

## [Quick Q&A: Did Jesus Appear in the OT?](http://www.lamblion.us/2010/08/quick-q-did-jesus-appear-in-ot.html)

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By [Nathan Jones](#)

### **Was the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament also Jesus?**

- Amelia, Texas

The Angel of the Lord referred to in the Old Testament was indeed Jesus Christ. This was Jesus' title and form before He came to the Earth to be born as a human being. The Angel of the Lord was Jesus' preincarnate state, meaning who and what He was before manifesting Himself in human form.

### **Existed Before Own Birth**

We know that Jesus existed before He was born a human as recorded in the Gospels because the Bible teaches that Jesus is God. The following verses bear witness to the fact that Jesus existed before His incarnation as a man.

In the following verse, Jesus is saying that He existed before the Patriarch Abraham was ever alive, almost 1,800 years earlier. *"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, 'before Abraham was born, I am!'"* - [John 8:58](#)

John the Baptist's message included a verification that Jesus, who was a few months younger than John by birth, existed before John was ever conceived. *"John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, 'This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'"* - [John 1:15](#)

One of the best verses demonstrating Jesus' pre-existence, here Jesus is saying that He existed before the Creation. *"And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began."* - [John 17:5](#)

Again, the Lamb, which is another name given to Jesus, is said to have existed before the Creation. *"...the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."* - [Revelation 13:8](#)

We even know that Jesus had no beginning, for He flat out declared He was one with the Father and so shared God's eternal attributes. *"I and the Father are one."* - [John 10:30](#)

## OT Activity

The Bible gives the reader many indicators that the Angel of the Lord wasn't just an angel, or even a specially designated angel, but God Himself. We know this because when the Angel of the Lord interacted with people in the Old Testament, they treated Him with the reverence due only to God.

Notice the switch between "Angel of the Lord" and "LORD" in [Judges 6:11-24](#), for instance. In this Old Testament story, the soon-to-be judge Gideon is greeted by the Angel of the Lord. Verse 11 says in a very human fashion, and indeed probably looking just like a human, the Angel of the Lord sat down under an oak tree and struck up a conversation with Gideon. Gideon asks why the Lord had not fulfilled the wonders God promised the people of Israel that he was waiting for. The reaction was that *"the LORD turned to him"* and replied, which identifies the Angel as the Lord Himself.

Gideon later brought food that the Angel of the Lord's staff consumed with fire, followed by a dramatic disappearance. Gideon's reply to such a sight in verse 22 was, *"Ah, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"* He feared dying from seeing the living God. Absent in form but still clearly present, the Lord replies in voice in verse 23, *"Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die."* Clearly, this angel was no angel at all, but the Lord God Himself!

There are many other visits from the Angel of the Lord in which the recipients of the visit gave the title and honor due only to God. Hagar calls the Angel of the Lord "LORD," "God," and "One" in [Genesis 16:7-13](#). Jesus appeared to Abraham when the three men visited (Genesis 18), to Jacob whom He wrestled ([Genesis 32:22-31](#)), and to Manoah to give the promise of a son named Samson ([Judges 13:2-6](#)).

The Angel of the LORD even declares Himself to be God from the burning bush to Moses in [Exodus 3:2-6](#) with the use of the title "I Am." Jesus claimed that title for Himself in [John 8:58](#). Jesus by saying He was "I Am" was the great Yahweh, also known to us today as Jehovah God.

## Other Personage?

Couldn't the Angel of the Lord then be the Father or the Holy Spirit? Among the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who make up the Trinity, the Father after the Fall couldn't be seen without causing the death of the onlooker, such as when God told the Israelites not to approach His mountain or they'd surely die ([Ex. 19:12](#)). When the Holy Spirit interacted in the Old Testament, it was always spiritual in form to empower a chosen individual like giving super strength to Samson or the gift of prophecy to King Saul.

When human form was needed, the second person of the Trinity — Jesus Christ — fulfilled that role as the Angel of the Lord.