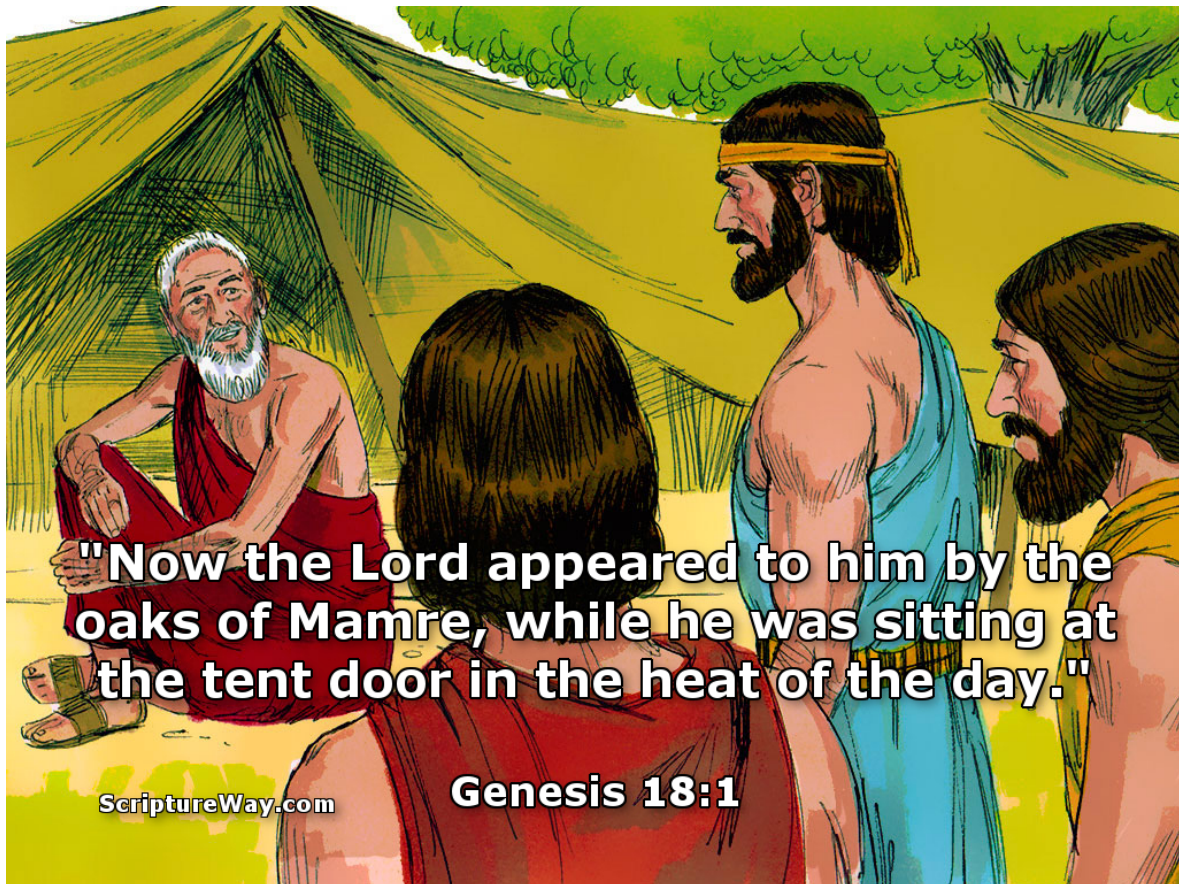


“Jesus Christ, the Visible Expression of God”

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***"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."
(Colossians 1:15)***

"And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power." (Hebrews 1:3)

This lesson teaches that when God has been visible to people in the Old and New Testaments, it was God the Son, the timeless second person of the Trinity.

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Consider. Although the Father is unseen, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the visible expression of God throughout the Old and New Testaments.

1. No one has seen the Father except Jesus Christ, God's Son.

In John 6:46, Jesus said, "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father."

2. The Son was with God from the beginning and was God.

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

3. In the Old Testament, when God visibly appeared to people it was God the Son.

In the Old Testament, when God visibly appeared to people it was God the Son, the timeless, pre-incarnate second person of the trinity. Consider the following examples from scripture. Note where the One appearing is interchangeably called the "Angel of the Lord," "Lord," and "God."

Hagar -- Genesis 16:7-13

Abraham -- Genesis 17:1-22, Genesis 18:1-33

Moses -- Exodus 3:1-6, 13-15 (burning bush, John 8:58), Exodus 13:17-22 (pillars of cloud and fire), Exodus 33:9-11 (face to face), Exodus 33:17-23 (Moses sees the Lord's back)

Gideon -- Judges 6:11-24

Manoah and his wife (Sampson's parents) -- Judges 13:2-24

Elijah -- 1 Kings 19:9-18 (the Lord speaks with Elijah)

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4. In the New Testament, God the Son was visible as a man, fully God and fully human.

He became flesh ("Incarnation"). "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

He was fully God and fully human. "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. (9) *For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,* (10) and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority" (Colossians 2:8-10, italics added).

He was and is the visible image of God. "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation" (Colossians 1:15).

Helps Word-studies tells us, "*Image* then exactly reflects its *source* (what it directly corresponds to). For example, *Christ* is the very *image*, (supreme expression) of the *Godhead* (see 2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15)" (Ref. 1).

Jesus said to Philip, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9)

He was seen, heard, and touched by mankind. "What was from the beginning, *what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands,* concerning the Word of Life— (2) and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us" (1 John 1:1-2, italics added).

He was and is the exact representation (character) of God. "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, (2) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (3) And He is the radiance of His glory and the *exact representation of His nature,* and upholds all things by the word of His power" (Hebrews 1:1-3, italics added).

The Greek word translated as *exact representation* in Hebrews 1:3 is *charaktér* (Ref. 2). Christ exactly represents and reflects the character of God because he is God.

Let us be thankful that we have a God who has visibly revealed himself to us in his Son, Jesus Christ. Out of God's great love for us, Jesus the Son of God, fully God and fully human, gave his life as a sacrifice to atone for our sins. Let us listen to him that we may understand God's character. Let us believe in him that we may have eternal life (John 3:16).

Apply. Believe in (put your faith in, put your confidence in) the Lord Jesus Christ, who was and is the visible expression of God to mankind.

References

1. <https://biblehub.com/greek/1504.htm>
2. <https://biblehub.com/greek/5481.htm>
3. <http://www.scriptureway.com/home/jesus-is-the-son-of-god-not-just-a-great-teacher>
4. <http://www.scriptureway.com/home/who-is-jesus>

For Additional Reading

For additional reading about Jesus as the eternal Son of God, I suggest these articles:

- "Jesus is the Son of God - Not Just a Great Teacher" (Ref. 3)
- "Who is Jesus?" (Ref. 4)