

The Unseen God In the Old Testament

Please note, this is a very important study deal with the Seen God of the Old Testament even though we do not enter into the ancient Hebrew texts. That will come later. Right now we want to establish that in the Old Testament there was both an Unseen God and an Seen God.

The Sacred Scriptures present to us both, a seen God, Elohem, Yahweh-Elohem, and an unseen God, Yahweh in the Old Testament. In the New Testament Jesus Christ is the Elohem of the Old Testament. In the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Colossians he presents Jesus Christ in the full glory and wonderful antiquity of His Person as both the Creator, as the Divine Equal in His first form, and the Redeemer, in His second form as the Servant of God the Father.

As we approach this wonderful subject, we should mark this rule, when the Scriptures present A Divine Being in His seen form then He is Jesus Christ in the New Testament and Elohem or Yahweh-Elohem in the Old Testament. When the Scriptures present the unseen God this is Yahweh in the Old Testament Who is our Heavenly Father in the New Testament. We must recognize the unseen God, or the invisible God, as the God and Father of Jesus Christ. He will only be seen again after the Second Coming, and by the saints in the New Jerusalem.

Let me also remark this is one of the arguments used by Biblical Trinitarians against Sabellians and Unitarians. There is a Divine Being Who is visible and there is a Divine Being Who is invisible. Christ Jesus is the image of the invisible God.

Some of the Sabellians will try and tell us that the Father is not a Divine Being, but only the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ. With that false distinction in mind, please substitute the name Father with the name, Christ's Divine Nature, in the Sacred Scriptures and see what happens. Colossians 1 is a very good starting place to try the Sabellian rule and see again how their false reasoning fails.

**(Col 1:1 [AKJV]) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother,
2 To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

3 We give thanks to God even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

4 Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have to all the saints,

5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

6 Which is come to you, as it is in all the world; and brings forth fruit, as it does also in you, since the day you heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

7 As you also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;

8 Who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.

9 For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

10 That you might walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, to all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness;

12 Giving thanks to the Father, which has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

(Christ Jesus in His sacred and heavenly manhood is the image, the visible image of the INVISIBLE GOD. This is not true in His Deity, but in His Manhood. Furthermore please note that He is the same Being Who is both the Creator and the Redeemer. He is also the FIRST BORN OF ALL CREATION, but not in His deity, or He is not a BORN GOD, but He is a born or generation Son in His sacred and heavenly Manhood.)

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now has he reconciled

22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and blameless and unreprouable in his sight:

23 If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

24 Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God;

26 Even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

29 Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily.

First, we must consider the *Unseen God*, Whom we believe to be God the Father. He will be seen by all at the last day, but has not yet been seen except by our Lord Jesus Christ and his brothers and sisters in Him by eternal union.

I Tim. 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen.

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

On this matter Jesus stated:

Joh 6:46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

Joh 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

(Christ is the image of the Father, the Invisible God and bears His express essence, Hebrews 1. They are not the same Being, but Christ is in the Image of the Invisible God. Sabellians think they are saying something by claiming that Christ said that if you have seen Him, then you have seen the Father and this means they are one and the same Being rather than Christ being the image of the Invisible God.)

Our Lord Jesus Christ was with the Father before creation and was then taught by the Father.

When our Lord Jesus Christ, as the God-Man, stood face to face with the Father, John 1, the elect were then in eternal union with Him and then stood faith to face with their Father as they were in Christ Jesus when He did so!

1Pe 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

It must be evident that we cannot return to the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls unless we were there with Him before in our eternal union.

Jesus Himself stated of this wonderful union and teaching between the Father and the Son:

Joh 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Joh 5:20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

The Father's Generation and Teaching of His Son Before Creation

Prov. 8:22 The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

26 While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

27 When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:

28 When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:

29 When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

30 Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.

Christ then, before creation and during creation, delighted with the sons of men. These were the elect of God, given as sons and daughters from the Father unto the Son as His brothers and sisters.

Mic 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

The Seen God in the Garden of Eden

When Adam and Eve were in their original pure and unfallen state they did see God and enjoyed fellowship with Him. At this point we must note that the elect of God, in their pure natural state, as distinguished from their pure spiritual state, did see and enjoy communion with God.

Jesus made it clear that this was not the Father. We must here remember His words on this point:

Joh 6:46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

When the elect of God saw God in their pure and unfallen natural state in the Garden, they did not see the Father nor the Holy Spirit, but they did see the God-Man. He was then known as Elohem.

The Old Testament is Not Filled with Theophanies but with Christophanies

Christ Jesus Himself certain should know these wonderful truths and He said:

Joh 5:37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

Since no natural man has seen the Father or His shape or form, or heard His voice at any time, save the elect by their union with Christ, Who then did they see? Christ answers again:

Joh 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

We must remind ourselves that the elect of God did see the Father and did hear the voice of the Father, but only because of their union with Christ Jesus in His seeing the Father and hearing of the Father.

For example, the elect certainly did hear the Voice of the Father at the Baptism of Jesus Christ. But, they only heard His voice by their union with Christ and they shared in this wonderful blessing because of Christ and His standing with the Father.

Joh 14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

How then can these things be? Jesus answered again:

John 15:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The Unseen God is certainly God the Father. The Seen God is certainly our Lord Jesus Christ.

One more example then we shall move on.

Isa. 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

5 Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Who then did Isaiah see? John answers for us:

Joh 12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

We must remind ourselves again that we are not Tri-Theists any more than Christ Jesus was a Tri-Theist. We believe that in the Godhead

there are Three Distinct Beings, yet they are not separated but distinct. They are Three in One and One in Three, distinct but not separate.

Joh 14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Jesus Christ as the Father's Medium

When Jesus spoke *He was still the* MEDIUM OF THE FATHER'S WORDS AND WORKS. As the Incarnate Servant of the Father, Christ taught His people that He was the Father's Medium.

During Christ's personal ministry as the Servant of His Father He was still the Father's Medium just as He had been while He was the Divine Equal in His first form.

Christ Jesus was the Father's Medium for creation and redemption from the foundation of the world. In His first form *AS THE DIVINE EQUAL*, He was the Father's Medium.

Phil. 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Yet, in His second form as the Servant of His Father, He was still the Father's Medium and taught us so in John 14:10.

Wherever Jesus went and spoke the Father went and spoke through Christ Jesus! *They were never separated, but they were distinct!* Wherever the Lord Jesus went and worked great works, it was till the Father Who was working even during Christ's form of humility!

Christ Jesus everywhere and in all things has been and still is the Father's Medium. At the Last Day reprobate mankind will have to deal with the Father directly. It will be wonderful for the elect, and terrible for the Reprobates.

Eph 3:9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Re 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Col. 1:12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

19 For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell;

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

Christ Jesus, as the *IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD, IS ONE AND THE SAME AS BOTH CREATOR AND REDEEMER!* He was and now is in the Form of God as the Divine Equal!

Christ Jesus as the Image of the Invisible God is one and the same as both the Divine Equal and the Servant of Yahweh. *His forms have been different, but He is not different,* He is the same yesterday, today and forever!

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

Our Redeemer in His essential divine nature is the same as the Father and the Holy Spirit, He is both self-existent and immutable!

Mal 3:6 For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

This is not separation, but it is distinction!

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, *which is in the bosom of the Father*, he hath declared *him*.

While He walked on this earth Jesus was still in the Father's bosom.

Joh 14:11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

1Jo 2:24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

See our larger work on *The Forms of Jesus Christ*, prepared by the Ministering Brothers of The Old Faith Baptist Church.

We will now turn our attention to the *Seen God*.

Concerning the Seen God in the Old Testament

Our Lord Jesus Christ was often seen by the elect children of God, and often He had special and sweet communion with them. We are now dealing with the experiences of the Lord Jesus Christ as the SEEN Yahweh in the Old Testament after the fall of Adam and Eve into sin and ruin.

Please take the time to study the Sermons of S E Pierce dealing with *Christ in the Pentateuch* as found on Brother Leroy Rhodes' church site. Please take great delight in message 1.

The Seen God and the Giving of the Law

Before going any further let me suggest that each of us take a break and go to the Internet and search for this subject The Plurality of Yahwehs in the Psalms. The ancient Hebrew and ancient Greek Scriptures before the corrupted revision of the past few centuries carefully present a plurality of Yahwehs in the Book of Psalms and other places. For example:

The Yahweh said unto my Yahweh sit on my right hand until I make thy enemies thy footstool.

Having established from the teaching of Jesus Christ Himself that no man has ever seen the Father yet, but only the Son and the elect in Him, we can now ask **WHO THEN DID THE OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS SEE IF NOT THE GOD-MAN, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF?**

Joh 1:41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

Joh 1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

We have established from the very words of Jesus Christ and other inspired writers that no man has yet seen the Father. No man has yet heard His voice nor seen His shape at any time. The question then must be answered, **WHO DID THE OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS SEE?**

If Christ Jesus was not the Heavenly Man before His Incarnation, and if He did not exist except as God the Eternal Word, then Who did the Old Testament Saints see?

PLEASE NOTE THIS POINT WELL:

The God or Israel, or the Manifested God or Yahweh in the Old Testament is capable of being seen. How is He capable of being seen? Is the God of Israel any less of a God than the unseen God or the Father that Jesus said no man has ever seen?

It is our position that the Old Testament Saints did see our Lord Jesus Christ in His first form, that is, as the **DIVINE EQUAL,**

Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has appeared in two forms. The first is the divine equal. The second is as the servant of Yahweh.

We are not suggesting that Christ did in any way appear in the Old Testament in His *incarnate form*. He **did not** appear at anytime in His form as the Servant of Yahweh, **but He did always appear in the Old Testament as the Divine Equal.**

Christ Jesus had a glory given to Him by the Father from before the foundation of the world. This is the glory of His first form, the Divine Equal.

On Brother Leroy Rhodes's church site you will find the writings of that great old Particular Baptist writer of the early 1800s, S E Pierce. Please consider well Pierce's commentary on John 17. Brother John O'Brien placed this great old commentary into MS Word and in this form in MS Word it can be found.

S E Pierce rightly shows that the Being praying in John 17 is our Lord Jesus Christ as the MAN, the Mediator of the New Covenant.

I Tim. 2:5 For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

As the Man, Christ Jesus prayed unto His heavenly Father, He prayed for one wonderful event! Christ Jesus prayed in John 17 that He would return to the glory that He had with the **FATHER BEFORE THE WORLD WAS!** Notice also that this glory of Christ was a **GIVEN OR COMMUNICATED GLORY**. The Father gave this glory to Christ.

Christ returned to this glory after His resurrection. After Christ's resurrection He was again as He was before creation, in the glory the Father gave to Him before the world.

John 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Please notice again this is GIVEN OR COMMUNICATED GLORY FROM THE FATHER. Christ is not speaking of any essential Divine glory He had as God the Word, but rather a communicated or given glory from God the Father.

In Conclusion

In the Old Testament men and women often saw God and lived. They did not see God the Father, but God the Son, the God-Man Creator and Redeemer. They saw Him in His first form as the Divine Equal. They did not then see Him in His second form as the *Servant of Yahweh*, but in His pre-incarnate manly form, as the Heavenly Man. In this form He was then the Seen God.

The entire Old Testament is a presentation of the Seen God Who often times walked on this earth. This was Jesus Christ in His first form. The Old Testament is about Christ in His first form Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God for indeed He was divine by eternal union with the Godhead!