

The Tri-Unity of God and the Deity Of the Messiah

Two Watershed Doctrines of the Messianic Movement

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I will never forget the first time I heard someone pray in the name of Jesus. The year was 1973, and I was a tank commander in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) Reserves during the Yom Kippur War.

Our unit was fighting back the invading Syrian army near the northern border of Israel. Our commanders had ordered us to advance on the Golan Heights in an attempt to neutralize the missile-launching facilities the Syrians had been using to shell towns and villages in northern Israel.

During the night, however, Syrian units had advanced well into the Galilee. As the sun rose over Mount Hermon on that June morning, my men and I found ourselves surrounded. The enemy was behind us and in front of us. To make matters even worse, we were having to maneuver around deadly land mines the Syrians had buried in the sand ahead of us.

As we slowly advanced, the fighting grew very fierce. We could hear explosions all around us, and lifeless bodies dotted the landscape as far as we could see. The air inside our tank was stale and hot. We were monitoring radio communications, so we knew the battle was not going well for us.

Suddenly, one of my men cried out, "Let's pray!" I told him we didn't have time for a prayer service because our orders were to advance into the Golan. But he was insistent and went right ahead and started praying. We all bowed our heads and joined him. He invoked the wrath of God on the enemies of His people Israel, as in the days of Joshua and Gideon. As he prayed, I sensed a Presence in that tank that I had never felt before. Then he closed his prayer with the Hebrew phrase *b'Shem Yeshua*, or "in Jesus' name."

I nearly fell out of my seat when I heard that name! I had heard the name of Jesus when I was a boy growing up in Morocco, where my father was a leading rabbi in the Moroccan Jewish community.

The Catholic children used to taunt and torment me because I was Jewish. My father told me the "Christians" were not like us. They had another God, a Jew named Jesus. I couldn't understand how these Christians could worship a Jewish man on Sunday and then turn right around and despise Jewish people the rest of the week!

So there we were, in the midst of a ferocious battle on the Golan, and one of my men prayed in the name of Jesus. I was dumbfounded and bewildered. I couldn't understand how a Jew could pray in the name of a Catholic god! I scolded him and asked if he was trying to bring more trouble upon us!

By this time, the sun was well overhead and the heat was stifling. The air was stagnant and still. All around us, IDF bomb specialists were busy digging around in the sand, trying to locate the Syrian mines so they could defuse them and clear a path for our tanks.

Just as this man finished his prayer, something astonishing happened—a wind started blowing. It wasn't merely a breeze, but a strong, howling wind that was kicking up the sand and making it difficult for us to see. In a matter of a few moments, we were in the midst of a full-blown sandstorm.

Then I heard excited voices all around us cheering and laughing. I peered down from my perch atop our tank and saw through my goggles what was happening. This mysterious wind was blowing the sand and small pebbles away, revealing all of the land mines the Syrians had planted there! Within a matter of minutes, our personnel had cleared the minefield completely. I remember wondering if I were dreaming, or if this was really happening. I deliberately dismissed the notion that it had anything to do with that soldier's prayer in the name of Jesus.

Who was this Jesus, anyway? And how could a Jewish man pray to Him as though He were God? These were questions I pondered in my heart over the next several years.

After I became a believer in 1986, I learned that even in the Messianic Movement, there are many different ideas about who Jesus of Nazareth was. Some say He was God in the flesh while others say He was only the Son of God. Still others say He was neither God nor the Son of God, but only a human messiah, “the son of Joseph” (*Mashiach ben Yosef*).

Revisiting an Ancient Controversy

In many ways, this is the same controversy the early Messianic community—our spiritual ancestors—grappled with in the first century. The earliest Christians were Jewish believers known as *N'tzrim*, or Nazarenes (Matt. 2:23; Mark 14:67, 16:6; Acts 24:5). Following the Ascension, their leader was *Ya'akov ha Tzaddik*, or James the Just, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus.

The Nazarenes believed in the virgin birth, and in His identity as the incarnate Son of the Living God. They believed in the divine authority of the New Testament, including all four Gospels and the Epistles of Paul. They stood resolutely for the faith in the face of challenge after challenge. One powerful sect that opposed Messianic orthodoxy in the period following the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 was the Ebionites.

The Ebionites believed Jesus was the Messiah but regarded Him as the offspring of Joseph and Mary rather than as God in the flesh. They also rejected the writings of the Apostle Paul, as well as other portions of the NT. Other splinter groups in the first through the fourth centuries subscribed to even more diverse theories about Jesus and who He was.

No wonder the nature and personality of the Godhead has been such a problematic issue throughout Church history. Down through the ages, it has commanded the attention of some of Christendom's most prominent personalities and brilliant thinkers.

This controversy centers not only on the Person of the Messiah, *Yeshua* of Nazareth, but also on the personality of the Holy Spirit, or *Ruach haKodesh*. A denial of the essential doctrine of the Messiah's divine nature goes hand in hand with the denial of the personality and power of the Holy Spirit.

This explains why those who deny the divinity of *Yeshua* also have little time for the blessed Holy Spirit, for He is the One who guides us into all truth and points us to *Yeshua*, the Son of God (John 16:13-14).

Because this ancient controversy continues in Messianic circles today, we must deal with it forcefully and biblically. It is tragic that many Jewish people who come to faith in *Yeshua* are being pulled in the wrong direction by false teachers.

The Council of Nicaea

Anti-trinitarians are fond of pointing out that the Council of Nicaea formalized and defined the doctrine of divine tri-unity in AD 325. To them, this means the doctrine of the “Trinity” (the term chosen at Nicaea to describe the triune Godhead) did not exist before then.

However, this argument is illogical. It's like saying God is not omnipotent because the term “omnipotence” is not found in the Bible. We should not be asking if a certain English term is found in the Bible, but rather, is the teaching itself found there? And no one will argue about the biblical teaching of divine omnipotence. Likewise, the teaching of the “Trinity” existed long before the term itself did.

The word “Trinity” is merely a label for the concept that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all God. The Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Spirit is God. If this is what the Bible teaches, then the Bible teaches the reality of the Trinity. The fact that the word “Trinity” does not appear in the Bible is really immaterial. The real question is, does the teaching of the Trinity appear in the Bible? Observe:

THE FATHER IS GOD—Matthew 6:9; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 8:6.

THE SON IS GOD—John 8:48-58; Hebrews 1:1-14; compare Revelation 1:8 with 22:12-16.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS GOD—Genesis 1:2; Numbers 11:29; Acts 5:3; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Ephesians 4:30.

Trace the above references through the pages of Holy Writ and the teaching of divine tri-unity will emerge with unmistakable clarity. The Scriptures are very specific in attributing deity to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Since each of the Three can rightly be considered God, the teaching of a triune Godhead is true and biblical.

It is also interesting that all three “Persons” of the Godhead were present at the Messiah’s *t’vilah* (baptism) as recorded in the Gospels. There at the Jordan River, the Father spoke, the Son was baptized, and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove (Matt. 3:16-17). (Nicaean discussions about the Godhead used a specialized definition of the term “Persons,” or Hypostases, to describe the individuality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It did not infer a “person” in a human sense.)

Anti-trinitarians also argue that the Roman Emperor Constantine convened the Council of Nicaea as part of his strategy to foist a corrupted version of the Christian faith on the masses. He and his underlings were anxious to find a “glue” to hold their diverse Roman Empire together, and they felt that with the right spin, this Middle Eastern religion of Jesus the Nazarene could be just the ticket!

The pagan masses were accustomed to worshiping male and female deities, along with their semi-divine offspring, so Roman religious leaders saw the potential in elevating Mary’s status and making her the object of “veneration” (which to the casual observer looks curiously like the worship of a divinity). This gave the pagan multitudes a Queen of Heaven (i.e., Mary) who, along with God, produced Jesus, their Son.

So it is difficult to argue with those who say this was Roman Catholicism in its embryonic form. Nonetheless, it is a serious error to assume that everything that came out of Nicaea was incorrect or originated in paganism.

The Council of Nicaea also affirmed belief in the Second Coming, the coming Judgments, and other biblical doctrines. Does this mean we should reject these teachings, along with that of the triune Godhead, simply because they also were affirmed at Nicaea? Reasonable people would say no.

A Divine Messiah?

Traditional Jewish teaching says that the Messiah will be a mortal man who will be born normally. He’s not divine and there’s no virgin birth, according to the rabbis. Some sects of Judaism actually say that a messiah is born in every generation and the behavior of the Jewish people determines whether he will reveal himself.

The reason the Messiah’s coming has been delayed for so long, according to these sects, is that no generation has been sufficiently worthy. Yet the Jewish Bible, or *Tenach*, is full of attestations to the divinity of the Messiah.

That is not to say it hits us over the head with this teaching. Under the Old Covenant, certain threads of truth were implicit, rather than explicit, because the fullness of revelation had not yet come. God has revealed His truth progressively, beginning with the rudimentary teachings of the Torah of Moses and finally culminating with the teachings of the Torah of the Messiah, *Berit haChadashah* (the New Covenant, or New Testament).

From Genesis to Revelation, God reveals Himself systematically, page after page, precept upon precept, one layer at a time, progressing from the simple to the more complex. Do not assume that the New Testament alone teaches the deity of the Messiah, or that this was a strange, new doctrine introduced by Paul and his Christian followers! In Isaiah 9:6-7, for instance, the Prophet declares:

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, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the in-crease of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

This passage is unquestionably Messianic because it points us to the Messianic Kingdom, its government, and even more specifically, the Throne of David (v. 7). And here the Messiah is known as “Wonderful Counsellor,” “Mighty God,” “Everlasting Father,” and “Prince of Peace” (v. 6). Isaiah says the Messiah is *El Gibbor*, the Mighty God. In all five biblical instances where this Hebrew name appears, it refers to God.

The rabbis, on the other hand, say this is impossible because the Messiah is a man and a man cannot be God. One ancient Jewish source, *Targum Jonathan*, attempts to address this Messianic prophecy in its comments on Isaiah 9:6-7 (v. 5 in the Targumic text).

Judge for yourself whether it provides an adequate explanation for the Messiah being called “Mighty God:”

The prophet announced to the house of David that: A boy has been born to us, a son has been given unto us, who has taken the Law (’oraytha) upon himself to guard it; and his name has been called before the One who gives wonderful counsel, the Mighty God, He who lives forever: “Messiah,” in whose day peace shall abound for us.

One or Three?

One of the first prayers Jewish children learn is the *Shema* (lit., “Hear”), taken from Deuteronomy 6:4: “Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.”

In Hebrew, it sounds like this: “*Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.*” The Hebrew text looks like this: שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד .

I have been studying the Hebrew Torah and Talmud for as long as I can remember, and the one characteristic of the Hebrew *Shema* that stands out more than anything else to a Hebrew speaker is this: The nouns are all plural! A literal translation would be, “Hear, O Israel, the LORDS our Gods, the LORDS (are) One.”

Furthermore, the word for “one” in Hebrew, when it denotes a single entity (that is, an absolute one, such as “one” car, or “one” child), is *yachid*. However, when it signifies a compound unity (like “one” nation, or “one” cluster of grapes, where the “one” is part of a greater whole), the word routinely used is *echad*. In Genesis 2:24, the Torah says a husband and his wife are joined together and become “one flesh” (*basar echad*). There are still two individuals, as we all know, but they are *echad*, a compound unity. Similarly, “one people,” or “one nation” is *am echad*. It takes many individuals to make up “one nation.” This is the meaning of *echad* and it’s the word Moses used (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) in the *Shema*. The Lord, according to Moses, is a compound unity rather than a simple unity.

It is unfortunate that so much of rabbinic scholarship over the past 2,000 years has been a knee-jerk reaction to the perceived dangers of Christian teachings. Even the writings of the great Maimonides, or the Rambam, the famed medieval Jewish scholar and physician, are sometimes tainted with an obvious anti-Christian bias. In his Jewish Creed, for instance, the second article states:

I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is a Unity, and there is no Unity in any manner like unto His, and that He alone is our God, who was, is, and will be.

In the Hebrew text of his creed, the Rambam exchanged the word *echad*—used in Deuteronomy 6:4 to describe the compound unity of the Godhead—for the word *yachid*, which denotes absolute singularity. The reason for this is obvious. If God is *yachid*, then He cannot be a Tri-unity. If He is *echad*, however, He can be. Given the ongoing debate between Judaism and the Catholic Church at the time, the Rambam probably felt he had no choice but to substitute *yachid* instead of the word Moses used. When we search through the unguarded comments of Jewish sages and mystics who were not so concerned about counteracting Christian teaching, a different picture emerges. The *Zohar*, for example, is one of the sacred books of the Jewish mystical tradition. It offers this observation about the divine name *YHVH*:

Come and see the mystery of the word *YHVH*: there are three steps, each existing by itself: nevertheless they are One, and so united that one cannot be separated from the other. The Ancient Holy One is revealed with three heads, which are united into one, and that head is three exalted. The Ancient One is described as being three: because the other lights emanating from him are included in the three. But how can three names be one? Are they really one because we call them one? How three can be one can only be known through the revelation of the Holy Spirit (*Zohar*, Vol. III, 288; Vol. II, 43, Hebrew editions; see also Soncino Press edition, Vol. III, 134).

Let us be very clear about this. We are not suggesting that the *Zohar* teaches the doctrine of the Trinity. It does not. In fact, nothing in traditional Jewish sources—other than the Bible itself—teaches the Trinity. And even in the Torah and the Prophets, the teaching is more implicit than explicit, as we observed earlier. What we are saying here is simply that the concept of God existing as a compound unity, rather than

as a simple unity, is not un-Jewish. When properly understood, the doctrine of Tri-unity violates no teaching of the Jewish Scriptures.

More Clues

Beginning in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, clues and hints about God's Tri-unity are sprinkled throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. In Genesis 1:26, God says, "Let US make man in OUR own image, and after OUR own likeness." Verse 27 says that's exactly what He did: God, *Elohim* (a plural noun), made (*bara*, a singular verb) man in His own image. A few verses earlier, the Bible begins by declaring, "In the beginning God (*Elohim*, plural) created (*bara*, singular) the heavens and the earth (v. 1) . . . and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (v. 2)." So here at the very outset of divine revelation, the Bible introduces us to two personages: God (*Elohim*) and the Spirit of God (*v'Ruach Elohim*). Is it merely coincidence that in the priestly blessing in Numbers 6:24-26, the name of the Lord is mentioned exactly three times in three verses?

The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,
And give you peace.

Furthermore, when the priest (*cohen*) stands to bless the people, he holds up his hands in a way that depicts the Hebrew letter *shin* (שׁ), with three parallel lines connected by a perpendicular line across the base. According to Jewish tradition, the significance of this priestly gesture is found in the fact that one of God's names, *Shaddai* ("Almighty"), begins with the letter *shin*. This same Hebrew letter is on the face of the *mezuzah*, the little box attached to every Jewish doorpost. Inside each *mezuzah* is a miniature scroll containing the *Shema*: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our Gods, the LORD is one."

There may even be a further clue in Isaiah's dramatic vision of the Lord sitting on His throne, "high and lifted up" (6:1-13). Angelic beings offer up worship in triads: "*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!*" (v. 3).

Messiah: The Wisdom of God

The eighth chapter of Proverbs introduces us to the concept of Wisdom and the role Wisdom plays in the affairs of men, all of which is based (according to the argument of the writer of the proverb) on the role Wisdom played in the Creation. As the chapter progresses, we see that Wisdom is not merely an attribute of the man who fears the Lord, but is actually personified in the One who has been with God from ". . . *the beginning of His way, before His works of old*" (8:22).

This fascinating proverb goes on to tell us that Wisdom was set up ". . . *from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth*" (v. 23). He (that is, Wisdom) was there when God prepared the heavens and ". . . *drew a circle on the face of the deep*" (v. 27).

Not only was Wisdom *present* at the Creation, but He was actually the *agent* of Creation. "Then [that is, at the Creation] I was beside Him [the LORD] as a master craftsman" (v. 30). In other words, the Lord God used this One known here as "Wisdom" to create the universe. The chapter concludes with a description of the blessedness of anyone who hears Wisdom, watching daily at His gates (v. 34). It also promises that those who find Him find life and the favor of the Lord (v. 35). Does any of this sound familiar? If so, it is probably because you have read it in John 1:1-4:

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

The Apostle Paul calls the Messiah "the wisdom of God" in 1 Corinthians 1:24. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews confirms that Jesus the Messiah was the Agent of Creation.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power . . .

—(Heb. 1:1-3; see also Col. 1:15-17).

Not only is the Messiah our Creator, but He is also our Redeemer. Closely connected with the messianic passages we have already seen are those that speak of His coming as a Savior, Redeemer, and King.

The Hebrew Scriptures not only tell us about this coming messianic King, but they point out that He would come from the very Throne of Almighty God. The Prophet Micah said that from Bethlehem would come One “. . . *whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting*” (5:2).

Earlier in this study, we noticed how the Prophet Isaiah relates that the coming Governor, who was to be born as a child, and who would be given as a son, would bear the names and titles of divinity (9:6-7).

Isaiah also refers to the Rod out of the stem of Jesse, and the Branch that would grow out of Jesse’s roots (11:1). Again, this is a reference to the Messiah, who comes from the line of King David, the son of Jesse. This King-Messiah will be imbued with “the Spirit of wisdom and understanding” (v. 2), taking us back once again to the Wisdom passage in Proverbs (8:1-36).

The Prophet also has this to say, almost parenthetically, in Chapter 48:

“Come near to Me, hear this:
I have not spoken in secret from the beginning;
From the time that it was, I was there.
And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit
Have sent Me” (NKJV, v. 16).

Notice the three distinct personages in this remarkable verse: (1) the speaker, who was already in existence in “the beginning,” (2) the Lord GOD (*Adonai YHVH*), and (3) God’s Spirit (*Ruach*). The speaker can only be the preexistent Messiah, the Son of God. He has been sent on His earthly mission by the Lord GOD and His Spirit, the other two members of the Godhead.

The Prophet Jeremiah may provide yet another clue when he elaborates on the designation of the Messiah as the Branch that grows from Jesse’s roots (23:5-6). He says one of the Messiah’s names is *YHVH Tzidkenu* (יהוה - צידקנו), or “The LORD Our Righteousness.”

Theophanies in the Old Testament

John 1:18 says, “*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*” That is, the Son is the expression of God which allows us to see that which we would ordinarily be unable to see (see also Ex. 33: 17-23; Col. 2:9).

In the Tenach, over and over again, people experienced the presence of God, either in the form of a cloud or a pillar of fire, as the Israelites did when they came out of Egypt, or in what appeared to be human or angelic form. These incognito divine visitations have been dubbed “Christophanies” (lit., “Messiah appearances”) by theologians. They are regarded as pre-Bethlehem appearances of *Yeshua* the Messiah.

One such visitation was made to Joshua before the battle of Jericho. When Joshua asked the identity of a Man who appeared before him with sword in hand, the answer came back, “Nay, but as Captain (Heb., ‘prince’) of the Hosts of the LORD am I now come.” Hearing this, Joshua fell on his face and worshiped this mysterious Prince.

If this mysterious Entity had been merely an angel, then we would expect him to refuse Joshua’s worship (compare Rev. 22:8-9). In this case, however, not only did He not rebuke Joshua for worshiping Him, but He admonished him, “. . . *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy*” (Josh. 5:15).

This is not an isolated instance. In fact, we may note a pattern of appearances extending from one end of the Tenach to the other.

<i>APPEARANCE TO</i>	<i>REFERENCE</i>
Hagar	Genesis 16:7-10
Abraham	Genesis 22:11-13
Jacob	Genesis 31:11-13
Jacob	Genesis 32:24-30
Moses	Exodus 3:1-8
Israelites	Exodus 14:19-20
Israelites	Exodus 23:20-23
Balaam	Numbers 22:22-35
Joshua	Joshua 5:13-15
Israelites	Judges 2:1-3
Gideon	Judges 6:11-24
Manoah	Judges 13:1-24*
Elijah	1 Kings 19:4-8
David	1 Chronicles 21:16-39
Jerusalem Residents	Isaiah 37:36
Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego	Dan. 3:25
Yeshua the High Priest	Zechariah 3:1-6
The Temple	Malachi 3:1

What are we to make of this host of mysterious appearances by One known as the Angel of the LORD? The Bible says no one has seen God at any time, yet we have here a list of Old Testament personages, each of whom encountered Him in human form, in a most memorable way! We can only assume that this was He of whom it is written: “. . . *The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him*” (John 1:18).

The compassionate Angel who comforted Hagar in the desert, the mysterious Man who spent the night wrestling with Jacob at Bethel, and the One who revealed Himself to Manoah as “Wonderful,” were all one and the same. This Angel of *YHVH* was the *Logos*, the *Memra*, the Wisdom of God, the fullness of the Godhead in human form. He was *Yeshua* the Messiah, appearing to them long before His birth in Bethlehem.

He is also the One known as the Angel of His Presence, who saved and redeemed Israel (Isa. 63:9). Interestingly enough, the next verse informs us that in spite of all God’s love and pity, Israel rebelled and vexed His Holy Spirit (v. 10). Note the three distinct personages in this passage: (1) God the Father, the One who called Israel “my people,” (2) the Angel of His Presence who saved and redeemed them, and (3) the Holy Spirit (*Ruach HaKodesh*), whom they grieved by their disobedience.

We should not leave this section without reminding ourselves of yet another occasion when Isaiah himself had a vision of the Lord sitting on His throne (Isa. 6). The Temple was filled with His glory, and the seraphim cried out, “*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory*” (v. 3). Isaiah responded with this memorable declaration: “*For mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts*” (v. 5).

Of whom was Isaiah speaking? In answering this question, we find, once again, that the New Testament (*Berith HaChadashah*) is the best commentary on the Old Testament (Tenach). The Apostle John refers to Isaiah’s vision of God’s glory, and also of Israel’s rejection of that revelation, and says Isaiah saw the glory of *Yeshua* (John 12:41). Isaiah saw Jesus and spoke of Him!

Messiah: The Exalted One

We saw earlier that the Messiah was the Agent of Creation. Colossians 1:15-17 says not only that He created all things, but also that all things were created “for Him.” This is precisely what the Book of Revelation says about God and the Lamb (Rev. 4:11; 5:13)!

In his letter to the messianic congregation at Philippi, the Apostle Paul declares that Messiah *Yeshua*, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God (Phil. 2:6). Furthermore, we are told that God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every other name, that at the name of *Yeshua* every knee should bow, and every tongue should confess that *Yeshua* the Messiah is *Adonai*, to the glory of God the Father (vv. 9-11).

God says, *"I am the LORD and my glory will I not give to another"* (Isa. 42:8). Yet the Prophet Daniel presents us with this statement: *"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"* (Dan. 7:13-14).

Where are we ever commanded to serve a created being in this way? Who else could approach the Ancient of Days (God the Father) and receive glory from Him? Who else could possess an everlasting Kingdom? What human being could ever share the throne with God, the LORD of Hosts, Jehovah? The very notion that any mere mortal could fulfill these qualifications is not only ludicrous, but also blasphemous.

This can only be the One who is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). Let us then be among those who worship Him in spirit and in truth, and say with our hearts, *"... Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever"* (Rev. 5:13). Amen.

*Note Judges 13:18, where the Angel of the LORD discloses that His name is "Wonderful," a term which later appears in the list of messianic names in Isaiah 9:6. Note also that at the conclusion of this episode, Manoah was afraid they would be killed because they had seen God (v. 22).