

Who — What — was Jesus before His Human Birth?

This question has puzzled theologians for centuries: Was He God — was He angel — was He spiritual essence — did He exist only in the Plan, thought, and Purpose of God?

by Garner Ted Armstrong

WHY SHOULD there be such confusion concerning the existence of Jesus Christ? In our Western world of professing Christianity, we see nothing but religious confusion — *differences and debates* — over the one great focal point of all Christianity — Christ Himself!

Even learned theologians, it seems, cannot agree on *who*, or *what* was Christ before His birth! *Yet your own Bible is very plain on this subject!*

Are YOU one who is willing to ask God, and not men, for the truth?

Jesus Had a Father

During His earthly ministry, Jesus Christ revealed a Father-Son relationship existing between Him and His heavenly Father. Throughout the Bible, God stresses the *family* relationship — first, between God the Father and the Son, and then between each begotten Christian and the Father. The Church is revealed as the *mother* of us all (Gal. 4:26). Individuals within the Church refer to each other as “brothers” and “sisters.” Throughout God’s revelation, He shows us that there is a *FAMILY* known as God!

Let’s understand it!

The logical place to begin is in the *very beginning*, so get your Bible and turn to Genesis, the first chapter. “In the beginning, *GOD* . . .” These are the very *FIRST* words that meet our eyes when we begin to find out *WHO*, or *WHAT* God *is*! In studying through the inspired account of the creation of all things, it becomes clear the creation was accomplished *not* by just *one* person but by *MORE* than one! “And God said, Let *us* make man in *OUR* image, after

OUR likeness . . .” (Gen. 1:26). God was not like the absent-minded professor, who was speaking to Himself — but was revealing a *PLURALITY* of persons, *MORE* than one, in the word appearing in your Bible as “God.”

The Hebrew Proves It

The Hebrew word used for “God” in Gen. 1:1 and throughout the account of the creation is *Elohim*, which actually means *more than one*! It is the plural form of the Hebrew word *El* or *Eloah* which can be correctly translated as “Mighty One.” The *PLURAL* form, as used in your Bible, means “The Mighty *ONES*” or *MORE* than just one person.

Elohim is a *uniplural* word, showing more than one person — just as the words “group,” or “church,” or “family” are single words, which mean *more than one person*!

What’s more — all other scriptures uphold and support this vital truth! Listen to the words of the inspired Apostle Paul, who said, “For by Him [Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: *ALL THINGS WERE CREATED BY HIM*, and for Him.” Paul went on to say, “And He is *BEFORE* all things, and *BY HIM* *all things consist*!” (Col. 1:16, 17.) Was Paul just flattering Christ — was he, simply adding spiritual-sounding phrases to make Christ seem more *magnified* to the Christians in his care? Certainly not! For “*ALL SCRIPTURE* is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Tim. 3:16).

If *all things* were *CREATED* by Christ, then He must have been *ONE* of the persons included in the Hebrew word *Elohim* we read in Genesis 1:1.

Christ Before Adam

Strange though it may seem, there are *TWO* accounts of the “beginning” of all things given in your Bible! In the Gospel of John, chapter 1, a most vital passage gives us the clear, simple *TRUTH* of Christ’s office *prior* to His human birth. “In the beginning was the Word” (John 1:1). Notice, “*In the beginning . . .*” There cannot be *TWO* beginnings — only *one*; so it is speaking of exactly the *same time* as Genesis 1:1. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was *with* God, and the Word *WAS* GOD!”

There is the vital truth still unseen by so many — and yet so *PLAINLY* revealed in your Bible!

The Greek word which is translated into the English as “Word” in John 1:1 is *Logos* which means, more literally, *spokesman*, or one who *speaks*. To continue: “The same was in the beginning *with* God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:2, 3). Yes, *EVERYTHING WAS MADE BY HIM*, by the *spokesman*, or the *Logos*, who became *CHRIST*, as we read in Colossians 1:16, 17!

The Person in the God Family who later *became* Jesus Christ was the One who *SAID* (spoke), “Let us make man in *OUR* image,” thus executing His awesome office as the very *EXECUTIVE* of the God *FAMILY*!

Notice how clearly John’s Gospel states this truth: “And the Word

[Logos] was MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). WHO was full of grace and truth? "...grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"! (Verse 17.)

Jesus Is Also God

Remember, the Bible *does not say* there is only ONE member in the God Family, but expresses a PLURALITY of persons — more than one! Otherwise Jesus would be a liar, for He prayed constantly to His Father who was in heaven!

Further light is shed on this commonly misunderstood subject in the wonderful book of Hebrews. Paul tells us, "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 a Son*" [Ivan Panin New Testament] whom He hath appointed HEIR of all things, *by whom also He made the worlds*"! (Heb. 1:1, 2.) It becomes self-evident, then, that Jesus Christ is the very CREATOR! And yet millions do not know, nor even faintly comprehend this amazing truth! Paul called Him "God our Saviour" (Titus 1:3). And so — in the person of Jesus Christ, our very CREATOR became our Saviour! Christ is at once our Maker, and a member of the Godhead. Therefore, His life which He gave for us is of far greater value than the sum total of every living, breathing human being!

In order to pay the PENALTY for your sins and mine, which penalty is death — death for all eternity unless they are pardoned and washed away (Rom. 6:23) — it was necessary that Christ be divine, that His life be worth more than all our human lives put together! When Christ took our sins He paid the penalty we have incurred — not eternal life in hellfire, but the cessation of life — DEATH! "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3). Jesus was MADE FLESH (John 1:14) and became a human being for this very purpose, that He might DIE on the cross for all mankind! And yet, if Christ were ONLY human, His life would have paid only the death penalty incurred by one other human. The pen-

alty for every individual's sin had to be paid!

But remember, the penalty for sin is DEATH, and God cannot die! Therefore, the penalty is HUMAN life — and God of Himself could not have paid such a penalty. It was absolutely necessary, then, that Christ be BOTH human and divine!

The awe-inspiring mystery of God is not grasped in its overwhelming significance except by those who will hunger and thirst for God's truth! (Matt. 5:6). The Logos, the One who spoke, and CREATED by His very WORD, "emptied Himself [margin] and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7, 8).

The Divine Being who was instrumental in CREATING all things was changed into human flesh! Was Jesus human? YES, He was! Your very salvation depends on it!

Jesus Had HUMAN Nature

God came in the flesh as Jesus Christ, lived a perfect life, totally without sin, and thus was able to die and pay the full penalty of sin in our place! Jesus was God made into mortal flesh "for the suffering of death" (Heb. 2:9).

Past articles in *The PLAIN TRUTH* magazine have proved conclusively that Jesus Christ was HUMAN, that He DIED and was absolutely DEAD during the three days and three nights He was in the grave. "...as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same" — took on HUMAN NATURE, became flesh and blood — "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14).

Jesus constantly had to CRY OUT to God day and night to keep Himself from falling! MILLIONS of people, not understanding the tremendous battle, the lifelong struggle Christ had with Himself, in overcoming His own human nature — the natural pulls of the flesh — do not fully realize the extent of the sacrifice their Saviour made,

and in many cases are trusting in a FALSE SAVIOUR!

"For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in ALL POINTS tempted like as we are, yet without sin"! (Heb. 4:15.) "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared"! (Heb. 5:7.) Your very Saviour had to CRY ALOUD TO GOD, in strong crying and TEARS, to overcome Himself, to withstand the temptations of SIN, to finally die on the cross with the record of a PERFECT life! Are you WORTHY of this tremendous sacrifice?

Who Was the LORD of the Old Testament?

In the King James authorized version of the Bible, the word "LORD" is frequently used, and usually always in small capital letters. Wherever this word appears in the capital letters, it is translated from the Hebrew word "Yhvh" commonly pronounced today as "Yahveh." The Yhvh, when more correctly translated, implies "The ETERNAL" or "The EVER-LIVING ONE," rather than "Lord."

Throughout the books of the Old Testament, the Eternal appeared to various individuals, dealt particularly and personally with the ancient Israelites, and talked directly (though from the darkness of a cloud or the brightness of a fire) to Moses. This Person who spoke to Adam, to Enoch, and to Moses was the One who later became Jesus Christ!

Christ Himself said so!

"And the Father Himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape"! (John 5:37.) This almost universally misunderstood truth has led many people to repudiate the Old Testament, to cast aside the Laws of God as having no binding force on them today.

"But what of the transfiguration?" Yes, what of the transfiguration? The disciples, Peter, James and John, were with Jesus on a mountain, apart from the others, when a marvelous vision ap-

peared — an actual *foretaste*, a view ahead into the soon-coming Kingdom of God! As the disciples stood, gazing with awe and wonder at the brilliance of the vision, there came a "... voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Matt. 17:5). But notice, did the scripture say it was God the Father who spoke? No! *Read it in your own Bible!*

Many have carelessly assumed the Bible says what it does not say! Notice this particular case, where a *voice* is heard speaking, and yet Christ Himself tells us it COULD NOT HAVE BEEN THE VOICE OF GOD! (John 5:37.) The only logical conclusion in the light of all Scripture is that an angel (messenger) spoke, as one bearing this message from the Father in heaven!

Since it was *not* God the Father who spoke to Moses, and who even allowed Moses to see His hind parts (Ex. 33:23), then it had to be the Eternal Being who was instrumental in executing God's Word! That was Christ's prior OFFICE, that was His all-important job! Who was the One who SPOKE to Moses? Why the *Spokesman*, the *Logos*, of course!

Notice I Cor. 10:4, "... And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they [the ancient Israelites] drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, *and that Rock was Christ!*"

That certainly clinches it! The One who actually GAVE the laws to the children of Israel from Mount Sinai was the One who later became Jesus Christ! JESUS CHRIST WAS THE LORD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT — THE GOD WHO DEALT PERSONALLY WITH ISRAEL, WHO

INSPIRED THE PROPHETS, WHO REVEALED HIMSELF TO THE PHARAOH, TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR AND THE KINGS OF THE EARTH!

Most people have assumed the God of the Old Testament was the Father of Jesus Christ. This is proven by God's own inspired Word to be a great error. As we read in I Cor. 10:4, the "ROCK" of the Old Testament was Jesus Christ. Remember the word "LORD" is actually *Yhvh*, which means the Ever-Living One, or the Life Self-Existent One. Now see II Sam. 22:2-3 (Revised Standard Version): "He said, 'The LORD (*Yhvh* is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; thou savest me from violence.'"

In Psalm 18:1-2, *this same ROCK is Yahveh*. When Moses was talking to *Yahveh*, and asked Him His name (Ex. 3:4, 5, 13), He answered that His name was "I AM" (verses 6, 14) and "*Yahveh*" — the Eternal One (verse 15). See also Ex. 6:2, 3. In John 18:5-8, as soon as Christ made Himself known to the crowd led by Judas as "I AM" (the "he" in italics is added without inspiration, and was not in the original), they went backward and fell to the ground. Again in John 8:56-58, Jesus called Himself: "I AM."

The person of the Godhead who is our REDEEMER is Jesus Christ. John 4:42 (RSV) contains this: "They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that *this is indeed the SAVIOR of the world.*'" See Isaiah 60:16, where *Yahveh* is called the *Redeemer*, which is

the SAVIOUR, or the Holy One of Israel!

Jesus, the Saviour, was the Holy One born of Israel (Jacob). Jesus is the LORD of the Old Testament.

What to DO About It

What an overwhelming truth it is, to realize the glorious, the awe-inspiring magnitude of Jesus' pre-human existence! It should make you realize more fully the tremendous PRICE that was paid that YOU might have your guilty past blotted out, and the slate wiped clean! GOD HIMSELF, in the person of Jesus Christ, paid that penalty!

Think of it!

God the Father sent His own Son down to this mundane sphere of sin and fleshly emotions to suffer for humanity, and thereby provide a way of salvation, a way to enter into life eternal! The Life that was poured out on the cross was a human life — but it was much more than that — it was also very GOD-LIFE! Jesus was human, but He was also divine! Day and night, while on this earth, Christ must have remembered the tremendous power and glory *from all eternity* He had enjoyed with the Father — and realized it would have been possible to *sin*, to *relent* in His battle against human nature, and *become eternally lost!* The very willpower, the determination and perseverance of Jesus Christ, together with the Divine presence of the Holy Spirit of God, kept Him from falling, that He could become the Saviour of the world!

Can you grasp it? Can you comprehend? Your very Creator — the One who gives you every breath of air you breathe, DIED FOR YOU! What are *you* going to do about it?

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Is Jesus God?

by Herbert W. Armstrong

STARTLING as it may seem, there is great *confusion* today among religious leaders concerning the true nature and office of Jesus Christ — the Saviour of the world. *You* need not be in doubt! The Bible was divinely inspired to impart TRUTH to those who seek it with *honest* hearts and minds. But even this all-important subject has become jumbled in today's troubled and chaotic world.

What is the *real answer*? Is Jesus God? Is He the same as Jehovah? Is there more than one God? Here you will find *God's* answer — from His own Word — as revealed in *your Bible*.

Is Jesus God?

Jesus Christ came to pay the penalty for sin in our stead. He gave of *Himself*, that we might be reconciled to God. *How was this made possible?*

First, if Jesus had been *only* human, His death could have paid the penalty for but *one* other human who had incurred that penalty by transgression of God's spiritual Law (Romans 6:23). Since God the Father created all things *by* Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9), and since *all* things, including man, were made *by* Jesus Christ, He is our Maker and therefore God, and His life which He gave was of *greater value* than the sum total of all human beings. For we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the *Word was God*. The same was in the beginning with God; *all things were made by him*, and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:1-3). "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (verse 14 — RSV). Also, "He was in the world, and the world *was made through him*, yet the world knew him not" (verse 10 — RSV). Compare these scriptures with I Cor. 8:6 and Col. 1:12-19.

Life alone can *beget* life. This is the

absolute law of biogenesis. Since Eternal life is the GIFT of God (John 3:16), only a GOD *possessing* immortality could give it. If Jesus were only human, *we could not receive eternal life through Him* and He could not be our Saviour. Man *does not* have eternal life inherent in himself. But, as God "the Father hath life in himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." And, "God *hath given* to us eternal life, and this life is *in His Son*. He that hath the Son hath life; and *he that hath not the Son hath not life*" (John 5:26 and I John 5:11-12).

He Was Also Human

On the other hand, Jesus was also human. Since it is *human* life which has transgressed God's Law, the Law claims *human* life as its penalty. Contrary to popular present-day teaching, the Word of God states that the wages — the penalty — of sin, is DEATH — not eternal life in a so-called "hell fire" (Romans 6:23). When we sin, we break God's perfect spiritual law, "for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). The penalty for this sin is *death*. The penalty *must be paid*. God the Father will not compromise. It must be paid *by man*. Therefore, Jesus, who is and was God, who has always existed (John 1:1, 2), was actually *made flesh* (verse 14). He, who was God, actually *became* human flesh because I John 4:2, 3 — RSV — states, "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ *has come in the flesh* is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God." He was conceived in and born of the human virgin, Mary. "Now, the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother, Mary, had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 1:18). He was made not only flesh, but *human* flesh and blood. Notice Heb. 2:14: "Since then the children are sharers in

blood and flesh, himself also in like manner partook of the same" (Ivan Panin translation).

Jesus called Himself the Son of MAN repeatedly, and also the Son of God. Matthew wrote, "Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do men say that the Son of man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven'" (Matt. 16:13-17).

Jesus, in nature, is equal with God — "Jesus Christ: who, existing in God's form, counted not the *being on an equality with God* ought to be grasped at, but emptied himself... being made in likeness of men" (Phil. 2:6 Panin translation).

He is *called* God in Titus 2:10, 13. Therefore He *is* God. The Bible contains so much on these points that the above is a mere fragment of the evidence.

Yes, Jesus is also "Jehovah," although this word is a *mistranslation* used in the American Standard Version. The original name, in the Hebrew, contained the consonants "YHVH." In writing in Hebrew, vowels were omitted, supplied only in speaking. Thus the precise pronunciation of the name is not definitely known, but today it is commonly assumed to be *Yahveh*, or *Yahweh*. The *meaning*, in English, is "THE ETERNAL," or "THE EVERLIVING," or the "SELF-EXISTENT." It is commonly supposed that *Yahveh*, or, as commonly called, "Jehovah", or, as in the Authorized Version, "The LORD," of the Old Testament was God the FATHER of Jesus Christ. *This is a flagrant error!*

Yahveh was the God of Israel, the

only One of the Godhead known to Israel. When He came in human flesh they did not recognize Him. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him and the world knew Him not" (John 1:10-11 Authorized Version). Neither did they know God the Father (Matt. 11:27 and Luke 10:22, Panin). "No one knoweth . . . who the Father is, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to REVEAL him."

In Genesis 1, the Hebrew name translated "God" is *Elohim*. This is a uniplural name, such as "church," or "family." A church or a family consists of more than one person, yet is *one* church, or *one* family. In this same sense *Elohim* — the God kingdom — includes both God the Father and *Yahveh*, who was the *Logos* or the WORD of God, and also their Spirit emanating from them, the Holy Spirit, the LIFE, CHARACTER, and POWER of God. Jesus, in praying for the welfare of the Church, prayed that its many members might "be ONE, as we are One" (John 17:11, 21). The Church is ONE body, yet composed of many members (I Cor. 12:12). A husband and wife are ONE FLESH, yet two persons.

The word "God" has two meanings — the God kingdom or the family of God, AND the persons composing that kingdom or family. Christ and the Father are ONE God, not two Gods — one *Elohim*. That is why *Elohim* said, "Let us make man in OUR image" (Gen. 1:26).

Yahveh was the "WORD" or Spokesman of the Godhead — its second member. As soon as God began to SPEAK to man, it was always *Yahveh* who spoke (translated "LORD" in the Authorized, and "Jehovah" in the Revised version. See Gen. 2:16, 18 and Exodus 20:2). Always it is *Yahveh* in the original Hebrew — the "WORD" who was made flesh. The proof of this is a long study involving hundreds of passages.

As a fragment of the evidence, compare Isaiah 8:13-14 with I Peter 2:7-8. Isaiah said, "The LORD of hosts" — YHVH shall be "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence." Peter said, in quoting this text in reference to Christ, He is "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence." Jesus is the LORD — the Eternal of the Old Testament.

Now compare Isaiah 40:3 with Matt. 3:3 and Mark 1:3. John prepared the way before *Yahveh* (Isaiah 40:3) who was CHRIST (Mark 1:14-15).

In Rev. 1:17 we read, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand upon me, saying, 'Fear not, I am the first and the last.'" And in verse 8, "'I am the Alpha and the Omega,'" says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Again Rev. 22:13, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." Study also Rev. 22:16 for proof it was *Jesus* speaking. Jesus Christ calls Himself the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last. Now compare these texts with Isaiah 44:6: "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last; besides Me there is no God.'"

Now turn to Isaiah 48:11-12. "For my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another. 'Hearken to me O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am He, I am the first, and I am the last'" (Isaiah 48:11-12). Verses 17-18 show it was *Yahveh* speaking. And also in Isaiah 41:4, "Who has performed and done this, calling the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, the first, and with the last; I am He." All of these scriptures show the *Yahveh* is the First and Last. Christ is the *Yahveh* of the Old Testament.

Christ Is the ROCK — the God of the Old Testament

In I Cor. 10:4, the "Rock" of the Old Testament is called Christ. "For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ" (verse 4). II Sam. 22:2-3: "He said, 'The LORD — *Yahveh* — is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence.'" See also verse 32.

In Psalm 18:1-2, *this* same "ROCK" is *Yahveh*. When Moses was talking to *Yahveh*, and asked Him His name (Ex. 3:4-5, 13), He answered that His name

was "I AM" (verses 6, 14) and *Yahveh* — the Eternal One (verse 15). See also Ex. 6:2-3. In John 18:5-8, as soon as Jesus identified Himself to the mob led by Judas as "I AM" (the "he" in italics is added without inspiration, and was not in the original), they went backward and fell to the ground. Again in John 8:56-58, Jesus called Himself: "I AM." For we read, "Jesus said to them 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, *I am*'" (verse 58).

The person of the Godhead who is our REDEEMER is Jesus Christ. John 4:42 contains this: "They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that *this is indeed the SAVIOUR* of the world.'" "But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a *Saviour*, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20). Read also Titus 2:10-14, Luke 1:68-69.

That Jesus, the Savior, is *Yahveh*, see Isaiah 49:7 and Isaiah 60:16, where He — *Yahveh* — is also "the mighty One of Jacob" — to be OF Jacob means a son, or descendant of Jacob — the Mighty One of all Jacob's children. Also in Isaiah 48:17, *Yahveh* is called the Redeemer, and the Holy One of Israel — the One of Israel who is Holy! The same is expressed in Isaiah 43:14, "Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel . . ." Also note the next verse (15), *Yahveh* is Israel's Holy One, Creator of Israel, Israel's King. Now notice in Acts 3:14-15 that the Christ the Jews denied was the same "HOLY ONE" — *Yahveh*! "But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One . . . the Prince of life." See also Acts 2:27 and Mark 1:24.

Christ Was David's SHEPHERD

Who was David's *shepherd*? (Psalm 23:1.)

In John 10:11, Jesus said *He* was the Shepherd. Open your Bibles also to Heb. 13:20: "Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great *Shepherd* of the sheep . . ." Compare this text with I Peter 2:24-25, which says, "For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the *Shepherd* and Guardian

of your souls." We also read, "Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock. And when the chief *Shepherd* is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory" (I Peter 5:2-4).

It is JESUS CHRIST who is coming again in person as KING of kings to rule, and to RESTORE. In Rev. 19:13 John writes, "He is clad in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God." "From his

mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty" (verse 15). And again in Rev. 17:14 John writes, "They will make war on the *Lamb*, and the *Lamb* — Christ — will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful." The Great Shepherd who is coming to RULE as King over all kings is *Yahveh*. "And ye My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Eter-

nal" — *Yahveh* or Christ! Read it for yourself in Ezek. 34:11, 30-31.

Now notice Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-4. "It shall come to pass that the mountain [Kingdom] of *Yahveh's* House shall be established in the top of the kingdoms" — ruling the world. "And He, *Yahveh* [Christ], shall judge among the nations, and rebuke strong nations," and then they shall have PEACE.

In almost every Old Testament passage, the LORD *Yahveh* — the Eternal — is Jesus Christ. He is the God of Israel.

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