

God & His Apprentice in Creation according to: *Moses, David, Solomon, the Apostles, & the Earliest Christians*

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For many years Trinitarians have defended the idea of a plural God by appealing to the first words of the Bible, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* The Hebrew word "Elohim" (God) is always plural in grammatical form. This has been widely used by Trinitarians to validate the idea that "one God" can consist of three Persons. However, Hebrew scholars have proven conclusively that this word has a singular meaning unless it is referring to more than one god in the context.¹ There are several examples where the plural "elohim" refers to an individual pagan god.² When Elohim is used with this singular sense, it is called a "majestic plural." Hebrew sometimes uses the majestic plural to make certain nouns superlative. It is a way of making the meaning much greater or magnificent than the usual sense. It served the same function as when we capitalize "God" for the superlative sense, but use the lower case "god" when referring to pagan deities. There are other Hebrew words that follow this pattern as well. For our purposes, "elohim" is spelled (plural) the same regardless of whether it is referring to the one true "Elohim" or many "elohim." Context becomes the determining factor. Therefore, no argument can be made successfully either way concerning whether God is a plurality of Persons or a single Person based solely on this term.

That "Elohim" has a singular meaning when referring to God is proven by the fact that the third-century BC Jewish translators of the Septuagint always used the singular masculine Greek noun θεός (Theos) where the Hebrew has "Elohim" referring to the God of Israel. When referring to multiple pagan "gods," they used the plural form θεοί. This proves that those most familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures and the Hebrew language of the day absolutely did not believe the word "Elohim" in the Old Testament was ever meant to be understood as a plurality of Persons when referring to the God of Israel. It was understood as always being singular in sense. Thus the Trinitarian claim is not valid.

If "Elohim" was meant to have a plural sense in Genesis 1 (that "God" refers to the entire Trinity which was involved in creating the heavens and the earth), the correct translation would not be *"God created the heavens and the earth,"* but rather *"Gods created the heavens and the earth."* No Trinitarian, however, would dare refer to the Trinity as "Gods" (plural),

¹ Gesenius, Wilhelm, Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, Ch. II:124,g p. 399

² Ex. Judges 6:31; Judges 11:24; 1 Samuel 5:7; 2 Kings 1:2-3

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because this immediately clashes with the many passages of Scripture that say God is one, the only God, and there is no other God but He.

In order to overcome the logical problem of three Persons being one Person, Trinitarians often imply that the noun "God" is sometimes impersonal, referring to a "kind," "essence," or ontological "substance" (species) rather than a personal noun, referring to a Person. This device is used to reconcile the "one God" statements with the Trinity concept, essentially claiming that the "one God" statements refer to a single "God-kind" or "God-family" in which individual members shared the same God-essence, God-substance, God-nature, or God-kind. To Trinitarians, the many "one God" statements do not mean **one Person** called "God," but rather one God-race or non-personal essence shared by three Persons.

However, there is no Scripture that uses the term "God" in this sense unless it is presupposed and forced onto the Scriptures. Furthermore, the Scriptures specifically identify the "one God" statements as referring to one Person, the Father, both by always using singular personal pronouns and by specifically identifying the "one God" as the Father alone.³

God's Apprentice in Creation, according to Moses (Gen. 1)

However, even though the statement *"In the beginning God [singular] created the heavens and the earth"* absolutely requires that the word "God" refer to the Father alone, it does not preclude a second person being present (who is not called "God" in this passage). That a second Person was God's personal Agent, through whom He created everything, is indeed implied throughout the entire creation account. He is then clearly indicated in verses 26-27 which describes the creation of mankind by a plurality of Persons. The work of all six days implies the use of a personal Agent from the following three facts:

1. Genesis 1:1-2 states: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."* Notice that *"the Spirit of God"* is presented as being active "hovering." This *"Spirit of God"* was presented by Moses as distinct (not necessarily separate) from God in some way. Otherwise, the text would simply say that God was hovering over the face of the waters. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that *"God is Spirit."*⁴ If God had procreated (begotten) a "Son," that Son must also be *"Spirit"* in the same sense that God is *"Spirit."* The genitive *"of God"* can imply something proceeding FROM God (either proceeding from beside God or proceeding out from God Himself) such as a

³ Mark 12:29-32; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5

⁴ John 4:24

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limited extension of His presence and power. Or the genitive “of God” can imply a possessive, meaning Spirit belonging to God. Either way, a begotten “Son,” who is also “Spirit,” having proceeded out of God, could fit the description here. Although, a limited extension of God is also a possible interpretation without this manifestation being a distinct Person. Yet this statement implies a distinction between “God” who is said to have “*created the heavens and the earth*” (which were shapeless and empty) and the “*Spirit of God*” who/which is said to be hovering over the face of the waters as if in anticipation of further action (shaping the raw materials).

2. Immediately following the opening verses, God spoke a series of commands which are the series of “*Let there be...*” statements for each of the six days of creation. In the LXX this statement (Let there be) is the Greek word γενηθήτω (lit. Originate!) which is in the imperative mood, thus a command. In Hebrew it is jussive mood, which is also a command. In both Hebrew and Greek, the verbs are third person. This means the one being commanded is not personally identified or addressed in the context.⁵ Yet, commands are normally stated with the expectation that they will be carried out by a conscious person, not by inanimate things which have no volition or power to accomplish the commands. Moses said that the earth was originally “*formless and empty*” (NIV), indicating that the substance, matter and energy, was present, but nothing specific had taken shape until after God gave this series of verbal commands. Then, in response, an unnamed entity carried them out. After each command “*Let there be ...*” was given, the text says that a specific thing “*became*” or “*originated.*” The Greek word in the LXX is “ἐγένετο.” This is exactly the same word used by John in his prologue: “*Everything **originated** through Him, and without Him nothing **originated.**”⁶ A few verses later, speaking about the Son, John stated, “*He was in the world, and the world **originated** through Him, and the world did not know Him.*”⁷ Consequently, all of the “*Let there be ...*” commands followed by “*and ___ originated*” statements for all six days imply that God created these things through an unnamed Agent who took up His commands and acted on them.*

3. After each of the “*Let there be ...*” commands followed by the resulting “*and ___ originated,*” God is said to have inspected and approved of the end product. That is “*God saw that it was good.*” If God was not using a personal Agent through whom He created everything, then it is extraordinarily odd that God would inspect and approve of His own

⁵ In English we do not have third-person commands. We only command in the second person, the one to whom we are addressing directly. However in Hebrew and Greek, third-person commands are common. Third person commands are usually translated in our English Bible as “let him ...” (ex. Matt. 5:31,40; Matt. 16:24; Matt. 20:26; Matt. 24:15; etc.).

⁶ John 1:3 LGV

⁷ John 1:10 LGV

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work. After the six days work, “Then **God saw everything** that He had made, and **indeed it was very good**.”⁸ However, if God was creating through an Agent, then inspection by God and His pronouncing His approval are called for and make perfect sense.

Regarding the creation of man on the sixth day, all ambiguity was removed as Moses made it perfectly clear that a second Person besides God was involved. This was accomplished by Moses’ use of plural pronouns and verbs.

Genesis 1:26-27 NKJV

26 Then God said, “Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

27 So God created man in **His** own image; in the image of God **He** created him; male and female **He** created them.

The verb translated “Let us make” in the LXX is ποιήσωμεν first-person plural, subjunctive mood.⁹ It is literally, “**We should make** man in **Our** image and after **Our** likeness.” Given that this “**We should make**” (subjunctive mood) statement follows after the “Let there be ...” (imperative mood) commands, the implication is that the creation of man was special, in which God desired to have a more direct role, as opposed to a supervisory role implied by the imperative commands regarding everything else.

Let’s consider the switch from the plural to the singular in the following verse. “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”¹⁰ The switch from plural in verse 26 to singular in verse 27 adds an extremely important aspect to this passage. God was speaking to another Person, and He indicated that both Himself (God) and the second unnamed Person would participate in the creation of man (“**We should make ...**”). Also, both Persons would be the exemplar for man to be made in their common “image” (“**in Our image and after Our likeness**”). Some, including Jews, Muslims, and some Unitarians, claim that the plural pronouns refer to angels. However, angels are created beings of a “kind” that is foreign to both God and mankind. If verse 26 refers to God and His angels, then man was created as a blended image of two different “kinds” – God-kind plus angel-kind. However, verse 27, by using the singular, states twice that man was created in the image of God alone. Therefore, it was not a blend of God and angels as the exemplar, but God alone who is necessarily one Person.

⁸ Gen. 1:31 NKJV

⁹ The subjunctive mood indicates what should occur, not necessarily what will occur.

¹⁰ Gen. 1:27 NIV

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How do we reconcile the fact that man was created in the image of God alone, yet he was created in the image of God plus another unnamed Person(s)? The answer can be only one thing: The second Person to whom God spoke was of the same “kind” as God Himself. As such, there is no difference between man being created in the image of God or created in the image of God plus the second Person who was of the same “kind.”

The concept of “kind” refers to creatures which procreate only according to what they actually are in ontological nature. This is a very important concept introduced in this very chapter.¹¹ The word translated “kind” in the LXX is γένος (genos), from the verb γεννᾶω “generate/beget.” Thus, when animals (or man) reproduce according to “kind” (γένος) it implies generating another from the same kind, nature, essence, substance, produced out of the parent’s own existence. In the very first chapter of the Bible we have the creation of man after the image of God **plus another Person who is of the same “kind” as God.** Since being of the same “kind” in the Genesis account necessarily implies procreation (begetting), if this sameness of “kind” is applied here, **the logical inference is that the second Person is the Son of God.**

But there is another logical and necessary inference from Gen. 1:26-27. Not only are both Persons in verse 26 the exemplar after which man is the image, but both participated in the creation of man. Yet, verse 27 attributed the creation of man to a single Person, God!¹² This is where the concept of “agency” (which was implied in all six days of creation) is strongly reinforced by the creation of man. When someone employs a second person to perform a task under his authority, the second person is the “agent” of the first. Yet it remains proper to say that the primary person did the task. For example, if I hired a realtor who sells my house, it is proper to say that “I sold my house.” This is because I initiated the action, authorized the agent to act in my name, provided the house to sell, signed the contracts, and personally participated in the closing. Yet, the realtor, in carrying out my instructions under my delegated authority actually “sold” the house as my agent. So, depending on context, I could accurately say that “*I sold my house.*” Yet to be more specific, I could also say that “*I sold my house through a realtor.*” Both statements are true and accurate because we understand the concept of “agency.”

This concept of “agency” (God acting through a second Person) is the solution to why Genesis 1:26 has God plus a second Person creating man, yet in the next verse Moses

¹¹ Gen. 1:11, 12, 24, 25, etc.

¹² The usual Trinitarian explanation is that “God” in verse 27 refers to the Trinity consisting of all three Persons. But this clashes with “God said” in vs. 26 where one Person is speaking to an unnamed Person(s) who is not included in “God” in that statement.

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wrote “*So God created man.*” This should not come as a surprise because the same is said of Jesus in the New Testament.

Acts 2:22 NASB

*22 “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which **God performed through Him** in your midst, just as you yourselves know –”*

The clause “*through Him*” is δι’ αὐτοῦ (dia¹³ autou). This passage and several others¹⁴ indicate that God actually performed Jesus’ miracles, yet Jesus played a secondary role as God’s Agent. Several seemingly problematic passages in Scripture are immediately resolved by recognizing this principle. For example, the Torah clearly indicates that “*God alone*” brought Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. This is stated in the Song of Moses among other places.

Deut. 32:11-12 NKJV

*11 As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings, 12 So **the LORD alone** led him, And there was no foreign god with him.*

Yet we have this seemingly contradictory statement:

Exod. 23:20-23 NKJV

*20 “Behold, I send an Angel¹⁵ [LXX “**My** Messenger”] before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. 21 “Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; **for My name is in Him.** [LXX “My name is upon Him] 22 “But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. 23 “For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.*

¹³ The vowel (alpha) at the end of διὰ is dropped in Greek script whenever the following word begins with a vowel. This is done for pronunciation purposes. In modern Greek, the alpha is replaced with an apostrophe.

¹⁴ John 3:2; John 5:19,30; John 14:10; Acts 10:38

¹⁵ The word “angel” in Hebrew is “malak” and in Greek is “angelos.” Both terms simply mean “messenger” and are used in the Bible of both human and heavenly messengers. They do not indicate a specific “kind.”

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Notice carefully that what the Messenger of God carries out under God's authority, God is said to have done ("I will cut them off"). Likewise, what the Messenger of God speaks, God is said to have spoken, as in "if you indeed obey **His voice** and do all that **I speak**." This is because God's name (Yahweh – Jehovah) is in/upon Him. He is not independent, but acts in Yahweh's name, as His personal Agent. Consequently, we find the Messenger of the LORD claiming to have done what the Song of Moses said that **God alone** has done.

Judges 2:1-4 NKJV

1 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "**I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you.** 2 And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed **My voice**. Why have you done this? 3 "Therefore **I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you;** but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" 4 So it was, when **the Angel of the LORD spoke these words** to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept.

Did God alone do these things as the Song of Moses declares? The LORD was "alone" in the sense of sole sovereignty, that no foreign god participated in delivering Israel from Egypt, feeding them in the wilderness, bringing them into the Promised Land, or defeating the Canaanites. God's personal Agent, called His "Messenger," acting under God's authority and His commands, is not excluded by God stating that He alone did these things. What are excluded are the foreign gods of the Egyptians.

Similarly, Isaiah declares that "the LORD alone" will be exalted on the Day of the Lord.

Isaiah 2:10-11,17-19 NKJV

10 Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty. 11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, The haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, And **the LORD alone** shall be exalted in that day. ... 17 The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, And the haughtiness of men shall be brought low; **The LORD alone** will be exalted in that day, 18 But the idols He shall utterly abolish. 19 They shall go into the holes of the rocks, And into the caves of the earth, From the terror of the LORD And the glory of His majesty, When He arises to shake the earth mightily.

Revelation cites this passage, with a critical addition.

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Rev. 6:15-16 NKJV

*15 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and **hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!** 17 "For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

Both Isaiah 2 and Revelation 6 deal with *the Day of the Lord* when the Son is established as King on Mt. Zion by force.¹⁶ Yet, "***the LORD alone*** shall be exalted in that day." It is clear that the Son will indeed be exalted on that day,¹⁷ and that it is through the Son's exaltation to the Throne of David that God is exalted, the one who places Him in that position.¹⁸ The same is true when God stated that He alone created all things.

Isaiah 44:24 NKJV

*24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all **alone**, Who spreads abroad the earth **by Myself**."*

Throughout this entire chapter, Israel's God was being contrasted with the impotent pagan gods who had no hand in creating these things and thus had no legitimate claim to sovereignty over any aspect of nature.¹⁹ In all of these "*the LORD alone*" passages, the intent was to rule out the claims of the pagan gods, not to rule out the Son's role as God's Agent. God's Apprentice in creation is not ruled out by Isaiah's statement. As God's Agent, He is included. According to Job, the angels were present also as observers and "shouted for joy" when God laid the foundations of the earth.

God's Apprentice in Creation according to David (Psalm 102:23-28)

In Hebrews 1, Paul quoted several Old Testament passages that spoke of the Son, contrasting these with created angels. Two of these were Psalm 45 and Psalm 102.

Hebrews 1:8-12

*8 But **to the Son**²⁰ he says:*

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore

¹⁶ Psalm 2:5-9

¹⁷ Phil. 2:9-10

¹⁸ Psalm 45:6-7

¹⁹ vss. 6-20

²⁰ πρὸς δὲ τὸν υἱόν – the following words were spoken **TO the Son**. Compare vs. 13.

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God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”²¹

10 And: [also to the Son]

***“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.** 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.”²²*

Hebrews states that **these two Psalms of David were addressed to the Son of God.** The first was Psalm 45 which is very obviously a Messianic Psalm referring to the anointing of the Messiah to reign as “God” in the Kingdom by Messiah’s own “God” – the supreme God. However, the second quote comes from Psalm 102 which contains a prayer **to the Son of God.** In this prayer, (presumably) David asks the Son to spare his life a little longer. He contrasted his own mortality and short lifespan with the Messiah’s own origin (from His role in creation itself), then with His reigning forever upon the Throne of David as God promised.²³

Psalm 102:23-28

23 He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days.

*24 I said, “O my God, Do not take me away in the midst of my days; Your years are throughout all generations. 25 **Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.** 26 They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. 27 But You are the same, And Your years will have no end. 28 The children of Your servants will continue, And their descendants will be established before You.”*

According to Hebrews, the words in quotations beginning in vs. 24 were spoken to the Son. Thus the foundations of the earth and the heavens were said to be the work of the Son’s hands! Consequently, the second Person present in Gen. 1:26-27 was the Son. Yet, in the very next verse, the Son’s role was contrasted with the angels, showing just how inferior they were to the Son whose hands fashioned the creation.

3 When has He ever said to any of the messengers, “Sit on my right side until I should place Your enemies under your feet”?

²¹ Psalm 45:6-7 LXX

²² Psalm 102:25-27 LXX

²³ 1 Chron. 17:10-15 (cf. the application of verse 13 to Christ in Heb. 1:5)

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In this very passage, Hebrews counters the Jewish argument concerning angels participating in creation.

God's Apprentice in Creation according to Solomon (Prov. 8:22-30)

The second Person present in Genesis 1:26 was also identified by Solomon as God's Son, the one whom God "begat" and who then accompanied God in creating all things, the one who is called "Wisdom" by Solomon and later by Paul.²⁴

Proverbs 8:22-31 LXX²⁵

22 κύριος ἔκτισέν με ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς ἔργα αὐτοῦ

*"The Lord made Me **THE BEGINNING** of His ways for His works."*

23 πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέν με ἐν ἀρχῇ

*"Before the age **He established Me in the beginning.**"*

24 πρὸ τοῦ τὴν γῆν ποιῆσαι καὶ πρὸ τοῦ τὰς ἀβύσσους ποιῆσαι πρὸ τοῦ

προελθεῖν τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων

"Before the creating of the land, and before the creating of the deep, before the fountains of water came forth,"

25 πρὸ τοῦ ὄρη ἐδρασθῆναι πρὸ δὲ πάντων βουνῶν γεννᾶ με

*"before the mountains were settled, before all hills, **HE BEGETS ME.**"*

26 κύριος ἐποίησεν χώρας καὶ ἀοικήτους καὶ ἄκρα οἰκούμενα τῆς ὑπ' οὐρανόν

"The Lord made countries and wilds, and the top inhabited [places] under heaven."

27 ἡνίκα ἠτοίμαζεν τὸν οὐρανόν συμπαρήμην αὐτῷ καὶ ὅτε ἀφώριζεν τὸν ἑαυτοῦ θρόνον ἐπ' ἀνέμων

*"When He was preparing the heaven, **I was present with Him**, and when He was setting His throne over the wind,"*

28 ἡνίκα ἰσχυρὰ ἐποίησε τὰ ἄνω νέφη καὶ ὡς ἀσφαλεῖς ἐτίθει πηγὰς τῆς ὑπ' οὐρανόν

"when He was strengthening the clouds above, and as He secured the fountains under heaven,"

29 καὶ ἰσχυρὰ ἐποίησε τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς

"when He established the foundations of the earth,"

30 ἤμην παρ' αὐτῷ ἀρμόζουσα ἐγὼ ἤμην ἣ προσέχαιρεν καθ' ἡμέραν δὲ εὐφραϊνόμενη ἐν προσώπῳ αὐτοῦ ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ

*"**I was beside Him, master-crafting**, I was the one He was delighting in, daily rejoicing in His presence, in all appointed times."*

²⁴ 1 Cor. 1:24; 1 Cor. 2:7-8 (cf. also Luke 11:49 & Matt. 23:34).

²⁵ The Greek text of the Septuagint is Alfred Rahlfs edition; the English literal translation is mine.

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This last underlined statement is the epitome of the concept of apprenticeship, being a subordinate companion, a protégé, in the work of creation. This apprenticeship is also implied in Genesis 1:26-27, where it is clear that God is the instigator, source, and primary cause of everything.

Solomon himself solved the riddle of the identity of “Wisdom” in Proverbs 8.

Prov. 30:1-4

*1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, his utterance. This man declared to Ithiel – to Ithiel and Ucal: 2 “Surely I am more stupid than any man, And do not have the understanding of a man. 3 **I neither learned wisdom** Nor have knowledge of the Holy One.”*

Solomon recorded the words of someone named Agur, confessing that he was ignorant of both “Wisdom” (the one who spoke in Prov. 8) and the “Holy One” who is God Himself. In response to these words confessing ignorance, Solomon pointed Agur back to the words of chapter 8 which describe “Wisdom” as having been “begotten” before God created anything else, and who was then His companion in the creation of all things. Solomon solves the riddle, by posing a rhetorical question:

*4 **Who has ascended into heaven, or descended?** Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and **what is His Son’s name**, If you know?*

The one who has repeatedly ascended and descended²⁶ from heaven was the Messenger of the LORD, here called the “Son” of the Creator of all things exactly as described in Prov. 8.

God’s Apprentice in Creation according to the Apostles

In the New Testament, the concept of the Son’s role as God’s apprentice in creation is mentioned seven times. Yet the Son is never said to have “created” because that would make Him independent of God, the source, and place Him as God’s equal and peer. All of the passages which speak of the Son’s role in creation make God the creator and the Son His personal Agent or apprentice. This secondary and subordinate role is accomplished by using the preposition διὰ + genitive case object. This indicates that God did the works **through**, or **by means of**, His Son. This keeps God alone as the “creator” and primary cause yet places the Son as subordinate to God, acting on God’s commands.

²⁶ John 3:13; Eph. 4:8-10

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The exact same language used of God performing Jesus' miracles "through" Him found in Acts 2 is consistently used of the Son's role in creation:

Acts 2:22 NASB

*22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which **God performed through Him** in your midst, just as you yourselves know –"*

John 1:3 LGV

*3 Everything **originated through Him**, and without Him nothing originated.*

John 1:10 LGV

*10 He was in the world, and the world **originated through Him**, and the world did not know Him*

The Greek words translated "through Him" in all three verses above are δι' αὐτοῦ. Also, the word translated "originated" is ἐγένετο, the same Greek word in Genesis 1 LXX. In every case where Moses wrote that God said "Let there be ...," and then that thing occurred ("and **there was** ..."), it is the Greek word in the LXX is ἐγένετο.

If anyone doubts that the one in whose name we are saved in vss. 10-12 is the same Person called "Logos" in verses 1-3, the identical clauses in verses 3 & 10 should settle the question. That is, "the world originated through Him" (the Son vs. 10) and "everything originated through Him" (Logos vs. 3). Logos was not the source of creation, but God's Agent. This is why the Son is never said to have "created." Instead, the preposition διὰ refers to agency when its object is in the genitive case as it is in the above passages and in all of the following passages.

1 Corinthians 8:6

*6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom [ἐξ οὗ - lit. "out from whom"] are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, **through whom** [δι' οὗ] are all things, and through whom we live.*

Thus, Paul attributed the ultimate source and origin of all created things to the Father, but the role of God's apprentice in creation is consistently assigned to the Son.

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Ephesians 3:9

*9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things **through** (διὰ) Jesus Christ.²⁷*

Colossians 1:16

*16 For by²⁸ Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created **through**²⁹ (διὰ) Him and for Him.*

Hebrews 1:2

*2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, **through** (διὰ) whom also He made the worlds;³⁰*

Hebrews 2:10

*10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things³¹ and **by** (διὰ) whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

In all seven statements in the New Testament which link the Son of God to the creation, the preposition διὰ is used, that God did the creating “through” the Son as His Agent or instrument. Consequently, we have perfect harmony and consistency between Moses, David, Solomon, John, and Paul. The Son of God was the second Person present with God during creation week, His Apprentice to whom He said, “Let Us make man in Our image, and after Our likeness.”

God’s Apprentice in Creation according to the earliest Christians

From the earliest testimonies of post-apostolic Christianity, the plural pronouns (Us/Our) in Genesis 1:27 referred to God and to His Son. The following are a few of the earliest witnesses to this fact. Many more could be produced from later writers.

²⁷ The last clause does not appear in some early manuscripts. However, whether or not this clause was original, it still follows the pattern of assigning agency (διὰ), not source, to the Son’s role in creation.

²⁸ Here the preposition is ἐν which has a very wide range of meaning, but also includes the idea of agency. Some translations render it “by” and others “in.” Greek scholar Daniel Wallace lists 10 possible senses for this preposition depending on context. The 5th one listed is “Instrumental: *by, with*” (Wallace, *Greek Grammar, Beyond the Basics*, p. 372). This is exactly the sense of διὰ + genitive case object.

²⁹ The use of the preposition διὰ in repeating what was just stated using the preposition ἐν shows conclusively that the sense of ἐν in the first statement is instrumentality which is essentially the same as agency.

³⁰ Lit, “through whom He fashioned the ages.”

³¹ The Son is the heir of all things (Psalm 2:7-8)

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Barnabas of Alexandria (AD 100?):

*“And further, my brethren: if **the Lord** endured to suffer for our soul, He being Lord of all the world, **to whom God said at the foundation of the world, ‘Let Us make man after Our image, and after Our likeness,’** understand how it was that He endured to suffer at the hand of men.”*

Justin Martyr of Rome (AD 110-165):

*“And the same sentiment was expressed, my friends, by the word of God [written] by Moses, when it indicated to us, with regard to Him whom it has pointed out, that God speaks in the creation of man with the very same design, in the following words: ‘Let **Us** make man after **Our** image and likeness. . . . I shall quote again the words narrated by Moses himself, from which we can indisputably learn that [God] conversed with **someone who was numerically distinct from Himself, and also a rational Being**. These are the words: ‘And God said, Behold, Adam has become as one of **Us**, to know good and evil.’ In saying, therefore, ‘as one of **Us**,’ [Moses] has declared that [there is a certain] number of persons associated with one another, and that they are at least two. For I would not say that the dogma of that heresy which is said to be among you is true, or that the teachers of it can prove that [God] spoke to angels, or that the human frame was the workmanship of angels. But **this Offspring, which was truly brought forth from the Father, was with the Father before all the creatures**, and the Father communed with Him; even as the Scripture by Solomon has made clear, that **He whom Solomon calls Wisdom, was begotten as a Beginning before all His creatures and as Offspring by God, . . .**”³²*

Theophilus of Antioch (AD 115-181):

*“God, then, having His own **Word** internal within His own bowels, **begat Him, emitting Him along with His own Wisdom before all things. He had this Word as a Helper**³³ **in the things that were created by Him, and by Him He made all things**. He is called “governing principle,” because He rules, and is Lord of all things fashioned by Him. He, then, being Spirit of God, and governing principle, **and Wisdom**, and power of the highest, came down upon the prophets, and through them spoke of the creation of the world and of all other things. For the prophets were not when the world came into existence, but the Wisdom of God which was in Him, and His holy Word which was always present with Him. Wherefore He speaks thus by the prophet Solomon: **“When He prepared the***

³² Justin, Dialogue with Trypho, ch. lxii

³³ Note the secondary role of the Son as God’s Apprentice

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heavens I was there, and when He appointed the foundations of the earth I was by Him as one brought up with Him."³⁴

*"But as to what relates to the creation of man, his own creation cannot be explained by man, though it is a succinct account of it which holy Scripture gives. **For when God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness,"** He first intimates the dignity of man. **For God having made all things by**³⁵ **His Word,** and having reckoned them all mere bye-works, reckons the creation of man to be the only work worthy of His own hands. Moreover, God is found, as if needing help, to say, **"Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness."** **But to no one else than to His own Word and Wisdom did He say, "Let Us make."**"³⁶*

Irenaeus of Lyons (AD 120-202):

*"As it has been clearly demonstrated that **the Word, who existed in the beginning with God, by**³⁷ **whom all things were made, who was also always present with mankind,** was in these last days, according to the time appointed by the Father, united to His own workmanship, inasmuch as **He became a man** liable to suffering, [it follows] that every objection is set aside of those who say, "If our Lord was born at that time, Christ had therefore no previous existence." **For I have shown that the Son of God did not then begin to exist, being with the Father from the beginning; but when He became incarnate, and was made man,** He commenced afresh the long line of human beings, and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner, with salvation; so that what we had lost in Adam — namely, to be according to the image and likeness of God — that we might recover in Christ Jesus. ..."³⁸*

Tertullian of Carthage (AD 145-220):

*"'The head of every man is Christ.' What Christ, if He is not the author of man? The head he has here put for authority; now 'authority' will accrue to none else than the 'author.' Of what man indeed is He the head? Surely of him concerning whom he adds soon afterwards: 'The man ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image of God.' Since then he is the image of the Creator (**for He, when looking on Christ His Word, who was to become man, said, 'Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness'**), how*

³⁴ Theophilus, To Autolyucus, Bk. I, ch. x

³⁵ Note the preposition of agency, "by/through"

³⁶ Theophilus, To Autolyucus, Bk. II, ch. xviii

³⁷ Note the preposition of agency, "by/through"

³⁸ Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Bk. III, ch. ix

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can I possibly have another head but Him whose image I am? For if I am the image of the Creator there is no room in me for another head.”³⁹

“For so did the Father previously say to the Son: ‘Let us make man in Our own image, after Our likeness.’ And God made man, that is to say, the creature which He molded and fashioned; after the image of God (in other words, of Christ) did He make him.”⁴⁰

The earliest Christians contiguous with the time of the Apostles believed and taught that the Son of God was present with God in the beginning, through whom God created all things, being God’s Apprentice, His personal Agent to mankind, and the heir of the world. In making these claims, they consistently distinguished between the one called “God” and the “Son of God” who is called “Word,” “Wisdom,” “Messenger,” etc.

Prior to His complete transmutation to human-kind (via “kenosis” – self-emptying),⁴¹ the Son of God was of the God-kind, since He was literally “begotten”⁴² by Him, having proceeded out of God,⁴³ thus He was “*the only-begotten of the Father.*”⁴⁴ The Father alone is literally “God” in His own identity.⁴⁵ Whenever the Son is called “God” it is because, as “*the Messenger of the LORD,*” He is “God” and “LORD”⁴⁶ to whomever God sends Him, because He is “*the Messenger of His Face,*”⁴⁷ being “*the image of the invisible God,*”⁴⁸ and “*the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.*”⁴⁹ In all of these the Son is God’s personal Agent, thus God’s subordinate, never His equal.

That the Son of God was God’s Apprentice in creation, God’s Agent in all of His personal interactions with mankind, establishing all of His covenants through Him, being the heir of the whole earth,⁵⁰ is consistent throughout the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the writings of the earliest Christians closest to the Apostles.

³⁹ Tertullian, Against Marcion, Bk. V, ch. viii

⁴⁰ Tertullian, On the Resurrection of the Flesh, ch. vi

⁴¹ Phil. 2:5-8

⁴² Psalm 2:7

⁴³ In John 8:42 Jesus stated: ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον (“For out of God I issued forth”).

⁴⁴ John 1:14

⁴⁵ 1 Cor. 8:4-6

⁴⁶ Exod.

⁴⁷ Isa. 63:9

⁴⁸ Col. 1:15

⁴⁹ Heb. 1:3

⁵⁰ Psalm 2