

HEBREWS

Lesson 7: The Preexistent Christ - Part 2 w/Answers

Hebrews 10:5-7

We continue our study of Christ in the Old Testament. As we saw in the previous lesson, Christ was the central figure in the creation story. This was evidenced by the verses in Genesis 1:26, 3:22 and 11:7, where we drew special attention to the words "us" and "our," indicating that God's triune being was present—God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus the Son.

We also noted that Christ, particularly in the book of John, made many references to his coming down from heaven, as well as his having been present with God before the creation. In this lesson, we will deepen our understanding of Christ, his presence and his central role in all of creation by looking to see if, and how, Christ physically manifested himself in the Old Testament. Was he present during any of the Old Testament period and, if so, how? Put on your thinking caps as God's Holy Spirit leads us in a study of Christ's presence during the Old Testament period.

We will again be employing many scripture references. I pray these will add immensely to your understanding of the Old Testament and its importance, as well to provide you a deeper more personal walk with Christ as our hope and our salvation.

1. You may need a Bible dictionary for this one. Look up the word "Theophany" and write the definition here.
 - a. ANSWER: You probably found a definition that goes something like, "a visible manifestation in human form of God." This is important to understand as we study the following verses and see that God in human form is Jesus.
2. Read John 1:18, John 6:46, and 1 John 4:12. What do they each tell us about seeing God?
 - a. John 1:18
 - i. ANSWER: Jesus is God in human form, and he reveals God to us so that we may know God exists.
 - b. John 6:46
 - i. ANSWER: Only Jesus has seen God; no other human has ever seen God. Don't let anyone every fool or deceive you. No one—not any human has ever seen God, except Jesus.
 - c. 1 John 4:12
 - i. ANSWER: So while we have never seen God, if we have Jesus as our savior, God lives in us.
3. If no one has ever seen God, then many of the Old Testament passages must be in error—or something deeper is happening. Consider the following questions in light of the passages that tell us no one has ever seen God. Read Exodus 3:1-6.
 - a. Who is speaking to Moses from the Burning Bush according to verse 2?
 - i. ANSWER: The Angel of The Lord.
 - b. Who is speaking to Moses from the Burning Bush according to verse 6?
 - i. ANSWER: God
 - c. Who could this Angel of the Lord be? Perhaps Christ?
 - i. ANSWER: Yes, he is referred to in Hebrew as the messenger of Yahweh—in Hebrew, *malak Yahweh*. Jesus is the only messenger who bears this name, *malak Yahweh*.
4. Read Judges Chapter 13.
 - a. Who visits Samson's mother (verse 3)?
 - i. ANSWER: The Angel of the Lord comes to Samson's mother.
 - b. Who does she tell her husband visited her (verse 6)?
 - i. ANSWER: She tells him, "A man of God came to me. He looked like an angel of God, very awesome."
 - c. Who is described in Judges 13:9-10? Is this an angel, a man, or God?
 - i. ANSWER: Verse 9 tells us that it was "the angel of God," and in verse 10, Samson's mother again describes him as a man.
 - d. What was their reaction to this visit as described in Judges 13:22-23? Had they seen God or someone else? (They would have died if it had been the former.)
 - i. ANSWER: They had not seen God, but Jesus in the form of the Angel of the Lord.

5. Read Genesis 16:7-14. Who does Hagar "see?" See verse 13; was it an angel or a person?
 - a. ANSWER: She saw the Angel of the Lord and knew that he was the image of God. She described as "the God who sees me." She then said to the Angel of the Lord, "You are the One who sees me."
6. Is it possible that "the Angel of Lord" is another expression for Christ? In our earlier reading, when Samson's parents asked him his name, he told them that it was too difficult to explain. Would they have been able to understand at that time that "Jesus the Christ" was his name?
 - a. ANSWER: Clearly they understood that God hears and sees, as reflected in the verses we read, but they would not have been able to understand God in the form of Jesus as the Messiah, the anointed one, the Christ. This is what Jesus, the Angel of the Lord, was referring to when Menoah asked the Angel's name, and he replied that his name was "beyond understanding" (Judges 13:16-18).
7. Let's further consider Christ as the "Angel of the Lord" by reading John 8:58 and Genesis 22:1-12. Who was talking to Abraham? Who had Abraham demonstrated his faith to by not withholding his only son? Was it God, an angel, or Christ?
 - a. ANSWER 1: In John 8:58, Jesus tells us that before Abraham existed Jesus existed. In Genesis 22:1-12, God spoke to Abraham and instructed Abraham to prepare to sacrifice his son Isaac. God told him where to go, and Abraham told Isaac not to worry; God would provide the sacrifice, i.e., the "lamb for the burnt offering." However, when the time came and Abraham was ready to plunge the knife into Isaac, the "angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, Abraham! Abraham!" and told Abraham "do not lay a hand on the boy" because he knew that Abraham feared God and because he had "not withheld from me your son, your only son." (Emphasis mine.)
 - b. ANSWER 2: Clearly God, Jesus, and the angel of the Lord were one. Jesus was indeed present and told Abraham not to sacrifice his son. The only person who could have given that instruction to Abraham was God/Jesus: "I and the father are one." (John 10:30).
8. Now compare Genesis 28:10-22 with Genesis 31:11-13. Whom did Jacob see?
 - a. ANSWER: In Genesis 28, Jacob saw "The LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac." Then in Genesis 31, he saw "the angel of God" who told Jacob that he was also "the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me." In both instances, he was seeing Jesus as a theophany, a visible manifestation of God.
9. For each of the passages below, list the lives that were changed when they encountered the Angel of the Lord.
 - a. Genesis 12:7, 15, 17-18
 - i. ANSWER: Abram and Sarai
 - b. Genesis 16:10
 - i. ANSWER: Hagar
 - c. Genesis 26:12, 23-24
 - i. ANSWER: Isaac
 - d. Genesis 32:24-32
 - i. ANSWER: Jacob
 - e. Exodus 3:1-4:17
 - i. ANSWER: Moses
10. Did Christ refer to his existence in the Old Testament during his earthly ministry? Read Luke 24:27 and John 5:46-47 and indicate whether they refer to Christ being present in the Old Testament period?
 - a. ANSWER: Yes, both references indicate that Jesus the Christ was present from the beginning of the Old Testament. You will recall that Genesis 1:26 specifically refers to "us" and "our." These are direct references to the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, all being present before the creation. As recorded by both Luke and John in the passages referenced above, Jesus himself acknowledges the many references to his coming (as Messiah) during Old Testament times.
11. There are numerous other appearances of Christ in the Old Testament but none more dramatic than in the book of Daniel.
 - a. Read Daniel 3:13-30. In verse 25, who does the king believe he sees in the fire?
 - i. ANSWER: He sees a "son of the gods." The fourth person is Jesus.
 - b. Read Daniel 6:16-22. In verse 22, who came to rescue Daniel?
 - i. ANSWER: God sent His angel, the angel of the Lord.

I know that this study can be challenging. I pray, however, that through these lessons your walk and your understanding of Jesus our Savior and Messiah will deepen and grow stronger. May God continually bless you as you study His Holy Word.