

# Who is Jesus?

<https://abn.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/bd/firstborn?lang=eng&ad...> A<sup>3</sup>

Firstborn

Jesus is the firstborn of the spirit children of our Heavenly Father, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh, and the first to rise from the dead in the Resurrection, “that in all things he might have the preeminence” (Col. 1:13–18).

According to the LDS Church, prophets and apostles, Jesus was the firstborn spirit child of heavenly Father and heavenly mother in pre-existence. At a later point in time, He became one of many Gods and created our universe. 1 John 4:1 tells us that we need to test the spirits to see if they are from God. Therefore, we need to test these claims about Jesus that are being made by the LDS Church. But how should we go about doing this?

John 17:17 “Thy word is truth.”

Psalm 119:105 “They word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

When we look to God’s Word, what do we read about Jesus?

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Psalm 90:2 “*Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the whole world, **from everlasting to everlasting you are God.***”

- How long has Jesus been God for?

*John 1:1-3 “In the **beginning was the Word** (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God**. The same was in the beginning with God. **All things were made by him**; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”*

- Who was every single thing in every single universe that has ever come into existence created by?

*Colossians 1:16-17 “**For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**”*

- Was there anything (visible or invisible) in heaven or on earth that Jesus did not create?
- Did anything exist before Jesus? Or did he exist before all things?

## ***Is Jesus the Firstborn and Only Begotten Son of God?***

### **How many “firstborns” does God have?**

Exodus 4:22 *“And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my **firstborn**.”*

Psalms 89:27 *“Also I will make him my **firstborn**, higher than the kings of the earth.”* (Verse 20 clarifies that this is referring to king David)

Colossians 1:15 *“Who is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** of every creature.”*

- Israel, David, and Jesus are all called God’s “firstborn.”
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### **What does “firstborn” mean in these passages?**

1. Israel – God’s special group of people whom he chose to be holy/set apart and that he promised to preserve. “Firstborn” here is in reference to rank or position: In the sight of God, the preservation of the Israelites are of greatest importance to God than any other people group because it would be through the bloodline of David that the Messiah and savior of the world would come. They are the only group of people that God covenanted with in the Old Testament. So protecting and preserving them was of the highest importance to God.
2. David – The last half of verse 27 helps us understand that “firstborn” is connected to David being the highest and most powerful king in the world. “Firstborn” here is also in reference to rank or position. It means that David will be the highest ranked and most supreme king in the world.
3. Jesus – In the same way, the following verses (Colossians 1:16-17) give us context to help us properly understand what “firstborn” is referring to: Jesus created absolutely ALL things and is before absolutely ALL things. “Firstborn” for Jesus is also referring to rank and position. It is saying that Jesus is highest in rank and supremacy. This contextually makes sense: Jesus is supreme over every single thing that has ever been created because he is the one who created all of it and He existed before all of creation as well. The context clarifies that “firstborn” is not a reference to a chronological genealogy of Jesus being the literal firstborn or first birthed offspring of God the Father.

### **What does “only begotten son” mean?**

1. Hebrews 11:17 *“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his **only begotten son**.”*

- Was Isaac literally Abraham's only begotten son? No. Abraham had Ishmael before Isaac. He also had other sons after Isaac. This leads us to believe that the phrase, "only begotten son" cannot always be interpreted in a literal sense. What then might it be referring to?
  - o Begotten in this passage means, "Unique or one of a kind." Yes, Abraham did have more than one son, but Isaac was the only son he had by Sarah and Isaac is the son that God promised Abraham through His covenant. In this context, it makes for Isaac to be referred to as Abraham's "only begotten son," because of the unique/one of a kind son that Isaac was.
  
- 2. John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his **only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*
  - All throughout the New Testament, Jesus is called the Son of God. But there are also many other times where Christians are called sons and daughters of God by means of spiritual adoption (Romans 8:15). Adam, Solomon and angels are also called sons of God. So when we read that Jesus is the only begotten son of God, the Biblical writer is intentionally separating Jesus from the everyone else who is also called a son of God. The relationship with Jesus had/has with the Father is much more unique and intimate than our relationship with the Father. Another way to say this would be that Jesus is the unique son of God because of his unique relationship with the Father. This is not a reference to Jesus being literally begotten or reproduced as an offspring of God the Father.
    - o Not only is Jesus called "the son of God." Jesus commonly referred to himself as "the son of man." Why is only Jesus rightfully called "the son of man" if every human male is also a literal son of man?
    - o He is also called the lamb of God as well as the eternal father (Isaiah 9:6). He is not literally a lamb, neither has he literally been a father for eternity. These are all symbolic titles to help us mere humans attain a better grasp on who this Jesus is. It would be a mistake to interpret any of these titles in a hyper literal sense. Terms as "Father" and "Son" are attributed to both God and Jesus in order to help us understand the relationship between the different persons of the Trinity.

- Jesus: the created offspring of heavenly father and heavenly mother who has not always been God but became one of many Gods over time? **Or** the Jesus who has eternally existed as God and created absolutely all things?
  
- Jesus: the brother of Lucifer? **Or** Jesus: the creator of Lucifer?

**These are two very different Christs and we need to choose very wisely which Jesus we are going to put our faith in. Which Jesus have you put your faith in?**

