

**CONFRONTING  
YESHUA'S DIVINITY  
AND MESSIAHSHIP**



confronting issues series

# CONFRONTING YESHUA'S DIVINITY AND MESSIAHSHIP

J.K. McKee

**MESSIANIC**  
**APOLOGETICS**  
[messianicapologetics.net](http://messianicapologetics.net)

# CONFRONTING YESHUA'S DIVINITY AND MESSIAHSHIP

© 2012 John Kimball McKee

repaginated 2016

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the author(s).

Cover photos: Istockphoto

---

Published by Messianic Apologetics, a division of Outreach Israel Ministries

P.O. Box 850845

Richardson, Texas 75085

(407) 933-2002

[www.outreachisrael.net](http://www.outreachisrael.net)

[www.messianicapologetics.net](http://www.messianicapologetics.net)

---

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard, Updated Edition* (NASU), © 1995, The Lockman Foundation.

Unless otherwise noted, quotations from the Apocrypha are from the *Revised Standard Version* (RSV), © 1952, Division of Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

# table of contents

INTRODUCTION .....xi

## ANSWERING THE “FREQUENTLY AVOIDED QUESTIONS” ABOUT THE DIVINITY OF YESHUA .... 1

Answering these “Frequently Avoided Questions” .....8

False Claim #1: God cannot die. If Yeshua the Messiah is God, then how could He die on the cross? .....9

False Claim #2: God cannot be tempted. Yeshua the Messiah was tempted by Satan in the wilderness. How can Yeshua be God if He was tempted?.....12

False Claim #3: The New Testament Scriptures always present a difference between the Messiah and God, proving that they are not one and the same. Because of the separation of the Messiah and God, how can He be God? .....14

False Claim #4: To worship Yeshua as God is to worship another god. This is idolatry. How can you worship Yeshua as God? We are only supposed to honor or bow down to Yeshua.....18

False Claim #5: Yeshua the Messiah had to be born to exist. He did not exist until He was born. How can Yeshua be God if He had to be born to exist? .....26

False Claim #6: The demons never confessed Yeshua to be God. How can Yeshua be God if the demons never confessed Him as such?.....30

False Claim #7: The Scriptures tell us that God is a spirit and that He cannot be seen. How can Yeshua be God if He could be seen by human people? .....31

False Claim #8: Psalm 110:1 is a proof text that Yeshua the Messiah is not God, and has been purposefully misrepresented by those trying to make the Messiah God. How can Yeshua be God when adon is a Hebrew title given only to human masters? .....35

False Claim #9: Yeshua the Messiah never said “I am God.” How can Yeshua be God if He never said “I am God”? .....38

False Claim #10: God says that “I am not a man.” .....44

The Ongoing Issue of Yeshua’s Divinity in the Messianic Movement....46

**WHAT DOES THE SHEMA REALLY MEAN? ..... 49**

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 .....51

The Shema for Ancient Israel.....51

Does the Shema allow for a plural Godhead? .....57

1 Corinthians 8:5-6 .....65

The Messianic Shema: One God and One Lord .....65

The Truth About the Trinity and Messianic Handling of the Shema .....69

**ANSWERING THE “FREQUENTLY AVOIDED  
QUESTIONS” ABOUT THE MESSIAHSHIP OF  
YESHUA..... 75**

Answering these “Frequently Avoided Questions” .....85

False Claim #1: Numbers 23:19 clearly states that God is not a man, yet Christianity considers Jesus to be God, when at most he was just a human teacher. ....86

False Claim #2: Psalm 22:17(16) uses “lion” and not “pierced” in the Hebrew. Christian Bibles have purposefully mistranslated the verse to prove the Messiahship of Jesus. ....88

False Claim #3: Matthew 2:23 is wrong. There is no single prophecy that states that the Messiah will be called a Nazarene. ....90

False Claim #4: Matthew 2:15 has deliberately misapplied Hosea 11:1, as it calls the people of Israel out of Egypt, not Jesus out of Egypt. ....94

False Claim #5: Jesus is not the “greater prophet” spoken of by Moses. .96

False Claim #6: The genealogies of Jesus in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 do not align with the genealogies of the Tanach. ....100

False Claim #7: Isaiah 7:14 has been purposefully mistranslated with “virgin” in Christian Bibles, to fit a pagan concept of a virgin giving birth, specifically to Jesus. ....106

False Claim #8: Matthew 27:9 has deliberately misreferenced the Tanach. The text says that “Jeremiah” spoke a prophecy that should really be a word credited to Zechariah. ....112

False Claim #9: The suffering servant of Isaiah 53 is Israel, not Jesus. ....114

False Claim #10: Human sacrifice is deplorable to God. How can Jesus be “the sacrifice” for all humanity when God Himself would never accept it? ..... 118

The Criticism Only Messianics Can Respond To..... 121

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR ..... 129**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 131**



## abbreviation chart and special terms

The following is a chart of abbreviations for reference works and special terms that are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

Special terms that may be used have been provided in this chart:

ABD: <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>	understand what a Biblical text means on its own
AMG: <i>Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament</i>	EXP: <i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i>
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)	Ger: German
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament	GNT: Greek New Testament
Ara: Aramaic	Grk: Greek
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)	<i>halachah</i> : lit. "the way to walk," how the Torah is lived out in an individual's life or faith community
b. Babylonian Talmud ( <i>Talmud Bavli</i> )	HALOT: <i>Hebrew &amp; Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Koehler and Baumgartner)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.	HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
BDAG: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)	Heb: Hebrew
BDB: <i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>	HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
BECNT: <i>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>	ICC: <i>International Critical Commentary</i>
BKCNT: <i>Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament</i>	IDB: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.	IDBSup: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement</i>
CEV: Contemporary English Version (1995)	ISBE: <i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i>
CGEDNT: <i>Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> (Barclay M. Newman)	IVPBBC: <i>IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old &amp; New Testament)</i>
CHALOT: <i>Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>	Jastrow: <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Ba'ali, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature</i> (Marcus Jastrow)
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)	JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition	JETS: <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls	KJV: King James Version
ECB: <i>Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible</i>	Lattimore: <i>The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore</i> (1996)
EDB: <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i>	LITV: <i>Literal Translation of the Holy Bible</i> by Jay P. Green (1986)
eisegesis: "reading meaning into," or interjecting a preconceived or foreign meaning into a Biblical text	LS: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Liddell & Scott)
EJ: <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>	LXE: <i>Septuagint with Apocrypha</i> by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
ESV: English Standard Version (2001)	
exegesis: "drawing meaning out of," or the process of trying to	

LXX: Septuagint  
m. Mishnah  
MT: Masoretic Text  
NASB: New American Standard Bible (1977)  
NASU: New American Standard Update (1995)  
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*  
NEB: New English Bible (1970)  
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*  
NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint (2007)  
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*  
NIGTC: *New International Greek Testament Commentary*  
NICNT: *New International Commentary on the New Testament*  
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*  
NIV: New International Version (1984)  
NJB: New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic (1985)  
NJPS: Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures (1999)  
NKJV: New King James Version (1982)  
NRSV: New Revised Standard Version (1989)  
NLT: New Living Translation (1996)  
NT: New Testament  
orthopraxy: lit. "the right action," how the Bible or one's theology is lived out in the world

OT: Old Testament  
PreachC: *The Preacher's Commentary*  
REB: Revised English Bible (1989)  
RSV: Revised Standard Version (1952)  
t. Tosefta  
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament  
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*  
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*  
TEV: Today's English Version (1976)  
TLV: Tree of Life Messianic Family Bible—New Covenant (2011)  
TNIV: Today's New International Version (2005)  
TNTC: *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*  
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*  
UBSHNT: United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition  
v(s). verse(s)  
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*  
Vul: Latin Vulgate  
WBC: *Word Biblical Commentary*  
Yid: Yiddish  
YLT: Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898)

# Introduction

The *Confronting Issues* series began in 2007, as a selection of small stapled booklets, comprising a rather forthright article or two produced by Outreach Israel Ministries and (now) Messianic Apologetics. Today in 2012, because of the significant wave of changes and transitions occurring within the broad Messianic community, the *Confronting Issues* series is being retooled a bit, into small books, addressing some of the major debates of the day. It would be our hope and prayer that these new releases are able to interject a well-needed perspective into the conversation regarding the different topics of importance, offering fair-minded and constructive solutions, which carefully address the Biblical text, and can sincerely help Jewish and non-Jewish Believers in their walk with Yeshua the Messiah.

There is no more pressing issue for Believers in Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ), than understanding who their Lord actually is. There are many statements appearing in the Apostolic Scriptures or New Testament, which give witness to who He is. Yeshua is the Word made flesh (John 1:1, 14), He is the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36), He is One who had the audacity to say “before Abraham was born, I am” (John 8:58), and He is One “existing in the form of God” (Philippians 2:6, ASV). Yeshua is the Savior of the world, whose sacrifice for human transgressions provides permanent atonement and forgiveness. Yeshua the Messiah of Israel is the One “of whom Moses in the Law and *also* the Prophets wrote” (John 1:45). Yeshua the Messiah is One who the Scriptures definitely regard as no ordinary man, as He performed miracles, had control over the weather, and who was recognized as unique by the forces of evil. He is “the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Revelation 22:13).

While there is much about the nature of the Messiah that is difficult for mortals to fully comprehend, He is portrayed as the One in whom “all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form” (Colossians 2:8), and He is “our great God and Savior (Titus 2:13). He is the prophesied Messiah of Israel, and He is God made manifest in the flesh. Recognizing Yeshua as God, and as the prophesied Messiah from the Tanach or Old

Testament, are two concepts that have been under continual attack by many outside *and* inside forces in today's broad Messianic movement—and the attacks continue to grow in intensity. There are people who have been caught easily unaware by poor arguments against Yeshua's Divinity and Messiahship. **There are answers to the claims against these foundational truths that are available for those who need an immediate shoring up of their faith.**

*Confronting Yeshua's Divinity and Messiahship* has compiled a number of key articles that I have written over the years, which are intended to directly combat errant ideas that circulate here and there within sectors of the Messianic community. Common claims that are issued against Yeshua being the Divine Savior, and Yeshua being the Messiah, are directly responded to with poignant observations and exegetical detail. If you have been in a situation where a rogue individual you have encountered makes a statement or two against who Yeshua is, as communicated to us in the Holy Scriptures, then this publication should serve as some useful ammunition against those claims. The most frequent statements that one will hear, which are made against Yeshua's Divinity and Messiahship, are directly confronted and responded to.

*J.K. McKee, Editor  
Messianic Apologetics*

# Answering the “Frequently Avoided Questions” About the Divinity of Yeshua

answering the claims of the anti-Divinity Messianics

Anyone who has surveyed the Messianic movement—whether it be Messianic Judaism, the One Law/One Torah sub-movement, or Two-House sub-movement—knows that it is very broad and diverse. There is a broad array of theologies and opinions evident in the Messianic movement, just as in Christianity or Judaism. There are those who are theologically conservative, and those who are theologically liberal. There are those who believe that God has the ultimate control over their lives, and those who believe that they can determine their own destiny and dictate to God who He is, ignoring His direction. There are those who think deeply, and there are those who think simplistically. There are those who let themselves be tossed and swayed by religious politics, and there are those who do not allow entangling alliances to have an influence over them.

Since the 1990s and 2000s, it is not surprising that an age-old theological controversy, going back to the Second and Third Centuries C.E., has arisen in the broad Messianic movement: *Who is Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ)? Is He God—or is He just a human man?*

This has now developed into a debate that is not so easily delineated along any kind of denominational, organizational, or ministry lines, *as it affects everybody*. While various Messianic associations and ministries have rightfully taken strong stands against those who would deride Yeshua the Messiah as being the Divine Savior—the fact is that individual people who may attend congregations which officially affirm Yeshua as God, may themselves

only think of the Messiah as a good man who was connected to God in a special way, or some kind of exalted supernatural being, yet ultimately created. It is certainly true that there are many Christian people who attend church every week, being members of denominations which officially affirm the Divinity of Jesus, who themselves do not believe in it and only think that Jesus was a good teacher. So, individual people denying Yeshua's Divinity is not at all an isolated incident, nor is it uncommon to the world of Christian religion, at least.

What can make things in the Messianic movement much different, though, is our relatively small size, and the fact that many sub-groups and cliques are becoming more and more reliant on promoting themselves by various modern communication media. It is very easy for an outspoken individual in the assembly, who does not believe that Yeshua is Divine, to cause quite a stir. In the past, this would have only taken place by a person passing out questionable literature on the side, not too different from a dealer offering free samples of illegal drugs. What happens now is usually seeing various opinions expressed via a personal blog page or YouTube channel. All too often, individuals are caught broadsided when various arguments are made or encountered, not quite knowing what to do. Too many can be persuaded, even if just for a little while, into thinking that Yeshua the Messiah might not really be God.

Sadly, too many of today's Messianic congregational leaders do not know what to do about this. And, given the fact that apostasy is indeed prophesied to be a sign of the Last Days (2 Thessalonians 2:3), people denying major tenets of our Messianic faith is something that we are all going to have to deal with in increasing numbers as the Second Coming draws nearer. Pockets of individuals here and there denying Yeshua's Divinity is sure to be followed by much larger groups, and in time it will be found in some Messianic congregations' leadership and whole ministries. Those of us who are true to what the Scriptures tell us about Yeshua the Messiah, however, **can have confidence that He is indeed the LORD God, and He is indeed Divine!** There are fair-minded, Biblically-rooted answers for the questions and criticisms being made. *You do not have to be broadsided by some of the main, yet decidedly weak arguments, that are being bantered around.*

Answering the "Frequently Avoided Questions"  
About the Divinity of Yeshua

**Approaching the Debate:  
Why does the Messiah have to be Divine?**

The question of whether or not Yeshua the Messiah is Divine, God in the flesh, has been a cause of considerable debate and dissension in various periods, since His ascension into Heaven. The Apostolic Scriptures record ancient hymns and creeds affirmed about Yeshua by the First Century Believers themselves (i.e., Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 1 Timothy 3:16), some of which may have been formulated to not only make key statements about who He is, but also subvert errant ideas that had circulated in various sectors of the *ekklēsia*.

In much of theological study since the First Century and ministry of the Apostles, we encounter the views of people who strongly believed that Yeshua (Jesus) must be God, and that any diversion of believing that He is not God must be viewed as theological heresy. There are also those who have strongly believed that Yeshua was only a human man, that He had some kind of special relationship with God and was quite possibly even the Messiah empowered by God, but was never God in the flesh.

Whether Yeshua the Messiah is Divine is an old debate, and while there are discussions about what this group of Christian leaders insisted, or what that sect did—**this is an issue that ultimately tries a reader's loyalty to the claims of the Biblical text.** How Medieval Roman Catholic leaders handled those who they considered to be "heretics," for example, *should not* be what guides our thoughts about this issue. What should guide our thoughts about this issue is understanding the wide-sweeping Biblical ramifications of: "these have been written so that you may believe that Yeshua is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31). What matters for our deliberations is whether or not the Divinity of Yeshua is a **clear teaching of Scripture**, that the Divinity of Yeshua is something reflected in the testimony of the Apostles, and how the Divinity of Yeshua is something which affects our salvation.

As I approach the issue of whether or not Yeshua is the Divine Savior, my reasons for believing in His Divinity are firmly based within the text of Scripture. From Scripture, we see stated in numerous places that only God can save human beings from their diverse trials, and allow His people to enter into His blessed purpose for them. The LORD

God explicitly claims that He is the only Savior (derived from the Hebrew verb *yasha*, יָשַׁע)<sup>1</sup> of people:

“For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place” (Isaiah 43:3).

“I, even I, am the LORD, and there is no savior besides Me” (Isaiah 43:11).

“Declare and set forth *your case*; indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me” (Isaiah 45:21).

“I will feed your oppressors with their own flesh, and they will become drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob” (Isaiah 49:26).

“You will also suck the milk of nations and suck the breast of kings; then you will know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob” (Isaiah 60:16).

“Yet I *have been* the LORD your God since the land of Egypt; and you were not to know any god except Me, for there is no savior besides Me” (Hosea 13:4).

These verses from the Tanach (Old Testament) attest to the fact that the LORD (YHWH) Himself is the only Savior and Redeemer, as demonstrated by great acts of deliverance and victory for His people. The claim of Isaiah 42:51, for example, is most exclusive: **“And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me”** (NIV). The process of being saved from the eternal punishment to be meted upon sinners, directly involves actions performed by God Himself.

The key to properly dealing with whether or not Yeshua is Divine, is with how He could possibly offer any person eternal redemption as Savior, if He were only a human man.

---

<sup>1</sup> “be saved, be delivered (Niphal); save, deliver, give victory, help; be safe; take vengeance, preserve (Hiphil)” (John E. Hartley, “יָשַׁע,” in R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2 vols [Chicago: Moody Press, 1980], 1:414).

## Answering the “Frequently Avoided Questions” About the Divinity of Yeshua

The Apostolic Scriptures (New Testament) surely affirm that Yeshua the Messiah is the Savior (Grk. *sōtēr*, σωτήρ). The angels proclaimed at Yeshua’s birth, “for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord” (Luke 2:11). The Apostle Paul wrote, “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Yeshua the Messiah” (Philippians 3:20), and he spoke about “the redemption which is in Messiah Yeshua” (Romans 3:24). He further says, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace” (Ephesians 1:7; cf. Colossians 1:14), which is undeniably the activity of salvation. Four times in the Epistle of 2 Peter, Yeshua is called “our Lord and Savior” (1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18). And indeed, there are many other places in the Apostolic Scriptures where Yeshua the Messiah is unambiguously referred to as the Savior, including: John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Ephesians 5:23; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 1 John 4:14.

For some outsiders encountering the testimony of Scripture, there seems to be an issue. If the LORD God says that He is the only Savior and Redeemer of His people, then how can Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) also be referred to as the One who saves and redeems sinners? Is not this something that can only be done by God alone? The Biblical truth of the matter is that a human person being saved, forgiven of his or her sins, and being spiritually regenerated, **is directly connected to whether or not Yeshua the Messiah is Divine.**

We need to each consider the picture of the Ancient Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt. Any one of us in the Messianic community, who has studied the Passover, should be fully aware of how the Passover lamb is a type and shadow of Messiah Yeshua (1 Corinthians 5:7), and that the Passover represents our exodus as Believers from slavery to sin to new life in Him.<sup>2</sup> The Passover is a picture of an individual’s salvation. The Exodus account tells us that after the Lord had swallowed up the Egyptian armies that the Israelites began singing a song: “The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will extol Him” (Exodus 15:2). The Hebrew text says that *Yah v’yehi-li l’yeshuah* (יְהוָה יְהִי־לִי לְיִשׁוּעָה), or “the LORD has become our *yeshuah*.”

This is not the only place where we see God as the *yeshuah* of His people. Psalm 118:14, 21 exclaims, “The LORD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation [*l’yeshuah*, לְיִשׁוּעָה]...I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me, and You have become my salvation

---

<sup>2</sup> Consult the author’s article “The Message of Exodus.”

[l'*yeshuah*]." Isaiah 12:2 says, "Behold, God is my salvation [*yeshuati*, יְשׁוּעָתִי], I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord GOD is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation [l'*yeshuah*]." Perhaps most intriguing is Psalm 98:3: "He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." This verse tells us that the world has seen *yeshuat Eloheinu* (יְשׁוּעַת אֱלֹהֵינוּ), in that the salvation of God is to have global ramifications. Such salvation extends far beyond physical deliverance from worldly trials and situations.

These verses from the Tanach affirm how God alone is the only Source of salvation, redemption, and deliverance from not only peril—but that He is the only steadfast One in whom people can trust and rely. God was the salvation for the Ancient Israelites, as the Supreme One removed them from their slavery in Egypt, being their salvation or *yeshuah*. If we are born again Believers, God has had to surely be *yeshuah* or salvation for us, leading us on an exodus out of the bondage we once had to sin and the forces of darkness, and into new life and restored communion with Him.

**Is God our Savior?** The conviction that Yeshua the Messiah must be Divine, God in the flesh, is deeply rooted in where the Source of one's salvation is found. The Source of our salvation is God Himself. God Himself is the only One who can save and redeem human beings from sin and the realm of death. The Psalmist expressed how, "No man can by any means redeem *his* brother or give to God a ransom for him—but God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for He will receive me. Selah" (Psalm 49:7, 15). If Yeshua were only a human man or mortal, or even a created supernatural being, then could He legitimately have the power to deliver people from the clutches of death and eternal punishment (cf. Revelation 1:18)?

It is entirely appropriate for one to conclude that there is *no possible way* for Yeshua to be the Savior, providing eternal redemption for those who look to Him, unless He is truly God. Only if Yeshua is Divine, can He then be our Savior. The Hebrew Tanach is adamant about the LORD God being the only Savior, and if Yeshua is not the LORD God—a part of the Divine Identity—then who or what is He? How can Yeshua genuinely be the Source of eternal salvation if He is not God? Some have said that Yeshua only acts as "the Savior," meaning that He is God's agent in the world, but that He is ultimately not God. Yet, when we look at something as important as the

## Answering the “Frequently Avoided Questions” About the Divinity of Yeshua

intertextual quote of Isaiah 45:23 in Philippians 2:10,<sup>3</sup> it definitely forces us to acknowledge that Yeshua the Son is indeed the LORD (YHWH):

“Declare and set forth *your case*; indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, the LORD? And there is no other God besides 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*” (Isaiah 45:21-23).

“God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Yeshua EVERY KNEE WILL BOW [Isaiah 45:23], of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11).

The implications, of Isaiah 45:21-23 and Philippians 2:9-11 viewed together, are completely unavoidable. The One God of Israel, who has directly insisted that He is the only Savior to which all must turn for deliverance—who specifically says “there is no other<sup>4</sup>” (Isaiah 45:22)—has actually *shared* this status with Yeshua. This should not be surprising, as Yeshua is stated to be One “existing in the form of God” (Philippians 2:6, ASV). Not only is Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ) the One to whom all of Creation and all created beings (human *and* supernatural) must give an account, confessing His supremacy and worshipping Him—but the Father and Son definitely co-exist as a part of a plural Godhead, with the Son having the same Divine Identity as His Father.

The statement of Isaiah 45:21-23 about God being the exclusive Savior to whom the whole Earth must turn and swear allegiance, and Yeshua being the One to whom every knee will likewise bow and every tongue confess—makes it definite “that Yeshua the Messiah is *ADONAI*” (CJB), and not a mere human master. A word like Isaiah 45:21-23 applied to any mere human agent empowered by God, or some supernatural yet created agent, would immediately invoke an accusation of blasphemy, yet the *Carmen Christi* hymn of Philippians

---

<sup>3</sup> Erwin Nestle and Kurt Aland, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland 27th Edition* (New York: American Bible Society, 1993), 518; Kurt Aland, et. al., *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/United Bible Societies, 1998), 675.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. *v'ein od* (וְאֵין עוֹד).

2:5-11 is widely believed by conservative expositors to be a very early form of liturgy used by the Body of Messiah, representing a high Christology of Yeshua being Divine, which the Apostle Paul incorporated into his letter.<sup>5</sup>

Whether or not Yeshua the Messiah is God, **is indeed a salvation issue**. None of us as limited human beings may fully understand all of the complexities of Yeshua's Divinity, His pre-existence of Creation, and His co-existence with the Father—but we *must acknowledge* a Divine Redeemer in order to be forgiven of our sins and be saved from eternal punishment. We need to make sure that if we indeed must profess that Yeshua is Lord, it is those who have received the eternal redemption He offers—and not the condemned who will have to acknowledge Him at the Great White Throne judgment, before their final sentencing.

### Answering these “Frequently Avoided Questions”

There are many claims that those who deny the Divinity of Yeshua, and thus deny the Biblical reality that we must have a Divine Savior, make, in saying that Yeshua is not God. Many of the arguments that anti-Divinity proponents make tend to be sensationalistic, and they can definitely prey on various individuals' unfamiliarity and/or ignorance of the Bible. Those who are undiscerning, and especially those who have perhaps not had the spiritual encounter with the Creator through the Divine Messiah that they think they have had, are quite susceptible to these arguments.

It has become commonplace, when trying to challenge Yeshua as the Divine Messiah, to see various lists and compilations floating around, called something like the “Frequently Avoided Questions.” Perhaps it is because these questions are so easily answered, that various Messianic Bible teachers who fully affirm Yeshua's Divinity, have not really taken the time to answer them. This analysis that I have provided you is intended to address ten of these specific so-called “Frequently Avoided Questions,” which are often used to claim that the Messiah is not Divine. You will find that these questions can be answered, that they are usually based on a selective reading of Scripture passages only at the surface level, and that when deeper readings of the text are conducted they fully affirm Yeshua's Divinity. Yet, it is these questions that can get even relatively mature and Biblically-rooted Believers, caught totally off guard.

---

<sup>5</sup> For a further examination, consult the author's commentary *Philippians for the Practical Messianic*.