

Jesus Christ—Lord God of the Old Testament *and* Son of God

The family nature of the Godhead is the key to your eternal destiny!

In order to truly understand the Scriptures, it is critical to realize that the Lord God of the Old Testament was the one Who was *made flesh* and became Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As we will see, “God” in the Old Testament is frequently translated from the Hebrew word *elohim*, which is a collective *plural* noun that refers to a holy *family* of spirit beings. Scripture reveals that there are at present *two* Who are *Elohim*—members of the **God Family**: **God**, Who is called **the Father** in the New Testament, and the one Who became Jesus Christ, and is thus now **God the Son**.

Who was Jesus? To understand Jesus’ preexistent state, we must go back to the *beginning*—as brought out by the apostle John. Here, John describes Jesus before He became human. “In *the* beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men... And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father)...” (John 1:1-4, 14).

If we read no further in the New Testament, we would know with certainty that Jesus *was* the God of the Old Testament and that He was **the one Who created “all things.”** But there is so much more evidence. The apostle Paul, for example, shows that the God Who dealt with the nation of Israel was the one Who became Christ. “And *they* [the children of Israel] all drank *of* the same spiritual drink; for they drank from *the* spiritual Rock that followed *them*. **And that Rock was Christ**” (I Cor. 10:4). Moses shows that the “Rock” was the one Who had created Israel. “You forgot the Rock *Who* brought you forth [from Egypt], and have forgotten the God Who formed you” (Deut. 32:18).

Here, Paul clearly tells us that Christ—not the one later known as God the Father—was the Jehovah that spoke with Moses and led the nation of Israel out of Egypt. Notice what Paul taught the Colossians: “Because **by Him** [Jesus] **were all things created**, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers; **all things were created by Him and for Him**. And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist. And He is the Head of the body, the church; Who is *the* beginning, *the* firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence” (Col. 1:16-18). In Hebrews, he wrote that “God, Who spoke to the fathers at different times in the past and in many ways by the prophets, has spoken to us in these last days by *His* Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, **by Whom also He made the worlds**; Who, being *the* brightness of *His* glory and **the exact image of His person**, and upholding all things by the word of His own power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at *the* right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:1-2).

In a rather cryptic statement, Jesus identified Himself as the “I AM” of the Old Testament. “Jesus said unto them, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM’ ” (John 8:58). The statement correlated with the name by which Jehovah revealed Himself to Moses: “And God said to Moses, ‘I AM THAT I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me unto you’ ’ ” (Ex. 3:14). Indeed, Jesus existed well “before Abraham.” Just hours before His crucifixion, Jesus prayed, “And now, Father, glorify Me with Your own self, with **the glory that I had with You before the world existed**” (John 17:5)—referring directly to His preexistent state.

Jews in particular found it hard to believe that God could become a *man*. Yet, the New Testament shows that one of the members of the Godhead became a man that we might have the opportunity to be born into the Family of God. In his epistle to the Philippians, Paul explains: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, **although He existed in the form of God**, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **but emptied Himself, and was made in the likeness of men**, and took the form of a servant; **and being found in the manner of man**, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross” (Phil. 2:5-8)

Incredibly, the one Who became Jesus Christ voluntarily gave up His position as God to come to this earth as a physical human being in order to die for the sins of mankind (John 10:17-18). When one understands this vital fact, it gives new meaning to the oft-repeated passage, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Who was Melchizedek? Writing to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul provides valuable evidence of Jesus’ preexistence as God. “In this same manner also, Christ did not glorify Himself to become a High Priest, but He Who said to Him, ‘You are My Son; today I have begotten You.’ Even as He also says in another *place*, ‘You [Jesus] *are* a Priest forever according to the order of Melchisedec’ ” (Heb. 5:5-6).

Thus, Christ holds the office of Melchizedek. But who was this mysterious priest? In Genesis 14:18, Melchizedek is called the “King of Salem” and the “Priest of the Most High God.” Yet, this was no ordinary king-priest. Paul describes Him further in Hebrews 7:2-3: “And [Melchizedek] to Whom Abraham gave a tenth part of all; on the one hand, being interpreted King of Righteousness; and on the other hand, King of Salem, which is King of Peace; without father, without mother, **without genealogy; having neither beginning of days, nor end of life;** but having been made like the Son of God, **remains a Priest forever.**”

Paul is obviously describing a being who has *eternally existed*, as only God can. Thus, Melchizedek was clearly the one Who became Christ; as Melchizedek, He was the priest of the *Most High God*, the one Who became God the Father. Today, Jesus remains a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

God is a Family: Early theologians were driven by the need to explain the appearance of Jesus Christ. Some found their explanation by fabricating the Trinity doctrine, a teaching that is grossly unbiblical. Since Christ *is* God, what is His relationship in the Godhead? Jesus is called the “Son of God,” and He calls God His “Father”—revealing a clear family relationship.

Thus, God is a family. “And God [*Elohim*] said, ‘Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, after **Our** likeness’ ” (Gen. 1:26). And, “Go to, let **Us** go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech” (Gen. 11:7). The Hebrew word for “God” used here in Genesis is *elohim*, a collective *plural* noun. Though this word taken by itself does not prove that there are two beings in the Godhead, it allows for the plurality that is clearly indicated in other parts of the Bible, such as in John 1:1-14.

In Jesus’ prayer recorded in John 17, He further reveals that the “Us” of these passages are in fact the Father and the Son, Jesus Christ: “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me” (verses 20-21).

The word *elohim* can function like our English words *group*, *church*, *team*—or *family*. A church can have many members, but is still one church or body (I Cor. 12:20). A family can have many members, but is still *one* family. In creating the institution of marriage, God said that the man and the woman were to become *one* (Gen. 2:24). There is only *one* God family, presently

composed of two members, the Father and the Son. Jesus is called the “firstborn of many brethren” (Rom. 8:29), showing that, in the future, there will be many more sons and daughters added to the God Family.

Look again at the creation account in Genesis. God had created fish after the fish kind, birds after the bird kind, and cattle after the cattle kind. But in Genesis 1:26, God made man after the *God kind*—in God’s image and likeness. Clearly, God is creating a family, after His very own kind—the God kind. *Elohim*—composed of two Beings from eternity, the Most High God and the Word—became a family as one took on the role of a Father, and the other a Son. This is profound because, unlike a closed Trinity, the family nature of the Godhead opens the door for humans, following Jesus’ example, to become immortal sons and daughters of that same Family.

Jesus Came to Reveal the Father: While the plurality of the Godhead is evident in the Old Testament, this truth is revealed primarily in the New Testament—by Jesus Himself. “[No] one knows Who the Son is, except the Father; and Who the Father is, except the Son, and the one to whom the Son personally chooses to reveal *Him*” (Luke 10:22; also Matt. 11:27).

Again, a clear *family* relationship is made in the New Testament between Christ and the Father. “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has declared Him**” (John 1:18).

Indeed, unless Jesus had *revealed the Father*, there would be no way for us to know Him. Christ came to the earth to reveal the Father and to show that a family relationship has existed in the Godhead—a Family into which humans could be born.

The apostle John understood God’s plan for mankind. Notice what he wrote: “Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be **called the children of God!** [Note, again, the family relationship.] For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved, [even] now we are [already] the [begotten] children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, **we shall be like Him** [when we are born into the God Family at the resurrection], because we shall see Him exactly as He is” (I John 3:1-2).

It is clearly God’s plan to bring many sons and daughters into His family. “Because it was fitting for Him [God the Father], for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, **in bringing many sons unto glory**, to make the Author of their salvation [Jesus Christ] perfect through sufferings” (Heb. 2:10).

The pages of your Bible are filled with evidence of God’s great purpose for man. And yet, the majority of professing Christians are blinded to this central truth—believing instead in a closed Trinity. Why? Because Satan has cleverly deceived the whole world (Rev. 12:9).

But God is not a closed Trinity. *God is a family*—a family into which you can be born at the first resurrection when Jesus returns!