

Jesus in the Old Testament

Written by K B Napier
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Christians are familiar with the concept of 'types of Christ'; they hear plenty of references to them in many sermons on the Old Testament. Very often these 'types' are more in the imagination than in biblical reality. Yes, some are correctly described as 'types'. Others, persuaded by popular writers or by denominational ideas, tend to see these 'types' everywhere, just blindly repeating their sources when texts cannot sustain such an interpretation. Yet others, inexperienced in real biblical research, will paint flowery pictures they THINK are 'types of Christ'... spiritual delusions.

The inexperienced Christian is therefore advised to be careful. There ARE references to Christ in the Old Testament, but try to adhere to what is more obvious and leave the rest until you can examine the texts more carefully, with knowledge.

In this article I will look at a brief list of definite allusions to Jesus Christ. I will not cover them all, only a few that are more obvious. Note that the Father and the Holy Spirit are Spirit. Only the Son manifested in observable human form.

Jesus Visits Abraham

This is an obvious reference to Christ. The very first verse in Genesis 18 tells us that "the LORD appeared" to Abraham. In this text 'LORD' is Jehovah. Bear in mind that 'God' includes all three Persons in the Trinity. As the Son is the only One to manifest in the flesh, we know that the 'LORD' in this incident had to be Christ.

Christ was accompanied by two angels, and all three were called "men" because that is what they looked like. Later that day, in 19:1, the two persons who were with Christ were called "angels". Abraham seems to instantly recognise one of the men as God, whom He calls "Adonay" ('Lord'). The same word could mean an ordinary man, but not in this context.

The One Who was Christ told Abraham that He would return in nine months' time to ensure his 90 year old wife had a son. We know this was God speaking, for the word "LORD" (Jehovah) is used in verse 13 for the same 'man' Who was speaking to Abraham. He repeated His promise to bring about a birth (verse 14), referring to Himself as Jehovah. After this Jehovah, manifest as human (Christ), warned of the destruction of Sodom. After much discussion Christ left Abraham (verse 33).

The Lion's Den

Enemies of Daniel arranged a law specifically to catch Daniel and his friends (rather as homosexuals have devised laws just to criminalise Christians). The end result was that three of Daniel's closest friends were thrown into a fierce furnace of fire. The furnace must have been at eye-level for the king, peering into the flames, suddenly jumped up and asked if they had only thrown three men into the fire.

The king could see that all three were alive and well, being unharmed by the fire. More than that, he saw a fourth man with them. The king himself described this fourth man: "and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." He used the Aramaic word *'elahh* for God, meaning (in this text) the God of Israel. "Son" or

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(also Aramaic), means exactly that – God's divine Son.

The king called on the three friends to walk out of the raging fire and blessed their God (here named *'elahh*). He thought he had seen an angel of God and he was right, because an angel is One sent by God – and Christ was sent by the Father.

A rabbi recently said he was 'astonished' when he checked his Jewish Bible, to find Jesus (or, in Jewish terms, Yeshua) mentioned no less than 150 times. This is why Paul preached Jesus from the Law of Moses and the prophets (the Tanakh. See Acts 28) to Jewish leaders. To this point alone we have come across two theophanies (appearances of Christ in human form).

Four chapters after the fire incident, Christ appeared to Daniel in a vision; he saw the 'son of man' coming in the clouds of Heaven. When He stood before the Father He received all honour, power and glory (chapter 7). That can only be Christ.

Wrestling with Christ

We know that Jacob wrestled all night with a stranger. Though he began as a stranger, Jacob came to see that He was indeed God... Christ. After the event Jacob called the place 'Peniel', "*f or I have seen God face to face, and my life has been preserved.*"

Jacob knew that no man could see God (the Father) face to face and live. Therefore, we know that God in this case must have been Christ.

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A similar meeting with God face to face was when Christ met with Gideon and spoke with him (Judges 6). Christ is mentioned very clearly in Isaiah 9, where He is called wonderful counsellor, mighty God, prince of peace, etc.

A modern (saved) rabbi tells us that most rabbis could not read or understand Hebrew, but spoke Greek or Aramaic in earlier days. Hence 'Targums' were written – paraphrases of Old Testament Hebrew texts. These targums, he said, are filled with references to the Messiah. One targum interprets that when pre-sin Adam and Eve walked in the garden, they heard the *Memra* of the Lord: the Memra means "the Word (Christ)". This is why that magnificent text in John 1 says

"in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God".

Proof-absolute that Christ is mentioned in the Old Testament! And there is more!

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