Is Jesus Jehovah?
Colossians 1:19 and OT verses connections to Jesus

In the past two weeks we have tackled the topics that “Jesus is Awesome” and “Jesus is Supreme”. In fact those descriptions seem pathetically small compared to who Jesus is – the eternal Son of God; the creator and sustainer of all – both visible and invisible. Jesus is the head of the church and beginning & first born from among the dead opening up a whole new life for any person who is willing to put their trust and faith in Him. Jesus and Jesus alone is the exact image and perfect manifestation of the One, True God of the Universe. For that to be true, Jesus would have to be God Himself. Now we come to Colossians 1:19 ... “For God [the Father] was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him [Jesus, the Son He loves].”

One can’t get clearer that Jesus is fully God.

PROPOSITION: Jesus is Jehovah/YHWH – as is the Father and the Holy Spirit as there is only ONE true God!

I. Jesus is fully God

   Colossians 1:19

   A. “God pleased”

      “God” here refers to God the Father who is invisible and whom Jesus is the exact image & perfect manifestation of. As it says in v 15a, READ. Now we read in v 19, that God the Father is pleased to have ALL His fullness dwell in Jesus. Jesus is more than awesome and supreme!

   B. “all his fullness”

      “ALL of God’s fullness”. Jesus is not one of many religious leaders, He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. “Fullness” means that the totality of divine power and attributes is in Christ. Jesus is completely God. Only in Jesus Christ can God’s fullness be fully seen. Jesus is not just an image, or sketch of God, nor is Jesus just a summary of God. In Jesus there is nothing of God left out. He is the full revelation of God, and nothing more is necessary.

      Then to make it even more clear, the word “all” is added to “fullness”. Full already means totally full – the full measure – so adding “all” to that emphasizes the complete completeness of God in Jesus or the full fullness of deity in Jesus. And if you had any doubt that the human Jesus born over 2,000 years ago is totally God as well as human, turn the page to Colossians 2:9. READ. These two verses are some of the most powerful statements of Christ’s deity in the New Testament. Everything that God is, Jesus is. However, God is more than Jesus. God includes the Father, Son, and Spirit. Jesus is only one aspect of God, but he is every bit God. We could say that God the Father and God the Son are in some sense different yet at the same time being of the same es-
sence. That’s God’s unique nature as Trinity. Only one God in 3 persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Of course God is unique – He is God!

C. “dwell in him”

Back to chapter 1 v 19 READ. ALL the FULLNESS of GOD DWELLS in Jesus the Christ. Dwell is to be at home permanently, not just to stay or reside for a time. Deity or the fullness of God, did not just come on Jesus when He was baptized. Jesus being “fully God” is not something temporary, but permanent.

II. Where did the word “Jehovah” come from?

(YHWH; Jehovah; Y=J; Adonai-Elohim; Ketiv/Kethib, Qere, Qere perpetuum)


To answer that question, we better first make sure we know who or what Jehovah is. 6,828 times in the Old Testament the word YHWH or Jehovah is used for God. It is the only word for God which is used solely and exclusively for the one true God of the Universe. The word “elohim” for God can refer to the true God or a false god. The word “Adonai” for God can refer to God as Lord or a high-up boss as lord. So only this one word, YHWH or Jehovah always and only means the one, true God.

Neal how come you keep saying “YHWH & Jehovah” like they are the same word? Those sound like two very different words. Let’s start back at the beginning so you might know where our English word “Jehovah” came from. Probably because of the expense of writing materials, the ancient Hebrew language only wrote the consonants of a word. So “Neal” would be spelled “NL”; “Leisa” would be spelled “LS”. Try spelling your first name just with the consonants so you can visualize this. IF YOU look near the top of your outline, you will see the actual Hebrew spelling of the true God - YHWH. But how do you know how to pronounce it if there are no vowels? There’s the problem. A couple hundred years before Jesus, the Jewish people stopped speaking this word for God out loud. They stopped saying YHWH. Primarily this was out of reverence – some felt it was too holy to actually speak while others wanted to keep it from being used as either a swear word or a word used in magic spells. Interestingly at the time of Jesus, the Jewish historian Josephus, who was also a priest, said he knew the pronunciation of the name but declared that his religion forbid him to divulge it. Once the temple was destroyed then even the priests stopped quietly pronouncing it.

When the Hebrew language stopped being a spoken language all together – some Jewish people called the Masorites – added vowel points below the consonants so the Jewish people would know how to pronounce their own words. There are a number of different ways you can pronounce NL depending on what vowels you use. This was easy for the words that had been spoken before, but what vowels do you use with “YHWH” which is the highest name for the true God, when it hadn’t been pronounced by the Hebrew people in over 500 years. They would write the replacement word to be spoken in its place over in the margin – “adonai,” “elohim”, “the name”, whatever. The written text was called the Kethib and what was to be spoken over in the margin was called the Qere. Because there are 6,828 uses of YHWH in the Old Testa-
ment – in time they skipped writing the new word over & over in the margin for YHWH and instead just put the vowel points for the substitute word to SAY in place with YHWH below those 4 consonant letters of YHWH. Most commonly that was the vowel points of “Adonai” and sometimes the vowel points of “Elohim”. This shorthand is called the Qere perpetuum. Don’t try to remember those names, you know I can’t even pronounce them. I have those weird words in your outline so any who are interested can google them for more info. Now the European Christians didn’t know about the Qere perpetuum 300 years ago so they took the later Masoretic spellings at face value – the consonants of YHWH and the vowels from ADONAI. But those together and you have Jehovah. They also regularly substituted the letter “J” for the Hebrew letter “Yod” – and that is where the English word Jehovah came from. It is not how Moses pronounced this word or any of the OT prophets. In fact our current spelling of Jehovah didn’t come until the 1769 version of English language Bibles. The original, 1611 KJV had a different spelling and it was used in only in 7 verses of those 6,800 uses. But for over 200 years all English speaking Protestants, Catholics and Orthodox people used this particular pronunciation – Jehovah for this original word YHWH. It is NOT how the Moses or the Old Testament people pronounced this unique name of God, but it became our English equivalent.

So now let’s consider our question today that comes out of Colossians 1:19 (“For God [the Father] was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [the Son of God, Jesus the Christ]: Is Jesus Jehovah – in other words, Is Jesus the YHWH mentioned in the OT which only and always refers just to the one true God? The Jehovah Witnesses say “absolutely not” – Jesus is not God in that way – God the Father is Jehovah. The Mormons, on the other hand, if I understand them, say “Yes Jesus is Jehovah, but God the Father is not Jehovah.” Is Jesus Jehovah? You might be thinking, “Well I don’t know if that is going too far but I also am not willing to say Jesus isn’t Jehovah. Well let’s gain some confidence from the Bible.

III. Titles for Jehovah are used of Jesus

The first clue we are given is that the titles for Jehovah in the Old Testament are used of Jesus in the New Testament. Let’s read the Isa 10:20 passage you looked up earlier.

A. The Holy One

READ Isa 10:20. Jehovah in the OT is called “the Holy One of Israel.” In Acts 3, Peter is speaking to a crowd that gathered after the healing of a crippled man – He said, “You handed Jesus over to be killed and you disowned Him before Pilate, though he (Pilot) had decided to let him (Jesus) go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One.” In Acts 2, speaking of Jesus’ resurrection, Peter applies this OT verse to Jesus “nor will you let your Holy One see decay.” So this title clearly used of Jehovah/YHWH is applied to Jesus. Turn to Isa 44:6.

B. First and last

READ Isa 44:6. So Jehovah Almighty is called King and Redeemer – the first and the last – and then so we don’t miss the point, the Bible adds there is no other god – not like Him. This is repeated in Rev 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” Guess how the
book of Revelation ends? Applying all these terms clearly for Jehovah to Jesus – Rev 22:13 says “I [Jesus] am the alpha and the omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.” The clear title of Jehovah is applied to Jesus. **Turn to Deut 10.**

C. Lord of lords

**READ Deut 10:17.** Jehovah is given many titles here, but one we quickly recognize is used of Jesus many times in the NT “Lord of lords.” Rev 17:14 “They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because He is (…pause for answer…) Lord of lords and King of kings – and with Him will be His called, chosen and faithful followers” – that’s us! The only person “Lamb” is used metaphorically like this, is Jesus. Jesus is given the same title, Lord of lords, as Jehovah.

D. Savior

**READ Isa 43:11; Lk 19:10; Titus 2:11-13**

Let’s do one more. **Turn back to Isa 43. READ v11.** There is no “savior” outside of Jehovah. Did you realize that the title “Savior” is reserved in the Bible for God? Do we use the title of “Savior” about Jesus? All the time! Our short hand for starting the Christian life is to “accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior.” Luke 19:10 says Jesus’ purpose in coming to this earth was “to seek and to save what was lost.” Titus 2:13 says “we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” This is truly incredible. The awesome titles given to Jehovah – the only name that always refers to the one and only true God of the Universe – those titles are often applied to Jesus. **Is Jesus Jehovah?** We see some clear evidence of this in the uses of the titles of Jehovah.

IV. People referred to Jesus as Jehovah

Maybe these are just coincidences – maybe these titles are too generic sounding – let’s go for something stronger - do we have any evidence that actual NT people referred to Jesus as Jehovah? **Turn to Matt 3.**

A. Matthew & Mark **Matt 3:1-3; Mk 1:2-3; Isa 40:3**

Matthew, Mark and Luke all introduce John the Baptist in a similar way by quoting an OT prophecy. **READ Matt 3:1-3.** So John the Baptist is the forerunner – the voice who is preparing the way. John the Baptist’s job is to “Prepare the way for the Lord” – to prepare the way for Jesus – Jesus is the Lord. NOW when we go back to the prophecy in Isaiah 40:3 guess what we find? The original word for Lord used in the Hebrew is YHWH or Jehovah. John the Baptist is to prepare the way for Jehovah. Matthew and Mark, who knew the OT, are both equating Jesus with Jehovah.

B. Luke & Paul **Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Rom 10:13**

Luke and Paul were tremendous co-workers in spreading the gospel of Jesus throughout the world. But their writings were very different. Luke devoted his time to writing narrative – what Jesus said & did and what the church did. Paul, on the other hand, wrote commentary and application of the truths of Jesus – we call these epistles or letters. Despite their different approaches, they both used the same OT verse. It is found
in Joel 2:32: "And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved". The word “LORD” there is our word YHWH or Jehovah. So everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.

You are getting the idea now aren’t you? Luke and Paul are going to quote this passage to show Jesus is the name that will save us. Luke records the apostle Peter using this verse in his very first sermon on the day of Pentecost and applying it to Jesus who is called “both Lord and Christ.” Paul applies the Joel passage directly to Jesus who is Lord of all. In doing so, both Luke & Paul equate Jesus with Jehovah. This is getting exciting – are you gaining any confidence? Turn to John 12.

C. John

In Isaiah 6, the great prophet Isaiah is given a vision of heaven. Seeing the glory of the Lord, Isaiah says in v 5 "Woe to me! I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord [Jehovah] Almighty."” (Isaiah 6:5, NIV) Jehovah & His glory is the focus of this passage. Now when the apostle John refers to this very same OT incidence here in John 12 – notice how John interprets it. READ v 41. John says directly that it was Jesus & His glory which were the focus of Isaiah’s vision. So John directly connects Jesus as Jehovah.

D. Jesus (& writer of Hebrews)

Now I’ll have you do one. Let’s start quoting Psalm 23 together: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,” (Psalm 23:1-2, NIV) - Guess what Hebrew word is used for “Lord” in verse 1 – YHWH or Jehovah!!! – Correctly translated Ps 23:1 says Jehovah is my shepherd. Did Jesus ever apply this to himself? John 10:11, Jesus said "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:14, Jesus said "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—". (And Heb 13:20 confirms this was common knowledge of Jewish believers when it calls the risen Lord Jesus “that great Shepherd of the sheep.”). Even Jesus directly equates himself with Jehovah. Turn to John 20.

E. Thomas

I’m not sure why we call him “doubting Thomas” when all he really wanted was some objective, tangible evidence for this outlandish claim of an incredible miracle? It is not every day someone claims that a person tortured to death has risen bodily from the dead. What did Thomas say when he saw the risen Jesus? Jn 20:28 "My Lord and my God!” Jesus is God – and there is only one true God!!!

III. Old Testament confirmation

The Old Testament actually confirms this for us if we look closely.

B. Jehovah Redeemer (Jehovah Sabaoth)

Isa 44:6
Read Isa 44:6. The KJV and the NASB both translate this more literally “the Lord [Jehovah], the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts [Jehovah Saba-oth]”. In other words there is a differentiation between Jehovah and his redeemer Jehovah. This passage also makes it clear there is ONLY one God. So we have a picture of the Trinity here – One God in three persons. So whether we focus on this unusual literal wording that comes through in the KJV or NASB OR whether we focus on the titles of Redeemer, Israel’s King and first & last which is equally applied to Jehovah alone in OT and Jesus alone in the NT we see in the OT a confirmation that Jesus is God – the one and only true God. Lastly let’s turn to Jer 23.

A. Jehovah our Righteousness (Jehovah Tsidkenu) Jer 23:5-6
READ 23:5-6a – Clearly this is a description of the coming Messiah or coming Christ that the OT prophets foretold would come to change the world. Now let’s continue to see what that Christ would be called. READ 6b. He would be called “Jehovah Our Righteousness” or in Hebrew “YHWH Tsidkenu”. Again we see this distinction between Jehovah (in 5a) and Jehovah our Righteousness whom the first Jehovah would send BUT there is only one true God. Again this is another foreshadowing of the awesome truth we call the Trinity – Father, Son & Holy Spirit, just One God, the true God.

When we say that we believe that “Jesus is divine”, “Jesus is deity” or “Jesus is God” some people in our day try to reduce these to wimpy meanings that simply aren’t there like Jesus is just a great teacher or great example of humanity. But when we say Jesus is Jehovah – the name for God that is only ever used for the one and only true God – there is no wiggle room. Yes! The man Jesus Christ who graces the pages of the NT is the God Jehovah whose mighty works are written in the OT. His deity can not be disputed. Yes! Jesus is Jehovah. But so is God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. There is only one God. This one God is expressed in TRINITY – one God in three persons, not three gods. And if that ever confuses you, why would you think it should be different – if we could figure the trinity out easily then humans could have created this idea. Of course we won’t figure the Trinity out in this lifetime. We are too finite to understand all of the infinite. Yes! Jesus is Jehovah. The Jehovah Witnesses are wrong when they say Jesus is not Jehovah and the Mormons are wrong when they say God, the Father is not Jehovah. We may not understand all that this signifies, but we can recognize that Jesus is truly King of kings, Lord of lords, Redeemer, The Holy One, The First & Last, ….. and God – not any God, not a lesser God, but the one and only true God of the Universe. And when we do that, then we can genuinely surrender our lives to follow Jesus in faith and find the abundant life our inner beings so long for. To God be the Glory AMEN!