

I. INTRODUCTION

John 4:22-23 “You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.”

- A. My goal in today’s teaching is to identify the God of Israel in Scripture, specifically and personally known by the Jews as YHWH. A western mindset has removed us Gentiles from the true identity of who YHWH thus distorting the truth that Jesus is YHWH. In other words, we do not know what we are worshiping. This oversight incidentally produces idol worship in our lives because we are worshiping an image of who we think YHWH is, rather than who YHWH says He is. Based on these presuppositions, I want to crystallize in our minds that Jesus Christ truly was the God of Israel in the Old Testament and I seek to exhort us in the importance of worshiping Jesus in the TRUTH of this identity.
- B. John 4 Dialogue.
- C. Story of three men.
- D. Why is this important?
 1. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 “For the time will come when they will not endure **sound doctrine**; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires and will turn away from the truth and will turn aside to myths.”
 2. Cosmogony—If we do not believe that Jesus is God, it inherently affects the Genesis 1 account removing Jesus from the picture of eternity. When creation becomes disfigured in our minds it prevents Jesus from being worshiped as divine from the beginning.
 3. Soteriology—If Jesus is not YHWH we have no identity for who the Messiah is, and therefore His identity as God can be held in question, meaning we have no assurance of salvation so He cannot be worshiped as the Messiah.
 4. Eschatology—If Jesus is not YHWH, there remains no hope for a resurrection. The coming ‘King of Israel’ is no King at all if He is not the One prophesied of by His Father in Scripture. In this case, the Scriptures are all unfulfilled lies making void the very reason for our existence as Christians so “let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die!” (1 Cor. 15:32).
 5. Idolatry—According to the Scriptures idolatry is the worship of anything and everything that is not ‘YHWH’. Therefore, if we do not know what we are worshiping, we are worshiping an idol; or a manmade, self-disclosed image of what we think YHWH is that is not Biblically accurate.
 6. Monolatry—The exclusive worship of one God. This form of worship is what set the Jews apart in their day and must set us apart in ours.
- E. I seek to answer these questions in this study:

1. What was the unique divine identity of YHWH, the God of Israel? Who was the God of Israel?
2. Does the Father, and the Old Testament include Jesus in the unique divine identity of YHWH?
3. Do the apostles and the New Testament include Jesus in the unique divine identity of YHWH?
4. Does Jesus include Himself in the unique divine identity of YHWH?
5. Do we include Jesus in the unique divine identity of YHWH today?

II. SECTION 1: CHARACTERIZING THE UNIQUE DIVINE IDENTITY OF GOD

A. **YHWH**—The Tetragrammaton (the four letters)- First used in Genesis 2:4 which appears in our Bible as “LORD.” God first uses this name of Himself in Ex. 3:14 when speaking to Moses from the burning bush. The name YHWH characterized and named the unique identity of God to all Jewish people. When this name was said, it meant something, considering YHWH is used close to 7,000 times in the Bible.

1. The modern use of ‘God’ and the historical use of YHWH are contrary to one another. To the Jews, YHWH always inflected His unique divine identity when spoken, making it the supreme, sacred name of the ONLY God. It was the name that demanded sole and total worship, or death!

Decalogue: Exodus 20:2-6 “I am the LORD (YHWH) your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3“You shall have no other gods before Me. 4“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5“You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments,” (emphasis mine).

2. Problem: Many in the Western church today worship God as many different things, and seemingly in last place He is worshiped as the things by which He identifies Himself with. (When was the last time you heard a worship song entitled: The God who brought Israel out of slavery?) When we begin to see God as an ethereal, undefined entity, based on our feelings, emotions, or experiences rather than on the Bible, we are actually creating a god in our own image that relates to us based on our feelings and ideas. This effectively makes YHWH someone He is not, because our idea of God has become an idol. Idol worship is the inevitable result of not knowing what we worship.

“The notion of a hierarchy or spectrum of divinity stretching from the one God down through the gods of the heavenly bodies, the daemons of the atmosphere and the earth, to those humans who were regarded as divine or deified, was pervasive in all non-Jewish religion and religious thought, and inseparable from the plurality of cultic practices in honour of a wide variety of divinities. Jews understood their practice of monolatry to be

justified, indeed required, because the unique identity of YHWH **was so understood** as to place Him, not merely at the summit of hierarchy of divinity, but in an absolute unique category, beyond comparison with anything else," (Bauckham, *Jesus And The God Of Israel*, 12, emphasis mine).

3. Solution: We restore the unique divine identity of YHWH found in the Scriptures so that we worship Him in the TRUTH of who He is. It is by this that we give Him preeminence and monolatry. This is what He has asked from Israel for millennia, and he requires the same from us today: To know WHO He is.

Whereas the tendency of non-Jewish thought is to assimilate such ideas of divine uniqueness to patterns of thought in which the supreme God is the summit of a hierarchy of divinity or the original source of a spectrum of divinity, the tendency of Jewish thought is to accentuate the absolute distinction between God and all else as the dominant feature of the whole Jewish worldview. (Bauckham 13)

- B. Second Temple Judaism was the time in which Jesus and the apostles lived. The theology of this time is what became the theology of the apostles, which ultimately became Christianity. What was known and taught at the time of second temple Judaism was the foundation upon which the apostles built their Christology. These are the roots that were deep inside the apostles, and they must be the roots that go deep inside of us if we are to see Jesus with un-scaled eyes.

- C. Deutero-Isaiah, (chapters 40-55) was considered the most important text, after the Torah, in Second Temple Judaism. It is the main location in the Bible where YHWH boldly trumpets His own identity to His people with His own mouth. These chapters hold a divine key into understanding who YHWH defined Himself to be, and are a primary focal point in this study.

- D. Two primary descriptions God uses to identify Himself:

1. Creator and Sovereign Ruler of all things.

- a) Although YHWH is defined as this in many different places in the Scriptures, in Deutero-Isaiah we see that this is WHO God says He is with His own mouth. This distinguished Him from all other pagan gods of the day. In fact, it placed Him in the supreme category of the God who not only ruled all things, but also created all of the things He ruled over.

2. The Holy One of Israel

- a) In Deutero-Isaiah this specific identity is used over 10 times. YHWH identifies Himself as the God who delivered Israel out of the hands of slavery in Egypt and through great signs and wonders performed by His hand made a nation of slaves into His own unique people. Oh the beauty of a God who chose slaves to be His own, chosen people! (Is. 41:14,16,20; 43:3,14,15; 45:11, 47:4; 48:17; 49:7,7; 54:5; 55:5)

- (1) Through the unique context of Israel and God's relationship to them, we as Gentiles can read the Bible and understand how God responds to different circumstances and events with people on the earth. These are REAL time and space examples that have actually taken place. Questions like: How does His mercy work? When is

His mercy cut short? When must judgment take place? How does the Lord discipline those He loves? Is God a God of love? All of these questions are FULLY answered in Scripture through the story of Israel and the identity in which God has revealed Himself by. Therefore, without the lens of God's relationship to Israel we will most often stumble around in the dark wondering what God is like, but that is never what God intended. It is a simple and pragmatic thing to understand the knowledge of God in this way, because everything God thought we should know about Him during this age He has put in that Book and revealed Himself as He is. Unfortunately, it is when people actually never read it that they suppose they must somehow mysteriously 'seek out' the knowledge of God and set up for themselves qualifiers to be able to 'know' God. Thus, we end up over-spiritualizing our relationship to Him. I suggest a more simple way to apprehend the knowledge of God— we must begin reading the Bible and study the last 6000 years of history which He has divinely orchestrated to reveal Himself to man!

- b) God's identification through His own Character Description: 'YHWH, YHWH, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness...' (Ex. 34:6). This is the identity YHWH declared to Moses.
- (1) Through the consistency of His acts throughout the Bible, God proves Himself to be the God He proclaimed to be in the above passage. In other words, throughout scripture YHWH is testifying of this one truth—I AM exactly who I told you I AM. I can hear Him saying, "Gentiles, now that you've been grafted into the root of Israel, carefully read through this Book and see if I am who I said I am. Did I fulfill my promise to be merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness?"
 - (2) "The word is used only in cases where there is some recognized tie between the parties concerned. It is not used indiscriminately of kindness in general, haphazard, kindly deeds; this is why Coverdale was careful to avoid using the word 'kindness' in respect of God's dealings with his people Israel. The theological importance of the word *chesed* is that it stands more than any other word for the attitude which both parties to a covenant ought to maintain towards each other. Sir George Adam Smith suggested the rendering 'leal-love.' The merit of this translation is that it combines the twin ideas of love and loyalty, both of which are essential...God's loving-kindness is that sure love which will not let Israel go. Not all Israel's persistent waywardness could ever destroy it. Though Israel be faithless, yet God remains faithful still. This steady, persistent refusal of God to wash his hands of wayward Israel is the essential meaning of the Hebrew word which is translated loving-kindness." [Norman H. Snaith, *Theological Word Book of the Bible*, ed. by Alan Richardson (New York: MacMillan, 1951), 136-7.]

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a *new covenant* with the house of Israel and the house of Judah..."³⁵ Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night..."³⁶ **"If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation**

before me forever... ³⁸ **Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD... It shall not be uprooted or overthrown anymore forever." (ESV Jeremiah 31:31-40; cf. 33:24-26)**

III. THE FINAL UNIQUE REVEALING OF GOD'S DIVINE IDENTITY TO MANKIND

- A. These two identities merge together with great significance and heightened glory in the Day of the Lord when God is fully revealed, "...the mystery of God would be finished..." (Rev 10:7) found in **Israel's eschatological expectation**.
- B. "In the future, when God will fulfill His promises to His own people, showing Himself to be finally and definitively the gracious God they have known in their history from the Exodus onwards, God will at the same time demonstrate His deity to the nations, implementing His sovereignty as Creator and Ruler of all things in establishing His universal Kingdom, making His name known universally, becoming known to all as the God Israel has known. The new exodus of the future, especially as predicted in the prophecies we call Deutero-Isaiah (40-55), will be an event of universal significance precisely because the God who brought Israel out of Egypt is also the Creator and Sovereign Ruler of all things," (Bauckham 8).

IV. CONCLUSION OF SECTION 1

- A. YHWH has distinctly made His unique divine identity known in the Old Testament in two ways: Creator and Sovereign ruler of all things; and The Holy One of Israel, the One who delivered Israel from the hands of slavery in Egypt through signs and wonders.
- B. The overarching point that I'm hoping to make is the difference in worshiping the *who*, instead of the *what*. A western worldview has sought to define *what* God is, rather than *who* God has said He is. YHWH purposely makes Himself a Character in the narrative of Scripture, not just a thing. He reveals Himself in this way to show an identity, not just invisible attributes, meaning God has revealed the true nature of His identity by the things He has done, and these deeds and works are intrinsic to Who He is. God is seeking to be worshiped for *Who* He is. Without being anthropomorphic, God was trying to show us His person!

Prelude to Section 2: The birth of Jesus was the first time man met this person. Thus, Jesus will completely embody the very identities that YHWH Himself possessed. It is by this illumination that the complete identity of Jesus can be known, giving way to Jesus being worshiped for *who* He is.

V. SECTION 2: WORSHIPING JESUS AS THE UNIQUE DIVINE IDENTITY OF YHWH

- A. The primary way that we worship God today is through attributing worship to Jesus. So, something has changed since Second Temple Judaism when worship was only attributed to the God the Jews knew as YHWH. Christology was born through the person of Jesus and now we can worship the fullness of YHWH that is revealed in Jesus. Prior to this, the full identity of God was hidden in a mystery (1 Cor. 1-2) and the revelation of who God was, was purposely left incomplete by Him so that the Son would have the same preeminence as the Father did in the Old Testament. **(Is. 45:15 Truly, You are a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, Savior!)**

John 1:1 “No one has seen God at anytime...For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”

Paraphrase: We read about God’s personal character in Scripture but never saw Him. What we knew about God until now was mostly the law, but through Jesus we’ve seen the whole picture—God is merciful and compassionate, meek and lowly, and truly long-suffering because we watched Him live and die on the earth He created.

- B. Therefore, logically speaking, Jesus must be worshiped as the God of the Old Testament, The God of Israel– YHWH. If Jesus isn’t worshiped in this way, we are again worshiping an idol! We must seek to give full definition of the unique divine identity to the person of Christ and begin to fully cocoon the identity of YHWH into the person of Jesus. This is what Jesus seeks—the monolatry of all mankind for Himself because He was the unique person of YHWH.
- C. The YHWH Butterfly.

VI. IS JESUS INCLUDED IN THE DIVINE IDENTITY OF YHWH?

- A. It is important to mention at the outset a simple principle. All Jews alive during second temple Judaism held to the strictest form of monotheism, believing it was their duty to the first and second commandment to only worship YHWH. However, the simple fact that the apostles worshiped Jesus and taught others to worship Jesus was proof of their belief in Jesus being YHWH. If Jesus was not YHWH they would have been in direct opposition to Jewish monotheistic worship, and have been considered heretics.
- B. Through proper exegesis (proper examination of Scripture leading to critical explanation and interpretation of the text) of Scripture in the New Testament, it becomes clear that the apostles used a creative exegesis of Old Testament passages to draw clear comparisons of Jesus’ inclusion in the divine identity of YHWH. The understanding of YHWH in second temple Judaism was the core foundation of the birth of Christology.
- C. Implications:
 - 1. If Jesus isn’t YHWH of the Old Testament we have no idea who, or what we’re worshiping. If so, we do not know who died on the Cross. The blood that was spilled could have been a mortal man’s, and the OT would be rendered meaningless because God did not fulfill His promises. Jesus could just be “that man,” or “that bloke” or “that mate” with no Scriptural identity. If this be true, we as ‘Christians’ cannot be sure of our salvation because only the God who promised Israel that He personally would save and deliver them could reconcile men back to Himself. If Jesus was not YHWH, we have no identity for the Christ, and thus WE HAVE NO CHRIST, NO MESSIAH.
 - 2. In contrast, if Jesus is in fact YHWH, the God of Israel, then we have a six thousand year record of what Jesus’ is like. We have a complete history of the things He has said and done, and what we’re to say and do in response. It is this Man, who in the same way YHWH delivered Israel through the Red Sea, has led us through the blood red sea of our transgression, led us through the wilderness of sin, laid His Cross over the Jordan of our iniquity, and will ultimately deliver us to the promised land which is the New Jerusalem at the day of His coming! This is the beauty of Jesus being the God of Israel in the

Scriptures. It is the hope of glory and it is the confidence we have to stand before the God of Israel whom we've known and read about in the Bible. We've seen His power in the story of creation and witnessed His authority in delivering Israel from slavery. We have looked upon His long-suffering through the prophets and experienced His kindness towards mankind in the narrative of the gospels, and through Jesus' death we have seen a new facet of His character—the ultimate representation of YHWH's humility in His becoming a man and enduring the shame and disgrace of the crucifixion of the cross. It is by this book and history contained therein that we know and identify the character of our God who is the God of Israel, who is YHWH!

John 18:27-31 27 Then the soldiers of the governor took God into the Praetorium and gathered the whole Roman cohort around Him. 28They stripped God and put a scarlet robe on Him. 29And after twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on Gods head, and a reed in Gods right hand; and they knelt down before God and mocked HIM, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 30They spat on God, and took the reed and began to beat God on the head. 31After they had mocked God, they took the scarlet robe off Him and put His own garments back on Him, and led God away to crucify Him, (emphasis mine).

VII. DOES THE OLD TESTAMENT INCLUDE JESUS IN THE UNIQUE DIVINE IDENTITY OF GOD?

- A. There is one main text that we must define first, for it is in this text that the early church built and defined their Christology.

Psalm 110:1 “The LORD (YHWH) says to my Lord (Messiah) sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

1. Psalm 110 is the most quoted OT text in the New Testament (21 times), but found almost nowhere else in the literature of early Judaism. This implies that this Psalm meant very little to the Jews before Christ was born, because no worship was to be attributed to anyone except YHWH; however, this became the foundational Christological text in the New Testament specifically to attribute worship to Jesus as part of the unique divine identity of YHWH. To the early Christians this text clearly declared Jesus as being placed on the divine throne itself, exercising God's sovereign rule over all things.
2. It is by this same form of reasoning that we can take other texts and prove that Jesus was included in the unique divine identity of YHWH by the Father, early Church, and by Jesus Himself.

- B. The Lens of Deutero-Isaiah

1. Deutero-Isaiah is significant because here God continually describes His own identity. It is YHWH, revealing how YHWH defines Himself. Here He gives the two descriptions already mentioned: The Creator and Sovereign Ruler of all things, and the One who delivered Israel from slavery in Egypt. By this identity YHWH defines Himself repeatedly in these chapters, emphatically adding that He is YHWH, and He will not give His glory to another.

2. It is in these chapters that God also reveals a new person identified as His Servant, whom the nations will worship. There is no disagreement among the majority of scholars that the Servant in Deutero-Isaiah is Jesus.

Isaiah 42:8 “I am YHWH, that is My name; I will not give my glory to another...”

49:5-7 “And now says YHWH, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant...

7 Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down.”

52:13 “Behold, My Servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted.”

55:5 “Because of YHWH your God, even the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified You.”

- a) This can appear to be a contradiction since God has said he will not give His glory to another. However, it is in God’s allowance of His Servant to be worshiped by kings and princes, becoming high and lifted up and greatly exalted, as well as glorified by YHWH Himself that we must conclude that the God who will not give His glory to another, is not giving His glory to another when His Servant is worshiped. Therefore, the Servant is intrinsic to the unique divine identity of YHWH.
3. Also found in these chapters is YHWH beginning to identify Himself as a Savior, alluding to His coming as the Messiah.

43:3 “For I am YHWH your God, The Holy One of Israel, Your Savior.”

43:11 “I, even I, am YHWH, and there is no Savior besides Me.”

45:21 “...and there is no other God beside Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me. Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.”

VIII. DO THE APOSTLES AND THE NEW TESTAMENT INCLUDE JESUS IN THE UNIQUE DIVINE IDENTITY OF YHWH?

A. The Gospel of John

1. In consistency with the identity of YHWH as the Creator of all things creation was understood strictly as the solitary act of YHWH:
- a) In consistency with the identity of YHWH as the Creator of all things creation was understood strictly as the solitary act of YHWH:

Isaiah 44:24 “I, the Lord, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself, and spreading out the earth alone.”

45:6 “I am the Lord and there is no other, the One forming light and creating darkness...”

It is the event that is explicitly, and exclusively accomplished by YHWH Himself with NO ONE else present. In John 1, Jesus not only participates in the creation account, He is the very means by which creation happens. Therefore, Jesus must be included in the unique divine identity of YHWH who was at the beginning.

2. The unique phrase I am He is used by YHWH 7 times in the OT, with an emphatic version, I, even I, am He used twice, making a total of 9 usages. Interestingly, John records 7 I Am usages by Jesus in His gospel with the 7th repeated twice in chapter 18. The numerous use of the phrase is by no means arbitrary, but rather seems to be John's intentional way of declaring that Jesus is to be included in the unique divine identity of YHWH.

John 4:26; 6:20; 8:24; 8:28; 8:58; 13:19; 18:5; 18:6; 18:8

B. Pauline Epistles

1. Paul states in **1 Cor 8:6**—“***...yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him...***”
2. This is a pseudo-repeat of what is called the *Shema*, **Deut. 6:4**, which was repeated twice daily by all torah observant Jews. Scholars agree that Paul is referencing the *Shema* here though it may not appear clear. Paul's reinterpretation of this passage through the inclusion of Jesus does make clear that Jesus is to be included in the divine identity of YHWH, even to the extent of it being repeated *twice daily* by all those who would consider themselves *torah adherent*.

C. ***Philippians 2:6-11*** “***For this reason also, God has highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***”

1. Bestowed on Him the name which is above every name:
 - a) The ONLY name mentioned in the Scriptures which is above every other name is the very name of the Unique Divine Identity of God: YHWH. This is Paul's declaration of what the Father has done for His Son— bestowed upon Him the Tetragrammaton. In other words, Jesus is the Creator and Sovereign Ruler of all things, and Jesus is the God of Israel.
 - b) Also in **Hebrews 1:4** “***Inherited a name more excellent than they...***”
2. **10** “***That at the name of Jesus every knee will bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.***” Paul is including here the Deutero-Isaiah passage mentioned previously where the Father boldly states: **45:21** “***...that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance.***” Paul is revealing his summary of the passage in Isaiah: that Jesus was to be included in the unique divine identity of the One who declared this.
3. To the glory of God the Father—This phrasing suggests that when every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus Christ is YHWH, it glorifies the Father in heaven. Thus,

in giving Jesus glory, you are giving the Father glory which is consistent with the passage in *Isaiah 42:8* ***“I am YHWH, that is My name; I will not give my glory to another...”***
So, in worshiping Jesus you are worshiping the Father, and thus that Jesus is integral to the unique divine identity of YHWH.

IX. DOES JESUS INCLUDE HIMSELF IN THE UNIQUE DIVINE IDENTITY OF YHWH?

A. Compare Revelation with Deutero-Isaiah

Revelation 1:8 (The Father)—***“I am the Alpha and the Omega”, ‘says the Lord’ “who is and who was and who is to come.”***

1:17; 2:8 (Jesus)—***“I am the first and the last.”***

21:6 (The Father)—***“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”***

22:13 (Jesus)—***“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”***

Isaiah 44:6 ***“I am the first and I am the last; beside me there is no God.”***

48:12 ***“I am He; I am the first, and I am the last.”***

B. ***Revelation 3:21***—***“He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.”***

1. Jesus sitting down on His Father’s throne, the governmental throne of all the universe, boldly suggests that He must be included in the identity of the One seated upon the throne, and must accordingly be attributed worship that He is worthy of.

C. ***Revelation 5:9-14***—***“And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. “You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.” Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever. And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshiped.”***

D. ***Matthew 28:18***—***“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”***

1. This is Jesus own claim to the unique divine identity of YHWH being the sole Sovereign Ruler of all things.

E. ***John 14:1***—***“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.***

F. ***14:6***—***“No one comes to the Father except through Me.”***

1. I am the entrance to the divine identity of YHWH!

G. **14:9** “...*he who has seen Me has seen the Father.*”

1. I am the exact representation of the YHWH.

2. **Heb. 1:3**—“*And He is the radiance of His glory, and the exact representation of His nature.*” Interpret this verse through the lens of Deutero-Isaiah “I will not give my glory to another.”

X. DO WE AS BELIEVERS INCLUDE JESUS IN THE UNIQUE DIVINE IDENTITY OF YHWH?

- A. Whereas, to the Jews in second temple Judaism, the name of YHWH invoked a definitive understanding in their minds of Creator of Everything, Sovereign Ruler of All Things, The One who delivered Israel from Captivity, today, the identity of YHWH, or ‘God’ as we call Him, has slowly deteriorated. We are at a critical juncture in the church at large, whose identity ought not to lie in who we are as an organization, but rather *Who* we believe God is. It is God’s own definition of Himself that makes God who He is and the definition He has given is to be remembered by all generation—YHWH. The only lens we can use to discern the truth of YHWH’s identity is the God-breathed Scriptures. I want to painstakingly take my experiences with God to the Scriptures and attest that my experiences hold true to His identity. If I do not do this, I will most certainly become one who is not founded upon truth according to the Bible, but rather my own experiences of who I think God is. These are the dangerous areas hidden within men’s hearts that replace the God of Israel with an idol of their imagination.
- B. In application to Jesus, the same is true. Jesus walked the earth to reveal the hidden mystery of YHWH’s full unique divine identity, and in so doing became the Lamb that was slain before the foundations of the earth. This final revelation of the identity of YHWH was unforeseen, and nearly unpredicted in second temple Judaism. The Jews simply had no existing paradigm for YHWH as the Suffering Servant. It was a part of His nature that God had hidden, and rarely spoke about in the Tanach. Despite their affluent study of Deutero-Isaiah based on their experiences with YHWH, they were defining Him in the way they always had: Creator of Heavens and the Earth; Sovereign Ruler of all things, and the Holy One of Israel. As an apologetic, I believe that God had not manifested this hidden facet of His nature during those times for one purpose: To guarantee His own crucifixion. If YHWH had given too much warning in the Scriptures of His identity as the Suffering Servant, they might not have crucified Him. But, there, through His glorious nature ‘lifted up’ by the ones He created, He was in fact ‘lifted up’ on the Cross, and simultaneously ‘lifted up’ for all mankind to see and praise this God of humility, who laid down His reputation of Everlasting, and for three days lay in the grave a dead God. The beauty of this mystery was the climax of the Biblical Narrative, the peak of human history, and the culmination of all perfection (Ps. 139); only to be completely fulfilled upon the glorious day that Jesus returns on the clouds of heaven and shows all mankind that the man who died on the Cross was the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, the Sovereign Ruler of All Things, and the unique divine God of Israel. He is YHWH. And for that day we cry aloud and eagerly wait. Amen.

XI. CONCLUSION

- A. YHWH revealed His unique divine identity in the Old Testament as: The Creator All Things and the Sovereign Ruler of All Things, as well as the One who delivered Israel from captivity. He was worshiped by the Jews in second temple Judaism according to this identity as the One God, the only God, and the only One to whom worship was to be ascribed. This worship was what separated the Jews from the peoples of their day and proved their monolatry. Deutero-Isaiah holds a sacred key in defining what the belief was at the time of Second Temple Judaism, which would have been the foundation of what the first Christians believed upon.
- B. The Apostles have in the New Testament, through their creative exegesis of Old Testament Scriptures, drawn the conclusion that Jesus is the Creator All Things and the Sovereign Ruler of All Things, as well as the One who delivered Israel from captivity. He is clearly included in the unique divine identity of God and therefore to be worshiped in like manner.
- C. We must worship Jesus as the God of Israel, as YHWH, or we are worshiping an idol. This is not a question that can remain unanswered in a Christian's mind for it is the very foundation of our knowledge of the Savior! If we lose the simple doctrine that Jesus is YHWH, WE LOSE EVERYTHING.
- D. Response: Being equipped with this information I believe it is necessary to take the posture of repentance before our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and ask forgiveness for making Him into an image that is not who He is. We must repent for idol worship since we have worshiped our own ideas, rather than the true unique divine identity of YHWH revealed in Scripture.

All Scripture Quoted from The NASB