

God as Our Father

Topical Study

- Primarily signifying God’s paternal relationship to Jesus Christ, the term also refers to God’s fatherly relationship to his creation, especially to believers as the “children of God”.

1. Aspects of the fatherhood of God

A. He is the Creator and provider

- 1 Corinthians 8:4–6

⁴ Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one. ⁵ For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), ⁶ **yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.**

- Deuteronomy 32:6

⁶ Do you thus deal with the LORD,
O foolish and unwise people?
Is He not your Father, who bought you?
Has He not made you and established you?

¹⁸ Of the Rock who begot you, you are unmindful,
And have forgotten the God who fathered you. (32:18)

- Isaiah 64:8

⁸ But now, O LORD,
You are our Father;
We are the clay, and You our potter;
And all we are the work of Your hand.

- Acts 17:24–28

²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵ Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. ²⁶ **And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of**

their dwellings, ²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

A. He shows love and compassion

- Hosea 11:1 - God's Continuing Love for Israel

¹¹ *"When Israel was a child, I loved him,
And out of Egypt I called My son.*

- Psalm 103:12-14

¹² *As far as the east is from the west,
So far **has He removed** our transgressions from us.*

¹³ *As a father pities his children,
So the LORD **pities those who fear Him.***

¹⁴ *For **He knows our frame;**
He remembers that we are dust.*

- Jeremiah 3:19-20

¹⁹ *"But I said:*

*'How can I put you among the children
And give you a pleasant land,
A beautiful heritage of the hosts of nations?'*

"And I said:

*'**You shall call Me, "My Father,"**
And not turn away from Me.'*

- ²⁰ *Surely, as a wife treacherously departs from her husband,
So have you dealt treacherously with Me,
O house of Israel," says the Lord.*
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- 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - Comfort in Suffering

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,** ⁴ who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

B. He exercises his providence and care

- Psalm 68:5

⁵ *A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows,
Is God in His holy habitation.*

- Matthew 6:26

²⁶ *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*

- Matthew 6:31–33

³¹ *“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’* ³² *For after all these things the Gentiles seek. **For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*** ³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

- pp. Luke 12:29–31
- Matthew 7:7–11 - “Ask, and It Will Be Given”

⁷ *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.* ⁸ *For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.* ⁹ ***Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?*** ¹⁰ *Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?* ¹¹ *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things** to those who ask Him!*

- pp. Luke 11:9–13

C. He disciplines and corrects

- Deuteronomy 8:1–5 - God’s Gracious Dealings

1 *“All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to give to your forefathers.*

2 *“You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.*

3 *“**He humbled you and let you be hungry,** and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD.*

4 *“Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.*

5 *“Thus you are to know in your heart that **the LORD your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.***

- Proverbs 3:11–12
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11 *My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD
Or loathe His reproof,*

12 *For whom the LORD loves He reproveth,
Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.*

- Hebrews 12:5–6
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5 *and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons,*

*“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord,
Nor faint when you are reproveth by Him;*

6 ***For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines,
And He scourges every son whom He receives.”***

2. *Dimensions of the Fatherhood of God*

A. **God as the Father of Jesus Christ**

- Matthew 3:16–17
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16 *After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him,*

17 *and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “**This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.**” (pp. Mk 1:11; Lk 3:22)*

- Matthew 11:25–27 - Come to Me
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25 *At that time Jesus said, “**I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,** that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.*

26 *“**Yes, Father,** for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight.*

27 *“**All things have been handed over to Me by My Father;** and no one **knows the Son except the Father;** nor does anyone **know the Father except the Son,** and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.*

- Luke 2:49

49 *And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? **Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?**”*

- John 5:17–18

17 *But He answered them, “**My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.**”*

Jesus’ Equality with God

18 *For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, **but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.***

- John 17:11

11 *“I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and **I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.***

- John 20:17

17 *Jesus *said to her, “**Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father;** but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’ ” ;*

- Romans 15:5–6

5 *Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,*
6 *so that **with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ;***

- Ephesians 1:3

3 ***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,***

- 1 Peter 1:3

3 ***Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,***

- 1 John 1:3

3 *what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed **our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.***

B. God is the father of Israel

1. He cares for his covenant people

- Jeremiah 31:9

9 *“With weeping they will come,
And by supplication I will lead them;
I will make them walk by streams of waters,
On a straight path in which they will not stumble;
For I am a father to Israel,
And Ephraim is My firstborn.”*

- Exodus 4:22

22 *“Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Israel is My son, My firstborn.”*

- Deuteronomy 14:1 - Clean and Unclean Animals

1 *“You are the sons of the LORD your God; you shall not cut yourselves nor shave your forehead for the sake of the dead.”*

- Deuteronomy 32:6

6 *“Do you thus repay the LORD,
O foolish and unwise people?
Is not He your Father who has bought you?
He has made you and established you.*

- Isaiah 63:16

16 *For **You are our Father**, though Abraham does not know us
And Israel does not recognize us.
You, O LORD, are our Father,
Our Redeemer from of old is Your name.*

- The nation’s physical ancestors, Abraham and Jacob (Israel) played a crucial role in Jewish thinking.
- It had been the besetting temptation and sin of the Jews to rest on the mere privilege of descent from Abraham and Jacob (cf. Matthew 3:9)

9 *and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father’; for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham.*

- John 4:12 - The Woman of Samaria

12 *“You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?”*

- John 8:38–39 - Light of the World & Truth shall make you free - Pharisees contradict

38 *“I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.”*

39 *They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus *said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham.*

- but at last they renounce that to trust God alone as Father
- Malachi 2:10 - Sin in the Family

10 “Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?”

2. *He is the father of the kings of Israel*

- 2 Samuel 7:13–14 - The Davidic Covenant

¹³ *He (David through Solomon) shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.** If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.*

- pp 1 Chronicles 17:12–13

¹² *He shall build Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. **I will be his Father, and he shall be My son; and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him** who was before you.*

- This description of God’s fatherhood involves the maintenance of a special relationship between God and David’s descendants, which ultimately includes Jesus Christ.
- See also Psalm 2:7

⁷ *“I will declare the decree:
The LORD has said to Me,
‘You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.*

- Psalm 89:26–27

²⁶ *He shall cry to Me, ‘You are my Father,
My God, and the rock of my salvation.’*

²⁷ *Also I will make him My firstborn,
The highest of the kings of the earth.*

- The firstborn child was given a place of special honor and a double portion of the inheritance (Gen. 27; 2 Kin. 2:9).
- Gen. 27 - Jacob's deception and the stolen blessing

9 When they had crossed over, Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for you before I am taken from you." And Elisha said, "Please, let a double portion of your spirit be upon me." (2 Kings 2:9)

- However, in a royal grant covenant, a chosen person could be elevated to the level of firstborn sonship and thus have title to a perpetual gift involving dynastic succession (cf. Ps. 2:7).

*7 "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD:
He said to Me, 'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.*

- Though not actually the first, Israel was considered the firstborn among nations (Ex. 4:22);

22 "Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, "Israel is My son, My firstborn.

- Ephraim the younger was treated as the firstborn (Gen. 48:17–19); and

17 When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head.

18 Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head."

19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also will become a people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations."

- David was the firstborn among kings.
- In this latter sense of prominent favor, Christ can be called the firstborn over all creation (Col. 1:15), in that He is given the preeminence over all created beings.

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

C. God is the father of Christian believers

1. He has an intimate relationship with believers

- Matthew 6:9 (NKJV)

⁹ *In this manner, therefore, pray:*

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

- Lk 11:2 adds:

...Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.

- See also
- John 20:17

¹⁷ *Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am **ascending to My Father and your Father**, and to My God and your God.’ ”*

- 2 Corinthians 6:17–18:

¹⁷ *“Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,”
says the Lord.*

*“And do not touch what is unclean;
And I will welcome you.*

¹⁸ *“And I will be a father to you,
And you **shall be sons and daughters to Me**.”
Says the Lord Almighty.*

- Galatians 3:26

²⁶ *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

- 1 John 2:13

¹³ *I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. **I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.***

2. *He adopts believers into his family*

- John 1:12–13

12 *But as many as received Him, to them **He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,***
13 *who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, **but of God.***

- Romans 8:14–17

14 *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, **these are sons of God.***
15 *For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received **a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”***
16 *The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that **we are children of God,***
17 *and **if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.***

- Galatians 4:5–7

5 *so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, **that we might receive the adoption as sons.***
6 *Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, **crying, “Abba! Father!”***
7 *Therefore you are **no longer a slave, but a son;** and if a son, then an heir through God.*

- 1 John 3:1

*Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, **that we should be called children of God!** Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*

D. The fatherhood of God has implications for the church

1. *Character: children are to reproduce the Father’s likeness*

- Matthew 5:47–48 - we must live in love and the desire to bring others to redemption, as Jesus did...

*⁴⁷ And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸ Therefore **you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.***

2. *Unity: one Father means one family*

- Ephesians 4:3–6

³ endeavoring to **keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**

⁴ There is **one body and one Spirit**, just as you were called in **one hope of your calling**; ⁵ **one Lord, one faith, one baptism**; ⁶ **one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.**

- See also
- Malachi 2:10 - Treachery of Infidelity

¹⁰ **Have we not all one Father?**

Has not one God created us?

*Why do we **deal treacherously with one another**
By profaning the covenant of the fathers?*

- Matthew 23:9

⁹ *Do not call anyone on earth your father; **for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.***

- Ephesians 3:14–15 - Appreciation of the Mystery

¹⁴ *For this reason I bow my knees to **the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ**, ¹⁵ from whom **the whole family in heaven and earth is named,***

3. *Status: believers are related to Jesus Christ*

- Matthew 12:50

⁵⁰ *For whoever does the will of **My Father** in heaven is **My brother and sister and mother.***

- pp Mk 3:35, pp Lk 8:21
- See also
- Romans 8:29

²⁹ *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be **the firstborn among many brethren.***

- Hebrews 2:11

¹¹ *For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason **He is not ashamed to call them brethren,***

4. *Inheritance: believers are heirs of the Father's kingdom*

- Romans 8:16–17

¹⁶ *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit **that we are children of God,** ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

- See also
- Luke 12:32

³² *“Do not fear, little flock, **for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**”*

- Galatians 3:29

²⁹ *And **if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.***

- Colossians 1:12

¹² *giving thanks to the Father who **has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance** of the saints in the light.*

- Titus 3:7

⁷ *that having been justified by His grace **we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.***

5. Submission: believers are to revere the Father

- 1 Peter 1:17

¹⁷ *And if you **call on the Father**, who without partiality **judges according to each one’s work**, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here **in fear**;*

- See also
- Matthew 6:9

⁹ *In this manner, therefore, pray:*

*Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.*

- pp
- Lk 11:2; (Same)
- Ephesians 3:14 - Appreciation of the Mystery

¹⁴ *For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

3. *Godly Sons of Godless Fathers*

1. Jonathan, son of Saul, risked his life to help David.
2. 1 Samuel 18:1 - Saul Resents David

*Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, **the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.***

3. Asa, son of Abijam, was Judah's first righteous king.
4. 1 Kings 15:8–14

⁸ So Abijam rested with his fathers, and they buried him in the City of David. Then Asa his son reigned in his place.

Asa Reigns in Judah

⁹ In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa became king over Judah. ¹⁰ And he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His grandmother's name was Maachah the granddaughter of Abishalom.

¹¹ Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as did his father David. ¹² And he banished the perverted persons from the land, and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. ¹³ Also he removed Maachah his grandmother from being queen mother, because she had made an obscene image of Asherah. And Asa cut down her obscene image and burned it by the Brook Kidron. ¹⁴ But the high places were not removed. Nevertheless Asa's heart was loyal to the LORD all his days.

5. Hezekiah, son of Ahaz, was Judah's second righteous king.
 - 2 Kings 18:1–20:21
6. Josiah, son of Amon, led Judah in a great revival.

4. *Godless Sons Of Godly Fathers*

1. Esau, son of Isaac, sold his birthright.
 - Gen. 25:27–34
2. Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, offered strange fire on the altar of incense.
 - Lev. 10:1–5
3. Abimelech, son of Gideon, murdered his 70 brothers
 - Judg. 9
4. Hophni and Phinehas, sons of Eli, were immoral and dishonest priests.
 - Sam. 2:12–25
5. Joel and Abijah, sons of Samuel, took bribes and perverted justice.
 - 1 Sam. 8:1–3
6. Amnon, son of David, raped his half sister
 - 2 Sam. 13:1–19
7. Absalom, son of David, led a rebellion against his father

- 2 Sam. 15–18
- 8. Adonijah, son of David, attempted to steal Solomon’s throne
 - 1 Kings 1
- 9. Rehoboam, son of Solomon, caused a tragic civil war
 - 1 Kings 12
- 10. Joram, son of Jehoshaphat, murdered his six brothers
 - 2 Kings 8:16–24
- 11. Ahaz, son of Jotham, sacrificed his own children to idols.
 - 2 Kings 16:1–20
- 12. Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, was Judah’s worst king.
 - 2 Kings 21:1–18
- 13. Jehoahaz, son of Josiah, did evil in the sight of God
 - 2 Kings 23:31–33
- 14. Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, burned the scroll from Jeremiah
 - Jer. 36:20–26
- 15. Zedekiah, son of Josiah, persecuted Jeremiah
 - 2 Kings 24:17–25:30; Jer. 37:1–21