

received everlasting rule from the throne of God (see Daniel 7:13-14).

TEACHING ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY

In the Old Testament, the prophets were messengers of God. The authority for their words resided in God, and so they would frequently remind the people of this. Moses, furthermore, received the Law from God, and no good Israelite would think of revising it on their own authority. Jesus, on the other hand, spoke with an authority only God Himself could claim. While the prophets said, “Thus says the Lord!”, Jesus often said, “**Truly, truly, I say to you ...**” (John 1:51, 5:19, 10:1, etc.).

Also, Jesus claimed that His teaching fulfilled the Law given by God to Moses (see Matthew 5:17). Six times in His sermon on the mountain, **Jesus contrasted elements of the Law with His own teaching, given on His own authority.** Here is just one example: “*You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*” (Matthew 5:43-44).

Significantly, Jesus finished His sermon on the mountain with a warning that those who did not obey his words would face destruction (see Matthew 7:26-27). This parallels the judgement threatened to those who disobey the Law of God (see Leviticus 26:14-29; Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

That Jesus spoke in these ways did not go unnoticed by the people: *And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes* (Matthew 7:28-29).

THE WRITINGS OF ST. PAUL

In the Old Testament, God swore that every knee would bend before Him, and every tongue should confess Him. God said, *By myself I have sworn, from my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return: ‘To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear’* (Isaiah 45:23).

In the New Testament, these words are referenced by St. Paul, but Paul applies them to Jesus. In his letter to the Christian community in Philippi, he said, *At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Philippians 2:10-11).

Notice also that here St. Paul gives to Jesus the divine name, “Lord” — “the name which is above every name” (Philippians

2:9). In fact, Paul uses the divine name of “Lord” for Jesus almost constantly in his letters. St. Paul also spoke openly of the divinity of Jesus: Before taking human flesh, Jesus “*was in the form of God*” (Philippians 2:6); and “*in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily*” (Colossians 2:9).

“WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?”

“I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

The examples we gave above are **not even half** of the Biblical evidence for the divinity of Jesus. In truth, the New Testament of the Bible is full of such evidence. In the Gospel, Jesus asks His disciples, “*Who do you say that I am?*” (Matthew 16:15). What about you? Who do YOU think that Jesus is? If He calls you, will you follow Him?

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” (Revelation 3:20)

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The Divinity of Jesus in the Bible



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

“I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30)

EMMANUEL

Many people, religious and non-religious, misunderstand the identity of Jesus. Many believe that Jesus was a mere man, a great teacher, crucified by the authorities for His radical views. Many others believe that He was a kind of angel — a supernatural being created by God and sent into the world to teach us the way. Many of those who think these things about Jesus base their views, in one way or another, on the Gospels, or on the New Testament in general.

However, the testimony of the Bible is that Jesus Christ was not simply a creature — human or angel. The Bible teaches that Jesus was (and is) the divine Son of God, the eternal Word. It teaches that He is God in human flesh. Many people think that this teaching is seen only in a handful of places in the New Testament, and did not belong to the faith of the earliest Christians. This is not true. Many people think that among the four Gospels, only the Gospel of John teaches that Jesus is divine. This also is not true. The New Testament is *filled* with references to the divinity of Jesus Christ.

One reason that so many people are misled on this matter is because Jesus revealed His divinity to His disciples gradually, by actions as well as by words. He didn't often come out and simply say that He was God. But by speaking the way that He spoke, and acting the way that He acted, Jesus revealed to the people of His time (and to us today) that He is truly *Emmanuel* — God-with-us (see Isaiah 7:14).

How did He do this? In many different ways, Jesus made references back to Old Testament teachings about God, and applied them to Himself. In other words, the New Testament repeatedly portrays Jesus in ways that God was portrayed in the Old Testament. For example, in the Old Testament, God is depicted as calming storms, walking on water, appearing through clouds, forgiving sins, revealing laws for behavior, and, of course, receiving external signs of worship. All of these are recorded of Jesus in the New Testament. Let's look at these examples more closely.

CALMING THE STORM

In the Psalms of David, God commands a storm to cease: *Some went down to the sea in ships. ... [God] commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea. ... Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress; he made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed* (Psalm 107:23, 25, 28-29).

The Gospels record this same kind of event: *A great storm of wind arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the*

boat was already filling. But [Jesus] was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm (Mark 4:37-39).

Notice that Jesus did not pray to God the Father for the storm to cease. Moses accomplished a similar miracle when he divided the Red Sea, but he was totally dependent on God, following exactly each step as the Lord commanded him (see Exodus 14:15-16). In Jesus' case, He simply commanded the sea and it obeyed Him.

WALKING ON WATER

In the book of Job, the Scriptures speak of God as walking on the seas: *[God is the one] who alone stretched out the heavens and trampled the waves of the sea...* (Job 9:8).

In the Greek text, it states that God walked on the sea as though on dry ground. This actually happened in the first-century: *Immediately [Jesus] made his disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side. ... And about the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. He meant to pass by them. ... They all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart; it is I; have no fear"* (Mark 6:45, 48, 50).

If Job 9 says that God alone has walked on the waves of the sea, what are the Gospels suggesting when they record that Jesus did the same? The obvious conclusion is strengthened when we consider that Jesus "meant to pass by them," which is what God did when He manifested Himself to Moses and Elijah in the Old Testament, which we'll consider below.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

In the Old Testament, God manifested Himself on mountains, and through the mediating presence of a cloud, and through declaring His Name. All three of these come together when He appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai (Horeb) in Exodus 34: *The Lord said to Moses, "... Come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to me on the top of the mountain" ... The Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. The Lord passed before him* (Exodus 34:1-2, 5-6).

On the same mountain as Moses, Mount Horeb (Sinai), God appeared to Elijah: *And he said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and ... a still small voice. ... And behold, there came a voice to him* (1 Kings 19:11-13).

The experiences of Moses and Elijah are extremely similar. The Lord revealed His glory to Moses centuries before Elijah, proclaiming His Name. Both Moses and Elijah experienced a revelation of God on that mountain. Elijah did not see the face of the Lord, and neither did Moses.

All of this ties together with the Gospels. In Mark 9, Jesus journeys up a mountain, and reveals His glory: *Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them ... And there appeared to them Eli'jah with Moses; and they were talking to Jesus. ... And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him."* And suddenly looking around they no longer saw any one with them but Jesus only (Mark 9:2, 4, 7-8).

Immediately, the connections become apparent. God appeared in glory to Moses and Elijah on a mountain, and Jesus also appears in glory on a mountain to three disciples, in the presence of Moses and Elijah. To Moses, God appeared in a cloud and proclaimed His Name; and so too, a cloud appears at the mountain with Jesus, and the voice of the Father comes forth proclaiming the Name of Jesus His Son. At the Transfiguration, then, the divinity of Jesus was revealed.

An important difference, however, is that Moses and Elijah could not gaze upon God's face, lest they die. On the mountain with Jesus, however, they and the disciples beheld His face. Since God had become man, His face could now be seen in the face of Jesus.

FORGIVING SINS

In the Old Testament, no human being can forgive sins. Just as the only person who can forgive a cheating spouse is the spouse who was cheated on, so only God can forgive transgressions of His commandments. Consider this text: *To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness; because we have rebelled against him* (Daniel 9:9).

With this background in mind, consider this text from the Gospel: *They came, bringing to [Jesus] a paralytic carried by four men. ... And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."* Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, *"Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"* (Mark 2:3, 5-7).

Indeed: Who can forgive sins but God alone? In Jesus' response to the scribes who said this, He identifies Himself as "The Son of Man." In the Old Testament, the Son of Man is a mysterious figure *in the clouds of heaven* who