

## ***Fatherhood of God***

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Reference to God the Father is prolific in Scripture, but surprisingly there are only ten mentions in the Old Testament. And why would that be so? This lesson will answer, and give us the blessing of His word—authority—on it. Moses makes the first mention of God as our Father in The Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 32:6 *“Is this the way you repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not your **Father**, your Creator, who made you and formed you?”* And he used the name LORD—Covenant Father—and your Father, as **Creator!**

Then we have to jump to the Psalms to get the next two mentions in 2:7 *“I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your **Father**.’”*—**Jesus** proclaimed the LORD as His Father. A maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite in 89:26-27 said, *“He will call out to me, ‘You are my **Father**, my God, the Rock my Savior.’”* *27I will also appoint him my first born, the most exalted of the kings of the earth*—reference to **Jesus** as Father, God, Savior and Rock from the Psalmist.

- Isaiah 9:6—talking about **Jesus**—*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting **Father**, Prince of Peace.”*

- Isaiah 63:16—talking both times about **Jesus as Redeemer**—*“But you are our **Father**, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, O LORD, are our **Father**, our Redeemer from of old is your name.”*

- Isaiah 64:8—*“Yet, O LORD, you are our **Father**. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.”* Isaiah speaks of Father, **Creator!**

- Jeremiah 3:4-5—**God of Israel** responding to their sin—*“Have you not just called to me: ‘My **Father**, my friend from my youth, swill you always be angry? Will your wrath continue forever?’ This is how you talk, but you do all the evil you can.”*

- Jeremiah 3:19-20—**God of Israel** speaks of their unfaithfulness—*“I myself said, ‘How gladly would I treat you like sons and give you a desirable land, the most beautiful inheritance of any nation.’ I thought you would call me ‘**Father**’ and not turn away from following me. 20But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to me, O house of Israel,’ declares the LORD.”*

- Malachi 2:10—to Judah as **Creator** in last OT reference—*“Have we not all one **Father**? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?”*

Father is defined in *Webster’s New American Dictionary*—*n* 1 : a male parent 2 *cap* : **God** esp. as the **first person of the Trinity**. The ten mentions of ‘Father’ in the Old Testament are in reference to: A) **Creator** (3 times), B) Covenant Father/**God of Israel** (2 times) and C) **Jesus** (5 times)—further identified as Rock, Savior, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Redeemer, Potter and Husband. Bottom line: the Father and Son are *One!*

The OT presents ‘Father’ as Creator, and Israel’s Covenant Father 5 times—the other 5 are of Jesus—but the New Testament (**New Covenant**) mentions ‘Father’ scores of times, but only after the incarnation of the Son of God. **God is presented as potentially ‘our’ Father only after He has presented His Son in the flesh! And it is the Son, then, who presents The Father to us!** He is represented by Jesus as the *One* with all and full authority in heaven and in earth. Matthew is all over heavenly Father and Father in heaven. And Jesus submits to that authority in every respect and commands His followers to do so.

In Matthew 6:9 Jesus taught His disciples to address God Almighty—“*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.*” So, is God the Father of every living person, or is He the Father of His own children by faith in His Son? Scripture is clear that God is Father Creator to everyone only in the sense that He made life for them possible. But God becomes ‘our’ Father through faith in the *Lord Jesus Christ—the Anointed One*. “**God’s people are doubly His children,**” said Charles Spurgeon, “they are His offspring by creation, and they are his sons (*and daughters...mine*) by adoption in Christ.”

**The unveiling of the Father is tied up in the Son!** And it unfolds in the NT with Jesus 1) addressing the Father, 2) introducing the Father, 3) submitting to the Father, and, ultimately, 4) being given all power and authority from the Father. As a young boy, accidentally left in the temple, Jesus said, “*I had to be in my **Father’s** house*”; in His ministry said, “*I do just what the **Father** says*”; just before death He prayed in submission “*Not my will but Your will, **Father***”, and after His resurrection announced to us all: “*I go to the **Father***”!

**Authority**, what does it really, fully mean when we’re talking about the Supreme Authority? Again, we defer to *Webster* beginning with the root word author—**1 : one that originates or creates** **2 : one that writes or composes a literary work**. The first definition of author certainly defines God, but look at how well the second does so—one that writes or composes a literary work—God’s written epochal word: God’s Son! And we are to submit to His *Word*.

Six meanings are given for authority; not all included—**1 : a citation used in support of a statement or in defense of an action; also : the source of such a citation** **2 : one appealed to as an expert** **3 : power to influence thought or behavior, and 6 : convincing force**. God is the ultimate source of everything and the expert on it—God is the Supreme and One and Only ‘Know-it-all’! Definitions 3 and 6: while God the Father absolutely has the power to influence and He is a convincing force; He has elected to give to every human being free will—to choose Him or not; to be influenced by His Awesomeness, or not.

**In the case of our Heavenly Father, His authority equals power—the ‘be all end all’!** 1 Corinthians 4:20 *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.”* We are only here to please God: We are the kingdom of God. God will bring judgment to men and nations who reject His authority. We are not invited to vote on what parts of God’s word we believe, teach and obey. 1 Samuel 15:23 says, *“For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.”* To reject God’s authority is to rebel; and rebellion will cost us.

► So Jonah sailed for Tarshish—possibly in Spain—though there are several cities with that name on the coast of the Mediterranean. We know he was a man swallowed up by I. Prejudice; then a II. Churning sea, and, finally, a III. Great fish prepared by the LORD. In **Jonah 1:6 ff** the sailors began to interview him:

1. How can you sleep?

Verse 7 interrupts: *“Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity.”* And the lot fell on Jonah! Back to the interview in verse 8:

2. Who is responsible for making all this trouble for us?

3. What do you do?

4. Where do you come from?

5. What is your country?

6. From what people are you?

7. What have you done?

8. What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?

In Jonah 1:9-10 he explained: *“I am a Hebrew, and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land (Creator—mine).”* And then 10: *“This terrified them and they asked ‘What have you done?’ (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.)”* What terrified the sailors was when Jonah announced the God of heaven as the *One* who **made the sea**, because they had believed the sea to be unmanageable, untamable and un-make-able! God’s control of the sea was often used in Scripture to stress His complete power and authority over creation (Psalms 24:2; 33:7; 65:7; 74:13 et al).

God’s authority over creation and over all its creatures is not dented or daunted by our rejection or rebellion: **His rule remains:** God does His will! And we get to see in Jonah 1:12-17 *“Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and **it will become calm. I know that it is my fault** (rebellion) that this great storm has come upon you.*

*13“Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for **the sea grew even wilder than before.** 14Then they cried to the LORD, ‘O LORD, please do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased.’ 15Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and **the raging sea grew calm.** 16At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.”*

The sea recognized the authority of its Creator/Father God and obeyed His command to churn, and it obeyed His command to grow wilder than before—rage—and then it obeyed God’s command to grow calm. The sea submitted: **committed to the discretion and decision of the God who made it.** See, we can obey without submitting. Verse 17 concludes with a fish that will do His bidding: *“But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.”* And God would forgive a wicked, pagan city—the capital of Assyria—and even those not His people submitted and repented!

**When Jesus told us to go and tell He gave the same command that God gave to Jonah.** We’re either going to submit and obey or rebel and disobey. If we silently choose to stay put—perhaps because we’re shy or afraid or insecure in our faith—then we’ve disobeyed and chosen to rebel. Jesus said if we love Him we will obey Him. “If we cannot be torn in pieces by the roaring lion, if we may be hugged to death by the bear, the devil little cares which it is, so long as he destroys our love to Christ, and our confidence in Him,” said Spurgeon.

**Submission** to authority starts at home: if it isn’t practiced in the home, it won’t be performed anywhere else. Vashti was the wife of King Xerxes (Ahasuerus in Hebrew) of Persia, and on the seventh day of a big banquet for the men, he sent for her—to show her off. Scripture does not tell us why she refused but simply states in Esther 1:12bc *“Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger.”* That act of rebellion cost her: she was remanded to quarters away from the palace and was rejected as wife to Xerxes and Queen to Persia.

Now the God of Israel was all over the search for Vashti’s replacement: and we know that **Esther was His choice!** But marriage and crowning wasn’t the end of her story, but just the beginning. Esther had been raised by her cousin, Mordecai, because she had neither mother nor father, and she submitted to his authority and obeyed his instruction not to reveal her Jewish nationality and family background. Scripture says in 2:10 *“Mordecai had forbidden her to do so.”*

There was a very wicked man in the king’s service who had determined and plotted to have all Jews destroyed. And he managed to convince the king to sign an edit that on a certain day every Jew would be exterminated. No one knew about Esther, and she might have been overlooked for slaughter if she had kept silent. In Esther 4:13-14 Mordecai spoke words to Esther that are an indictment to us today: *“Do not think that because you are in the king’s house you alone of all the Jews will escape. <sup>14</sup>For **if you remain silent at this time**, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father’s family will perish. **And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?**”* Though God isn’t mentioned in Esther, He used this submitting Jewess to save His people!

Psalm 50:1 *“The Mighty One, God, the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to the place where it sets.”* Our nation is under God’s judgment today! He will judge our sin, because His perfect love is juxtaposed by His severity—justice. God won’t give America a ‘pass’; and He will not acquit sin apart from His Son—John 14:6. Spurgeon again, “When God saw Jesus in the sinner’s place, He did not spare Him; and when He finds the unregenerate without Christ, He will not spare him.”

What are we to do in the face of our nation’s sin, of our own sin, and in view of the calamities that are coming to us from the hand of God, as He is giving opportunity for us to repent and return to Him—to His authority. God is not done with America, yet, because we are still here. Acts 1:7 *“He (Jesus) said to them, **It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.**”*

The LORD appeared to Solomon at the dedication of the temple and said in 2 Chronicles 7:13-14 *“When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain,*

*or command locusts to devour the land*

*or send a plague among my people, <sup>14</sup>if my people, who are called by my name, will **humble** themselves and **pray** and **seek** my face and **turn** from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”* Spurgeon: “You have no rights as a subject, you have forfeited them by your treason; but nothing can forfeit a child’s right to a father’s protection. Be not afraid to say, ‘My Father, hear my cry.’”

Romans 8:15 *“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”* And in John 10:30 Jesus tells us: **“I and the Father are one.”**

► Satan asked Eve, “Did God really say?” and then told her at least four lies:

1. God is not good —this tree is good for food
2. God is not truthful —you won’t surely die
3. God is not righteous —you will simply know what God knows
4. God is not gracious —here’s what God meant when He said...

And those lies birthed rebellion and myriad perpetual lies! We must overcome them by knowing God’s word: we must know the truth to recognize the lies!

God the Father has given all authority in heaven and in earth to His Son. Colossians 2:10 *“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, <sup>10</sup>and you have been given fullness in Christ, **who is the head over every power and authority.**”* Our Lord Jesus is quoted by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:18 *“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”* Jesus is Lord—the Anointed One! John 3:35 *“The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.”* John 5:17 *“Jesus said to them, ‘My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.’”* John 20:21 *“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”*