

Who is the Angel of the LORD?
By Daniel Gregg

Introduction

In ancient times Israel believed that the LORD could appear in an angelic or human form to be seen. When God makes such an appearance, the Scripture begins by identifying Him as "the Angel of the LORD," and then it goes on to say He is the LORD a little later in the narrative.

Ancient Israel regarded the *angel of the LORD* as the LORD himself appearing in angelic or human form. The word "angel" really means "messenger" in the Scriptures without any connotation of a being with wings.¹ We can see this in the few cases where the "messenger of YHWH" is identified as someone other than the LORD:

Then spake Haggai the LORD'S messenger in the LORD'S message unto the people, saying, I *am* with you, saith the LORD. KJV Haggai 1:13

For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he *is* the messenger of the LORD of hosts. KJV Malachi 2:7

Whenever the angel of the LORD is identified in the Scripture, He is normally the LORD manifesting in a physical form. Only in a very few cases is He identified as someone else. Therefore, we should assume that in those cases where the angel of the LORD is not identified explicitly that it is indeed the LORD presenting Himself.

Now a messenger is someone who is sent by the LORD. But can the messenger be the LORD Himself? Indeed He can! Consider this passage:

Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there *am* I: and now the Lord GOD,² and his Spirit, hath sent me. KJV Isaiah 48:16

Here we see that YHWH is speaking, and then He proceeds to say that YHWH has sent Him! Another text we might consider where YHWH sends Himself in a physical form is Genesis 19:24:

Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; KJV Genesis 19:24

In this passage, YHWH is one of the three messengers that came to Abraham, and then He discussed the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah with Abraham afterward. When YHWH concluded his investigation of their wickedness, he called on YHWH in Heaven to destroy the cities.

¹ The same Hebrew word is used in Gen. 32:1 and Gen. 32:3, "And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother."

² Hebrew, "Adonai YHWH" i.e. Lord Yahweh.

Identifying the Angel of the LORD:

When Hagar flees from Sarah, the Scripture says:

And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. KJV Genesis 16:7

When the encounter is finished, the Scripture reports:

And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, "Thou God seest me": for she said, "Have I also here looked after him that seeth me"? KJV Genesis 16:13.

The passage has four times called Him "the angel of the LORD" and then the Scripture says, "And she called Yahweh's name, who was speaking to her, "You, God, see me." It is important to note that the text narration says she was calling YHWH a name, and identifies Him as the one speaking with her. It is not Hagar who makes the identification. It is the Scripture. What Hagar said is shown in quotation marks. That is what she called YHWH: "You are El-Roi," the God who sees. So here we have the angel of the LORD identified as YHWH. Now in this passage, Hagar wonders if she has seen the back of the LORD, and she may have only heard Him, but the identification of the messenger as YHWH is clear, both in the narration and in Hagar's words.

This passage is the very first time that the "messenger of YHWH" appears in the Scripture with this designation. It is very important to understand that the Scripture usually defines the terms it uses at the first use. Here in the first use of the "angel of YHWH" there is no doubt who He is. It is God Himself.

In Rabbinical Judaism, this identification is denied. What they may say is that Hagar was mistaken. It does not really resolve the issue though, because the Scripture itself makes the identification. It may also be pointed out that the Rabbinical interpretation did not exist before the conflict with Christianity, and that the plain interpretation was the original ancient understanding.

If this is not enough to convince us, then let us move on to another passage:

And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, Here *am* I. 12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. 13 I *am* the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred. KJV Genesis 31:11-13.

And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I *am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; KJV Genesis 28:13.

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. KJV Genesis 32:30.

The angel of the LORD, who is God, appears in a dream to Jacob, and announces that He is the God who appeared to him at Bethel. A little later, Jacob wrestles with the angel of the LORD. The text calls Him a "man" in this case, and He blesses Jacob. Jacob finally realizes who He was and says, "for I have seen God face to face." Again, this plain sense of the text explains why faithful Jews were willing to accept Yeshua as the incarnation of YHWH. Scripture gives a number of examples where Israelites expected to be harmed by gazing at the LORD, but then reports that they did not die. God is showing us that He intends to set a precedent that non-lethal appearances are possible.

Seeing God

We may expect from these experiences that the faithful Israelites were open to the idea that God could put in an appearance among them in a physical form and that they might not be destroyed by it. The theology of Israel was not in those days inoculated by the leaven of the Rabbis against the possibility. Israel only understood that God may not be seen in a certain glorified form. This is made plain in Exodus 33:

And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle. 18 And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. 19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. 20 And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. 21 And the LORD said, Behold, *there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen. KJV Exodus 33:11-23

Within the space of nine verses Moses speaks "face to face" with YHWH, and is then told he cannot see YHWH's face. How is this the case? The reason is given in vs. 18, "Shew me thy glory" and vs. 19, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." Clearly, when Moses spoke face to face, only part of His glory and only part of His goodness were seen in the physical manifestation. Moses did not see a vision in the former case. Rather, YHWH limited His glory. That is what the Scripture indicates. And in the latter case, YHWH did not limit His glory of righteousness that shone from His face, but Moses was only allowed to see His backside.

Likewise, in Messiah Yeshua, the glory of God is limited, yet Yeshua is the same YHWH who spoke face to face with Moses. For it is written:

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten God³, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath expressed *him*. John 1:18

³ So read the best MSS in my opinion. Even so, it says the same thing in John 1:1-3, "And the Word was God."

There is nothing "new" in this passage in John 1:18. The God who expresses YHWH in Heaven is the angel of YHWH who appeared to Abraham by the Oaks of Mamre. Abraham, Jacob, and Moses spoke with Him "face to face." Abraham bargained with Him, and Jacob wrestled with Him. Indeed, our God is not a God who disdains walking and talking with men, nor even suffering and dying for men as Yeshua the Messiah.

Now in Rabbinical opinion, no one ever gets to see God in any form. John only means no one has seen Him in his pure, spiritually glorified essence. But when God takes physical expression, He may be seen. Therefore, every time the Scriptures say that men have seen God, they will say that they were only seeing a vision. Why do they say this? It was not so before Yeshua died and rose again on the third day. There was no entrenched tradition against seeing the angel of the LORD who is the LORD. But the Rabbis sinned against the Holy One of Israel. They denied that the messenger of YHWH was the LORD in physical form appearing to men so that they could deny that He came as Yeshua the Messiah.

Therefore, Yeshua said to them that were denying Him:

I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I AM⁴ ye shall die in your sins. KJV John 8:24.

Now at this time the Rabbinic heresy was not all pervasive in Judea, as it is at this day, and the people were willing to believe that Messiah could indeed be a longer stay of the angel of YHWH who is YHWH among men.⁵

The Angel of YHWH is Worshiped:

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship⁶, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so. KJV Joshua 5:13-15.

And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, *and* the mighty men of valour. KJV Joshua 6:2

⁴ Please note that "he" after "I AM" is in italics in most texts, and indicates that it is not in the Greek. However, "he" does refer to the Holy One of Israel, i.e. the Messenger of YHWH who is YHWH.

⁵ It must be commented that Messiah was fully God and fully man in one Person. That is, the divine and the human were fully integrated. The Scripture hints at this in Zechariah 1:8 where "the angel of the LORD" is called a "man".

⁶ Compare Rev. 22:8-9 where John was not permitted to worship another angel.

Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. 22 And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD!⁷ for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. 23 And the LORD said unto him, Peace *be* unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. KJV Judges 6:21-23.

And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. 16 And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he was an⁸ angel of the LORD. 17 And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What *is* thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? 18 And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it *is* secret?⁹ 19 So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered *it* upon a rock unto the LORD: and *the angel* did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on *it*, and fell on their faces to the ground. 21 But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an¹⁰ angel of the LORD. 22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 23 But his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these *things*, nor would as at this time have told us *such things* as these. KJV Judges 13:15-23

Who then is this "messenger of YHWH" that is YHWH, who is worshipped, whose name is also "Wonderful?" This is the same one as Yeshua of Nazareth, who was in the bosom of the Father. At times Israel only heard the voice of God so that they would not be tempted to make their own image of God, but also God has manifested Himself in physical form in the "messenger of YHWH" so that Israel would be prepared to accept His appearance as the Messiah of Israel. Therefore, God presents His own righteous image of Himself in Messiah Yeshua.

Messiah Appears on Mt. Sinai

Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: 10 And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under

⁷ The words are "Adonai YHWH" in Hebrew, i.e. "Lord Yahweh".

⁸ The text should say "the".

⁹ The Hebrew means "Wonderful" as a title of Messiah.

¹⁰ The text should say "the".

his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. 11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. KJV Exodus 24:9-11.

But God also hides Himself:

And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye *heard* a voice. KJV Deuteronomy 4:12

Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day *that* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: 16 Lest ye corrupt *yourselves*, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, KJV Deuteronomy 4:15-16.

So what are we to make of this? YHWH hides Himself in the cloud when He announces the Ten Commandments, but in the morning the elders of Israel appear before Him, and they "saw the God of Israel." It has already been explained in Exodus 33 how this can happen. YHWH as the angel of the LORD appeared to men, but in the fire the LORD is hidden, and only His voice is heard. The cloud is to cloak His glory so that Israel would not gaze on the LORD and be destroyed (Exodus 19:21).

Did Moses See a Vision?

And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, / the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, *and* will speak unto him in a dream. 7 My servant Moses *is* not so, who *is* faithful in all mine house. 8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? KJV Numbers 12:6-8.

The Scripture says that Moses beheld the likeness of YHWH. He saw His "similitude" which is the same word in Hebrew as in Deut. 4:12 where idolatry is prohibited. No one is to make a "likeness" of YHWH, yet YHWH has shown His likeness to Moses. Moses did not see a vision. For it is in vision that God speaks to the other prophets.

It has been supposed by some Messianic teachers that the Name YHWH is reserved for God in his invisible form. But this is not the case. This notion is, in fact, an accommodation to the Rabbis who do not believe in Yeshua, and who invented the philosophy that YHWH does not appear in physical form to man. What do the Scriptures say?

Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning¹¹; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter *and* former rain unto the earth. KJV Hosea 6:3

In this text, we see that YHWH rises up on the third day at dawn (see Hosea 6:2). Also, in Zechariah 12:10 when it says, "**and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced**" it is YHWH who is speaking. We have also stated before that Moses spoke face to face with YHWH while in a physical form. Evidently, the Name is not reserved for God in his invisible form.

Confessing the LORD

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord¹² Jesus¹³, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord¹⁴ shall be saved. KJV Romans 10:9-13.

At the end of this text is a quotation from Joel 2:32. Paul's point is that believing in YHWH is one and the same with believing in the Messenger of YHWH, who is our Lord YHWH the Anointed One. And how can one call on the name of Yeshua and the name of YHWH if Yeshua's name is not YHWH? And how can one be immersed in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit if the name of the Son and the Spirit is not YHWH? It does not say "names" but "name." The confession in Romans 10:9 is explained by the quotation from Joel 2:32 in Romans 10:13. The Hebrew text says, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of YHWH shall be saved."

Psalm 110

The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. 2 The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. 3 Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning¹⁵: thou hast¹⁶ the dew of thy youth. 4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

¹¹ The Hebrew says, "at dawn".

¹² The Greek Papyri MSS here have the *nomina sacra* symbolism showing that YHWH is meant.

¹³ *Nomia Sacra* symbol = Yeshua, Peshitta = Yeshua.

¹⁴ Hebrew = "YHWH".

¹⁵ The Hebrew says, "dawn."

¹⁶ Hebrew "To you [is] the dew of your youths"

5 The LORD¹⁷ at THY right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. 6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. 7 He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head. KJV Psalm 110:1 {A Psalm of David.}

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: KJV John 5:22

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. KJV John 5:27

And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. KJV Revelation 19:15

"YHWH says to my Lord," David writes. Who is David's Lord? David's only Lord is YHWH. But here YHWH sits at the right hand of YHWH. Furthermore, in vs. 5 David addresses YHWH in Heaven and says "YHWH at Thy right hand" referring again to the Lord who is his Lord. Into the hand of YHWH at the right hand of YHWH is committed all judgment (John 5:22; 27; Rev. 19:15). For this is the meaning of *Malakitzedek*. In Hebrew it means "King of justice," which in Spanish is "Rey de justicia." But we know that in Hebrew *Tzedek* means both "righteousness" and "justice." In the context of Psalm 110, YHWH at the right hand of YHWH is the King of Israel who executes *justice* on the nations (vs. 6). This refers to His priesthood in the order of the *King of Justice*. For the Father has committed all judgment and justice to the Son.

Yeshua quoted Psalm 110:1 to the scribes and Pharisees. After this no man would dare ask Him any more questions!¹⁸ Why is this? They were not stupid. They knew that to try to debate Yeshua over this would result in a discussion of verse 5 and the topic of the "Messenger of YHWH" (a.k.a. Angel of the LORD) in the Scripture. They saw their defeat coming from afar and hastily withdrew the questions. They knew who He was claiming to be, and so did all Israel.

Later the Rabbis began to argue their vision theories, or mistaken identity theories, or that the angel of the LORD was only his mouthpiece and not YHWH Himself. It was not enough for them to reject Yeshua. They had to reinterpret the Scriptures. So now Israel is deceived again. But this was not then the case. It was known that YHWH could manifest in physical form and that Yeshua was claiming to be YHWH who manifested himself as YHWH.

The rejection of Yeshua was due to a number of factors. They were jealous of Yeshua's success and appeal when they were in power. They loved money and the platitudes of men. In a sort of way they were the "Catholic Church" of that time. They

¹⁷ One of the 134 places where the Sopherim changed YHWH to Adonai. (Also according to *fragmentum codicis Hebraici in geniza Cairensi repertum*.) See BHS where the marginal note reads "many YHWH." We should go with the harder reading rule here and the comments of Ginsburg. Even when the Sopherim changed the text, though, they left a qamets at the end of Adonai to show that YHWH was meant.

¹⁸ Matthew 22:44-45.

also used Greek philosophy, with its rejection of the physical and its dichotomy between nature and heaven to justify a one-sided view of God that would not permit Him to lay aside His greater glory to become a human being. This infection had started a few centuries before Yeshua came, but did not conquer the religio-political body politic of Israel until confronted with Messiah.

The LORD Yeshua

We cannot let go of the point that Yeshua is LORD. Any weakening of this point is to hand the Rabbis a concession that they have prepared as a weapon against believers in Messiah. It must become clear in our liturgy and prayer that YHWH means Yeshua. It must be clear that Messiah is worshipped as YHWH, just as the messenger of YHWH was worshipped (who was in fact Yeshua). We must ever be suspicious of anyone who says that Israel only saw visions or dreams of YHWH when the text says that they saw Him. For the aim of such maneuverings is to remove Yeshua from His divine position. We must also be suspicious of all attempts to deny that the Name YHWH is properly applied to Him. For Satan is forever trying to discredit YHWH's revelation of Himself to men.

One Messianic teacher makes a great argument for God taking on human existence, but then stops short of applying the Name: **"It is really very simple: when God is spoken of as invisible, it is speaking of God as revealed in the Name, or by the designation "Father," and when God appears to people, it is speaking of the incarnate God, i.e., the Messiah, designated by the name "Son of God," "Son of Man," "Immanuel," "the Word," as well as other names."**¹⁹ Is this the truth? No, it is only a half truth, and a half lie. The invisible God has many other titles and names as well. Likewise, YHWH made Himself visible and spoke face to face with Moses, and He is called YHWH in that form. Moses saw no vision nor did he dream a dream, but Moses saw the form of YHWH (Numbers 12:6-8). The same word for *picture*, "t'munah" in Hebrew, is used both to say that Israel did not see an image and that Moses did see an image. Thus, the Torah is preparing Israel to accept Yeshua as the express image of YHWH Elohim. For He is YHWH manifest in human form (t'munah) which is His similitude or likeness.

What is the effect of this huge concession (to deny that the divine name YHWH applies to Yeshua, since he is the image of YHWH)? The practical effect is that in liturgy it will be avoided to call Yeshua who He is with the Name above all Names. When Christians say Lord Yeshua or Lord Jesus, they mean God Almighty, but when Jews say LORD or HASHEM they mean YHWH, but exclude Yeshua. The practical effect of the view quoted above is to hand unbelievers permission to worship in the assembly as

¹⁹ Tim Hegg; Notes on Genesis 18. Tim Hegg has elsewhere confessed Messiah as LORD (YHWH), but does allow others to claim they are believers when they do not confess Yeshua is YHWH. This course is extremely dangerous, especially as Messianic Jews are in mortal conflict with the Rabbis over the identity and mission of Yeshua. I was once part of a Messianic fellowship in Green Bay, WI led by a Jewish doctor and his wife. There was a lack of correct identification of Yeshua as YHWH in this fellowship. I was not aware of the problem, as they did confess Him as Messiah. However, eventually it turned out that they claimed to honor HaShem, the LORD, while denying Yeshua as Messiah. They then departed to Orthodox Judaism in Milwaukee, WI. They caused three weak Christian families to depart from the faith with them.

brothers, when they in fact have no faith in the LORD.²⁰ The issue here is not the use of the NAME, but that one means the NAME when calling on Yeshua. It is sufficient to know that Jesus is Lord to be saved, i.e. God, but those who know Him at this level are not denying that He owns the Name above all names. But for those who know the Name above all names, that it is YHWH, to suggest that we are not to understand YHWH when calling Yeshua "LORD" is indeed foolishness, and in light of the current conflict it is imperative that we do not view these people as truly converted.

Zechariah 3:1-2:

And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. 2 And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: *is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* KJV Zechariah 3:1-2.

Here we have a clear identification of the "messenger of YHWH" as YHWH. The first verse refers to the "angel of the LORD" who is defending the high priest, and Satan stands at the right hand of the messenger of YHWH to resist his advocacy. Then the angel of YHWH is referred to as YHWH, "YHWH said unto Satan, YHWH rebuke thee." Once again, this is Yeshua who is speaking. He is YHWH our advocate at the right hand of YHWH.

Zechariah 1:8-13:

I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white. 9 Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be. 10 And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the LORD hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. 11 And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest. 12 Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? 13 And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with good words and comfortable words.* KJV Zechariah 1:8-13

²⁰ For Yeshua said that if they do not honor Him then they do not honor His Father in Heaven. Moreover, in John 4 He said that whoever does not believe in Him is condemned already because he has not faithfully trusted in the Name of the Son of God. The reason that Israel did not accept Messiah and did not recognize YHWH's appearance among them is because Israel rejected the words of the prophets, which they were supposed to believe. If they had believed Moses and the Prophets, they would have believed in Yeshua. For the Scripture requires Israel to listen to the words of the Torah and Prophets (Deut. 18).

Here a man stands among the myrtle trees, which represent Israel, and the "bottom" represents the exile. The man is called the "angel of YHWH" in verse 11. The Messenger of YHWH, who is Yeshua, asks YHWH how long He will withhold mercy. YHWH speaks comforting words to YHWH. Yeshua is our advocate who understands our weaknesses and the urgency of God's keeping of His promises for our deliverance. So we have the angel of YHWH identified as a "man," but elsewhere we have the angel of YHWH identified as YHWH.

Yeshua's Words

He says:

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. 44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? 45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. 46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. 47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? KJV John 5:43-47.

What is the Father's name? Surely we know! It is YHWH. But if another Jesus should come in his own name that is not the name of the Father, then they will receive him. Or if another messiah comes in his own name that is not the "messenger of YHWH" who is YHWH, then they will receive him.

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if²¹ thou canst tell? KJV Proverbs 30:4.

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. KJV John 3:13

Moses spoke face to face with YHWH, who was Yeshua before He was born of a virgin. Moses himself is going to hold Israel accountable for what he wrote about Messiah. It is the mission of Satan to steal the glory of the Father that belongs to the Messiah. What does Yeshua say about the teachers of the Law that deny Him? What does He say about the cult of the Rabbis? These are indeed hard words for the tribe of Judah to hear:

Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. 43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. 44 Ye are

²¹ The Hebrew reads "For you knowest."

of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. 46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. KJV John 8:41-47.

Are these words anti-Semitic? By no means. It was Israel that first rejected the Holy One of Israel. And it was Judah that removed the boundary stone. If Messiah rejected the unfaithful among His people, then it is because they have rejected Him. Do not the Rabbis say that those who believe in Him are not Jewish? Then again, Messiah has already spoken about this:

Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews²², and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. KJV Revelation 3:9

What Messiah is really saying, is that the Rabbinical Synagogue has become a cult that denies Messiah and denies that Messiah loves Gentiles in addition to Jews. The day is coming when unbelieving Jews will have to acknowledge Christians (who have been grafted into Israel) and worship God the right way, confessing Yeshua as YHWH.²³

Doctrinal Tests

For believers who are not teachers, it will be sufficient if they say that Jesus is Lord, meaning God. They should also be open to learning about the name YHWH applying to Yeshua. For teachers who fail to confess that Yeshua is LORD (meaning YHWH, or incorrectly "Jehovah") or who actively teach against the identity of the "Messenger of YHWH" in the Scriptures as YHWH Himself in a physical form, then we should rightly be suspicious of whether or not they belong to the Faith, and we will be justified in not officially regarding them as saved until they turn to the Truth.

For those who are critical of this being too strict a doctrinal test yet who themselves confess the truth, then I would urge obedience to Torah:

Behold, I send an Angel²⁴ before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. 21 Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. KJV Exodus 23:20.

²² Of course, this does not mean that they are not descended from the tribes of Israel. Rather the concept in the promise is that of spiritual identity. They have been cut off from the promise due to unbelief.

²³ For they will say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of YHWH" (Mat. 23:39).

²⁴ Hebrew, "Messenger."

This is the messenger of the covenant whose name is YHWH that was seen on Mt. Sinai by the seventy elders of Israel. This is the Commander of YHWH's army, before whom Joshua took off his shoes and worshiped. This is YHWH our Righteousness and our Justice.

Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.²⁵ 2 And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; 3 And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel²⁶, in whom I will be glorified. 4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment *is* with the LORD, and my work with my God. 5 And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb *to be* his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered²⁷, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength. 6 And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. 7 Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and²⁸ his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, *and*²⁹ the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. 8 Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; KJV Isaiah 49:1-8.

The Messiah is YHWH the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to Him whom man despiseth, to Him whom the nation abhorreth And because Yeshua has His name, He says:

I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*³⁰, ye shall die in your sins. KJV John 8:24

Who then is the Great "I Am" who was, who is, and who is to come? He is YHWH our Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, who became Yeshua. No less of a confession will do. For this is the one who spoke to Moses in the burning bush.

²⁵ Yeshua means "Yahweh Saves."

²⁶ Messiah is the representative of Israel before God. That is why it says "Israel" here.

²⁷ The Kingdom of Israel was scattered to the nations until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. The Kingdom is not restored to the Land until the times of the Gentiles are ended.

²⁸ The Hebrew does not say "and."

²⁹ The Hebrew does not say "and."

³⁰ The text does not contain this word.

But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. KJV Matthew 10:33

YHWH our Justice

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. 6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name **whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. KJV Jeremiah 23:5-6**

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* **wherewith she shall be called³¹, The LORD our righteousness. KJV Jeremiah 33:15-16**

Here in Jeremiah 33:15-16 an errant Jewish translation has crept into the text. The text is calling Jerusalem by the divine title instead of Messiah. But the text actually should read, "**which He is called by her**" taking the verb as Niphal. This will make it congruent with Jeremiah 23:5-6.

The Image of God

The Scripture prohibits man from making images of God because man is sinful and corrupt and always makes a corrupt image. However, the Scripture shows God making an image of Himself through which to receive worship. When Isaiah sees God worshiped, an image in the vision is necessarily involved:

In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord³² sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* the LORD of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory. 4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. KJV Isaiah 6:1

The LORD is clearly receiving worship through His image. Isaiah did not witness worship of an empty throne with an unseen Spirit on the throne. Truly God is invisible in His eternal spiritual essence, but it is also clear that He accepts worship through the physical interface He wears. Therefore, Yeshua is the Eternal God wearing a human

³¹ The Hebrew text reads, "And this is the name which he is called by her: YHWH our Righteousness."

³² One of the 134 changes of the Sopherim. Should read YHWH.

body. The person beneath the exterior is YHWH and not some other person or some other created spirit. Moreover, it is through this physical manifestation that God communicates the nature of His glory and righteousness to His creatures.

The Nature of the Universe

The Greeks and Gnostics introduced mankind to the complete separation of the physical and the spiritual. Yet, we do not really know if such an idea is the fundamental nature of the Universe. The more Man explores the quantum reality of physics, the more vague the division between the spiritual and the physical becomes. It is possible that the physical is a manifestation of deeper spiritual realities. The Scripture does say that God holds the Universe together by the power of His Word. It is not yet revealed to us what the real nature of God's "spiritual/physical" image is in the heavenlies, nor by what senses it is possible to perceive Him. We may never know the answer. It may be the proverbial black box closed to investigation. We will experience Him face to face in the Age to come but perhaps not know what makes it possible.

Meanwhile, in Yeshua, God did clearly receive worship while in a human body. The real issue is not *how* God presents Himself to be worshiped, but *Who* is being worshiped when He expresses Himself to His creation.