

## THE PREEXISTENCE OF JESUS

(Philippians 2:5-11)

### 1) Old and New Testament passages that teach this doctrine.

- a) Micah 5:2.
  - i) One would come to rule out of Bethlehem.
  - ii) But notice the last phrase.
  - iii) The Lord's eternal goings forth are contrasted with His coming forth from Bethlehem.
  - iv) There is no reason to add that unless the One mentioned is eternal and pre-existent.
- b) John 1:1, 14 – sadly, in the Watchtower Society's version of the Bible, the New World Translation, they translated John 1:1 "In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god."
- c) John 8:58.
- d) John 12:41 + Isaiah 6:1-3.
  - i) After Isaiah saw the vision, he was told to go tell the people.
  - ii) The words of Isaiah's message are repeated in John 12:36-40 and are applied to Jesus.
  - iii) Isaiah had a vision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Godhead sitting on His throne before He came to this world as Jesus the Christ.
- e) John 16:28.
- f) John 17:5.
- g) 2 Corinthians 8:9.
- h) Colossians 1:15-17.
  - i) What is interesting about this text is that the Jehovah's Witnesses use it to teach that Jesus was created because of verse 15.
  - ii) Jesus is the firstborn of those that have died and been resurrected never to die again is all that the verse is saying.
- i) 1 Peter 1:10-11.
  - i) The Spirit of Christ was telling them these prophecies.
  - ii) Guy N. Woods wrote, "The Spirit of Christ having been in the prophets, it follows that Christ existed during the times of the prophets, and this verse thus becomes an important text in supporting the deity and pre-existence of the Lord Jesus".
- j) Revelation 22:13.
- k) All of these passages teach the preexistence of Jesus.
- l) Jesus referring to Himself as "I Am" on occasion, recorded by John, points to His preexistence.

### 2) Philippians 2:5-11.

- a) There are at least six things mentioned in this text that Jesus did to empty Himself and to enter the world that all show His eternal existence.

- b) Jesus did not hold onto equality with God (Philippians 2:6).**
  - i) He existed in the form of God before coming to earth is the idea.**
  - ii) Those in heaven saw Him as God, because that is what He was and is.**
  - iii) He had an equality with God.**
    - (1) This word “equal” means to claim the same nature, rank, and authority.**
    - (2) The Jews understood that Jesus claimed this (John 5:17-18).**
  - iv) Jesus let go of this equality in order to come to earth to be our sacrifice.**
  - v) This shows that John 1:1 teaches what is known as coetaneous, of the same age and duration, relationship between God the Father and the Word, Jesus.**
- c) Jesus emptied Himself of reputation (Philippians 2:7).**
  - i) In heaven, the Word, was being in the form of God, possessing all the characteristics of deity.**
  - ii) On earth, the Word became flesh (Hebrews 2:14-17).**
  - iii) He emptied Himself, which is the meaning of made of no reputation, which is one Greek word.**
- d) He voluntarily took on another form (Philippians 2:7).**
  - i) As the Word, a Spirit, He could not die, being immortal and eternal.**
  - ii) The Word had to come to earth and take on another form, human form, in order to be the sacrifice for our sins.**
  - iii) Hebrews 10:5 – a body had to be prepared for Him.**
- e) The Word was in the likeness of man (Philippians 2:7).**
  - i) Thayer gives this meaning of the word translated “likeness” - Resemblance (inasmuch as that appears in an image or figure), freq. such as amounts well-nigh to equality or identity:.**
  - ii) The Holy Spirit gave Paul this word because Jesus looked like us but was different in that He never sinned (Romans 8:3).**
  - iii) This could not be said about one who is created by God, because He would have been less than God and in need of being justified and Jesus needed no justification (Hebrews 4:15).**
- f) The Word, as man, fulfilled His mission (Philippians 2:8).**
  - i) Jesus had to be found as a man, which indicates that He was something else before becoming a man.**
  - ii) What Paul does is contrast Jesus with what He is and was with what He appeared to be in the eyes of men.**
  - iii) Jesus had to become obedient unto death because He was not subject to death as you and I are, for the fact that He is not and was not a sinner.**
- g) The Word died but was exalted (Philippians 2:8-11).**
  - i) Jesus was given a state of glory greater than what He had before He came.**
  - ii) He left perfect God and came back Perfect God-Perfect Man.**
- h) Jesus having to do these six things all show His pre-existence.**

Some material came from a manuscript by Keith Mosher in the 1998 Power Lectureship book.