

Champions/Women of Destiny

LESSON 1



The Pre-existence of Christ

Passages to Read: Micah 5:2; John 1:1, 17:5, 24; Colossians 1:17; Revelation 22:13

A HISTORICAL VIEW OF JESUS

About 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ, God's Son, lived on the earth. Born of a virgin, He grew up with an incredible mission: to provide a way for the world to be saved (John 3:17; 2 Peter 3:9). Not from pollution, political strife, or economic hardship, but from sin (John 1:29).

With His weapon of love, Jesus battled for the lives of men and women. He defeated Satan, not by killing Satan, but by letting Himself be killed upon a wooden cross on a lonely hill called Golgotha. After Jesus died He miraculously rose from the dead. Many people saw Him and believed that He is God's Son. Then, He ascended into heaven, leaving His followers with one last message: to tell others how they too can be saved from sin and become His disciples (Matthew 28:19-20).

Long ago, the Jewish people offered sacrifices for their sins. They were required to bring a perfect lamb, kill it, and burn it on an altar as a covering for their sin. Through His crucifixion, Jesus Christ became our perfect, sinless Lamb. And by dying on a cross, He paid the penalty of sin for all mankind. Those who accept Him as their personal Savior can experience a wonderful relationship with Him that will climax when we see Him in heaven. But those who reject Him must suffer separation from Him forever and eternal torment in hell.



These next few lessons will provide a closer look at the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. As you study His Word, seek to develop a closer relationship with Him.

The Importance of His Pre-existence

The Bible says that Jesus Christ has always existed. Therefore, He existed before His incarnation in Bethlehem. We call this truth His *pre-existence*.

The pre-existence of Jesus is essential to our faith. Because Jesus has always existed, he is not a created being (NOTE: the word *begotten* in John 3:16 refers to God the

Trinity – God is made up of three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' deity – Jesus is God.

Jesus' incarnation – His coming to earth in human flesh.

The Word – in John 1, this expression refers to Jesus.

Father's relationship with His Son and **does not suggest Jesus was created**). If Jesus had been created, He would have been less than God. But Jesus is God and, during eternity past, coexisted with God the Father in heaven.

How do we know Jesus existed before His incarnation in Bethlehem? Let's look at His participation in creation, His Old Testament appearances, His testimony, and the testimony of Bible writers.

HIS PARTICIPATION IN CREATION

Prior to His earthly ministry, Jesus – along with God the Father (1Cor. 8:6) and God the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:1-2; Job 33:4) – created our world (Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:1-2). John 1:1 says, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The expression **the Word** is another name for Jesus (John 1:14-15; 1 John 1:1-4; Rev. 19:13). John 1:3 (also referring to Jesus as **the Word**) says: *All things were made by Him [Jesus]; and without Him was not anything made that was made.*

Jesus in the Old Testament (Can You SEE Him?)

Long before Jesus Christ took His first baby step beneath the loving gaze of His earthly parents, He came to earth on several occasions to do the will of His heavenly Father. Those occasions when God, the Son, temporarily assumed human form and interacted with humans are called **theophanies**.



Genesis 18:1 records the first **theophany**: *And the Lord appeared unto him [Abraham].* While Abraham sat in his tent, God appeared to him in the likeness of three men – two angels and Jesus. Genesis 32:24-32 records a theophany in which God, the Son, wrestled with Jacob. In Joshua 5:13-15, God again in human likeness, encouraged Joshua for battle. Most scholars believe that, in each case, God, the Son, appeared in the likeness of an angel or man.

His Testimony

Another fact that illustrates Jesus' pre-existence is His own testimony (John 17:5, 24). In John 3:13, He said: ***"No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven – the Son of Man [Jesus Christ]."***

On one occasion, Jesus taught in the temple after the Feast of Tabernacles. This ceremony features a four lit candelabra, which symbolizes the pillar of fire through which God guided the children of Israel (Exodus 13:21). During this ceremony, Jesus said, ***"I am the light of the world"*** (John 8:12). He went on to explain that His origin was of His Father in heaven.

In response the Jews asked: ***"Are you greater than our Father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets."***

Do you believe and understand that Jesus Christ is the only human that God has ever called His Son?

Who do you think you are?" (John 8:53). Check out Jesus' response: **"I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, I AM."** (John 8:58). In this simple statement Jesus claimed existence before Abraham, who lived 2, 000 years before this event took place. Even more shocking to the Jews was the fact that Jesus referred to Himself with the Old Testament name **Yahweh**, meaning **I AM that I AM** (Exodus 3:14). By claiming the name Yahweh for Himself, Jesus declared His timelessness and deity. The Jews understood all too clearly Jesus' claim of equality with God and promptly prepared to stone Him for such an accusation. **"At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds."** (John 8:59).

Can't hit what you can't see

What Others Have Said About Jesus

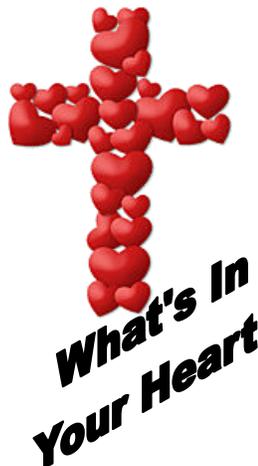
Other Bible writers also declare Jesus Christ's pre-existence. In Colossians 1:17, Paul especially confirmed Jesus' participation in creation when he wrote: **"He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."** (NIV) In 2 Corinthians 8:9, Paul supported the truth of Jesus' pre-existence a second time: **"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."** Don't misread this. God is not talking about Jesus hooking you up to become a millionaire –**Not!** Paul is referring to heaven, Jesus' true home. Jesus gave up untold riches to become poor for us by becoming a man born into a poor family. However, it is only by becoming a man that He could die on the cross and save us from our sins.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Jesus Christ has no beginning or ending. Bethlehem was simply a gateway for the Lord Jesus to enter our world in human flesh and sacrifice Himself on our behalf. Even before the world was created, Jesus Christ was there (John 1:1). Unlike other men and trends that go out of style with time, Jesus Christ will always be in style. Just as He worked miracles in the New Testament, He can work miracles in your life. Draw closer to Jesus through prayer and a deeper study of His Word. Jesus Christ is and will always be the same (Hebrews 13:8).

In Revelation 22:13, the apostle John records Jesus calling Himself the **Alpha and Omega**, which are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. John says that Jesus is the **beginning and the end, the first and the last. He was, is, and always will be.** Jesus does not say this without being able to back it up.



Memory Verse

"Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world."

—John 17:24

Now watch this Supplemental Video about your lesson and message from our Higher Ground Director: <https://youtu.be/Vdxy0oQngqs>

Champions and Women of Destiny

LESSON 1



The Pre-existence of Christ

Click here if you are taking your quiz online, then send the email you receive to your mentor to grade and discuss: <https://forms.gle/o5wZfgZJUqffPLkU8>

Now that you have completed this lesson, you will need to complete the following Review Quiz. Your Mentor will go over this with you when you meet together. Here are the rules:

- Set up a time and place to meet with your mentor.
- Bring something to write with.
- You will need to take 10-15 minutes to complete the quiz and your mentor can go over it with you. Your mentor should have the answers and will grade your quiz.
- Make sure your answers are complete and clear.
- Share the memory verse with your mentor (**without using the lesson**).
- When you are finished, your mentor must enter your lesson online using the link that was sent to them in order to receive credit.

Feel free to contact Robin Rankin if you have any questions:

Phone: 417-266-3121

Email: robin@kaakamps.org

Champions and Women of *Destiny*

LESSON 1 Review Quiz



Click here if you are taking your quiz online, then send the email you receive to your mentor to grade and discuss: <https://forms.gle/o5wZfgZJUqffPLkU8>

The Pre-existence of Christ

Student name _____
(PRINT CLEARLY)

Note: Answer questions in complete sentences and careful thought. This determines how well you understand what you read.

1. Long ago, what did the Jewish people offer as a sacrifice for their sins? Why?
2. What do we mean when we refer to Jesus' incarnation?
3. What do we mean when we refer to Jesus' pre-existence?
4. True/False. Jesus Christ is a created being.
5. During eternity past, where did Jesus coexist with God the Father?
6. Fill in the blank. "Those occasions when God, the Son, temporarily assumed human form and interacted with humans are called _____."
7. To whom did God, the Son, not appear in the form of an angel or man?
a. Joshua b. Moses c. Solomon d. Jacob
8. During which Jewish ceremony did Jesus proclaim, "*I am the light of the world.*"
9. Jesus declared His timelessness and deity by claiming what name for himself? Why?
10. Describe another theophany (not in lesson) documented in Daniel 3:19-28.