

“Difficult” Scriptures

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For those areas where we have congregations, I have passed out, as I typically would do, an outline of my sermon notes, and it's a condensation of what I have prepared. The notes today are three pages, and chances are reasonable (in fact, I'll take my watch off just to help it be more reasonable) that I may only get to pages one and two, because pages one and two are about the record of God and Jesus Christ in scripture, and the title today is:

“Difficult” Scriptures

I put it in quotes because some of the scriptures are difficult only because somebody poured mud in the stream, so to speak. With mud in the stream you have to ask what's in the water, and then they must explain to you what's there because you can't see it for yourself. If you take the mud out of the stream and it runs clear, then you don't have to ask what's in the stream—you can read your Bible and it's clear. I think some scriptures that are difficult have been made difficult as compared to others that are naturally so. Within my notes, pages 1 and 2 are about the record of God and Christ in scripture—different elements of that subject depending on how fast this goes. Page 3 is about the nature of the physical and spirit creations. I actually started the sermon with what's on page 3 but then I kept adding things to pages 1 and 2, so at this point I'll either break off at some point and continue that on another day, or if it flows through quickly then I'll just go as far as I can. Since these are sets of scriptures it's not like an entire story flow; I can actually break off at whatever point I need. I just want to explain, for those who have notes, and are wondering why I didn't use my notes, that I'm giving you a bonus. I'm giving you something to consider before I speak next.

Each of us has learned the things we have in a variety of ways. Some of what we learned came because of what we were taught (and there are different sources for that), and some of what we learned came from studying on our own—just reading our own Bible for ourselves. But even then, some of what we learned wasn't the same. We could sit in church services, hear the same message, and pick up different things. So you never know when someone says, I never believed that, or, that's what I was taught—it depends on where those different teachings came from. There were things I believed and could prove, coming into the church and beginning to study the Bible, and they were pretty basic—the Sabbath, the holy days—I could read about them, I could prove them, I could show them to somebody. But then there were things that I simply accepted as true, and most of those would have been in the prophetic areas because I really couldn't prove or tell you where the tribes of Israel were by historical reference, or what were the resurrections of the Roman Empire. I asked my history professor in college (Ambassador College, the church's college back then), “Are all those resurrections of the Roman Empire what you saw from history, before you were in the

church of God?" He hesitated a bit and said, "I think so." That was very unconvincing to me, so my point is not that they weren't obvious to someone who had historical knowledge, but that those were things somebody told me, and I believed them and I accepted them. For me, over the years, effectively, if I gave a sermon on prophesy it was probably from a booklet. If I could speak about how to live this Christian life, that's something I could read for myself. Before I was in the church of God, they taught us not to lie, cheat or steal. I wasn't responsive to that but that's what we were taught. There are different things that I learned in different ways, and there are different levels of what was internalized and what I simply accepted as true. For me, again, how to live this Christian life came from scripture; prophetic understanding came from the church. Looking back, I think I trusted the church too much and God too little. I trusted too much when somebody told me what the answer was, and not enough to be able to read the Bible and just see it for myself. In recent years, I've tried to go back and find things that would help to clear the silt out of the stream and just believe the truth because it's there.

One of the things I was taught early on in the church of God was the word of God is the foundation of knowledge. I liked that and I still like that. That was helpful to me. What I would now add to that is, the record of God and Jesus Christ in scripture is the foundation of the word of God. You have a body of knowledge based on scripture but the scripture is based on the record of God and Christ in scripture—that's the basis. If you do not have that, then the implication of that will not come clear. You will have silt in the stream forever, with somebody saying, here's where that is and here's what this means and here's what you understand, instead of being able to simply look clearly and see what's in that stream for yourself.

If you think, though, if you know who God and Christ are in scripture—again, it runs the stream clear, so to speak—if you think God the Father in the Old Testament is actually Jesus Christ, then all of a sudden the Bible becomes a maze of assumptions and contradictions, and you have to have somebody tell you what you're reading: Well, here's what that means; this is not really so; here's the answer over here. Or quite frankly, recently, there have even been times when I'm listening to a message and the scripture is actually being misquoted, and you don't turn there because that's what we've always understood, therefore it rings true, or seems like it's true. I think we need to be very cautious about that. These are very, very important things.

If you believe, again, that God the Father, in the Old Testament, is actually Jesus Christ, then at some point you're going to believe that the High Priest on the Day of Atonement took the blood of the sacrifice and placed it at Jesus Christ's feet. It doesn't work. It doesn't line up. It doesn't make sense! So in the end, what you're not even going to understand, apart from what the actual record is, is what the holy days fully represent. These are very serious things.

In Acts 8, the Ethiopian eunuch had been to Jerusalem, he was returning home, and God sent Philip to engage him. He was sitting in his chariot, reading from the book of Isaiah—Isaiah 53. Philip approached him and asked, do you understand what you're

reading? The eunuch replied, how can I unless someone guides me? It says, Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this scripture where he was reading, quoted or preached Jesus to him, and eventually in response, the eunuch said, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. That conception did not come from being in Jerusalem to hear the teachers. That conception came from God working through his mind, and Philip showing him what he was reading and what it meant.

The eunuch was reading Isaiah 53, verses 7 and 8 (“He was led as a lamb to the slaughter...”), and Isaiah 53, verses 9 and 10 (“He had done no violence ... yet it pleased Yehovah to bruise him.”) When the eunuch said, I believe Jesus Christ is the son of God, he understood who Yehovah was. He understood that Yehovah was the one who became the Father of Jesus Christ and he came to understand that it was Jesus Christ who was sent. The eunuch had been to Jerusalem and hadn’t been told what the answer was, but he learned from reading the scripture when Philip pointed it out to him, God working with his mind, that Yehovah now had a son, and at that point, the stream for the eunuch began to run clear. He could read the book of Isaiah, he could read some of the prophecies in Psalms, and he could now recognize there was a relationship laid out in scripture that he could see. He didn’t have to have someone now continuously say, here’s what that means. Brethren, that’s a very important process. When God opens your mind to understand, you have a choice. You can grasp it, you can respond to it, or you can turn away and bury it in the sand. The Bible is very clear about what God’s intention is for us in understanding these things.

In John chapter 9 we have a different account. Jesus healed a man who had been blind from birth and it was on a Sabbath. The Pharisees got very angry and they questioned the parents of the man who was healed, but the parents were afraid to answer. They said, look, he’s an adult, go talk to him for yourselves. So the Pharisees sought him out and examined him, and he did answer. They didn’t like the answer. So they kicked him out of the synagogue. In John 9:35, I want to read through the part where Christ then returns to the one whom He had healed.

John 9:35 *Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” (NKJV)*

This is basically the same question that the Ethiopian eunuch came to. This conception comes when you understand what the scriptures actually mean and God opens your mind to see it. “Do you believe in the Son of God?”

36) *He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”*

37) *And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”*

38) *Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.*

39) *And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.” (NKJV)*

Literally, in the process of accountability, there are people who are going to have their minds opened, and there are people who are going to have their minds closed, based on what their response is going to be.

40) *Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?"* (NKJV)

Certainly the leaders couldn't be blind, right? The leaders, the ones who teach us these things?

41) *Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.* (NKJV)

To him who knows to do good and does not do it, it is sin. We become accountable for the understanding that God has given us.

It's an amazing process to watch the church of God, to watch understanding begin to be funneled into the church by God's own mercy and grace, and then watch the choices people make. Some people turn and run, some people hide from it and go away, and some people embrace it and are rejoicing. The people who have embraced it in recent times have actually made statements like, this is like a first love all over again, and the flame is burning into brightness, and it's exciting. That's not what it's like if you choose to go back to sleep. These are important things. You don't need to know Greek and Hebrew to follow the basic threads of scripture. They are helpful to know, and there are words in the Bible that you can research to see what the actual meaning of the word is, but I'm talking about the basic threads of scripture.

My initial studies—they would go back, now, maybe five or six years, as I began to do more focused study on the record of God and Jesus Christ—were simply to see what terms God and Jesus Christ had in common, and by contrast, which were exclusive and unique. I learned "Savior" was a term they had in common and it shocked me because we had never had a sermon, that I can remember, on God the Father being our Savior. Frankly, outside of this context, I haven't heard one since either. It was shocking to me that our Savior is God the Father, and our Savior is also Jesus Christ. One offered the sacrifice, one was the sacrifice. That was a term that was held in common. "God Almighty" was unique. Everybody can't be the Almighty, and you can't have more than one Almighty. Again, that wasn't culled from Greek and Hebrew, that was just simply from looking at the text. I began to add them all up and put them in order. The "living God" was also unique. Every reference in the Bible—there were thirty in my New King James, split between the Old and New Testaments—every single one of them was the same.

I want to start with this "difficult" scripture because it's not difficult at all. It is only difficult because somebody poured mud in the stream, with the result that you can't see it, you have to ask them what the answer is, and when they tell you, it will seem true (because you've heard it so often before), but the honest answer is, you can't muddy this one up if

you're just reading it by yourself—you would see it, and you would have to have somebody tell you it's not true in order to misunderstand it. So I want to go through it; I've addressed a little of this subject before but some of what I'm doing today is going back and reinforcing the various threads. In Matthew chapter 16, verse 13, I want to start there, because this is so fundamental and so basic.

Matthew 16:13 *When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"*

14) *So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

15) *He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

16) *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (NKJV)*

The one the living God has anointed, the one the living God has sent.

17) *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (NKJV)*

My Father, the living God. You can start walking through those references, everywhere you go, front to back, and they're all going to be the same. The reason this is important is because the story has been given that these things are not actually so. Well, they are so, and again, you'll have to see it for yourself. Deuteronomy 5 is the second giving of the Ten Commandments, and starting here in verse 22,

Deuteronomy 5:22 *"These words the LORD [Yehovah] spoke to all your assembly ... (NKJV)*

If you believe that there are two Yehovahs then you're going to sort this according to your pleasure. Part of what I want to do today is to go to some of the scriptures and make it very clear who, specifically, Yehovah is.

22 repeated) *"These words the LORD [Yehovah] spoke to all your assembly in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. [Moses, making the record.]*

23) *"So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders.*

24) *And you said: "Surely the LORD our God ... (NKJV)*

Now, *the LORD our God* is kind of important here—I'll come back to that.

24 repeated) *“Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives.*

25) *Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD [Yehovah] our God anymore, then we shall die.*

26) *For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?*

27) *You go near and hear all that the LORD [Yehovah] our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD [Yehovah] our God says to you, and we will hear and do it.’ (NKJV)*

Obviously if Jesus Christ is walking around on the earth and He’s stopping and talking to people, and giving them information and instruction, and they’re dining with Him, then to hear his voice isn’t exactly an earthshaking event. This reference above is not to Jesus Christ, this is describing the living God—it says so. The Bible is consistent on that record. Then you go back to Deuteronomy 5, at the beginning of the passage [verse 6], where it says, I am Yehovah your God, and at the end of the passage, in verse 24, it says, surely Yehovah our God has shown us His glory. So God the Father says, I am your God, and Israel replies, You are our God. That’s the exchange. Yehovah our God is in Deuteronomy twenty-three times. Yehovah your God, I am Yehovah your God, is in Deuteronomy 280 times. It’s all the same reference. It is continuous.

Israel’s God, the one who gave them the Ten Commandments, was the living God, and that’s God the Father—the Father of Jesus Christ. That’s just what the Bible says. To get someone to say, that’s not what this really says, you have to pour mud in the stream, you have to get it all silted up, and then you have to ask, what can be the answer? Well, the answer is, it means what it says. You don’t need Hebrew and Greek to understand it. What’s interesting is that the record of scripture itself, of God speaking to His people, is the thread that unravels the whole sweater. You pull that thread and the entire argument that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament unravels.

Let’s go forward a little bit, to Genesis 22. Again, you don’t need Greek and Hebrew, you just need to believe what is there and what it says, then you can see it for yourself. The account in Genesis 22 is considered a difficult passage but it’s actually quite clear.

Genesis 22:1 *Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”*

2) *Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” (NKJV)*

The temple was on Mount Moriah in the time of Solomon and David, and in Herod’s time during the New Testament. These are the mountains of Moriah and the chances are quite high, I would say, that where God told Abraham to take Isaac is the same place where the Temple would ultimately be built at a later date. That’s not an absolute,

but the reference to the location appears to be the same, and I think very much that's what God intended and what was going to take place. We're in Genesis 22; let's go down to verse 9.

Genesis 22:9 *Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.*

10) *And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.*

11) *But the Angel [the malak] ... (NKJV)*

The malak is the messenger—you've got to understand at some point in time we're reading the English and we need to understand the basis for the translation. There is no class of beings called malaks. That word connotes the actions and responsibilities of a messenger. The fact is it can apply to various things. Most of the time it applies to what we would consider a spirit being or an angel, but actually the label "malak" is not a reference to the nature of such beings, it is a reference to their responsibilities—they are messengers.

11 repeated) *But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." (NKJV)*

When you go on down through here and you begin to reference this, God the Father is clearly intervening in a way that shows Abraham what His purpose is, verse 12. The Angel is now speaking.

12) *And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." (NKJV)*

The argument, if you believe Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament, is that the Angel is Jesus Christ—and the Angel probably was Jesus Christ, because He was the messenger—so therefore the Angel that was commanding Abraham to offer his son was the God of the Old Testament. What is it that a malak does? He brings a message. When a malak arrives and delivers a message, he's telling you what he was given to say. In some cases, it's prefaced by, here's what God says. In some cases he just simply delivers the message. It's the decree. He declares it: This is from God, the Father. Going on down, what's the argument now? The argument here is that the Angel's name is Yehovah. Sometimes a malak appears to be Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, sometimes it doesn't. There are angels that are clearly not Jesus Christ. Those are sometimes matters of interpretation, and I recognize and accept that. I'll say this, in the record of scripture, Yehovah was never a malak. He was never the one who had the message that was given to Him. He was the one who gave the message to one of His servants, Jesus Christ specifically being the Servant of God. Genesis 22, down in verse 15, goes on further.

15) *Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,*

16) *and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD ... (NKJV)*

This is given in a slightly different context, in terms of He's now quoting what Yehovah gave Him to say.

16 continued) ... *because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son—*

17) *blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.*

18) *In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."* (NKJV)

Because you obeyed the voice of God the Father, and the message He gave to his messenger that was then delivered. It's interesting, as you go through this and you begin to walk down through, it says, in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

Notice what it said back in verse 16. *By myself I have sworn, says [Yehovah] the LORD.* This is referenced in the New Testament. Let's go to Hebrews 6 and confirm it. I heard once that the decision that Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament is a matter of reasoning, where you have to take a body of all these different things and you have to weigh them against each other, and decide which ones to give more weight to or not, and then you make the reasoned judgment that these things are so. It's not true. The Bible is the revelation of God. The living God is who the Bible says He is and this is what He does. It isn't just a matter of reasoning and judgment, it's a matter of believing, literally, from the text. God, back in Genesis 22, said He swore an oath, so let's go to Hebrews 6, verse 13. It says,

Hebrews 6:13 *For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater [here's the oath, this is the reference, it takes you right back to Genesis], He swore by Himself ... (NKJV)*

Who only could not swear by anyone greater? God the Father. Could Jesus Christ swear by someone greater? Yes, God the Father was greater—God the Father had no one greater. Because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself—this is God the Father.

14) *saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you."*
15) *And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. (NKJV)*

So, it isn't a matter of judgment—putting things together and then using one thing to interpret the other—it's a matter of once you have the answer, once you put it in the right order, everything is going to match in place. Again, some scriptures and passages seem difficult mainly because someone was pouring silt in the stream. I hope we can let some of that wash out and just see how the record reads.

Go back to Exodus then, in this case chapter 23. This is one that I honestly think has been blended up a little bit compared to just what the clear record of it actually is. Exodus 23—we'll label this one a "difficult" passage for the sake of understanding it more clearly.

Exodus 23:20 *"Behold, I send an Angel before you ... (NKJV)*

This is a malak, and this Angel—this Messenger—I believe, does appear to be Jesus Christ, the one God is using to assist Him in leading Israel. But who sends Him then? Jesus did not send Himself, so the "I" in the scripture is God the Father. *I* (God the Father) *send an Angel before you*, and I would just say that this Angel would appear to be Jesus Christ. That's a judgment, with discernment—I'm not going to demand it but let's just use it the way it is written; in that context, I would agree.

20 continued) *... to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.*

21) *Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him.*

22) *But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. (NKJV)*

The argument, again, is that the Angel's name is Yehovah and that God the Father is not actually speaking here. Like I've said, you take that thread, that God the Father actually does speak, pull it, and the entire sweater comes loose on the argument that Jesus is the God of the Old Testament. The Emperor has no clothes and is exposed—the sweater has unraveled. I pulled on the string and what we believed before is no longer true.

The secondary argument—quite frankly used sometimes in a way that goes beyond what's intended—is that the Angel here has the authority to forgive sin. So ask yourself, regarding Exodus 23, where it says, *He will not pardon your transgressions*, does that mean that the Angel has the power to forgive sin? I don't have a problem with the Angel, the Messenger, if it's Jesus Christ, having the power to forgive sin by the authority of God the Father—that's not an issue for me. But let's just ask, did God the Father pardon Israel's sins? Excuse me, the blood of bulls and goats?—it isn't possible. Israel wasn't remitted of their sins in the Old Testament. What they had was a relationship based on obedience. Thus if they obeyed God, God would turn and bless them. When they disobeyed God then God punished and cursed them to turn them back. Only a line of prophets and individuals whom God called—among them Abraham and David—were receiving the Holy Spirit, and called in such a way that God was going to remove their sins upon their repentance. The honest answer is that God the Father wasn't removing Israel's sins. The idea that somehow this changes the dynamic here—no, it doesn't. What it means is you do what He says, because if you don't, he won't tolerate that. He will turn around and punish you if you turn away, because that's what God Himself was doing, and with that there is no change.

I want to show you who “I” is. It’s not that foggy if you read the passage. Where does the passage start? Go back to Exodus 20. *I am Yehovah your God*. It says, you are our God. Paul said, I worship the God of our fathers—the one whom his fathers worshipped. Exodus 20:2—I am Yehovah your God. This is stated in the first person, and there is no messenger being portrayed. Let’s start with that. Exodus 20:22.

Exodus 20:22 *Then [Yehovah] the LORD said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven.’* (NKJV)

This is still Yehovah your God, this is God the Father, the living God from Deuteronomy who spoke. No change in the context. All the players remain the same in this story. All you have to do is walk through it. Now you have Exodus, chapters 20 through 23, where Yehovah continues His instructions to Moses. There is no change—nobody came and changed roles or positions, the context is exactly the same—and then you get back to Exodus 23, and verse 20, where it says, *Behold, I send an Angel before you*. The “I” is God the Father and the “Angel” is His messenger, and then it says:

21) Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. (NKJV)

The Angel is not the one who is talking to Moses. It says right here, Yehovah, God the Father, is talking to Moses about the Angel. So God the Father is the one who spoke the commandments. That’s what the Bible says. (You would have to have someone tell you it didn’t say that in order to believe it any other way.) It does say that, and as I said, take that thread and pull on it, and the whole sweater will come undone because of one verse. It says, *My name is in Him*. What does that mean, if God’s name is in you? When you pray to God, do you pray in someone’s name? You’re praying to God the Father but you are praying in the name of Jesus—“In Jesus’ name we pray, amen”—right? There’s an authority there. We pray according to this authority because these are the instructions God has given.

To say that My name is in Him, I believe, means God’s authority is in that Angel—you had better do what He says because I am telling Him what to do; He has My authority, He has My power; He has My might that is behind Him. Now, regarding God’s authority in the Angel, let’s just look at a verse, Psalm 118. The Bible actually works together and matches. It’s Psalm 118, and verse 22. When it says, My name is in Him, does that mean His name is the same as My name? It doesn’t say that, and frankly, that violates all the rest of scripture. It says,

Psalm 118:22 *The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.* (NKJV)

We know who that is—Jesus Christ—no question about that.

23) *This was the LORD's [Yehovah's] doing; (NKJV)*

Excuse me, God the Father is the one who made Christ the chief cornerstone; of course He did!

23 continued) ... *It is marvelous in our eyes.*

24) *This is the day the LORD [Yehovah] has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

25) *Save now, I pray, O LORD [Yehovah]; O LORD [Yehovah], I pray, send now prosperity.*

26) *Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD [Yehovah]! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD [Yehovah].*

27) *God is the LORD [Yehovah] ... (NKJV)*

God is Yehovah. How can that be missed? I'm simply using the term, best as I can pronounce it, as it is written in the original Hebrew, so that it doesn't kind of blend over into a generic term like "master" or "lord"; I'm simply trying to show that the context is distinct and specific. Who came in the name of God the Father? Jesus Christ. Who is Yehovah? God the Father. It says, God is Yehovah. He's the one who selected, or who sent, Jesus Christ.

So now you have Yehovah, God the Father, sending an Angel. Who sent the Angel? Yehovah, God the Father—it's the same. God's name could possibly, may well also be, in the Angel's name. But that isn't given to us in this particular passage. But just think it through. The name Jesus is derived from Greek (*Iesus*), and in English, its equivalent would be Joshua, and Joshua in the Hebrew is *Yehoshua*, the shorter form of which is *Yeshua*. So the fact is (and I've had this expressed to me) when they stepped out the door to call Jesus inside for lunch, they didn't call Him "Jesus", they called out His name in the language that they spoke. Regardless of that, the point is this: The name *Yehoshua*, with its variations of *Yeshua*, *Jesus*, and *Joshua*, means "Yehovah is salvation" or "Yehovah saves". God's name was in Joshua, Jesus, and Yeshua. I would just say, when it says My name is in Him, I think there are two things we can consider. One, He has My authority, My instruction and My direction, so you'd better pay attention to Him. And two, it is very possible that the Angel's name is such that God's name was in Him, though His actual name (the name of the Angel) isn't revealed in this passage.

If you have access to the [Bible Topical Index](#) that I published, you can go to page 100 and you will find a section under "Messiah; Anointed; Christ" that says, "Name—In Relation to God the Father", and there are thirty-two entries. Not thirty two-different names, but thirty-two entries of scriptures. Let me show you the kind of thing that now takes place in scripture; let's take Jeremiah 23:5. This is an example where God's name is in Jesus Christ, and it's in the Old Testament, and it's a different example. There are actually a number of these that are scattered in different places.

Jeremiah 23:5 *Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD [Yehovah], "that I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; (NKJV)*

That Branch is Jesus Christ. Who is going to raise Him? God the Father. (You can't walk around it, you can only ignore it, and try to go somewhere else and say, here's what that really means.) If you read it, there's no way out of what is being referenced.

5 continued) ... *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 [the Branch of righteousness] will be called: THE LORD [YEHOVAH] OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (NKJV)*

God's name is going to be in Him, the same as it is in Yehoshua, the same as it's in Yeshua, the same as it's in Joshua and Jesus. His name means "God the Father is salvation" or "God the Father saves". Now we have it spelled out in verse 6: God the Father is our righteousness. There are layers of this in the Bible. Like I said, go to the Index—thirty-two entries—you can consider the scriptures there, and there will be various references to what appeared to me to be Jesus Christ. In this case, there is no appearance at all, it is simply spelled out so that we can understand these things.

Look at Psalm 83. Again, these aren't the scriptures that we're going to be turning to if we're trying to throw mud in the stream, because these are way too clear and too hard to walk away from. Psalm 83, verse 16. I'm breaking into this without the full context because I want to get to the point.

Psalm 83:16 *Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Your name, O LORD [Yehovah].*

17) *Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; yes, let them be put to shame and perish,*

18) *that they may know that You, whose name alone is [Yehovah] the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth. (NKJV)*

Your name, alone, is Yehovah, and You are the Most High over all the earth. *Most High* is a relative term. Most High what? He is the Most High God over all the earth—I am God, and you shall have no other gods before Me; I am the Most High. He's higher than Jesus Christ. You know what? Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. God the Father—I do not change, says Yehovah. God the Father has always been the Most High. He's never not been the Most High. Do you think if They were equal somehow, one stepping down would be a change? I think that would be a big change. Scripture does not indicate that that ever took place. This is a relationship that has been continuous. Jesus has always been God's Servant. He has always been.

If Yehovah is Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, and if Jesus is the Most High God over all the earth, then God the Father was not supreme. Is that a big issue? That is a very big issue. What difference does it make? I will ask you, is this just something we can't really understand, where we kind of don't know? Are God and Christ one in a way that we don't know, but we just know that They're one? What is amazing to me is the

argument (and I've heard this made) that They really can't be together—how can you put Them in the same place together? (What do you mean? I thought They were one!) Oh no, if God the Father is on earth, then Jesus Christ has to be in heaven—I've heard people say that. Excuse me, what Bible are you reading? If They are one, you would think They would like to be together, you would think They would want to be together, you would think They would work perfectly together. Well, They do, and They are together. Now, are They always together? Well, that's up to God and His will. I've heard it asked, "What difference does it make—is this something we can really understand?" This is actually a very serious matter, and I'll tell you why. In the church of God we have taken the glory of God the Father and we have attributed it to Jesus Christ—that is a problem. That is a serious problem. Let's look at Isaiah 42. It is a very serious issue. Isaiah 42, verse 8.

Isaiah 42:8 *I am [Yehovah] the LORD, that is My name; and My glory I will not give to another ... (NKJV)*

God the Father is the highest God—the Most High God—He's the supreme being. He says He will not give His glory to another. Jesus Christ does not have the full glory of God the Father or They would both be the same. In the binity They are kind of the same; you blend Them together how you like, but that's not how this works.

Another difficult scripture, with somebody pouring mud in the stream, is Isaiah 63:7. This is again what they call a theophany. I don't know, I'm not even sure what the term means because I don't have it in scripture, but it kind of means the appearance of God in scripture, and it's used as a generic term. The scripture just says:

Isaiah 63:7 *I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses.*
8) *For He [this is Yehovah] said, "Surely they are My people, children who will not lie." So He became their Savior. (NKJV)*

God saved Israel out of Egypt. He redeemed them with what? Payment was made with the blood of the firstborn of the Egyptians. That was the price, the redemption. God the Father is the Redeemer. It was Jesus Christ's blood in redemption in the New Testament. When you see *Redeemer*, it's God the Father. God so loved the world that He, as the Redeemer, gave His only begotten Son. The fact that Christ became the sacrifice is the redemption. Christ is the price. God is the one who paid it, and paid it with His own Son. Going on down,

9) *In all their affliction He was afflicted ... (NKJV)*

Who? God the Father was afflicted. Christ said if you've seen Me, you've seen the Father. If you reject Me, you've rejected the Father. If you abuse Me, you're abusing the One who sent Me. That's how that works.

9 continued) ... *and the Angel of His Presence* [whose presence?—God the Father's presence—the messenger, the Angel] *saved them*; (NKJV)

They are both Saviors; *Savior* is a title used in common. In the New Testament, in the Old Testament, it's used in common. They both fulfill that role.

9 continued) ... *in His love and in His pity He redeemed them* [God the Father is the Redeemer]; *and He bore them and carried them all the days of old.*
10) *But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit*; (NKJV)

Whose Holy Spirit is it? God the Father's. It's all consistent; again, it works perfectly, unless somebody has to come tell you that's not really what's in that stream.

10 continued) ... *So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.* (NKJV)

We go on down and begin to walk through this. In verse 9, we see the word Angel with a capital "A"—I realize that's a translation decision, but I want to point out to you that the translators are not afraid to make a decision as to who they think this is. Then we see the word Presence, with a capital "P", which again is the choice of the translators. The translators are telling us that they think the Angel and the Presence are divine beings and that's how they are referencing those in the text. They are willing to look at this and say, this is God, according to their understanding of the text.

The argument then—even though you have the Father as Redeemer and Jesus Christ as the Redemption—the interpretation of this scripture in Isaiah 63 is that Christ was the one who brought Israel out of Egypt and the Father wasn't there—They couldn't be together, as if God is saying, I don't want to be seen with you, Son, until you get your act together or something—and this just doesn't make recognizable sense. When we read 1 Corinthians 10:4, it says *that Rock was Christ*. Do we believe Christ was there? We do believe it, because the Bible says He was there. Do we believe that God the Father was there? Yes, we do. Christ said it was God who spoke to Moses—God was there. Christ is the one who said so, and it works. If we don't have to have somebody telling us otherwise, we would understand, and we would understand clearly.

Now go down to Isaiah 63, verse 10. I read it and I want to transition over to a couple more verses. This is where, all of a sudden, the stream has to be mucked up a little bit to give the answer that supports the errors in interpretation.

Isaiah 63:10 *But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; so He turned Himself against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.*

11) *Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying: "Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within them ...* (NKJV)

Now we have the argument made that Jesus Christ is the Shepherd of God's flock, and He's the one who brought them up out of the sea, so all these references now go back to Jesus Christ, trumping any other explanation that is in place. Sometimes you do have to go look at the Hebrew to see what it says. In verse 11, the word *shepherd* is actually plural. Even though the translators capitalized Angel and Presence, they did not capitalize shepherd. That's not proof, but that tells us they were willing to consider, and here they don't think it should be capitalized. Why? Because the honest answer is, it is plural and it isn't a reference to Jesus Christ. Biblehub.com has 28 versions of this verse. Fifteen of them are translated *shepherds*—plural. Two of them are translated *leaders*—plural. Not one of the twenty-eight is capitalized. Not every version uses capitalization, but I'm just saying, nobody believes that's Jesus Christ, and they don't even include it as a reference that way; the fact is, it is plural, and most versions recognize it. God brought Israel out of Egypt with the leaders of His people, that's all it means. The only people who do believe this is Jesus Christ are within the church of God. Not all of them believe it, and neither do I, anymore, because it simply doesn't hold up in scripture. Let's just keep reading, in verse 12. Who is the subject here?

12) *Who led them by the right hand of Moses, with His glorious arm, dividing the water before them to make for Himself an everlasting name ...* (NKJV)

So Moses was one of the shepherds who led, but not the only one.

13) *Who led them through the deep, as a horse in the wilderness, that they might not stumble?"*

14) *As a beast goes down into the valley, and the Spirit of [Yehovah] the LORD causes him to rest, so You lead Your people, to make Yourself a glorious name.* (NKJV)

Then notice verses 15 and 16—same passage, same context, same individuals:

15) *Look down from heaven, and see from Your habitation, holy and glorious. Where are Your zeal and Your strength, the yearning of Your heart and Your mercies toward me? Are they restrained?*

16) *Doubtless You are our Father, though Abraham was ignorant of us, and Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O LORD [Yehovah], are our Father; our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name.* (NKJV)

I have added a comma after *Redeemer* in my Bible in order to get it to read the way I think is accurate, because I believe the way that this reads, with a comma added for a pause, should be: You, O Yehovah, are our Father; Our Redeemer, from Everlasting is Your name. It doesn't mean, our Redeemer from Everlasting is Your name. It just means, from Everlasting is Your name. What is His name? His name is Yehovah, and it makes perfect sense. Nobody believes *the shepherd* is Jesus Christ except the church of God, and honestly that argument can't be sustained, because the word isn't even singular; it doesn't mean one individual, and the context is the leaders, including Moses. Obviously Christ was there—that's not denied. That Rock was Christ, He was there, He

and the Father were together. Were They always together? I don't know. Sometimes God wants us to focus on Him, and sometimes God wants us to focus on His Messenger—His Servant. It depends on the context.

Let's go to Acts 7. There are stacks of these types of scriptures that all match but if you reverse one you have to reverse the others, and then you can't quite talk about that loose thread on the sweater, the fact God the Father has actually spoken—it says so, Christ said so, the record says so—because if you actually go and admit that, you can no longer contain the unraveling of a story which just isn't so. Acts 7:38—let me start in verse 37 and then go forward.

Acts 7:37 *This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel [this is Stephen, making his argument before they kill him], 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.'*
38) *"This is he ... (NKJV)*

Who is "he"? The Prophet? No, the subject is Moses. This is he—Moses—

38 continued) *... who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai ... (NKJV)*

When did He speak to him? I don't know for sure. I'm not sure where that account is or if we even have that account remaining. I believe it because it says so. It says the Angel—excuse me, it means messenger; does the messenger speak? Yes, the messenger does speak, that's what He does—He speaks. It says the Angel spoke to him on Mount Sinai. So it's Moses who is in the congregation, in the wilderness, with the Angel who spoke to him, and it was Moses who was with our fathers. It was Moses,

38 continued) *... who received the living oracles to give to us,*
39) *whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,*
40) *saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'* (NKJV)

The whole argument and the thread is talking about Moses. Stephen is making the case—what happened, what God did, what Moses's responsibility was. It was Moses in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him, it was Moses who was with the fathers. He was the one who received the living oracles. He had the Ten Commandments, in the finger of God, written in stone, whom our fathers would not obey but rejected, saying, where is this man—we don't know what has become of him. That's how that reads, actually, if you want to read it the way it says.

This is the first sermon I've actually made it through in record time, so the third page of the notes is simply a continuation of scriptures, and I'd like to just go on to the nature of the physical and spirit creations.

This next scripture was pointed out to me, and I was asked if I would consider going into and addressing some of these things. In 2 Corinthians 4, verse 16, Paul is writing,

2 Corinthians 4:16 *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*

17) *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*

18) *while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. [Here's the point] For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (NKJV)*

So now the question comes up, is the physical creation—the things we can see—going to go away and disappear completely, and be replaced by things we cannot see, by spirit existence, which will replace it and then we will go on in that way? Let's just take a look at what the record is. In my notes I've broken this out into different sets of scriptures, scriptures that say that the physical creation and the heavens are going to pass away; and then scriptures that say they are going to be changed; and then scriptures that say they are going to be made new; and then you go back, and read, "will pass away", and in context that means their form or condition is going to change. So the physical doesn't cease to exist and then be replaced by all things spiritual (which is the story I was told when I began to attend the church of God), and I want to show you that. Let's go to Isaiah 51 and start with "pass away". Verse 6.

Isaiah 51:6 *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished. (NKJV)*

That seems to indicate that it's going to go away and cease to exist—pass away. Take the word "salvation"; there are people who are saved; there are people who are being saved; there are people who will be saved—it depends on how the reference is used.

Matthew 24:32 *Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.*

33) *So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!*

34) *Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.*

35) *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away. (NKJV)*

So that's a reference that leans towards the idea that this is all going to go away, it's all going to be replaced, and it's going to be something completely different.

Now let's look at the word "change". Let's go to Hebrews 1:10 on this reference.

Hebrews 1:10 ... *"You, LORD [Yehovah], 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."* (NKJV)

That's a slightly different approach. It is quoted from Psalm 102 in the Old Testament, which says the same thing: The heavens will perish but You will endure. The heavens will be changed. Okay, "pass away", in the English, has one sense; "changed", in the English, has another sense. Let's go to 2 Corinthians 5:17, and look at "made new".

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

18) *Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,*

19) *that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

(NKJV)

Here we have verse 17, which says, if you are in Christ, you are a new creation, but you don't go away, you change—*all things have become new*. It's a different type of reference but it's along the same thread. Revelation 21 connects with this very clearly, I believe. Revelation 21, verse 4.

Revelation 21:4 *And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

5) *Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."* (NKJV)

All of these concepts are related, but you're going from the English perception of "pass away" to the English understanding of "changed", then to the English understanding of "made new". What I'm saying is, we don't always have to go to Hebrew and Greek—it's very helpful at times—but if you just read the threads of scriptures that relate, at some point they work. They work together. God didn't make every one of us a scholar. He didn't make me one. I compiled an index because I couldn't remember scripture, not because I could. I had to make lists; I used to go and memorize scriptures before I counseled someone for baptism, to make sure to have those scriptures in my mind, otherwise they wouldn't be readily available. The more lists I made and the more subjects I made—at some point in time, the index took shape and began to expand. So I carry that index, the [Bible Topical Index](#), with me everywhere I go, if I am on a visit or if I'm doing something ministerial, because I might have to see what it is that it said, that I don't remember. It's a crutch—it's my crutch. You're welcome to share it but that's why I compiled it.

In terms of passing away, and that meaning “former condition” rather than “cease to exist”, let’s go to 2 Peter 3; I’ve been there in a reference to the new heavens and the new earth, and the changes that are going to take place at the beginning of the Millennium. In 2 Peter 3, verse 10, it says,

2 Peter 3:10 *But the day of the Lord ...* (NKJV)

This is interesting—there is no “the” in front of *Lord* here. It’s not the way that God the Father is referenced. Generally speaking—and there are grammatical rules and changes—but generally speaking, in the New Testament, if the Greek says, the God, it’s the Father. If the Greek says, the Lord, it’s Jesus Christ. But if it just says, God, by itself, that can be Christ, and if it just says, Lord, by itself, that’s actually Yehovah. Like I said, there are a few grammatical rules that are technical, but look at the body of them—if you have ten things and eight agree, go with the eight. Don’t go with the two for the purpose of arguing away the rest of the record. Don’t say Jesus Christ is also alive, to support the argument that He the living God.

So in verse 10, it says, the day of Yehovah ...

10 continued) *... will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.* (NKJV)

Does it mean burned up and ceasing to exist? It doesn’t mean that. You don’t cleanse anything by burning it up. Have you ever burned up something, and then it was clean when you were done? No, it’s a mess afterward. A fire does not cleanse anything, it just destroys and burns things up. The phrase “burned up” literally means “found”. You can go to the Greek and it will tell you what it means. In The New Living Translation, 2 Peter 3:10 is rendered this way:

2 Peter 3:10 *... the earth and everything in it will be found to deserve judgment.* (NLT)

That makes perfect sense, actually. I agree, there are problems with transmission, translation and interpretation. I understand that. At some point in time, this record is going to match and the stream will run clear. Let’s just back up in 2 Peter 3, to verse 5. What is the context of this passage?

2 Peter 3:5 *For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6) by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water.*

Did it cease to exist? No, it was changed. This passage is describing the Flood. The earth didn’t go away, the earth was right there; the water had to recede and then the earth was restored. So the previous two verses describe it being flooded with water.

7) *But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire ... (NKJV)*

For what? In the same way, as happened in the Flood, to be found in judgment and cleansed, not by cleansing spiritually but by God simply removing, from this earth, the body of people who are opposed to Him, and He is going to restart His Kingdom, or establish His Kingdom, by working with people who will not be opposed to Him. That's where this goes. So there is a parallel between the earth being "destroyed" by water and the earth being "destroyed" by fire—that of being found in judgment.

6 repeated) *... reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. (NKJV)*

Is that a difficult scripture? Only if someone says the answer isn't so, and here's what this means. No, the answer is quite clear. The verses immediately prior to it illustrate what God intended.

In the church of God, in terms of Satan's fate, the "holy grail" of scriptures is Revelation 20, verse 10. I'm not going to actually explain that to you today and I'm going to tell you why. There are a couple of problems in that verse. One problem in the verse is it says, they will be tormented forever and ever, and it is portraying only Satan being thrown in, so then you have to reach, you have to ask, what does it mean by "they", which is actually in the text—it's there. It says, they will be tormented. Excuse me, the Beast and the false prophet are thrown in and burnt up, it would seem. So that's a problem but it's a minor problem. I think that problem is very easy to address, but the biggest point is "forever and ever", and in the church of God, I believe that has never been fully addressed. In this case, forever and ever means "ages of the ages"—it is a reference to a very specific thing, because there are ages; there is the age of the ages; and there is the ages of the ages. In the Greek they are not the same. In the English they are; they are worded sometimes differently but we blend them all together.

Here's the point: We had a ministerial conference last February—Pacific Church of God—and we made an agreement. First we agree, then we teach, because we don't want someone saying, here is what that means, while somebody else says, no, this is what this means. If we can explain it to each other, then we can teach it, and people will understand. If we can't understand it between us, then how can we expect anyone to agree?

That is why Revelation 20:10 needs to be addressed by those who teach in Pacific Church of God, and there are arguments that need to be made; we have to first be able to teach it to each other, see it in agreement, and then we will go forward with it. So I'm not actually going to go there but I know that's the "holy grail". That outweighs every other scripture in the Bible, in many of our minds, because our focus sometimes has been a little bit simplistic, as in, it says right here that's what it means, so that's the end of it; no more death, no more whatever, no more sea, and no context. So I want to address what the record of scripture is for the judgment of Satan and the demons, and I

think I actually have the means, time-wise, to get this done. Let's go to Isaiah 24 to start with. The body of scriptures that agree are going to give you the answer.

Isaiah 24:17 *Fear and the pit and the snare are upon you, O inhabitant of the earth. (NKJV)*

We're reading now of the judgment at the very end, prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth.

18) *And it shall be that he who flees from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up from the midst of the pit shall be caught in the snare; for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth are shaken.*

19) *The earth is violently broken, the earth is split open, the earth is shaken exceedingly. (NKJV)*

Signs and wonders of the day of the LORD, and the things that go in that context.

20) *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall totter like a hut; its transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it will fall, and not rise again.*

21) *It shall come to pass in that day that the LORD [Yehovah] will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth. (NKJV)*

Those in heavenly places or heavenly offices, and those who are kings on the earth.

22) *They will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prison; after many days they will be punished. (NKJV)*

The record of scripture is, the physical people who are defying God are destroyed; their blood is running down the valleys and they are consumed—their flesh is consumed. In terms of those who are shut up in a pit, in prison, these are the demons and Satan: *after many days*—after the Millennium—*they will be punished.*

23) *Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD [Yehovah] of hosts will reign on Mount Zion [God's throne] and in Jerusalem [where the physical temple is going to be] and before His elders, gloriously. (NKJV)*

Just for general context, there is a condition of restraint where the spirits are put into prison, and then later on they are actually punished. Two different steps. Now, in Ezekiel 28:1, it says,

Ezekiel 28:1 *The word of the LORD came to me again, saying,*
2) *“Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, “Thus says the Lord GOD [Yehovah Elohim] ...*

If you argue that there is one God and two Yehovahs, that means you have one Elohim, but Christ didn't have a Greek Bible, He had a Hebrew Bible. He taught from the Hebrew scriptures. So if you have one Elohim and two Yehovahs, you have a serious problem, because does the Bible say there is only one Elohim? No. So what is your basis for arguing that there is one Elohim? By relying on the word "God" instead of "Elohim". "God" can mean anything to people, it can mean anything they want it to mean, but it's not so. Both God and Christ are divine beings, referred to as Elohim, but only one of them is Yehovah. If you have one God and two Beings, that is not the way the Bible actually records it.

So, continuing with verse 2 here, it says, Thus says Yehovah Elohim,

2 continued) ... "Because your heart is lifted up, and you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, though you set your heart as the heart of a god ... (NKJV)

It begins with the Prince of Tyre, and in verse 8, it says,

8) They shall throw you down into the Pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the midst of the seas.

9) "Will you still say before him who slays you, 'I am a god'? But you shall be a man, and not a god, in the hand of him who slays you. (NKJV)

Notice verse 10.

10) You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of aliens; for I have spoken," says the Lord GOD.' " (NKJV)

That's the Prince of Tyre—he's going to die the death of the uncircumcised. Now, in Ezekiel 28:11 begins a passage on the King of Tyre. The King of Tyre is a portrayal of Satan, as opposed to a physical human being who is a king on the earth. Even the New King James translators make a break here, knowing that the subject changes; thus a different subheading is placed above this next passage.

11) Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

12) "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

13) You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond...

The passage describes the rest of the precious stones, then it says,

13 continued) ... The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.

Satan is a created being.

14) *“You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.*

15) *You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.*

16) *“By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.*

(NKJV)

There’s no confusion regarding the passage, and where the break is there’s no confusion. Even the New King James translators knew where to make the break.

17) *‘Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you. [This is prophetic.]*

18) *“You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trading; therefore I brought fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you.*

19) *All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no more forever.” ’ ’ (NKJV)*

That’s quite clear. The wages of sin is death. It doesn’t matter if you’re a spirit being, doesn’t matter if you’re a physical being—the wages of sin is death.

Let’s go to Matthew 8. I want to look at a couple of accounts where demons are referenced because the wording they use here is interesting.

Matthew 8:28 *When He [Jesus] had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way.*

29) *And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”*

They were restrained into a certain condition, and they knew there would be a time coming, and of that torment they were saying, are You come here to torment us before time—it’s not time yet, is it? The word *torment* in the Greek literally means to torture or to examine by torture. It does not mean death. It means torment in a very strong and very serious way. The demons are saying, have You come here to trouble us before it’s time to be troubled? That’s what is being said.

In Mark chapter 1, we’ll see a different word used in a different context, but it will show you there’s a distinction between the two portrayals.

Mark 1:23 *Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, 24) saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"* (NKJV)

This is different. The word *destroy* here in the Greek means "to cut off entirely". It is permanent destruction. So one reference is to torment, the other reference is to death. When you understand that then, and there is an opportunity to have this discussion, maybe one of us will come back to this later, once we come to an agreement.

Let's look then at the story of Lazarus and the rich man because it matches the difference between torment and destruction. It's going to show that torment is the condition of facing destruction. There is no torment in destruction. They are thrown in the fire, they burn up immediately; there's no torment, it's over. The torment is in waiting to be burned up, facing your judgment, and that is different. The demons are under torment now, facing their judgment. When they are destroyed they will cease to exist, they will be no more forever. That's not torment. They are not going to be tormented forever and ever. They are going to be tormented up until forever and ever. I hope we all agree on that when the time comes. Just my opinion, but it's worth consideration. Luke 16—let's go to Lazarus and the rich man—this scripture had always been a little difficult for me. I think it's pretty clear once I stopped and considered it.

Luke 16:19 *"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20) But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 21) So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 22) And being in torments in [the grave] Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.* (NKJV)

This is a portrayal of an event. It's giving it in terms that are going to be equal to what we've looked at already, in terms of Satan and the demons.

23) *Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'* (NKJV)

He's not burning, he's facing the flame, therefore he's in torment. You go in the flame, and if you're resurrected in the flesh, there's no more torment—the torment is over, because you have been destroyed. The rich man said, I am tormented in this flame; he's facing the lake of fire. This is portraying the fact that he's on one side and Lazarus is on the other.

24) *But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.*

25) *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed ...*

Because there is no repentance from having denied God and been judged accordingly.

25 continued) *... so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'*

27) *"Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house,*

28) *for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.'*

He realizes that they may be facing judgment and destruction in the fire.

29) *Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'*

30) *And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'*

31) *But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.'*" (NKJV)

The torment of Satan and the demons is in facing the fire. In destruction they cease to exist. When you look at the terms and the way the story is being told, it's telling you which side of that issue is then being addressed.

All difficult scriptures aren't really that difficult. Sometimes, someone has just been clouding up the stream.