

His Eternal Pre-Existence

Loving Our Magnificent, Invincible Savior

Jesus didn't suddenly appear on the scene with His birth at Bethlehem. That was when He came to earth as one of us to play the central role in our redemption. But He wasn't waiting in the wings rehearsing His lines! What was the Son of God doing before He became the Son of Man? The clues are scattered across the pages of the Bible like stardust in the heavens.

In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself. John 1:1 AMP

Before the Incarnation

Jesus is the Eternal Son of God, having been in existence since before time began. Everything we might know to say about God will be true of Him, if it is true of God. But it is not that simple. His descent to earth changed everything. During His Incarnation He took a break from being God, set His divine attributes aside, and became fully human for 33 years. Now, post-Resurrection, He is right back on "the job" of ruling over the universe with the Father and the Holy Spirit, but with a crazy twist: He is still united to our humanity, having become forever the God-Man. That's going to take some explaining!



There's always more to Jesus than meets the eye, even well-schooled eyes of faith. For now, however, the question before us concerns His life before the Incarnation, specifically in His relationship to Israel.

The extraordinary truth about Jesus' pre-existence is that He didn't just drop in us "out of the blue" when He showed up in Mary's womb, as if He had only been God at a distance up until then. No, He had been intimately involved with Israel from the beginning. There is a natural tendency to suppose that God the Father was "single-handedly" dealing with Israel, keeping Jesus "off stage" waiting for His entrance as Messiah. Seen in this (mistaken) light, all references to God and all appearances and utterances of God in the Hebrew Scriptures are attributed to the Father. But that's not what the gospel tells us.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. John 1:9-11 ESV

This one statement by John makes it clear that—all along—Jesus had been creating, sustaining and redeeming the world, humanity, and Israel especially: "He came to His own." For sheer pathos there is nothing to match this: Jesus was the national God of Israel! He came to them visibly and in Person, yet they didn't recognize the One who led them out of slavery, across the Red Sea, into the Promised Land and back from Captivity. He spoke to them through prophets,

signs and wonders. Yet, "his own people did not receive him." And worse, they put their own God to death on the cross. We share in that of course—Jesus died for our sins as well—but Israel's tragic blindness shows us how hard it can be to "see" the Lord when He visits us.

Jesus, the Great "I AM"

To open our eyes better, let's review seven monumental sayings of Jesus by which He was trying to open Israel's eyes to who He was (and forever is): the seven "I AM" sayings recorded in the gospel of John. These provocative statements were intentional allusions to the greatest "I AM" statement of all time, the self-revelation of God as He spoke to Moses from out of the burning bush. Unquestionably, Jesus desired to open His listeners' blinded eyes to see Him who was speaking to them as the same One who spoke to Moses then.

God said to Moses, "I am who I am." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel, 'I am has sent me to you.'" ...This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations. Exodus 3:14-15 ESV

The meaning of "I AM" as a name for God is a vast subject in itself, but in essence it means "I will become what I choose to become" and is, therefore, a statement of God's eternal and utter self-existence and uniqueness, His absolute independence from and sovereignty over everything He created. By this we can see that for Jesus to say "I AM" to Biblically educated, believing Jews was "shock therapy." But for us it also opens a window into His activity prior to the Incarnation: what Jesus says He is in the present shows us what He has always been, even though Israel "did not receive Him."

"Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from before your birth, carried from the womb; even to your old age I am he, and to gray hairs I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save." Isaiah 46:3-4 ESV

Seven "I AM" Statements in John

1. The Bread of Life

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." John 6:35 ESV

As a staff gave power to a man, so the ancients called bread the staff of life, for it gave everyone the strength each day required. Just as Jesus gave the Israelites their daily manna in the wilderness, so too, He gave them (and us) their daily words of heart strengthening encouragement and guidance. We "feed" on His every Word.

And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Deuteronomy 8:3 ESV



2. The Light of the World

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12 ESV

In the beginning of creation, Jesus radiated forth the light that God gave to banish the primordial darkness. Jesus was with Israel in the cloud of glory and the fiery pillar, leading them as they came out of Egypt. His wisdom was there to enlighten their understanding all along the way. He has been enlightening our darkness ever since.

For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light. Psalms 36:9 ESV

3. The Gate

"I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture." John 10:9 ESV

We are at risk whenever we go out into world, besieged as it is by spiritual darkness, but we are also at risk in our homes. That's why the Lord called for Israel to place reminders of their God on their doorposts and their gates—so that, whether they were leaving or returning, they would remember that He was with them and that they were meant to be "with Him" by living faithfully.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore. Psalms 121:7-8 ESV

4. The Good Shepherd

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:11 ESV

David epitomized the good shepherd who willingly risks his own life for his flock. He told Saul that, because he had fought off both bear and lion with God's help, he was ready to face down the giant Goliath for Israel's sake. A Greater Shepherd was watching over him. Later, he wrote a psalm in praise of the Shepherd who had been resting, refreshing, and raising him to leadership as Israel's servant king.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. Psalms 23:1-3 ESV

5. The Resurrection and the Life

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" John 11:25-26 ESV

Belief in resurrection and eternal life didn't make it in any obvious way into the first five books of the Bible. That's why the Sadducees, who based their faith on Moses' writings alone, were at such odds with the Pharisees, who believed the "writings and the prophets" were also scripture.



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Old Job lived long before their time, yet his words have outlasted them. All he caught was a faith-glimpse of his Redeemer, but he knew he would see Him one Day.

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. Job 19:25-27
ESV

6. The Way, the Truth, and the Life

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6 ESV

In making this "I AM" statement Jesus is saying that anyone who finds the right way to live has found it through His direct enabling; anyone who discovers a truth, any truth, has drawn close to His Person; anyone who experiences the quality of life that heaven calls "life," entered into that moment by His grace. God the Father gives these gifts, but we can only enter into them through Jesus' working, just as we can only come to the Father, through His revealing.

For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.
Proverbs 2:6-8 ESV

7. The Vine

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5 ESV

What a beautiful image of fruitfulness vines gave to Israel! Branches heavy-laden with grapes were sure to usher in a harvest, leading to choice wine—the gift and sign of joyful fellowship. Above all, vineyards were a sign of their position in God's heart—Israel was the vineyard He cultivated by prophet, priest and king, as well as by Word and sacrifice. His very life was in their midst! Had they only stayed united to their Vine... how different it might have been.

What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it? When I looked for it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? Isaiah 5:4 ESV

Explore More about Jesus

[His Miraculous Birth](#) If Jesus truly is our Model and Example in everything pertaining to the spiritual life, then His birth has volumes to speak to us about our own new life in Him. Indeed it does! What it reveals will make you marvel even more at the "risk" He took and the miracle, not only of His birth, but of His unwavering pursuit of His divine assignment.

[His Incomparable Life](#) It is our happy task to be "imitators of Christ." Jesus said that disciples fully formed (that's you and me in the making) will be like their teacher.^[7] When it comes to

showing us how to live, Jesus really is the Master. Trying to copy His ways from the outside in, however, is a guaranteed formula for frustration and failure. We need to see how He did it from the inside out.

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Scriptures on His Eternal Pre-Existence

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

I want you to know, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 ESV

But in the last of these days He has spoken to us in [the person of a] Son, Whom He appointed Heir and lawful Owner of all things, also by and through Whom He created the worlds and the reaches of space and the ages of time [He made, produced, built, operated, and arranged them in order]. He is the sole expression of the glory of God [the Light-being, the out-raying or radiance of the divine], and He is the perfect imprint and very image of [God's] nature, upholding and maintaining and guiding and propelling the universe by His mighty word of power. Hebrews 1:2-3 AMP

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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