



*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (Rev 1:8)*

**Of the Father's Love Begotten**  
(*Corde Natus Ex Parentis*)

Of the Father's love begotten,  
ere the worlds began to be,  
he is Alpha and Omega,  
he the source, the ending he,  
of the things that are, that have been,  
and that future years shall see,  
evermore and evermore!

At his word the words were framèd;  
he commanded; it was done:  
heaven and earth and depths of ocean  
in their threefold order one;  
all that grows beneath the shining  
of the moon and burning sun,  
evermore and evermore!

O that birth for ever blessèd,  
when the Virgin, full of grace,  
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,  
bare the Savior of our race;  
and the Babe, the world's Redeemer,  
first revealed his sacred face,  
evermore and evermore!

This is he whom seers in old time  
chanted of with one accord;  
whom the voices of the prophets  
promised in their faithful word;  
now he shines, the long expected,  
let creation praise its Lord,  
evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven, adore him;  
angel-hosts, his praises sing;  
powers, dominions, bow before him,  
and extol our God and King;  
let no tongue on earth be silent,  
every voice in concert ring,  
evermore and evermore!

Thee let old men, thee let young men,  
thee let boys in chorus sing;  
matrons, virgins, little maidens,  
with glad voices answering:  
let their guileless songs re-echo,  
and the heart its music bring,  
evermore and evermore!

Christ, to thee with God the Father,  
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,  
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving,  
and unwearied praises be;  
honor, glory and dominion,  
and eternal victory,  
evermore and evermore!

This hymn carol almost qualifies as a Creed and summary of the Christian Faith. It was written in ancient times when men took their faith far more seriously than modern churchmen and women seem to do. The words were composed by Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius between 348 and 413 Anno Domini (in the Year of our Lord); translated by John Mason Neale in 1854. The musical score is *Divinum Mysterium* (the Divine Mystery). Even the title is a torch of biblical truth – Christ was Begotten, not made.

There was a time in the history of the Church during which truth stood immutable and absolute. Men and women, from the ancient fathers to the Reformation, were willing to lay down their lives for the slightest threat against that truth. The theology of those past great martyrs was a Polemic theology that would not even consider error as a valid argument. Today, most modern churches have opted for an Irenic theology that, out of a politically correct concern for those who simply do not “get it,” is willing to give equal weight to all theories – even those that directly contradict Scripture. Such Irenic theology has become the basis for teaching of error in our seminaries. But this great and ancient hymn adheres strictly to the revealed Word of God in all its utterance.

As the first stanza alleges, Christ was begotten of the Father before the worlds were made. He was with the Father in the beginning. Which beginning, you may ask? The Eternity that existed before the first day of Creation – **THAT** beginning. He is the Alpha and Omega of the Greek alphabet and the A to Z of the English (*from righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias*. Matthew 23:35) He is the first and last of every language, and all letters intervening. He is the whole and complete WORD! (John 1:1-3)

Our Lord was the Executive Architect of Creation. He made the worlds and all that is in them. I cannot begin to describe the depth and meaning to which the words of this hymn fathom the Deep of the mysteries of God. He made the heavens, the earth, and the seas. All that dwell upon the earth from the tiniest microorganism to the

greatest whale was of his creation made.

*“O that birth for ever blessèd, when the Virgin, full of grace, by the Holy Ghost conceiving, bare the Savior of our race; and the Babe, the world’s Redeemer, first revealed his sacred face!”* No man or woman will ever forget the name of the blessed Mary. Her womb was filled by pure Grace at the conception of Jesus through the agency of the Holy Ghost. She bore the first-born of the New Creation of God so that all who place their faith and trust in Him shall be made new. Not all of those who dwell upon the earth will be redeemed by the Lord, but those who believe by faith through grace shall be all that is of the world that matters. Jesus was not poor. He dwelt in the alabaster palaces of His Father; yet, He forsook that beauty for the common fare of the heart – for you and me. That which His heart cherished and treasured became that upon which His heart was set. He saw only beauty, love and righteousness in a people who owned no righteousness. He loved us so.

*“This is he whom seers in old time chanted of with one accord; whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word; now he shines, the long expected, let creation praise its Lord!”* Many may presume that the Gospel begins with the Gospel of Matthew of the New Testament. This is far from true. We are told in Mark: *“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.”* (Mark 1:1-2) The Gospel is written also in the Prophets, but even before in Eden: *“And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”* (Gen 3:14-15) And, yes, even before that when God placed the Tree of Life in the midst of the Garden at Eden. The Light has pierced from Eternity Past to clear the darkness of Eternity Future for us.

*“O ye heights of heaven, adore him; angel-hosts, his praises sing; powers, dominions, bow before him, and extol our God and King; let no tongue on earth be silent, every voice in concert ring,”* The Angels of God have always rejoiced at the majesty and beauty of Christ! They marveled at His handiwork in the Creation of the worlds and heavenly bodies: *“Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together ( a common reference to Angels), and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”* (Job 38:5-7) Though the angels sang, and sing, in chorus and adoration at the mention of His Name, some voices of the lost remain silent now, and forever; except that one moment of His return when every knee shall bow and ever tongue shall confess Him as Lord.

*“Thee let old men, thee let young men, thee let boys in chorus sing; matrons, virgins, little maidens, with glad voices answering: let their guileless songs re-echo, and the heart its music bring”* What a Jubilation Day of celebration will be enjoyed at the return of our Lord and King! Those who have slipped away silently in the arms of the Angel of Death – old men and women, those who are in the prime of life, and the blessed little children – all shall raise their sweet voices in glad songs, praises and tidings of glorious joy at the rolling back of the scroll of the heavens and the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ leading the mighty armies of Heaven.

*“Christ, to thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be; honor, glory and dominion, and eternal victory!”*

The benedictory seal of this hymnal creed is an allusion to the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Should we ever weary of praises to God and His Son, Jesus, we would be pitiful creatures indeed. The victory is not one which must be won – it was secured for the believer in Christ on the Cross at Calvary. We honor Christ with our reverence in life and worship, we give our highest accolades of glory to Him as our Sovereign Lord, and we acknowledge the victory which He has secured over death and sin by that death at Calvary. The victory was not of a single battle, but of the War that raged from Eternity Past until Christ, once and for all, defeated the dreaded enemy of every man's soul – Satan and his filthy bag of sins.

We shall close this creedal hymn study with the final words of each stanza which I have reserved for last. The promises and Providence of God are for “. . . *evermore and evermore!*” Do you rest upon those promises this Christmastide?