

## Morphe - Schema

*“Christ Jesus . . . being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”* [Philippians 2:5-7](#)

*“Great is the mystery of godliness,”* Paul exclaimed as he summarized the incarnation (I Timothy 3:16). No mere words, even those inspired by God Himself, can completely express what transpired when *“the Word was made flesh”* ([John 1:14](#)). There are, however, a few clues in this marvelous Philippians passage. The choice of the Greek word *morphê* to express what Jesus possessed prior to His becoming the God-Man is important. This *“form”* of God is not the Greek word that one would choose to express the visible or outward shape – that word would be *schêma*. *Morphê* emphasizes the character, the being that makes the being what it is.

Interestingly, *morphê* is also used to tell us that Jesus took on the *“form”* of a servant: *“[he] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men”* ([Philippians 2:7](#)). Jesus *“voided”* the *morphê* that He rightfully possessed as God and *“received”* (passive) the *morphê* of a servant or slave (*dulos*). Then, *“in the likeness [homoîôma, similitude] of men,”* He came to be [*ginomai*, to come into existence].

We may never fully understand what transpired in the councils of Triune eternity. But this we can know and believe: *Jesus became man for men, and He alone saved us from our sin and justly granted us eternal life.*