

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 or 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 *Yabveh*. "And ye My sheep, the sheep of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Eter-

nal" — *Yabveh* 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 *Yabveh's* House shall be established in the top of the kingdoms" — ruling the world. "And He, *Yabveh* [Christ], shall judge among the nations, and rebuke strong nations," and then they shall have PEACE.

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