John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Colossians 1:15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Week 9 – Jesus Christ in the Old Testament

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Whether we knew it before or not, the first reference to Jesus in the Bible is Genesis 1:1.

Jesus is God, Jesus is Divine. He has always had a predominate role in the course of the Earth and humanity.

The Old Testament is a collection of works (prophecies) pointing toward the Word becoming flesh and "dwelling amongst us."

Prophecies About Jesus in the Old Testament

The books of the Old Testament contain many passages about the Messiah—all prophecies Jesus Christ fulfilled. For instance, the crucifixion of Jesus was foretold in Psalm 22:16-18 approximately 1,000 years before Christ was born, long before this method of execution was even practiced.

Some Bible scholars suggest there are more than 300 prophetic Scriptures completed in the life of Jesus.

Although this list is not exhaustive, you'll find 44 messianic predictions clearly fulfilled in Jesus Christ, along with supporting references from the Old and New Testament.[1]

44 Prophecies Jesus Christ Fulfilled			
	Prophecies About Jesus	**Old Testament Scripture**	**New Testament Fulfillment**
1	Messiah would be born of a woman.	Genesis 3:15	Matthew 1:20 Galatians 4:4
2	Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.	Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:1 Luke 2:4-6
3	Messiah would be born of a virgin.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:22-23 Luke 1:26-31
4	Messiah would come from the line of Abraham.	Genesis 12:3 Genesis 22:18	Matthew 1:1 Romans 9:5
5	Messiah would be a descendant of Isaac.	Genesis 17:19 Genesis 21:12	Luke 3:34
6	Messiah would be a descendant of Jacob.	Numbers 24:17	Matthew 1:2
7	Messiah would come from the tribe of Judah.	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Hebrews 7:14
8	Messiah would be heir to King David's throne.	2 Samuel 7:12-13 Isaiah 9:7	Luke 1:32-33 Romans 1:3
9	Messiah's throne will be anointed and eternal.	Psalm 45:6-7 Daniel 2:44	Luke 1:33 Hebrews 1:8-12
10	Messiah would be called Immanuel.	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23
11	Messiah would spend a season in Egypt.	Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:14-15
12	A massacre of children would happen at Messiah's birthplace.	Jeremiah 31:15	Matthew 2:16-18
13	A messenger would prepare the way for Messiah	Isaiah 40:3-5	Luke 3:3-6
14	Messiah would be rejected by his own people.	Psalm 69:8 Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11 John 7:5
15	Messiah would be a prophet.	Deuteronomy 18:15	Acts 3:20-22
16	Messiah would be preceded by Elijah.	Malachi 4:5-6	Matthew 11:13-14
17	Messiah would be declared the Son of God.	Psalm 2:7	Matthew 3:16-17
18	Messiah would be called a Nazarene.	Isaiah 11:1	Matthew 2:23
19	Messiah would bring light to Galilee.	Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:13-16
20	Messiah would speak in parables.	Psalm 78:2-4 Isaiah 6:9-10	Matthew 13:10-15, 34-35
21	Messiah would be sent to heal the brokenhearted.	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
22	Messiah would be a priest after the order of Melchizedek.	Psalm 110:4	Hebrews 5:5-6
23	Messiah would be called King.	Psalm 2:6 Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 27:37 Mark 11:7-11
24	Messiah would be praised by little children.	Psalm 8:2	Matthew 21:16
25	Messiah would be betrayed.	Psalm 41:9 Zechariah 11:12-13	Luke 22:47-48 Matthew 26:14-16

26	Messiah's price money would be used to buy a potter's field.	Zechariah 11:12-13	Matthew 27:9-10
27	Messiah would be falsely accused.	Psalm 35:11	Mark 14:57-58
28	Messiah would be silent before his accusers.	Isaiah 53:7	Mark 15:4-5
29	Messiah would be spat upon and struck.	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
30	Messiah would be hated without cause.	Psalm 35:19 Psalm 69:4	John 15:24-25
31	Messiah would be crucified with criminals.	Isaiah 53:12	Matthew 27:38 Mark 15:27-28
32	Messiah would be given vinegar to drink.	Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34 John 19:28-30
33	Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced.	Psalm 22:16 Zechariah 12:10	John 20:25-27
34	Messiah would be mocked and ridiculed.	Psalm 22:7-8	Luke 23:35
35	Soldiers would gamble for Messiah's garments.	Psalm 22:18	Luke 23:34 Matthew 27:35-36
36	Messiah's bones would not be broken.	Exodus 12:46 Psalm 34:20	John 19:33-36
37	Messiah would be forsaken by God.	Psalm 22:1	Matthew 27:46
38	Messiah would pray for his enemies.	Psalm 109:4	Luke 23:34
39	Soldiers would pierce Messiah's side.	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
40	Messiah would be buried with the rich.	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
41	Messiah would resurrect from the dead.	Psalm 16:10 Psalm 49:15	Matthew 28:2-7 Acts 2:22-32
42	Messiah would ascend to heaven.	Psalm 24:7-10	Mark 16:19 Luke 24:51
43	Messiah would be seated at God's right hand.	Psalm 68:18 Psalm 110:1	Mark 16:19 Matthew 22:44
44	Messiah would be a sacrifice for sin.	Isaiah 53:5-12	Romans 5:6-8

The Probability of Jesus Fulfilling These Prophecies

Professor Emeritus of Science at Westmont College, Peter Stoner, has calculated the probability of one man fulfilling the major prophecies made concerning the Messiah. The estimates were worked out by twelve different classes representing some 600 university students.

The students carefully weighed all the factors, discussed each prophecy at length, and examined the various circumstances which might indicate that men had conspired together to fulfill a particular prophecy. They made their estimates conservative enough so that there was finally unanimous agreement even among the most skeptical students.

However Professor Stoner then took their estimates, and made them even more conservative. He also encouraged other skeptics or scientists to make their own estimates to see if his conclusions were more than fair. Finally, he submitted his figures for review to a committee of the American Scientific Affiliation. Upon examination, they verified that his calculations were

dependable and accurate in regard to the scientific material presented (Peter Stoner, Science Speaks, Chicago: Moody Press, 1969, 4).

Concerning Micah 5:2, where it states the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem Ephrathah, Stoner and his students determined the average population of BETHLEHEM from the time of Micah to the present; then they divided it by the average population of the earth during the same period.

They concluded that the chance of one man being born in Bethlehem was one in 300,000, (or one in 2.8×10^5 - rounded),

After examining only eight different prophecies, they conservatively estimated that the chance of one man fulfilling all eight prophecies was one in 10^{17}.

To illustrate how large the number 10^{17} IS (a figure with 17 zeros), Stoner gave this illustration. If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten. Suppose that we take 10^{17} silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They'll cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would've had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote them in their own wisdom .[2]

The Physical Appearances of Christ in the Old Testament

the·oph·a·ny [thee-of-uh-nee] noun, plural the·oph·a·nies.
a manifestation or appearance of God or a god to a person.

1. Genesis 14:17-20 (Hebrews 5:6; 7:1-8) - Jesus is called Melchizedek, priest, man, Son of God. He blessed Abraham.
    a. 2 reasons why some say Melchizedek was not Christ:
        1. Hebrews 7:3,15 - made like unto the Son of God (Daniel 3:25)
        2. Hebrews 7:4 - called a man (Genesis 18:1-2; 32:24; Joshua 5:13)
    b. 5 reasons why some say Melchizedek was Christ:
        1. called priest of the most high God (before the Law was given) - Hebrews 7:1
        2. called a priest forever (like Jesus) - Hebrews 5:6; 7:3,17,21
        3. called "king of Salem" (peace) - Isaiah 9:6; Ephesians 2:14; Hebrews 7:1-2
        4. called "king of Righteousness" - Romans 10:1-4; Hebrews 7:2
        5. without genealogy (Eternal One) - Hebrews 7:3

2. Genesis 16:7-13
(called *angel of the Lord* - blessed Hagar)
3. Genesis 18:1-14
(called Lord, man - blessed Abraham)
4. Genesis 32:24-30 (Hosea 12:2-5)
(called man, God, angel - blessed Jacob)
5. Numbers 22:22-35
(called *angel of the Lord* - warned Balaam)
6. Joshua 5:13-15
(called man - fought for Joshua & Israel)
7. Judges 2:1-4
(called *angel of the Lord* - rebuked Joshua & Israel)
8. Judges 6:11-22
(called *angel of the Lord, Lord* - fought for Gideon & Israel)
9. Judges 13:1-22
(called *angel of the Lord, God, man* - raised up Samson for Israel)
10. 2nd Samuel 24:13-17; 1st Chronicles 21:12-18; 2nd Chronicles 3:1
(called *angel of the Lord, Lord, angel* - chastened king David & Israel
11. 1st Kings 19:1-7
(called *angel of the Lord, angel* - strengthened Elijah)
12. Daniel 3:23-28 (Hebrews 7:3)
(called *Son of God, angel* - protected Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego)
13. Zechariah 1:7-19; 2:1-3; 3:1-6; 4:1-5; 5:5-10; and 6:4,5
(called *angel of the Lord, angel, man* - revealed truth to Zechariah)

A. The Personal Appearances of Christ in the Old Testament

1. Genesis 21:17,18
(called *angel of God* - cared for Hagar)
2. Genesis 22:11-18
(called *angel of the Lord* - blessed Abraham)
3. Genesis 28:13-16
(called *Lord* - blessed Jacob)
4. Genesis 31:11-13
(called *angel of God* - instructs Jacob)

5. Exodus 3:1,2 (John 8:58 and Acts 7:30-33)
   (called *angel of the Lord* - instructs Moses)
6. Exodus 13:21 (Exodus 23:20-23)
   (called *Lord* - leads and protects Israel)
7. Exodus 14:19
   (called *angel of God* - leads and protects Israel)
8. 2nd Kings 1:3,15
   (called *angel of the Lord* - protected Elijah)
9. 2nd Kings 19:35 (2nd Chronicles 32:21; Isaiah 37:36)
   (called *angel of the Lord* - Zechariah 1:11,12; 3:1,5,6; 12:8)
10. Daniel 6:22 (Numbers 20:16 and Isaiah 63:9 and Daniel 3:28)
    (called *angel* - protected Daniel)

B. The Personal References of Christ in the Old Testament

1. Genesis 24:7,40
   (called *angel* - Abraham instructs servant)
2. Genesis 48:16
   (called *angel* - Jacob recalls Genesis 32:24-30)
3. Exodus 23:20-23; 32:34; 33:2 (Numbers 20:16)
   (called *angel* - Exodus 13:21; 14:19; Isaiah 63:9)
4. Numbers 20:16
   (called *angel* - Exodus 13:21; 14:19; Isaiah 63:9)
5. Judges 5:23
   (called *angel of the Lord* - Judges 2:1,4; 6:11,12,21,22; 13:3,13,15, 16-18,20,21)
6. Psalms 34:7; 35:5,6
   (called *angel of the Lord*)
7. Isaiah 63:9
   (called *angel of his presence* - Exodus 23:20-23)
8. Hosea 12:4
   (called *angel* - Genesis 32:24-30)
9. Zechariah 12:8
   (called *angel of the Lord* - Zechariah 1:11,12; 3:1,5,6; 12:8)
10. Ecclesiastes 5:6
    (called *angel*)[3]

The Angel of the Lord

While angels have occasionally performed some of these actions, such as miracles and prophecy, there are clear examples when “the Angel of the Lord” cannot be viewed as a normal angel.

He is occasionally identified as God, accepted worship, and at least two people who saw Him thought they would die for seeing Him face to face. These same attributes and activities are clearly attributed to God elsewhere in Scripture.

There are a few other statements to consider. In Zechariah 3:1–2, “the Angel of the Lord” is distinguished from Yahweh because He talks to Yahweh.

John 1:18 states, “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.” So man has only seen the Son of God, not the Father or the Holy Spirit.

Also, the “Commander of the army of the Lord” (Joshua 5:14) is likely the same individual as “the Angel of the Lord.” Joshua saw this “Commander” holding a sword, and He accepted Joshua’s worship, something the holy angels refuse to do (Revelation 19:10, 22:8–9).

Finally, “the Angel of the Lord” does not make any appearances after the birth of Christ in the New Testament, although the risen Jesus did appear to Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1–6; 22:6–10; 26:14–19; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8).

These truths have led many students of Scripture to conclude that “the Angel of the Lord” in the Old Testament is none other than Christ Himself.

He is called God, given attributes of God, seen by people, worshiped, and distinguished from the Father and Spirit.

So rather than undermining the uniqueness and importance of Christ, theophanies affirm the uniqueness of Jesus. They also show the intimacy of God with His creation, unlike the distant god of deism that some people incorrectly associate with the God of the Bible.

The appearances of Christ in the Old Testament confirm the fact that He existed prior to the Incarnation, just as He plainly stated:

John 8: 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.” 57 So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?”[d] 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” 59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

The fact that Jesus is the Creator also demonstrates His existence prior to His first advent (John 1:1–3; Colossians 1:16).

Why Did Christ Appear in the Old Testament?

If God could just spontaneously appear in human form, why did Jesus go through the whole process of virgin birth and childhood etc?

There are several reasons why Jesus went through this process.

He did it to fulfill prophecy.

> *Genesis 3:15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."*
>
> *Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

He also came in the flesh so that He could sympathize with humanity.

> *Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.*

Of course, one of the major reasons Jesus became a man was to save us from our sins.

> *Hebrews 10: 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*

This chapter goes on to reveal that the Levitical priests repeatedly offered the same sacrifices that could never take away our sins. Instead, these sacrifices served to cover the sins of the people.

In order for our sins to be removed (i.e., forgiven), we needed the blood of a perfect man.

By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

> *Hebrews 10:10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*
>
> *Hebrews 10:12 But when Christ[a] had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, 13 waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. 14 For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.*

By being conceived in Mary, Jesus took on human flesh … As a literal descendant of Adam, Jesus could be the perfect sacrifice for the sons of Adam. He died, was buried, and bodily rose from the dead in fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

He died and rose again to give life to those who are descendants of Adam (the one who brought sin and death into the world) and who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

1 Corinthians 15:21 For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Not only was He one of us, but also Jesus perfectly fulfilled the Law and offered Himself as a lamb without blemish.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our[a] conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

1 Peter 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

By living a sinless life, He also provided the perfect example of obedience for us to follow. And by His perfect life and death in the flesh, He broke the power of Satan.

Hebrews 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

And how would Abraham have known that the man he was speaking to was God? Why would God appear in human form anyway?

By the time of Genesis 18, God had already appeared to Abraham on at least two occasions (Genesis 12:7, 17:1) and spoken to him in some way several other times (Genesis 12:1; 13:14; 15:1).

It is reasonable to conclude that in Genesis 18 God appeared in the same form as before so that Abraham would recognize Him. Indeed, when he saw the Lord and the other two “men” (angels), Abraham ran out to Him and bowed down.

Of course, this pushes the question back to an earlier time. How did Abram (Abraham) recognize God the first time He appeared to him?

The Bible does not tell us this, but based on the many other theophanies discussed earlier, we know that the person usually recognized “the Angel of the Lord” soon after seeing Him.

The very first theophany may have occurred when God pronounced the Curse.

> *Genesis 3: 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

The implication is that God appeared in physical form since they heard Him walking in the garden prior to confronting Adam and Eve.

Throughout Scripture, God conveyed His message to man through various means. He gave Joseph, Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar dreams that foretold future events.

He also used visions to communicate with Daniel, Ezekiel, John, and others. In many places, we are simply told that “God said” or “the word of the Lord came to” a certain individual. In these instances, it is possible that a theophany took place and God spoke face to face with the individual. It is also possible that God audibly communicated with people without physically appearing to them, as was apparently the case with Elijah when God used “a still small voice” to speak to His prophet (1 Kings 19:12–13).

Of course, without the Bible specifically telling us if God took on the appearance of a man to speak with people, we can only speculate. Regardless of why God chose this method at times, we know that He effectively communicated His message to the recipient when He appeared.

Angels

And if angels could appear in human form, does that not blur the line between angels and humans? What is the significance of being a human, a descendant of Adam, when angels seem to be able to take on our form spontaneously?

> *Hebrews 13:2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

Some commentators link this passage to Abraham in Genesis 18; however, Abraham did not “unwittingly” entertain angels. He was fully aware that at least one of his guests was supernatural. There were others in the Bible who seemed to have been unaware that they were entertaining angels or “the Angel of the Lord” (e.g., Lot in Genesis 19:1–2; Gideon in Judges 6:11–24).

You may view these incidents as blurring the line between humans and angels, but there are clear distinctions.

- Angels are spiritual beings (Hebrews 1:13–14), while humans have flesh and bones along with a spiritual component (Luke 24:39; Acts 17:16).

- Angels, at least some of them, can take on human form, but humans are incapable of taking on an angelic form.

- Hebrews quotes Psalm 8:4–6, which reveals that man has been made "lower than the angels." Angels are certainly more powerful than humans and are aware of many things that we don't know.

However, there are some ways in which man has the advantage over angels.

> *1 Peter 1:12 It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.*

In fact, only humans can receive salvation because Jesus became a descendant of Adam and only descendants of Adam can be saved.

Jesus didn't take on the nature of angels to die for them (Hebrews 2:16).

So even though an angel may be able to take on the form of a man through some supernatural ability or power, an angel cannot actually become a descendant of Adam.

Rebellious angels cannot be saved, but rebellious humans can be saved if they repent of their sins and place their faith in Christ alone to save them.

The Bible also tells us that Satan and many of these rebellious angels are engaged in efforts to deceive humanity (Ephesians 6:10–13; 2 Corinthians 11:14–15), so we must exercise discernment and "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1–3; Galatians 1:6–9) to determine whether or not the messages we hear are in line with Scripture—especially the gospel.

Remembering that we are actually in a spiritual battle with masters of deception should cause us to be even more diligent in studying the Scriptures to make sure we are following the one true Christ instead of "false christs" (Matthew 24:24).[4]

Things to Mull

1. Is it important for us to understand that Jesus was active and involved in the Old Testament? Why?

2. Why did God have so many prophetic words proclaimed about Jesus birth, life, death, and resurrection?

3. (Read Exodus 3:1-6) Why would the Lord be called the Angel of the Lord?

4. Why did God use a theophany of Jesus to give Abraham the prophetic word about the birth of Isaac instead of using a prophet?

5. Does Jesus still show up as an angel to speak to people today?

6. How does God speak to people today?

7. What should we do if an angel appears to us with a message?
   (1 John 4:1-6)

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