

NO Man has seen GOD at ANY Time!

A Rather Thought Provoking Claim made by Jesus Christ Himself, (also Confirmed by the Apostles) , Conveys Potent Implications for those who Believe that God the Father was the only GOD in the Old Testament Era.

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The Church of God has long taught that Jesus Christ came to REVEAL the Father! That one important aspect of His ministry was to make known to certain individuals WHO the Father is. Matthew 11:27 and Luke 10:22 being statements to that effect. "...and no man knows who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will **reveal** him." In a way, it's an odd thing to suggest that no man knows who God the Father IS! After all, didn't Abraham and Isaac and Jacob know? Didn't Moses know God? He spoke with Him face to face after all. (Ex. 33:11)

No Man at Any Time!

An earlier verse affirming the same is John 1:18, a pre-announcement by John the Baptist, of Christ and His ministry: "***No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.***" John thought it important to present this as a first clue to mankind of what was happening. That 'the Lamb of God' was going to be introducing a 'new' consideration into their theology!

Then, Jesus said in John 5:37, "***Ye have never heard His voice at any time nor seen His shape,***"

Later, to His disciples in John 6:46 He said, "***Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.***" What a brash claim to make **IF** the Old Testament had long since revealed the Father and adequately so!

The Apostle Paul weighed-in on this subject in 1st Timothy 6:16, writing: "***Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man has seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.***" Paul illustrates the situation more fully

pointing out that God the Father emits an aura of glory too brilliant for any human being to see or even approach. There is an emanation of power, including the spectrum of light, that would be fatal to any mortal brought into His vicinity.

The problem is, these statements are cross-grained with the general conception that Israel of old had seen and heard *YHWH Elohim*, the LORD God of the Old Testament. It being the general consensus that this was God the Father! When Jesus plainly stated most emphatically that no man had ever at any time seen or heard the Father, that: "***Ye have never heard His voice at any time nor seen His shape***," we are forced to reconsider the many events and interactions in the Old Testament purporting to have been with God!

Who walked and talked with Adam and Eve?

Genesis 2:16, 3:8-19, 4:9

Who had lunch at Abram's place? Genesis 18:1-33

Who wrestled with Jacob all night? Gen. 32:24-30

calling Himself 'God Almighty'? Genesis 35:9-11

Who did Israel hear speaking from Mt. Sinai?

Exodus 20:1-2

Who did the 70 Elders see and hear on Mt. Sinai?

Exodus 24:9-11

Who did Moses speak with face to face? Ex. 33:11

Who did Moses see in glorified form? Ex. 33:18-34:6

Who led Israel from Egypt and thru the Wilderness? Ex. 20:2, 1st Cor. 10:4

Who excluded disbelieving Israel from entering

"His Rest"? Hebrews 4:8

Which Lord did David refer to being spoken to by

YHWH? Psalm 110:1

Who did David see sitting at God's right hand?

Psalm 110:5 Matthew 26:64

Who did Daniel see being presented before the

Ancient of Days? Daniel 7:13

Who did Nebuchadnezzar see in the fiery furnace?

Dan. 3:25

Who was physical Israel's Father? Isaiah 9:6
Who was the Creator? John 1:3, Hebrews 1:2
Who was the "I AM" of Moses' day? Ex. 3:13-14,
Before Abraham was, I AM! John 8:56-58
Who spoke from the burning bush? Exodus 3:6
Who was the Church in the Wilderness married to? Jeremiah 3:14

With all these examples, **the religious Jews had PLENTY with which to take pointed exception.** Yet, they offered no protest to the statement!

Silence Can Speak Volumes!

You see, if the Pharisees or the Disciples had thought as we think, if they perceived what He was saying as we would, **why wouldn't they have scoffed in vehement protest?** After all, consider all the above examples, where their religious ancestors apparently **did** precisely that: having heard and having seen God. Just for example, the 70 elders who were invited up onto Mount Sinai, who all-together heard, saw and ate a meal set out before the God of Israel. (Exodus 24:9-11)

Obviously, they didn't see these events as refuting what Jesus had just said. Rather, **they** perceived Him to be making reference to another High Being within the God of Israel. How they saw it was as an audacious claim to effective **'equality'** with **"His Father":** God! This is the point of these earlier presented statements, that Jesus would REVEAL the existence of a God Being long concealed in the background of human awareness. One not as yet specifically revealed to mankind! Then, to claim GOD as "Father", one must be making claim to being His Son! This too was new to the theology of the day, though their scriptures do affirm a 'Son'! (Isaiah 9:6, Heb. 1:8)

(We need to also keep in mind that their perceptions would differ in that the 'duality' of persons that entered the 'christian' thought stream with Marcion, and those of similar persuasion, had not yet developed. As attitudes began to become increasingly anti-nomian (against Law), it was posed that the God of the Old Testament was a **different** Being than the God of the New, substantially to justify disregarding commandment-keeping! The God of the Old Testament being stern and severe, the God of the New, meek and merciful: thus different persons! The Jews and the

Disciples of the first century would have exhibited no such consideration.)

A God Inaccessible

A rather un-remarked claim, that few have considered adequately, was uttered by Jesus in John 14:6, where He said: **"No man cometh unto the Father but by me..."** Consider this claim in light of peoples' access to the GOD of the Old Testament. Did this represent a change? Did peoples' ability to access God change at the time of Christ, or was this access exclusion always in place? Did the people before Christ have access unto their *YHWH God* before Jesus was born or not? Did they lose access when He came into this world? Was there an 'intermediary' set between God and man always, or was that situation set-up only after about 27 A.D. when Jesus began His ministry? 1st Timothy 2:5 **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"** Beginning when?

If this statement is true, that all access to the Father was thru Him exclusively, was it always true, just that people hadn't realized that it was the pre-incarnate Christ they were dealing with all along? That would be the necessary situation if this statement describes what had always been the case.

What a bummer if people had direct access unto the Father in the years B.C., only to lose that direct access with the start of Jesus' ministry!

If one is to pose that Jesus Christ had no pre-existence, (as some do) then the above claim would have to represent a change. If there was no change, then we must conclude that He did exist, in different form, prior to the first century.

Learning OF the Father

Another insightful verse that adds to this subject. Is John 6:45. Jesus said, **"Every man that has *learned of the Father comes unto me!*"** What are we expected to understand this to be saying? Does it mean 'learned of...' in the sense of being taught by, or does it mean 'learned of the existence of' the Father? If it were the case that people in Old Testament times had dealt with and **known** GOD the Father, why wouldn't that continue? Does this, like the example presented above, represent a change

in accessibility, or a change of awareness? If the GOD of the Old Testament was the Father, then we are locked into accepting one of these scenarios: 1. That Jesus pre-existed before He became born of the flesh and served in an intermediarian position back then, or 2. This represents a change in which a second Being is inserted as intermediary where none had been before, or 3. That the GOD that Israel had contact with in the centuries B.C. was NOT GOD the Father! Being theologically savvy, much more so than people today, first century religionists would have seen these implications!

When someone learns of the existence of the Being we now know as 'GOD the Father', he must come to and work thru Jesus, His Son, for access. The reason being, that NO MAN comes to the Father but by Christ! That's the essence of what John 14:6 and 6:45 are telling us! We don't barge 'straight in'! We don't deal directly. We can't bypass God's designated intermediary and access the Father directly. Even our thoughts can't penetrate thru His 'force field', except when conveyed in the blood-stained 'diplomatic pouch' of the Son's Name! We today have clear awareness of the existence of and access to God the Father, but only through His Christ!

The GOD of the Old Testament

All of this speaks rather powerfully to the fact that the God of the Old Testament was God, but **was not** GOD the Father. That in fact, there was One Being who interfaced with humankind all through history, and that Being was the One we now recognize as His Son! That *YHWH Elohim* was Jesus, the "*I AM*", who spoke with Moses face to face: ¹ That He was the Creator ² who rested, creating the Sabbath Day, and who excluded **un**-believing Israel from entering the True Rest that it represents; ³ That the Christ of God (His Anointed) was the One who led Israel out of Egypt and through the Wilderness; ⁴ All as positively attested to in the New Testament.

¹ Exodus 33:11 & 3:14 John 8:23-24

² Hebrews 1:2 John 1:3

³ Hebrews 4:

⁴ 1st Corinthians 10:4

Those who believe and teach that the GOD of the Old Testament is a different Being than the God of the New have it wrong. It was the same Being in either circumstance. God the Father has consistently worked with humanity only through the agency of the Being who became 'born of flesh'. A Being who consciously participated in the decision to, for a time, divest Himself of His Glorified state. "*Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*" (Philippians 2:6-7) "**Made Himself**" indicates He was the One who decided! There had to be a pre-existence for that to be!

All of these verses stating that no man has seen God at any time, endorse the fundamental Truth, that the Father was a *relatively* unknown entity among the general population from the beginning. It was part of the ministry of Jesus Christ to reveal the existence of a Being long concealed from human awareness. That the Father did **not** at any time utter audible sound nor manifest Himself in any manner visible to man. The only possible exceptions were writings, where David penned words assignable to the Father, (Psalm 110:1) and Daniel had a *vision* where he reported having seen the Ancient of Days. (Daniel 7:13) And most anciently, the smoking furnace that preceded the burning lamp in the Maledictory Procession that irrevocably established the Abrahamic Covenant on that original "Night to be Much Observed". ⁵ (Genesis 15:17)

This not only attests to the pre-existence issue, but also establishes that the God of the New Testament was one-and-the-same as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The One who gave the Ten Commandments, the "Me" of the first commandment, "*You shall have no other gods before me...*"

We are given an important revelation by which we can properly conceive of the God of the Bible. Let's let it factor-into our thinking! 

⁵ A careful reading of Genesis 15 will show that the Exodus began on this 'selfsame day'. Thus, this event would be the evening beginning the fifteenth day of the first month. Compare also Exodus 12:41-42: The evening before Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine.