

# HE CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN

(The pre-existence of Christ)

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(Excerpt from "God's Son" a book by Phillip Hayes)

*"For I came down from heaven . . ." [John 6:38].*

*"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,  
Before Abraham was, I am" [John 8:58].*

In 1994 I wrote a little book called "Jesus, The Son of God". The writing caused quite a stir among the readers and frankly got me in "hot water" with some believers. Others rejoiced in the message and I received many letters of appreciation from young and old alike.

The reason I wrote the Son of God message was to Biblically answer this question, "What does God require us to believe about Jesus for us to be saved". I felt and still feel if we focused on what the scripture says about Jesus and stop placing our own spin on the scriptures we would all believe the truth and not be divided concerning the very Person we all profess to love and worship.

Recently I have desired to rewrite "Jesus, The Son of God" in order to address some areas that I did not address in the first booklet. The title of the new book is, "GOD'S SON".

The more I studied and compiled scriptures and notes for this new book the more I realized it was going to be lengthier than I had written before. Therefore it has taken much longer to write, proof, edit and publish than I had anticipated. This writing is in no way a complete study of the subject. That being said, I hope you enjoy the following excerpts from "God's Son".

As amazing as it sounds, understanding the Person of Christ and His relationship with the Holy Spirit and God the Father has divided the church for centuries.

It is not my purpose to further divide the body of Christ. Rather it is my sincere belief that this book contains the answers to unify the peoples of God with the actual teaching of the Apostles and what they believed concerning the Person of Christ.

There are various teachings within Christianity concerning the Deity of Christ. The majority of Christians world-wide believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. The second most popular teaching is the Oneness/Jesus-Only doctrine. These are the two main teachings. I realize there are considerable differences of opinion and illustrations that are used to teach these doctrines and space will not allow me to address all of them.

In my study I have found there is a common thread running throughout each group's belief system and that is the belief of the pre-existence of Christ before He was born of the Virgin Mary. The Trinity is basically described this way: God is triune consisting of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. Three persons, but just One God.

Oneness/Jesus-Only teach that Jesus was actually the Father and not a separate person or God being. Some Oneness teachers explain the doctrine in this way: The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit being "modes" or manifestations of the same Person. The rational is there is but One God and if Jesus existed as God the Son that would make two God's not One. Further insisting, if Jesus was God, He would have to be the Father.

As I stated, both have several verses of scripture to "prove" their teaching. Both sides of this issue have debated one another with each walking away from the debate table stating they had won the debate!

Both theories are backed by many of the very same scriptures and how they interpret them.

Please keep an open mind with me as we look at the scriptures both are using. Also keep in mind we are entering into an area that is without controversy a great mystery. First Timothy chapter three, verse sixteen states: *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"*.

The following is from various "statements of faith" defining Christ's pre-existence, along with my comments, "Did Jesus exist before Abraham?" Their answer to the question is, "Jesus made many statements recorded in the Gospels that garnered great controversy in His day. He said that He came from heaven (John 6:38), had the authority to forgive sins (Luke 7:48-50), and is the "Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). But perhaps His most surprising assertion was given in response to the Jews in John 8. Amid a heated debate over His identity, Jesus told them, *"Before Abraham was born, I am!"* (John 8:58). This declaration is especially significant given that the phrase "I am" was used as a title for God (Exodus 3:14).

Is Jesus saying His existence before Abraham was that He was God? If so, was He God the Father or the Son of God? If He was God's Son before Abraham, what form did He have? Was He an angel? Most teach that Jesus is saying He is the "I AM" or the "Father" depending on their theology of the Godhead. From these statements many teach Jesus was claiming pre-existence no matter how they personally view or teach the Deity.

When Jesus claimed to exist before Abraham, His hearers *"picked up stones to stone him"* (John 8:59). They knew immediately that Jesus' statement was claiming equality with God, and the penalty for blasphemy under Jewish law was stoning (Leviticus 24:16). Later, in John 13:19, many believe that Jesus again applies the divine name "I AM" to Himself: *"Now I tell you before it come,*

*that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he".* They also point to Isaiah chapter forty-one verse 4 to prove their belief, *"Who hath wrought and done it, calling the generations from the beginning? I the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am he."*

Bible teachers on both sides of the issue document with the scriptures that the Bible teaches Jesus existed before Abraham. Jesus was "with God in the beginning" (John 1:2; see also John 1:14; Colossians 1:16–17).

Jesus is the beginning and the end. *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."* (Revelation 22:13). He is "God over all" (Romans 9:5) and "the Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). Oneness/Jesus-only and Trinity teachers both claim that Jesus was then and will forever be the great "I AM."

In the Book of Genesis, the Lord appeared and spoke to Abraham. Throughout the conversation, the Lord is alternately called a "man" and "the Lord" *"And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant" [Genesis 18:1-3].* (also see verses 13, 16, 17, 22).

Trinity teachers believe Genesis chapter 18 provides further support for Jesus' claim that He existed before Abraham. The three men that visited Abraham were called the Lord and many believe these three were actually the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in bodily form.

Remember now, we are using the same scriptures both sides of the issue use to teach and defend their individual positions. They merely put their own interpretation on the scriptures.

There are other scriptures to substantiate the pre-  
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existence of Christ. Let's take a look in the Old Testament for actual references to the Son of God: There are five verses referring to the "sons of God" that most Bible scholars and students believe refer to the angels. There is only one scripture in the Old Testament that appears to refer to The Son of God. *"He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God"* [Daniel 3:25]. Many surmise that the ancient people including King Nebuchadnezzar believed there were sons of God. They note that it is not clear if these ancient people believed these sons of God were angels. However, King Nebuchadnezzar said the fourth man had a form like the Son of God, (not sons of God) indicating they believed God did in fact have a Son! They also point out that in the King James Version sons of God are with a small "s" while the Son of God in this passage is with a capital "S".

There are several verses in Genesis and one in Isaiah where the Bible records God referring to Himself in the plural. We find this first in Genesis chapter one verses 26 and 27, *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them"*.

In Genesis chapter three verse 22 the Bible records God speaking again using the plural word "us", *"Then the Lord God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; . . ."*

During the building of the tower Babel, we find the following account where God visited the city to see the tower, *"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one*

language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech" [Genesis 11:5-7]. "Let us go down! The Lord again uses the plural word "us"!

The prophet Isaiah wrote, ". . . I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" [Isaiah 6:8]. (Underline emphasis mine).

The Triune thought of course is that God is plural consisting of Father, Son and Holy Spirit and God is speaking of Himself, the Holy Spirit and His Son. The Jesus-Only explanation is the "us" God is referring to is none other than the heavenly host of angels, etc.

Proverbs chapter 8 speaks of "Wisdom" which many interpret to be the Son of God. "The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him" [Proverbs 8:22-30].

Speaking of our Lord Jesus, Apostle John called Jesus, "The Word" and began his Gospel with these words, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with

*God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" [John 1:1-3].*

In verse 10, John said Jesus made the world! *"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not".*

In verse 5, John testified that John the Baptist said Jesus existed before him! *"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me".*

Christ's preexistence was also prophesied of in Micah chapter five verse 2, *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting".*

The Apostle Paul is very bold in his epistle to the Colossians that Jesus Christ created all things and existed before all things were created. *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him 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: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist" [Colossians 1:15-17].*

The writer of Hebrews identified Jesus as the One found spoken of in the Psalms. God actually calls His Son, "God". Look at these amazing verses in Hebrews: *"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and*

*they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?" [Hebrews 1:8-13].*

These six verses are astounding! The writer is stating that God called His Son, "God". He also writes that God anointed His Son with the oil of gladness and that in the beginning He laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of His hands! These are not my words, these are the words God inspired to be written in the book of Hebrews!

In John chapters 16 and 17 we find Jesus plainly teaching His disciples that He existed before the world was ever created. *"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb" [John 16:28-29].*

Jesus stated, *"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father" (John 14:9)*. Jesus also said no man has ever seen God! What's going on here? The Apostle John made the same declaration, *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" [John 1:18]*. Now take a look at John chapter five verse 37 where Jesus is even more bold! *"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape"*.

We find the Apostle John stating the same thing again in First John chapter four verse 12, *"No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us"*. The inquisitive mind might ask, "If Jesus is the incarnate God that both Oneness and Trinity teach, why did both Jesus and John state that no one has ever seen God or heard His Voice, or seen his shape?"

Hebrews chapter one verse 3 tells us that Jesus was the expressed (exact) image of God's person. There is no



doubt Jesus fully expressed God's persona to the world! In the same way, we as Christians are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God (See Romans 8:29). In the beginning Adam was created in the image of God. Of course Adam was not God although he was created in his image. You might say, when you seen Adam, you seen God. Although we are predestinated to be in the image of Christ, we will not be Christ! This is how we should view these scriptures concerning the image Jesus was in.

Think about this. Is it possible that Jesus was not saying He was the Father when He said, *"When you have seen me, you have seen the Father"*? Or, was He referring to the "works" that the Father was manifesting through Him instead of His physical appearance? Please read all of John chapter fourteen for a better understanding of our Lord's statement. We will address how these verses have been misused a little later. .

Jesus also stated He existed before the world was! Here are two powerful statements our Lord made, *"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was"* [John 17:5]. Again in verse twenty-four He says, *"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world"* [John 17:24]. Remember, we are only seeking Biblical proof that Christ pre-existed before He was born. We are not trying to prove or disprove which concept of the Godhead is right. The Word of God will determine that.

In reference to what Jesus stated, I should mention another scripture that is found in Revelation chapter thirteen, verse 8, *"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"*. Clearly, this is a prophetic verse indicating it was always God's predestinated plan for the Lamb of God to die for the

sins of mankind.

It is clear Jesus explicitly taught His own pre-existence. Look at these remarkable statements of Jesus whereas He boldly states that He came down from Heaven. *"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" [John 3:13].* Jesus stated very clearly that He was the Bread from Heaven! *"For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world" [John 6:33]. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" [John 6:38]. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" [John 6:62]. "And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world" [John 8:23]. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" [John 16:28].*

That Jesus pre-existed as Deity is further proven by His being the object of worship repeatedly in the Gospels. Look at these few verses: Matthew twenty-eight verse 9, *"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him".* Matthew twenty-eight, verse 17, *"And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted".* Luke chapter twenty four verse 52, *"And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."* In John chapter nine verse 38 we find Jesus accepting worship from a man He had healed from blindness, *"And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him".* John chapter twenty verse 28 records Thomas declaring that Jesus was his God, *"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God".*

Jesus never rejected such adoration and worship! He saw such worship as entirely appropriate. Jesus implied that He had authority over the Sabbath (See Mark 2:28) as well

as the authority to abolish the Law (See Ephesians 2:14-15). These statements and actions would be blasphemy coming from anyone short of a Divine entity!

It should be very clear that no matter what you believe concerning the Godhead you will have to admit that our Lord Jesus was truly the most unique man ever born. He was in fact the only begotten Son of God possessing both humanity and deity. *"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"* [1Timothy 3:16].

I hope you can see by the scriptures we have looked at thus far why most Christians believe that Jesus pre-existed as an individual God Person called the Son of God or as God the Father Himself either in the plural or singular sense. We have also reviewed several scriptures whereas God often referred to himself in the plural instead of singular tense. This is why teachers of the Trinity believe this would indicate that although God is One, God is also a plural entity, which would explain his omnipresence, unlike humans who are singular by design. Omnipresence: *(of God) present everywhere at the same time. As a human (singular by design), I can only be in one place at a time.*

Now let me share a few of the many verses of scriptures that suggests God is One undivided and apparently not plural. The command God gave to His people Israel is, *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD"* [Deuteronomy 6:4]. This command of God has always been a stumbling block to Jewish people when they are told they must believe in a Trinity to become a Christian. They take this command as well as other verses in the Old Testament as proof there is only one God and that He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. That He is singular, not triune.

In Isaiah chapter forty-five verses 5 & 7 we find this

powerful statement, *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."* God also spoke by Moses a similar declaration in Deuteronomy, *"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand."* [Deuteronomy 32:39].

In the New Testament we find several similar statements. *"And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he"* [Mark 12:32]. The Apostle Paul writes to Timothy and says, *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"* [1Timothy 2:5]. The Apostle gives the early Corinthian church a "statement of faith" concerning what they should believe about God, *"But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him"* [1Corinthians 8:6]. So it is evident, there in One God, not two, not three, just One!

Thus far, two things in our study seem to be clear. There should be no doubt, Jesus did pre-exist before coming to earth. And secondly, we must believe there is only One God. How the Person of God is perceived in theology is where Christians are divided.

Some teach that God the Father incarnated Himself in human flesh, and was born of a virgin, lived, died and was raised from the dead. They teach that the man Jesus was no more than a robe of flesh that God the Father dwelt in. But wait! This theory would mean that Jesus was His own Father, and the Father was His own Son! If that were true, there wouldn't be a real Son of God with a will and soul, that

was crucified, buried and rose from the dead! Would it not also mean that our hope of a resurrection is in vain? Does this teaching make sense to you!

Then there is the triune of God thought that one third of God (the Second Person) came to earth, incarnated Himself in the womb of Mary and gave Himself for the sins of the people.

It would seem the scriptures we have looked at tend to bring more questions than answers. Please remember, Paul said this was a great mystery. As a matter of fact he said this mystery was kept secret since the world began. (See: 1Tim. 3:16; Rom. 16:25; Col. 1:26, 27). The mysteries of God can only be revealed by the Spirit. What we don't understand with our natural reasoning must be accepted and believed by faith.

No matter what your theological background is, there is one thing everyone needs to do. Stop trying to understand spiritual things with a natural mind. The scriptures are not to be interpreted by us, they are given for us to simply believe. *"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" [2Peter 1:21].*

Although there are many verses of scripture that puzzles Bible readers, the next few verses will again challenge the inquisitive mind. Perhaps you have pondered these verses as well. We know that Jesus prayed to God! Of course, some would say, "That was His flesh praying!" Others would say, "Yes, the Son of God prayed to His Father!" How does God pray to God? Or perhaps more importantly, why would God have to pray to God?

Most all Christians believe the Holy Spirit is God and that He lives in every believer. I believe that! There are numerous scriptures that let us know God lives in us. *"What?"*

*know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.” [1Corinthians 6:19]. “. . . Christ in you is the hope of Glory” (Colossians 1:27). Second Corinthians chapter 13, verse 5 is very clear, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” So, whatever you believe about the Godhead it is a fact that Father, Son and Holy Spirit all live in His people. We don’t fully understand it, but every Christian believes it! This truth alone should unify us rather than divide us!*

Look at this passage in Romans, *“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” [Romans 8:26].* This verse clearly shows that the Holy Spirit prays for us (makes intercession) when we do not know what to pray for! God prays to God for us!? Some easily accept this statement as they believe the Holy Spirit is a distinctly separate person from God the Father. It makes sense to them that the Holy Spirit prays to the Father, just as Jesus had prayed to the Father. On the other hand, others struggle with this as they believe the Holy Spirit, God the Father and the Son of God are all the same person as well as the same Spirit.

I realize this chapter may present more questions than answers. I will leave anything that you might think is unanswered to the Holy Spirit and the Words of God we have given thus far. I believe the Truth is here for all to see but I realize many are blinded by what they have been taught. I pray you will allow the Holy Spirit to guide you.

God’s people should not remain divided over a mystery that human reasoning cannot explain. Truthfully, we should not try to explain the unexplainable! I do not believe God is pleased with this as we believe and worship the same Son of God that was given all power in Heaven and in earth.