

the Divine Identity of a plural *Elohim* Godhead. Those who hold to a high Christology properly direct how ascribing the glory that is due of the One God of Israel, also given to Yeshua the Messiah, is acceptable only if Yeshua is God.

It is worthwhile to catalogue the thoughts of a number of commentators on 2 Peter 3:18, who likewise recognize the presence of a high Christology in the doxology offered:

- Michael Green: “In this incidental phrase we have the highest possible Christology. For glory belongs to God (Rom. 11:36; Jude 25). But Peter had learnt that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father (see Jn. 5:23).”⁴⁹
- Richard J. Bauckham: “The concluding doxology addressed to Christ corresponds to the high Christology of 1:1 (‘our God and Savior Jesus Christ’), and shows the importance which the Christian attitude of praise and worship toward Christ had for the recognition of his divine status.”⁵⁰
- Douglas J. Moo: “Normally glory is ascribed to God; only here, in 2 Timothy 4:18, and in Revelation 1:5-6 do we find doxologies directed to Christ—although we do find a ‘blessing’ of Christ, as God, in Romans 9:5. But this certainly fits the high view of Jesus Christ that Peter presents from the very beginning of his letter (see esp. 1:1).”⁵¹
- Ben Witherington III: “This doxology, unlike many in the New Testament (see only 2 Tim 4:18; cf. Rev 1:5-6), is to Christ, which confirms what we have already seen from 1 Peter 1: our author believes that Christ is divine or part of the Godhead and thus worthy of worship and praise, since only God should be praised in this way. Indeed he is the Lord and Savior of all humankind.”⁵²

Jude 24-25

“To the only God our Savior, through Yeshua the Messiah our Lord”

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Yeshua the Messiah our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.”

In the closing salutation of the Epistle of Jude, glory is issued *monō Theō sōtēri hēmōn dia Iēsou Christou tou Kuriou hēmōn* (μόνω θεῷ σωτήρι ἡμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν), “to [the] only God [the] Savior of us through Jesus Christ the Lord of us” (Jude 25, Brown and Comfort).⁵³ As is seen throughout Jude, Yeshua the Messiah is not an independent entity, who performs actions in disassociation from the Father:

“Jude, a bond-servant of Yeshua the Messiah, and brother of James, to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Yeshua the Messiah: May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you” (Jude 1-2)

“For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Yeshua the Messiah” (Jude 4).

⁴⁹ Green, *2 Peter*, 164.

⁵⁰ Bauckham, *2 Peter*, 338.

⁵¹ Moo, *2 Peter*, pp 214-215.

⁵² Witherington, *1&2 Peter*, 390.

⁵³ Brown and Comfort, 850.

The Nature of Yeshua in the General Epistles

“These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah to eternal life” (Jude 1:19).

A survey of each of these three passages shows how interconnected the activity of God the Father and Yeshua the Son is: “loved by God the Father and kept for Yeshua the Messiah” (Jude 1, CJB/CJSB), “who pervert God’s grace into a license for debauchery and disown our only Master and Lord, Yeshua the Messiah” (Jude 4, CJB/CJSB), “keep yourselves in God’s love, as you wait for our Lord Yeshua the Messiah to give you the mercy” (Jude 1, CJB/CJSB). Jude 25 concludes the letter, extolling “God alone, our Deliverer, through Yeshua the Messiah, our Lord” (CJB/CJSB). The Epistle of Jude, at twenty-five verses, was mainly composed to address a false teaching promoting licentiousness, but even within such a short letter, readers do see that Yeshua the Son is the agent by which “God our Savior” (*Theō sōtēri hēmōn*) can be experienced. Those who hold to a high Christology of Yeshua being integrated into the Divine Identity, hardly consider Yeshua being God as something to the dismissal of the Heavenly Father.

Not to be overlooked, though, is how Jude 20-21 makes light of “praying in the *Ruach ha-Kodesh*. Keep yourselves in the love of God, eagerly waiting for the mercy of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah that leads to eternal life” (TLV). Here a revealed tri-unity of the Godhead can be detected with the Spirit, God the Father, and the Lord Yeshua being referred to. While the traditional Christian doctrine of the Trinity may be recognized as being incomplete at times, it is hardly non-Biblical or even pagan, as it is derived from passages such as Jude 20-21.

1 John 1:1-4

“Yeshua the Word of Life”

“What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life—and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Yeshua the Messiah. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.”

Various approaches are witnessed in contemporary scholarship, to the content of the Epistle of 1 John, mainly given the presence of late First Century false teachings and heresies. Some of these errors are thought to be associated with the full rise of Gnosticism by the Second Century, whereas these errors might just as well be incoherent ideas and concepts capable of doing nothing more than hurting the Body of Messiah. In view of the content of 1 John, it is easily deduced that the false teaching(s) addressed, promoted lawlessness and licentiousness. The false teaching(s) also detracted from a secure identification of Yeshua the Messiah as one sacrificed for the sins of human beings, and the proper lifestyle incumbent of those who have placed their trust in Him. When one surveys the Epistle of 1 John, warnings against sin are affluent, and statements about the nature of Yeshua are presented—not only to combat whatever amalgamation of errors the audience had encountered—but to most especially encourage the audience to live in accordance with the salvation they have been provided.

The author of 1 John attests to being a first hand witness of Yeshua the Messiah, having not only seen Him in person, but also having touched Him: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our