



Christophany or Theophany

The definition of a Christophany or Theophany is an appearance of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. Jesus Christ appeared as an angel in Genesis 22:11-18, Genesis 31:11-13, Exodus 3:2, Exodus 13:21, and Exodus 14:19.

"But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." (Genesis 22:11, NASB)

"Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' "He said, 'Lift up now your eyes and see that all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you. 'I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.'"" (Genesis 31:11-13, NASB)

"The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed." (Exodus 3:2, NASB)

"The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night." (Exodus 13:21, NASB)

"The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them." (Exodus 14:19, NASB)

Jesus Christ appeared as a man in Genesis 32:24-29 and wrestled with Jacob. In Genesis 18, He talked with Abraham. In Joshua 5:13-15, Christ is seen with a sword.

"Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was dislocated while he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And he blessed him there." (Genesis 32:24-29, NASB)

"Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?""" (Joshua 5:13, NASB)

Jesus Christ appeared as inanimate objects such as the burning bush in Exodus 3:2-4, the cloud in Exodus 33:9-11, the pillar of fire in Exodus 13:21, and the God of Israel in a cloud in Exodus 24:15-18.

"The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up." When the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am.""" (Exodus 3:2-4, NASB)

"Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and the LORD would speak with Moses. When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent. Thus the



LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.” (Exodus 33:9-11, NASB)

“The LORD was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.” (Exodus 13:21, NASB)

“Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the mountain top. Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.” (Exodus 24:15-18, NASB)

Principles of Christophany

The Angel of Jehovah is Jesus Christ. Gen. 22:11-18.

“But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son. Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.” Then the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son, indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”“ (Genesis 22:11-18, NASB)

Many passages where the Angel of Jehovah is distinct from Jehovah such as Genesis 24:7, Zechariah 1:12-13, and 1 Chronicles 21:15. In such passages, it is very clear that there is a distinction. The Angel of Jehovah is Jesus Christ and Jehovah is God the Father.

““The LORD, the God of heaven, who took me from my father’s house and from the land of my birth, and who spoke to me and who swore to me, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give this land,’ He will send His angel before you, and you will take a wife for my son from there.” (Genesis 24:7, NASB)

“Then the angel of the LORD said, “O LORD of hosts, how long will You have no compassion for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant these seventy years?” The LORD answered the angel who was speaking with me with gracious words, comforting words.” (Zechariah 1:12-13, NASB)

“And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; but as he was about to destroy it, the LORD saw and was sorry over the calamity, and said to the destroying angel, “It is enough; now relax your hand.” And the angel of the LORD was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.” (1 Chronicles 21:15, NASB)

The Angel of Jehovah is the second person of the Trinity. The distinction between the Angel of Jehovah and Jehovah is that the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, is the only visible member of the Trinity. John 1:18; John 6:40; 1 Tim. 6:16.



“No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.” (John 1:18, NASB)

““For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”“ (John 6:40, NASB)

“who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.” (1 Timothy 6:16, NASB)

The voice of the Father was heard in Matthew 3:17. The power of the Holy Spirit was felt in Romans 8:16.

“and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”“ (Matthew 3:17, NASB)

“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,” (Romans 8:16, NASB)

The presence of Jesus Christ was visible when on earth. After the Virgin Birth, the Angel of Jehovah designation is no longer used. The reasons why Melchizedek is not a Christophany is because Melchizedek was a historical person. He was a king and a priest. He was a type of Christ, but not Jesus Christ.

Christophanies or Theophanies are never given formal names. For example, the Angel of Jehovah. Also, they are never mentioned with specific geographic names such as Salem. God is the messenger in a Christophany.

See category on [Theophanies of Jesus Christ](#).

See category on [Jesus Christ, Post-Resurrection Appearances](#).