

Messiah Yeshua is God

Is Yeshua the Messiah truly YHVH God? This is a critical matter to understand, because without a clear understanding of who Yeshua is, He and His ministry is misunderstood, under-appreciated, and for many disbelieved. For most Christians in the world, Jesus (Yeshua) is the Christ (Messiah) and Jesus Christ is God. They accept this because it is the standard "party line" of the church. Judaism, on the other hand, does not believe that Jesus (Yeshua of Nazareth) is or was the Messiah. They don't believe that He fulfilled the prophecies of being the Messiah; their expectations were that He would establish the Kingdom and bring back the scattered exiles of Israel. Further, Judaism does not hold to the deity of Yeshua. They argue that God cannot be a man and that God is One and only one God. The idea of the Trinity (three persons of God) is a core doctrine of the church but a form of idolatry to Judaism, and many in the Messianic movement also regard it in the same way. I also agree that God is not three equal yet separate persons as the Trinity teaches. But some in the Messianic movement have gone further—they now say that Yeshua is the Messiah but He is not YHVH God. [Note: When I use the word "Lord" I am referring to YHVH, when I refer to God I mean *Elohim* who spoke to Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Creator of the universe.]

Let's look at the question of Yeshua's deity by looking primarily at the very nature of YHVH God. Do the Scriptures refer to the Messiah as being God or part of God? Did you know that God has parts?

God reveals this to us in the garden story of Genesis. There is a subtle shift in how God manifests Himself to us. In the creation, the Scripture simply says that God created. But beginning with the garden segment it became the *Lord God* (in Hebrew *YHVH Elohim*) who made the garden and began to deal with man. This is the first of many plural expressions of God. You know the story: Eve was deceived, man sinned, and mankind was kicked out of the garden. Why exactly did the *Lord God* kick Adam out of the garden?

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*Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of **Us**, knowing good and evil; and now, lest he stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" – therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken.*

Genesis 3:22-23

The man has become like one of Us - This expression implies a number of things. First, there are parts that make up the Lord God. He is not an *absolute* One, He is a *unified* One. There are many examples of this same concept. There are many things that have parts that make up a whole. The United States is made up of 50 different states but they stand as one united nation. An automobile has many parts but they make one complete car. God has defined Himself as having several parts but emphasizes that He is One God.

Let me show you some other places where God shows Himself as having parts.

If you go back further to the creation of man, God referred to Himself in a plural (more than one) form.

*Then God said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

Genesis 1:26

God did not make man like His other creations. God created man separately and gave him rule over other created beings. God did not make man like heavenly beings. It is very clear that we were made in the image of God and only God. God is a plural form (our image is plural, not singular) and we too have a plural form.

A man has a body, a soul, and a spirit, but he is called a "living being" and is considered to be one person. Apparently, God has something similar when it comes to a plural form unified to be One God.

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Judaism struggles with this concept. Since they are so opposed to the Messiahship of Yeshua and the "works of God" that He did, they find they have no choice but to deny that God has parts, or for that matter, a Son! Even so, the Hebrew Scriptures stand apart from their obstinacy. Consider this passage.

Who has ascended into heaven and descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has wrapped the waters in His garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name or His son's name? Surely you know!

Proverbs 30:4

The obvious answer to these questions is God. But the last question is pounding home the truth of the answer. God has a Son and we should know the names of the Father and the Son! This is not the New Testament. This is Hebrew Scripture expressing the knowledge and understanding of God from Moses and the Prophets. I am sure that you could answer the question of God's name, but where is the Messiah's name prior to the testimony of Yeshua? It is found in the Genesis passage when Jacob blessed his sons. Jacob called out the future Messiah here.

For Thy salvation [Yeshua] I wait, O Lord.

Genesis 49:18

The Hebrew word for salvation is the very name of the Messiah. Look at another example that comes directly from Jacob where he describes all of the parts of God. When Jacob blesses Joseph (who was a type of the Messiah), he describes God in three distinct ways, not persons.

... from the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob (from there is the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel), from the God of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

Genesis 49:24-25

If you break these verses down, Jacob offers his blessing from – *the Mighty One of Jacob*. This could be all of God, but then he inserts more definition distinguishing this title from *the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel*. The Shepherd

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of Israel is a definite Messianic expression. Just as Joseph was sent by his father Jacob to see to the welfare of the flock and his brothers (they were all shepherds), so the Messiah was sent by His Heavenly Father to see to the welfare of us—God's flock. We are called the flock of God.

"As for you, My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, you are men, and I am your God," declares the Lord God.

Ezekiel 34:31

The Son of David is another definition of the Messiah. David was a shepherd. The Son of David is to be the shepherd that tends to God's flock – all of us.

Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

Ezekiel 34:23-24

This Shepherd theme dominates Scripture when talking about the Messiah. Ezekiel is not talking about the historical King David—this is an allusion to the Messiah.

Therefore, Jacob's reference to the Mighty One of Jacob is both a direct reference to God and to the Messiah specifically.

Still not convinced? Look at the title of *the Stone of Israel*. There are only a few references in the Bible to the one called *the Stone of Israel*. Jacob, in the early part of his life, gives us the best understanding. When Jacob traveled to his mother's family in Paddan-aram, he slept at Bethel and used a stone for a pillow. That night Jacob saw the ladder with angels ascending and descending between God's throne and the earth. In Hebrew Genesis 28:13 says that God was standing beside *him* (the ladder). Did you see that? Jacob's ladder was a part of God. It was the Messiah. This is exactly how Yeshua described Himself when meeting Nathaniel. He referred to the ladder as "Son of Man," (John 1:51) which means the Son in the form of man.

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Additionally, the word Stone has meaning as well. The Hebrew word is *eben* and is a word formed out of two words, *Av* and *Ben*. *Av* means *father* and *Ben* means *son*. The word stone is the picture of unity – the unity of God between the Father and the Son. The emphasis is on unity, not on two persons or personalities. This corresponds exactly to Yeshua saying that He and His Father are One and that He came to do the will of His Father.

The next part that Jacob describes of God is the Holy Spirit. *From the God of your father who helps you*. The Holy Spirit is called the *Helper*. When we refer to God leading us or assisting us, we are referring to the work of the Spirit. This is how the Scripture describes the Spirit of God.

*...because I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the orphan who had no **Helper**.*

Job 29:12

*Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me; O Lord, be my **Helper**.*

Psalms 30:10

*Behold, God is my **Helper**; the Lord is the sustainer of my soul.*

Psalms 54:4

Even Yeshua spoke of when the Holy Spirit would be given to the disciples and defined the Spirit as *the Helper*.

*And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Helper**, that He may be with you forever;*

John 14:16

*But the **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.*

John 14:26

*When the **Helper** comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me,*

John 15:26

*But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the **Helper** shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.*

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John 16:7

Finally, Jacob referred to God as the Father.

And by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of heaven above.
Abraham was one of the most powerful examples of a father to us spiritually and the great promise of God was given to him.

And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Genesis 12:3

The story of the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is about who will get the blessings of the fathers. These blessings originated from our Heavenly Father and first given to the fathers.

So let's summarize for a moment. Jacob spoke a blessing upon Joseph, who was a type of the Messiah citing first the blessing of the *Mighty One of Jacob* (the Messiah) then his *Helper* (the Holy Spirit) and finally *Almighty God* (the Father) who blessed him.

God has been and continues to show that He is made of parts. He is a plurality, but we are instructed to always speak of Him in a Unified way. This is exactly how Jacob described God and is the meaning of the Shema.

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is One!

Deuteronomy 6:4

Despite this emphasis on being a Unified One, God freely speaks of His parts when speaking with us. Sometimes He expresses Himself in multiple ways that are all applicable to the Messiah. There are a number of instances.

I am the Lord, your Holy One, The Creator of Israel, your King.

Isaiah 43:15

Our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name, The Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 47:4

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And all flesh will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Isaiah 49:26b

Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.

Isaiah 48:12

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go.

Isaiah 48:17

Every one of these passages describing God are direct expressions of the Messiah. How can we know this? Because Yeshua of Nazareth used these same words to describe Himself. Not only did He speak of Himself in this way but demons that He cast out expressed the same words concerning Him. Do you remember the demons who exclaimed "We know who you are" to Yeshua? "You are the Holy One of God," they said. (See Mark 1:24)

Let me now address the question of whether Yeshua of Nazareth is the Messiah, which has been debated for centuries. In my judgment He is the Messiah, based on Scriptural evidence, not because it is the standard position of the church. I believe that He is the Messiah *in spite of* what Christianity says.

As I have walked out my faith I have sought evidence to base my faith in "truth" not in presumption. Stating or agreeing that Yeshua of Nazareth is the Messiah based on the word of others is faith based on *hearsay*—those others were told that by others. Even unbelievers know that *hearsay* is not evidence and cannot be trusted. Some Christians go so far as to claim that they "just have faith." Sometimes they speak it out to make it sound like they have faith or they use their will to act out the faith. In either case, this is presumption. They presume something to be true (Jesus is the Christ) and they try to make it so. Presumption is not truth. Presumption is hoping that something is true.

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I have learned from the Scriptures and from other men who have experienced God directly that faith is hearing, believing, and acting on the promises (words) of God. The Apostle Paul said it simply.

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of the Messiah [God].

Romans 10:17

Where did Paul get this understanding? Paul got it from Abraham's testimony. Abraham heard the word of God for the promise of a son (Isaac) and it was credited to him as righteousness.

Then he [Abram] believed in the Lord [what God said]; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Genesis 15:6

Many Messianic believers share my point of view on this subject. They assert that the Messiah came to fulfill specific Hebrew understandings of the Scripture, not to scrap Israel and start a new thing called the church. They hold to the idea of Yeshua fulfilling the Hebrew Scriptures according to God's plan.

Yet we find some Messianics struggling a bit trying to hold to the idea of Yeshua's deity. Maybe they want to bridge the great gap between Christianity and Judaism. Some Messianics dabble in the tenets of Judaism trying to find "authentic" understandings and find themselves getting caught up in Pharisaic (rabbinic) teachings. As a result, they play games holding to Yeshua *while not asserting their testimony in Him*. They play along with Jewish neighbors hoping that by their mere presence or by osmosis they will figure out that Yeshua was the Messiah, but the fact that the Messiah is God (YHVH God in the flesh) is a show stopper!

Let's address that issue straight on. I believe that Yeshua of Nazareth is the Messiah and that the Messiah is God. Therefore, I believe that Yeshua of Nazareth was and is YHVH God. He is God in the flesh who came to do the work of redemption.

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Did you know that this issue was the reason for the Nicene conference of the early church fathers in 325 A.D.? They were trying to get consensus for the belief that Jesus was divine (deity). This is also why the Gospel of Thomas was not put into the canon (the contents of the Bible). According to them Thomas did not emphasize the deity as John had done so they dismissed Thomas' testimony as the product of a "doubter."

The Scriptures describe God in a host of ways. The Scriptures describe the Messiah in a host of ways. Yeshua described Himself in exactly the same ways that the Scriptures do. The logic is not complicated. The Messiah is part of God; Yeshua is the Messiah; therefore, Yeshua is part of God. Yet some struggle with God's nature and the work of the Messiah.

Let me pose a question to help explain this logic. The question is, "Is God Truth?" Everyone answers "Yes." Yet the Scriptures say that nothing can be called "truth" without it being established by the evidence of two or three. So, where is the evidence of two or three so we can say "God is truth."

It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son. 1

JOHN 5:6-9

Oh, by the way, it must only be the evidence of God. This is why God has shown Himself and manifested Himself in the form of two or three at all times. As I mentioned earlier, the simple expression of the *Lord God* is a plural expression.

Maybe this is why Yeshua cried out on the cross "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" God the Father and the God the Holy Spirit were separate from Him at His death. Maybe this why Yeshua said He had to return to the Father before the Spirit could be sent. God maintains His unity of at least two at all times.

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Let me pose a last logic element of why the Messiah Yeshua is God. Some of my Messianic brethren are struggling to know the Messiah and honor God correctly. It is blasphemy to call something holy that is not or to call something profane that is holy. If Yeshua of Nazareth is the Messiah and the Messiah is YHVH God, then treating Him less than God is blasphemy. If the Messiah is not God and we treat Him as God, then that is blasphemy as well. So, this is a very important part of our faith.

There are times when the Bible tells us clearly and we read right over it, not perceiving the message. In John 19:19-22 it describes the sign that Pilate had written and attached above Yeshua's head on the execution stake. The words were in Hebrew Yeshua of Nazareth, the King of the Jews (*Yeshua HaNazeret VaMelech HaYehudim*). An acrostic of those four Hebrew words (the first letter of each word) spell *YHVH*. That is why the Jews so violently objected to that sign. So, let me pose this final question to the Messianic brethren wrestling with this question. Did Yeshua die for your sins? Was He the Lamb of God sacrifice promised by Abraham? If you are Messianic, you will answer with a "Yes." So, then let us answer this question.

Did God save us? Did God give us the gift of life? Or, did a very nice guy named Yeshua from Nazareth die for us to try to pay the price of our sin? The Bible says that no one man can do such a thing. The price must be paid by God, and only God is called *Savior*. He does not share His glory with another.

Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son."

Genesis 22:8

For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;

Isaiah 43:3

I, even I, am the Lord, and there is no savior besides Me.

Isaiah 43:11

And all flesh will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

Isaiah 49:26

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...It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.

John 4:42

...looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our Great God and Savior, Christ Jesus [Yeshua the Messiah],

Titus 2:13

We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

I John 4:14

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me.

Isaiah 44:6

These are the same words Yeshua used in Revelation 1:8. The Apostle Paul provides powerful testimony to the deity of Yeshua in his letter to the Colossians.

For by Him [Yeshua the Messiah] all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Colossians 1:16-17

These traits are not from just a nice guy named Yeshua from Nazareth but the traits of the Creator God Almighty. We may not fully understand it, but we need to be careful of what we profess with our mouths. When we are in the kingdom all will be made clear.

And the Lord will be King over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be One, and His name One.

Zechariah 14:9

Yeshua is YHVH God, the Redeemer of Israel, the Mighty One of Jacob, the King of Israel. Let us, therefore, recognize Yeshua as the Holy One of Israel and give Him the glory that is due.

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