

Who Did the Early Church Think Jesus Christ Was Prior to His Birth As A Man?

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Some believe the Messiah did not pre-exist, however from his own words, we see that he did pre-exist as the Angel of God with the rank of Morning Star (Rev. 22:16; Jb. 38:7). He came down from heaven where he existed prior to becoming the Son of God (Jn. 3:13; 1Cor. 15:47). He is also the captain/commander of the host of God having jurisdiction over all angels (Jos. 5:13-15; Heb. 1:7-9; Rev. 19:14-16). All faithful angels are Christ's companions (Heb. 1:9), but Christ was given greater authority by his Father who created him (Heb. 1:13).

There is one other Morning Star identified in scripture, but his authority was removed because he rebelled against the law of God (Isa. 14:12-20; Ez. 28:14-19). The fall of this morning star, Satan, was witnessed by Christ (Lk. 10:18); this provides further proof of Christ's existence as the Angel of God (Ex. 14:19; Re.22:16) prior to his birth as a man.

Due to the fact that God is not a respecter of persons (Ac. 10:34), He will deal with all who rebel against His law in similar fashion, unless they repent of sin (Mt. 3:8) and begin living in accordance with His every word. Christ is also referred to as the Angel of His Presence (the Father's Presence) because he is at the right hand of God (Mt. 26:64; Ac. 7:55).

The Bible identifies Christ as the Angel of God in the Old Testament (1Cor. 10:4):

Ex. 23:20: Behold, I send an angel before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place I have prepared (cf. Jn. 14:2) In my Father's house are many dwellings; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Ex. 23:21a: Beware of him and obey his voice (cf. Mt. 17:5). While he (Christ) was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear him!"

Ex. 23:21b: Do not provoke him (the angel of the Lord), for he will not pardon your transgressions (cf. Mt. 9:6). But that you may know that the son of man has power on Earth to forgive sins, then he said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed and go to your house" (also cf. Gen. 48:15-16; Isa. 63:8-9).

Ex. 23:21c: For my (the Father's) name is in him (the Angel of the Lord) (cf. Isa. 9:6-7). For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given (in sacrifice), and the government will be upon his shoulder and his name will be called Wonderful (cf. Jud. 13:18) Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

As we are not to worship angels (De. 4:19; 17:3; Rev. 22:8-9), he is not to be worshiped either. Christ is our High Priest (Heb. 2:17) and intercessor/mediator (Heb. 7:25; 8:6; 12:24). Likewise, the High Priest in the OT was not to be worshiped because he was appointed as mediator for the nation of Israel. As Messiah was given the title "King of kings" by his Father (Rev. 19:16), we are to show deep respect and honor toward Christ, but that is very different from worshiping him as God (Php. 2:9-11).