

**The Doctrine
of
Christ's
(Absolute) Deity**

versus

the

Teachings of the Jehovah Witnesses

by

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The Tetragrammaton: יהוה

Jehovah, Jahweh, or Jihweh?

The name Jehovah is a mix-up of God's name JHWH and of the vowels of the Hebrew word for 'Lord' ('Adonai [lit. 'my lords']: in most cases used as *plurale majestatis* {Latin for plural of majesty}); but here not totally coincidentally in the plural, just as the word for GOD usually is written in the plural ['Elohim' (lit. 'powers')]. Cf. Gen. 1.26: "Let *us* make Adam" (i.e. 'human,' or 'humans'; not *the* human being,' for Christ is *the* human being in accordance with John 19.5 {I admit that the hermeneutics behind this particular point is debatable, but not the theological idea}). God's name was considered too holy to be pronounced and one read 'Lord.' Hebrew consists only of consonants and the vowels were supplied in thought only. Later, when people tended to forget them, they were placed above and under the words in the forms of small dots and dashes.

One could argue that originally God's name had been 'Jihweh' and that means then 'He will be' (after the analogy of His name in Ex.3.14: 'I will be who I will be'). The usual form of Jahweh probably is the so-called hiphil form of the verb h'w'h and means 'He will cause to be,' or 'He will make to be.' In this pamphlet we will use the term Jehovah for reasons of convenience.

God or god?

"For in Him lives the entire fulness of the deity bodily" (Col.2.9). The apostle Paul says this of Christ such as He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father. It is therefore very illogical and even blasphemous to reason that Christ now has been changed back into the archangel Michael and that His (holy) body simply has disappeared. (According to the Jehovah witnesses Christ is an epiphany or manifestation of this archangel). Take notice that it says 'bodily.' The apostle employs a very powerful phrase 'THE entire FULNESS of the DEITY, so as to leave no doubt whatsoever that Christ really is GOD and not just a god.

In Ps.97.7 angels (therefore also Michael and Gabriel) are called 'gods;' in the Septuagint (the first translation of the Hebrew O.T. into Greek) translated as 'His messengers,' but in Heb.1.6 as 'Gods messengers' (in most modern translations 'angels'). Angels are a kind of higher servants according to Heb. 1.7,14.

However Christ is not such a god, but God according to Rom.9.5: "... the Christ after the flesh, being THE God [that is] above all (possibly 'all things'), blessed" Both phrases are in apposition and therefore signify the same person. Jehovah witnesses apply the second phrase to God the Father and translate: "... out of whom is Christ after the flesh. God who is above all, be blessed" However, if this were correct, the Greek would have run just as in Eph.1.3 and would have said: "... Blessed is the God who is above all" Take note that in the second case the word 'blessed' is emphasized and put at the beginning of the sentence.

In John 1.18 the same construction is used (apposition): "... the unique Son Who is in the bosom of the Father. . ." (lit. 'the one being in the bosom;' [ὁ ὢν]. [I translate through 'unique Son' in stead of 'only-begotten,' since μονογενῆ actually means 'unique' or 'one of a kind' (from Greek 'monos' *only* and 'genos' *kind*). In Greek 'only-begotten' would have been μονογεννητο. An excellent French translation has '*fils unique.*' In secular ancient Greek this term was also used for 'only child.' That this biblical word cannot strictly be made to mean 'only-begotten,' may also be

apparent from its use in Heb.11.17; where it is used for Isaac. For Abraham did already have an elder son, namely Ishmael! Darby therefore translates here again through '*filis unique*' in his French translation. But in his English version apparently he dares not stray from the King James, as he has 'only-begotten' there again].

Tit.2.13 therefore says: ". . . awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ . . ." The word 'and' is used inclusively here and therefore joins 'God' and 'Saviour' together with 'our.' Jehovah witnesses, here again, distinguish falsely between God the Father and Christ. But the conjunction is not employed here in the same way as in 2 Pet.1.2, where the Person of Christ is distinguished from the Person of God the Father. This follows not only from the difference of the position of 'our' in both cases, but particularly because the appearing of Christ is referred to. It should be clear that Christ is coming back and not God the Father!

The usage of the word 'God' (in Greek 'the God') occurs also in 1 John 5.20 and Heb.1.8. Also here Jehovah witnesses attempt to distort the real meaning. In all cases they try to apply 'the God' to God the Father. But in the first case the word 'this' [some translations have 'He'] ("This is the true God") clearly points back directly to Christ. Moreover both Christ and God the Father are called 'THE True' here (cf. John 17.3). In the second case they would have been right if the Greek original would have run as: "God IS your throne." But it says: "Your throne, O God (lit. 'the God'), . . ."

Two Jehovahs!?

"And Jehovah said unto Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan!" (Zech.3.2). This reminds us of Ju.9, where Michael says the same thing to Satan! Naturally the first Jehovah here is not the archangel Michael, but Christ before His incarnation. The second Jehovah is of course God the Father. This verse also reminds us of Ps.110.1: "Jehovah said unto my Lord. . ." Christ quotes this verse in Lu. 20.42 (where He confirms the Septuagint: "The Lord said unto my Lord."). The Pharisees were confused by the quotation of this verse, because the Messiah—although He is David's son—yet He is David's Lord! Just like the Pharisees the so-called the Jehovah witnesses do not understand that Christ, as a human being, is really the descendant of David 'after the flesh' and not an archangel that has been changed into a human being. By the way, angels live by their own justice. They cannot confer justice on humans also. Moreover it says in Heb. 2.16 that Christ does not help angels (c.q. fallen angels), but the seed of Abraham. How could that be said if Christ in origin was an angel Himself!?

That there are two Jehovahs is also clear from Gen. 16.11-13, where the Angel of Jehovah is also Himself called Jehovah!

Christ's Coequality with God the Father

In Phil.2.6 it says: ". . .who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine to be on an equality (lit. 'equal things,' or 'aspects') with God . . ." But certainly Jehovah witnesses consider it rapine to state that Christ is not just a god, but God! Therefore also it says in Heb.1.6: "Let all God's angels worship Him." As God the Son Christ deserves adoration. An angel, however, is not allowed to be worshiped according to Rev.22.8,9; therefore neither the archangel Michael! In Heb.1.13 it therefore says: "But as to which of *the* angels said he ever, Sit at my right

hand . . .?” It does not say: “To whom of *His* angels . . .” Christ simply cannot be an angel, also not the very first one. Therefore it does not surprise us that it is written in Mat. 28.19: “. . . to the NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” All three the Persons of the divinity share the same name. Because it does not say ‘to the *names* of!’

The Holy Spirit, then, is also God and not just some kind of force of God. Please, read carefully 2 Cor.3.18 and compare that verse with 2 Cor.3.6,17. That the Holy Spirit certainly is a Person and not just some impersonal force of God, may be clear from the verse that says that we must not grieve or sadden the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4. 30) The Trinity is one God Who consists of three Persons. God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are together the One and only God. This is a mystery that we cannot, need not and must not attempt to comprehend. It is the faith once delivered to the saints.

John 1.1

In John 1.1 the Holy Spirit employs an anarthrous phrase. Jehovah witnesses are quick to take advantage of this and to translate: “. . . and the Word was a god.” Often, when the definite article is not used, the qualitative character of a noun is emphasized. So it says in Lu.20.38: “. . .but he is not God of [the] dead but of [the] living . . .” God’s character is referred to here, viz. God of the living. Jehovah witnesses translate here: “He is not *a* God of the dead . . .” Why here ‘*a* God’ and in John 1.1 ‘*a* god’!? This is very whimsical and must be done to fit the meaning to their purpose. Just as in Lu.20.38 therefore John 1.1. should read: “. . . and the Word was God.”

Revelation 3.14

The expression here ‘the beginning of God’s creation,’ a title of Christ, does not mean that Christ had a beginning, but that He *became* the beginning of God’s creation. For, according to John 1.3, there is nothing (most manuscripts have ‘not a thing’) that came into being; without coming into being through Him. He Himself, as God, did not come into being therefore. For as God the Son He has no beginning. But as the divine Builder He became indeed the beginning of God’s creation, for He became human.

The word for ‘beginning’ here is perhaps best compared to the usage of the same word by Christ when the Pharisees asked Him who then He considered Himself to be. He answered: “Altogether (lit.’the beginning’) that which I also say to you.” (John 8.25). In his French translation Darby translates here through ‘*absolument*’. In a footnote he explains: “in the principle and universality of what I am;” i.e. his speech presented himself, being the truth.’

The same word shines through here as in John 1.1: “In the beginning was the Word . . .” This beginning is the eternal state of Christ as the Word, before creation, and therefore goes back infinitely further than the ‘beginning’ of Gen.1.1.

Christ had the same conflict with the Pharisees as Christians have with the Jehovah witnesses. Both groups do not accept that Christ’s deity is absolutely coequal to the one of His Father. The reason behind the attempt to assassinate Him in John 8.59, is that He employed a title for Himself that was only reserved for God Himself, viz. ‘I AM’ [ἐγώ εἰμι]. (Cf. Is.41.4; 43.13 אֲנִי הוֹאֲ אֲנִי ‘I

AM' [lit. 'I he']; in the Septuagint translated through ἔγω Κυριο ὁ Θεο , 'I Lord the God.' In the same passage, verse 11, it is stated that outside of Jehovah there is no Saviour. However, in many places in the N.T. Christ certainly is called 'Saviour.' With a capital that is.)

If they only had thought that He meant that He had been around already before Abraham's time, then they would have declared Him crazy, or considered Him to be possessed. That they did already earlier. Much better than the Jehovah witnesses they understood that He considered Himself to be absolutely equal to God.

In John 10.30, where Christ says that He and the Father are one (lit. 'one thing'), they understand this again and again they attempt to assassinate Him. But according to the theology of the Jehovah witnesses God and Christ are not one, but two! However, in accordance with the right interpretation there is no question of contradiction to Deut.6.4: "Hear, Israel: Jehovah our God is one(!) Jehovah." The Pharisees understood Christ completely on this point, but the Jehovah witnesses do not.

'Firstborn'

The usage of this word for 'firstborn' (πρωτοτοκο) can easily be misunderstood. In Mat.1.25 most manuscripts use it in connection with Jesus as Mary's firstborn son. In Col.1.18 this word is used for Christ as the beginning and as the firstborn from among the dead (you see, Christ's holy body did not just disappear and He did not change into Michael again as by the waving of a wand; He rose up from among the dead. Moreover, He showed His disciples that a ghost does not have flesh and bones [acc. to Lu.24,39!]). In this 18th verse the title of 'firstborn' has (above all) to do with His having been raised up from among the dead. As such He is also the firstborn of all Creation, not in the least the coming new heaven and earth.

In Col.1.15 this word is used figuratively: "... firstborn of the entire creation ...". Here not a literal sense is applied, but a metaphorical one with the meaning of 'firstborn with all the appertaining rights.' The following verse therefore supplies the meaning: "For by Him all things were created ...". That He created all things logically excludes Himself.

Christ as Human

From 1 Tim.2.5 and 1 John 2.1 it is clear that Christ is also a human being and that He is our advocate (is He indeed yours?). In John 17.5 He asks from His Father the same glory as the one He possessed when He was still with the Father (not to be confused with verse 22). For He had become a little less than the angels (Heb.2.7), that is as a human. He was and is also God. God remains God and does not *change* into a human being, but God did take the human nature *into addition*. Christ is one Person with two natures, the divine one and the human one.

As this Person He is now seated at the right hand to the majesty on high (Heb.1.3), at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12.2). The first martyr, Stephen, saw Him still standing there (Acts 7.56). Take notice that He is called here 'the Son of man' (not again the archangel Michael then!).

That Christ still is a human and will be so unto all eternity, may also be apparent from Zech. 14.3,4. Here it clearly is stated that His *feet* will stand on Mount Olive and that this mountain will split in two.

Eternal Salvation through Christ's Work or through Our Own Works?

The Jehovah witnesses have to wait and see whether they will make it through Armageddon. Therefore they have to do their utmost now and that by their own strength. It is not coincidental that when one denies the absolute deity of Christ, one also comes to deny His work on the cross; which is all sufficient. The result is that a soul cannot rest in that Work. The apostle Paul even goes as far as stating that when anyone brings a gospel other than his by God inspired message; that person be accursed (anathema) [Gal. 1.6-9]!

Annihilation or Punishment?

This God-man, Christ Jesus, has also warned us for eternal hell (Mat. 25.41; Mk.9.43-48). And to confirm this, Rev. 14.10,11 warns that they that will receive the sign of the beast, will be tortured and that they 'will have no rest day nor night unto the ages of the ages!' (Perhaps then there is a kind of day and night cycle in hell: the expression 'the uttermost darkness,' in that case, is to be taken more spiritually than literally in its meaning; for there is, after all, question of the 'second death' [also meant more spiritually than literally, for the damned also have eternal and immortal bodies]).

How is this possible when one has been annihilated and therefore simply has ceased to exist, as the Jehovah witnesses avow, just like the seventh day adventists (who contend that the damned are annihilated after a long period of punishment)? Of the devil, the beast and the false prophet (i.e. the antichrist) it is even said that they will be tortured day and night 'till the ages of the ages' (Rev. 20.10). There is gradation of pain and punishment, then. Christ also says somewhere that they that did not know the will of the master, will be punished with few strokes and that they who did know that will, will be punished with many strokes.

It is my prayer that God may use this pamphlet to open up the hearts of a few unbelievers and that they that already possess the just faith, may be confirmed therein. May the reader say with me, like Thomas did: 'My Lord and my God!' But then in the deepest meaning. Amen.

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