“His name shall be called . . . The Mighty God, The Father of Eternity” [Isa. 9:6, Heb.]. Naturally, God is the Father of eternity. No one who believes that God is His attributes has any trouble with that. Nor does anyone who believes the doctrine of the trinity have any trouble with the idea of the Son given being both The Mighty God and The Father of Eternity. For the child born is in His divine nature Immanuel, or With Us God! Nor does anyone familiar with the Bible’s self-explanatory principle, Scripture interpreting Scripture, have any trouble with the English translation of the text. The English properly presents the divine Son, Immanuel, as The Mighty God, for in the very next chapter the prophecy is that the elect remnant in true conversion shall return to Him, and there, too, He is denominated The Mighty God (10:21)! So the translation, to be correct, must not be weakened to “mighty hero,” or anything else than The Mighty God.* The same goes for the literal translation of the Hebrew, The Father of Eternity. This is correct, for in Isa. 57:15, where we read that “the High and Lofty One, whose name is Holy, inhabits eternity,” the word is the same as in 9:6. God gave the Son to come into this world a child born for us. God gave Him these names: Wonderful! — which He is in both His divine Person and in the union of the two natures; Counselor! — so that He is wonderful in the union of sinless human wisdom and omniscience; The Mighty God! — wonderful in the union of weak humanity and omnipotence; The Father of Eternity! — wonderful in the union of man with eternity!

God, with this attribute of eternity is called “the everlasting God” (Gen. 21:35), “the King eternal” (1 Tim. 1:17), “the eternal Spirit” (Heb. 9:14). The Son in His divine nature is “from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2). In His office of Mediator He was “set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was” (Prov. 8:23, 24). God’s attributes (God himself) are said to be eternal. His power is eternal power (Rom. 1:20). His mercy is from everlasting (Ps. 103:17); His love is an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). God’s purpose is eternal (Eph. 3:11). God’s covenant is an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:7). God’s election is from eternity. “God . . . from all eternity elected some to everlasting life” (Westminster Shorter Catechism, A. 20, quoted in Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary!) Webster defines the word eternal: “without beginning or end of existence. ‘The eternal God is thy refuge.’ Dt. 33 . . . Unchangeable; existing at all times without change, as eternal truth.” Some theologians have used the word eternally, referring to the eternalness of God.

In the Reformed Dogmatics we are taught that God, being the Eternal One, in His eternity may not be conceived in terms of time, “as if eternity were time without beginning and without end. For eternity is not time. There is a qualitative difference between time and eternity.” Eternity is not time extended infinitely in both directions. (In my public school days, we were taught this, especially in geometry class: a line was said to extend in both its directions infinitely. This is Deism!) Time can be measured. Eternity “is ‘from everlasting to everlasting . . .’ Time is a creature . . . God is the Self-existent One. In this work, time is conceived of as (a river) moving out of (in the stream of) the future (on) into the past. Time, then, does not move from past to present to future; but out of the future into the present and on into the past. This was Augustine’s view of time. He held that the future becomes present, and the present becomes past. Only of the eternal, unchangeable God can it be said that “He is.” From His firm and absolute being, in which He is always constant in Himself, He sees all things sliding along beneath Him like an
ever-rolling stream. God lives in an “eternal now.” He alone can say, I Am! “He alone is the eternal I AM.” He is “the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

H. Bavinck wrote: “In God there is not time. He is what He is from eternity. There is in Him ‘no variation, neither shadow cast by turning.’ ... He is without beginning . . . end . . . succession of moments; He cannot be measured or counted in His duration . . . Eternity is identical with God’s essence ... He is . . . ‘His own eternity.’ ” (So also said Charnock.) “God is eternity itself.” (Gill). Archibald Alexander Hodge (Presbyterian) wrote on “His eternity: By affirming that God is eternal we mean that His duration has no limit and that His existence in infinite duration is absolutely perfect. He could have had no beginning, He can have no end, and in His existence there can be no succession of thoughts, feelings or purposes. There can be no increase to His knowledge, no change as to His purpose. Hence the past and the future must be as immediately, as immutably . . . with Him as the present. Hence His existence is an ever-abiding, all-embracing present, which is always contemporaneous with the ever-flowing times of His creatures. His knowledge, which never can change, eternally recognizes His creatures and their actions in their several places in time, and His actions upon His creatures pass from Him at the precise moments predetermined in His unchanging purpose.

“Hence God is absolutely unchangeable in His being in all the modes and states thereof. In His knowledge, His feelings, His purposes, and hence in His engagements to His creatures . . . ‘The counsel of the Lord standeth forever . . .’ (Ps. 33:11).”

Scripture is wonderful in its teaching that God is King forever; His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; He Himself is the living God who lives forever and ever. His name, The Ancient of Days, cannot mean ancient In days, or through days, or because of days. For He is ancient before, after, beyond and over against days. The Ancient of Days is no more ancient now than He was in the days of Adam, or when the universe was created along with the creature Time. “Father Time” becomes ever more ancient as ages roll on. Not so The Father of Eternity, the Ancient of Days, who has no beginning of days, nor end of life, but abides continually (Heb. 7:3), even after time shall cease to be. An archdeacon (whatever that is) in the Church of England said that this name (Ancient of Days) “has no reference to the eternity of God.” The very opposite is true. It can express nothing else but His eternity. The Ancient of Days is the Creator, not a creature of days! The Ancient of Days is “from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2), or, literally, mimee olam, “from the days of eternity.” So the name means “The Ancient of the Days of Eternity.” The Ancient of Days sits on the throne of Judgment (Dn. 7:9, 10); He is King with an everlasting dominion (v. 13, 14); He shall come in final judgment, after which the saints shall possess the kingdom (v. 22). Surely The Ancient of Days is the infinite and eternal God!

God’s knowledge is from eternity. “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” (Ac. 15:18), or, as the original has it, “from eternity.” What Augustine said of time could just as well be said of eternity. If no one asks me, “What is eternity?” I know well enough what it is, but if anyone does ask me what it is, I don’t know how to explain it. I know that I believe it, but it is hard to understand and harder yet to express in words. Amazing, isn’t it, not only that we cannot comprehend eternity, but that we cannot conceive of it, yet we want to believe it, do believe it, delight in believing it, long for it, inasmuch as we do comprehend that there is an eternity!

It is terrible for the wicked to contemplate this. For God is the “living God, an everlasting king, (whom) the nations shall not be able to abide (in) His indignation” (Jer. 10:10). But what a comfort this is to the saints! For Christ has taken and borne all the eternal wrath and hell due me, and fully satisfied for all my sins. Further, the Holy Spirit assures me of eternal life. With all the
saints I exclaim, “This God is our God forever and ever” (Ps. 48:14).

Christ Himself, as God, is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, who has the first and the last word, since He is the entire Word that God shall ever speak to this world. He is the Beginning and the Ending, Himself from everlasting to everlasting, God, and so has no beginning and no end. He Himself says this, “saith the Lord God,” (the latter word added in the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Latin, Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopic versions.) He is God who is, who was and who is to come! God to eternity! The Lord God the Almighty! (Rev. 1:8). Angels sing of Him everlastingly, “Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come, Thou art holy! holy! holy!” (4:8). And to this “all the people said, Amen!”

*Scripture plainly teaches that Christ is God. He is called my God (Jn. 20:28), our great God (Tit. 2:13, Greek), O God, Thy God (Heb. 1:8, 9), your God (Isa. 40:9), God manifest in the flesh (I Tim. 3:16), God over all blessed forever (Rom. 9:5) and the true God (I Jn. 5:20).

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