

## And the related question: Is Jesus God?

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***The Longest running Controversy in Judeo - Christian Religion is the matter of the Identity of Jesus Christ. His also being God Divides Judaic Theology from Christian Theology as does No Other Issue. These below items present many concise reasons why the Church of God accepts His Personal Divinity and Pre-Existence.***

***If God had intended we conceive of Him as a Single Being, WHY are there so many unequivocal statements that affirm His Son as being God also?***

***The Controversy did not originate in the New Testament Era. The seeds of Misunderstanding and Conflict were planted back in earliest times. What was the Major Contention that Christ had with Jewish Theology that ultimately led to His being given a most extreme death sentence?***

### **Here are more than 45 Reasons to Acknowledge Jesus' Divinity!**

**1. ■ Emmanuel**, “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, **God with us.**” (Matt. 1:23 quoting Isa. 7:14) The very name of this individual incorporates a singular form of a name of God, (*El*). His being ‘with us’ makes it no less so. This is indisputably referring to the Son of God, Jesus the Christ. From ancient times, Jesus is called ‘God.’ The use of the singular is entirely appropriate here, in that the Father never divested of His Power and Glory as did the Second Person, who became born of the flesh, dwelling among men and by doing so acquiring the capability of death, something essential in order to be able to pay the penalty for sins. In stating that the Son is God, is the scripture telling us a lie? Is it telling us to tell a lie by calling Him God?

**2. ■ Let US make man like us!** “And God (*Elohim*) said, Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness:..” (Gen. 1:26) From the very beginning, Creation is represented as a collaborative effort of two Beings, here speaking as one. Gen. 3:22 reflects the same plurality of Beings, observing man’s attempt to enter the Divine realm by partaking of the forbidden fruit. “And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become **as one of us**, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:..” Not something that a singular Being could truthfully state!

**3. ■ The LORD said to my Lord.** David, (and Daniel after him), referred to his personal Lord, one other than THE LORD. In Psalm 110, David relates a significant moment in time, when The LORD (*YHVH*) says to his Lord (*Adonai*), “Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Now, IF David **knew** of the existence of who we regard as the greater LORD (*YHVH*), then why would he refer to a ‘lesser’ Lord (*Adonai*) as being his Lord? Did David worship another Being than THE LORD? (*YHVH*). Did David violate the first commandment in doing so? We should keep in mind that it’s this verse primarily that got Christ killed (in combination with Daniel 7:13 which relates that occasion when these words of Psalm 110:1 were uttered), and that provoked great resentment among religious Jews. (Mt. 22:46 & Mk. 12:37) This clearly indicates one Being speaking to another Being. It was this very possibility that shut down dialog with the religious leaders twice in a short period. (See Mark 12:34 and 12:37) In Mark 12:34 the background subject was the *Shema* and its possible meaning of unity between Beings, rather than

a singularity of Being, and 12:37 with its clear reference to Psalm 110:1 indicating even more clearly one Being speaking to another that abruptly ended discussions! They were unwilling to consider the possibility! What we should note is the change made in verse 5 of Psalm 110, where the Jews of the second or third century BC altered their original text to substitute 'Adonai' in place of the original 'YHVH'. Psalm 110:5 indicates that Adonai was also YHVH, but the post-exilic Sopherim wouldn't hear of it.

Daniel's experience, related in chapter 10 is profound, in that he was visited by his Lord, who appeared to him in three manifestations, each exhibiting lessened Glory than the previous. In verses 5 & 6 we see a Being described who is a dead ringer for Jesus Christ as described in Revelation 1:13-16, before whom Daniel wilted physically, becoming semi-conscious (v. 8&9). In verse 16, this Being is represented in a more humanlike form, and in verse 18, with the appearance of a man. Now, Daniel refers to this Being as his Lord (the same term as David used, but in Daniel the translators chose to use the lower case L.) Verse 16&17 have: "...then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, **O my lord**, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this **my lord**? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me." Here, a man who went to the lions den for the worship of his Lord, would he so easily refer to another Being as his lord whom he served? A Being who is represented to us appearing exactly as does the Glorified Jesus Christ, the One who was dead but is alive (Rev. 1:18). The dilemma for the modern bible student is to ascertain whether this Being Daniel engaged was God the Father or the pre-incarnate Son.

**4. ■ Who rested on the seventh day?** In Hebrews 4:8, we are told that it was Jesus who offered them 'rest' indicating that Jesus, (or the Being that later became known to us as Jesus), was the Creator who rested on the seventh day. (v.4) Those who believe that God is a single Being represent God the Father as being the Creator, not Jesus. But places such as Hebrews 1:2, John 1:3, Eph. 3:9 and Col. 1:16 indicate that the Being who later became manifest in the flesh had in fact in the beginning been the facilitator of Creation. "*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 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. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;*" (Col. 1:15-18) A number of points here: 1. God the Father is to us invisible, 2. The Son presents that invisible image in visible form, 3. He is the 'firstborn' of all who are to be 'born' in that manner, 4. All things in existence were created by AND for Him, 5. He pre-existed all things, 6. He is head of the Church, 7. He is the first to be resurrected from the dead into spirit existence. God the Father has never been dead!

**5. ■ My Lord and my God.** Those who advocate that to worship any other than the One God, God the Father, is tantamount to breaking the first commandment need to consider Jesus' mother and aunt. Both indicated that Mary's unborn was their God! (Luke 1:41-44 & 46-47) Thomas also left no doubt, in exclaiming Jesus as his Lord and God. (John 20:28) (If he'd been incorrect, wouldn't Jesus have corrected him? The account in John was written six decades after the event. If Thomas had overstated or mis-stated, wouldn't John have clarified or qualified the statement?) Both before His birth and after His death, He is referred to as God. The writers of the books of Hebrews and the Psalms affirm that the Son is God!

**6. ■ Hebrews 1:6-10.** The extraordinarily profound narrative in the book of Hebrews causes some to disregard the book as belonging in the canon. The point of the objectionable passages, such as the one presented below, is too clear. "*..For unto which of the angels said he at any time, **Thou art my Son**, this day have I begotten thee?* (quoted from Psalm 2:7 ) *And again, **I will be to him a Father, and he shall be***

*to me a Son?* 6: *And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.* (quoted from Psalm 97:7 ) 7: *And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.* (quoted from Psalm 104:4) 8: *But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.* (quoted from Psalm 45:6-7 ) 9: *Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* (quoted from Isaiah 61:1&3) 10: *And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:* (quoted from Psalm 102:25-27 ) Here, God the Father addresses His Son, referring to Him as God, as well as Himself! In other words, there is considerable precedent for regarding both God and His Son as God! These statements are found all through the Old Testament! The main point here is that God the Father is seen referring to His Son as God who should be worshiped. Does this worship violate the first Commandment?

Some allege that it does! Referring back to the place in Psalms being quoted, we also find God referring to His Son as the “Mighty One!” Ps. 45:3. This word is used also in Isaiah 9:6, there translated “the Mighty God.”

**7. ■ The WORD became flesh:** Perhaps the most profound declaration of Christ’s absolute Divinity is found in the opening verses of the writings of the Apostle John. Both were written rather late in the new Testament era, the Epistle of 1<sup>st</sup> John and especially the Gospel of John. John was particularly vocal in affirming and defending the Divinity of Christ. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* (Two Beings: The Father God and the Word 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.”* (John 1:1-3) Then beginning his first Epistle, John takes his statements to an explicit degree, showing that the Word had **taken on a form** that was both visible, and tangible! That He had taken on a form that was real in the physical dimension! *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;”* The WORD existed from the ‘beginning’, was **with** God, and **was** God! Not only that, but the Word was directly and fully co-involved in Creation. Nothing that exists came into being without His direct involvement! Further clarity is established in verse 14 of his Gospel, *“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* The Apostle, by affirming these things, was in large part countering the Gnostic views that were making inroads into the early Church. That emerging problem can be seen in 1<sup>st</sup> John 4:2-3, 2:21-22 and 2<sup>nd</sup> John 7. That is considered in the next point.

**8. ■ Denying that Christ is come in the flesh:** *“Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”* (1<sup>st</sup>.Jn. 4:2-3) *“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”* (2<sup>nd</sup> John 7) What is the issue here? It isn’t something that we in this generation would comprehend, without understanding Gnostic theology. A Gnostic, who was persuaded of metaphysical Dualism (as reflected in Greek thought), would have serious problems with a Divine Being in any way being composed of flesh (having entered the material dimension) as they considered anything material to be corrupt and evil. Thus, in order to embrace and defend their acceptance of Christ as being a Divine Being, they must disassociate Him from any existence involving physical matter. So to remain in acceptance of Christ’s Divinity, they were compelled to allege that He had no physical body, only the **appearance** of one! Paul supported John in his statement in Colossians 1:19 & 2:9, that *“...For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;... For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead*

*bodily.*” These statements are a spear thrust deep into the heart of Gnostic views. The argument here is between Christ’s physicality and His Divinity. To the Gnostic, He couldn’t be both. The fact of this argument supports the belief in His Divinity in the early NT Church, even among the Gnostic element, though the Gnostics saw need to deny His physicality in order for that faction to accept His Divinity under their preconceived belief system.

The important consideration with this particular matter is that IF Christ was merely a man, as some of Unitarian persuasion allege, then this would never have come up as a controversy. If the early Church had realized and believed that He was just a physical human being, there would be no question whatsoever as to His ‘coming in the flesh.’ That would be a given, would it not?

**9. ■ The Glory which I had with you.** Those who advocate that Jesus is **not** God usually pose also that He had no existence prior to His physical birth. In the face of that is Jesus’ own proclamation of having existed in the glorified state before the present world. On the occasion of His final recorded prayer in the flesh, He said, “*And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*” (John 17:5) Clearly, this Being had once existed in a glorified state, but left it to take on a physical form in order to bear the sins of humanity. Philippians 2:6 even indicates that He was complicit in the decision to divest Himself of His glorified state, proving that He had a conscious pre-existence. “*Who, 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:*” This after having first existed in the Godly form. This clearly indicates involved consent, not imposition.

**10. ■ YHVH, YHVH, Elohim.** An event in Exodus 34 is especially unique. Moses on numerous occasions had face-to-face exchanges with the de-glorified God (*YHVH*) (Ex. 33:11) *YHVH* appeared in the likeness of a normal man on those occasions. When Moses asked to see Him in His glorified state, rather than how He usually appeared (which tells us something about who Moses knew Him to be) not only was he granted his request, but with a special ‘bonus.’ On this occasion, God would utter the name of God, something rare at this early date. (v. 17-23) That name is found in chapter 34, verses 5 & 6, He uttered: “*YHVH YHVH Elohim*” Now in this place, translators didn’t insert the verb ‘is’ as they did with Deuteronomy 6:4, which could as easily be rendered: Yahweh, Yahweh (are) God. In other words, there are two *YHVH*’s in the Elohim! The Deuteronomy 6 instance is unique in that it adds the word ‘*echad*,’ which strengthens the rendition if and when regarded properly. *Echad* suggests a unity. In other words, it could be rendered: “Only Yahweh Yahweh (is) Elohim,” or “Yahweh, Yahweh (is) the one (with the sense of being unified) Elohim.” The question is, why was it important in these places to utter the name *YHVH* twice? Once would suffice to make the statement. “Yahweh is the one and only God.” (The sense of how they interpreted and translated a similar expression found in Deuteronomy 6:4)

But there is more to this story than is typically presented. We should note that Moses didn’t ask for God to utter His name, but the Being Moses was having face-to-face encounters with saw fit to add this component into the event He agreed to exhibit before Moses. Why was that? Let me suggest that God wanted Moses (and us) to be aware that HE (the One showing Himself in semi-glorified form) was **not** the only Being who exists in Glory. That there IS another Being, and that BOTH share the same name. That perhaps was the greater consideration in this event, and the Being who dealt with mankind saw fit to interject the fact.

**11. ■ The Everlasting Father.** Isaiah 9:6 makes a definitive identification, by affirming that one of the names and roles of God’s **Son** is the Everlasting Father! “*For unto us a child is born, unto us a **son** is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*” In the Old Testament era, He was the ‘father’ of the elect nation. In the millennial age, He will be the ‘Father’ of the converting Family, not to

in any way diminish or deny the fact that He had a Father, who then legitimately becomes our Father also, only upon conversion. Israel didn't understand who their true Father was. The Being who they'd dealt with throughout their history was the Being who later became born of the flesh. The Father of their LORD was an unknown entity to them prior to Jesus ministry of revelation. (Matt. 11:27, Lk. 10:22 & John 8:54-55) Here also in Isaiah, the Son is called 'God!'

**12. ■ I am not alone!** (Alone in what sense?) In arguing with the religious leaders, Jesus made a direct statement as to His non-singularity of Being, and His unity with His Father. In John 8:16, He refers to the acceptance of two witnesses as affirmation of an important truth. (Actually, their law says 'two or three.' (Deut. 17:6 & 1<sup>st</sup> Tim. 5:19) What a golden opportunity to introduce the Spirit as a third witness, **if** there were three Beings in the Godhead!) But He says there are two and that He is not a single entity witness.

**13. ■ The Father and the Son.** Terms like monotheism, bi-theism or tri-theism in the first century had not yet been coined by theological processes. The *primitive* term for the conceptualization of the Godhead appears all thru the New Testament. The Apostle John, writing late in the NT Era even goes so far as to identify rejection of what he calls the understanding of 'the Father and the Son' as the doctrine of antichrist! "*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist...He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, **he hath both the Father and the Son.***" (2<sup>nd</sup> John 7-9) "*Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that **denieth the Father and the Son.***" (1<sup>st</sup> John 2:22) One would think that denying that Jesus is the Christ would represent the 'antichrist.' But, no, it's the one who denies the 'duality' of the Father AND the Son who is antichrist! How do people deny the Father and the Son? Is this referring to the duality of the Godhead? And in verse 23, "*Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*" Acknowledges the Son in what manner? That He is God? To attempt to worship God the Father alone, excluding, or doing an 'end run' around His Son, by John's pointed statement, appears to be an impossibility, in keeping with Jesus' declaration, that 'no man **can** come to the Father but by Him!' Putting it another way: If the Son isn't God also, then we would have no acceptable intermediary by which to access the Father. Even the Son, in His recently resurrected state, had to be presented to the Father by officiating heavenly agents. (Daniel 7:13)

**14. ■ No man has seen God or heard His voice at any time.** This potent affirmation should have provoked massive objections among religious people of the first century. "*And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice **at any time**, nor seen his shape.*" (John 5:37) At any time? Then who was that who walked with Adam and Eve? Who ate with Abraham before going on toward Sodom? (Especially in contrast to Jesus' statement in John 8:56) Who did Jacob wrestle with all night? (Gen. 32:24-30) Who was that who spoke with Moses face to face? (Ex. 33:11) Who did Moses see in glorified form (Ex. 33:18 & 34:5-6), even being imbued with a small measure of that radiance himself thereafter? (Ex. 34:29) Who did Moses Aaron and the seventy elders see and eat with on the mountain? (Ex. 24:9-11) Who did Daniel see? (Daniel 10) Perhaps the greater question is, why weren't there howls of protest over this statement? Only one explanation will suffice: that they understood that He was speaking of another Father, above and in the background of that Being who had dealt with Moses and the patriarchs anciently. Colossians 1:15 tells us that the Father is invisible! (Note: IF John 5:37 is true, how could there be any descriptions of the Father's appearance?)

**15. ■ The God of the whole earth.** Isaiah 54 refers to the LORD of Hosts in a number of situations unique to the coming Christ. The Father was never married to national Israel nor is He the direct agent of the redemption process. The Son (God's Christ) is named as becoming 'the God of the whole Earth.' (v.5) Why prophesy of a situation of which there was no doubt? When would the Father have become the God of the whole earth? Wasn't He in effect always that?

**16. ■ Christ came to reveal His Father.** Though Israel worshiped a Being they regarded as their spiritual Father, (likely in deference to Isaiah 9:6) they, in actuality, didn't know of the existence of the Being Jesus revealed as His Father! It was the fact that their Father had a Father that was the unrealized situation. As early as the pre-teenage Jesus' interrogation in the Temple, it was "**my** Father," not "**our** Father." (Luke 2:49) His Father legitimately becomes 'our Father' only upon becoming engendered of His Holy Spirit.

**17. ■ Moses wrote of ME!** Perhaps we let Jesus' statement in John 5:46 pass by too quickly. Most people allow that Moses might have made only occasional or oblique mention of the Son, but that most of his mentions were of the Father. Then again, IF Moses wrote of Jesus Christ, and IF the Being who became Jesus did not yet exist, in how many places would he or could he have written of Him? Luke 24:27 shows that there were multiple places where Jesus was specifically mentioned, not only in Moses but in all the prophets as well. Who did Daniel see and speak with? A not-yet existent Being? His encounter involved a Being who was then actively opposing the world powers of the time, with the archangel Michael's assistance! (Dan. 10:13) The first 10 verses of Hebrews 10 is also undeniable. Here the pre-incarnate Christ is quoted speaking to His 'soon-to-be' Father, prior to His receiving His physical body, stating "*in the volume of the book it is written of me.*" (v. 7) These 10 verses present evidence of a consciousness long prior to His physical birth. The writer of Hebrews recognizes and positively asserts that David's comments in Psalm 40 being directly applicable to Christ's sacrifice for the sins of mankind.

**18. ■ I AM the I AM.** The claim of being THAT Being, introduced to Moses as the "*I AM*" literally blew the arresting Jews off their feet. (John 18:5-8) Obviously, His choice of words as to how to identify that He was the one they were seeking has less impact with us, not speaking the language, than it did with them. He didn't say, Yes! I am Jesus of Nazareth. He said something that affirmed their accusation, and which was consistent with the reason for their misguided quest to take Him! He was that Being who had given Moses his commission to bring the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage! (And, He would ultimately be bringing them out of theirs.)

**19. ■ Abraham and I saw each other!** An outrageous exchange between disbelieving Jews and Jesus is recorded in John 8:56-57. (John is wonderful in relating the subtleties regarding the issue of the Divinity of Jesus. John 1:1-5 for example.) Abraham rejoices to see His day. Does that mean Abraham 'saw' and haggled with a Being who had only a distant future existence? And on what account would he have 'rejoiced?' In verse 57 we can see by their response that they understood Him to be saying that He personally saw Abraham during his lifetime! Galatians 3:17 states that Christ was directly involved in making the Abrahamic Covenant! Who was the LORD who spoke with Abraham in Genesis 18?

**20. ■ I will be their God and they shall be my people.** Isn't the Father already that? What would be the situation where this would be spoken of in a prophetic sense? (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 6:16; Lev. 26:12; Rev. 21:3)

**21. ■ Christ was the Creator, by whom and for whom.** Despite attempts to dismiss the obvious claim of many New Testament writers as to who was the Creator, the overwhelming consensus remains for the hearer to accept or reject. "*The world was made by Him... Without Him was not anything made that was made... ..His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds.*" Some are satisfied to pose that the word 'by' should read 'for.' The Creator (the Father) created all things **for** Christ. Then we come to Hebrews 1:10, where the Father, speaking to the Son says, "*Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands:*" and Colossians 1:15-18. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** of every creature: 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. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.” A passage much harder to dismiss as merely being receptive of Creation as opposed to being its prime facilitator. Notice also the affirmation that HE existed before all things had come into being! (A cross-confirmation of John 17:5)

**22. ■ Who dwells in the light that no man can approach unto.** Another under-considered affirmation is found in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:16. We are introduced to the environment of an aura of brilliant energy that is lethal to physical beings. While there is a Being capable of living within that consuming aura, we need to consider what is the source of that emanation. This is the nearest thing we have to a description of the appearance of God the Father. Consistent with this picture is the description of what will happen when God the Father descends to earth to receive the fulfilled Kingdom from the Son that we see in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:24-28, while 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10-13 describes further what will happen to the material world at that occasion when the Father joins the Son on earth after the Millennial Age and the Plan of Redemption is fully carried through. The point here is that the Father consistently exhibits His **full** Glory, a Glory that He never at any time relinquished or diminished, where the Being who fulfilled the role of the Son did, by personal choice, divest Himself of His previous form and glory! (Exodus 33:18-23, Daniel 10:5-18, Philippians 2:6-7) This explains Christ’s statement that no man has at any time seen the Father or heard His voice. As Timothy corroborates, no man **can** see God the Father for this reason.

**23. ■ The Lord shall judge His people / all judgment is given to the Son.** The area of Judgment warrants our consideration with regard to the official conduct of the Plan of Redemption. John 5:22 tells us that **all judgment** is given to the Son. The question for us is when did that assignment happen? Was it right from the beginning? Does the Father **ever** intrude into that jurisdictional area? Deuteronomy 32:35-43 is reflected in Hebrews 10:30. Verse 29 indicates that this Lord is the Person of the Son of God. That would then draw us to conclude that the LORD (*YHVH*) in that passage in Deuteronomy is the Being who later became born of the flesh. Will God the Father ever, or Has He ever dealt **directly** with sinful humanity, except through the intermediary agency of His Son? We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. (2<sup>nd</sup> Cor. 5:10) The Father is not our Judge. The Father will not be there to plead our case. Rather it is the Son who will ‘justify’ us before the Father and will present us to Him once justified. But more importantly, our Judge, Christ, is referred to as GOD in Romans 14:10-12

Psalms 50:1-6 says this: “**The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.**” This passage poses some important considerations: According to Isaiah 9:6, ‘the Mighty God’ is what the Son also is called, so we can’t rule out that possibility here. This ‘Mighty God’ is here called *YHVH*! Our God shall come (to earth) and shine forth out of Zion. When did the Father ever do that? The Mighty God, *YHVH*, **shall** (future tense) **judge** His people, those who will have become ‘Saints,’ having made a Covenant with Him. Now if we believe that all judgment is given to the Son, then we must conclude that this is referring to Him in this place.

**24. ■ That Rock was Christ.** Apparently the Apostle Paul had no doubts as to the identity of the Being who personally dealt with ancient Israel, specifically the one who brought them out of Egypt. (Lev. 26:12-13) He affirmed very specifically who that Being was! “*Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all*

*drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed (went with, margin) them: and that Rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.*” (1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 10:1-5) After identifying Israel’s accompanying “Rock,” he then calls Him God!

**25. ■ Two Divine Representations of the Master Covenant.** Genesis 15 presents a defining moment in religious history. An event we identify as the Abrahamic Covenant. In it, the Covenant is confirmed by the procession of two Divine Representations: one enveloped in darkness, further obscured by its own smoke, and the other represented by an illuminating lamp which follows. The cleaved-in-two sacrificed animals represent the four distinct phases of the overall Covenant as it extends out through time, from the patriarchal age through to the end of the post-Millennial Age. (See “The Abrahamic Covenant” article.)

**26. ■ Jesus plainly claimed full ‘equality.’** Language that to us doesn’t have the same obvious meaning as it did to the Jewish religionists of the first century provoked a dramatic reaction with them. For example, the implications of the statement ‘God is my Father,’ to this generation doesn’t carry the same weight as it did to the religious Jews of Jesus’ day. Paul recognized His affirmation of ‘equality,’ (Phil. 2:6) as did the Jews when they heard the simple statement as we read in John 5:17. The claim of sonship was recognized by them as a claim of Divinity. (v.18) Why doesn’t that same understanding come through among us as fully today? Even those of Unitarian persuasion don’t recognize today what the first century Jews plainly saw. We ought also to pause at Philippians 2:6-7, which in addition to supporting the claim of ‘equality,’ also describes a former state of being! “*Who, 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:*” We here have indication of a prior existence and consciousness, being in a **Divine Form**, the form of God, where He personally decided to take on a different form, that of lower beings! Not only did He claim equality but He **had** equality prior to taking upon himself the inferior state.

**27. ■ Can a plural GODhead refer to itself as a singular entity?** And, does the use of a singular pronoun or verb exclude a plural entity? Language permits plural entities be reflected in the singular. We say “this cluster of grapes is good. The congregation gathered in its regular place. The team won its game.” Etc., etc. The singular verb or pronoun correctly reflects a group entity as though it was a singular entity.

**28. ■ Why is the Name ‘Elohim’ so predominantly a plural?** The Name is also found, though relatively rarely, in the singular form so the singular form does exist. What’s curious is that in the Hebrew, when we, in our bibles, see ‘God’ (*Elohim*), it’s really saying ‘the Gods!’ In translating over into English, that inherent plurality becomes less obvious.

**29. ■ Why use a term indicating ‘unity’ if there is but one Being?** Hebrews 1:3 makes five comparisons: First, two ways in which the two Beings are identical, then two ways in which they are distinctly different, then shows one sitting at the right hand of the other. Yet, Deuteronomy 6:4 uses the Hebrew ‘*echad*’ which indicates a unity between more than one singular entity. (See #32)

**30. ■ There are no other ‘gods.’** The statement in the first commandment, “*You shall have no other gods before Me*” is understood to prohibit worship of any other than the One God. What is the ultimate intent of this statement, the number of Beings in the Godhead, or the prohibition of regarding any other being as a ‘god?’ (This is the ‘subtlety’ that the scribe in Mark 12:34 addressed.) At the time this statement was made, the only other Higher Being that they **could** truthfully regard as a God would have been God the Father, who was largely an unknown entity at this early date.



**31. ■ The Gods decided to cause a great flood!** An interesting aside, in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, a descendant of Noah, who wrote during his lifetime (Noah lived another 350 years after the flood. He died just before Abram was born!) worded in his epic that “*the Gods decided...*” to cause a great flood, using a plural. This would suggest, that if his statement was true (and it was – the Elohim caused the flood), then we see in Noah’s day and after a continuing understanding of the fact of a plural Godhead!

**32. ■ The ‘Shema’ is clarified in the New Testament.** Though long interpreted as a definitive indication of numerical singularity, a narrative as to its meaning in the New Testament cracked open the true intent of the statement of a unity of more than one, rather than what the prevailing opinion by that time had come to be. The ‘discreet’ answer by the scribe in Mark 12:34 alluded to the ‘exclusivity’ of God, not His ‘singularity’ of Being! This possibility provoked sufficient fear (of entering into a ‘heretical’ discussion) that no man **dared** pursue this matter further! The Hebrew word ‘echad,’ in its prevalent Old Testament definition, suggests a unity between or among separate parties or beings. Some examples: In Judges 6:16 and 20:11, we see the word used to describe a group acting in unified manner. “*So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as **one** man.*” 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 5:13 “*...the trumpeters and singers were as **one**, to make **one** sound to be heard.*” They were on tune and in time with each other and produced a unified blend of sound. Not the voice of a single singer or the tone of a single instrument though it sounded that way. Gen. 3:22 “*... man is become as **one** of us...*” In other words, attempting to enter into their unity! Gen. 41:25 “*...the dream(s) of pharaoh is **one**...*” In other words, both presented the same message. “*...the **one**...the **other**...*” both are from *echad*, in Ex. 17:12&13, 18:3&4, 25:19, 36:10, 37:8&19, etc. Ex. 24:3, “*...and all the people answered with **one** voice...*” Lev. 4:2, 13, 22, 27, “*...against **any** of the commandments...*” Num. 7:3, “*...for each **one**...*” Num. 13:23, “*...with **one** cluster of grapes...*” In each of these places, the Hebrew word ‘one’ (or ‘any’) is *echad*. Not a quantitative ‘one,’ but a unified ‘one!’

**33. ■ What does the Father look like?** Do we have a description of God the Father, where it is clear that He’s the Being being described? Colossians 1:15 and Hebrews 11:27 say He’s, to us, invisible. 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:16 says His aura is a brilliance instantly fatal to a physical being. 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:24-28 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10 shows what will happen when God the Father comes to Earth for the first time to accept the Kingdom from the Son. This event will be only after all physical beings are made spirit in the third resurrection or expunged from existence in the lake of fire. (Matt. 25:31-46) God the Father can not abide the presence of potentially sinful beings, and will absorb all living (by that time made immortal spirit beings) into Himself, but only after the redemption process is fully complete.

**34. ■ What is the Father’s Name?** Are we able to identify any name that is exclusive to God the Father? (Even the Son is called ‘the everlasting father’ in Isaiah 9:6!)

**35. ■ Translations allow us ‘wiggle room.’** What’s especially interesting is that the first century religious crowd spoke the language the Old Testament was written in. They needed no translation. Theirs was the original! And, the reaction to certain objectionable claims on the part of Christ were not explained away as translation errors. What provoked the greatest reaction was His claim of full equality with His Father. That is the issue that ultimately got Him killed. The most often Old Testament verse quoted in the New Testament is Psalm 110:1 (&5). Some 20 times. To be seated in God’s Throne at the Father’s right hand, one must be fully God Himself! They understood the implications of that, though few accepted it! There are numerous examples of them going berserk when this verse was quoted. (Matt. 26:64-66, Mk. 14:62-64, Ac. 7:54-58, etc.) This was and is a primary difference between Judaic belief and Christian belief.

**36. ■ A Name which is above every name.** And for what purpose? “*...Which he wrought in Christ, when*

he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and **every name that is named**, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:" (Eph.1:20-21), "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him **a name which is above every name**: That at **the name of Jesus** every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;" (Phil. 2:9-10) What is that Name,? and notice that it calls for direct worship! Would this be appropriate of a being below the God-plane level?

**37. ■ Who are we to worship?** Those who aspire to worship God the Father **only** are faced with a technical 'problem.' They see they MUST worship the Father only, in that they don't accept that Jesus was God, but then, they're faced with God's explicit requirement that we worship His Son as prerequisite to having access to Him! Not only must we accept that no man can 'come to' the Father but through His Son, but He Himself declares that we must have the same regard for His Son that we do for Him! "*Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*" (1<sup>st</sup> Jn. 2:23) "*For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honours not the Son honours not the Father which hath sent him.* (John 5:22-25) Our regard for both is essential to the worship of either!

**38. ■ There are Two Thrones.** It's plainly stated in places such as Revelation 3:21 that there are two separate Thrones: One is to be on earth, the other exists in heaven. Each having a principal occupant with the other as 'right hand' support. (Consider Psalm 16 with its apparent role reversals.)

**39. ■ The Jewish Scholars of the first century were well familiar with the 'two Beings' controversy.** This awareness may account for the instant aggravated reaction that verses such as Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13 received when quoted to the religious leaders of the day. There is both a book and an article titled "*The Two Powers in the Heavens*" which document this long-running controversy. (*The article version may be requested from this author.*)

**40. ■ The Early Church recognized that The God of the Old Testament was one and the same as the God of the New!** One indication we have of that is that the early Church *heretic Marcion* posed that the God of the Old Testament was a different Being than Christ, the God of the New, and having distinctly different personalities. For the Church to have identified his protest against the prevailing belief as being faulty (heretical), it **must** have differed with his position. There were two camps which took issue with Marcion. Those who accepted that Jesus was one and the same as the LORD God of the Old Testament, (such as the Apostle Paul as we see in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 10:4) and those who did not believe that Jesus was God incarnate, which is refuted internally in the New Testament. (e.g. John 1:1, 1<sup>st</sup> John 4:2-3, and 2<sup>nd</sup> John 7) John also stated plainly that Jesus is the true God! (1<sup>st</sup> John 5:20 "*And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God, and eternal life.***") One thing we can glean from Marcion is that he accepted the premise of there being TWO God Beings, though he failed to understand that the 'second Person' was the Being who singularly interacted with humanity in both the OT and NT!

**41. ■ Christ was directly involved in making the Covenant with Abraham 430 years before the giving of the Law!** Galatians 3:17 alleges that God confirmed the Covenant with Abraham through Christ. In other words, that the Being who became Christ was the direct contact individual and instrument of that immutable Promise. IF He did not have an existence at that time, as some allege, then who made that Covenant? It had to be someone with capability of experiencing death, as that was the underlying basis of the Maledictory Oath made there at that time! If the Promise Maker wasn't able to deliver

(surrender all, even forfeit His Life) to the Promise, then that Covenant Oath would have been fraudulent!

Sometimes confirmations are verified indirectly. Sometimes obvious points of Truth are laying right in plain sight, just waiting to be noticed. No small matter are the statements in **Galatians 3:17**. *“And this I say, that the covenant, that was **confirmed before of God in Christ**, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”* There was a pre-Mosaic Covenant, the Covenant of Promise, that we read of in Genesis 15. We are assured that the Law, added 430 years later, did not and can not disannul the Promise! But it says God confirmed that Covenant of Promise. It also states that that Covenant was “confirmed of God **in Christ**.” What is that telling us? Is it merely indicating that the Person of Christ fulfills the Promise that Abraham would have a legitimate spiritual heir? Or, is it telling us that it was Christ who Himself did the confirming. (As in 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 10:4) One might ask, how could that be?

Well, someone uttered the Promise to Abraham. There was an audible verbal exchange! Someone SPOKE those words. Was the Speaker God the Father? This brings us to another loaded question. Did Abraham ever hear the voice of and see the image of God the Father? On the strength of John 5:37 we have basis to answer, NO! No man, at any time, has seen the blinding Glory of the Father (that we read of in 1<sup>st</sup> Tim. 6:16) nor heard the sound of His voice. The Father never presented Himself directly to mankind, nor could anyone live who was exposed to such Energy-Charged Presence. So, who was that Being who came out to meet Abraham and who uttered the Promise in Genesis 15, confirming it beyond all question by the dual-Being-procession, passing through the bloody path of the Maledictory Oath Sacrifice? (Gen. 15:17) (See the article on “*The Abrahamic Covenant*.”)

Is this passage in Galatians 3 telling us that it was the Being who later became born of the flesh that was the One through whom the Father confirmed the Promise visibly and audibly to Abraham, and who would be the ultimate fulfillment of it? If so, we then have one more confirmation of the pre-existence of Christ, more than four centuries prior to the Exodus and His giving of the Law at Mount Sinai. It would also shed light on Christ’s claim in John 8:56-57.

**42. ■** Those who have concerns with **Jesus being called God**, in addition to Hebrews 1, should consider Revelation 21:6-7. In keeping with Isaiah 9:6, the ‘Alpha and Omega’ it says, *“And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and **I will be his God**, and he shall be my son.”* Even Jesus refers to Himself as God! The Alpha and Omega is the one who is alive but was dead! (Rev. 1:8, 11 & 18) The same will become the God to all overcomers, even in the millennial age!

**43. ■** In Revelation 11:15-18 we read this: *“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.** And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O **Lord God Almighty**, which art, and wast, and art to come; because **thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.** And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give **reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.**”* Here, the Being who is identified unmistakably as Christ is referred to as “Lord God Almighty” (affirming what Isaiah 9:6 says, that the Son is there called “the Mighty God.”) Where is the Father ever identified as the one who will rule on and over all the nations of the Earth? All power to do so was given to Christ at the Wave Sheaf Offering event. (Matt. 28:18, Psalm 110:1, & Daniel 7:13) Revelation 15:3-4 has: *“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, **Lord God**”*

*Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.*” Here, the Lord’s Christ, the ruler and judge of all the Earth is called “Lord God Almighty!” (See also #23 regarding the Judgment matter.)


44. ■ In several places, we see the unusual word “**Godhead**” used. If God were just a single Being, why would there be need for such a word as that? Consider Colossians 2:9: “*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*” And Romans 1:20: “*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.*” Just the use of the term suggests an entity in which there is more than One Being! Now, the Colossians passage is making the case that Christ dwells fully within the Godhead!

45. ■ Under a related consideration to this topic, we find a revealing passage in 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:10-12. “*Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time **the Spirit of Christ** which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*” So, we have a clear statement that the Spirit of Christ inspired Old Testament writers in the centuries BC, “before Christ.” So if the mental thoughts of Christ could be placed within inspired men, His pre-incarnate existence should be affirmed without question.

46. ■ Speaking to an assemblage of unbelieving Jews, who demanded to know if **He was God’s Anointed**, (the Christ) He explained that His sheep knew His voice, that His Father is greater than all, and that He and His Father **are one!** (John 10:24-38) What is most revealing about this exchange is that THEY perceived Him to be alleging that He **also was God!** (v.33) He uttered a saying that strongly resembles their Shema (their recitation of Deuteronomy 6:4). They took up stones with intent to kill Him! The interesting thing is that He didn’t refute their accusation of what He was alleging. He didn’t say, “I didn’t say that!” Rather, He broadened the claim, showing them the places in their scriptures which show the potential of humanity to also be gods! If making such a statement as He did was the great “sin” that those Jews, and for that matter, people today would allege, why did He make no ‘disclaimer?’ Why did John, writing a full generation later, also record no disclaimer or qualifier? Those who allege that Christ never claimed to be God lack the perceptual skills as these first century Jews exhibited.

47. ■ **Melchizedec** was Priest of the Most High God. In Genesis 14, Psalms 110 and Hebrews 6:20 thru 8:6, we are made specifically aware that Christ is our High Priest, of the order of Melchizedec. This Being is described as being immortal, having neither beginning of life or end of days. Now, IF Christ wasn’t this Being, then there is some other Being who possesses eternal existence other than the Father. Melchizedec is not the Father, as He is His Priest, Priest of the Most High God. (Gen. 14:18) Who is this Being who inhabits eternity if not the pre-incarnate Christ? Who else would have been ‘king of Salem’ (king of peace) back in the time of Abraham?

**A Final Note:** See also my article “*What Christ Said About Himself*”, which presents the various ‘first person’ claims as to His identity and undeniable Divinity made just within the Book of Revelation.

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## Questions for those of Unitarian Persuasions:

- 1) Do we have any biblical passages that describe God the Father's visual appearance?
  - a. 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:16 *...a light than no man can approach unto.*
  - b. Revelation 4:2-3 *...no physical image description, only light!*
  - c. Genesis 15:17 (Galatians 3:29 & 15-18)
  - d. Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 11:27
  - e. Seeing God in full Glory would be lethal. Ex. 33:20 (Deut. 4:24 & Heb. 12:29)
  
- 2) If John 5:37 is true, then there could be no eyewitness accounts in answer to question 1. Then, who is described in places such as Daniel 10:5-9? Who did Moses speak with face to face? (Ex.33:11) Who wrestled with Jacob all night? Who did Moses, Aaron and the 70-elders see up on Mount Sinai? (The children of Israel certainly heard a voice! Ex. 20:18-19)
  - a. Exodus 33:11; *...spoke with Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.*
  - b. Exodus 33:18-23 & 34:5-6 *...saw this Being in Glorified form on one occasion!*
  - b. Genesis 32:24-30 *...Jacob wrestled with God...saw God face to face and lived!*
  - c. Exodus 24:9-11 *Moses, priests and 70 elders saw the God of Israel.*
  
- 3) Is it an offense against God to deny the Divinity of His Son?
  - a. John 5:22-25 *...they should honor the Son just as they honor the Father.*
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:23 *...whoever denies the Son denies the Father also.*
  
- 4) Christ claimed to be 'not alone.' He and His Father comprise a dual entity.
  - a. John 8:16 *...I am not alone, but I AM with the Father who sent me.*
  
- 5) Christ claimed to have been in existence before Abraham!
  - a. John 8:56-58 *...before Abraham was, I AM.*
  - b. John 17:5 *...glorify me with the Glory which I had with you before the world was.*
  - c. Galatians 3:17 *...the (Abrahamic) Covenant was confirmed before God in Christ*
  
- 6) Christ claimed that the first century Jewry didn't know God the Father. Then who did they know? Why was there no protest of this allegation?
  - a. John 8:55 *...yet you have not known Him, but I know Him...*
  - b. John 8:19 *...you know neither me nor my Father...*
  - c. John 5:37 *...you have neither heard His voice at any time, not seen His form!*
  
- 7) What does 'echad' really mean? (The key word in the *Shema*.) Its used thus:
  - a. Gen. 11:6-7 *...the people are one...*
  - b. Gen. 34:16 *...we will become one people.*
  - c. Gen. 41:25 *...the dreams of Pharaoh are one;*
  - d. Ex. 24:3 *...the people answered with one voice...*
  - e. *Echad* indicates a unity among many, *Yachid* indicates a singular entity.
  
- 8) Can we identify any name that is exclusive to God the Father?
  - a. The Son is also referred to as 'everlasting father' in Isaiah 9:6
  - b. Both share the name "Ancient of Days" in Daniel 7.
  - c. God calls His Son 'God' in Hebrews 8:1
  - d. YHVH speaks to the other YHVH, compare Ps. 110:1 with 110:5.
  
- 9) Who is the "True God" referred to in 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:20? Is it the Father or the Son, needing to be affirmed? Why would the Divinity of the Father be at all in question?

- 10) Can God the Father ever in any way interface with sin-capable humanity? Does His Nature allow sinfulness to approach into His sphere of existence?
- 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15:21-28 *Christ prepares individuals for the Kingdom.*
  - Heb. 1:3 The Father did not die for our sins.
- 11) The Priest Melchizedek was an immortal Being, without either beginning or ending of living existence. Note His eternal existence in the past direction as well as the future.
- Psalm 110:4 *...you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.*
  - Hebrews 10:17 repeats the above
  - Hebrews 7:3 *...without genealogy, having neither beginning of days or end of life.*
  - God the Father was not Melchizedek!
- 12) Did the Father ever directly interact with humanity?
- 13) Was Thomas wrong to call Jesus his Lord and God? John 20:28
- 14) Were Elizabeth and Mary wrong to identify the unborn Jesus as their Lord? Lk. 1:43
- Was Mary wrong to identify her unborn son as God my Savior Lk. 1:47
  - Or was she suggesting that there was ‘another Lord’?
- 15) To whom was God speaking in Hebrews 1:5-13?
- God was speaking to His Son Heb. 1:5
  - God’s angels are instructed to worship Him. Heb. 1:6
  - God calls His Son God! Heb. 1:8
  - God has a God! Heb. 1:9
  - The Creator is called ‘Lord’! Heb. 1:10
  - This quotes the same from Psalm 45:2-7
  - Psalm 45:2-3 shows that God has blessed the “Mighty One” (not Himself!)
  - God has been anointed by His God! Ps. 45:7



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