

# **The Word**

## **...From the Beginning**

**By Frank Borg**

# **The Word ...From the Beginning**

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## Chapter 1

# Traditional COG teaching on ‘Who is Christ’

**S**tudents of Herbert W. Armstrong will have been taught that God the Father and the Word both co-existed throughout eternity. The teaching is that *both* of these Personages had no beginning, and at some point in history God began to create by and through the Word. A few of the more common scriptures used to support this teaching will be outlined in this chapter, but discussed in more detail in the next two chapters. Notice the first of these scriptures used to support the teaching that God and the Word co-existed throughout eternity:

**“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jn. 1:1).**

As stated, the above scripture is one which has traditionally been used to prove that the Word, (who later became Jesus Christ), and God had no beginning and co-existed together. This is expounded upon in a number of Mr. Armstrong’s books, booklets and articles including *Mystery of the Ages* and *The Incredible Human Potential*.

Another scripture used to support the teaching that God and the Word co-existed throughout eternity is found in Hebrews 7, and reprinted hereunder:

“For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also

King of Salem, which is, King of peace; **Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually**” (vs. 1-3).

It was taught by Mr. Armstrong, and is still taught by the various offshoots formed from the former *Worldwide Church of God*, that Melchisedek was the Word in the Old Testament, the high priest to whom Abraham paid tithes. The fact that Hebrews 7:3 states that Melchisedek was “without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life” and “abideth a priest continually” was used by Mr. Armstrong to support the teaching that Melchisedek and the Word are one and the same, who co-existed with God throughout eternity. These scriptures and others will be discussed at length in the next two chapters.

To emphasize the point that God created all things in heaven and in earth by and through the Word, scriptures such as Col. 1:12-17 are used:

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: *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:* And he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:12-17).

Following are extracts from Mr. Armstrong’s book, *Mystery of the Ages*, which summarize the teaching being

discussed. This should help refresh in everyone's mind Mr. Armstrong's teaching on this subject:

“If you were asked where in the Bible to find the very earliest description of God in point of the time of his existence, you probably would say, “Why, in the very first verse in the Bible, Genesis 1:1, of course.” Right?

Wrong!

In time-order the earliest revelation of WHO and WHAT God is is found in the New Testament: John 1:1.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men” (John 1:1-4).

“The Word” in this passage is translated from the Greek *logos*, which means “spokesman,” “word” or “revelatory thought.” It is the name there used for an individual Personage. But who or what is this Logos? Notice the explanation in verse 14:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

When he was born as Jesus Christ, he was flesh and blood, materialistic and could be seen, touched and felt. But what was he? As God—as the Logos? That is answered in John 4:24, “God is a Spirit,” and spirit is invisible. We know what was his form and shape as the human Jesus. But of what form and shape was he as the Word? We will explain that later.

The Word, then, is a Personage who was made flesh—begotten by God, who through this later begetting became his Father. Yet at that prehistoric time of the first verse of John 1, the Word was not (yet) the Son of God. He divested himself of his glory as a Spirit divinity to be begotten as a human person. He was made God’s Son, through being begotten or sired by GOD and born of the virgin Mary.

So here we find revealed originally *two Personages*. One is God. And with God in that prehistoric time was another Personage who also was God—one who later was begotten and born as Jesus Christ. But these two Personages were spirit, which is invisible to human eyes unless supernaturally manifested. Yet at the time described in verse one Jesus was *not* the Son of God and God was not his Father”” (pgs. 40-41, *Mystery of the Ages*, softbound edition).

“...God the Father is Creator. But he “created all things by Jesus Christ.” Jesus is the Word. It is written, “He spake, and it was done” (Ps. 33:9). God tells Christ what to do (John 8:28-29). Jesus then speaks, as the workman, and the Holy Spirit is the POWER that responds and does what Jesus commands” (pg. 44, *Mystery of the Ages*, softbound edition).

Now that the reader has been briefly reminded of this subject as was taught by Mr. Armstrong, we will dedicate the rest of this booklet to further discuss the three scriptures listed in the opening of this chapter. We will also discuss many other scriptures, some of which were not referred to by Mr. Armstrong in connection with this subject. We will see that scriptures reveal much more, *deeper* understanding on who and what the Word is! The Truth you are about to prove with your Bible has not been understood until now in the detail in which

it is presented in the next two chapters. Get ready to understand *the Word...from the beginning!*

## Chapter 2

### From the Beginning

**T**he Bible has much to say about the Word, who later became Jesus Christ through a human begettal. Many do not realize it, but there are many scriptures which discuss the Word and God at the time *prior* to the creation of the heavens and the earth. It seems that the majority of God's people have perhaps overlooked most of these scriptures, or have not understood them. It is vital that we dig deep into scripture and allow God to communicate His Truth to us on that which there is need to know on the subject of the Word and His relationship with God. As God deepens our understanding on the Being known as the Word, we also deepen our understanding on God the Father! Through this study of scriptures on this subject, we will understand God and the Word as never before! God the Father is offering His people the opportunity to deepen His and Christ's relationship with us and vice versa.

In this chapter, we will take a look at a number of scriptures which reveal deep Truth about the Word, and His relationship with God *prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth*.

#### **Biblical details about the Word/Jesus Christ**

In Revelation chapters 2 and 3 we learn a number of details about Jesus Christ. These two chapters contain messages which Christ *Himself* delivers to the seven congregations: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. In the message to the Ephesus Church we are told that Jesus Christ walks in the midst of the seven congregations indicating that He leads His true people (Rev. 2:1). In the message to Smyrna we are told that He is the "first and the last,

which was dead and is alive” demonstrating that He is the whole, from beginning to end, and that He is the first of the firstfruits having been resurrected from the dead (Rev. 2:8). Revelation 2:12 begins outlining the message to Pergamos, in which we are told that Christ “has the sharp sword with two edges”, or that He is the One who has and delivers God’s Truth (Jn. 17:17). To Thyatira, Christ is described as the “Son of God who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet like fine brass” (Rev. 2:18). Sardis is told that Christ “has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars”, implying His power and fullness of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 3:1). The Philadelphia Church is told that Jesus Christ is holy, true, has the Key of David, opens that which no man can shut and shuts that which no man can open, revealing that He administers God’s government (Rev. 3:7). We are then told something *very* interesting about Christ in the message to Laodicea. Notice the latter part of Revelation 3:14 in reference to Jesus Christ:

“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, **the *beginning*<sup>G746</sup> of the creation of God**”

Did you notice what is stated in this verse? Read it again! Revelation 3:14 states that Jesus Christ is the witness for God and His truth; it also tells us that Christ is “**the *beginning*<sup>G746</sup> of the creation of God!** This last part of the verse should, like a bolt of lightning, strike all those who believe that Christ co-existed with God the Father throughout eternity! Why? Because this part of scripture unequivocally goes against that teaching! Understand: Revelation 3:14 tells us that Christ was “the *beginning*<sup>G746</sup> of the creation of God”, clearly revealing that the creation *began* with Christ! Jesus Christ “the *beginning*<sup>G746</sup> of the creation of God”! Does not this communicate to us that the Word was a *created* Being? If this is proven to be the case, would that not mean that He did *not* co-exist with God throughout eternity? How often have many of us read through this scripture, yet been blinded to its simple

and straightforward meaning because of the preconceived idea that the Word co-existed with God throughout eternity? How many have read through this verse and simply not believed it? Now is the time to take notice and search the scriptures to see if other sections of the Bible confirm this Truth and discuss it in more depth!

### **Strong's 746 = first in sequence**

Before moving on to other sections of scripture, let us first focus on that which is stated and revealed in Revelation 3:14, study it and then verify it with other verses in the Bible to ensure and confirm its accuracy. Remember: Revelation 3:14 tells us that Christ is “the *beginning*<sup>G746</sup> of the creation of God”. We cannot just skim over these clear words and ignore them simply because they might not conform with what we might already believe! The word “beginning” in Rev. 3:14 is translated from the Greek word “arche” and is listed as number 746 in Strong's concordance. Strong's gives the following definition for the word “arche”:

**“a commencement, or (concrete) chief (in various applications of order, time, place or rank): - beginning, corner, (at the, the) first (estate), magistrate, power, principality, principle, rule”.**

With this definition in mind, we can see that Rev. 3:14 clearly communicates to us that, *in order of time, Christ is the very first of God's creation*. This is a powerful scripture with deep meaning! It tells us that Christ is the *commencement* of God's creation. We are told that Christ is the *beginning* or the *first* of God's creation in order of time! Who can argue with such clear communication from Almighty God?

To further confirm that the word “beginning” (Strong’s 746) in Revelation 3:14 reveals that Christ was the “first” (in time order) of God’s creation, we shall take a look at a few scriptures where the word “beginning<sup>G746</sup>” is more accurately translated as “first” in the New Testament. Notice the following scriptures:

“And the angels which kept not their **first**<sup>G746</sup> estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto judgment of the great day” (Jude 1:6).

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the **first**<sup>G746</sup> principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Heb.5:12).

“This **beginning**<sup>G746</sup> of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee [*referring to Christ’s first miracle during His earthly ministry, that of turning water into wine*], and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him” (Jn. 2:11).

By now there should be no doubt in the readers’ mind that Revelation 3:14 means exactly what it states, that *Christ is the first<sup>G746</sup> of God’s creation!* This signifies that the Word is a *created* Being! However, students of the Bible will know the importance of searching the scriptures to ensure that there is more supporting evidence. One verse in the Bible is not enough on which to base a teaching. We must search the scriptures and collect all that is relevant to a subject in order to clearly understand God’s communication on that subject.

## “Appointed”

We will search the Word of God to ensure that what is translated in Revelation 3:14 is in fact an accurate translation and is supported by other scriptures. As we continue this study, the reader will realize that there are many more scriptures in the Bible which confirm that the Word is a created Being. This may come as a shock to many, but is nonetheless what the Bible reveals – and we must believe God’s clear communication (Jn. 17:17). Notice what is stated in Hebrews 3:

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that **appointed**<sup>G4160</sup> him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house” (vs. 1-2).

Here, scripture tells us that Jesus Christ was faithful to God His Father “who **appointed**<sup>G4160</sup> Him”! To understand the deep meaning being communicated to us in this verse we must understand that the word “appointed” is a regrettable translation for the word “made”! The word “appointed” in verse 2 is translated from the Greek word “poieo” and is number 4160 in Strong’s concordance. Significantly, the word “poieo” is *only* translated as “appointed” in Hebrews 3:2 and is nowhere else translated as such, which clearly indicates that it is a mistranslation. In other verses “poieo” is translated as “make, made, do or bring forth”! Again we will state: nowhere else, other than in Hebrews 3:2, is the Greek word “poieo” translated as “appointed”! Notice the following definitions for this word “poieo” (number 4160) given to us in Strong’s concordance:

“to **make or do** (in a very wide application, more or less direct)... appoint... **bring (forth)**...cause, commit...

**execute... make... provide... purpose... raising up... yield”.**

This definition given in Strong’s continues to clarify what is stated in Hebrews 3:2 that God the Father “*made*” Jesus Christ! God the Father “brought forth, executed, purposed, raised up” Jesus Christ! With this in mind, Hebrews 3:1-2 could read, “...Christ Jesus, Who was faithful to Him who *made* <sup>G4160</sup> Him...”. Scripture is so plain when we allow it to interpret itself.

To completely and irrefutably prove that the word “appointed<sup>G4160</sup>” should be translated as “made<sup>G4160</sup>” in Hebrews 3:2, let us notice a few examples of Bible verses where this word is translated as “made”. These examples will continue to solidify the fact that the word “**appointed**<sup>G4160</sup>” is used in Hebrews 3:2 to convey the Biblical fact that Christ was *made*<sup>G4160</sup> or created:

“And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast *made* <sup>G4160</sup> heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is” (Acts 4:24).

“God that *made* <sup>G4160</sup> the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands” (Acts 17:24).

“And he answered and said unto them, have ye not read, that he which *made* <sup>G4160</sup> them at the beginning *made* <sup>G4160</sup> them male and female” (Matt. 19:4).

“But from the beginning<sup>G746</sup> of the creation God *made*<sup>G4160</sup> them male and female” (Mk. 10:6).

“Saying with a loud voice, fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that *made*<sup>G4160</sup> heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (Rev. 14:7).

“For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree *bring forth*<sup>G4160</sup> good fruit” (Lk. 6:43).

There are many other scriptures recorded in the Bible, which confirm that the word “appointed<sup>G4160</sup>” as translated in Hebrews 3:2 literally means “make, made, bring forth<sup>G4160</sup>”. We will take a look at one final example to make this Biblical point. Hebrews 1:2 states:

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath *appointed*<sup>G5087</sup> heir of all things, by whom also he *made*<sup>G4160</sup> the worlds”.

Did you notice that in the above verse the word “appointed<sup>G5087</sup>” (Greek: “tithemi”) is used, and so is the word “made<sup>G4160</sup>” (Greek: “poieo”)? This verse compares and contrasts these two words, which helps us to clearly and further understand that the Greek word “poieo<sup>G4160</sup>” should have been translated as “made<sup>G4160</sup>” in Hebrews 3:2 and *not* as “appointed”. If God did not want to demonstrate the idea that Christ was a created Being, then He would have no doubt inspired the Greek word “tithemi<sup>G5087</sup>” to be used instead of the word “poieo<sup>G4160</sup>”! Notice Hebrews 3:1-2 again:

“...consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that *appointed*<sup>G4160</sup> Him...”

With the Biblical proof that we have discussed on the Greek word “poieo” (Strong’s 4160), it should be abundantly clear that the true intent of what is stated in Hebrews 3:1-2 should be better translated as:

“...consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that *made*<sup>G4160</sup> Him...”

The Greek Interlinear Bible is extremely clear in its translation. Notice Hebrews 3:1-2 as recorded in the Greek Interlinear Bible:

“...Christ Jesus, faithful Being to the One *making* Him...”

The scriptures discussed above continue to prove that Jesus Christ is a *created* Being! God the Father *created* the Word who later became Jesus Christ! However, there is more overwhelming proof on this subject which is embedded in scripture. As we prayerfully study this subject, we must keep an open mind and allow God to direct us through His communication.

## Proverbs 8

Proverbs 8 is a very revealing passage of scripture when discussing the subject of the Word as a created Being:

“The LORD *possessed*<sup>H7069</sup> me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. *I was set up* from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, *I was brought forth*; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills *was I brought forth*” (Prov. 8:22-25).

The vocabulary used in the above passage clearly demonstrates that whatever is being discussed was “set up” and “brought forth”. When one reads the whole of chapter 8, it becomes clearly evident that the subject being discussed is the “Word”. To prove this Biblical fact, we will look into the rest of Proverbs 8 as we proceed. Before doing that, let us first of

all consider the verses listed above. The first word which should grab our attention is the word “possessed”. Proverbs 8:22 states: “the Lord *possessed*<sup>H7069</sup> me”. What exactly does this mean? Strong’s gives us the following definition for the word “*possessed*” (**number 7069**):

“A primitive root; **to erect**, that is, **create**, by extension **to procure...**”.

With this definition in mind, Proverbs 8:22 could be more clearly translated as, “The Lord **created**<sup>H7069</sup> me in the beginning of His way...”. God “**possessed**<sup>H7069</sup>” the Word: God “**created**<sup>H7069</sup>” the Word! The Word (who later became Christ) was “set up” “from the beginning” as it states in verses 22 and 23. Proverbs 8:22-25 is repetitive so that God’s people understand this clear Truth. These verses state that the Word was “set up”, “brought forth” or “**created**” before anything else. He was “the *beginning* [or first] of the creation of God” just as it states in Revelation 3:14.

Following are a few different Bible translations of Proverbs 8:22-25 that offer tremendous clarification on the point here being discussed. Notice:

**“The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works**, before his deeds of old; **I was formed long ages ago**, at the very beginning, when the world came to be. When there were no watery depths, **I was given birth**, when there were no springs overflowing with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, **I was given birth...**” (*New International Version*).

**“God sovereignly made me—the first, the basic—before he did anything else. I was brought into being a long time ago, well before Earth got its start. I arrived on the scene** before Ocean, yes, even before Springs and Rivers and Lakes. Before Mountains were

sculpted and Hills took shape, I was already there, newborn..." (*The Message Bible*).

**"The Lord formed and brought me forth** at the beginning of His way, before His acts of old. **I was inaugurated** and ordained from everlasting, from the beginning, before ever the earth existed. When there were no deeps, **I was brought forth**, when there were no fountains laden with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, **I was brought forth...**" (*Amplified Bible*).

"From the beginning, I was with the LORD. I was there before he began to create the earth. **At the very first, the LORD gave life to me.** When **I was born**, there were no oceans or springs of water. My birth was before mountains were formed or hills were put in place" (*Contemporary English Version*).

**"The Lord made me** the beginning of his ways for his works. **He established me** before time was in the beginning, before he made the earth: even before he made the depths; before the fountains of water came forth: before the mountains were settled, and before all hills, **he begets me**" (*Septuagint*).

**"The Lord made me** as the start of his way, the first of his works in the past. From eternal days I was given my place, from the birth of time, before the earth was. When there was no deep **I was given birth**, when there were no fountains flowing with water. Before the mountains were put in their places, **before the hills was my birth...**" (*Bible in Basic English*).

The above verses simplify, further explain and define the original Hebrew text through a number of different Bible translations, that the Word was a *created* Being. Each

translation adds clarity and deepens the meaning of these inspired verses. We need to deeply think about what is being communicated to us in these verses: they state that the Word was created as the first of God's works. The Word was created before anything else was created. The Amplified Bible translation tells us that the Word was formed and brought forth! God gave life to the Word before anything else (NIV)! Clearly, the Word was a created Being.

Of course, some may raise the valid point that Proverbs 8 is discussing Wisdom. However, we must understand that scripture also clearly reveals that Jesus Christ *is* Wisdom! Notice the following scriptures which confirm this:

“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, ***Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God***” (1 Cor. 1:24).

Jesus Christ is the Wisdom of God! Proverbs 8:22-25 is referring to the creation of the Word! Notice another verse confirming that Jesus Christ is Wisdom:

“But of him are ye in **Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom**, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30).

We must continue studying and discussing further verses in Proverbs 8 because they elaborate and clarify this subject:

“Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was ***I brought forth***: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave

to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, **as one brought up**<sup>H525</sup> with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him” (Prov. 8:25-30).

The above verses communicate that the Word was *brought forth* (or created) at some point in history *before* the heavens, the earth and anything in them was created (vs. 25). We are told that God created the heavens, the earth and all that is in them through the Word (Prov. 8:27; Eph. 3:9 etc). Proverbs 8:30 communicates that the Word was “as one brought up<sup>H525</sup>” by God. Strong’s helps us understand the phrase: “as one brought up<sup>H525</sup>”. We are told that this is referring to being “trained, skilled” as an “expert”, “workman” or “architect”. Let us understand this enlightening Truth which God is opening up to His people: The Word was “brought forth” and personally trained by the God who created Him to be a skilled architect and workman (Strong’s 525)! The Word was trained in the way that He should go (Prov. 22:6), and the Word Who was later born on this earth as Jesus Christ *never* departed from it (Prov. 22:6)! The Word (later born as Jesus Christ) demonstrated absolute and unwavering loyalty, love and unity to God His Father, just as a loyal son would demonstrate loyalty, love and unity to his parents! The Word was a “delight” to His Father, “rejoicing always before Him” (Prov. 8:30). God trained the Word in the way that He should go and His Son never departed from it. God trained the Word in every possible way, including architecture<sup>H525</sup>! Scripture tells us that *the Word is a master architect!* Notice the following Bible translations of Proverbs 8:30 which correctly and clearly communicate the intended meaning of the verse originally inspired in the Hebrew language. This verse, as do many others in Proverbs 8, also confirms that what is being discussed has to do with a created Being – the Word:

“Then *I was beside Him as a master craftsman*, and I was daily His delight...” (*New King James Version*).

“*I was the architect at His side*. I was his constant delight...” (*New Living Translation*).

“Then *I was by him, [as] one brought up [with Him]*: and I was daily [His] delight...” (*World English Bible*).

“Then *I was by Him [His] nursling*, and I was daily his delight...” (*Darby Bible translation*) [**Note: Nursling = “a little baby at the breast”**, *Encarta dictionary*].

By piecing the various scriptures together we are told that the Word was created (Rev. 3:14; Prov. 8:22-25 etc), and was trained by God as a master craftsman and architect Who was constantly by His side (Prov. 8:30). Before the heavens, earth, and all things that are in them were created, the Word was created and was daily the delight of God! From the moment the Word was created, He was beside God being taught and trained by Him. After God created the Word and trained Him, God began creating all things through the Word (Eph. 3:9). What a wonderful, detailed picture is being shown to us by God the Father! God the Father is the Supreme God Who first created the Word, and then created all things through the Word.

## **In the Beginning**

Now let us discuss the first two verses in John 1. These verses state:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (Jn.1:1-2).

Verse 1 starts out by using the phrase “*in the beginning*”. We have traditionally believed, and many still teach, that these first two verses in John 1 reveal that God and the Word both co-existed in eternity. This is a false assumption and is not a true representation of what is stated in this scripture! Why? Because *eternity has no beginning* - yet John 1:1 specifically refers to *a beginning*! This verse must be referring to a specific time in history, otherwise it would not refer to a “beginning”. To understand the time setting of this verse, we need to understand what scripture means by the phrase “in the beginning”. Strong’s Concordance tells us that the phrase “the beginning” would be better translated as “*a beginning*”. “A beginning” is being referred to in John 1:1! Whenever a “beginning” is mentioned, it would have to refer to a *specific* time in history. Whichever way one looks at it, the “beginning” discussed in John 1:1 has to have a starting point which has a definite time, otherwise it is not a “beginning”. **The “beginning” discussed in John 1:1 is simply referring to a specific time in history when God and the Word were both in existence.** Therefore, it must be referring to a time after the Word was created. This verse does not indicate that both God and the Word co-existed throughout eternity! It simply does *not* state this!

It seems logical and obvious that the “beginning” discussed in John 1:1 is the “beginning” discussed in Genesis 1:1. There is *nothing* in scripture to make us think differently. Notice what is stated in Genesis 1:1:

“In the *beginning* God created the heaven and the earth”.

The “beginning” discussed in Genesis 1:1 is referring to the beginning of the creation of the heavens and the earth. This is “a beginning” – it is referring to a specific time in history! As Herbert W. Armstrong correctly stated over several years, the word “God” in Genesis 1:1 is translated from the Hebrew word

“Elohim<sup>H430</sup>”, a uniplural word such as the word “church”. “Church” is a singular word, but is plural in form (i.e. one church [singular] is made up of many members [plural]). This is the same with the Hebrew word “Elohim”. “Elohim” is a singular word, but plural in form indicating that at the time being referred to in Genesis 1:1, there were two Personages. Evidently, Genesis 1:1 is very closely linked with John 1:1. John 1:1 tells us that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God” – *two Personages!* Genesis 1:1 defines the term “in the beginning”, stating that it is referring to the time when the heavens and the earth were created. Genesis 1:1 also tells us that God<sup>H430</sup> (Elohim, more than one Being) created the heavens and the earth. We know that the word “Elohim” indicates more than one Personage. John 1:1 not only confirms this, but also states that “in the beginning”, (i.e. when the heavens and the earth were created), there were *two* Personages: God and the Word – just as Genesis 1:1 infers through the uniplural Hebrew word “Elohim”! Is it not overwhelmingly clear that Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1 define each other? Is it not so obvious that both scriptures refer to the same time in history? Is it not so clear that John 1:1 defines the uniplural word for “God” (Hebrew: Elohim), which is used in Genesis 1:1 confirming that there were *two* God Beings in the beginning, when the heavens and the earth were created? John 1:1 does not tell us that God and the Word co-existed throughout eternity! In fact, there is not a single verse in the Bible to indicate that God and the Word co-existed throughout eternity. Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1 merely state that at “a beginning” – at a certain time in history when the heavens and the earth were created – there existed two God Beings, God the Father and the Word.

Notice the following scripture which defines “*beginning*” as having a starting point with a definite time:

“The Lord possessed (*made*) me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, ***from the beginning, OR ever the earth was***” (Prov. 8:22-23).

Since we know that God created all things in heaven and on earth through the Word, (Jn. 1:3, Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:16 etc), the “beginning” spoken of in John 1:1 is, of course, referring to a point in time after the Word was created but prior to the creation of all other things including the heavens, the earth and all that is therein. “The beginning” discussed in Genesis 1:1 and John 1:1 is evidently referring to the same point in time in history - a time *after* the creation of the Word.

## **One God**

We have already seen a number of scriptures which communicate the fact that the Word is a created Being. Now we will see that God the Father is the only true, original God who has inhabited eternity. He has no beginning and no end. As we discuss some verses which confirm these statements, the Truth that the Word is a created Being is further given irrefutable Biblical support.

Notice carefully what is stated in the following scriptures:

“And ***this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God***, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (Jn. 17:3-4).

Christ is here confirming that there is one “only true God”. Statements such as this are found throughout the four gospels and in other books of the New Testament. However, as we have just seen, in John 17:3-4 Christ makes a clear connection

between “eternal life” and the one “only true God”. Referring to God the Father, Christ states: “*this* is life eternal” (vs. 3)! These words indicate that God the Father is the only one true God who is *eternal*, indicating that the Father is the only Being Who has life without beginning and without end. *God the Father is eternal* (Deut. 33:27 etc), while *Jesus Christ is everlasting* (see Is. 9:6)! Let us be sure to understand: scripture indicates that God the Father is the only God *who existed in eternity* (and has no beginning), while the Word is a created God Being (therefore has a beginning) and is lower in rank. In John 17:3-4 Christ is evidently contrasting the life of the Eternal Father with that of the Everlasting Christ: God the Father’s life is without beginning and has no end (i.e. He is *eternal*, Deut. 33:27), while Christ’s life is with beginning but has no end (i.e. He is *everlasting*, Is. 9:6). Scripture indicates that God the Father created the Word as a God Being. The Bible is replete with scriptures which communicate this Truth to us.

Notice another scripture in 1 John 5, which correlates with John 17:3:

“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, **that we may know him that is true**, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true<sup>G228</sup> God, and eternal<sup>G166</sup> (perpetual) life**” (vs. 20).

Jesus Christ came to this earth to give us a deeper understanding about the Father Who is eternal, which means that He is without beginning and without end. While Jesus Christ was created in the image of God, as a God Being, *only God the Father is eternal!* We must understand that God the Father is eternal (Deut. 33:27) and Jesus Christ is everlasting (Is. 9:6).

Notice a few other scriptures which expand on this Truth:

“For **there is one God**, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5).

Let us take a look at what Christ Himself stated about His Father and God *after His resurrection*:

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, **I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God**” (Jn. 20:17).

The apostle Paul clearly understood this concept and expounded upon it in His writings. Notice what he wrote in 1 Corinthians 8:

“As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that ***there is none other God but one***. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us ***there is but one God, the Father***, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Cor. 8:4-6).

Is it not so clear that there is one true, original God who inhabits eternity? In the above verses Paul clearly stated that “there is none other God but one...*the Father*”. James 2:19 corroborates:

“Thou believest that there is **one God**; thou doest well”.

Notice Ephesians 4:4-6:

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, **One God and Father of all**, who is above all, and through all, and in you all”.

*God the Father is the Father of all*, including Jesus Christ. The fact that Christ is called the Son of God indicates that the Son was created by the Father. Let us think about this on the physical level: the word “son” indicates “offspring”. A father and mother who give birth to a son have their blood running through that son. He is a part of them; they had a part in his “creation”. The son is their offspring. When a son is born into a family, his parents had a part in “making” that son; had he not come out of them he would not be their true son! This is the same with the Word who later came to this earth as Jesus Christ. The fact that He is called a Son indicates that He is the “offspring” of His Father, and thus created by Him. If He was not a created Being, as many believe, then Christ should perhaps be more appropriately known as a brother to the Supreme God! Why call Him a Son if He did not come out of Him, or if He was not created by God (the Father)? As already stated, if He is not an offspring of the Father, then He would not be called a Son, but a Brother! Of course, this is a preposterous claim because we know that Christ is the Son of God (Matt. 4:3, Matt. 8:29, Matt. 14:33 etc). The point being made is that, as scripture attests, the Word was created by God and is thus appropriately known as His Son (*or His offspring*). We do not know for sure, but God the Father may have very possibly taken a part of Himself to create the Word, just as God took a bone out of Adam to create Eve. In this way the Word, was created in the express image of the Father.

### **Express *image* of God**

Hebrews 1 gives us more information that sheds light on this subject that Christ is a created Being. Notice:

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, **and the express image of his person**, and upholding all things by the word of his power, **when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty** on high; **Being made so much better than the angels**, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (vs. 1-4).

There are three phrases in the above verses, which have been bolded for ease of reference. These phrases need to be discussed in some detail as they help us to understand this subject further. Notice:

**1) In Hebrews 1:3 we are told that Christ is the express image of God.** We need to think about what this means. The word for “image” in verse 3 is 5481 in Strong’s. Strong’s gives us this information:

“From the same as G5482; a *graver* (the tool or the person), that is, (by implication) *engraving* ([“character”], the *figure* stamped, that is, an *exact copy* or [figuratively] *representation*): - express image.

Here God the Father is stating that Christ is the *image* and the character of God. Strong’s further tells us that Christ is an “image” or “*exact copy*” of God the Father. A “copy” of something is not the original – *it is a copy!* The point here being made is that the supreme God was the “engraver” (Strong’s 5482) Who created an “exact copy” or “exact representation” (Strong’s 5482) of Himself. Again, a copy is a duplicate or a reproduction of the original. In this case, the

Word is the copy of God the Father; He is created in the express image of the Father.

2) Hebrews 1:3 also states: “***when Christ had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high***”. If we understand what this is saying we would realize that it was *after* Christ’s sacrifice, (after His physical life, death and resurrection), that He qualified to sit down on the right hand of God the Father. This would imply that *before* this took place, as the Word, Christ was *not* qualified to sit down on the right hand of God. If, as some believe, Christ co-existed with God throughout eternity, if He had equal character to God, if He was equal to God in every way (except in rank), would it not seem strange that the Word had to come to this earth as Jesus Christ to qualify before He could sit on the right hand of God the Father? The fact that we are told that it was *after* Christ’s sacrifice, death and resurrection that He could sit on the right hand of the Majesty on High should make us think! Why, even though He enjoyed the glory of being the other Personage in Elohim (Jn. 17:5, Jn. 13:31) could He not sit on the right hand of God *before* He came to this earth? After all, students of Mr. Armstrong were told that before the Word was made flesh He was equal to God in every way except in rank, so why could He not sit on the right hand of God *before* His earthly sacrifice, death and resurrection? Why would Christ have had to go through His human life and suffering in order to sit on the right hand of God? Is this not further proof in itself that the Word is a created Being who *had to* come to this earth to prove Himself and qualify in order to sit down on the right hand of God, and to inherit all things? We will ask again: If the Word was not a created Being, had co-existed with the Father throughout eternity, and was equal to the Father in every way other than in rank, why would He have had to become human, go through so much suffering and death before being able to sit on the right hand of the Father? We will discuss this further.

The first chapters in the book of Zechariah in the Old Testament discuss Joshua the High Priest. The *Faithful Church of God in Laodicea* has published a booklet which explain the scriptures discussing the identity of Joshua. In the booklet we prove with irrefutable scriptural support that Joshua the High Priest, spoken of in the book of Zechariah, is in fact representative of Jesus Christ. (Please download, or ask for, your free copy of the FCGL booklet entitled “*The end-time Joshua*”). Joshua (or Jesus Christ) took on the sins of the world represented by the filthy garments discussed in Zech. 3:3, and after doing so died for the remission of the sins of mankind. After Christ’s perfect sacrifice for mankind, God the Father removed the filthy garments from Him (Zech. 3:4), and clothed Him with clean ones and set a mitre upon His head (Zech. 3:5). Then, in Zech. 3:7, God the Father tells Christ the following:

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts [*referring to God the Father*]; If <sup>H518</sup> [*if = SINCE*] thou wilt walk in my ways, and if <sup>H518</sup> [*if = SINCE*] thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by”.

This ties right in with Hebrews 1:3, which is discussed above! After Christ proved Himself by overcoming and conquering Satan the devil here on this earth, and by demonstrating that He walked in God the Father’s ways and kept His charge (Zech. 3:7), and “when Christ had by himself purged our sins” (Heb. 1:3), God the Father told Christ that He would *now* judge His house (Zech. 3:7) and sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on High (Heb. 1:3). This is clear indication that Jesus Christ *had to* come to this earth to prove Himself and qualify in order to inherit all things! He would not have had to prove Himself or qualify had He not been a created Being, just as God the Father did not have to prove Himself because He is not a created Being! If the Word co-existed with God throughout eternity and was equal to Him in character, the

Word would not have had to prove Himself by divesting Himself of His glory, coming to this earth, conquering Satan and dying! He would not have had to do that to prove Himself and qualify, just as God the Father did not need to prove Himself and qualify! Can you see how scripture demonstrates a distinct difference between God and the Word, which difference further supports the understanding that the Word is a created Being? Notice Rev. 3:21-22:

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, *even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* He *that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*”.

Christ overcame! He came down to this earth to do that (Matt. 4). As He overcame He qualified to sit down with the Father on His throne (Rev. 3:21). Human beings are also offered this outstanding opportunity if we too overcome and conquer. The point being discussed here is that Jesus Christ had to overcome and qualify! If the Word co-existed with God throughout eternity and was equal to Him in every way (except in rank) why would He have needed to overcome and qualify? The reason is that the Word was a created Being, and because of that He *needed* to qualify!

However, we must never lose sight of the vital truth that Jesus Christ took on the sins of mankind. He was the perfect sacrifice – the perfect Lamb without blemish – who, without sin could take on the sin of mankind and pay the penalty in its stead, making it possible for mankind to be forgiven of sins and to be born into the Family of God! Being created a God Being, and then as a man living a sinless life, only Christ was able to do this for mankind – this is why He is our Savior.

**3) Hebrews 1:4 states Christ “being made<sup>G1096</sup> so much better than the angels”.** This phrase possibly also indicates that

Christ was “created” – He was created better than the angels! Notice how the word “made” is applied in the following scripture, perhaps giving us more clarity as to its meaning in James 3:9:

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are *made*<sup>G1096</sup> after the similitude of God” (Jn. 1:3).

In this chapter we have referred to and discussed a number of scriptures, which clearly communicate that the Word is a created Being. He is the Son, or the offspring, created in the image of God the Father. He is a perfect *copy* of the Father. He was evidently created at some point in history prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth, and we know this because at the time of the creation of the heavens and the earth both Beings were in existence (Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:1). After the Word was created, all things from that point forward were created through the Word (Eph. 3:9). Jesus Christ had to then come down to this earth to prove Himself and to qualify to sit on the right hand of God (Zech. 3:7; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 3:21 etc). Jesus Christ is also our Savior who, as the perfect Lamb without blemish, took it upon Himself to die for the forgiveness of our sins!

### **Consider**

After having discussed so many scriptures on this subject, we would like to leave the reader with a final thought for consideration.

It is a Biblical fact that God cannot dwell with sin. God is righteousness and He will not dwell with unrighteousness. Given this Biblical fact, it is also clearly understood that God the Father will not come to this earth until after all the elements are burnt up. Only once there are new heavens and a new earth will God the Father come to this earth (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

Let us think about this logically: if both God and the Word co-existed in eternity, and were equal to each other in every way other than in rank, would it not seem strange that God would have sent the Word to this earth? If both God and the Word were equal in every way other than in rank, why would the Father have expected the Word to come to this earth and take on Himself the sin of mankind? If God the Father cannot dwell in sin, how could the Word come to this earth, surround Himself by sin and then take on man's sin on Himself? Would not the criteria regarding dwelling and being in the presence of sin be the same for both of the God Beings – God and the Word? Would not the Word coming to this earth, while God the Father being absolutely unable to come to this earth because of sin, be a case of two weights and two measures – unless the Word was a created Being who had to come to this earth to qualify? Why could one God Being come to this earth while the other God Being be unable to come until the elements are burnt up (2 Pet. 3:10-12)? The answers to these questions should offer tremendous clues and help clarify the subject being discussed in this booklet. The answers to the questions just listed should clearly indicate that God created the Word Who then had to come down to this earth to learn obedience by His suffering (Heb. 5:8) and to qualify and perform the sacrifice of taking on the sins of mankind and paying the penalty in our stead (2 Cor. 5:21).

Placing all the scriptures on this subject together, it seems clearly evident that although God the Father inhabited eternity He created the Word at “a beginning” prior to the creation of the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1; Jn. 1:1). After that, through the Word, God created *everything else* – all things – including the heavens, the earth, the angels, human beings, animals and all else as we are told in John 1:3, 10; 1 Cor. 8:6, Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:15, Heb. 1:1-2 and more. God created all things through and by the Word. Four thousand years after mankind was created, the Word came down to this earth as Jesus Christ to qualify and also die for the forgiveness of sins

of mankind, making it possible for mankind to also enter into the God Family.

### **Created God vs created human**

At this juncture, an explanation should be given to address the difference between “being made God”, just as the Word was, and “being made human with the potential to be born of God” just as we are. Some may ask: why did God not create us all into the God Family, as spirit Beings, rather than create us human with the potential to be born into His spiritual Family? This may also be even better rendered: why was it necessary for the Word to be created God before being born Man? These are good questions!

Please study the following two points, which discuss the reasons why the Word *had to* be created God and *then* come down to this earth. Once we understand this, the above questions become easy to answer. Notice:

a) The Word, created God, meant that He (*the Word*) enjoyed divine glory (Jn. 17:5), but was not of the same rank as God the Father. The Word, as God, could not sin (1Jn. 3:9; 1 Jn. 5:18). However, to reach His full potential, *the Word had to prove Himself by choosing God’s way of life*. To do this He had to be divested of His glory, come down to this earth and choose God’s way of life for Himself. Notice:

**“Who in the days of his flesh...learned<sup>G3129</sup> (*understood*) he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect<sup>G5048</sup> (*being made complete*), he became the author of eternal<sup>G166</sup> (*better translated “everlasting”*) salvation unto all them that obey him” (Heb. 5:7-9).**

The Word had to come to this earth to completely understand<sup>G3129</sup> and prove His obedience “by the things which

He suffered”. Scripture tells us that this experience *completed*<sup>G5048</sup> (perfected<sup>G5048</sup>) the Word. The Word, who became Jesus Christ through His human begetting, was made perfect<sup>G5048</sup> (*complete*<sup>G5048</sup>) by the things which He suffered and experienced on this earth (Heb. 5:8-9). Throughout His physical lifetime, Christ was subject to the pulls of the flesh, yet He overcame and absolutely proved His unwavering loyalty to God the Father by *choosing* not to sin (Matt. 4:1-11; Heb 4:15 etc); *this* made Him complete (Heb. 5:9). Having enjoyed the glory of God from the moment He was created, it would have been unthinkable for Christ to choose a life contrary to God’s way while He was on this earth, which would have deprived Him from returning to that glory – yet He still had to prove Himself through *choice* as do all humans beings created in the image of God. Christ proved Himself through the choices which He made on this earth!

As Mr. Armstrong taught for many years, the one thing that God cannot create by fiat is character! This is why, as a created Being, the Word *had to* come to this earth and prove Himself through *choice*. Scripture clearly tells us that Christ was in all points tempted, yet is without sin (Heb. 4:15). Through right choice, Christ proved Himself perfectly! Notice what Christ said in John 16:33:

“...be of good cheer; *I have overcome*<sup>G3528</sup> *the world*”.

Christ stated that He overcame<sup>G3528</sup> the world. In other words He conquered<sup>G3528</sup> and gained victory<sup>G3528</sup> over the world. This is what He came to do. This is how He proved Himself and became complete (Heb. 5:7-9). He had to gain the victory<sup>G3528</sup>! It was after His earthly experience that Christ reached His full potential and *now* sits on the throne with His Father (Rev. 3:21), judges His house and keeps His courts (Zech. 3:7) in full glory.

b) The Word was also *sent* down to this earth because of God’s love for us; to make possible a larger spiritual Family of God.

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Being *created* God, the Word was perfect. During His physical lifetime Jesus Christ *chose* to be perfect, which *completed* Him (Heb. 5:7-9). This qualified Him to be our Saviour. Our future in the God Family hinged on this! After living a sinless life, in perfect obedience to the Father, Christ was able to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind through death. Notice:

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that **he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins**” (1 Jn. 4:10).

“For **he hath made**<sup>G4160</sup> [*created*] **him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him**” (2 Cor. 5:21).

Scripture does *not* indicate that the Word came to this earth through consensus between Him and God the Father, as many have traditionally believed. Scripture clearly tells us that God the Father *created* the Word (2 Cor. 5:21 etc.), and at a later time *sent* His Son to this earth (1 Jn. 4:10) so that He could be the propitiator for our sins. Christ had to go through this experience so that *our* incredible human potential could be realized in our lives. It is through Christ and His sacrifice that many sons are brought unto glory (Heb. 2:10).

To recap: the Word, who was created a God Being, has a special relationship with the Father. However, it is evident through scripture that the Word still *had to* come down to this earth to (1) prove Himself and qualify (Heb. 5:7-9; Rev. 3:21 etc). This made Him complete *through choice* (Heb. 5:9). He was also created to (2) be a Saviour for mankind. After living and enjoying the glory of God for eons the Word came to this earth, took on human form and paid the penalty in our stead so that mankind’s sins may be forgiven (1 Jn. 4:10; 2 Cor. 5:21etc).

In His plan to create a spiritual Family, God the Father first created the Word ensuring that there was a Saviour, one High

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priest (Heb. 5:5; Heb. 9:11) who is the clear Head of the wife (Eph 5:23; Col. 1:18; Col. 2:19) and who will always have the preeminence (Col. 1:18). This is why the Word had to be created God before being born of Man! Later, God created mankind. As humans, we have the opportunity to *choose* God's ways, grow in character and prove ourselves loyal to the Father before being born into His spiritual Family (just as Christ did during His time on this earth). The proven 144,000 firstfruits will fulfill the role of the wife of Jesus Christ in the God Family (Rev. 14:1-4), submissive to her Husband and to God the Father who is supreme in authority.

The steps God has meticulously taken by first creating the Word, and then us in human form (before being born into His spiritual Family) leaves no room for any grey areas as to the government structure and our position within His Family: Christ is the Head and Savior of the wife, His Body (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). The firstfruits, as the wife, will be a helpmeet to her Husband, Jesus Christ.

What a magnificent plan our awesome God has put in motion to increase His Family!

## Chapter 3

### Melchisedek

In chapter one of this booklet, we were reminded that one of the main sections of scripture used to support the teaching that the Word co-existed with God throughout eternity is found in Hebrews 7 regarding Melchisedek. In this chapter we will take a close look at the relevant verses in Hebrews 7 to understand exactly what is being communicated. We must look at these verses and study them with an open mind, ensuring that preconceived ideas do not cloud God's communication. Notice Hebrews 7:

“For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; *Without father, without mother, without descent*, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; *abideth a priest continually*” (vs. 1-3).

Those who believe that God and the Word co-existed throughout eternity teach that Melchisedek was the Word in the Old Testament, the high priest to whom Abraham paid his tithes. Because of what is stated in verse 3 about Melchisedek not having father or mother, and being without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, many believe that this is proof enough to state and believe that the Word lived in eternity with God. As we proceed, we will see that the Apostle Paul was here communicating something different to this theory which is believed and accepted by many.

#### **Without father, mother or descent?**

Notice the following phrases which appear in Heb. 7:3:

Without father = Strong's 540  
= of unrecorded paternity

Without mother = Strong's 282  
= of unknown maternity

Without descent = Strong's 35  
= unregistered as to birth

Taking into account that which Strong's explains on the vocabulary used in these phrases, it could be easily deciphered that what is being stated in Hebrews 7:1-3 is not that Melchisedek was *literally* without father or mother, but that *his parentage was not recorded and neither were the details surrounding his birth*. This is an important fact, which must be realized if we are to understand God's communication on this subject! Due to the fact that in his time Melchisedek, in a sense, appeared out of nowhere, no one knew his father, his mother or anything about his lineage. This was a strange thing for the Hebrews of Melchisedek's time, since being in the priesthood required a record of lineage. This is the thought that being conveyed in Hebrews 7:1-3. The phrase "abideth a priest continually" in verse 3, would no doubt be referring to the "order" of Melchisedek, the priesthood which we are told would abide continually and never die out, *just as the priesthood of Jesus Christ*. Notice Psalm 110:4:

**"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, *Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek*".**

In this sense *only* was Melchisedek referred to as being "made like unto the Son of God". The order of Melchisedek would abide continually, just as the priesthood of Jesus Christ. It must be pointed out that although most *assume* that Melchisedek was Christ, *nowhere* does it state this in scripture! Melchisedek was "made like unto the Son of God" in the sense that his priesthood would go on for ever just like that of the

Son of God. Melchisedek was made “like unto the Son of God” who also “abides a priest continually”!

Notice the following extracts from a few commentaries on this verse, which completely coincide with what scripture is stating:

Gill’s Commentary on Hebrews 7:3:

**Without father, without mother, without descent...** is to be understood not of his [Melchisedek’s] person, but of his priesthood; that his father was not a priest, nor did his mother descend from any in that office; nor had he either a predecessor or a successor in it, as appears from any authentic accounts: or this is to be interpreted, not of his natural, but scriptural being; for no doubt, as he was a mere man, he had a father, and a mother, and a natural lineage and descent; but of these no mention is made in Scripture, and therefore said to be without them; and so the Syriac version renders it; "whose father and mother are not written in the genealogies"; or there is no genealogical account of them.

Barnes commentary on Hebrews 7:3:

**Without father** - ...there is no evidence that Melchizedek was “fatherless”... It was very important in the estimation of the Jews that the line of their priesthood should be carefully kept; that their genealogies should be accurately marked and preserved; and that their direct descent from Aaron should be susceptible of easy and certain proof. But the apostle says that there was no such genealogical table in regard to Melchizedek. There was no “record” made of the name either of his father, his mother, or any of his posterity. “He stood alone.”... The meaning of the word rendered “without father” here is therefore, “one the

name of whose father is not recorded in the Hebrew genealogies.”

**Without mother** - The name of whose mother is unknown, or is not recorded in the Hebrew genealogical tables...there is no reason to doubt that Melchizedek had an ancestry as honorable as other kings and priests of his time. The simple thought is, that the name of his ancestry does not appear in any record of those in the priestly office.

**Without descent** - “Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life.” ...The obvious meaning of the phrase is, that in the “records of Moses” neither the beginning nor the close of his life is mentioned. It is not said when he was born, or when he died; nor is it said that he was born or that he died. The apostle adverts to this particularly, because it was so unusual in the records of Moses, who is in general so careful to mention the birth and death of the individuals whose lives he mentions. ... It “cannot” be that he [*Paul*] meant to say that Melchizedek had “no beginning” of days literally, that is, that he was from eternity; or that he had “no end of life” literally, that is, that he would exist forever - for this would be to make him equal with God. The expression used must be interpreted according to the matter under discussion, and that was the office of Melchizedek “as a priest.”

**Abideth a priest continually** - The expression, “abideth a priest continually,” therefore, is equivalent to saying that he had a “perpetual priesthood” in contradistinction from those whose office terminated at a definite period, or whose office passed over into the hands of others.

Ungers Bible Dictionary has a very simple and straight forward commentary on Melchizedek. Notice:

....The relationship between Melchizedek and Christ as type and antitype is made in the Epistle to the Hebrews to consist in the following particulars:

Each was a priest:

- (1) not of the Levitical Tribe
- (2) superior to Abraham
- (3) whose beginning and end are unknown
- (4) who is not only a Priest but also a King of Righteousness and Peace

"Without Father" Heb 7:3 refers to Priestly Genealogies.

Melchizedek is not found on the register of the only line of Legitimate Priests. No record of his name is there: his Father's name is not recorded, nor his Mother's, no evidence points out his line or descent from Aaron. It is not affirmed that he had no father, that he was not born at any time, or died on any day; but that these facts were nowhere found on the register of the Levitical Priesthood.

The above commentaries from which we quote, clearly demonstrate that Melchisedek was a man that did have a father, mother, birth and death date. The explanation for Hebrews 7:3 is that there was no actual record of this information, which was not normal for Jewish priesthood practice. In Hebrews 7:3, Paul compares the fact that the office of priesthood through the order of Melchisedek is perpetual, just as is the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Paul injects the thought that because of this resemblance, Melchisedek "was like unto the Son of God".

What wonderful understanding God has given His people on the subject of "The Word...from the beginning". This understanding also gives us a clear and deep perspective on

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God the Father that He alone inhabits eternity and has no beginning or ending.

All God wants us to do is believe Him and His communication via the Holy scriptures!

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We are here to help! Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions. Our address is: Faithful Church of God in Laodicea, P.O. Box 31135, Edmond, Oklahoma 73003, USA. Email: [mail@menofsign.org](mailto:mail@menofsign.org). Our web address is: [www.fcogl.org](http://www.fcogl.org)