**Jesus In The Old Testament Before His Humanity**

One of the central doctrines of the Gospel *(the New Testament)*, upon which so much rests, concerns the deity of Jesus Christ, which teaches that Jesus is the Son of God, and, therefore, deity himself. The Gospel teaches it as a fact, and almost seems to take it for granted, that the Lord Jesus Christ actively existed as far back as creation—in fact before creation [Joh 17:5]—and that it was, in fact, through Jesus Christ that God the Father created all things [Joh 1:1-3; Col 1:16-17; Heb 1:2-3].

Now, since the doctrines of the Lord Jesus and the apostles were consistent with and drawn from the OT Scriptures [Rom 16:25-26], this doctrine regarding the active existence of Christ from before the creation of the world is contained and was drawn from the OT. For this reason and since Jesus himself said that “the Scriptures… testify about me…” [Joh 5:39], we must be able to find and identify *pre-incarnate*Jesus in *action in*the OT as taught by the NT. *At the end, though it was the NT that introduced us to this doctrine, we must be able to teach it solely from the OT*.

As central as this doctrine is, teaching from the OT is a real challenge.

**HOW DO WE FIND JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT?**

There are two basic means of discovering Jesus before his humanity, these are

1. Through the identification of the Messiah as Yahweh in the scriptures.

*We know that Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in the OT. There are, however, some of these prophecies that identify the Messiah as, not just human, but as deity.*

1. Through Jesus’ self-identification as Yahweh who appeared to Abraham in the company of two angels and gave him the promise regarding the birth of Isaac.

*The Lord Jesus positively identified himself as Yahweh who appeared to Abraham.*

**A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION OF “YAHWEH” IN SCRIPTURES**

It is quite important to this study to know that there is a difference between “**LORD**” *(all capital letters/uppercase)* and “**Lord**” *(sentence)* when applied to God in the OT as it appears in most of our English translations. Take not that though both words have the very same spelling one is in capital letters (uppercase) while the other is not.

The word translated “LORD” is “Jehovah” *(also called Yahweh)*. Jehovah*(or Yahweh)* is God’s Name, this is what He told Moses at the burning bush [Exo 3:16]. This Name belongs to God alone.

The word translated “Lord”, on the other hand, is either “Adonai” or “Adon”, which simply means lord or master. Unlike Jehovah which only applies to God, Adon is a title applied to God, to angels and to men. Adonai, however, is a title applied only to God and to his angel.

1. Jehovah is called “Adonai”, which is often translated “Lord” [Gen 18:3; Exo 4:10] and “Adon”, also translated lord [Gen 19:2; Exo 34:23; Deu 10:17; Psa 8:1; Isa 3:1]
2. Angels are called “Adon” [Jos 5:14; Dan 10:16-17]. Lot called them *“Adonai”* [Gen 19:18]
3. Men are called *mostly “Adon”*[Gen 18:12*Sarah called Abraham her ‘Adon’*; Gen 31:35 *Rachael called her father ‘Adon’*; Gen 32:4 *Jacob called his brother Esau ‘Adon’ and referred to himself as his servant*; Gen 42:10; 44:9,19 *Joseph’s brothers called him their ‘Adon’ and referred to themselves as his servant*; Exo 32:22 *Aaron called Moses ‘Adon’*]

**THE MESSIAH AS YAHWEH IN SCRIPTURES**

The scriptures reveal the Messiah to not only be a man, the fleshly descendant of King David, but Yahweh himself and since the Lord Jesus is the Messiah, i.e., the Christ, prophesied in Scriptures, he is Yahweh.

**SOME SCRIPTURES SHOWING MESSIAH TO BE YAHWEH**

1. In Psalm 45, the Messiah is described both as a man [Psa 45:1-2] and as God [Psa 45:6-7].
2. In Micah 2:13, the Messiah, the King of Israel, is called Yahweh. In this prophecy,
   1. the Messiah, the King of Israel is Yahweh and
   2. Micah tells us that he would be the first to rise from the dead—“Their king will pass through before them, Yahweh at their head”.
   3. This prophecy also tells us that the resurrection of the Messiah/Yahweh from the dead will be what will make the resurrection of the others possible—he will break open the way and will go up before them.
3. The prophet Zechariah in Zec 12:10 prophesies that the messiah will be pierced. Quite significantly, Yahweh identifies himself as the Messiah who was to be pierced. Interestingly, this is not the only prophecy where it is prophesied that the Messiah would be pierced, see also Psa 22:16; 40:6. Therefore, when Yahweh identifies himself as the one who is pierced, we can be certain he is identifying himself as the Messiah.
4. Isaiah, along with other passages of scriptures, also identifies the Messiah as the “Arm of Yahweh” [Isa 53:1] and as the “Right Hand of Yahweh”. Although, in scriptures, these titles can also represent the power of God, they actually represent a particular office.

**JESUS AS THE ARM AND RIGHT HAND OF GOD**

The title, “Right Hand of God/Yahweh” implies that he is seated at the right hand of God. That is, his relationship to God is equivalent to that of Joseph to Pharaoh [Gen 41:44; 44:18], or Mordecai to Xerxes [Est 10:3]. This in practice means that he exercises the full authority of God and has all authority to act in His Name.

There is so much more to be said in particular about Jesus being the right hand of God, but there is no space here. However, we may note the fact that, although it would seem from Psa 110:1 and Mar 16:19 that the Messiah began to sit at the right hand of God after his death, resurrection and ascension, this is only true with regard to his humanity. The truth is that, the fact that he bore these titles before his humanity means that, even before becoming human, he was seated at the right hand of God. It gives an insight into the relationship between Jesus and God his and our Father.

**A VERY FEW FACTS ABOUT THE ARM AN RIGHT HAND OF YAHWEH**

1. Yahweh’s Right Hand, the Messiah, Created the world [Psa 88:6-13; Isa 48:13; Job 26:13; Isa 45:12; 48:13; Jer 27:5; 32:17; Zec 12:1]
2. Yahweh delivers; he saves those who trust in him by his Right Hand [Psa 17:7; 20:6; 60:5]
3. The gospel and message of the prophets is about the Arm of Yahweh [Isa 53:1]

**JESUS’ SELF-IDENTIFICATION**

51Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.   
52Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?   
54Jesus answered… 56Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it,* and was glad.   
57Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?   
58Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. [Joh 8:51-58 KJV]

Jesus’ word that anyone who kept his word would never see death meant that he was greater than Abraham. This was unthinkable for the Jews and so they asked Jesus, “Art thou greater than our father Abraham…?” [Joh 8:53 KJV]. To this Jesus answered, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” [Joh 8:56 KJV]

From the verses that follow [Joh 8:57-58], it is very certain that this had all happened in the past, in the days of Abraham. Now, whatever Jesus was telling the Jews, especially since they did not believe in him, had to be something they could verify from the then present facts or from scriptures. Therefore, though Jesus had the experience first-hand, whatever Jesus was referring to had to be an event recorded in the Scriptures. So, where do we find such a story about Abraham in scriptures where

**IMPORTANT FACTS FROM JESUS’ STATEMENT**

* Abraham was given a word, a promise that someone *(he wouldn’t be called Christ in the story)* would visit him on a certain day
* On this day of visitation, something was to take place which Abraham desired. His rejoicing is not simply that he would see this person *(keep in mind that Jesus was proving his greatness and rejoicing to meet someone does not mean he is greater than you)*
* The promise was fulfilled
* Abraham saw the day *(please, this is not a vision)*and
* That which Abraham desired and which was promised him was fulfilled and Abraham was glad?

Now, what event in Abraham’s life has all of these?

**THE EVENT JESUS WAS REFERRING TO**

Quite interestingly, there is only one story in the record of the life of Abraham that matches all of the above, no other comes even close. This story is contained in Gen 18.

In this story, Yahweh appeared to Abraham in the company of two angels [Gen 18:1-2]. In this story, Yahweh

1. Promised to return [Gen 18:10] and
2. Promised that when he returned, Isaac would be born to Sarah [Gen 18:10]

Now let us consider the facts and see that this is the event the Lord Jesus was referring to.

**THE FACTS**

1. Abraham expressly desired to have children [Gen 15:3-4]. Quite significantly, this is the only promise made to Abraham in his lifetime which he expressly desired, and which was fulfilled to him in his lifetime. This is the only major request that Abraham ever made of Yahweh that we ever really read about.
2. Yahweh promised him the birth of a child, Isaac, through whom Abraham would have many children [Gen 15:4-5; 17:15-19].
3. Abraham was evidently happy at the promise [Gen 17:17]
4. Yahweh, appearing to Abraham in the company of two angels, promised to visit Abraham in the coming year and that on the day of his visit, the promised child, Isaac, would be born to Abraham [Gen 18:10]. If Abraham was happy the first time he heard the promise, he certainly was the second time.
5. Finally, the scriptures states that Yahweh visited as he had promised [Gen 21:1-2]. We may note here that the visit of Yahweh does not mean that he physically returned, see some passages that demonstrate this fact [Exo 3:16; 4:31; 1Sa 2:21 KJV].

We see certainly, that this was what Jesus had in mind.

1. Abraham was looked forward to a certain day which Jesus called “my day” because Yahweh had informed him that he would return.
2. Abraham looked forward to this day with joy, he rejoiced to see it, because, according to Yahweh’s promise, on this day, his long-desired son, Isaac, would be born.
3. Jesus said Abraham “saw it and was glad” because the promise was indeed fulfilled [Gen 21:1-2 KJV]—Yahweh visited Sarah and she had the promised son.

**JESUS IS THE YAHWEH WHO VISITED ABRAHAM**

The one in this story whom Jesus identified as himself is the one who gave Abraham the word and the one who promised to visit Abraham. In this story, it is Yahweh, and not any of the angels that came with him that made the promise. Therefore, it is very certain that the one who is Yahweh in this story is the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus referred to the day of Yahweh’s visitation to which Abraham was looking forward with joy as “my day”. This means that Yahweh, whose return Abraham was joyfully looking forward to, is in fact the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, it is very important to note that although all three—Yahweh and the two angels that came with him—spoke at times [Gen 18:5,9], it was only Yahweh who spoke the promises [Gen 18:10]. Therefore, since it was Yahweh, and not any of the two angels, that promised to return, it is clear that Jesus is identifying himself as Yahweh who made promise to Abraham.

Since Yahweh is the one who promised to return, and since it was Christ’s day *of visitation*—“my day”—that Abraham was looking forward to, it is quite certain that the one among the three who is the Lord Jesus is Yahweh, the one who made the promise.

**FURTHER CONFIRMATION**

Jesus in his encounter with the Jews, recorded in Joh 8, described Abraham belief the word given to him and treating the man who brought the word to him with honour [Joh 8:39-40], unlike the Jews who did not believe Jesus and for this reason sought to kill him. If we ask to which event Jesus was referring when he said this, it becomes very clear that the event he had in mind is that which is recorded in Gen 18.

Nowhere in the account of Abraham’s life as recorded in Scriptures does he receive any word from any man, rather, he received all his word from God. The only occasion where Abraham received a word from God through a man is that recorded in Gen 18 where Yahweh appeared to him as a man. Abraham believed the word and indeed treated Yahweh who appeared to him with honour.

Indeed, Abraham honoured Yahweh.

1. Abraham bowed low to the ground before him [Gen 18:2]
2. Abraham pleaded with him not to pass by but to allow him to entertain him and wash their feet [Gen 18:3-5]
3. Abraham hurried to entertain him and the two angels that came with him [Gen 18:6-8].
4. Like a servant waiting on his master, Abraham stood by Yahweh and the two angels that came with him as they ate [Gen 18:8]. Abraham personally waited on Yahweh, he didn’t give the job to any of his servants.

Therefore, we can see again that the event Jesus had in mind all through Joh 8 was the event recorded in Gen 18.

**THE IDENTITY OF THE LORD JESUS FROM THIS STORY**

The one Jesus identified as himself is in this story called

1. **Yahweh** by the author of Genesis [Gen 18:1,10,13-14,17,22,26,] and
2. **The Judge of All the Earth** by Abraham [Gen 18:25].

*(To be a judge in scriptures you have to be lord—you cannot judge those over whom you have no appropriate authority. Therefore, “Judge of All the Earth” can also be correctly restated as “Lord of All the Earth”.)*

**FACTS DRAWN FROM JESUS’ SELF-IDENTIFICATION**

The following are facts that result from the identification of Jesus as Yahweh, Judge of All the Earth

1. Jesus has always been the Judge of All the Earth [Gen 18:25]
   1. The affairs *and fate*of the earth have always been under his charge.
   2. He has authority to judge, to decide who lives and who dies. He decided on the spot the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah at the intercession of Abraham [Gen 18:23-32]
2. Jesus was the one who chose Abraham [Gen 18:19].
   1. The fact that Abraham recognized him so easily [Gen 18:1-5] means that this was not their first face to face meeting.
   2. Also, it means that Jesus was the one who had been appearing to Abraham all the while as Yahweh [Gen 12:7; 15:1-2; 17:1]
3. According to Zechariah, Yahweh, the Lord of All the Earth [Zec 4:14]
   1. Is served by two angels which Zechariah called anointed ones [Zec 4:14]. This is in perfect agreement with the fact that Jesus *(Yahweh, Judge of All the Earth)*, in this story came to Abraham in the company of two angels
   2. Owns the seven spirit/eyes of Yahweh that range throughout the earth [Zec 4:10]. Basically, this is how he sees all that is done in all the earth; he knows everything that happens on earth.
4. The Ark of the Covenant is called “the Ark of the Lord of All the Earth” [Jos 3:11,13; 7:6]. This means that the one who was worshiped under the Law of Moses was the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. He is not the only one bearing Yahweh, there is one higher than him *(God the Father)*, who also bears this Name [Gen 18:17-19]. He chose Abraham in service to Yahweh his Father.
   1. This means that he runs the earth according to the Father’s will.
6. He is represented by his angels. Although he said he was going down to Sodom to verify the reports against Sodom [Gen 18:21], he did not personally go but the it was instead the two angels that came with him that went down to Sodom [Gen 18:33; 19:1]. Put another way, his angels’ actions are his actions.

**TRACING HIS STEPS BACKWARDS IN GENESIS**

Following the narrative of Genesis backwards and also, since he is the one in charge of the earth, the following becomes certain,

1. It was the Lord Jesus who divided men into nations [Gen 11:6-9]
2. It was the Lord Jesus who destroyed the earth with a flood but saved Noah and his family [Gen 6:5-8]
3. It was he who judged Cain and drove him away from the land of Eden [Gen 4:10-16]
4. He was the one who walked in the Garden from whom Adam and Eve hid [Gen 3:]
5. He was the one who judged Adam and Eve and the serpent [Gen 3:14-19] and drove them out of the Garden [Gen 3:22-24]
6. He was the one who created man and woman and all the animals and in fact everything [Gen 2:4,7,19,21-22]

**JESUS’ IDENTITY & NAMES BEFORE HIS HUMANITY**

1. Yahweh [Gen 18:1]. *(Yahweh is in many English Bible translated the LORD. That is, Lord all in uppercase, or capital letters)*
2. Judge or Lord of All the Earth [Gen 18:25]
3. Lord Yahweh [Gen 15:2]
4. El-Shaddai, God Almighty [Gen 17:1]
5. God [Gen 17:2]
6. The God of Glory [Act 7:2]
7. Yahweh of Hosts [1Sa 4:4]
8. Yahweh of Hosts that dwelleth between the cherubim [1Sa 4:4; 2Sa 6:2; 2Ki 19:15; Psa 80:1; 99:1]
9. Yahweh Elohim, i.e., LORD God [Gen 2:4-5]

**CONCLUSION**

This knowledge is a key to so much in the scriptures and the Gospel. With this knowledge, we can learn so much more about the Father and our lord Jesus Christ.