

PREINCARNATE STATE

Christ existed as the eternal Son of God in the Old Testament:

"Then I said, 'Here I am, I have come – it is written about me in the scroll.' "
Psalm 40:7

And, in the New Testament:

"Therefore, when Christ came into the world, he said: . . . 'Here I am – it is written about me in the scroll – I have come to do your will, O God.'
" Hebrews 10:5-7

The Old Testament records the eternal son being installed as the Messiah, or Christ, on earth:

"I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.' I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, 'You are my Son, today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery' . . . Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment." Psalm 2:6-12

The Son and the Incarnation are also mentioned in Proverbs 30:4, Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 9:6.

Jesus indicated he had eternal existence:

"No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man." John 3:13

John the Baptist indicated Jesus had eternal existence:

"John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me."' "
John 1:15 and 1:30

Jesus is the creator:

"Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." John 1:3

"For by him all things were created; things in heaven and on earth."
Colossians 1:16

"In these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things. And through whom he made the universe." Hebrews 1:2

Jesus is the fullness of deity, radiates God's glory, is the exact representation of God's being and has the same nature as God:

"For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form." Colossians 2:9

"The Son is the radiance of God's glory, and the exact representation of his being." Hebrews 1:3

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who, being in very nature God . . ." Philippians 2:6

The Angel of the Lord

In the Old Testament, the Angel of the Lord (or the Messenger of YHWH) was the Son – Christ. The Angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush, to Samson's mother and father, to Gideon, and more. The Angel of the Lord is called YHWH, God, and 'I am who I am'. He was worshipped and spoke as God. See more information in Chapter 53 (Angelology) under "The Angel of the Lord".

Submissive to the Father

Christ is eternally submissive to the Father's will. Christ is submissive to the Father in:

1. Eternity Past – Revelation 13:8; Matthew 25:34
2. The Old Testament – Psalm 2; 40:7
3. The Gospels
 - a. In the gospel account – John 15:10
 - b. In the incarnate state – Philippians 2:6-8
4. The Church Age – Acts 2:33, 36;
5. The Millennium – Revelation 20:4, 6
6. Judgment – John 6:22, 26, 27, 30
7. Eternity Future – 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

Incarnation

The word "incarnation" comes from two Latin words *in* and *carnis*, meaning "in" and "flesh" respectively. Incarnate means "in the flesh". Incarnation refers to the eternal God taking on a human body and a human nature when the second member of the Trinity, the Son, was born as the man Jesus.

Isaiah predicted this event when he wrote:

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

The phrase "son is given" indicates the eternal existence because it does *not* say "a son is born" or created. The eternal Son was given to mankind. The verse *does* say "a child is born" because Jesus was born as a man. Jesus is both the eternal son and a human being that had a point of birth with a full human nature. The title "Mighty God" that Isaiah gives him is the Hebrew word *el gibbor*. The Hebrew word *el* means God and *gibbor* means hero. Isaiah tells us the eternal Son will be born as a man and be known as God the Hero. Indeed, Jesus is all that and more!

834 [e]	3651 [e]	310 [e]	1571 [e]	1992 [e]	3117 [e]	776 [e]	1961 [e]	5303 [e]
'ā·šer	kên,	'a·ḥă·rê-	wə·gam	hā·hēm	bay·yā·mîm	bā·'ā·reš	hā·yū	han·ne·pî·lîm
אֲשֶׁר	כֵּן	אַחֲרֵי	וְגַם	הֵם	בַּיָּמִים	בָּאָרֶץ	הָיוּ	הַנְּפִלִים 4
when	that	after	and also	those	in the days	on the earth	were	The Nephilim
Pro-r	Adv	Prep	Conj	Art Pro-3mp	Prep-b, Art N-mp	Prep-b, Art N-fs	V-Qal-Perf-3cp	Art N-mp

	3205 [e]	120 [e]	1323 [e]	413 [e]	430 [e]	1121 [e]	935 [e]
lā·hem;	wə·yā·le·dū	hā·'ā·dām,	be·nō·wî	'el-	hā·'ē·lō·hîm	be·nê	yā·bū·'ū
לָהֶם	וַיֵּלְדוּ	הָאָדָם	בָּנוֹת	אֶל-	הָאֱלֹהִים	בָּנָי	יָבֹאוּ
to them	and they bore [children]	of mankind	the daughters	to	of God	the sons	came in
Prep-l 3mp	Conj-w V-Qal-ConjPerf-3cp	Art N-ms	N-fpc	Prep	Art N-mp	N-mpc	V-Qal-Imperf-3mp

8034 [e]	376 [e]	5769 [e]	834 [e]	1368 [e]	1992 [e]
haš·šēm.	'an·šê	mê·'ō·w·lām	'ā·šer	hag·gib·bō·rîm	hēm·māh
הַשֵּׁם	אֲנָשִׁי	מֵעוֹלָם	אֲשֶׁר	הַגִּבּוֹרִים	הֵמָּה
of the name	men	from of old	who [were]	the mighty men	Those [were]
Art N-ms	N-mpc	Prep-m N-ms	Pro-r	Art Adj-mp	Pro-3mp

1368. gibbor

gibbor: Mighty, strong, warrior, hero

Original Word: גִּבּוֹר

Part of Speech: Adjective; noun masculine

Transliteration: gibbowr

Pronunciation: ghib-BORE

Phonetic Spelling: (ghib-bore')

KJV: champion, chief, X excel, giant, man, mighty (man, one), strong (man), valiant man

NASB: mighty men, mighty, warriors, mighty man, warrior, heroes, men

champion, chief, excel, giant, man, mighty man, one, strong man

Genesis 10:8

NIMROD

HEB: הִחַל לְהִנּוֹת גִּבּוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ:

NAS: he became **a mighty one** on the earth.

KJV: to be **a mighty one** in the earth.

INT: began to be **A mighty** the earth

Genesis 10:9

HEB: הוּא הָיָה גִבּוֹר צֶיד לִפְנֵי

NAS: **He was a mighty** hunter before

KJV: **He was a mighty** hunter before

INT: he become **was a mighty** hunter before

Genesis 10:9

HEB: וְאִמֵּר כְּנִמְרֹד גִּבּוֹר צֶיד לִפְנֵי

NAS: Like Nimrod **a mighty** hunter

KJV: Even as Nimrod **the mighty** hunter

INT: is said Nimrod **A mighty** hunter before

The reasons for the Incarnation are listed in Scripture:

1. To reveal God to us – John 1:18; 14:7-11
2. To provide an example – 1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6
3. To provide an effective sacrifice for Sin – Hebrews 10:1-10
4. To fulfill the Davidic Covenant – Luke 1:31-33
5. To destroy the works of the Devil – 1 John 3:8
6. To become the real High Priest – Hebrews 4:14-16
7. To be qualified to Judge – John 5:22, 27

Virgin Birth of Christ

The virgin birth of Jesus is an important Christian doctrine due to the nature of sin as discussed in the chapter on Hamartiology. Every man born receives an inherited sin nature from his father, the imputed sin of Adam, and the drive to commit personal sins due to this corruption in his nature. If Jesus had had a natural father, he himself would have had in his humanity a sin nature, imputed sin and the corruption that would have produced personal sins. The best God could hope for with a man like this would be a rise to the status of a Moses, a David or an Isaiah. But, what made these men great and gave their words such meaning was that they believed in and spoke of a man who would come to deliver them from inherited sin, imputed sin and personal sin. Of course, they could not have been hoping for another man just like themselves, but for a man who would be able to deliver them both from political enemies and from the greatest enemy of all – death, which is the wages of sin.

The Old Testament alluded to this deliverer and his unique birth. God told the serpent in the garden that this man would come from a woman, but did not say anything about the man's father. He simply called this deliverer the seed of the woman:

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring (seed) and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." Genesis 3:15

In another place, King Jehoiachin, a descendent of David and ancestor of Jesus' earthly father Joseph, is told that none of his offspring (seed) will sit on the throne of David or rule in Judah. With this verse God removed the possibility of a male lineage in Jesus' life. The reason is this: If Joseph had been the biological father of Jesus, then this verse would have made Jesus' Christ ever returning to the earth as Israel's deliverer and king impossible. Jesus would have been disqualified from being the King of the Kingdom of God, which would make a large amount of Jesus' teaching in the gospels irrelevant. Joseph cannot be Jesus' father if there is still to be any hope that Jesus is the Christ. Read Jeremiah's words concerning King Jehoiachin:

"This is what the Lord says: 'Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring (seed) will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah.'" Jeremiah 22:30

For a graphic view of Jesus' genealogy from Jehoiachin to Joseph, see the chart titled "Jesus' Genealogy" in Section 5 (Life of Christ). Jehoiachin's father is also cursed in Jeremiah 36:30.

Isaiah makes the prophecy of the virgin birth very clear when he says:

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin (*almah*) will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (‘God with Us’).”
Isaiah 7:14

This is a clear and exact prediction that the Messiah will not have a natural father. The word translated “virgin” is the Hebrew word *almah*, which only means a young unmarried girl when used in the Old Testament. The word *almah* is translated in the Greek Old Testament (LXX) with the Greek word *parthenos* which can only mean “virgin”. Matthew 1:23 quotes Isaiah 7:14 using the LXX translation of *almah* into *parthenos*. This gives the translation of *almah* as “virgin” the status of divine inspiration. The one born of this virgin conception and birth is said to be “God with Us” or God with man. Clearly this can only refer to the eternal Son of God becoming a man.

The New Testament attests to the virgin birth of Jesus in Matthew 1:18-23, Luke 1:26-35 and Luke 2:1-19. Of special interest are two verses in John. In John 2:1-5 Jesus’ mother requested Jesus do something about the lack of wine at a wedding in Cana. It is clear that Mary was not asking Jesus to simply go to the store and pick up some wine or run back home to Nazareth and grab some wine out of the cellar. Jesus’ response to her indicates that Mary was expecting something miraculous from the Son of God, because he said, “My time has not yet come.” Mary accepted the answer and left the matter in his hands when she told the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” Mary knew Jesus was more than human.

John 8:41 describes Jesus talking with some unbelieving Jews who have claimed that “Abraham is our father” after Jesus drew attention to his Father by saying, “I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence and you do what you have heard from your father.” Their response indicates that they were acutely aware of the confusion concerning who Jesus’ legitimate father was, because they then replied accusingly, “We are not illegitimate children.” Yet, the Jewish community thought they knew who Jesus’ natural father was because they often referred to Jesus as the son of Joseph the carpenter. After Luke records the details of the virgin conception and birth he says that Jesus “was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph.” (Luke 3:23) It is interesting to note that Jesus went out of the way to speak of God as his father, as if he were trying to draw attention to the fact that he was the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15 and Isaiah 7:14.

Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King

Jesus is indeed the Son of God and the savior of mankind. In his ministries before God Jesus also serves as a prophet to his generation and beyond, a priest who represents men to God and God to man, and a man who will rule the entire world as king.

1. Prophet – Moses said another prophet like him was coming (Deuteronomy 18:15). According to Acts 3:22-24, Jesus was that prophet. The crowds received Jesus as a prophet (Matthew 21:11, 46), and Jesus’ claimed to be a prophet (Luke 4:24).
2. Priest – The priests of the Old Testament came from the line of Aaron of the tribe of Levi. Jesus was from the tribe of Judah, yet the New Testament makes it clear that Jesus is a priest like Melchizedek who was not even Jewish. Melchizedek was a priest because he had been chosen by God. The book of Hebrews explains the priesthood of Jesus to the Jewish people. The priests of Aaron

served on earth in a man-made temple that was a shadow of heaven. Jesus is a priest who can enter the true heavenly temple and actually remove sin from man in the presence of God.

3. King – Jesus is seated at God's right hand ruling all creation from heaven now, but we are awaiting his return when he will be King of the whole earth (Zechariah 14:9).

Jesus as Teacher

It is important to keep in mind the context of Jesus' many teachings. Understand this: Jesus was a man living under the Jewish Law, obeying the Jewish Law and speaking to people who were obligated by God to keep that same law. Jesus also spoke of the coming Kingdom that even now has not been manifested. The Jews were also living under the rule of the Roman kingdom. When the Jews rejected Jesus, he began to speak of the new dispensation called the church age that would begin after he was gone. The church age would occur between the age of law and the age of the Kingdom. By living and teaching at this juncture in time, Jesus was addressing three different groups from three different ages. Jesus' words were coherent, and there is continuity in his thinking, but that does not mean a reader of the Scriptures could not be confused by placing Jesus' words in the wrong context. The situation and the audience are very important to understanding Jesus' thoughts.

Kenosis of Philippians 2:7

One question that is asked is how Jesus could be both God and man at the same time. Did Jesus stop being God for thirty-three years? Was he sometimes God and at other times man? The true doctrine is this: Jesus was 100% God and 100% man, 100% of the time – both while he was on earth and yet today.

“Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being found in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross!” Philippians 2:5-8

The key to the understanding Jesus' existence as God and as man is the phrase “made himself nothing” (ἐαυτον ἑκενωσεν / *heauton ekenosen*), which literally means “himself emptied”. The Greek word ἑκενωσεν *ekenosen* of Philippians 2:7 is the third person singular indicative aorist active tense of the word κενωω *kenow* which means “make of no effect, be in vain”. This verse is saying that Jesus is God in his very nature and quality of being. Even though Jesus is God, he made the fact that he is God of no effect. It was as if his being deity was “in vain” or useless to him. Instead of considering himself God, Jesus became a servant by becoming a man. This is called the Theology of Kenosis or the Kenotic Theology.

What Kenosis does not mean:

- It does not mean that Jesus stopped being God, because he cannot stop having the nature of God.
- It does not mean that while Jesus was on the earth he was not in the position of God because, as we will see, Jesus did many things on earth from the position of God including remembering, knowing, doing and speaking.
- It does not mean Jesus did not know he was God or that he gradually came to realize who he was.

This has not been an easy subject for theologians throughout Church history. For example, in 341 A.D. at the Synod of Antioch, the Church decided that kenosis meant that Christ emptied himself of “being equal with God” but yet maintained full deity. Later, the Reformation brought the debate back by considering that Christ emptied himself of certain attributes of deity (omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence) but did not change in regard to deity itself. The 1600’s brought to the debate the concept that Jesus was something less than divine, and the liberal 1800’s – after having rejected the authority of Scripture completely – rewrote Christian theology concerning Christology and kenosis.

What the kenosis of Philippians 2:7 teaches about Christ is that while maintaining the full position, attributes and knowledge of his deity, Christ did these things:

1. Took on full humanity, which would be very humbling to the eternal God. This taking on of humanity was not simply a thirty-three year commitment but was for the rest of eternity (1 Timothy 2:5)
2. Veiled his divine glory, which resulted in men not recognizing him as God. Isaiah indicated this would be the case in Isaiah 53:2 when he says, “He had no beauty or majesty (*hadar* – glory)” when he came as a servant. Note that, according to Isaiah 63:1, Jesus’ glory will not be veiled when he returns: “Who is this, robed in splendor (*hadar* – glory)”. Men did not see his glory but demons clearly could (Luke 4:34), although the disciples did see his glory on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:2-5; 2 Peter 1:16-18)
3. Voluntarily eschewed use of his divine attributes and authority for personal benefit (like turning stones into bread, floating off the temple pinnacle, or taking over the world system)

The main point of the kenosis is that Jesus left the condition he was in before the Incarnation, took on full humanity, and became a servant to man. We know that Jesus continued to be God and continued to use his divine attributes, because he demonstrated omniscience (Matthew 12:25; Luke 6:8), omnipresence (John 1:48-49) and omnipotence (John 11:43). His miracles are said to have revealed his glory (John 2:11). Some of the miracles Jesus did were done through the power of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:14; 5:17; Acts 10:38) but many times Jesus did miracles in his own power because he was God (John 10:25; 34-38; Luke 22:51; John 18:6). Jesus knew he was the Son of God (Luke 2:49), and recalled being part of events from eternity past (Luke 10:18) and events from the Old Testament, like speaking with Abraham (John 8:56). Thus, sometimes when Jesus spoke he spoke from the position of a man (John 19:28) – and sometimes he spoke as God. Jesus demonstrated both divine and human qualities (Luke 8:23).

Submissive to the Father:

Revelation 13:8 – “All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.” (NIV)

Matthew 25:34 – “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”

Psalms 2 – **←READ ALL**

Psalms 40:7 – “Then I said, “Behold, I have come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me:
I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”

John 15:10 – “If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”

Philippians 2:5-11 – “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Acts 2:32-36 – “This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”” (Psalm 110:1)

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Revelation 20:4, 6 – “

John 6:38 – “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.”

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 – “Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. 28 When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.”

Zechariah 14:9 – “And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day the Lord will be one and his name one.”