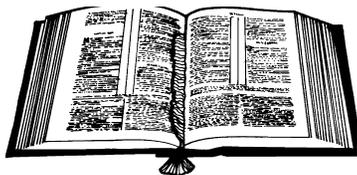


“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...” (John 1:1)
“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD -

Much of the confusion in the erroneous teaching of the pre-existence of Christ is developed around a misunderstanding of the language in the 1st chapter of John. (Verse 1 and 14 shown above are the key verses on this subject.)



“In the beginning was the word.” The “word” in these verses is taken from the Greek “logos”. It means reasoning or motive and indicates that God had a plan in His mind from the beginning, that He would have a son who would become the savior of the human race. This plan was first introduced as words of promise. The first formal promise of the future savior is found in Genesis 3:15, where God told the serpent- *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”*(NRSV)

In the future, this “offspring” of the woman (Eve) would strike the offspring of the serpent on the head, destroying it. As we grow in understanding of the Bible, we learn that the offspring of the serpent was sin and death, the result of the serpent’s lie. We also learn that Jesus would be the promised descendent of Eve, that was destined to destroy the effects of sin. (See also Hebrews 2:14.)

THE WORD MADE FLESH - For the entire Old Testament period these promises of the coming offspring of the woman were revealed only as inspired words in the Holy Scriptures. We are also told that God’s promised son would not be born until a future time. *“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law...”* (Galatians 4:4-5)

When Jesus was born to a virgin named Mary, this promised word finally *became flesh and dwelled among us*. (As recorded in John 1:14) There is no magic in this account, nothing mysterious at all. The word (or plan) was in God’s mind in the beginning. This purpose was so important that it became His entire purpose and being (it was God). He revealed His purpose first through the inspired word, and then when it was time, the plan became a reality when Jesus was born.



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Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.” (Acts 10:38 NRSV)

DID CHRIST EXIST BEFORE HE WAS BORN?

In the natural order of things, this would be a silly question. How could anyone exist before they were born? Unfortunately, when it comes to religious superstition, there are many who teach falsely that Jesus was first God, and then he became a man. This doctrine is referred to as “the pre-existence of Christ.” This is a false teaching that we need to review and clarify because so many have been deceived by it.

The verse in the box at the top presents us with important Bible information that has a bearing on this subject. This anointing of Jesus took place right after he was baptized. We read the story of the baptism of Jesus in Matthew 3:16-17.

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”



JESUS ANOINTED BY GOD

There are many interesting revelations in Acts 10:38 (above) that are worth our consideration:

- If Jesus were God, how could he anoint himself, and continue to be “with him”?
- If the Holy Spirit was a person (as some erroneously teach), how could one person anoint another with a third person?
- The name Christ means “anointed”; Jesus of Nazareth did not become Jesus the Christ (the anointed), -until after the anointing occurred. How then could Christ pre-exist?

Other relative questions:

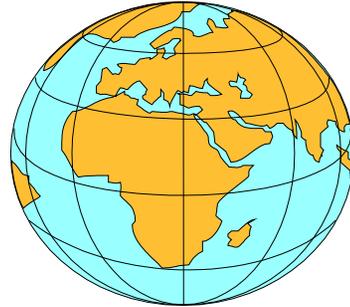
- How could a son be alive before his mother and still be her offspring?
- How could Jesus be the descendent of Abraham and David if he was born before they were?

“And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.” (Hebrews 1:6)

The Angels at the Creation of the World

If we study the account of the Creation in the first few chapters of Genesis, we will learn that the “elohim” (translated “God” in the Authorized Version of the Bible) assisted the Lord God with the work of the creation. These “elohim” are what we call the angels.

We read, for example, in Genesis 1:26, “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.”



The words “us” and “our” in this verse demonstrate clearly that the one true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, was not speaking. The use of plural terms teaches us that the “elohim” (the angels) were agents that carried out the work of the creation, using God’s power and under His direction.

This information is somewhat incidental to our theme, (that Christ did not pre-exist before his birth in about 4 BC). it does however, provide support for the Bible teaching on the origins of Christ. The verse from Hebrews 1:6, as quoted above, speaks about all of the angels of God worshiping at the birth of Jesus. In fact, we find evidence that this actually came to pass in the Gospel of Luke:

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” (Luke 1:10-14)

The point to all of this is simple. If Christ existed in the beginning with God, he would have been alive before the angels. They would not have been able to worship him at his birth. The evidence shows otherwise, 4000 years after the Creation, they did sing praises when Jesus was born. The angels of God were alive and working, long before Jesus was born or anointed as the Christ. We learn from this evidence that our Bible teachings must be always consistent with the Bible record. Isaiah wisely proclaimed:

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” (Isaiah 8:20)

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” (Colossians 1:15)

Christ, the Firstborn

As we consider the verse above, from Colossians 1, we are at first inclined to think there must be a contradiction, when compared to our conclusions on the opposite page. This is a classic example of how important it is for us to consider the entire context as we study the Bible on any important subject.

Too often, people read isolated verses and they fail to consider who is speaking, who they are speaking to and what the circumstances are. In this case, the Apostle Paul is writing to the saints in the church of the Colossians. He is reminding them how blessed they are to be in Christ Jesus and to be “partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” (Verse 12)

To understand what he meant when he wrote of Christ as the firstborn of every creature, we need to read all of the surrounding text. In particular, we should look at verses 17 and 18 in this first chapter.

“And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

These words are self explanatory and they are consistent with other verses, such as the prophecy in Psalm 89:27. This tells about an event that was still future when the Psalms were recorded. “Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.”

Yes, Jesus the Christ **became** the firstborn from the dead. We read also, “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” (1 Corinthians 15:20) He is the firstborn and the firstfruits of a new creation– called a “new and living way” in Hebrews 10:20. (This is also called a new heaven and a new earth in Revelation 21.)

Christ is the “head of the body, the church”. Consequently, it can also be said of him that he is the creator of this new and living way. It was his life of obedience to the Father’s will and his faithful sacrifice that laid the foundation stone for his spiritual temple, the body of believers. He is also said to be the “author and finisher of our faith” in Hebrews 12:2. (Compare Revelation 1:8,) All of these terms of praise and exaltation are appropriate for Jesus the Christ, our Lord and Master in the new creation. Jesus is the author, the Lord, the creator of this new order of things.

“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.” (Colossians 1:6)

When we read that Jesus “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature”, let us be sure we read the entire context, comparing it with “all Scripture”. We can only conclude that Christ was the firstborn in a new creation; he was not born before the foundation of the world in Eden.