

Everett C. DeVelde Jr.

The Covenant Name of God

A study of the holy name of God with particular interest in its application to his Messiah.

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About the Author

Now retired, Mr. DeVelde has been the Director of Administrative Computing at Grove City College, Grove City, Pennsylvania, where he also taught Biblical Hebrew. A minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Mr. DeVelde currently holds the office of Teacher in Nashua Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Pulaski Township, Pennsylvania.

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Although the name of the True and Living God, YAHWEH, appears 6828 times in the Old Testament it apparently is not well known among his people. This is observed in the fact that none of the translations of the Bible in modern times use God's covenant or memorial name, YAHWEH. Instead, the word LORD is used in its place and as we shall see God's covenant name does not mean Lord. Furthermore, the practice of substituting the word LORD for YAHWEH obscures the meaning of many texts and produces awkward readings in others. In addition, the Name given to the exalted Jesus Christ; the name which is above every name, YAHWEH, is not clearly seen. Apparently this is a problem to the church of Christ leading to careless worship practices and superficial relationships to the great King of glory.

In the office of a colleague hangs an eye catching poster with these words, "And you shall call his name Jesus, Prince of Peace, Mighty God, Wonderful Counselor, Holy One, Lamb of God, Prince of Life, Lord God Almighty, Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Root of David, Word of Life, Author and Finisher of Our Faith, Advocate, the Way, Dayspring, Lord of All, I Am, Son of God, Shepherd and Bishop of Our Souls, Messiah, the Truth, Savior, Chief Cornerstone, King of Kings, Righteous Judge, Light of the World, Head of the Church, Morning Star, Sun of Righteousness, Lord Jesus Christ, Chief Shepherd, Resurrection and Life, Horn of Salvation, Governor, the Alpha and Omega." Indeed, all of these are names given to Jesus but the Name which is above every name is missing.

The Editorial Board of the Lockman Foundation placed the following statement in the *Preface To The New American Standard Bible, A.D. 1963*. "It is known that for many years YHWH has been transliterated as YAHWEH. No complete certainty attaches to this pronunciation. However, it is felt by many who are in touch with the laity of our churches that this name conveys no religious or spiritual overtones. It is strange, uncommon, and without sufficient religious and devotional background. No amount of scholarly debate can overcome this deficiency. Hence it was decided to avoid the use of this name in the translation proper." This in spite of the fact that: "To professing Christians, whether of conservative or liberal persuasion, the name of God is most significant and understandable so." This statement was modified considerably in later revisions of the *New*

American Standard Bible yet the practice of substituting LORD for YAHWEH has continued. Indeed this principle of translation was also used in the *New International Version* and the *New King James Version*.

The *Revised Standard Version* goes even farther in its condemnation of the use of God's covenant name. "The use of any proper name for the one and only God, as though there were other gods from whom He had to be distinguished, was discontinued in Judaism before the Christian era and is entirely inappropriate for the universal faith of the Christian Church." It is my purpose to address this appalling ignorance of God's name and to deal with the obscuring of truth engendered by substituting LORD for YAHWEH in both the old and new testaments of the Bible. The Scripture citations that follow are taken from the *New King James Version* but I have removed the substitutions of LORD for God's covenant name.

(Exodus 6:2-3) 2 And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am YAHWEH. 3 "I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty (*El Shaddai*), but by My name YAHWEH I was not known to them.

We understand from this passage that God's name is YAHWEH. He revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as *El Shaddai* or God Almighty and to Moses he revealed himself by his covenant name YAHWEH. The name YAHWEH does not mean LORD. It is related to the Hebrew root *hayah* which means *he is*. Therefore, the name YAHWEH has the meaning of *the existing one* or as Francis Schaefer put it, "the God who is there." The patriarchs knew the power of God. This was the attribute of God that was paramount in their experience therefore they were intimate with or knew God as *El Shaddai*. They evidently knew of the name YAHWEH (Gen 2:4, 4:26, 9:26 etc.) but their experience with God did not focus on his reality or existence as it did latter on with Moses. To Moses God revealed his glory in his goodness, his name YAHWEH, and his sovereignty;

(Exodus 33:19-20) Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name YAHWEH before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." {20} But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."

By his name YAHWEH the true and living God revealed that he exists for the sovereign redemption of Israel and for his people throughout history. He revealed his redemptive purpose from the burning bush. Here is YAHWEH God who will save Israel from bondage in Egypt.

(Exodus 3:14) And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

The phrase “I AM” translates the Hebrew word *ehyeh* which is the first person singular form of the Hebrew verb *hayah* or *he is*. Thus does God reveal to Moses in this profound manner that he, as the self-existent One, will save Israel. His covenant name YAHWEH was not to be merely a form of address but a description of his attributes by which he would relate himself to Moses and to Israel and all the rest of his Church in all time.

Thus we see that the translation “but by my name LORD I was not known to them” (Exodus 6:3) is incorrect. It should read, “but by my name YAHWEH I was not known to them.” God’s covenant name is YAHWEH and not LORD. As we shall see there are many such passages in which God informs us that his name is YAHWEH.

Instead of substituting another word for YAHWEH or transliterating it, the French Bible, *La Bible* (Louis Segond), translates it as L’Eternel. For example, (Exodus 6:2-3) Dieu parla encore à Moïse, et lui dit: Je suis l’Eternel. 3 Je suis apparu à Abraham, à Isaac et à Jacob, comme le Dieu tout-puissant; mais je n’ai pas été connu d’eux sous mon nom, l’Eternel. Here God’s covenant name, YAHWEH, is translated into French as l’Eternel or *the eternal one*. So, “Je suis l’Eternel” means *I am the Eternal One* and “mon nom, l’Eternel” means *my name, the Eternal One*. This pattern is followed through all of the Old Testament. The word *Seigneur* is used to translate *kurios* or Lord, in the New Testament.

Historically the name YAHWEH was not pronounced by the Jews, believing that such a practice shows reverence to God. But one has to say something when the name YAHWEH is encountered so they substituted the word *Adonai*, or Lord, for it. Under the Hebrew letters of the word *Adonai* there are small vowel markings which the Jews transferred to the name YAHWEH making it YEHOWAH that in English becomes Jehovah. The covenant name, without the vowels belonging to *Adonai*, is pronounced YAHWEH.¹ It is true that this may not be the exact pronunciation of God’s covenant name but if not exactly correct it is very nearly so. We know this because there are many occurrences of the abbreviated form of the name YAHWEH, that is YAH, for which the Jews did preserve the pronunciation. Many of these are found in the Psalms as *Halelu YAH* or Let us praise YAHWEH.

Several other examples are as follows:

(Psalms 68:4) Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Extol Him who rides on the clouds, By His name YAH, And rejoice before Him.

¹ *Gesenius’ Hebrew Grammar*, Kautzsch and Cowley, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1966, pages 66 and 300.

(Isaiah 12:2) Behold, God *is* my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; 'For YAH, YAHWEH, *is* my strength and song; He also has become my salvation.'"

(Isaiah 26:4) Trust in YAHWEH forever, For in YAH, YAHWEH, *is* everlasting strength.

(Isaiah 38:11) I said, "I shall not see YAH, YAH in the land of the living; I shall observe man no more among the inhabitants of the world.

The *New King James Version* (NKJV) reads:

(Isaiah 38:11) I said, "I shall not see YAH, The LORD in the land of the living; I shall observe man no more among the inhabitants of the world.

As the covenant name of God is pronounced by people who are not Jewish there will be some accent given to it. This is certainly the case in English in which a J sound is substituted for the *yodh*, vocalized as Y in Hebrew. English speaking people for centuries have used Jehovah as the covenant name of God without believing that it was irreverent to do so. Irreverence is not the result of minor differences in pronouncing the covenant name of God but connecting God's name with falsehood or something that God is not.

Does then the practice of not pronouncing the name exhibit reverence for God? We must point out immediately that there is no command in the Bible to refrain from this. The third commandment deals with reverence for the name of God and it is this, "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain".² If we translate the verse without the *Adonai* substitution it reads, "You shall not take the name YAHWEH your God in vain, for YAHWEH will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain". As the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* states: "The third commandment requires the holy and **reverent use** of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, and works." If the practice of the Jews is correct then we should not pronounce any of names, titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, and works of God because they are all holy.

We are not to use the name YAHWEH in connection with anything vain such as false worship, incantations, divination, lying, blasphemy and such like. Pronouncing the name YAHWEH in a reverent and holy manner is certainly not forbidden here. Pronouncing the name YAHWEH as it is in Scripture is most assuredly a holy and reverent use of God's covenant name for the Bible comes to us from God, with 6828 explicit instances of the name YAHWEH. As we read the Hebrew Bible how can we avoid

² Exodus 20:7 NKJV and others.

thinking YAHWEH because that is really what is there before our eyes. Furthermore, why would thinking the name YAHWEH be any different from saying the name YAHWEH? All our thoughts, words and deeds must be holy so we must not take the name YAHWEH in vain even in our thoughts and concepts.

Furthermore, what of the hymns we sing that use the covenant name of God such as *Guide Me Oh Thou Great Jehovah* and *Jehovah's Perfect Law*? If it is proper to sing hymns that use God's covenant name why is it not proper to use God's covenant name as it is in the Bible?

2

The Covenant Name of God as it is used in the Old Testament

God's covenant name is used in several different ways in the Old Testament. It is used by itself, for example, and again I have removed the *Adonai* substitution to bring out the force and clarity of these texts.

(Nahum 1:7) YAHWEH *is* good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.

(Psalms 3:8) Salvation *belongs* to YAHWEH. Your blessing *is* upon Your people.

(Psalms 34:1-3) I will bless YAHWEH at all times; His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. {2} My soul shall make its boast in YAHWEH; The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad. {3} Oh, magnify YAHWEH with me, And let us exalt His name together.

In Psalm 110 God's covenant name is used in close connection with the word *Adonai* (Lord) where *Adonai* refers to the Messiah. To substitute *Adonai* for YAHWEH creates an awkward reading.

110:1 The LORD (YAHWEH) said to my Lord (Adonai), "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

2 The LORD (YAHWEH) shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

3 Your people *shall be* volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.

4 The LORD (YAHWEH) has sworn And will not relent, "You *are* a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

5 The Lord (Adonai) *is* at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath.

6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill *the places* with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

Now let us remove the substitution of *Adonai* for YAHWEH.

110:1 YAHWEH said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

2 YAHWEH shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!

3 Your people *shall be* volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.

4 YAHWEH has sworn And will not relent, "You *are* a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

5 The Lord *is* at Your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath.

6 He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill *the places* with dead bodies, He shall execute the heads of many countries.

7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.

In verses 1-4 The two persons of the Godhead are clearly seen when the text is translated literally, just as it is in Hebrew. YAHWEH is God the Father who seats *Adonai* (the Messiah) at his right hand in the position of power and authority. Jesus the Messiah is clearly the priest after the order of Melchizedek (King of Righteousness) and Melchishalom (King of Peace).³ Hebrews 7:17 quotes Psalm 110:4 affirming the identity of *Adonai* as Jesus the Messiah.

Verses 5-7 of the Psalm inform us that *Adonai* Jesus executes kings in the day of his wrath and judges among the nations, etc. How clear and forceful is this distinction between YAHWEH and *Adonai* yet *Adonai* Jesus is equal in power and glory to YAHWEH.

We move ahead to instances where YAHWEH defines his name that is to say, where he says "my name is YAHWEH."

(Hosea 12:5) That is, the LORD God of hosts. The LORD *is* His memorable name.

The literal reading is — That is, YAHWEH God of hosts, **YAHWEH is his memorable name**. Here it is stated specifically that God's name is YAHWEH. It is not *Adonai* or Lord that is the *zikro* of God (something by which one is remembered) but YAHWEH. To translate, "The LORD is His memorial name," is to say that the word LORD is the name of God and that is not true in this verse.

There are a number of references that fall into this category. In the following examples the NKJV phrase "the LORD" has been changed to YAHWEH as it is in the Hebrew text.

(Exodus 3:15) Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'YAHWEH God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.'

³ Hebrews 7:1-3

(Isaiah 42:8) I *am* YAHWEH, that *is* My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

(Jeremiah 16:21) "Therefore behold, I will this once cause them to know, I will cause them to know My hand and My might; And they shall know that My name *is* YAHWEH.

Now let us consider several instances of God's covenant name occurring immediately next to the noun *Adonai* for example "*Adonai* YAHWEH" which occurs several hundred times in the Hebrew Bible. Following the usual rabbinical substitution this becomes *Adonai Adonai* as we have already seen in Psalm 110.

The last clause of Isaiah 48:16 is literally translated — and now Lord YAHWEH has sent me, and his spirit. To avoid the awkwardness of "*Adonai Adonai*" the NKJV reads, "And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit Have sent Me". In this case God's covenant name YAHWEH is simply rendered as GOD.

The first clause of Isaiah 61:1 is translated — The Spirit of the Lord YAHWEH is upon me. Again the NKJV reads "The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me".

God's covenant name is also used in apposition with other nouns referring to God and it is used as a part of names, for example, the often used YAHWEH Tsabaoth, (YAHWEH of Hosts) or, YAHWEH Nisi, (YAHWEH is my banner Exodus 17:15).

But consider YAHWEH Tsidkenu (YAHWEH Our Righteousness) as it is in Jeremiah 33:14-17

14 'Behold, the days are coming,' says YAHWEH, 'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah:

15 'In those days and at that time
I will cause to grow up to David

A Branch of righteousness;

He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.

16 In those days Judah will be saved,

And Jerusalem will dwell safely.

And this is the name by which she will be called:

YAHWEH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS .'

17 “For thus says YAHWEH: ‘David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel.

This text informs us that Jerusalem (the Church) will be known by the name of the one who sits on the throne of the house of Israel (the Church) forever. This one is Jesus the Messiah whose name is YAHWEH TSIDKENU — YAHWEH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, as will be seen below.

(Hebrews 12:22-24) But you have come to **Mount Zion** and to the city of the living God, the heavenly **Jerusalem**, to an innumerable company of angels, {23} to the general assembly and **church** of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, {24} to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel.

Notice that the terms Mount Zion and Jerusalem both refer to the church. We need to see that these terms are used not only with reference to the temple in Jerusalem but particularly in Jeremiah to the church for whom Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant. In the following text the bride, the Lamb’s wife is the church but here is also Jerusalem.

(Revelation 21:9-11) Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you **the bride, the Lamb's wife.**" {10} And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy **Jerusalem**, descending out of heaven from God, {11} having the glory of God. Her light *was* like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

Jeremiah applies this name, YAHWEH TSIDKENU, directly to the Messiah (23:5-6):

5 “Behold, the days are coming,” says YAHWEH,
1 “That I will raise to David a **Branch of righteousness**;
A King shall reign and prosper,
And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.
6 In His days Judah will be saved,
And Israel will dwell safely;
Now this is His name by which **He will be called:**
YAHWEH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Clearly the Messiah is YAHWEH.

3

The Covenant Name of God as it is used in the New Testament

The New Testament was written in Greek nevertheless we find the Covenant Name of God expressed many times there and we shall consider some very interesting texts. The Greek New Testament often quotes the Old Testament . It sometimes quotes the Hebrew text, more often the Greek Septuagint which we will discuss later on, and sometimes the Old Testament passage in view is paraphrased or simply interpreted.

Consider these Old Testament texts from Isaiah.

(Isaiah 41:4) Who has performed and done *it*, Calling the generations from the beginning? 'I, YAHWEH, am the first; And with the last I *am* He."

(Isaiah 44:6) "Thus says YAHWEH, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, YAHWEH of hosts: 'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; Besides Me *there is* no God.

(Isaiah 48:12) "Listen to Me, O Jacob, And Israel, My called: I *am* He, I *am* the First, I *am* also the Last.

Thus YAHWEH informs us that he is the First and the Last. In the Greek language this is expressed as the Alpha and Omega. At the beginning of the Greek alphabet is the Alpha and at the end the Omega, thus they are the equivalent of the First and the Last. Now see how Jesus uses this concept.

(Revelation 1:10-18) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, {11} saying, "I am the **Alpha** and the **Omega**, the **First** and the **Last**," and, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." {12} Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, {13} and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the **Son of Man**, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. {14} His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; {15} His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; {16} He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength. {17} And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the **First** and the **Last**. {18} "I *am* He who

lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

What a sublime picture of YAHWEH, Jesus the Messiah!

(Revelation 2:8) "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the **First** and the **Last**, who was dead, and came to life:

(Revelation 22:12-13) "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work. {13} "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the **First** and the **Last**."

We can only conclude that Jesus is the Redeemer of Israel, YAHWEH Tsabaoth, YAHWEH of Hosts.

In Psalm 136 we read:

(Psalms 136:1-3) Oh, give thanks to **YAHWEH**, for *He is* good! For His mercy *endures* forever. {2} Oh, give thanks to the **God of gods!** For His mercy *endures* forever. {3} Oh, give thanks to the **Lord** (Adonai) **of lords** (Adonai)! For His mercy *endures* forever:

YAHWEH is the God of Gods and the Lord of Lords and this very language is applied to Jesus:

(Revelation 19:11-16) Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called **Faithful and True**, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. {12} His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. {13} He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called **The Word of God**. {14} And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. {15} Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And **He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron**. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. {16} And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**.

It follows, therefore, that Jesus, the Lord of lords, is YAHWEH, the Lord of lords. Here is he who rules the nations with a rod of iron, or as it is put in Psalm 2, he will break the nations with a rod of Iron and dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. Who but YAHWEH can do this.

(Psalms 2:7-9) "I will declare the decree: YAHWEH has said to Me, 'You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You. {8} Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* Your

possession. {9} **You shall break them with a rod of iron;** You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."

There are two persons in view in this Psalm, namely YAHWEH God the Father and the Son who is spoken of with the attributes of God. Only God himself has the nations for his inheritance and the ends of the earth for his possession. Regarding the Son, YAHWEH says:

(Psalms 2:6) "Yet I have set **My King** On My holy hill of Zion."

(Psalms 2:12) Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish *in* the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. **Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.**

The Son is said to be "My King" meaning that YAHWEH himself has uniquely appointed and installed the Son as the head of his church. Those who trust in the Son are blessed because the Son of God has all the power of the Godhead. We know that this psalm speaks of Jesus the Messiah because it is quoted as such in Hebrews chapter 1:

(Hebrews 1:1-5) God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, {2} has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; {3} who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, {4} having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance **obtained a more excellent name** than they. {5} For to which of the angels did He ever say: "**You are My Son, Today I have begotten You**"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?

The writer of Hebrews informs us that Jesus in these last days is the sole source of revelation from God, indeed that Jesus is the heir of creation and its Creator. As the exact image of YAHWEH, Jesus rules and governs all his creatures and all their actions; He has by himself purged our sins and occupies the position of highest authority in the Kingdom of God the Father. Only YAHWEH God has such awesome power and position. As if that were not enough the writer tells us that Jesus has inherited the Covenant Name of God which is YAHWEH.

That Jesus bears the name YAHWEH is stated directly in this same chapter:

(Hebrews 1:8-12) **But to the Son He says:** "Your throne, **O God**, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. {9} You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more

than Your companions." {10} And: "**You, YAHWEH**, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. {11} They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; {12} Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail."

Verses 10-12 quote Psalm 102:

(Psalms 102:20-27) To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To release those appointed to death, {21} To declare the name **YAHWEH** in Zion, And His praise in Jerusalem, {22} When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve **YAHWEH**. {23} He weakened my strength in the way; He shortened my days. {24} I said, "O my God, Do not take me away in the midst of my days; Your years *are* throughout all generations. **{25} Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens *are* the work of Your hands. {26} They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. {27} But You *are* the same, And Your years will have no end.**

We notice that this does not appear to be an exact quote. It is, in fact, not a quote of the Hebrew Old Testament but of a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament known as the Septuagint. The Septuagint is so called because 70 Jewish scholars contributed to the work over a period of time during the 2nd and 3rd century BC. As you see, Hebrews 1:10, with the Septuagint, uses the Covenant Name, "**You, YAHWEH**, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth," and as we have noted the antecedent of the pronoun "You" is Jesus "the Son". The Hebrew text, however, does not use God's Covenant Name. Psalm 102:25 reads "Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, " etc. But clearly the antecedent of the pronoun "You" in verse 25 is YAHWEH. Jesus is YAHWEH!

Another text denoting the Messiah as YAHWEH is Isaiah 40.

(Isaiah 40:1-5) "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. {2} "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord's hand Double for all her sins." **{3} The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the YAHWEH; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. {4} Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; {5} The glory of YAHWEH shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see *it* together; For the mouth of YAHWEH has spoken."**

That this text speaks of the Messiah is clearly demonstrated by the several quotes of it in the New Testament.

(Matthew 3:1-3) In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, {2} and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" {3} For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "**The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of YAHWEH; Make His paths straight.'**"

(Mark 1:1-3) The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. {2} As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You." {3} "**The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of YAHWEH; Make His paths straight.'**"

(Luke 3:1-6) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, {2} while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. {3} And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, {4} as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, saying: "**The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of YAHWEH; Make His paths straight. {5} Every valley shall be filled And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough ways smooth; {6} And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'**"

(John 1:19-23) Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" {20} He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." {21} And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." {22} Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" {23} He said: "**I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way of YAHWEH,' ' as the prophet Isaiah said.'**"

All of the New Testament Evangelists quote Isaiah 40:3 but Luke as you see also quotes verse 4 and the middle clause of the Septuagint verse 5, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." The Hebrew text of Isaiah 40:3 is identical to the Septuagint text except for God's name. The Hebrew text uses YAHWEH and the Greek Septuagint uses *kurios* or Lord. Since the evangelists also use Lord in place of YAHWEH we conclude that they follow the Septuagint reading. It should be clear, however, that the one John the

Baptist refers to is Jesus. John is the one who makes straight the way of YAHWEH who in this context is Jesus the Messiah.

That Jesus is YAHWEH is stated more forcefully if that is possible in the next verses of Isaiah 40.

(Isaiah 40:9-11) O Zion, You who bring good tidings, Get up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, You who bring good tidings, Lift up your voice with strength, Lift *it* up, be not afraid; Say to the cities of Judah, "Behold your God!" {10} Behold, the **Lord (Adonai) YAHWEH** shall come with a strong *hand*, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward *is* with Him, And His work before Him. {11} He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry *them* in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

As the use of *Adonai* in Psalm 110:1 is Messianic⁴ so is it here in Isaiah 40:10. It is Jesus the Messiah who will come with a strong hand – who will feed his flock like a shepherd, etc. Here *Adonai* the Messiah bears the name YAHWEH.

Moses wanted to see the Glory of God.

(Exodus 33:18-23) And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." {19} Then He said, "**I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name YAHWEH before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.**" {20} But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." {21} And YAHWEH said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. {22} "So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. {23} "Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

(Exodus 34:1-8) And YAHWEH said to Moses, "Cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones*, and I will write on *these* tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke. {2} "So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself to Me there on the top of the mountain. {3} "And no man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain." {4} So he cut two tablets of stone like the first *ones*. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as YAHWEH had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. {5} **Now YAHWEH descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name YAHWEH. {6} And YAHWEH passed before him and proclaimed, "YAHWEH, YAHWEH God, merciful and**

⁴ YAHWEH said to my Lord (*Adonai*) sit at My right hand --

gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, {7} "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." {8} So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.

As we note from this passage man cannot see the glory of God and live so God revealed his glory to Moses, and to us, in three ways. He proclaims his goodness, his covenant name, YAHWEH, and his sovereignty. Inherent in the name YAHWEH is mercy, grace, patience, goodness and truth. What a sublime reason for knowing and loving God's covenant name! This is the name that is above all names. It is wonderful. It is beautiful. How can we ever understand its richness? But now see that Jesus the Messiah has this same glory seen in the goodness, the name YAHWEH, and the sovereignty of God.

(Hebrews 1:1-4) God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, {2} has in these last days spoken to us by **His Son**, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; {3} **who being the brightness of His glory** and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, {4} having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

(John 1:14) And the Word became 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.**

Thus we comprehend the glory of God the Son as we do God the Father in his goodness, his name YAHWEH, and his sovereignty.

Finally, let us consider Zechariah 12:10.

(Zechariah 12:6-10) "In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place; Jerusalem. {7} "YAHWEH will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. {8} "In that day YAHWEH will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of YAHWEH before them. {9} "It shall be in that day *that* I will seek to

destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. {10} "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on **Me** whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

In this text YAHWEH promises to deliver Judah from her captivity. It is YAHWEH who is speaking, therefore, the pronoun "Me" in verse 10 refers to Him. Verse 10 therefore means, "then they will look on YAHWEH whom they pierced." John quotes this statement from verse 10 with reference to Jesus.

(John 19:29-37) Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put *it* on hyssop, and put *it* to His mouth. {30} So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. {31} Therefore, because it was the Preparation *Day*, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. {32} Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. {33} But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. {34} But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. {35} And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. {36} For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not *one* of His bones shall be broken." {37} And again another Scripture says, "**They shall look on Him whom they pierced.**"

The difference between these texts is simply the viewpoint of the writer. Zechariah writes in the first person and John, the third. However, it is very clear that YAHWEH whom they pierced is Jesus the Messiah.

4

Conclusion

As I stated at the beginning of this treatise my burden is to address the perceived ignorance of God's Covenant Name in his church. This appalling state of affairs has been brought about by the refusal of modern Bible translators to transliterate the name YAHWEH as it appears throughout the Old Testament. Behind this refusal is the superstition of the Jewish scholars who gave us the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament which uses the word *kypios* (Lord) to represent God's covenant name. These Jewish scholars simply continued their previous practice with regard to the Hebrew Scriptures, substituting *Adonai* (Lord) for YAHWEH. The Jewish Rabbis have influenced nearly every subsequent translation of the Bible in that manner. While it is true that modern translators have used the words LORD and GOD in small capitals, to represent YAHWEH, we have seen that it results in awkward translations and lack of force and clarity.

In the later part of the 19th century British scholars determined to revise the Authorized Version (King James) of the Bible. American scholars joined this revision effort but differed significantly with their British counterparts in many details of the revision. The American preferences were relegated to an Appendix of the Revised Version published in 1885. As soon as the British Revision committees were disbanded the American Revisers set about the task of publishing the American Standard Version which incorporated all the American preferences in the Revised Version Appendix and much more. In the preface to the American Standard Version published in 1901 we read the following statement:

"The change first proposed in the Appendix – that which substitutes "Jehovah" for "LORD" and "GOD" (printed in small capitals) – is one which will be unwelcome to many, because of the frequency and familiarity of the terms replaced. But the American Revisers, after a careful consideration, were brought to the unanimous conviction that a Jewish superstition, which regarded the Divine Name as too sacred to be uttered, ought no longer to dominate in the English or any other version of the Old Testament, as it fortunately does not in the numerous versions made by modern missionaries. This Memorial Name, explained in Ex. iii. 14, 15, and emphasized as such over and over in the original text of the Old Testament, designates God as the personal God, as the covenant God, the God of revelation, the Deliverer, the Friend of his people; -- not merely the abstractly "Eternal One" of many French translations, but the ever

living Helper of those who are in trouble. This personal name, with its wealth of sacred associations, is now restored to the place in the sacred text to which it has an unquestionable claim.”

Today the principles set forth by the American Revision committee seem to have fallen by the wayside. The popular Bible versions of our day continue the Jewish Rabbinical practice and we must ask why so many translation committees, including the prestigious Authorized Version (King James), did so? Perhaps it may be argued that since the New Testament uses the word *Lord* to refer to God, particularly in many passages in which the Old Testament is quoted, that this validates the practice of substituting the word LORD for YAHWEH.

In answer to that let us remember that most of the New Testament quotes of the Old Testament are really quotes of the Greek Septuagint. The New Testament was written in Greek and the apostles quoted the Septuagint to provide language consistency. But the Septuagint is really just another translation of the Bible. The inspired Old Testament Scriptures were written in Hebrew with some small portion in Aramaic and it is to the Hebrew Bible that we must defer for the inspired text. According to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* statement in chapter I paragraph 8:

“The **Old Testament in Hebrew** (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the **New Testament in Greek** (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, **are therefore authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.** But, because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that, the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner; and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope”.

Accordingly we must always come to the Hebrew Old Testament in order to get the exact text for a New Testament Quote of an Old Testament Passage. Therefore the use of Septuagint quotes by the New Testament writers does not validate the Rabbinical practice of substituting LORD for YAHWEH. Perhaps the reason for continuing this practice in modern translations rests on the premise that transliterating the Covenant Name is unpopular. The American Standard Version committee termed it unwelcome and in fact the ASV publication was a failure. The prestigious Authorized Version (King James) had imbued into Christ’s Church a tradition that was too difficult to change.

I must say that I am not arguing for a move to republish or promote the ASV. Its language is no longer the common (vulgar) English in use today and it had not been compared with the Dead Sea Scrolls which were discovered nearly 50 years later. But I am arguing for a return to the translation principles of the ASV. It is important that the church of Christ knows and loves the Covenant Name of God. That is the Name used so often in the Bible and it is there by inspiration and it should not be suppressed by refusing to transliterate it or by substituting another word for it. If the church finds Gods Covenant Name to be strange and uncommon this must be laid at the door of pastors, teachers, translators and publishers who have suppressed it. Are you really willing to say to Him to whom you will give answer for the souls of those given to your charge, "I refused to say your name or write your name"?

Perhaps you think that the word "suppression" is too strong in view of the fact that LORD or GOD are used in place of YAHWEH. The use of small capitals (or large capitals NIV) informs the reader that God's Covenant Name is being replaced. Do you as a pastor or teacher make this clear to those who hear you? If so why is there such ignorance of God's Covenant Name? God's Memorial Name is YAHWEH.⁵ It is with this Covenant Name that we are to remember the True and Living God. How can this be done if we are ignorant of it?

(Philippians 2:5-11) Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, {6} who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, {7} but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. {8} And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross. {9} Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him **the name which is above every name**, {10} that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, {11} and *that* every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.

The name which is above every name is YAHWEH and is the name of Jesus before whom all will bow. The name Jesus was a common name and is so even in our own day. This name however is really the Hebrew name Yehoshua (Joshua) which means YAHWEH is salvation. It is interesting that before Yehoshua (Joshua) was sent into Canaan with eleven others to spy out the land, his name was Hoshea⁶ which means *salvation*. Yehoshua is the name Hoshea with the Hebrew letter *yodh* in front of it and the single letter *yodh* is used as an abbreviation for Yahweh, hence Joshua means YAHWEH is Salvation. Yehoshua, too, was a

⁵ Hosea 12:5

⁶ Numbers 13:16

common name but Jesus was so named to express the fact that he, YAHWEH, is the Savior of his people.

The name Christ, is the Greek way of saying the Hebrew word Mashiach (Messiah) which means anointed one. It is not really a name but a word that designates an office. The word Lord, however, (kurios in Greek) is the word used in the Septuagint to translate God's Covenant Name, YAHWEH. Jewish Rabbis used its Hebrew equivalent, *Adonai*. to substitute for YAHWEH. Therefore to say that "every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father," is to say that every tongue should confess that **Joshua the Messiah is YAHWEH**, to the glory of God the Father.

Similarly, the annunciation of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds was: (Luke 2:11) "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." That is to say, for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior (Joshua), who is YAHWEH the Messiah.

Likewise, (Acts 2:36) "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." That is to say, therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Joshua, whom you crucified, both YAHWEH and Messiah."

And again: (Romans 10:9) -- if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. That is to say, -- if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is YAHWEH and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

That Jesus is YAHWEH in no way detracts from the great power of the name Jesus. Rather the name Jesus is powerful and beautiful because this Jesus is YAHWEH. This Jesus, who emptied himself of his royal prerogatives to take upon himself human flesh even unto death on the cross, was exalted by God the Father with his own Covenant Name, YAHWEH. This Jesus is the, "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."⁷

We come to this great truth that we must use God's Covenant Name as it is required of us in Scripture. There is no prohibition from saying the blessed Name YAHWEH. To the contrary, we are required to use it. As Malachi puts it: (Malachi 2:2) If you will not hear, And if you will not take *it* to heart, To give **glory to My name**," Says YAHWEH of hosts, "I will send a curse upon you, And I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already, Because you do not take *it* to heart. How can we give glory to God's covenant Name if we will not speak the Name?

⁷ Isaiah 9:6

(Revelation 2:13) "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne *is*. And you **hold fast to My name**, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells." How is it possible to hold fast to the name YAHWEH if we are ignorant of it. It is never expressed in the Bible version we use and no pastor or teacher has instructed us in its use throughout the Bible so to us God's Covenant Name is uncommon and has little religious or devotional background.

Concerning the Third Commandment, "You shall not take the name YAHWEH, your God, in vain, for YAHWEH will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain," the *Westminster Larger Catechism* states:

Question 112: What is required in the third commandment?

Answer. The third commandment requires, That **the name of God**, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the Word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and: Whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, **be holily and reverently used** in thought, meditation, **word**, and **writing**; by an holy profession, and answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves, and others.

Question 113: What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?

Answer. The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, **the not using of God's name as is required**; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, **superstitious**, or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God's decrees and providences; misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the Word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or anywise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.

It is clear from the Catechism that we are to make reverent use of god's holy Name YAHWEH. The name of God as distinct from however else he makes himself known is to be used reverently and we see from the negative consideration that not using the name as required is sin. This

means that to glorify God's name it cannot be suppressed or held in silence or be replaced by another word. Paul tells us, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the **glory of God.**"⁸ Glorifying God requires action. We must worship him, love him, and do all that is required by his Law. Indeed we must proclaim the Covenant Name of God to the nations.

The Jews not only refuse to do this but they proclaim a false God. YAHWEH to them is not the Trinity. He is not the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit in whose name, YAHWEH, we are to baptize the nations. We read in Matthew 28 "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. {19} "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them **in the name** of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, {20} "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age."⁹ All three persons of the Godhead bear the same name which is God's Covenant Name, YAHWEH.

How does your view of Jesus and the God of the Bible compare to all of this? Indeed, how does your way of living reflect this view of Jesus? As we have already seen in Romans 10:9, we must confess that Jesus is YAHWEH in order to be saved. Accordingly this is an essential part of Christian doctrine. We may have freedom to hold one of several views concerning the second coming of Christ but not so with regard to the nature of the True and Living God. The Scriptures clearly teach that the three persons of the Godhead are "one God the same in substance and equal in power and glory."¹⁰ What can be more important to us than our personal salvation?

Our view of the Triune God of the Bible is nowhere more evident than in our worship practice. If we neglect the worship of God it invariably means that our view of God is deficient. When we comprehend the glory of YAHWEH as Moses did, in his goodness, his name and his sovereignty nothing can keep us from the worship of God. No matter what our profession or vocation we will order our lives accordingly to be in God's house regularly to join in singing and praying to him, observing the sacraments and hearing the preaching of his Word.

Then there is the matter of our obedience to God. The quality of our obedience depends our view of our Judge, Lawgiver and King. Isaiah writes "For YAHWEH *is* our Judge, YAHWEH *is* our Lawgiver, YAHWEH *is* our King; He will save us."¹¹ If our ruler is nothing more than the king of

⁸ 1 Corinthians 10:31

⁹ Mathew 28:18-20

¹⁰ *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Question 6

¹¹ Isaiah 33:22

England or the President of the United States, as prestigious as that may be, our obedience will always be tempered by his proximity or his ability to know about our misdeeds and to punish us for them. Too often our view of God and particularly of Jesus is similar to our view of the President. We disobey him because we don't really love him. We disobey him because we don't really believe he can know our sin and punish us for it. Yahweh is the creator of the universe and the realms of heaven where the angels dwell and we simply do not highly esteem him. We see Jesus as a cuddly baby in a quaint manger surrounded by tinsel and lights, but not as YAHWEH our Judge, Lawgiver and King; Our Savior. So we sin and neglect his worship.

In our day it is very common to illustrate Bible education materials with pictures of Jesus. He is depicted in many different ways from Caucasian to Semitic. Motion pictures have been created for use in major evangelistic efforts in which an actor portrays Jesus. We are told that many have been won to Christ through these means and that such pictures of Jesus help many people to understand biblical truth. However, all of these only depict the humanity of Jesus. That he is YAHWEH cannot be represented with pictures or art of any kind much less by a human actor. As Paul put it "for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' {29} "Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, **we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.**"¹²

According to the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* "The only Redeemer of God's elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who, being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person, forever."¹³ As well intentioned as it may be, depicting only the humanity of Christ represents the second person of the Godhead falsely. It serves to confuse the church and continues to propagate ignorance of Jesus as YAHWEH. Then, too, the representation of God in any form or image of created things is forbidden in the Second Commandment. As the *Westminster Larger Catechism* puts it; The Second Commandment forbids – "the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever".¹⁴ We do not merely misrepresent One who is a true man but One who is also YAHWEH. We don't understand the heinousness of this sin or even that it is sin in the first place, because we don't clearly understand that Jesus is YAHWEH.

¹² Acts 17:28-29

¹³ *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Question 21

¹⁴ *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question 109

Our knees should tremble before the awesome power and majesty of YAHWEH. They should tremble before Jesus who has the Name which is above every name. May we desire nothing on earth besides YAHWEH, the King of glory who became flesh, so that “we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”¹⁵

“Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. {8} Who is this King of glory? YAHWEH strong and mighty, YAHWEH mighty in battle. {9} Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. {10} Who is this King of glory? YAHWEH of hosts, He is the King of glory.”¹⁶

¹⁵ John 1:14

¹⁶ Psalms 24:7-10

