

The Pre-Existent Son of God

15 February 2006

A controversy surrounds the pre-existence of Son of God and the mode and manner in which he pre-existed, and by what name he was known. Some say that the one God came to earth as Jesus, while others teach that the Son of God did not exist until Bethlehem. These arguments have been around for 2000 years, and likely will never go away. Is the Bible clear on these questions? If it is, then why will people not accept the truth?

The second question can be answered by reviewing Israel's history since becoming a nation. Her rebellious history culminated in the rejection of the Messiah by most of the leadership, even though Christ taught among them over three years. It will not be different in our day, as there are many false teachers who will lead many away from truth.

The Son's Pre-existence: Col 1:16-17: *16. For by him (The Son) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* It is pretty plain that if the Son of God created all things, then he was before all things. Also, he is said to be in *the image of the invisible God* (verse 15), therefore he is not THE God, but the Son of God. The fact that there are two individuals called Father and Son, is well established in other studies. We know the Father sent the Son as Savior of the world (Jn 3:16-17). How is the Son referred to in the Old Testament?

First, look at this verse: **Rev 1:1:** *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: God (the Father) gave this revelation to the Son, who passed it on to John to write down. If Jesus is our mediator (1 Tim 2:5) and we can only know the Father through the Son (Mt 11:27), is it reasonable to also say that the Son is the chief Messenger between the Father and man? That is how he is pictured in the first verse of the book of Revelation.*

Angel of the Lord: The word 'angel' in the Hebrew and Greek is a transliterated word, both meaning 'messenger, or one who is sent.' Either meaning fits the Son of God. But, is he called a messenger, or angel in scripture? **Ex 3:1-8:** *1. Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of [Elohiym], even to Horeb. 2. And the angel of [Yahweh] appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. 3. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. 4. And when [Yahweh] saw that he turned aside to see, [Elohiym] called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. 5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou stand is holy ground. 6. Moreover he said, I am the [Elohiym] of thy father, the [Elohiym] of Abraham, the [Elohiym] of Isaac, and the [Elohiym] of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon [Elohiym]. 7. And [Yahweh] said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; 8. And I am come down to deliver them...*

Please note that the person speaking with Moses is named as the 'angel of Yahweh, Yahweh and Elohiym.' And in verse 14: *And [Elohiym] said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.* I AM is the very name claimed by Jesus before the Jews (Jn 8:58). Stephen, recounting the story of the burning bush to the Jews (Acts 7:30-35) said also that the Angel with Moses was also the one who spoke to Israel at Mt Sinai (Ibid, verse 38). Moses said in his

writings more than once, that the person who spoke from Mr Sinai was Yahweh (cp Duet 4:12). Paul the apostle also understood that it was Christ with Israel in the wilderness. It would be good here to note that the Hebrew word *elohiym* IS NOT a proper name. The word (#430) actually means rulers, judges, divine ones, angels or gods, and can be used the same way in the singular also. Yahweh actually said to Moses, *See, I have made thee a god (elohiym) to Pharaoh*. Yahweh, however, is a proper name for God.

1 Cor 10:4: *And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ*. Paul understood that the spiritual Rock from which Israel drank, and which followed them in the wilderness was Christ. Notice **Ex 13:21:** *And [Yahweh] went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:* Now compare this parallel scripture: **Ex 14:19:** *And the angel [messenger] of [Elohiym], which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:* It was Christ leading Israel in the wilderness, and in Moses' writings he used the Hebrew words 'Yahweh, Elohiym and angel of Yahweh' interchangeably in some contexts, all of which describe the Son in figurative language.

Mal 3:1: *1. Behold, I will send my messenger, (John the Baptist) and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord (or master), whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.* Messenger in this verse is the same Hebrew word transliterated "angel" in Ex 3:2 & 14:19. Christ is the messenger or, mediator of the new covenant (Heb 8:6 & 12:24; 1 Tim 2:5). So, we can see how the Son of God is often referenced as an angel, or messenger. He IS, in fact, the chief messenger who disseminates truth to humanity from the Father.

Chief Messenger: The word for 'chief messenger' in the Greek is the transliterated word "archangel" (archaggelos), Strong's number 743. It comes from a compound Greek word: archo⁽⁷⁵⁷⁾ + aggelos⁽³²⁾. Number 757 = to be first or chief, to reign or rule over; 32 = messenger, one sent. Thus the translation would be "chief messenger." Notice how Christ speaks with the voice of the archangel: **1 Th 4:16:** *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.* In Revelation (Rev 1:10, 13) you have Christ speaking with "a great voice, as of a trumpet", and it is "at the last trump" that the "dead shall be raised" (1 Cor 15:51-52).

Jude connects 'archangel' with the name Michael: **Jude 9:** *Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, does not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee*. We know Moses is in heaven (Mk 9:4), so Jude must be speaking of the time when he was resurrected by Christ. The heavenly angels are messengers, called ministering spirits (Heb 1:13-14). This idea leads many to believe that Michael is a heavenly angel, a created being, the head, or chief of all the angels. Others believe Michael in Jude refers to the Son of God. Which is it? If Michael is the head of the heavenly angels, why did God send Gabriel (Lk 1:26-31), instead of Michael, to Mary with such an important message as the birth of Jesus? Because Michael, the Son, was put in Mary's womb at the time Gabriel came.

Captain of the Host: Josh 5:13-15: *13. And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14. And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15. And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. "Captain", Strong's # 8269, is translated from the Hebrew word sar. "Host" is tsaba', # 6635. Sar has been*

translated as “prince, captain, chief, and ruler.” The man appearing to Joshua is not a created angel, or else Joshua would not have worshiped him. (See Rev 19:10; 22:8-9). The man identifies himself as the captain of Yahweh’s host. That is, he is the leader, or prince of God’s army. Who is this person? It is the Son of God as the Prince of the Lord’s host.

Michael your Prince: In Daniel, chapter 8, the little horn *magnified himself even to the prince⁽⁸²⁶⁹⁾ of the host⁽⁶⁶³⁵⁾*... (verse 11). This is the same Hebrew phrase found in Joshua 5, but translated “prince” instead of “captain.” Again, in verse 25, the little horn *shall also stand up against the Prince of princes...*, which is still Christ, who is also said to be “prince of the kings of the earth” (Rev 1:5). **Dan 9:25**: *Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks...* In this prophecy about the coming anointed One, a different Hebrew word (*nagiyd* - 5054) is translated ‘prince’, but carries the same meaning as *sar*.

There is one other Old Testament reference worth considering: **Dan 12:1-2**: *1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.* (American Standard) The book in which are written the names of the righteous is the ‘Lamb’s book of life’ (Rev 13:8). Daniel is saying it with different words, that it is Michael’s book in which the people of God are found written. **Heb 12:22-24**: *22. But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23. To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant...* (Cf Lk 10:20).

Summery: Because many do not understand the Father - Son relationship, they think that to refer to Christ as an angel denigrates Him as a divine being. But, to say that the Son of God is an angel, or the chief messenger of God, does not take away his divinity and the fact that he is a God to be worshiped. The Son is NOT a created being. He IS the divine Son of God, who today carries the perfected human nature. It is an awesome thing to think that the Father could take His only begotten Son and put him in embryo form, in the womb of a human being, to be birthed in the same manner as were you and I. And even more awesome, is all that happened to the Son of God will happen to us spiritually, i.e. to the inward person. The Father did this for US, because He loved us and desired that not one should perish, but all should have eternal life through His Son. It is the Son’s image into which we are to be made.

What difference does it make in how I understand the Son of God? **Isa 11:1, 10**: *1. And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 10. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.* **Rev 22:16**: *I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David...* The Son of God is the root and offspring (branch), and the rest is in the root - Michael. It is in understanding Michael that creates a war in our spiritual heavens to drive out the adversary so that we come to the rest of God. **Rev 12:7-8**: *7. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, 8. And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.* It is Michael who destroys the characteristic of the adversary from our thinking. Christ’s experience before the cross was as Michael (One who is like God), and in his humanity as Jesus (Yahweh is salvation) - the root and branch, the author and finisher of our faith.