

**GOD IS**



**A FAMILY**

## **ABOUT THE COVER**

The cover image for this booklet is a stylized artist rendering of Acts 17:22-23: "Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus (Mars Hill) and said, 'Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an alter with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.'"

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# Contents

"Let Us Make Man in Our Image . . ."	1
Is God Speaking to Angels?	1
Did God Use "Pluralis Maiestatis"?	3
God Created Man in His Image	4
Man Looks Like God	5
God Reproduces Himself Through Man	7
"Elohim"—Proof that God Is More than One Being	8
"Elohim"—Singular in Grammar but Plural in Meaning	9
"Elohim" Followed by a Singular Verb	10
"Elohim" Followed by a Plural Verb	11
Another Lesson in Grammar from the German Language	12
Plural Nouns Referring to God—"Elohim"	13
Jesus Christ WAS—and IS—God!	13
Jesus Came to Reveal the Father	14
Did the Ancients Understand the Duality in the Godhead?	15
The Prophet Daniel Understood	16
The Prophet Zechariah Understood	17
The Prophet Jeremiah Understood	18
The Prophet Micah Understood	18
The Prophet Isaiah Understood	19
Does Deuteronomy 6:4 Teach that God Is Only One Being?	20
Usually, the Term "Yahweh" Applies to Jesus Christ	21
Does Isaiah 48:16 Teach a Trinity?	21
Who and What Was Jesus Before His Human Birth?	22
A Spiritual World Before Christ?	25
Was the Father Always the Father—and Was Christ Always the Son?	26
Man's Ultimate Potential and Destiny	31

**T**he Bible reveals that God is not just a single being, but is comprised of two separate beings. These two beings are often referred to as the “Father” and the “Son,” illustrating the fact that God is actually a Family. While the Bible reveals that God is, in fact, a Family, it also shows that God is **not** a trinity. The Holy Spirit is not God, nor is it a separate being within the God Family. It is literally **the power** of God through which the God Family works.

When we pray to God, asking that He give His Holy Spirit to us so that we might live more effectively in His way of life, we are asking for God’s power that emanates directly from the Father and from the Son.

We will show in this booklet that the New Testament Scriptures, as well as the Old Testament Scriptures, clearly reveal that God IS a Family, presently comprised of two separate beings. Many who erroneously believe that the Old Testament teaches the existence of only one God being, have glossed over some very revealing passages without realizing the full meaning of what they are reading.

In the very first chapter of the Bible we are introduced to the fact that God is a FAMILY, consisting of more than just one person. We are also taught the mind-boggling truth that God wants to enlarge His Family—through US! It’s an awesome thing to understand that God created man to ultimately make him a part of His very Family!

### **“LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE...”**

Notice what God says in Genesis 1:26: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...’” Why does God use the plural form when talking about the creation of man? Why does He say, “Let US make man in OUR image, according to OUR likeness...”?

We find the same terminology in Genesis 3:22, after Adam and Eve had eaten from the forbidden fruit, “Then the LORD God said, ‘Behold the man has become like one of US, to know good and evil...’”

To whom is God speaking in these passages?

### **IS GOD SPEAKING TO ANGELS?**

Some claim that the words “Us” and “Our” in Genesis 1:26 and 3:22 refer to God and His angels. They say that God is speaking here to angels. However, we

know from Scripture that many angels do not look like men at all, especially the highest-ranking angels—the cherubim. They don't look like men, but rather like certain animals; and sometimes their appearance reveals a combination of different animal features. Would God, then, have told those angels to create man in “their” image and according to their “likeness”?

Note, for instance, that Lucifer, a former high-ranking cherub (Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:14, 16), who became Satan the devil, looks like a serpent or a dragon (compare Genesis 3:1; Revelation 12:3, 9). The book of Ezekiel describes four cherubs or cherubim. First, Ezekiel 1:5 tells us that the “likeness of four living creatures” or cherubs appeared in “the likeness of a man.” The account continues, however, to point out important differences, “As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of *an ox* on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle” (Ezekiel 1:10).

The predominant facial characteristic of these four cherubs was that of *an ox*, as Ezekiel 10:14 and 20–21 reveal: “Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of *a cherub*, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle... This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim. Each one had four faces and each one four wings.” Comparing Ezekiel 1:10 with Ezekiel 10:14, we note that the “face of *an ox* on the left side” is equated with the “face of *a cherub*.”

We see, then, that the appearance of the four cherubim, described as the “likeness of a man,” only referred to their relative form, but not to their individual characteristics. They showed a combination of human and animal features. They did not reflect the image of a man—therefore, they did not reflect the image of God.

In the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation, four high ranking spirit beings are described before the very throne of God: “The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle” (Revelation 4:7). Only one of these high-ranking spirit beings is referred to as having the *face* of a man, implying that his *overall* appearance does not reflect human features.

We also read about seven spirit beings who are sent out into all the earth (Revelation 5:6). Their appearance is that of horses, as parallel Scriptures in the book of Zechariah reveal (compare Zechariah 1:8–11; 6:1–8).

Wouldn't it be strange if God had told His angels to create man after *their* image and according to *their* likeness, when many of them don't look like men at all, while others show a combination of animal and human features?

Additionally, consider this: *IF* God were speaking to angels in Genesis 1:26, then that means that angels would have been participating in the creation of man. Nowhere does the Bible teach that angels participated in the creation of man. In fact, we are told that God created everything *through Jesus Christ*—not through angels (compare Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:1–2). The Bible specifically reveals who created man. We read in Genesis 2:7: “And the LORD GOD [i.e., Jesus Christ—not angels] formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”

We also read that God made man a little lower than the angels for the present time, but with the goal to be superior to, and to actually rule over angels (Hebrews 2:5–9). Angels were created by God as “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation” (Hebrews 1:14).

Again, wouldn't it seem strange to assume that God used angels to create man, with man's ultimate goal and purpose to rule over angels? Keep in mind that what is created is below the creator—not above him. Christ pointed out that the disciple is not over his master (compare Matthew 10:24). At best, the disciple is *like* his master (Matthew 10:25). Angels, however, will be *under* man, and man will actually judge angels (1 Corinthians 6:3).

Adam Clarke confirms in his “*Commentary on the Old Testament*,” on pages 38 and 39, that God could not have been speaking to angels in Genesis 1 and 3, because the Bible nowhere says that angels are created in the image and likeness of God. In fact, Adam Clarke emphasizes that no other creature but man was made in God's image, according to the express testimony of Scripture.

### **DID GOD USE “PLURALIS MAIESTATIS”?**

Some claim that the statement, “Let Us make man in Our image,” does not reveal a plurality of persons in the Godhead, but that it is like an expression of a king who speaks of himself in the plural form. They point out, for instance, that the queen of England might say something like, “We have decreed...” She is referring to herself, but she says, “we.” This way of speaking is called “*pluralis maiestatis*” or “*pluralis maiestaticus*.”

The problem with applying this concept to God's statements in Genesis 1 and 3 is that God did not use this kind of speaking in His inspired word, the

Bible—in fact, the early Hebrews knew nothing about this way of speaking. The concept that a king speaks of himself in a plural form was only developed much later by the Greeks, and then adopted by the Romans, as noted in a German encyclopedia, the *dtv-Lexikon*: “The *pluralis maiestatis* was created at Greek courts and reached the kingly titles of modern times through Rome.”

George Knight wrote a book in 1959, published in England, entitled, “A *Christian Theology of the Old Testament*.” He points out on page 66 that we cannot assume God was speaking by using the grammatical form of *pluralis maiestatis*, as this would mean to read into the Hebrew a modern way of speaking. He explains that if we look strictly at the Bible, we find that the kings of Israel and Judah are exclusively referred to by others—and exclusively refer to *themselves*—in the singular form, never in the plural.

## **GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS IMAGE**

Having ruled out the possibility that God was speaking to angels, or that He was referring to Himself by using a plural form as a manner of speaking, we are left with the understanding that God is, in fact, not just one being. We might say that the word, “God,” itself is a “name,” rather than just a reference to a single being. In other words, God is a Family. Man was created in God’s image with the very potential of becoming part of His Family. The God Family presently consists of God *the Father* and Jesus Christ *the Son* (Hebrews 1:1–2, 5; Luke 1:30–33).

The God Family is destined to *grow*. Once we become converted, we become *begotten* children of God—to be *born* into the very God Family at the time of our resurrection or change to immortality. Once we fully understand the fact that God is a Family and that converted Christians are destined to become a part of this Family, we can appreciate why Jesus Christ is called our elder *brother*—the firstborn among many *brethren* (Romans 8:29)—and why we are called the *children* of God (1 John 3:1–2; John 1:12–13). We also understand why we are called *sons and daughters* of God (2 Corinthians 6:18), and why we are privileged to call God *our Father* (Romans 8:15–17; Galatians 4:6).

In addition, Christ is referred to as the *bridegroom* who is to *marry His bride*—*the church* (Revelation 19:7–9; Matthew 9:15; 25:1, 5, 6, 10; John 3:22–30). The church is comprised of all those who have God’s Spirit—including those who will be called *after* Christ’s return. (Note that the new or heavenly Jerusalem, mentioned in Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 3:12, will descend from heaven to this earth long after Christ’s return. However, it is still associated at

that time with the “bride”—the church—in Revelation 21:9. We are told, in Revelation 21:24; 22:14, that all those will be able to enter the holy city, “who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life,” and “who do His commandments.”) The Bible tells us that Christ will actually *marry* His begotten disciples in whom His Spirit dwells.

The amazing truth is that it is God’s plan and desire to bring all of mankind to salvation (1 Timothy 2:4). In talking about the ancient and modern house of Israel and using it as a symbol for all mankind, Paul makes clear that “all Israel will be saved” (Romans 11:26). Christ is the “Savior of all men” (1 Timothy 4:10). He died for “the world”—not *only* for those who have responded to God’s calling today and who have become His disciples (John 3:16). However, no one can be saved unless he or she accepts Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior (Acts 4:12). Also, “no one can come” to Christ “unless the Father... draws him” (John 6:44). Therefore, God planned that those who have died without having heard the truth prior to their death will have the same potential of becoming God members in His Family in due time.

Revelation 20:5, 11–12 reveals that those people will be resurrected in a “second resurrection” for the purpose of learning and accepting God’s way of life. If they choose to obey God, they, too, will become God beings in the Family of God. After God’s plan will have reached its completion, God says this about *all* of His children: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son” (Revelation 21:7). We also read that *all* of them “shall reign forever and ever” (Revelation 22:5). (For more information on God’s awesome plan of salvation for all mankind, please read our free booklets, “*Do We Have an Immortal Soul?*” and “*God’s Commanded Holy Days.*”)

What we can see from all of these statements is that God is a Family, and that He is in the process of enlarging His Family—through man.

## **MAN LOOKS LIKE GOD**

The fact that God created man in His image and likeness is to be understood quite literally, showing that *man looks like God*. Of course, man is a physical being, while God is Spirit (John 4:24; 2 Corinthians 3:17). Still, when God manifests Himself so that He can be seen with human eyes, His appearance is that of a man, having a head with white hair, a mouth, eyes, chest, arms, hands, waist, legs, and feet. The Bible confirms that God has “form and shape”—although He is Spirit. It is difficult for physical beings to understand that Spirit can have “form and shape”—but it does, and the Bible clearly reveals this truth

to us. Notice God's own testimony in Numbers 12:8: "I speak with him [Moses] face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the *form of the LORD.*" Indeed, God spoke to Moses "face to face," that is, "plainly, and not in dark sayings" (compare, too, Deuteronomy 34:10–12), and Moses did quite literally see "the form of the LORD." We read about that account in Exodus 33:18–23:

"And he [Moses] said, 'Please, show me your glory.' Then He said, 'I will make all My goodness pass before you...' But He said, 'You cannot see *My face*; for no man shall see Me, and live.' And the LORD said, 'Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with *My hand* while I pass by. Then I will take away *My hand*, and you shall see *My back*; but *My face* shall not be seen.'"

God the Father is described in His glorified state in the book of Revelation. The Father is described as the "Lord God Almighty," sitting on a throne, having a scroll in His "*right hand*" (Revelation 4:8; 5:1). He is also described in the book of Daniel as the "Ancient of Days," with the "*hair of His head... like pure wool*" (Daniel 7:9).

In addition, the Bible contains numerous descriptions of Jesus Christ in His glorified state. As we will prove in this booklet, Jesus Christ is God—the second member of the God Family. He is the image of God the Father (2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15). Christ told His disciple Philip in John 14:9, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son look the same—in their outward appearance. Now note how Jesus Christ manifested Himself in His glorified state:

In Revelation 1:13–16, John sees Christ as "One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the *feet* and girded about the *chest* with a golden band. His *head* and *hair* were white like wool, as white as snow, and His *eyes* like a flame of fire; His *feet* were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His *right hand* seven stars, out of His *mouth* went a sharp two-edged sword, and His *countenance* was like the sun shining in its strength."

We find an almost identical description of God in His glorified state in the book of Ezekiel. As we will see later in this booklet, the personage who manifested Himself in this passage (as well as in the previous passage in Exodus 33) was, in fact, Jesus Christ. We read: "And above the firmament over their heads [the heads of the cherubim] was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a

sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was a likeness with the appearance of a man* high above it. Also from the appearance of *His waist* and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around. . . . *This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD*” (Ezekiel 1:26–28).

## **GOD REPRODUCES HIMSELF THROUGH MAN**

We read that God created man in His image and after His likeness. We saw that God looks like a man (or more correctly phrased, man looks like God), though God is, of course, a glorified Spirit being, while man is matter, made of the dust of the ground. In addition, Genesis 5:3 explains what it means to be created in the image and likeness of someone else: “And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.”

As Adam’s son Seth looked like Adam, so Adam, when God created him, looked like God. Both God and Adam were “reproducing” themselves in their own likeness, after their image.

Genesis 1 reveals that God began to reproduce Himself through man, by first creating man physically—in His image and after His likeness—and with the potential to become a spirit being and a full member of the God Family.

In reading the entire account of Genesis 1, beginning in verse 3, we find that God created plants and animals according to their own kind. He created great sea creatures according to their kind. He created every winged bird according to their kind. He created cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth according to their kind. However, when it came to the creation of man, God said: “Let Us make man in Our image!” So, God created man according to the God kind. That is why Adam is called the “son of God” in Luke 3:38. Also, mankind is called “the offspring of God” in Acts 17:28–29.

So then, rightly understood, the Bible reveals in the very first chapter that God IS a Family, and that man was created for the purpose of ultimately joining the Family of God.

This truth is confirmed throughout the Bible, including the New Testament. Ephesians 3:14–15 tells us, “For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the *whole family* in heaven [presently God the Father and Jesus Christ] and earth [*begotten* children of God, to be *bom* into the very Family of God at the time of their resurrection, or change, to immortality] is named.”

At this time, the Family of God in heaven consists of God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. In one sense, angels are also called “sons of God” (Job 1:6), since God created them, as He created man. However, angels are not part of the FAMILY of God of which we speak. We read in Hebrews 1:14 that angels are “all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation.” Angels were not created to inherit salvation—to become members of the Family of God. In the same way, the passage just quoted in the letter to the Ephesians speaks about those who are already *begotten* members of the Family of God here on earth—those, who are already “children of God” (1 John 3:2). It describes converted Christians, in whom God’s Spirit dwells, which Spirit is a guarantee, a down payment or an earnest toward their salvation (Ephesians 1:13–14). In a more general sense, though, unconverted people are also “sons of God”—since God created them as well (compare Luke 3:38, calling Adam the “son of God”). However, they are not (yet) *begotten* members of the God Family. The only distinction between unconverted people and angels is that unconverted people—unlike angels—*can* become members of the God Family, after they repent, believe, become baptized, and receive the Holy Spirit which is to continue to dwell in them until the time of their death or change (Romans 8:8–11).

Note, too, how the *New International Version* renders Hebrews 2:11, “Both the one who makes men holy [God] and those who are made holy [God’s chosen disciples] are of the *same family*.”

Our free booklet, “*The Gospel of the Kingdom of God*,” proves from the Bible, in much more detail than we can provide here, man’s incredible potential of becoming a *born again* member of the God Family.

## **“ELOHIM”—PROOF THAT GOD IS MORE THAN ONE BEING**

The very Hebrew word translated “God” in Genesis 1:26 reveals that God consists of more than one person. That Hebrew word is “*Elohim*,” which can be used as a plural word. It can be singular in grammar, but plural in meaning. For example, some English words that *are singular* in grammar are “church,” “club,” “family,” “school,” “government,” or “nation.” However, these words are all *plural* in meaning, or at least, the plural meaning is included. It is understood that the unit consists of more than one person. Unless there is more than one person, it is not considered a family, or a nation, or a church, etc.

The same is true for the Hebrew word “*Elohim*.” Grammatically, it can be a singular word, but it can have a plural meaning. Some reject this understand-

ing, falsely claiming that the word “*Elohim*,” as used in Genesis 1:26 and translated as “God,” cannot convey a plural meaning. But this objection has been correctly refuted by many commentaries, pointing out that the word “*Elohim*” does most certainly convey a plural meaning. They explain that the Hebrew word “*Elohim*” is the plural form of the singular Hebrew words “*El*” or “*Eloah*,” concluding that many theologians have understood this to refer to a plurality within the Godhead.

### **“ELOHIM”—SINGULAR IN GRAMMAR BUT PLURAL IN MEANING**

George Knight writes in his book, cited earlier, that the word “*Elohim*” is clearly a plural word. He explains that the same is true for the word “*Adam*.” Normally, “*Adam*” is translated as “*man*.” The word “*Adam*” can refer to the individual; it can refer to both man and woman; and it can even refer to “*man-kind*.” That the Bible refers to man and woman as “*Adam*” is remarkable, because the Bible also says that the two are to become “one.” [We might interject here that Jesus said on numerous occasions that the Father and He were “one” (compare John 10:30). In fact, He said that His disciples should also be “one,” as the Father and Christ are “one” (John 17:20–22). Christ was not saying, of course, that the Father and He are one *being*; neither was He saying that all the members of the Church should become one *being*. Rather, He was talking about unity, harmony, purpose, goal, and mindset. This will become clearer, as we proceed.]

George Knight goes on to explain that there are several words in the Hebrew, all ending with “*-im*,” which are derived from a grammatically singular word that conveys plural meaning. One of these words is “*Cherubim*,” the plural form of “*Cherub*.” Another word is “*Elohim*.” Other words are “*ne’urim*,” meaning “youth,” or “*mayim*,” meaning “water.” The concept of water, in particular, is very interesting, as it can refer to a single drop of water or to a vast ocean. We understand though that it is the same kind of water in either case, and it is always referred to as “water.” In that sense, water is both singular and plural. Knight goes on to point out that the same is true for the word “*Elohim*.” When we read that “*Elohim*,” or “*God*,” said: “Let US make *man* in Our image,” we should realize that the word for man, “*Adam*,” as well as the word for God, “*Elohim*,” can be singular or plural in meaning, depending on the context.

Some disagree. They claim that when the word “*Elohim*” refers to the God of Israel, it only conveys singular meaning, stating that the word “*Elohim*” is

allegedly *always* connected with a *singular* verb. (We will see later that this statement is false, since the word “*Elohim*,” when referring to the God of Israel, can very well be connected with a plural verb.) They cite, in particular, Genesis 1:27: “So God created man in *His* own image; in the image of God *He* created him; male and female *He* created them.” In this passage, the verb for “created” is, indeed, in the singular.

## **“ELOHIM” FOLLOWED BY A SINGULAR VERB**

The objection that “*Elohim*” cannot describe more than one God being, since it is followed by a singular verb in Genesis 1:27, is without merit, for several reasons. Let’s take a closer look.

Adam Clarke points out in his Commentary that the singular verb “*created*” does not necessarily reduce God or “*Elohim*” to a single person, as it could refer to the unity or oneness of more than one acting person. In other words, there was total harmony between the God beings when they created man. Further, the word for man, “*Adam*,” is also first referred to in the singular, but it includes both male and female, and the statement ends with the concept that God created “THEM.”

In addition, the fact that a singular verb follows a noun that is plural in meaning is not unusual. This is a question of grammar, not of meaning. We don’t say, “The family ARE big,” but rather we say, “The family IS big.” We still understand, however, that the word “family,” although followed by a *singular* verb, conveys a *plural* meaning, because a family must consist of more than one person in order to be called a family.

We also need to remember that the word “*Elohim*,” or “God,” **can** refer to either one of the two beings in the Godhead. Each one is called, and referred to as “*Elohim*,” or “*God*.” In Genesis 1:26, God, or “*Elohim*,” says, “Let US make man in OUR image.” One God being speaks to the other God being, referring to both of them as “Us.” When we read in Genesis 1:27 that GOD, or “*Elohim*,” created man in HIS image, we understand that it was the one God being who actually did the creating, and we already know from the New Testament that God the Father created everything *through Jesus Christ*.

It was God the Father who spoke to the One who is also called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, or the “Word” (John 1:1–3, 14; Revelation 19:11–13). God the Father said to Christ, “Let Us make man in Our image.” [If we were to conclude that *Christ* spoke these words, rather than the Father, then we would have to say that it was Christ who was in control and who gave command to

the Father—a conclusion not supported in Scripture. It was *God the Father* who created everything THROUGH Jesus Christ.] It was Christ, then, who did the actual work of creating man, and He created man in *His* image. Remember, though, that Christ is also the *image of the Father* (compare 2 Corinthians 4:3–4 and Colossians 1:15). Therefore, when Christ created man in *His* image, He also created man in the image of the Father. Man, then, was created in the image of GOD—in the image of both God the Father and God the Son.

### **“ELOHIM” FOLLOWED BY A PLURAL VERB**

We saw earlier that the word “*Elohim*,” although singular in grammar, can be plural in meaning. We saw, too, that “*Elohim*” can be followed by a singular Hebrew verb—as this is a matter of grammar, and not of meaning. Some claim that because of the fact that “*Elohim*” is often followed by a singular Hebrew verb, this somehow proves that the word “*Elohim*” cannot have a plural meaning. We have seen the falsity of this argument. However, there **are** Scriptures where the word “*Elohim*,” referring to the God of Israel, is accompanied by a **plural** Hebrew verb, **not** a singular Hebrew verb. This fact totally rules out the possibility that the word “*Elohim*,” when referring to the true God, can only have singular meaning.

Note the following examples:

In Genesis 20:13, Abraham states, “And it came to pass, when *God caused* me to wander from my father’s house, that I said to her [Abraham’s wife, Sarah], This is your kindness that you should do for me: in every place, wherever we go, say of me, He is my brother.” The Hebrew word for “God” here is “*Elohim*.” The word for “*caused*” is in the plural in the original Hebrew, not in the singular.

In Genesis 35:6–7, we read, “So Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him. And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there *God appeared* to him when he fled from the face of his brother.” The Hebrew word for “God” is “*Elohim*.” The word for “*appeared*” is in the plural in the original Hebrew, not in the singular.

In 2 Samuel 7:23, we read this prayer of David: “And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom *God went* to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name...” The Hebrew word for “God,” “*Elohim*,” is followed by a plural Hebrew verb, translated as “*went*” in the English.

The fact that the word “*Elohim*,” when referring to the God of Israel, can be accompanied in the Hebrew by a plural word is important, as it rejects the

claim that the God of Israel (“*Elohim*”) can only be one personage. The above-cited examples of plural Hebrew words (the Hebrew expressions for “caused,” “appeared” and “went”) make this very clear. In the Hebrew, the words for “caused,” “appeared” and “went” are distinctively plural, and cannot be understood to be singular. The same can be seen in other languages, for instance in German (a language related to Hebrew), although it might not be all that clear in English. In German, we might say, “*Der Hund bellte.*” (“The dog barked.”) The word “dog” or “*Hund*” is clearly accompanied by a singular verb (“barked” or “*bellte*”). Then, we might say, “*Die Hunde bellten.*” (“The dogs barked.”) In the English language, it is not clear, strictly judging by the word “barked,” whether the subject is singular or plural, as the verb is “barked” in either case. In German, however, it is clear that the verb (“*bellten*”) refers to a plural noun (if one wants to refer to a single dog, one would have to say, “*bellte*”—not “*bellten*”). The same is true for Hebrew. The fact that the Hebrew word “*Elohim*” is at times accompanied by a plural (not a singular) Hebrew verb proves that “*Elohim*” consists of more than just one being.

## **ANOTHER LESSON IN GRAMMAR FROM THE GERMAN LANGUAGE**

It is true, however, that in most cases, the Hebrew word “*Elohim*,” when referring to the God of Israel, is accompanied by a singular verb. This fact—that the word “*Elohim*” can be either singular or plural, and the verb that follows the noun “*Elohim*” may be in the singular in either case—should not surprise us. For instance, in German, we can observe the same principle when looking at the word for “police,” which is “*Polizei.*” One can refer to “*Polizei*” as conveying a singular or a plural meaning, but the verb in German is **always** in the singular. As an example, a single policeman could say: “*Hier steht die Polizei,*” meaning, “Here are the police.” Note that in German, the verb is in the singular. Or, the policeman could say, “*Die Polizei befiehlt.*” (“The police order you.”) Note again, that in German, the verb is in the singular, although now the single officer who gives the order speaks on behalf of the entire police force. At the same time, a group of police officers could all refer to themselves as “the police.” When they do, the verb associated with “*Polizei*” is still singular in German.

So now we have clearly established the fact that the Hebrew word for God, “*Elohim*,” can refer to more than one God being, or it can refer to either one of the two God beings. The verb associated with “*Elohim*” may be singular. Again, this is a matter of grammar, not of meaning.

## **PLURAL NOUNS REFERRING TO GOD—“ELOHIM”**

We also saw, however, that the word “*Elohim*,” when referring to the God of Israel, **does** at times associate with a plural verb, showing clearly that God **must** consist of more than one person. In addition, there are several nouns that refer to and describe the God of Israel that are used in the **plural**, again showing that the God of Israel **must** consist of more than one person.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 reads, “Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth.” In the original Hebrew, the word for “Creator” is in the plural, which should be translated as “Creators.” Both the Father and the Son are Creators. God the Father created everything, including man, through Jesus Christ.

Notice, too, Isaiah 54:5, “For your Maker is your husband, The LORD of hosts is His name.” Translating literally from the Hebrew, it should read: “For your Makers [are] your husbands.” Both “Maker” and “husband” are plural nouns in the original. There is no verb in the Hebrew, but it needs to be implied as a plural verb, since both the subject and the object are in the plural in the original Hebrew.

We find a similar statement in Job 35:10, “But no one says, Where is God my Maker...?” In the original, it says, “Where is God my **Makers**?”

In addition, Proverbs 9:10 states, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” The original says, however: “The fear of the LORD (is) the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the **Holy Ones** [or: “of the Holies”] (is) understanding.” “Holy” or “Holy One” is a plural noun in the original Hebrew. Similar passages can be found in Proverbs 30:3 and in Hosea 11:12.

These passages provide additional evidence that God is not just one being, but that He is a Family, consisting of the Father and of the Son.

## **JESUS CHRIST WAS—AND IS—GOD!**

Yes, Jesus Christ **WAS**—and **IS**—God! This is a profound statement that many may not have heard before! Some may well believe that God the Father created everything Himself. Many may have been taught that God is only one being, and that Christ is, at best, an angel, or, that He did not even exist before He was born as a human being. You may have heard those who claim that Jesus Christ is not God, therefore God the Father did not create everything through another God being—Jesus Christ.

The Bible clearly reveals, however, that **both the Father and Jesus Christ ARE God, and that they have ALWAYS been God throughout eternity!**

Reading from John 1:1, “In the beginning was the Word [the “*Logos*” in Greek, meaning “*Spokesman*”], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” We see that it is Jesus Christ—the “Word”—the One who “SPOKE, and it was done” (Psalm 33:9), and the One who later became flesh (John 1:14), who is referred to in John 1:1 as “God.”

Some say that the phrase in John 1:1 should be translated as, “The Word was divine,” in the sense that everything that God says is divine. That proposal is wrong. The Greek word for “divine” is “*theios*,” while the term for “God,” as used in John 1:1, is “*theos*.” The term “*theos*” can only mean “God.” The “Word” was not only “divine”—the “Word” was “God.”

There are many other passages that clearly reveal that Jesus Christ *always was*, and *now is*, God. He was God before He was changed into flesh and blood—a human being like us—to live for a short while on this earth. Then after His resurrection, He again became the powerful God being that He had been prior to His human birth.

John 1:18 tells us: “No one has ever seen God [the Father]. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known” (*New Revised Standard Version*). Notice the rendering of this passage in the *New American Bible*: “No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father’s side, has revealed him.”

Additionally, Romans 9:5 refers to Jesus Christ as “the eternally blessed God.” Philippians 2:5–7 explains that Christ was “equal with God” the Father, but that He took the “form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.” Hebrews 1:8 refers to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as “God.”

In John 20:28–29, Thomas calls the resurrected Christ “God,” and Titus 2:13 speaks of Jesus Christ as “our great God and Savior.” Christ is also referred to in the Old Testament, in Isaiah 7:14, as “God with us,” or “*Immanuel*,” and He is referred to as the “Mighty God” (in Hebrew, “*El*”), in Isaiah 9:6.

Clearly, it is Jesus Christ who is “the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). He is the second God being in the God Family. It is He who created man, but in doing so, He followed the instruction of God the Father, who is the *Highest* in the God Family (compare 1 Corinthians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28; John 14:28).

## **JESUS CAME TO REVEAL THE FATHER**

The Jews at the time of Christ did not know—and most still don’t know today—that God is a Family, presently consisting of two God beings. Christ

came to REVEAL the Father to them (Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22). The Jews thought they knew the Father, not realizing that the God of the Old Testament, *who directly worked with and dealt with Israel*, was Jesus Christ—not God the Father.

We have already read in John 1:18 that “no one has seen God at any time.” John 5:37 confirms that “you have neither heard His [the Father’s] voice at any time, nor seen His form.” Again, we read in John 6:46: “Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God,” that is, Jesus Christ. Finally, 1 John 4:12 repeats, “No one has seen God at any time.”

Still, we have read that God **did** appear to the ancient Israelites. They **did** hear His voice many times. Some even saw the form of God, to an extent, in His glorified state (compare Genesis 32:30; Exodus 33:11, 17–23; 34:6–8; Numbers 12:8; Deuteronomy 34:10; Isaiah 6:1–10; Ezekiel 1:26–28; 3:23; 8:4).

According to Biblical testimony, some *did* see “God” in Old Testament times, and they *did* hear His voice. On the other hand, Christ and the apostles taught that no human has ever seen or heard the voice of “God.” Since God does not contradict Himself in His Word, He is obviously talking about two different personages here. Indeed, the Bible clarifies that no one has ever seen God *the Father* (compare again John 5:37; 6:46). But some did see “God”—that is, the second being in the God Family—*Jesus Christ*, in His glorified state.

The Bible confirms that it was *Jesus Christ* who appeared to people and spoke with them in Old Testament times (compare John 8:56–58; 1 Corinthians 10:4, 9). In doing so, the Bible emphasizes again that *Jesus Christ was GOD* before He became a man, and that God is a Family, consisting of God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ. It was, in fact, Christ who dealt directly with Israel.

## **DID THE ANCIENTS UNDERSTAND THE DUALITY IN THE GODHEAD?**

Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, David, Daniel, and the other prophets understand that God, or “*Elohim*,” is more than one person? The Bible reveals that they did know.

Acts 3:13 states that the “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His servant Jesus.” Abraham, Isaac and Jacob understood that their God was the *Father*, who would later glorify Jesus Christ, the *Son*. They also understood—as we will see in a moment—that the God being *who directly dealt with and appeared to them*, was Jesus Christ—not the Father.

Notice Psalm 45. The sons of Korah wrote this Psalm, but it stands to reason

that David knew it. Psalm 45:6–7 reads, “Your throne, O God [“*Elohim*”], is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God [“*Elohim*”], Your God [“*Elohim*”] has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”

These verses refer to one of the persons in the Godhead, calling Him God or “*Elohim*,” and then to a second person in the Godhead, calling Him also God or “*Elohim*.” We are told here that “*Elohim*” anointed “*Elohim*” with the oil of gladness. The one being, “*Elohim*,” is also identified as God or “*Elohim*” of the other being, also referred to as “*Elohim*.” Here we see a reference to the Word or the Son, Jesus Christ—Himself God—and to the Father, who is also God. The Father is above all. He is the *Head* of Jesus Christ (compare 1 Corinthians 11:3). So we learn from this that God the Father is God of the Son, or the Word, who is also God.

The word “*Elohim*” is used for both personages in the Godhead. The patriarchs, David, and other Biblical writers did, indeed, understand this duality in the Godhead.

Note, for instance, Isaiah 41:21–26, where God is challenging the futility of idols: “Present your case, says the LORD. Bring forth your strong reasons, says the King of Jacob. Let them bring forth and show *US* what will happen; Let them show the former things, what they were, That *WE* may consider them, And know the latter end of them; Or declare to *US* things to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, That *WE* may know that you are gods; Yes, do good or do evil, That *WE* may be dismayed and see it *TOGETHER*... Who has declared from the beginning, that *WE* may know? And former things, that *WE* may say, He is righteous?”

God is using the plural in this passage to reveal that God is more than one being. Isaiah is not referring here to God and himself. Note that Isaiah quotes *verbatim* a statement from God (Note Isaiah 41:21: “Present your case, says the LORD...”). We find a similar statement by Jesus Christ, when He talked to the Pharisee Nicodemus, a “ruler of the Jews” (John 3:1). Nicodemus had visited Christ privately by night. Christ told him: “Most assuredly, I say to you, *WE* speak what *WE* know and testify what *WE* have seen, and you do not receive *OUR* witness” (John 3:11). Christ was referring to God the Father and Himself (compare verse 16).

## **THE PROPHET DANIEL UNDERSTOOD**

God repeatedly refers to Himself in the plural. It is made very clear in the book of Daniel, who these two God beings are. Notice the vision in Daniel 7:9–

10, 13–14: “I watched till thrones were put in place, And the Ancient of Days [a reference here to God the Father] was seated; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, Its wheels a burning fire; A fiery stream issued And came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, And the books were opened. . . I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man [a reference to the resurrected Jesus Christ, appearing before God the Father in heaven], Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.”

Jesus Christ—the future King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:16)—is described as ruling in the Kingdom of God over man. The Father will give Him the kingdom. Daniel knew and understood that the God Family presently consists of two God beings. He knew that God is not just one being.

## **THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH UNDERSTOOD**

Reading in Zechariah 4:8–9: “Moreover the word of the LORD [in Hebrew, “*Yahweh*”] came to me, saying: The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD [in Hebrew, “*Yahweh*”] of hosts has sent Me [“*Yahweh*”] to you.”

We see in this passage that the LORD [“*Yahweh*”] sent the LORD [“*Yahweh*”]. The expression, “*Yahweh*,” then is applied to both God beings. As we will see in more detail, both God the Father and Jesus Christ are referred to in Scripture as “*Yahweh*”—the “I AM” (compare Exodus 3:14)—basically meaning, “the Eternal,” or, “the Ever-living One.” This fact alone proves that both the Father and Jesus Christ have always existed—that they are God beings, and that the Old Testament teaches that there is more than just one God being.

Zechariah 6:9, 12–15 confirms this conclusion: “Then the word of the LORD [“*Yahweh*”] came to me, saying. . . (v. 12) Then speak to him, saying, Thus says the LORD [“*Yahweh*”] of hosts, saying: Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD [“*Yahweh*”]; Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD [“*Yahweh*”]. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between

them both. Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD [*“Yahweh”*]. . . Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD [*“Yahweh”*]. Then you shall know that the LORD [*“Yahweh”*] of hosts has sent Me to you. And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD [*“Yahweh”*] your God.”

Again, we see, that the God being, referred to as *“Yahweh”* here, sent the second God being, also referred to as *“Yahweh.”* It is *“Yahweh”* who says that *“Yahweh”* sent Him to the people. This passage does not refer to just a human messenger, or to an angel to convey the *“word of the LORD,”* while the *“LORD”* is speaking about Himself. Note that the *New King James Bible* capitalizes the word *“Me”* in *“...the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.”* They convey the intended meaning that the word *“Me”* refers to one of the two God beings, and not to a human or angelic messenger.

A third passage in the book of Zechariah, proving that the word *“Yahweh”* applies to both God beings, can be found in chapter 2, verses 8–11. Again, we read what the LORD [*“Yahweh”*] says, *“And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD [*“Yahweh”*] of hosts has sent Me to you”* (verse 11).

## **THE PROPHET JEREMIAH UNDERSTOOD**

Notice in Jeremiah 23:5–6 where the term *“Yahweh”* is used for both God beings in the same context: *“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD [*“Yahweh”*], That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD [*“Yahweh”*] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”*

Jeremiah shows that the LORD (*“Yahweh”*—the Father) will raise a *“Branch of righteousness,”* to also be called the *“LORD”* (*“Yahweh”*—*Jesus Christ*).

## **THE PROPHET MICAH UNDERSTOOD**

Reading from Micah 5:2–4: *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting. Therefore He shall give them up, until the time that she who is in labor has given birth; then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel. And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD [*“Yahweh”*], in the majesty of the name of the LORD [*“Yahweh”*] His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great To the ends of the earth.”*

Christ is identified in this passage as the Ruler in Israel, whose “goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.” In the original Hebrew it states, “from days of eternity.” Again, we are told that Christ has lived forever—which means, that He is God. Further, He is described as coming “in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God.” This is a reference to God the Father, who is called here LORD or “*Yahweh*.” The word for “GOD” is “*Elohim*.” Again, we see the structure within the Godhead—God the Father is the “Most High God” (compare Mark 5:7), and Jesus Christ, although a God being Himself, refers to the Father as *His God* (notice, too, John 20:17).

## **THE PROPHET ISAIAH UNDERSTOOD**

There are certain passages in the book of Isaiah, which, at first sight, may not seem to reveal the plurality in the Godhead, but they do just that, if we study them carefully.

Isaiah 34:16 reads: “Search from the book of the LORD, and read: Not one of these shall fail; not one shall lack her mate. For *My mouth* has commanded it, and *His Spirit* has gathered them.” If this passage were only addressing *one* God being, we would expect to read: “My mouth has commanded it, and My Spirit has gathered them.” Interestingly, a distinction is made between “My mouth” and “His Spirit.”

Isaiah 45:1 states: “Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held.” Again, if the passage were to only speak about *one* God being, we would expect to read: “Thus says the LORD to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand He has held.” However, God does not say it that way. He makes a distinction between “His anointed” and the fact that “I have held” his hand. In other words, it was the Father who gave Christ a command (“Thus says the LORD”), and it was Christ who quotes this command to Cyrus, and who holds Cyrus’ hand, in obedience of God the Father’s command. (Remember that the word “LORD”—“*Yahweh*”—can refer to both the Father and to Jesus Christ.)

Once we realize that those changes in reference are not merely “accidental,” we can find many more passages in the Old Testament along the same line that reveal that God is not just one person.

For example, Isaiah 29:22–23 says: “Therefore thus says the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, Nor shall his face now grow pale; But when he sees his children, the work of *My hands*, in his midst, They will hallow *My name*, and hallow the *Holy*

*One of Jacob, and fear the God of Israel.*” Notice the distinction between “My hands” and “My name” on the one hand, and “the Holy One of Jacob” and the “God of Israel” on the other hand. In the future, the children of Israel will recognize and believe in both the Father and Jesus Christ.

In Isaiah 62:6–7, God reveals that He has set watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem. Notice, what else the LORD is revealing in this passage: “*I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they shall never hold their peace day or night. You who make mention of the LORD [note that it does not say, “of Me”], do not keep silent, And give Him no rest [note again, it does not say, “And give Me no rest”] till He [not, “I”] establishes And till He [not, “I”] makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.*”

### **DOES DEUTERONOMY 6:4 TEACH THAT GOD IS ONLY ONE BEING?**

Deuteronomy 6:4 reads: “Hear, O Israel, The LORD [*“Yahweh”*] our God, the LORD [*“Yahweh”*] is one!” Many perceive that this Scripture teaches monotheism—that is, the existence of only one God. And indeed, it does. There is only one God. But in our thorough study until now, we have learned that God is a *Family*, consisting of more than one being. Since God does not contradict Himself in His Word, what can we learn from Deuteronomy 6:4? “*Yahweh*” is one being. The being who dealt directly with Israel was Jesus Christ. He was called “*Yahweh*”—He was and is one being. So, it is true that “*Yahweh*”—Jesus Christ—is one being.

In addition, “*Yahweh*” refers to the Father as well—and the Father is, of course, also one being. Thirdly, since “*Yahweh*” refers to both the Father and the Son, they are also “one”—one in purpose, goal, mindset, willpower and determination. They are unified. There is no division in the God Family.

Recall that Christ said that the Father and He are ONE. Christ was not saying that the Father and He were one *being*. In fact, He won a legal argument with the Pharisees by proving that the Father and He were TWO beings (John 8:17–18). Recall, too, that Christ prayed to the Father that His disciples should become “one” (John 17:20–23). We also know that Adam and Eve were to become “one” flesh (Genesis 2:24). We can learn from these examples that the disciples, or Adam and Eve, were not to become one being, but they were to reach, or achieve, oneness in mindset, in purpose, and in action.

Further, many commentaries, including the *Jewish Bible* or *Tanakh*, feel that the passage in Deuteronomy 6:4 should be translated, “The LORD is our God, the LORD alone.” This would make sense too, given the fact that both God

the Father and Jesus Christ are referred to as “LORD” or “*Yahweh*” in Scripture. In this sense, the prohibition is against worshipping other gods. Deuteronomy 6:4 definitively DOES NOT teach that there is only one God being, as this would contradict all the other Scriptures in the Bible that establish a duality in the Godhead.

### **USUALLY, THE TERM “YAHWEH” APPLIES TO JESUS CHRIST**

We should take note of the fact that in *most* cases, the expression LORD or “*Yahweh*” does not refer to the Father, but actually refers to Jesus Christ. Notice, for instance, in Hebrews 1:1–12 where God the Father (vv. 1, 5) says to the Son, Jesus Christ (v. 10): “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth...” This is a quote from Psalm 102:25–27, referring to “*Yahweh’s*” creation of the earth. Paul, in the book of Hebrews, applies this Psalm, and the term LORD or “*Yahweh*,” to Jesus Christ, again confirming that it was Christ who did the work of creation.

There are a few statements in the Old Testament, however, as we have seen in the books of Zechariah and Jeremiah, which use the expression LORD or “*Yahweh*” to also describe God the Father. Additional Scriptures that refer to the Father as “*Yahweh*” are to be found in Psalm 2:2, 7, 11. There, Christ is identified as “*Yahweh’s*” Anointed, and as “My Son.” We might also note Psalm 110:1, which is quoted by Christ in Matthew 22:42–45, referring to the Father as the LORD or “*Yahweh*,” while referring to Christ as “Lord” (“*adon*” in the Hebrew, meaning, “Lord, sir, master”).

### **DOES ISAIAH 48:16 TEACH A TRINITY?**

Another passage that proves that there is more than one person in the Godhead is Isaiah 48:16. Some claim, however, that this passage shows that the Holy Spirit is also a God being, and a third member of the Godhead. The passage reads: “Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; From the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me.”

This translation may give the impression that the Holy Spirit is a separate entity. However, in the original Hebrew, the words “Have sent” are in the singular, as the margin of the *New King James Bible* points out. As a consequence, the *New International Version* translates this passage more accurately as: “The Sovereign God has sent Me *with His Spirit*.” The *Jewish Bible* or *Tanakh* renders this passage as follows, “And now the Lord God has sent me, endowed with His spirit.”

Others claim that 1 John 5:7 teaches the Trinity. This passage is quoted as stating that “there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” Although this statement would not teach a Trinity, even if it were genuine, most scholars agree that these words were added by the Catholic Church to “prove” the Trinity, and that these words are not in the original writings. Our free booklet **“Is God a Trinity?”** discusses this passage in detail and proves from the Bible that the Holy Spirit is not God or a person—but is the power of God through which the God Family works.

### **WHO AND WHAT WAS JESUS BEFORE HIS HUMAN BIRTH?**

Some deny that God always has been a Family. They might perhaps admit that God is a Family now, but they state that there was a time when God was not a Family. The Bible is clear, however, that God always has been a Family—and that the Father and the Son existed as members of the God Family throughout all eternity.

Some say that Jesus Christ did not exist prior to His birth as a human being. They teach that there was only one God being—now known as the Father—who created Christ in Mary’s womb. Others admit that Christ did exist prior to His human birth, but teach that He was an angel. Even though some teach that Jesus BECAME a God being upon His resurrection from the dead, they deny that Christ was God PRIOR to His human birth.

As we have seen in this booklet, the Bible teaches clearly that Jesus Christ existed on the God plane BEFORE He gave up His divinity for a short while to become a human being.

In passing, some deny that Christ gave up His divinity, when He became a human being, claiming that He was “fully God and fully man.” This concept is false, too. If Christ had not given up His divinity to become “fully man,” He could not have died (as God cannot die—and neither can we, once we are God beings, compare Luke 20:35–36). If Christ did not die, and if He was not subsequently brought back to life by a resurrection *from the dead*, then our faith is “empty” and “futile” (compare 1 Corinthians 15:3–4, 12–18). In addition, you and I would not have a Savior, as it was necessary for Christ to overcome sin in the flesh (compare Romans 8:3). He “was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).

The truth is that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, BECAME a human being. He was not “fully God” and “fully man,” possessing two natures—rather, we

read in John 1:14 that “the Word BECAME flesh.” He gave up His divinity and His divine glory. The only way in which He was still the “Son of God” was that He was the person that had been God, BEFORE He became human. A king who becomes a beggar is still the person that had been the king at one time. In other words, Christ knew of His existence prior to His human birth—He knew of the person that He had been. Christ was that person. However, He laid aside His divinity and became FULLY man. When Christ BECAME flesh, He ceased to be what He had been—a divine glorified being. For additional information, please read our free booklet, “*The Gospel of the Kingdom of God.*”

Since it is very important to clearly understand that Christ existed prior to His birth as a human being, let us notice some additional proof:

I John 4:9 states: “In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.” WHO was sent into the world? According to this verse, it was the Son—God’s Son! Both the Father and the Son planned for Christ’s coming into the world, as 2 Timothy 1:9 explains: “[God] who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus *before time began.*” Again, we read in Revelation 13:8, Christ—the Lamb of God—was “...slain from the foundation of the world.”

John 17:5 adds these words of Christ, “And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You *before the world was.*” Earlier, Jesus had this to say while instructing His disciples: “I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father” (John 16:28).

As we continue to follow the story of Jesus Christ, we find a scene depicted in the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation that actually shows that Jesus Christ was glorified by the Father. The seventh chapter of the book of Daniel also describes the time after Christ’s resurrection when that former glory was restored to Him by the Father. There are many other Scriptures that refer to Christ being glorified (compare John 12:16; John 20:17; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 8:1; Ephesians 1:20).

There is another incontrovertible proof that Jesus was willingly sent into the world—leaving His place as the spiritual Son of God to become a flesh and blood, physical man (begotten in the flesh) who would live a sinless life in order to save all of mankind. No other sacrifice than that of God Himself—the *Creator* of man—could pay the price for man’s sins and allow man to have access

to the gift of eternal life. Yet, in order to be able to die, Christ, the Son of God, had to become flesh and blood.

Philippians 2:6–8, documents this: “. . .who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but *emptied Himself*, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross” (*New American Standard* translation). Notice, too, Hebrews 2:9, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower [or, for a little while lower] than the angels, FOR THE SUFFERING OF DEATH, crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, MIGHT TASTE DEATH FOR EVERYONE.”

To believe that Jesus Christ did not exist as a God being *before* His physical life is to deny the very meaning of the priceless sacrifice both He and the Father made. Alarmingly, at the core of this false belief, there lies the danger of one actually denying the Father and the Son, and that is the belief in and practice of “antichrist” (compare 1 John 2:22–23). The Father and the Son have existed throughout time—even before “time” itself existed.

Jesus Christ spoke of His own pre-existence over and over again. At one time, He stated boldly that He—AS God—had lived before Abraham. The Jews were so outraged that they were willing to stone Jesus. Notice the dialogue and the reaction of the Jews to Christ’s words in John 8:56–58: “[Jesus said,] ‘Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.’ Then the Jews said to Him, ‘You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’” When Jesus said, “I AM,” rather than, “I WAS,” the Jews understood that He identified Himself as God—as “*Yahweh*,” the “I AM” or Eternal of the Old Testament. That is why they “took up stones to throw at Him” (verse 59).

Consider, too, this statement that He made to His disciples very early in His three and one-half year ministry: “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (Luke 10:18). This event marking Satan’s failed rebellion against the Family of God happened long before even mankind was created. However, deeply rooted in this rebellion was Satan’s attempt to stop the great master plan of God in enlarging His kind to actually stop the future development of the sons and daughters of God. In that struggle, Satan lost—yet he continues to deceive and fight against the will of God. However, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has fulfilled a great step in the plan of God that is only open to mankind. It is not open to Satan and his demons, although they obviously have wanted to attain what

was not offered them. Christ has become the firstborn of *many brethren*. Understanding and acting on this truth will assure that none of us denies either the Father or the Son!

## **A SPIRITUAL WORLD BEFORE CHRIST?**

In addition, the Bible reveals a very intriguing insight for us to consider. Hebrews 9:11 states: “But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, **NOT OF THIS CREATION.**” Later, in Hebrews 11:3, we find that “By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were **NOT** made of things which are visible.” What the Bible states here is that the physical world was formed from the spirit world. Even science acknowledges that the entire physical creation is winding down, and that—given enough time—would all return to energy.

The book of Hebrews reveals even more in showing that spiritual things exist in addition to physical things. In the eighth chapter of Hebrews, in verse 5, the ancient earthly tabernacle and priesthood are categorized collectively as “the **COPY** and **SHADOW** of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ‘See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’” (Compare, for further proof, Acts 7:44–50.) Christ is called “a Minister of the sanctuary and of the **TRUE TABERNACLE** which the **LORD ERECTED**, and not man” (Hebrews 8:2).

Hebrews 9 continues to explain: “Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified (cleansed) with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (verses 23 and 24).

What these verses show us is that there is a spiritual world—and that this spiritual world already existed prior to the birth of Jesus Christ as a human being. Most Biblical “scholars” won’t deny this—yet, paradoxically, some deny that Jesus Christ existed on a spiritual plane prior to His birth as a human being! The Bible is very clear, however, that Christ did exist as a God being prior to His human birth. We read that God (the Father) created everything that was created—including in the spiritual world—by and through Jesus Christ.

Let’s read again Colossians 1:16: “For by Him [Christ] all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, **VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE**,

whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.” Jesus Christ is identified, in Revelation 3:14, as the “beginner of the creation of God,” as it should be correctly rendered. The *Authorized Version* translates this passage as, “the beginning of the creation of God,” falsely implying that Christ had a beginning. Christ, however, had no beginning. He is identified in Hebrews 7:1 as “Melchizedek,” the “priest of the Most High God.” Hebrews 7:3 explains that He had “neither beginning of days nor end of life.” Therefore, Revelation 3:14 is more accurately translated as “beginning” or “source” of God’s creation (compare, for instance, *Revised Standard Version*; *New Revised Standard Version*; *Revised English Bible*; and *New American Bible*). Christ EXISTED as a God being from all eternity, and it was He—the second member of the God Family—who *began* the creation of everything.

### **WAS THE FATHER ALWAYS THE FATHER—AND WAS CHRIST ALWAYS THE SON?**

Some advance another argument in an effort to disprove the Biblical truth that God has always been a Family. Although they might admit that God has always consisted of two beings, they state that God was not a Family before Christ’s human existence, as Christ was allegedly *not the Son* and the Father was allegedly *not the Father* prior to Christ’s human existence—hence, God could not have been a *Family* prior to Christ’s human existence.

Is it true that Christ BECAME the Son, and that the Father BECAME the Father at one given moment in time—or does the Bible teach that the two God beings ALWAYS were the Father and the Son?

Some quote Romans 1:4 as proof of the concept that Jesus Christ—the second being in the Godhead—BECAME the Son of God at the time of His resurrection from the dead.

In Romans 1:3–4, Paul states that God made a promise before “concerning HIS SON Jesus Christ our Lord who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead.” Does this Scripture say that Christ became the Son of God through the resurrection of the dead? Without analyzing the rest of the Scriptures, and focusing on this passage alone, another possible way of understanding Paul’s statement could also be that the Son, who had been flesh, became again a *powerful being* through the resurrection from the dead. In other words, Romans 1:3–4 is not conclusive proof that Jesus Christ BECAME *the Son of God* at the time of His resurrection from the dead.

Before we clearly present from the Bible what Romans 1:3–4 is saying, let us note another passage, Hebrews 1:5, which has been used in an attempt to prove that Christ BECAME the Son of God—that He was not the Son of God from all eternity. Hebrews 1:5 states, “For to which of the angels did He ever say: ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten you’? And again: ‘I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son?’”

Does this passage mean that Christ became the Son of God when He came into the world (verse 6), and that God became the Father at that time? Another explanation—again, just looking at this passage alone—could be that God the Father begot the Son, Jesus Christ, as a human being at that time, and that God the Father will be, and has been, to Christ a Father in the truest sense of the word, as Christ showed through obedience in His human life that He was an obedient Son, even while in the flesh.

When we view the passages in Romans 1 and Hebrews 1 in context with the other Biblical testimony, we must conclude that they cannot be used to validate the concept that Christ BECAME the Son of God at the time of His resurrection. If it were true that Christ became the Son of God through the resurrection, why did God the Father say before Christ’s resurrection, “This is My beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17)? When this event occurred, John the Baptist exclaimed, “And I have seen and testified that this is the SON OF GOD” (John 1:34). Christ is identified many times in the New Testament as the “Son of God,” prior to His death and resurrection (compare John 1:49; Matthew 4:3, 6; Matthew 8:29; Matthew 14:33).

Notice Christ’s own words in John 3:17, “For God did not send HIS SON into the world to condemn the world...” Another remarkable dialogue is recorded between Christ and Peter. Christ asked Peter, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven’” (Matthew 16:15–17).

Christ is not saying here that He would BECOME the Son of God at the time of His resurrection. Peter had identified Him as “the Son of the living God,” and Christ told Peter that God the Father had revealed this truth to him. Compare, too, John 6:68–69.

The Jews KNEW that Christ claimed that He WAS the Son of God (compare Matthew 27:40, 43; Luke 22:70; John 9:35–37; John 10:33–36; John 11:4; John 19:7). When Christ died, the centurion recognized that Christ was “the Son of God” (Matthew 27:54).

In addition, we find a few Scriptures in the Old Testament that refer to Christ—the second being in the God Family—as the Son (compare Psalm 2:1–2, 7, 11–12; Proverbs 30:4).

Generally, however, this terminology is not used in the Old Testament, as God was not clearly revealed as Father and Son in ancient times.

Christ, as the Son of God, had to come to reveal the Father. The Jews were under the misimpression that they were worshipping “the Father.” They did not understand that the God being functioning as the Messenger or Spokesperson of the Father and the God Family, who had been dealing directly with the ancients, was actually Jesus Christ. (Compare Christ’s words in John 8:54, “It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God.”)

Still, there are Old Testament passages that speak about God as “the Father.” References to “the Father” in the Old Testament can be found in Isaiah 63:16; Malachi 1:6; 2:10; 2 Samuel 7:13–14; 1 Chronicles 22:10; and Deuteronomy 32:6. In those passages, Christ—the “Word” or Spokesman for the Father—communicated to the people the words of the Father.

Since God created everything through Christ, it is also said in Isaiah 9:6 that Christ will be called in the future—after His Second Coming—the “Everlasting Father.” This statement proves, too, that Christ existed for all eternity. He is referred to here as the “everlasting Father” or “the everlasting Source” of everything—the “beginning of the creation of God.” However, when the Bible speaks of the “Father,” it normally refers strictly and exclusively to the highest God being in the God Family.

We find, then, that God was identified in Scripture as the Father and the Son *prior* to the human existence of Jesus Christ. God has been a Family for all eternity.

We should also note that Christ spoke, of course, about God as His FATHER. He made repeated statements to this effect PRIOR to His death and subsequent resurrection. We might also recall that He told the Jews that they had never seen the FATHER or heard the FATHER’S voice (John 5:37).

Returning to Romans 1:3–4, Paul is addressing the fact that Jesus was resurrected from the dead. This showed WHO Christ was. Notice again what Romans 1:2–4 really says. God the Father made a promise concerning His Son Jesus Christ. We read that the SON was born of the seed of David according to the flesh. We also read that the SON was declared to be the Son of God WITH POWER according to the Spirit by the resurrection from the dead. Christ was already the SON when He was born as a human being—but He became POW-

ERFUL when He became once again a glorified God being. He came back to His disciples after His resurrection to prove who He was, that God the Father had raised Him back to life, and that all authority or “POWER” had been given to Him by the Father (compare Matthew 28:18 in the Authorized Version; see also Hebrews 1:3).

We also read in Romans 8:3 that God sent “His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” Note whom God the Father sent to become a human being. It says, He sent “His own Son.” Notice the same statement in Galatians 4:4: “When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth HIS SON, born of a woman, born under the law.” Hebrews 5:8 also emphasizes that Christ had to suffer in the flesh, although He was “a Son.” He was already the Son of God PRIOR to His resurrection.

In light of the foregoing, we understand that Hebrews 1 does not state that Christ was *not* the Son prior to His human existence. Rather, the Bible teaches consistently that the Son of God came into the world. He became a human being. Thus, He became the Son of Man as well.

In thinking about Jesus in His preincarnate life, it is hard to describe the Father and Son relationship that existed from eternity in physical analogies. It is plain that although Christ was equal to God in one sense, He still said that God the Father was greater than He was (John 14:28). Also, Christ is and always has been the Spokesman for the Father and the Family of God. John 1:1 states: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was WITH God, and the Word WAS God.” What is important to understand from this verse is that Jesus was with God (the Father) at the beginning of creation. Further, Christ will be known again to the nations as the Word of God, when He returns to this earth. Revelation 19:13 describes His Second Coming in this way: “He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.”

God the Father holds a superior position in the God Family in that He represents the final authority. Christ was, always is, and always will be subject to the Father—a structure of relationship that has always existed.

The role in the Family of God between Father and Son not only stretches back through eternity, but it is a role that will continue forever into the future. Several decades after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we find a statement that was recorded by John, an apostle of Jesus Christ: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which GOD GAVE HIM to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John” (Revelation 1:1). Jesus is not doing this by Himself. Rather, the

revelation is received from God the Father, and Christ, as Spokesman for the Family of God, then sends it through His angel to John.

We read in 1 Corinthians 15:24, 27–28, “Then comes the end, when He [Christ] delivers the kingdom to God the Father... For ‘He [the Father] has put all things under His [Christ’s] feet.’ But when He says ‘all things are put under Him,’ it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” The head of Christ is and will be—and always has been—God the Father (1 Corinthians 11:3).

It may be difficult for us to comprehend that Christ WAS always the Son, and that the Father WAS always the Father. We may not be able to explain how that could have been the case, thinking, in using a human analogy, that God the *Father* must of necessity have existed prior to the *Son’s* “*birth*.” This is not true, however, since the Bible tells us that the Son—Jesus Christ, the Word—did not have a beginning. The Bible teaches us that God the Father was always the Father and that Christ was always the Son. We cannot explain this revelation with our limited human understanding. Neither can we explain how God could have lived from all eternity, or that there were even two God beings from all eternity. However, we know this to be true. The Bible teaches it, and we must accept it “by faith” (Hebrews 11:6), although the human mind might not be able to fully comprehend it (compare Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 13:12).

We have also learned from the Bible that God the Father is the highest in the Godhead. The Bible nowhere says that He was NOT the highest from all eternity. In fact, we read that God the Father created everything THROUGH Jesus Christ—so the highest God being created everything, including the spiritual world, through a God being “lower” than He. If we were to speculate, we could imagine, perhaps, that BEFORE anything was created, the two totally “equal” God beings decided between themselves that one should become the highest. However, the Biblical record does not leave room for such speculation. We are clearly taught that the Father always was the highest. We can’t explain or comprehend how that could be. Likewise, we might not understand how Christ could have always been the Son, or how the Father could have always been the Father. Still, the Biblical record is clear in this regard.

Therefore, we must conclude that God HAS ALWAYS BEEN a Family—and that God IS a Family today, presently consisting of the Father and the Son. The great hidden knowledge—the mystery hidden since the foundation of the

world—is that God has begun a process that will lead to the vast increase of His Family! As we have seen in 1 John 3:2, “now we are children of God.” We are now begotten—not yet born! However, a few people throughout the time from the creation of man and leading up to the return of Jesus Christ have already been called, and they have also been chosen, and they have proven themselves faithful (compare Revelation 17:14). These, and yet others still to come, will join the Family of God in the first resurrection.

These are the ones who have received God’s Holy Spirit prior to Christ’s First Coming. We read that the Spirit of Christ was IN the prophets of old (1 Peter 1:11). [This proves, too, that Christ existed at that time, prior to His human existence, and that He gave His Spirit to the prophets.] These prophets were already BEGOTTEN children of the God Family PRIOR to Christ’s First Coming. Again, this shows that God WAS a Family, and that He was already in the process of enlarging His Family, PRIOR to Christ’s birth as a human being.

The Bible also indicates that the vast majority of all of mankind who have ever lived, or who shall ever live, will come up in the second resurrection (compare Revelation 20:5) and will be given an opportunity to enter the Family of God as well (Please read our free booklets, “*Do We Have An Immortal Soul?*” and, “*God’s Commanded Holy Days,*” which explain the truth of the “second resurrection” in more detail.)

Just as the Father reveals the Son, and the Son reveals the Father, the resounding truth of just who God is can be understood by us! God has indeed given us a future and a hope. We, too, can become a part of what God IS—the GOD FAMILY!

## **MAN’S ULTIMATE POTENTIAL AND DESTINY**

In Hebrews 1, verse 2, it says of Jesus Christ that God the Father “...has appointed [Him] heir of all things.” It is further revealed in Hebrews 2:7 that although man was created “for a little while” lower than the angels, as the margin has it correctly, he will ultimately have “...*all things in subjection under his feet*” (verse 8).

The eighth chapter of the book of Romans presents us with even more astounding proof of the tremendous future God has in store for man. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption [correctly translated, “son-ship”] by whom we cry out ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit Himself [Itself] bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together” (verses 14–17).

Romans 8:18–19 continues: “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”

These two short verses open up the truth of the vast master plan of God and the very purpose for man’s creation—to increase His Family by having sons and daughters born into His very Family! We are told in 2 Corinthians 6:17–18, “Therefore ‘Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.’ ‘I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty.’”

After explaining that mankind was to become conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ, God shows the underlying purpose in His plan in Romans 8:29: Christ was to “be the firstborn among many brethren.” So important is the purpose of God in bringing many sons and daughters to glory that He was willing to give His only begotten Son in fulfillment of His objective (compare John 3:16). Romans 8:32 also clarifies this point: “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

“All things” means exactly that—it includes rule over the entire universe AND the unending future of God’s Kingdom. Man is to become a “joint heir” with Christ in “all things”! John, an apostle of Jesus Christ, was fervently aware of man’s tremendous future. In 1 John 3:1–2, he writes: “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

Paul also addressed this tremendous future transformation: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself” (Philippians 3:20–21).

Notice again God’s promise to man in Revelation 21:7: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” Revelation 22:5 adds, “And they shall reign forever and ever.” A careful analy-

sis of the entire passage in Revelation 22:3–5 shows that the reference of eternal rulership is indeed to *God's children* who will have been made immortal. While “God and the Lamb” are referred to in the singular in this passage—in order to show God the Father’s rule over everything and everybody, including the Lamb, Jesus Christ—the children of God are referred to in the plural. Notice the entire passage in Revelation 21:3–5: “And there shall be no more curse, but the throne *of God and of the Lamb* shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. *They* shall see His face, and His name shall be on *their* foreheads. There shall be no light there: *They* need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives *them* light. And *they* shall reign forever and ever.”

The Bible reveals that God is a growing Family, currently comprised of God the Father and Jesus Christ. God made man so that man could eventually become part of the God Family. God’s purpose for man is introduced to us in His own words at the very beginning of the Bible: “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.” The Bible is given to help us understand the reason we exist, and to help us to reach our ultimate potential.

We would like to encourage our readers to read or re-read our free booklet, “*The Gospel of the Kingdom of God*,” which proves from the Bible that it is indeed the potential of man to enter the kingdom of God—by becoming a member of the Family of God.

The very last book of the Bible tells us the destiny of those who become born again members, that is, Spirit beings—God beings—in the God Family. We read in Revelation 3:12, “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the **name of My God**.” They will receive God’s name—they will enter the very Family of God as born again spirit beings. Revelation 22:4 confirms this, “They shall see His face, and **His name** shall be on their foreheads.” At that time, they will be truly “born again”—and not before then. At that time, they will truly have inherited “all things.”

Yes, God *IS* a Family—and He wants YOU to truly become a born again member of His Family—His spiritual offspring. This is the reason *WHY* you were born. Just imagine YOUR awesome potential and destiny—to become, and to be named, *GOD!*

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