

Below you will find abundant information to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is identified by God's Word as Yahweh. I hope that you will take the time to do as the Bereans did and "search the Scriptures" to see who Jesus really is.

"Is Jesus Yahweh?"

The name Yahweh (or Jehovah) appears nearly 7,000 times in the Old Testament. Most English translations render the Hebrew name for God as LORD, while some (like the New Jerusalem Bible and Rotherham's Emphasized Bible) use "Yahweh" and others (like the American Standard Version of 1901 and the New World Translation) use "Jehovah." But, between Malachi and Matthew the Name suddenly disappears! There are over 5,000 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, and not one of them has the Name in either Greek or Hebrew letters. The Watchtower Society claims that the Name was there in the original Greek N.T., but that it was later removed. They claim this with no real evidence, for they are unable to produce even one manuscript of the Greek New Testament with the Name! Besides, some of those manuscripts of the N.T. date from within one generation of the original writings. That leaves very little chance for the Society's theory of a conspiracy to remove the Name from the N.T. writings. If we accept the facts the way they are (without trying to change them to fit a preconceived theory) we are forced to admit the Name is not in the N.T.

In the New Testament we meet up with another name. The name that is emphasized in the N.T. is the name of Jesus. (This makes for an interesting comparison in the New World Translation. While the Watchtower Society "restores" the name Jehovah 237 times to the N.T., their Comprehensive Concordance lists the name Jesus over 900 times!) In the book of Acts we particularly notice the emphasis of the name of Jesus. If you have an exhaustive concordance look up the word "name" in the book of Acts. Over and over again you will see the Name the early Christian church emphasized was the name of Jesus! At Acts 3:6 Peter healed the lame beggar in the name of Jesus Christ. In Acts 4:7,10,12,17,18 we read about the first disciples defending themselves before the Sanhedrin, proclaiming their use of the name of Jesus. In Chapter 5 they are back before the Jewish high court. For whose name did they suffer? Acts 5:41 tells us: "These, therefore, went their way from before the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name." They suffered for the name of Jesus! Space does not permit us to look at all the relevant verses. Take time to consider these few: Acts 8:12; 9:13-16,27,28; 15:26; 16:18; 19:17; 21:13; 26:9. In Acts the Name that is emphasized is the name of Jesus Christ

Why the change of emphasis between the Old Testament Yahweh and the New Testament Jesus? Are we being introduced to some rival deity in the New Testament when we encounter so much emphasis on the name of

Jesus? That is the way some nearly react when it is suggested that the answer lies in the fact that the N.T. identifies Jesus with Yahweh. Bear in mind that I am not saying Jesus is the Father! Rather, what I am saying is that Jesus and the Father share the same Name and are not in some sort of competition. Charles Taze Russell, the first President of the Watchtower Society, was firm in his belief that the name Jehovah could not be applied to Jesus. He is quoted with apparent approval on page 22 of the Society's official history book *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* (published in 1959):

"We confidently assert that the name Jehovah is never applied in Scripture to any but the Father. It is for those who claim the reverse to give a text, and show its applicability to Jesus or anyone else than the Father. Here is a way to prove the matter conclusively-the New Testament writers quote much from the Old Testament; do they ever quote a passage in which the word Jehovah occurs and apply it to Jesus? We claim that they do not."
-Quoted from pages 2,3 of the August 1882 issue of *Zion's Watch Tower*.
[Note: In recent years the Society has backed down from this position.]

Contrast what Russell wrote with this statement from a contemporary of his-J. Gresham Machen, a Professor at Princeton. He wrote in the book *Christianity and Liberalism* (1923): "It is a matter of small consequence whether Paul ever applies to Jesus the Greek word which is translated 'God' in the English Bible; certainly it is very difficult, in view of Rom. ix. 5, to deny that he does. However that may be, the term 'Lord,' which is Paul's regular designation of Jesus, is really just as much a designation of deity as is the term 'God.' It was a designation of deity even in the pagan religions with which Paul's converts were familiar; and (what is far more important) in the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was current in Paul's day and was used by the Apostle himself, the term was used to translate the 'Jahwe' of the Hebrew text. And Paul does not hesitate to apply to Jesus stupendous passages in the Greek Old Testament where the term Lord thus designates the God of Israel."-page 97. [Note: for those interested in whether the term "God" is applied to Jesus in the N.T., see our information sheets dealing with Titus 2:13/2 Peter 1:1; John 1:1; and Colossians 2:9.]

Let's consider a few quotations from the Old Testament and see if the New Testament writers had any problem in applying passages containing the name Yahweh to Jesus. We will use the New World Translation for these comparisons.

The apostle Paul quoted Psalm 68:18 and applied it to the Ascension of Jesus Christ. Psalm 68:18 says: "You have ascended on high; you have carried away captives; you have taken gifts in the form of men, Yes, even the stubborn ones, to reside among them, O Jah God." ("Jah" is an

abbreviated form of the name Jehovah.) Notice how Paul applies this passage at Ephesians 4:7-10: "Now to each one of us undeserved kindness was given according to how the Christ measured out the free gift. Wherefore he says: 'When he ascended on high he carried away captives; he gave gifts in men.' Now the expression 'he ascended,' what does it mean but that he also descended into the lower regions, that is, the earth? The very one that descended is also the one that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might give fulness to all things."

Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes the Greek Septuagint version of Psalm 102:25-27 and applies it to Christ: "You at the beginning, O Lord, laid the foundations of the earth itself, and the heavens are the works of your hands. They themselves will perish, but you yourself are to remain continually ; and just like an outer garment they will grow old, and you will wrap them up just as a cloak, as an outer garment; and they will be changed, but you are the same, and your years will never run out." Not only do we here see a N.T. writer apply an O.T. passage about Yahweh to Jesus Christ-notice to what lengths this N.T. writer will go in his scripture application. He openly identifies Christ as the Creator of heaven and earth. And he contrasts the impermanence of creation against its Creator, who is unchangeable and eternal. Does it make sense to think the writer of Hebrews felt Christ was only a creature after seeing how he applies Scripture?

Notice this comparison between 1 Peter 3:14,15 and Isaiah 8:12,13. 1 Peter says: "But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are happy. However, the object of their fear do not you fear, neither become agitated. But sanctify the Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you, but doing so together with a mild temper and deep respect." Now, Isaiah says: "'You men must not say, "A conspiracy!" respecting all that of which this people keep saying, "A conspiracy!" and the object of their fear you men must not fear, nor must you tremble at it. Jehovah of armies-he is the One whom you should treat as holy, and he should be the object of your fear, and he should be the One causing you to tremble.'" This comparison is even more striking if one compares the Greek word order of 1 Peter with the Greek Septuagint of Isaiah. The Hebrew says: "Sanctify Jehovah of hosts" (according to Jay Green's The Interlinear Hebrew-Greek-English Bible) but the Greek Septuagint has "Sanctify ye the Lord himself." (From Brenton's translation of the Septuagint.) Now, Peter, writing in Greek, would most naturally quote from the standard Greek translation of the O.T.- the Septuagint. The Septuagint here says: kurion auton hagasate (Greek word order: "Lord himself sanctify"). Peter's quotation in 1 Peter 3:14,15 is practically identical except here he exchanges the word auton (himself) for who is Christ. Peter writes: kurion de ton christon hagasate (Greek word order: "Lord but the Christ sanctify" - compare the Watchtower Society's

Kingdom Interlinear Translation.) It is as if Peter were adding a parenthetical thought to his quotation from Isaiah: "The object of their fear do not you fear, neither become agitated. The Lord (who is Christ) you should sanctify." Peter was making sure we knew that the Lord we are to sanctify is Christ!

Notice this prophecy from Isaiah 40:3-5: "Listen! Someone is calling out in the wilderness: 'Clear up the way of Jehovah, you people! Make the highway for our God through the desert plain straight. Let every valley be raised up, and every mountain and hill be made low. And the knobby ground must become level land, and the rugged ground a valley plain. And the glory of Jehovah will certainly be revealed, and all flesh must see it together. '" Matthew 3:1-3, Mark 1:1-4, Luke 3:2-6 and John 1:23 apply this passage to John the Baptist's preparatory work before the ministry of Jesus.

It becomes undeniable that New Testament writers applied Old Testament passages about Yahweh to Jesus. Can we be sure they were thereby identifying Jesus with Yahweh? Consider this example: Isaiah 6:1-10: "In the year that King Uzziah died I, however, got to see Jehovah, sitting on a throne lofty and lifted up, and his skirts were filling the temple. Seraphs were standing above him. . .And this one called to that one and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of armies. The fulness of all the earth is his glory'. . .And I proceeded to say: 'Woe to me! . . .for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of armies, himself!'. . .And I began to hear the voice of Jehovah saying: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I proceeded to say: 'Here I am! Send me.' And he went on to say: 'Go, and you must say to this people, "Hear again and again, O men, but do not understand; and see again and again, but do not get any knowledge." Make the heart of this people unreceptive, and make their very ears unresponsive, and paste their very eyes together, that they may not see with their eyes and with their ears they may not hear, and that their own heart may not understand and that they may not actually turn back and get healing for themselves.'"

Compare this with John 12:36b,37,39-41: "Jesus spoke these things and went off and hid from them. But although he had performed so many signs before them, they were not putting faith in him. . .The reason why they were not able to believe is that Isaiah said: 'He has blinded their eyes and he has made their hearts hard, that they should not see with their eyes and get the thought with their hearts and turn around and I should heal them.' Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory, and he spoke about him." If the Apostle John had no problem saying that Isaiah's vision of Jehovah in His temple was a vision of Christ's glory, why should we? Even the New World Translation Reference Bible cross-references Isaiah 6:1 to John 12:41!

We are told at Isaiah 45:22-24: "Turn to me and be saved, all you at the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no one else. By my own self I have sworn-out of my own mouth in righteousness the word has gone forth, so that it will not return - that to me every knee will bend down, every tongue will swear, saying, 'Surely in Jehovah there are full righteousness and strength.'" Notice how Paul makes a direct allusion to this passage at Philippians 2:9-11 (NIV): "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." At Isaiah 45:23 we were told that every knee would bend in worship and every tongue swear to Jehovah. Paul alludes to this and says this would happen "at the name of Jesus." Why? Because Paul adds that God has shared with Christ "the name that is above every name "-the Divine Name. So, when every knee bows before Jesus and every tongue confesses Jesus Christ as LORD, does this detract from the Father? Not at all! Rather, Paul said this would glorify God the Father!-compare John 5:23. (Interestingly, early editions of the N.T. part of the New World Translation had a cross-reference at Philippians 2:10 pointing to Isaiah 45:23. Their 1984 Reference Bible edition has removed that cross-reference.)

Consider these points: What was the most sacred Name to the Jews? Didn't the people of Israel have an intense awe for the Divine Name? So, how could Paul and Peter and John (who were from a Jewish background) so freely apply passages about Yahweh to Jesus Christ? Why did they have no hesitation in identifying Christ with Jehovah? When they called Jesus LORD, weren't they making a mind-boggling claim? The risen Savior was identified with Yahweh of the O.T.! Is that perhaps one reason why we are told at 1 Corinthians 12:3: "No one can say: 'Jesus is LORD,' except by the Holy Spirit." Space does not permit us to continue considering the evidence showing that the N.T. identifies Christ with Yahweh. For those wanting to do an in-depth study I would recommend the book *How To Answer A Jehovah's Witness*, by Robert Morey. Part 3 of his book is entitled "Is Jesus Christ YHWH?" and has an excellent workbook to work through on the subject. Also, our tract *Hiding The Divine Name* gives some further evidence, along with some insights into the Watchtower Society's scholastic integrity. (See our materials list for information on ordering. A suggestion for the Christian evangelist-even though JWs are told not to accept the religious literature of others, we have been able to get a few to take this tract. Have some on hand to share with your JW friend, or even with the Witness who calls at your door.)

(Above written by Mr. Dave Brown; originally appeared as an article in "The Dividing Line", the newsletter of Alpha and Omega Ministries.)