

A Study of the Preexistence of Christ According to the Jehovah's Witnesses and Its Evaluation

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Abstract

Jehovah's Witnesses' view regarding the preexistence of Christ is slightly different with many Christian denomination. Mostly Christians are believed that Jesus is co-eternal to the Father and same nature with Him. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to explore the main teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses regarding their understanding on the preexistence of Christ then followed by the evaluation on it. In order to understand the view of Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) on the preexistence of Christ and its evaluation, this study use qualitative study through gather and study the JW views from their literature and studies that has been study on it and also from the Biblical perspectives. The study found that for Jehovah's Witnesses Christ was exist prior to His incarnation but not co-exist with the Father. Christ is only begotten son of the Father as the first creation and Father endowed Christ the divinity. However, the Bible itself described that Jesus was with the Father from eternity, they are co-eternal. Christ already exist prior His incarnation. Jesus was with the Father, and Holy Spirit.

Key Words: *Pre-existence, First Creation, Begotten,*

Introduction and Background of the Study

Mostly Christians believed and accepted the preexistence of Christ. Christ is co-equal and eternal with the Father. Jehovah's Witnesses also believed in the preexistence of Christ prior to His incarnation. However, their perspective on Christ's preexistence differs slightly from that of many Christians

When we are studying at the doctrine of Christ chronologically, the natural place to begin is a study of the preexistence of Christ. Throughout the history of Christianity, the most basic doctrine of Christian faith is the pre-existence of Christ. The understanding of this teaching becomes the basis of all Christian doctrines regarding the Christology. Christ's incarnation, resurrection, and His atonement as our high priest are nothing without Christ preexistence.

Since Christ's preexistence has been taught since the beginning of the early church and reaffirmed by the New Testament (NT) authors, the acceptance or rejection of this doctrine affects the Christology as a whole, as well as our general understanding of Christianity. The traditional teaching is that Christ pre-existed before he became human as Jesus of Nazareth. The Godhead preexisted before the incarnation, and God the Son is the second person of the Trinity.

This doctrine of Christ's preexistence explains why the incarnation is an expression of God's love for fallen humanity.¹ Christian philosophers, dating back to Paul, were compelled to believe in Christ's preexistence by their understanding of who Jesus of Nazareth was and what he became at his resurrection. A doctrine of incarnation required preexistence. The developing understanding of the NT writers can be seen in the sending statements of the synoptic, the Johannine prologue, 2 Cor 8:6, Gal 4:4, Phil 2:6–11 and Hebrews 1, to list only the most prominent passages.²

However, in the present day, Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) as the supporter of Arianism³ has several objections to the traditional teaching of Christ's preexistence. They argued that, Jesus had a glorious existence long before He was born in Bethlehem. He is the only one directly created by Jehovah God. All others creatures come into existence through Him as God's agent. Although divine, Jesus Christ is not equal to the Father.⁴

Many studies have been done on the evaluation of Jehovah's Witnesses view Christology but not specifically on the Christ's pre-existence. For example, Ramos focused on the Soteriology⁵ and Robert focused on the doctrine of God as a whole not specifically on the preexistence of Christ and its evaluation.⁶ Therefore, it is interesting to study and to evaluate the preexistence of Christ according to Jehovah's Witnesses view. The primary goal of this research is to investigate the main teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses about their interpretation of Christ's preexistence, followed by an assessment from the biblical perspective particularly on the meaning the first born

¹McCready, Douglas, He Came Down from Heaven: The Pre-existence of Christ Revisited, (*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 40/3, Sept 1997), 419-432

²*Ibid.*, 422.

³Arius (260-336) believed that only the Father was absolute unchanging eternal, unbegotten. Based on Proverbs 8:2. He concluded that Jesus was the begotten son, created out of nothing, far back in eternity. God was not the Father, but a solitary God. After the Father Created Him, Christ gradually, over time, became God. Arian theology makes Christ a created being, he was not an eternal God like the Father. He was separate from the Father just as all creations are separate from the Creator. Arius concluded that Christ could not be eternal because the nature and attributes of the Monas (God). See, Robert A. Morey, *The Trinity: Evidences and Issues* (Iowa Falls, IA.: World Pub., 1996), 472. Today, the word "Arianism"

is an all-embracing term denoting any and all anti-Trinitarian theological systems which deny the deity of Christ and the personhood and deity of the Holy Spirit. While this definition does not fit all the various stages and phases of the long history of Arianism, it is generally true today. It encompasses the entire religious spectrum from modern Liberalism to Jehovah's Witnesses. See Robert A. Morey, *The Trinity: Evidences and Issues* (Iowa Falls, IA.: World Pub., 1996), 478.

⁴Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Kingdom is at hand, God be True*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1944), 46-47.

⁵Carlos in his dissertation evaluated the Christology of the Jehovah's Witnesses view in relation to the soteriology. The main purpose of this study is to evangelize Jehovah's Witnesses through their view of Christology and Soteriology. Ramos, Jose Carlos, "A People Waiting for Salvation: A Biblical Evaluation of Watchtower Christology and Soteriology with Suggested Strategies for the Evangelization of Jehovah's Witnesses" (1984). *Professional Dissertations DMin*. 217 <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/dmin/217>

⁶Taber, Robert S., "A Critical Study of the Jehovah's Witnesses Doctrine of God" (1953). *Western Evangelical Seminary Theses*. 225. https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/wes_theses/225

and begotten that pointed to Jesus

This paper wants to answer the following question: What is the understanding of the preexistence of Christ for Jehovah's witnesses? is the JW view on the preexistence of Christ compatible with Biblical data?

Method

In order to answers those questions, this study use qualitative analysis. Thus, this study is conducted through gathering and studying the JW views from their literature and other sources related to this topic. The analysis involves the use of documents from different context and times which are considered as relevant supply materials.

Historical Background of Jehovah Witnesses and Their View on the Preexistence of Christ

Throughout the history of Christianity, the most basic doctrine of Christian faith is the pre-existence of Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses as the International Association of Bible Students is the descriptive name for a group that emphasizes teachings about Jehovah's divinity and purpose. Taze Russell has often been referred to as "Russellite" since the group was founded in 1874. As they admit, the name of Jehovah's Witnesses comes from Isaiah 43: 1011. "You are my witness and the servant of my choice," Jehovah replied. "I myself am Jehovah, and there is no Savior beside me."

Moreover, Jehovah's Witnesses are not well-organized religious groups and do not carry out missions, churches, or regular worship. Its members usually travel to sell or distribute literature widely while promoting their education.⁷They have a publisher in Brooklyn, New York known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.⁸

Jehovah's Witnesses emerged from the Millerite moves of the 1840s.⁹ The characterized via way of means of persistent date of putting for the very last events. The final date set changed into 1914. Unfortunately, the failed of their prediction, while Jesus did now no longer come 1914, they started to educate that He got here in spiritually in place of bodily. The Witnesses repudiate the doctrine of the Trinity. They educate Christ changed into handiest a created being a great man. They believed that Jesus Christ will become spirit on the dying and he does now no longer upward thrust bodily from the grave.

There is one personality that has become very important in the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses. This is the first Charles Taze Russell born on February 16, 1852 as a Presbyterian church by the father of the founder of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was in 1870 that Russell first contacted Adventist and learned the doctrine of Jesus' Second Coming every day.¹⁰In July 1879, Russell discovered the Watchtower Society, not

⁷Jeremias S. Vitto, *A Thesis; Comparative Study of the Christology of Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists*, 1973), 23.

⁸Robert A. Morey, *How to Answer a Jehovah's Witness* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1980), 9.

⁹David A. Reed, *Answering Jehovah's Witnesses: Subject by Subject*, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997, c1996), 20.

¹⁰Allan Rogerson, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd. 1969), 29.

wanting to be remembered as an Adventist or mirror.¹¹ He was supposed to offer Jesus in 1914, but Jesus stopped coming to and died in 1916. The following year, Rutherford was elected the new president of the company. While running the company, the company chose the name "Jehovah's Witnesses." After Rutherford's death in 1942, he was taken over by Nathan H. Nour and attended Gilead Bible School in South Lansing, New York.¹²

Jesus Pre-existence

Who is Jesus exactly? This is the most important question ever for Christianity, and the solution is closely related to philosophical terminology. The Watchtower Society, also known as Jehovah's Witnesses, has responded in heaven to the existence of Jesus since 1884. Millions of Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Watchtower position is undoubtedly true and that dissenting opinions are wrong. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Christ existed before mankind and claim:

Jesus had a glorious existence long before he was born as a human here on earth. The Bible informs us that He is God's "first born son", created by Jehovah God. All other things came into existence through Him as God's Chief agent. Thus, before being born as a male child He served in the heaven where He was known as "the word" God's spokesmen. (John 1:3, 10, 14; Col.1:15-17).¹³

The Nature of Christ Preexistence

Jehovah's Witnesses accept the pre-existence of Christ. But when Jehovah's Witnesses comment on their relationship with his father, they feel they are not of the same nature. Jesus' predecessor is never accepted as the existence of his father. For them, the existence of the Word must be with God from the beginning to point to the beginning of Jehovah's creative work. The Bible corrects that Jesus was the first creation and born son. Like his God, eternal coexistence with his father is denied. He was the existence of God, but not Almighty God.¹⁴

First Creation

According to Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesus was the first intellectual being created by Jehovah. Jehovah God created Jesus as a divine spirit at some point before creation. "This means that he was created before all the other spirit sons of God, and that he is the only one who was directly created by God"¹⁵ The Gospel of John pays attention to

¹¹David A. Reed, *Answering Jehovah's Witnesses: Subject by Subject*, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1997, c1996).

¹²Edmond C. Gruss, Ed, *The Four Presidents of the Watch Tower Society (Jehovah's Witnesses)*, (USA: Xulon Press, 2003), 37-45.

¹³Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life.*(Brooklyn, NY: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1968), 47-48.

¹⁴Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Aid to Bible Understanding.* Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1997), 918.

¹⁵Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth.* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1982, 58.

the prehuman existence of Jesus as a "word" or a spokesman for God. John says. "In the beginning it was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God. It began with God." (John 1: 1, 2) Because Jehovah had no beginning, "The existence of the word "from the beginning" must point to the beginning of God's creative work. (Psalm 90: 2) Jesus is "the firstborn of all creation." Therefore, it existed before the creation of the physical universe with other spirits.¹⁶

Moreover, In His preexistence, Jesus was known as "the Word" (John 1:3,10,14) because He was God's spokesman, according to the Watchtower Society. He is also identified by Jehovah's Witnesses with Michael the archangel. "Reasonably, then, the archangel Michael is Jesus Christ. So, the evidence indicates that the Son of God (Jesus) was known as Michael before he came to earth"¹⁷.

Moreover, only the thighs. The Tower claims that Jehovah controls everything else in the universe on behalf of Christ before humans. He is also the Son of the "Only Son" God, in the sense that he is the only one directly formed by Jehovah God. Everything else was brought through him as God's chief agent.¹⁸ On the other hand, this agent should not be confused with God's co-creator. "But he did not become a co-creator of his father just because his son participated in the process of creation. He was an agent or tool on which the Creator Jehovah worked."¹⁹

What was the birth of Jesus? In form it was not the beginning of his existence. He lived long before the universe was created. He lived in Bethlehem with his father long before he was born. The fact that Jesus was recognized by most Christians throughout history with his disciples as Jesus Christ, the Savior, the Savior, and the Son of God, although there are many clear texts in the Bible of his existence, He was born, a man who had existed immeasurably before.²⁰

Only Begotten Son

Jehovah's Witnesses acknowledge Christ's preexistence; however, they believed that the Father is not equal with Christ. The Father is greater than the Son of God as they say

The head of every man is Christ and the head of Christ is God. Christ and His body and Christ regarded as one. They are all one in agreement, purpose, and organization. If this were not logical conclusion Jesus would never say: "My Father is greater than I "and therefore not my will, but thine be done." Hence all, including Jesus are in complete subjection to the great head, almighty God. (John 14:28; Luke 22:42).²¹

¹⁶Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Watch Tower*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 2000, 12 February), 11

¹⁷Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Reasoning from the Scriptures* [Reasoning] (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1985), 218.

¹⁸Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life* [Truth] (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1968), 47.

¹⁹Watchtower Bible and Tract society (*Aid to Bible Understanding*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1971), 918

²⁰Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Your Will be Done on Earth* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1958), 282.

²¹Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Let God be True*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1946), 104.

They also believed that only Jehovah God had immortality. As a reward for his faithfulness on earth, Jesus Christ is the first creature to achieve immortality.²² The price of faithfulness is immortality Jehovah's reign challenged by Satan.²³

This is like Lucifer's son shows that he wanted to sin in the same place. "Because God's most born son, the Word, Lucifer, was the first-born prince of all creation, they could be called the" morning stars, and they worked together for a long time.²⁴ Lucifer turned into created without delay after the Word.²⁵ Therefore, for Jehovah's Witnesses, God to begin with had sons: the Word and Lucifer who, due to his rebellion, have become Satan. Thus, the pre-incarnate Christ is provided via way of means of Jehovah's Witnesses as a heavenly being with a advanced position, however basically and extensively identical with any angel together with Lucifer and now no longer being identical to Jehovah God.

However, Jehovah's Witnesses acknowledge that Christ is eternal. The eternity of Christ eternity is not equal to the Father. The Father has no beginning and without the end, whereas Jesus Christ is only begotten son which directly created by the Father as His first born. They state that the Christ is eternal in His relation to the human being.

From all of the shows above it's far clean that for Jehovah's Witnesses Christ is created being, subordinate and not as good as the Father as Jehovah God. This coaching is a reappearance of the coaching of Cerius with inside the fourth century of the Christian era. It changed into Arius taught that Jesus did as soon as upon a time now no longer exist. His stay changed into derived from God and the nice God's creation, which have become instrumental in growing all matters with the aid of using Almighty Jehovah strength conferred to Him.²⁶ He is a god no God and He isn't Jehovah, the Father most effective is Jehovah. We might now no longer worship Him, simply the Father.

Christ' Nature of the Earthly Existence

Jehovah's Witnesses furthermore teach regarding the Earthly Jesus Existence is different from all Christianity commonly. According to Jehovah's Witnesses understanding, Christ became now no longer an incarnation in flesh, however became flesh, a human son of God, a really perfect guy, now no longer a spirit²⁷, even though having a non-secular or heavenly beyond and background.²⁸ Since Jesus turned into now no longer God however a god in His preexistence and due to the fact, there has been no incarnation definitely, He turned into now no longer a God-guy on earth. He turned into now no longer a hybrid heavenly and earthly creature. He turned into a

²²Ibid, 74.

²³Ibid, 29,30.

²⁴Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The New World*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1942), 18. See also *Truth*, p. 52. The very term Lucifer is applied both to Satan and to Jesus. Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Babylon the Great Has Fallen! God's Kingdom Rule!* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1963), 314,676.

²⁵Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The New World*, 17.

²⁶Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Make Sure all Things*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1965), 283-284.

²⁷Jehovah's Witnesses claimed that Christ before man was spirit who created by God. They denied that Christ has physically formed. After resurrection Jesus become spirit.

²⁸Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Kingdom*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1965), 49.

natural guy His existence pressure has been transferred from heaven with the aid of using the brilliant of the spirit of the Almighty God. He turned into no incarnation of a heavenly person, no incarnation of the Word of God however as John said clearly. The Word have become flesh and are living among us, and we had a view of His glory, the honor that belongs to the handiest begotten son of the father.²⁹ Therefore, for JW, the incarnation of Jesus proved that Jesus not equal to the Father, He was only son that lived among His fellow human.

Moreover, For Jehovah's witnesses the phenomenon of God's incarnation as a human is a lie. They assume that the title son of God given to the third Jesus in this world is a gift from God. God persisted to be His direct Father and he persisted to be God's handiest begotten Son.³⁰ This Miraculous was also responsible for the human perfection of Jesus.

Furthermore, it is thrilling to notice that the Witnesses practice Isaiah 53:10-12 "there was a toddler born to us, there was a Son given to us, and the princely rule will emerge as upon His shoulder. And His call might be referred to as Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of peace," to Jesus. They referred to as Jesus is Eternal Father. However, with-inside the equal book, they believed that Christ might be Eternal Father. For them, they referred to as Jesus as Eternal Father associated with His earthly children, to whom He will become Father by way of His sacrifice, need to accept possibility to stay all the time on a non-violent earth below His princely govern. However, that statement only applies to Jesus in connection with his humanity where He became the second Adam. So, for Jehovah Witnesses Christ is only begotten Son who in heaven was a mere angel, in his earthly life was only a mere perfect man, a second Adam and also while Jesus on the earth, thought a perfect man, possessed more than human ability, He can foretell the future as the Messiah and the Son of God.³¹

Christ Existence Post-Ascension

The Witnesses believed that Almighty God intervened and raised Jesus from the lifeless now no longer as human flesh, however as an excellent spirit.³² His resurrection turns into the channel of God's eternal lifestyles for mankind³³and while He resurrected from the useless, He turns into as immortal individual with-inside the Spirit Son.³⁴

Furthermore, the Witnesses said that right now after the ascension, Jesus seemed earlier than the Great maker of the brand-new covenant. He provided to Jehovah God the fee of His Human blood, the equal of an excellent human lifestyle. God exalted Jesus to be better than He became earlier than He lived and died as man.

²⁹Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Things In Which It is Impossible For God to Lie*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1965), 231.

³⁰Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *God's Eternal Purpose Now Triumphant for Man's Good*, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1974), 75,76

³¹Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *In the Bible Really the Word of God*, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1969), 120.

³²Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *New Heaven and Earth*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1957), 179.

³³Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Nations Shall Know that I am Jehovah*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1971), 338.

³⁴Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Life Everlasting in Freedom of Sons of God*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1953), 105.

However, even though He became exalted certainly creations, but He nevertheless remained not as good as the Father with-inside the identical manner He became in His pre-human existence. Though inferior and subordinate to Jehovah God on His being and nature, Jesus have become the top of all complete universes. He has become once more Michael and the Word. He is ruling the universe beneath neath Almighty Jehovah God³⁵ and believed that Jesus did not take His human body to heaven³⁶

We may conclude as connected with Jesus' Ascension, when Jesus ascended to heaven as glorious spirit and without body and still inferior and subordinate to the Father. All powers and authorities granted by Jehovah God unto Him as His son. He started ruling the universe after His ascension.

Pre-existence of Christ in Old Testament and New Testament

The Old Testament emphasizes Christ's preexistence. Micah describes the Messiah as someone who existed before his birth at Bethlehem Ephrathah, "whose origin is from of old, from ancient days" (Micah 5:2) or "from everlasting" (Micah 5:3). (KJV). The same anticipated Messiah is described by Isaiah as "Wonderful Counselor" and "Prince of Peace," as well as "Mighty God" and "Everlasting Father" (Isaiah 9:6).

The doctrine that the Son of God existed before He was born in Bethlehem and "descended" from heaven, where He had shared the Father's glory from all eternity, is essential to our understanding of His identity and work. It emphasizes that his birth is more than just the birth of a child. It pointed out that his birth was not just the birth of a great man, but a person who identified with God in the most intimate way.³⁷

Identity of Christ Preexistence in Old Testament

The Old Testament clearly describes the pre-existence of Christ before the Incarnation or His human existence. The pre-existence of Christ recorded in the Old Testament was very important as the foundation of the divinity of Jesus.

Elohim

The word "Elohim" in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word and means God. The Elohim are multiple words, not a single word as an explanation for the Trinity. The Old Testament word "Elohim" proves that it existed before Jesus was born. The Elohim is the name of God and was deeply related to the inclusion of Jesus in the Trinity, so Jesus' predecessor is the same as his father. Psalm 45: 6 says "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter" (KJV). This verse strongly stressed about Jesus Christ. The word "God is coming from the same word Hebrew word "Elohim" in Genesis 1:26 "And God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over

³⁵Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Let God be True*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1953), 179.

³⁶Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *God be True*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1946), 49.

³⁷Raoul Dederen, vol. 12, *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Commentary Reference Series (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001, c2000), 162.

every creeping thing that creep-eth upon the earth” (KJV).

In His preexistence, we can deduce that Jesus is equal to the Father. Because the Old Testament used the same word as the name of God to refer to Jesus Christ as Father's, he existed from eternity to eternity. The name "Elohim" used in the Old Testament for Christ demonstrates that Jesus is not subservient to the Father in ontological essence, as Jehovah's Witnesses believed.

Jehovah (Yahweh)

Moreover, the word “Jehovah” Yahweh as Jehovah’s Witnesses use as their name is also as description of Jesus Preexistence in Old Testament. In the book of Isaiah 40:3 says “The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God”(KJV) used “ Jehovah” And this verse also was applying John the Baptist’s preparatory work for Jesus (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23).³⁸ Furthermore, in the book Isaiah 44:6 says “The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God” (KJV). Jer. 23:5–6 says “Behold, the days come, said the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness and Hos. 1:7; Joel 2:32, all these verses was called Jesus as Yahweh as Father’s.

Member of the Godhead

There are many passages in the Old Testament that describe Jesus Christ as a member of the Godhead. As a member of the Godhead, he existed before the incarnation, equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit. First of all, it can be seen from the creative activities. According to John 1:3, Jesus is the creator of the universe and is called the co-creator of members of the Godhead. John 1:1-3 parallels Genesis 1:1, especially in Genesis 1:26 as a confirmation of the divinity of the Bible “and God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creped upon the earth”. Moreover, In Genesis 3:22 “one of Us” Gen. 11:7 “Let us”; Ps. 2:2–5 “Let Us “All these verses affirm that Jesus was a member of the divinity, and before he existed, he was equal to them in terms of the incarnation.

Messiah

The Messiah's term "anointed" strongly suggests Jesus. The Old Testament clearly states that the Messiah in the New Testament is Jesus. He is the anointed one to the Lord Jesus. Hebrews 1: 8 God, your throne is forever and ever. God, your God has anointed you. In this chapter, seven verses from the Old Testament are used to support the argument that Christ is superior to angels. The fifth verse, quoted in verses 8 and 9, comes from Psalm 45: 6, 7, where the king of David's house is called God. Is this a poetic exaggeration that sometimes appears in Eastern courts, or does this passage indicate someone other than the Old Testament prince in David's house?

The deputy regent of the deity of Israel, according to Hebrew poets and

³⁸Terry R. Briley, *Isaiah*, The College Press NIV commentary. (Joplin, MO: College Press Pub., 2000-c2004), 117.

prophets, was the prince of David's house. He was a descendant of a dynasty to which God had made a unique promise tied to the fulfillment of his plan for the world. Furthermore, when David's son emerged, embodying all the promises and aspirations connected with the dynasty, it was only partially relevant to one of David's ancient rulers, or even David himself. Will come to fruition completely. Finally, the Messiah showed up. This messiah can genuinely speak as God, not simply as the son of God, in a way that ancient David and his predecessors could not (verse five). The substance of God's splendor and the image of God's glory.³⁹ All these passages indicate that Christ and God and Yahweh are one. Ps. 110:1; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6–7; Jer. 23:5–6; Mic. 5:2; Zech. 13:7; Mal. 3:1 all these passages described that Christ also Yahweh equal to the Father.

Affirmation in New Testament

The New Testament tells us explicitly and implicitly that Jesus as the Tao existed before he was born in Bethlehem. His existence did not begin when he was born in Judea. Not only do we find numerous references to Jesus' lips as "sent" by the Father (see Matthew 5:17; 15:24; Mark 1:38; 10:45; Luke 19:10; John 5:23), this may be considered merely an allusion to his prophetic mission, but he clearly stated his origin in heaven, and he "come" or "descend" from heaven to earth: "I Come from the Father to the world" (John 16:28; see Matthew 20:28; Luke 19:10). "The one that comes from above is above all; the one that belongs to the earth belongs to the earth, and what he says belongs to the earth; the one that comes from heaven is supreme. He bears witness to what he sees and hears" (John 3: 31, 32). Once again, "no one has ascended to heaven except the Son of Man who came down from heaven" (John 3:13), or "What if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before?" (John 3:62).

Our Lord not only stated that He existed before coming into this world, in glory and close communion with the Father (John 17:5), but He also stated that "before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58), a phrase reminiscent of the [OT "I am who I am" (Ex. 3:14), the name by which God announced Himself to Moses in the wilderness as self-existent and eternal. This isn't just preexistence anymore; it's endless preexistence. "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance," insists Paul, "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15; cf. 3:16). To the Colossians he writes, "In him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, ... all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (1 Tim. 1:16, 17; see Creation II. C). He existed before His birth in Bethlehem.⁴⁰

The Testimony of Jesus Himself

Through the testimony of Jesus in John 10:30, it was confirmed that he coexisted with God before the incarnation, to prove that he is one with the Father. John 8:58 clearly emphasizes that Abraham existed before he was born as the ancestor of the Jews. John 16:28–30 "I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father. Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you

³⁹F. F. Bruce, *Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 19-20

⁴⁰Raoul Dederen, vol. 12, *Handbook of Seventh-Day Adventist Theology*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; Commentary Reference Series (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2001, c2000), 161.

are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God.”

The divinity of Christ is also confirmed by the use of the present tense in his response to the Jews: Before Abraham was (born) (*genesqai / genesthai*), I am (*eúgw eiúmi / ego eimi*) (John 8:58). Using the terms *genesthai* (born or became) and *ego eimi* (*me*), Jesus contrasts his eternal existence with the historical origin of Abraham. It expresses the eternity of being, not just pre-existence before Abraham. At least the Jews understood it that way; they realized that Jesus had proclaimed himself Yahweh, I AM from the burning bush (Ex. 3:14), and took stones in their hands to kill him (8:59).

Jesus Pre-existence Trough the Apostles Testimonies

In the 20th century, the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ has become an interesting debate among Christians. However, many passages written by the apostle allude to the pre-existence of Christ. I believe that the apostles described the pre-existence of Jesus in their writings to show that Christ existed among us before he became a human being, and that He was the god who took human flesh, to show that their eternal love for divinity went from eternity to eternity. eternal.

Pre-existence in John

The existence of Jesus is highly confirmed in the book of John. He admitted that Jesus existed before the incarnation. John's book precedes the presence of Christ, and we already meet him in the opening and opening words. In John 1:1-5,14 says

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. And the Word became 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”. (NKJV).

However, according to Jehovah's Witnesses, the translation of John 1: 1 it should be “In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, *and the Word was a god*”.⁴¹ For them, the Greek grammar and context strongly indicate that the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures is correct and that the "word" should not be identified as the "God" mentioned in the previous section. Nevertheless, the fact that there were no indefinite articles ("a" or "an") in Greek in the first century leaves the possibility of questioning the problem. This is why Bible translations in languages spoken in the early centuries of the Christian era are so interesting.⁴²

They believe that "the Tao was in the beginning, the Tao was with God (Greek, *ton,theon'*), and the word is God (*theos*)." This verse contains two forms of the Greek noun *the·os'* (*theos'*) (God). The first word is preceded by *ton* (the), which is a form of the Greek definite article. In this case, the *on* refers to the Almighty God. However,

⁴¹This translation is the *New World Translation*.

⁴²Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Watchtower*, 2000, January, 11, 24-25. (*Watchtower, Online Library: <http://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1200276277>*)

in the second case, *theos'*, there is no definite article.⁴³ So this passage does not say that (Jesus) is the same person as the God he is with, but it says that he is the same, holy, and one God.⁴⁴

What is the translation of the beast John 1:1? At first it was Word. He didn't start himself, but existed forever. As long as people's minds can go back to the past, the Lord Jesus will be there. He was never created. He did not start. (In this gospel of the Son of God, genealogy is inappropriate.) The Word is with God. He has an independent and distinct personality. He is not just an idea, an idea, or a vague example, but a real person living with God. Tao is God. Not only does he live with God, but he himself is God. The Bible teaches him to be God.⁴⁵

Although this verse is verbally similar to Genesis 1: 1 and 1 John 1: 1, the context indicates a time difference. The concept of the Logos belonged to Greek philosophy at the time of John, but John used the word in a broader sense, including Jewish thinking. In fact, the word in our Scripture refers to the unique communication between God and man that is realized in the flesh through the Word (v. 14). Jesus is the Son of God. The verb "*Logos*" in Greek is an incomplete tense, which means continuous action in the past. Literally John states that logos have been around since the beginning.⁴⁶

In addition, this logo is the "proton theon" and "face-to-face" god, showing the distinction and equality of people in the head of God, and God was present in the interrelationship with the Father. father. Here, two sacred people are interacting.⁴⁷ And the Word was face to face with God "*pros ton teon*."⁴⁸ The meaning is that the Word existed in the closest possible fellowship with the Father, and that he took supreme delight in this communion.⁴⁹ And in John 17: 5, 24 records: This verse strongly shows that Jesus coexists with God. Finally, Logos is God forever. There was no time when Logos wasn't completely God. The Greek word order is "God was a word."⁵⁰

At the same time, Jehovah's Witnesses strongly believe that "*kai theos*" without a definite article should be translated as God. However, Wallace believed that "a noun does not have to have an article to be determined. But conversely, when a noun has an article, it cannot be indeterminate. Therefore, it can be determined without

⁴³Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Watch tower*, (Watchtower Online Library: January, 1, 2009), 18-19. <http://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1200276277>

⁴⁴Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Reasoning*, ,(Watchtower Online Library: March 26, 2015), 212-213 <http://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1200276277>.

⁴⁵William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Jn 1:1.

⁴⁶Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Believer's Study Bible*, c1991 Criswell Center for Biblical Studies., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Jn 1:1.

⁴⁷Gary P. Baumler, *John, The People's Bible* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997), 7.

⁴⁸The New Testament contains more than 600 examples of accusative *πρός*. This indicates a move or direction to a location, or in this case a proximity. Therefore, friendship and intimacy in this context.

⁴⁹William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, vol. 1-2, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to John*, Accompanying Biblical Text Is Author's Translation., New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953-2001), 1:70

⁵⁰Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Believer's Study Bible*, c1991 Criswell Center for Biblical Studies., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995), Jn 1:1.

an article, and it must have the article is definite.⁵¹ In the big participle, John did not add the definite article before *theos* to negate the distinction just established between the two persons in the previous clause⁵² And although they differ from person to person, they share the essence of the father. Everything that can be said about God can be said about the Word.⁵³

Interestingly, where John emphasized the deity of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses did not apply the grammatical rules they used. For example, in Matthew 5: 9, *theos* does not have a definite article, but they did not translate it as Son of God. Luke 1:35, 20: 36-39 and John 1: 6 do not have articles, but they did not translate these verses into the same rules. The inconsistency of the translation methods of the New World Translation shows that there are errors in them.

Therefore, we can assume that they are applying this rule only to support their ideas about the person of Christ, especially in his preexisting divinity, and that they are translating John 1: 1 the way they did, and not on a biblical basis Study grammar carefully but based on their own doctrinal premises.

The Nature of Jesus Preexistence from the Biblical Perspective

As a member of the Trinity, from the eternal past, there are many mysteries surrounding the existence of Christ. Human beings have a limited understanding of infinite existence. With our limited ability, especially in the relationship with each other in the Trinity, how do we know the Godhead from eternity to eternity? So, from the biblical data, what is the nature of Christ's pre-existence?

There are some theories that have been proven to prove the preexistence of Jesus, two of which are Christian theories⁵⁴ and the humanistic theory.⁵⁵ In this section, we will study the theory of Jehovah's Witnesses about the pre-existence of Christ, which we call the angel theory. As we discussed in Chapter 1, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was created by the Almighty God in his pre-angel existence. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God and the eldest son of all creation. They literally understood and accepted that Jesus Christ was created by God. For this reason, from the biblical perspective that Jesus was born as the Son of God and the eldest son of all creatures, what is the nature of Jesus' pre-existence?

⁵¹Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1999; 2002), 243.

⁵²Andreas J. Kostenberger, "The Deity of Christ in John's Gospel", in *The Deity of Christ*, ed. Christopher W. Morgan & Robert A. Peterson, (Wheaton Illinois: Crossway, 2011), 99.

⁵³Kostenberger and Swain, *Father, Son, and Spirit*, 49-50, citing Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 269.

⁵⁴This theory will limit all thoughts about Christ's pre-existence to the only specific ideal of love and sacrifice that flows through this humanity and ultimately finds its perfection in Christ. This is the so-called "theistic evolutionist" theory.

⁵⁵Humanism theory believes that his predecessor Christ was not a god at all, but a being created in the previous life. The true perfect spiritual similarity of God, the archetype of mankind. This theory is supported by the German theologian Beaderman, who argues that the Second Coming of Christ in the world sent by the God of Love is not the incarnation, but the Second Coming of a person of physical heavenly air pressure.

Biblical Concept of Begotten Son

There are some descriptions of the titles of Christ in the New Testament; one of them is the "Son of God". Jehovah's Witnesses prove that Christ is not the eternal God by emphasizing the words of the Son. The word *monogenes* is used nine times in the New Testament. The question is, does the word *monogenes* always mean "unique" in a conceptual sense, or can it be used differently?

Jehovah's Witnesses as Arians and anti-Trinitarians use Jesus as the "only begotten" in his position. They think Jesus was created and the angle is the same as that of humans. Their argument is based on John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth" (NKJV).

The word "only begotten" in Greek is derived from two words *monogenes*: *monos* (only, one, alone) and *genos*, meaning "kind" or "class". The Greek word *genos* comes from the verb *ginomai*, which means "to become", not from *gennao*, which means "to produce." Therefore, *monogenes* means to appear instead of being born. In other words, the coming of Jesus is unique in his incarnation, not coming in the sense of being born.⁵⁶ So, Christ "only begotten" means "one of a kind" or "class; a singular, unique being."⁵⁷ Hence, the uniqueness of Christ is He is fully God and fully man or Jesus is God-Man.

In Hebrews 1:5 "You are my son and I gave birth to you". The word "son" in the Bible usually associated with the ship of Christ's son is the title of Christ incarnate. Nevertheless, his son-ship is predicted in Proverbs 30:4, and Jehovah's Witnesses use the teaching of Christ as a creature as the basis for their teaching. The word son is just a metaphor to say that God is the father and Jesus is the son. He didn't become a son until he was born on time. Before time and his incarnation, he and God are co-eternal.⁵⁸

But Jehovah's Witnesses did not believe in Jesus' incarnation. They state that Jesus was not a god, but his predecessor God, and he was not an earthly god because he had no incarnation.⁵⁹ According to them, the concept of the incarnation of Christianity is the doctrine of the origin of Satan.⁶⁰ They believed that when Jesus was on the earth, he was a perfect person, no more, no less, only possible through transfer.⁶¹ Through these arguments, Jehovah's Witnesses denied that Jesus was completely God and completely human. In other words, Jesus only created to exist as a human property in his predecessor.

The Meaning of First Born

There are several passages in the Bible that explain that Christ was first born.

⁵⁶Norman Gulley, *Systematic Theology: God as Trinity* (MI: Andrews University, 2011), 128.

⁵⁷Daniel Belvedere, *Reaching Meaning: Jehovah's Witnesses* (Washington DC: IICM, 1999), 50.

⁵⁸McArthur, John F, *Hebrews: An Expository Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 183), 27.

⁵⁹Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Life Everlasting*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1946), 75.

⁶⁰Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *Reconciliation*, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1928), 109.

⁶¹Watchtower Bible and Tract society. *The Nation shall Know that I am Jehovah?* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract society of New York, 1971), 305.

In the Hebrew 1: 2, the Father states that he created the universe through Jesus Christ. Following this verse, Hebrew 1: 5 states, "You are my son. Today I am your father." Jehovah's Witnesses literally understood this text. In other words, it understood that Jesus was a creation from God.

The first words Jesus was born in can be found in the book of Colossian 1:15-20 says

The Son is the image of God of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, for in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether throne or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning of the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the term "eldest son" in this verse proves that God gave birth to Jesus at some time when he returned to eternity. So, from a biblical point of view, what is the meaning of "First Born", is it literal or the meaning behind the word.

It is pointed out in these verses that Christ was born first in all creations and also among the dead. Jehovah's Witnesses literally understand the term "eldest son" in this passage. However, we can argue that Christ was not the first human being born, namely Cain, nor the first person to experience the resurrection, namely Moses. The first word born in this passage is not chronological, but comparative,⁶² According to Colossians 1:16, he is a Creator, so it is impossible to create a Creator. The Bible never speaks of Christ as an agent who acts as an agent of God in great things.

Furthermore, the word *protokos* is not genetically determined in Hebrew literature, however the word *protokos* is generally used as a term for a leader among a tribe or group.⁶³ In other words, Jesus is the best person to reincarnation and resurrection, or he is the first cause of all beginnings, as Revelation 3:14 "He is the beginning of all creation" came from *Arche*. It means that.

Colossians 1: 15-20 are parallel to Hebrews 1: 1-5a, 8, both of which speak of the supremacy of Christ as God and the Creator. At this point, Christ was called as the Son of God, not like humans in chronological order, but as an explanation of the relationship in saving the mission for mankind. But in the next verse, my father calls him God, just like God.

The word first born also refers to all true Christians born spiritually, not literally genetically true.⁶⁴ If Christ as the first born in literally the Hebrew word that should be used is *protoktistos* "first –created" not *protokos*.⁶⁵ It is the term for Jesus,

⁶²Norman Gulley, *Systematic Theology: God as Trinity* (MI: Andrews University, 2011), 124.

⁶³Gerhard Pfandl, *The Trinity in Scripture, Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 14/2 (Fall 2003): 80–94.

⁶⁴William A. Lane, *Hebrews 9-13*, vol. 47b in *World Biblical Commentary*, gen. ed., David A. Hubbard, Glenn W. Barker (Dallas, TX: Word, 1991), 47b:469.

⁶⁵ Gulley, *Systematic Theology*, 126.

first born in Colossians 1: 15-20, and in many places related to this term it can be concluded that "hegemony" is not literal or chronological.

Unfortunately, Jehovah's Witnesses seem to have failed to understand the first born in Hebrew word, as they have their own translations that support their idea of denying the God of Christ and rejecting the Trinity. They believe in the existence of Christ, but their understanding seems not compatible to the Biblical ideas.

For the conclusion, the preexistence of Christ is accepted by Jehovah's Witnesses, but His eternal coexistence with the Father is denied, as is His deity; He was a divine being or a God, but not almighty God. Jehovah God's first created intelligent being is Jesus. At some point in pre-creation time, Jehovah God formed Jesus as a divine-like spirit. The Father has no beginning and no end, whereas Jesus Christ is the Father's only begotten son, whom He created as His firstborn. Christ is God's only begotten Son, who was a mere angel in heaven, a mere perfect man on earth, a second Adam, and possessed more than human characteristics while on the world. When Jesus ascended to heaven as a magnificent spirit without a physical body, he remained inferior and subordinate to the Father but given authority to govern the universe.

On the other hand, biblical data from both the New Testament and the New Testament confirmed that the existence of Christ was equal to that of the Father, They are co-eternal and co-exist. Jesus as God's born son does not mean that he was born of the Father, but Jesus as the only person who is different from others (human being). Moreover, Jesus, who was first born, can be seen as a comparison, not as a chronological order. Therefore, Jehovah's Witnesses look at the existence of Christ based on their belief that they are not entirely based solely on the Bible.

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