

Is Yeshua the Messiah Yahweh Almighty?

Matthew Janzen (Assembly of Yahweh)
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Vs.

John Martignoni (Roman Catholic)
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Introduction

This article gives two opposing sides on the doctrine of the identity of Yeshua the Messiah. Many people today have opted for a belief that Yeshua (Jesus) is Yahweh (God). Others have questioned such a belief. It is my (Matthew Janzen) hopes that you will learn from what is discussed in these pages, and let this be only the beginning of many more hours of studying sacred Scripture. The format for the written debate goes as follows:

Janzen – first presentation (2000 words)
Martignoni – first rebuttal (2000 words)

Janzen – second presentation (2000 words)
Martignoni – second rebuttal (2000 words)

Janzen – third presentation (2500 words)
Martignoni – third rebuttal (2500 words)

Janzen – closing (500 words)
Martignoni – closing (500 words)

NOTE: I do not normally refer to Yahweh using the title “God.” In this article I did do so because it makes for an easier discussion with Mr. Martignoni, and causes less confusion for the average reader that may be interested in studying this subject. I did not, however, cease from using the given name of the Father (Yahweh) and His Son (Yeshua).

Matthew Janzen
First Presentation

Let me begin by saying that I am pleased that Mr. Martignoni is willing to have such a discussion, and I hope that all will learn from what is written. Let me also briefly mention that I use the original name for the Father (Yahweh) and the Son (Yeshua) frequently in my writings. This is mentioned so as for the reader to completely understand to whom I refer to.

The Point of Contention

I would like to point out what this debate is *not* about. It is not about whether or not Yeshua (Jesus) can be *called* God. I agree that Yeshua is *called* God in Scripture. My contention with Mr. Martignoni is that he believes Jesus is God, i.e. the second person of the Trinity. In other words, he believes that Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father. Classic Trinitarianism confesses one being of God, existing in three persons. I do not make such a confession, as I *do not* believe Yeshua to be “God the Son,” the second person of the Trinity.

Reasons I Do not Believe Yeshua is God

Now I would like to give ten reasons why the written word of Yahweh proves beyond a shadow of any doubt that Yeshua is not God Almighty. In the end the reader will have to choose between believing sacred Scripture or human tradition.

Reason #1: Who Do You Say That I Am?

This very question was asked by Yeshua to the Apostles in the gospel of Matthew. This is the very question we are discussing in this debate. What is the *inspired answer* to this *inspired question*? (Matthew 16:13-18). Two inspired answers were given by the Apostle Peter, but first remember, Peter gave his answer by revelation (vs. 17), and it was the foundation of the New Testament Church (vs. 18). This was not a partial revelation but a foundation, and it was certainly not what some uninspired man taught or told him. The two answers were:

The Christ (Anointed One)
The Son of the living God

Where in this answer is my opponent’s position? Couldn’t Peter have just as easily said, “You are the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” if Yeshua *really was* God?

Opponents Position	Peter’s Revelation
Yeshua is God	Yeshua is the Son of the living God

Who Will You Believe?

Reason #2: He Cannot Be Both

Yeshua cannot be both the Son of God and God for the same reason my opponent believes he cannot be both the Son of the Father and the Father. Notice that the Bible says:

2 John 1:3 - Grace be with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Yeshua (the) Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

My opponent believes the above verse proves that the Son is not the Father, and I agree with him. If the verse above proves this, why don't the verses calling Yeshua *the Son of God* prove that He is not God? Where's the consistency in this?

Revelation 2:18 - And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass.

Acts 8:37 - Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Yeshua (the) Christ is the Son of God."

These Scriptures and many more, are crystal clear if we are just willing to believe them.

Reason #3: The Meaning of Son of God

Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary of the English Language defines the word "son" as follows:

A male child; the male issue of a parent, father or mother. Jacob had twelve sons. Ishmael was the son of Hagar by Abraham.

<p><u>Genesis 23:8</u> ...entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar...</p>	<p>Does anyone here believe Ephron is really Zohar?</p>
<p><u>Exodus 31:6</u> I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach...</p>	<p>Does anyone here believe Aholiab is really Ahisamach?</p>
<p><u>Matthew 23:35</u> ...unto the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah...</p>	<p>Does anyone here believe Zachariah is really Barachiah?</p>
<p><u>Mark 1:1</u> The beginning of the gospel of Yeshua (the) Christ, the Son of God.</p>	<p>Does anyone here believe Yeshua is really God? WHY?</p>

- And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. [John 1:34]
- And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. [Acts 9:20]

Reason #4: 1 Timothy 2:5

My opponent will agree with me that there is only one God. This is to be understood as in a specific, unique sense of the word God. In light of this, notice how Paul distinguishes Yeshua from that one God. He does not place Yeshua in the one God category.

For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man (the) Christ Yeshua.

Notice the following: The one mediator mediates *between* the one God and men. If the mediator mediates between the one God and men, then this proves he is neither the one God nor the men he is mediating for, right?

DEFINITIONS FOR MEDIATOR:

Thayer's: One who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant. A medium of communication, arbitrator.

Strong's: A go between, that is, (simply) an internunciator, or (by implication) a reconciler (intercessor):—mediator.

1 Timothy 2:5 - Illustration

- For there is one truck, and one car between the truck and us, a Toyota Corolla.
- For there is one boss, and one secretary between the boss and us, Sally Smith.
- For there is one Matthew Janzen, and one pulpit between Matthew Janzen and us, the pulpit of wood.
- For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man (the) Christ Yeshua.

ONE God (Yahweh)

ONE MEDIATOR (Yeshua)

MEN (You and I)

I believe everyone reading this debate will agree with the first three examples above, but will have a difficult time accepting the fourth one, which is from the Bible, because of one thing – tradition of men.

Reason #5: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Exodus 3:15 states:

And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Yahweh God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this *is* my name for ever, and this *is* my memorial unto all generations.”

Who was speaking in the above verse? Was it God? Notice now what Acts 3:13 states:

The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Yeshua; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go.

Yahweh the Father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has a Son, Yeshua the Christ. His Son is *not* the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Reason #6: Only Begotten Son

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son...

John 3:18 - ...he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

1 John 4:9 - In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world...

THAYERS (definition for only begotten)

(1)Single of its kind, only 1a) used of only sons or daughters (viewed in relation to their parents) 1b) used of Christ, denotes the only begotten son of God.

- Luke 9:38 - ...for he is mine only child.
- Luke 7:12 - ...the only son of his mother...
- Luke 8:42 - For he had one only daughter...
- Hebrews 11:17 - By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.

I don't know of anyone who believes that Isaac is really Abraham. Hebrews 11:17 would prove this by calling Isaac, Abraham's only begotten son. Yet Yeshua is called the only begotten Son of God. Wouldn't the same logic prove that Yeshua was not God?

Reason #7: Adam Illustration

Luke 3:36-38 - ...Cainan, Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the*

son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.

We can become the sons of God (John 1:12; Galatians 3:26), but none of us will ever be a son of God like Adam was. He was a special son of God, seeing Yahweh created him from the dust of the earth without the process of pro-creation.

Does anyone here believe that Adam, the *son of God*, was *really* God? Or does his being called the son of God prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Yahweh was his Father *and* his God? If Adam being called the son of God, proves he was not God, then Yeshua being called the son of God, ought to prove he is not God.

ADAM	YESHUA
Son of God (Luke 3:38)	Son of God (Luke 1:35)
This means he is not God.	This means he is God?

A difference between Yeshua and Adam is that Yeshua was begotten through the womb of a virgin and he lived a sinless life. Two things Adam did not take part in. The point though is, *both* are called the son of God, meaning that God caused both to come into existence, proving *neither* is God.

Reason #8: Acts 7:55-56

But he (Stephen) being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Yeshua standing on the right hand of God. And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

How could Yeshua be standing on the right hand of God, and be the God he was standing next to?

Psalms 16:8 - I have set Yahweh always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Yahweh is here said to be at David's right hand. Doesn't this imply two parties? The Bible is explicit that Yeshua is now on the right hand of God.

- Colossians 3:1 - ...where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
- Hebrews 10:12 - But this man... sat down on the right hand of God.

Reason #9: James 2:19

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the demons also believe, and tremble.

- Matthew 8:28-29 - ...What have we to do with thee, Yeshua, thou Son of God?
- Mark 3:11 - And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before

- him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.
- Luke 4:41 - ...Thou art (the) Christ the Son of God.
 - Luke 8:27-28 - ...thou Son of God Most High? I beseech thee, torment me not.

The Point: The demons believe in one God (James 2:19). The demons believe Yeshua is the Son of God (Mark 3:11). The demons believe Yeshua is the Son of the Most High (Luke 8:28). The demons thus *cannot* believe that Yeshua is God or the Most High, but rather God's Son, or the Most High's Son. Are they wrong?

Reason #10: John 14:1

Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.

Here Yeshua tells his disciples that should believe in God (Yahweh) and believe also in him. The teaching is very plain. The word *also* necessarily implies God and another party.

Conclusion

The only conclusion that one can come to based upon Scripture is that Yeshua is the Son of God rather than being God. We will now see how Mr. Martignoni responds to the Scriptures. Please read his speech carefully.

John Martignoni
First Rebuttal

I will follow Matthew's format and respond point-by-point in the order that he has presented his arguments.

The Point of Contention

I got a chuckle out of Matthew's very first point. I was wondering how he was going to interpret away the verses that refer specifically to Jesus as God. Well, I was wrong, he didn't interpret them away, he just ignores them. He admits that Jesus is referred to as "God" in Scripture, and then proceeds to ignore that fact. He gives no reasons as to why he can ignore the fact that Scripture calls Jesus "God."

God, through Scripture, calls Jesus "God." Matthew Janzen does not. So, should you believe God, or should you believe Matthew Janzen?

Reasons I do not Believe Yeshua is God (According to Matthew)

Matthew states that the Bible "proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Yeshua [Jesus] is not God Almighty." Does it? Then why do I and some 1.6 billion other Christians, doubt it? And, again, why does it call Jesus "God"?

He also states that, "...the reader will have to choose between believing Sacred Scripture or human tradition." He is correct. But, his position is actually the "human tradition" to which he refers. Furthermore, his position is compounded by the fact that he relies on this "human tradition" for his most fundamental beliefs. Why does he believe the Gospel of Mark is the inspired word of God? Do the Scriptures tell him so? No, they don't. So, how does he know the Gospel of Mark is the inspired word of God? He has to rely on tradition in order to believe this. Just so he relies on tradition to believe that Matthew, John, Luke, James, 1 Corinthians, and all the other books are indeed the inspired word of God. He's caught in a bit of a bind here...railing against tradition, while at the same time depending on it for his core beliefs.

Reason #1: Who Do You Say That I Am?

Peter states that Jesus is the Son of God. As a Christian, I believe that. Peter's answer in no way contradicts Christian teaching about the Trinity. Jesus is God, and He is the Son of God. Matthew has presented nothing here to cast doubt upon this belief. His basic argument is simply: Jesus is either God, or the Son of God, He can't be both. He doesn't seem to truly understand Christian teaching on this matter.

For his argument here, I have one comment and one question. Matthew asks: "Couldn't Peter have just as easily said, 'You are the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,' if Yeshua *really was* God? This is basically an argument from silence, which is never a good argument to make. The argument is: Peter didn't just say, "You're God," when he had the perfect opportunity to do so, so that means Jesus isn't God. But, the problem is, if Peter had said, "You're God," then Matthew would have simply said, "Sure, Scripture says Jesus is God, but that doesn't mean he is God," and then ignore the verse altogether... (see "Point of Contention" above).

Question: Why, when Thomas calls Jesus, “My Lord and my God,” (John 20:28) do you not believe Jesus to be Thomas’ God?

Reason #2: He Cannot Be Both

Matthew states: “Yeshua cannot be both the Son of God and God for the same reason my opponent believes he cannot be both the Son of the Father and the Father?” Really?! I’d like to know what that reason is. Unfortunately, Matthew doesn’t tell us.

He goes on to state that I believe 2 John 1:3 “proves that the Son is not the Father.” Actually, I don’t believe it “proves” any such thing. I believe it is evidence of that fact, but not proof in and of itself. Again, his argument here proves absolutely nothing. He merely repeats that Jesus cannot be both God and the Son of God, but doesn’t really say why.

His Scripture verses merely state that Jesus is the Son of God. Again, I agree! Nowhere, though, do they say He isn’t God. Again, Trinitarian teaching says that Jesus, the Son of God, is God. Matthew has done nothing so far to cast doubt on that belief.

Reason #3: The Meaning of Son of God

Again, no substantial argument is presented. I agree that the sons mentioned in all the Scripture verses Matthew uses are not the same persons as their fathers. Just as I agree that the Son of God is not the same person as His Father.

Matthew’s arguments are not to the point. Is the son the same person as the father? No. I agree. That’s not the argument. Christians do not argue that the Son is the same person as the Father. The argument is this: Is the Son the same “nature” as the Father? Matthew doesn’t address this at all.

Is Ephron the same person as Zohar? No. Does he have the same nature (human) as Zohar? Yes. Is Aholiab the same person as Ahisamach? No. Does he have the same nature (human) as Ahisamach? Yes. Does Matthew deny these statements? Is Jesus the same person as the Father? No. Does Jesus have the same nature (divine) as the Father? Yes! And, if Jesus has the same nature as the Father, and the Father’s nature is divine, then Jesus’ nature is divine.

So, is the Son the same person as the Father? No. Does the Son have the same nature as the Father? Yes. And, nothing Matthew has presented so far argues to the contrary.

Reason #4: 1 Timothy 2:5

Matthew states: “Notice the following: The one mediator mediates *between* the one God and men. If the mediator mediates between the one God and men, then this proves he is neither the one God nor the men he is mediating for, right?”

Jesus, as true God and true man, is indeed the one mediator between God and men. If, however, this verse “proves” that Jesus isn’t God, because He is mediating “between” God and men, then it also “proves” that Jesus wasn’t a man. If the word “between” means that He wasn’t what appears before the word, then it also means that He wasn’t what appears after the word. And, in actuality, this is pretty much what Matthew is left to argue... that Jesus is neither God nor man. After all, what mere man can raise the dead by his own power? What mere man can heal the sick

by his own power? What mere man was “in the beginning with God”? What mere man can forgive sins by his own power? What mere man’s death can pay the debt owed by all men? Yet, Jesus did all of these things.

Think about this: Man sinned against an infinite God. He sinned against infinite goodness. So, is the price that needs to be paid for mankind’s sin against an infinite God... against infinite goodness... is that price a finite price? Obviously not. If you sin against infinite good, an infinite price has to be paid for that sin. Who can pay an infinite price... man, or God? One thing is for sure, man cannot. So, if Jesus’ death on the cross redeemed all of mankind... paid the price for man’s sins against God... then He can’t be a mere man, can He? If He’s not a man, and Matthew is arguing that He is not God, then, Matthew, what is He?

Reason #5: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

Repetition of the same argument - the Son cannot be the Father. Well, who said He was? I will use the passage he uses from Exodus, though, to help make my case. In Exodus 3:13-14, Moses asks God His name. God replies that His name is “I Am.” In John 8:58, how does Jesus identify Himself? “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” Jesus identifies Himself by using the name that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob used to identify Himself. What happens? The Jews try to stone Him. Why? Because stoning is the punishment for blasphemy. So, either Jesus blasphemed, by applying God’s name to Himself, or He was indeed God. So, is Jesus a blasphemer or is He God? Matthew’s position leads to Jesus being a blasphemer.

Reason #6: Only Begotten Son

Again, he repeats the same irrelevant argument about the son not being the father. Also, in the phrase, “only begotten,” he focuses on the “only” part, when he should be focusing on the “begotten” part. Does “beget” mean the same thing as “create”? No. Jesus was not created, He was begotten. Men were created, Jesus was begotten. Very important difference. So, again, he can’t be a mere man, can He? But, if He’s not God, then what is He, Matthew?

Does something of one nature, beget something of a completely different nature? Does a man beget something that is not a man? Does a frog beget something that is not a frog? Does a fish beget something that is not a fish? The word beget is used to show that Jesus is of the same nature as God. Human begets human. Divine begets divine. God is divine. So, Jesus is divine. He shares God the Father’s own nature. If He shares the divine nature, by virtue of being “begotten” of the Father, then He is indeed divine... He is indeed God.

Reason #7: Adam Illustration

Again, Matthew’s argument swerves off course. He basically says that since Adam is called the son of God in Luke 3:38, and he isn’t God, then since Jesus is also called the son of God (Luke 1:35), that means Jesus can’t be God either. Sorry, Matthew, but the logic doesn’t hold. For one thing, you don’t take into account that Adam was created, but Jesus was begotten. Adam is an adopted son of God, Jesus is not. Big difference.

Also, God is called Father. He is God. I am also called father. Therefore, I must also be God. Same term, “father,” applies to both of us, so if one of us is God, then both of us must be God. At least, by Matthew’s logic.

Reasons #8 - #10

Reasons #8 and #9 - again, the same argument as above...the son cannot be the father. Again, the same response as above... I agree. The fact that Jesus is standing on the right hand of God does absolutely nothing for his argument... God the Son and God the Father, are, after all, two different persons.

Regarding his reason #10, where he quotes John 14:1, “Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.” He states, apparently infallibly, that the word also “necessarily implies God and another party.” It does? Could it not also possibly imply that they didn’t yet understand exactly who and what He was, and He was essentially telling them that He was indeed God by telling them to believe in Him? He is putting belief in God on a par with belief in Himself. If they believe in God, He tells them, then believe in Him no less. Does not John 14 go on to say that those who know Jesus, know the Father? And that those who have seen Jesus have seen the Father? How is that if Jesus is not God?

Scripture says Jesus is indeed God:

Titus 2:13, “...our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ...”

Titus 3:4, “...God our Savior...”

1 John 4:14, “...the Father has sent His Son as the Savior of the world.”

Please note that Scripture refers to Jesus Christ as the “Savior” and that it also refers to the “Savior” as God.

John 10:30, “I and the Father are one.” What human being would ever say, “I and the Father are one?”

Isaiah 62:5, “...as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.”

Matt 9:15, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?”

God is the bridegroom. Jesus is the bridegroom. Jesus is God.

Romans 9:5, “to [the Israelites] belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, Who is God over all...” The Christ, Jesus, is God over all...so saith the Scriptures.

Matthew Janzen

Second Presentation

Mr. Martignoni begins by wondering how I am going to “interpret away” the verses that refer to Yeshua (Jesus) as God. He then states that I just ignore them. He is mistaken. I have no problem calling Yeshua God. The term God (Hebrew = *Elohim* / Greek = *Theos*) is not a unique term that applies only to Yahweh. Scripture refers to Moses as God (Exodus 4:16; 7:1), the Judges of Israel as God (Exodus 21:6; 22:8-9; 1 Samuel 2:25), Angels as God (Psalm 8:5; Hebrews 2:7), an Israelite King as God (Psalm 45:6), and even False gods as God (1 Kings 11:5; Zephaniah 2:11; 1 Corinthians 8:5). So, for Yahweh to call Yeshua God, does not *prove* that he is the one unique God, nor does it prove that he is co-equal or co-eternal with God the Father. Basically stated, it does not prove that Yeshua is God in the Trinitarian sense.

This is similar with another title in Scripture attributed to Yahweh quite often - Father. When we pray (Yeshua taught) we are to pray, “Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.” (Matthew 6:9) Whilst the title Father is here used in a very unique sense, it does not mean that other people cannot have that same title applied to them in other senses. Such is the case with Abraham, our Father (James 2:21; John 8:39; Romans 4:11-12). If I make the statement, “Abraham, our Father, was married to Sarah,” I am not saying that Abraham is Yahweh our Father; rather, he is our Father in a different sense.

I think Mr. Martignoni will agree that Yeshua is called the Father of Eternity in Isaiah 9:6. Some theologians believe this proves that Yeshua is Yahweh the Father or God the Father, I personally do not. I recognize that Yeshua can have the title *Father* applied to him and at the same time not be confused with God the Father. I also recognize that Yeshua can have the title *God* applied to him and not be confused with the one God.

Mr. Martignoni then asks why so many Christians believe Jesus to be God if he is not? The fact of a multitude of people believing a certain thing is no proof that the thing, in this case doctrine, they believe is truth. Yeshua himself said narrow is the way that leads to life and few be there that find it (Matthew 7:14).

My opponent then goes on with questions about the canon of Scripture. This debate is not about that subject. I will be glad to debate Mr. Martignoni in the future in writing or in public on the subject of the canon, but will not take up space doing so here.

Mr. Martignoni says that he believes Peter’s statement in Matthew 16:16 and that it does not contradict the teaching of the Trinity. He also states that I basically make an argument from silence here by asking the question, “Couldn’t Peter have just as easily called Yeshua the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?”

There is no argument of silence here, rather an argument based upon what the text actually says. Within Peter’s answer to Yeshua, there are two distinct beings. Yeshua is said to be the *Son of the living God*. Notice that the term “living God” is not applied to Yeshua, but rather to His Father, the one God. Peter knew how to

use the term “living God,” but in answer to a question about the identity of Yeshua he did not use such a term, but rather placed the words “Son of the” before the words “living God.” Thus we have one being identified as the “living God” and the other identified in a distinct fashion.

Also, Mr. Martignoni, if Peter would have said to Yeshua, “Thou are the Christ, the living God,” we would not be having this debate for I would agree that Yeshua would then be the one God. This is because the verse under consideration deals specifically with the identity of Yeshua. This is not just a verse which applies the title God to Yeshua, but rather one in which his *particular identity* is being discussed.

Concerning Thomas’ statement in John 20:28, I have no problem. Yeshua could rightfully be called Thomas’ Lord and God. But remember, Abraham could rightfully be called Thomas’ Father. This does not prove that Abraham was Yahweh the Father or that Yeshua was Yahweh God. Just a few verses before in the gospel according to John we have Yeshua referring to Yahweh as his God (John 20:17), and a few verses after Thomas’ declaration we have John giving us the reason he wrote his gospel - to prove Yeshua was the Christ, the Son of God (John 20:31), not “God the Son.” Yeshua was God to Thomas in the sense that he represented God whilst on earth (see Exodus 7:1).

My point concerning 2 John 1:3 is that Yeshua is referred to as the “Son of the Father.” I’ve have heard many Trinitarians use this verse to show Oneness Pentecostals that Yeshua is not the Father. “You see, he is the *Son of* the Father,” they say. Maybe Mr. Martignoni does not use the verse in that fashion; however the verse is proof that Yeshua is not his own Father. The point of all this is that the exact same logic can be used to prove that Yeshua is not his own God. When the phrase “Son of God” is used of Yeshua, he cannot be the God in that phrase, but rather the *Son of* the God in that phrase.

Next we come to the meaning of the phrase, Son of God. Mr. Martignoni agrees that all of the sons I listed in the chart are not their own fathers. He also agrees that the Son of God is not the same person as the Father. This is a good start.

He basically argues that, “The son of a human is a human, thus the Son of God is God.” With this basic argument I agree, but not in the Trinitarian sense. I have no problem recognizing Yeshua as divine, different than myself, unique, virgin born, sinless, etc. However, this still does nothing to prove that Yeshua is the one God.

Using the men Ephron and Zohar mentioned in the chart. Is Ephron the same person as Zohar? The answer is no. Is Ephron human? The answer is yes. Is Ephron *the same human* as Zohar? The answer is no. Is Yeshua the same God as Yahweh? No. He is rather God in a vice-regent, representative sense, seeing that the one God begat him.

Mr. Martignoni states concerning 1 Timothy 2:5, “Jesus, as true God and true man, is indeed the one mediator between God and men.” The problem with his statement is that you do not find it in 1 Timothy 2:5. Yeshua is rather referred to as the one mediator between the one God and men.

He then states, "If, however, this verse "proves" that Jesus isn't God, because He is mediating "between" God and men, then it also "proves" that Jesus wasn't a man. If the word "between" means that He wasn't what appears before the word, then it also means that He wasn't what appears after the word." It is true that Yeshua is not the men that appear after him in the verse. This is obvious, seeing that Yeshua mediates for these men and not for his own self. However, this does not prove Yeshua is not a man for the text explicitly calls him, "the man Yeshua [the] Christ." The point then stands firm, Yeshua is neither the one God nor the men he mediates for, but rather stands between the two parties which is what the word mediator means - a go between.

Mr. Martignoni asks, "What mere man can raise the dead by his own power?" Mr. Martignoni, I do not believe Yeshua was a *mere* man. He was the Son of the living God, begotten by the Father, virgin born, sinless, etc. Furthermore, Yeshua raised the dead by the power Yahweh gave him, not by his own power (John 5:19, 30). All of the other things my opponent mentions such as healing the sick, forgiving sins, paying the debt of sins with death were not accomplished by a *mere* man. They were accomplished by the man Yeshua Messiah, the Son of the living God.

While on the subject of sin, many believe that only the death of the one true God could atone for the sins of humanity, but sacred Scripture does not teach that. Hebrews 9:22 states that it takes the shedding of blood, and many Scriptures state that the sacrifice had to be without blemish. The blood of a sinless man was thus required, and Yeshua, the Son of the living God, was that sinless sacrifice (1 John 3:5). Romans 5:19 essentially tells us that by one *man* many were made sinners, thus it was by one *man* that many are made righteous (see also 1 Corinthians 15:21).

Mr. Martignoni doesn't do justice to my point on Exodus 3:15. Once again, the God speaking in Exodus 3:15 has a Son (Acts 3:13). Thus it was not the Son (Yeshua) speaking in Exodus 3:15.

My opponent then attempts to use John 8:58 as proof that Yeshua is the I Am of Exodus 3:15. The problem is, it was just shown why that is an impossibility. Does Yeshua's use of *I am* prove he is the same I am of Exodus 3:15? Not at all. Yeshua was in context speaking of the patriarch Abraham seeing his day (John 8:56). How did Abraham see Yeshua's day? Was it not by faith? (Hebrews 11:8-19) The Jews listening to Yeshua obviously misunderstood Yeshua because they wondered how he could make such a statement being not yet 50 years old, but they missed Yeshua's point. Yeshua was making the point that in the plan of the Father, he was the lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8). Abraham knew this and saw Yeshua's day by faith, and was glad. Yeshua's statement in verse 58 about I am, need mean nothing more than him being the bread of life, light of the world, door, good shepherd, Messiah, and Son of God (John 6:35, 41, 48; 8:12, 18, 24, 28; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 13:19; 18:5). Yeshua spoke spiritually, but the Jews took him literally. The same mistake was made by Nicodemus in John 3 where Yeshua spoke of being born again spiritually, but Nicodemus thought he was speaking of entering into your mother's womb a second time (John 3:3-4).

My opponent then asks about the word begotten. I'm very familiar with the word begotten. It's usage in the Greek language has to do with something coming

into existence or having a beginning, proving that Yeshua is not eternal. The same can be said for the meaning of the word son. People know what the word son means, and if you have a son, the son comes *after* the father, not before or at the same time, but *after*. The words only begotten (Greek = *monogenes*) are no evidence that Yeshua is the one God, but rather evidence that Yeshua is not the one God, but that God begat Yeshua (1 John 5:1). This is why Saint Matthew speaks of the birth/origin (Greek = *genesis*) of Yeshua in Matthew 1:18, and his being begotten in the womb of Miriam in Matthew 1:20. Mr. Martignoni again asks the question, “If he (Yeshua) is not God, then what is He Matthew?” My answer will continually be that he is God’s only begotten Son.

I have not completely answered my opponent’s first written speech, but I am out of room. I promise to pick back up where I’ve left off as well as continue to address any new statements put forth by my worthy opponent, John Martignoni.

John Martignoni
Second Rebuttal

What I am going to do here is bring up a number of verses, from Scripture that point to Jesus indeed being God. After all, this whole debate is about what Scripture says, right? I'll start with the ones I ended my last round comments with:

Titus 2:13, "...our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ..."

Titus 3:4, "...God our Savior..."

1 John 4:14, "...the Father has sent His Son as the Savior of the world."

Please note that Scripture refers to Jesus Christ as the "Savior" and that it also refers to the "Savior" as God. Also note that in Titus, it states that Jesus gave Himself to "purify for Himself a people of His own" (Titus 2:14). But, in 2 Cor 6:16, it has the "living God" saying this: "I will be their God and they will be my people." Well, we're Jesus' people and we're the people of the living God...hmm. Isn't then Jesus the living God?

Question: Matthew which God our Savior is being spoken of in Titus 3:4-7? Is it the God our Savior mentioned in Titus 2:13, or is it God the Father?

Matthew, Jesus and the Father are both called, "God and Savior." Which one is really God our Savior? How can Jesus be our great God and Savior, if the Father is God our Savior? Unless, of course, Jesus is indeed God?

John 10:30, "I and the Father are one."

John 17:11, "That they may be one, even as We are one."

What human being would ever say, "I and the Father are one?" How can Jesus and the Father be one, if Jesus is not God?

Isaiah 62:5, "...as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you."

Matt 9:15, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?"

God is the bridegroom. Jesus is the bridegroom. Jesus is God.

Romans 9:5, "to [the Israelites] belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, Who is God over all..." John 1:1-3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."

The Christ, Jesus, is God over all...so saith the Scriptures. How can Jesus be God over all, yet not be God? Also, in John 1, it says that ALL things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. If Jesus is a

creature, if He is not God, then He was “made” at some point. Yet, nothing was made without Him. Through Him all things were made. Jesus could not have made Himself. Therefore, if all things were made through Jesus, logic dictates that Jesus was never made. That He has always been and always will be. He is eternal. Only God is eternal...no beginning and no end. Therefore, Jesus is God.

1 Tim 4:4, “For everything created by God is good.” Given John 1:1-3, who is the word “God” referring to here? God the Father? Or, Jesus Christ, through Whom all things were made?

1 Tim 4:10, “For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially those who believe.” Who is Paul referring to here, Matthew? God the Father? Jesus Christ? Both are identified in Titus as the Savior of men.

2 Tim 1:10 says that Jesus abolished death. Isn’t God the only one capable of abolishing death?

Matt 9:6-7 has Jesus forgiving a paralytic’s sins. Isn’t God the only one capable of forgiving sin?

Heb 1:6 has the Father telling the angels to **worship** Jesus. Isn’t God the only one deserving of worship? Rev 19:10 tells us to “worship God.” But, God tells His angels to worship Jesus. Hmm.

John 5:21, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will.” John 5:26, “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself...”

Isn’t God the only one Who can give life to Whom He will? Isn’t God the only one who can have life “in Himself”? Yet Jesus does.

Phil 2:5-7, “Christ Jesus, Who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant...”

Jesus was in the “form of God,” and the “form of a servant.” One divine person, two natures - divine and human. How can one be in the “form of God,” if one is not God?

Romans 4:17, “As it is written, ‘I have made you [Abraham] the father of many nations,’ in the presence of the God in Whom he believed, Who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.”

So, God gives life to the dead. And, this is referring to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, right? Well, let’s look at John 2:19-21, “Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.’...But He spoke of the temple of His body.”

So, we see Jesus proclaiming that He will raise up His body, yet, it is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob Who gives life to the dead, is it not? So, is Jesus the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or is He lying when He says that He will raise up the temple of His body? Which is it, Matthew?

Rev 19:16 refers to Jesus Christ as “King of kings and Lord of lords.” Yet, Deut 10:17 refers to the Almighty God as “God of gods and Lord of lords.” So, Matthew, how can Jesus be Lord of lords if the God of gods is Lord of lords, unless, of course, Jesus is God?

I could go on and on with just Scripture, but Matthew will be hard pressed to even answer this little bit I’ve included here. Jesus is God the Savior of men. The Father is God the Savior of men. The Father raises the dead by His own power. Jesus raises the dead by His own power. The Father forgives sin. Jesus forgives sin. The Father has life in Himself. Jesus has life in Himself. The Father is Lord of lords. Jesus is Lord of lords. Jesus is God over all. The Father is God of gods. Jesus and the Father are one. Jesus is the bridegroom. The Father is the bridegroom. The Father’s name is “I am.” Jesus calls Himself, “I am.” I guess that means Jesus isn’t God, right?

Matthew’s whole argument is basically this: The Scriptures clearly show that the Son is not the Father, therefore the Son cannot be God. Well, I agree with the premise, as do all Christians, that the Son is not the Father...that they are indeed different persons. So his arguments on this point are basically non-arguments, because we are in agreement. However, I do not agree with the conclusion - that the Son is not God. What he needs to show, and has failed to show, is why the Son not being the Father means the Son cannot be God.

I don’t have the space to get into a treatise on the Trinity, but much of Matthew’s line of argumentation results from an apparently limited understanding of trinitarian theology. Human nature can be divided. Divine nature cannot be. Two different persons can share human nature yet not be one human...because human nature is divisible. Two different persons can share divine nature, yet be one God...because divine nature is not divisible. If Jesus has a divine nature, as Matthew has admitted, then He is indeed God.

The word “elohim” can have different meanings (angels, judges, false gods, etc.) other than just “God.”¹ So what? In all of these passages that Matthew refers to, it is quite obvious from the context that no one is being referred to as God Almighty. Moses is being appointed by God to stand in His stead before Aaron (Ex 4:16) and Pharaoh (Ex 7:1). This is quite obvious. Nowhere that I am aware of is it recorded that the people addressed Moses as their Lord and their God, as Thomas did with Jesus.

¹ NOTE: In order to follow Mr. Martignoni’s response here, you must refer back to Mr. Janzen’s second presentation and follow along.

[Note: I believe Matthew is using the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. If you are using a different version, your translation may be a little different and that may cause some confusion when reading the verses he mentions above.]

Matthew's argument cuts both ways. Abraham was indeed a father. So, if Abraham is called "father" because he is a father, then we have an argument for Jesus being God because He is called "God." To assume that when Jesus is called "God," that means that He is NOT God, is just that...an assumption.

Isaiah 9:6 is a verse that is obviously open to some interpretation, as Matthew's words make plain. I see in it the Son Who is the "Mighty God," but also all three persons of the Trinity Who are the one God - the "Everlasting Father," Jesus (the "Prince of Peace"), and the Holy Spirit ("Wonderful Counselor") - see also John 14:26, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name...".

Actually, I believed you missed my point here. Please go back and read what I said a little more closely in light of your words, "**beyond a shadow of any doubt** that Yeshua is not God."

He introduced the topic of "human tradition." I merely pointed out that he relies on what he calls "human tradition," not Scripture, to even have a Bible in the first place.

I agree 100% with what Peter said and with what Matthew basically says here...the Son is not the Father. So? Matthew's main argument here is indeed an argument from silence (look at the paragraph immediately above) because his point is all about what Peter didn't say...Peter didn't say, "You are the Christ, the living God." He didn't say, "You are the God of Abraham, Jacob, and Isaac." He didn't say, "You are God the Son." In other words, an argument from silence.

Abraham can rightfully be called Thomas' "father" because he is Thomas' father in a biological and spiritual sense. So, Jesus can rightfully be called Thomas' "God" because He is Thomas' God. Unfortunately, for Matthew's case, John 20:31 doesn't say "Yeshua was God to Thomas in the sense that he **represented** God whilst on earth." He has found it necessary to add his interpretation to Scripture here. And, there is a huge difference between Thomas calling Jesus his Lord and God, and God Almighty appointing Moses "as God" to Pharaoh (Exodus 7:1).

See my comments above on the Trinity. Also, Jesus, in His human nature, does indeed have God the Father as His God. His human nature is created. He was for a time made lower than the angels (Heb 2:7). His human nature is subject to the Divine. So, it makes perfect sense that He would call God, His God. Matthew can not believe this to be true, but so far none of the Scripture verses he has presented run contrary to anything in trinitarian theology.

Oh yeah, what about John 2:19-21? Was Jesus lying?

One question: How much of that last paragraph is actually in the Bible, and how much is Matthew's insertion of his own man-made fallible opinions into Scripture? How did Abraham see Jesus' day? Was it by faith, or was it by some special vision given to Abraham by God? The Bible doesn't tell us, but Matthew does. Did the Jews "obviously" misunderstand Jesus. Well, if you're trying to talk your way out of corner then they had to have misunderstood Jesus. But, the Bible doesn't tell us that, Matthew does. The Jews didn't misunderstand Jesus, they simply didn't accept what He was saying as being true, just like Matthew doesn't. In John 3, it is painfully obvious that Nicodemus didn't understand, Jesus even says as much. Nothing like that language is used in John 8, though, except in Matthew's interpretation.

Unfortunately, I didn't have the space to engage all of Matthew's comments fully at this time.

Matthew Janzen

Third Presentation

I will pick back up where I left off in Mr. Martignoni's first speech. My opponent states that I "swerve off course" with the illustration given concerning Adam. My point is this: Adam is termed a "Son of God" in Scripture (Luke 3:38). Why is Adam called a Son of God? Is it not because God directly created Adam? Notice in Luke's genealogy that Seth is *not* called a Son of God. This is because Seth was pro-created by Adam, whereas Adam had no earthly father. Yahweh God created him. Here, the term "Son of God" has to do with being uniquely fathered by Yahweh, and thus having a special relationship with Him. This is how the term is used in the whole of Scripture. The term is not one that is a "mask" for someone who is *really* God Almighty.

Mr. Martignoni states that I do not understand the difference between "created" and "begotten." Yet in my very first speech I stated, "A difference between Yeshua and Adam is that Yeshua was begotten through the womb of a virgin and he lived a sinless life. Two things Adam did not take part in." I recognize this difference, and I see it as important. I am not placing Adam on the same level as Yeshua, I'm only showing the meaning of the term "Son of God."

Mr. Martignoni then writes, "*Also, God is called Father. He is God. I am also called father. Therefore, I must also be God. Same term, 'father,' applies to both of us, so if one of us is God, then both of us must be God. At least, by Matthew's logic.*" That's most assuredly not the logic I'm presenting. I'm not saying that Adam and Yeshua are identical in every respect. I'm only showing that the term "Son of God" does not *really* mean "God." It rather refers to a person whom God has fathered in a certain, special way. Furthermore, what Mr. Martignoni stated about the title "father" is absolutely correct. Just apply that reasoning to the term God, and you will realize that just because Yeshua is called God, doesn't mean he is God Almighty.

Concerning my reasons #8 and #9 Mr. Martignoni just states that God and Jesus are two separate persons. What he means here is that the Father and the Son are not the same person, but they *are* both God. My point concerning the right hand is that it doesn't just say the Son is at the right hand of the Father (this would prove the Son is not the Father), but it says the Son is at the right hand of God. This proves that the Son cannot be the God that he is at the right hand of.

Also, once again, the demons believe in one God, yet they confess Yeshua as the Son of God Most High. God Most High (Yahweh) has a Son (Yeshua). Let me kindly say that I honestly find it amazing that people attempt to bypass what the Scriptures teach here.

John 14:1 was dealt with by Mr. Martignoni. *First*, remember that Yeshua said, "...ye believe in God, believe **also** in me." You do not have to be infallible to understand this Scripture. Yeshua separates himself plainly and clearly from God by the use of the word *also*.

Secondly, my opponent thinks that belief in Yeshua must mean that he is God. Opponents of my position, please consider for a moment that Yeshua just *might not*

be God, but rather God's Son. Do you not think that we should believe in the very Son of Almighty God? Would not God want us to believe in and follow the person he sent to redeem us from sin and human depravity?

Also, the Scriptures reveal that Yeshua is the express image (Greek = *charakter*) of Yahweh's person (Hebrews 1:1-3). This Greek term has to do with the seal left by a signet ring. Yahweh is the ring, Yeshua is the seal left by the ring (in illustration). Yeshua's reveals to us the Father. Looking at Yeshua is like you are looking at Yahweh. He perfectly performs the Father's will, always submitting to His Father's instructions. This is why seeing Yeshua is seeing the Father (John 14:9). Mr. Martignoni will agree with me that it doesn't mean Yeshua is the Father, for he believes the Son is not the Father. Therefore John 14:9 does not prove that Yeshua is God. It only shows forth the awesome relationship between Yahweh God and His only begotten Son.

Next, Mr. Martignoni lists Scriptures which he believes proves that Yeshua is God Almighty. I would like to first deal with his point on shared titles. He states that since God and Yeshua are both called Savior, and are both referred to as the bridegroom, they must both be God (in the Trinitarian sense). This is just not the case. As I've stated, and even my opponent has stated to some degree, for two people to be called the same thing does not make them one and the same being. For example, The Disciples of Yeshua are called the "light of the world," (Matthew 5:14); Yeshua is called the "light of the world," (John 8:12). Does this mean that Yeshua and His Disciples are somehow one and the same? Of course not, both can be termed "the light of the world" without confusing their identities.

Yahweh works through His chosen agent, Yeshua. This is similar to how Yahweh struck the Nile river with the rod in *His* hand (Exodus 7:17), yet it was literally *Aaron* who struck the Nile (Exodus 7:20). Is Aaron Yahweh? No, Aaron was used by Yahweh to perform a miracle. If I asked, "Who struck the Nile River with a rod?" The answer could legitimately be Yahweh, seeing Yahweh ultimately was the one who struck the river, yet if someone answered Aaron, they would be correct too. This is known as the principle of agency.

Yahweh did miracles and signs by Yeshua (Acts 2:22). Yahweh speaks in the last days by His Son (Hebrews 1:2), and Yahweh will judge the world by that man (Yeshua) He has appointed (Acts 17:31). In each of these examples Yahweh is performing the work ultimately, but He is using the vehicle of His Son to do so. In the case of His Son, the principle of agency is at its strongest level, seeing that Yeshua is really begotten of Yahweh. Yahweh fathered Yeshua in a way no other man had been fathered before or will be after.

Mr. Martignoni asks "What human being would ever say I and my Father are one?" How about a man who was directly fathered by Yahweh? How about a man in whom the fullness of God dwelt? How about a man in whom the Spirit dwelt without measure? Furthermore, in the John 10:30 passage Yeshua is speaking of oneness of purpose, not being or person. In context Yeshua is dealing with both he and his Father "keeping the sheep" (John 10:25-29). Paul uses the same word to describe his oneness with a fellow-worker in Christ when he says, "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one..." (1 Corinthians 3:8). I do agree that Yahweh and Yeshua's oneness transcends the oneness or unity we believers have

with Yahweh. The oneness of Yahweh and Yeshua is similar to the oneness I have with my begotten son. My son came forth from me. Yeshua came forth from Yahweh.

Mr. Martignoni also gives one translation of Romans 9:5. Both the RSV and the Moffat translation give the last phrase concerning God as a type of eulogy or doxology in praise to God concerning what has been said in verses 4-5. In other words, Paul makes the statement about the Israelites as God's chosen people, out of whom Christ came, and then adds praise to God who is over all and blessed forever. The phrase is used of God the Father elsewhere in the writings of Paul (Romans 1:25; 2 Corinthians 11:31). Note 2 Corinthians 11:31's use in distinction with the Lord Yeshua the Christ. The entire context in the first part of Romans 9 is about God's blessing on the Israelites. It would be appropriate for such a doxology to be given to God the Father here.

I will now move on to Mr. Martignoni's second speech, dealing with points I haven't already dealt with.

Mr. Martignoni talks about how that Yeshua purified for himself a people (Titus 2:14) and how that Yahweh God basically speaks of purifying for himself a people (2 Corinthians 6:16). Does this have to mean that Yeshua is Almighty Yahweh? Definitely not. For example: the Bible speaks of the commandments of Yeshua (John 14:15), and the commandments of Yahweh God (1 John 5:2-3). It also speaks of the commandments of Moses (Joshua 23:6; Malachi 4:4; 1 Corinthians 9:8). Using Mr. Martignoni's logic, Moses would have to be God, right along with Yeshua, seeing the commandments are called the law of Moses. Do you see what such logic actually teaches? We can be the people of Yeshua because we follow his teachings, walking in his footsteps. We can also be the people of Yahweh seeing that everything, including the Son (1 Corinthians 15:28), is subject to Him.

Mr. Martignoni then asks if Yeshua is the living God. The answer *has to be* a negative. Remember Peter's revelation. I want to ask all my Catholic friends that read this discussion to *really concentrate* on Matthew 16:13-18. Peter, by revelation, claims Yeshua as the *Son of* the living God. That's two identities: (1) Son, and (2) the living God. This means that he (Yeshua) cannot be the living God in that proclamation. To be the Son of anything means that you are not the person or being that you are the Son of. Yeshua thus cannot be in the category that comes after the words "Son of" (Most High, Highest, living God, God, Father, etc.)

Mr. Martignoni then asks me who is called God our Savior in Titus 3:4-7. The answer is God the Father. God the Father is also the "great God" of Titus 2:13.

Mr. Martignoni also mentions John 1. I believe he is referring to John 1:3. The proper understanding however of John 1:3 is that all things were made through the word or *logos* of John 1:1. The *logos* does not refer to the person of Yeshua, but rather to exactly what it says, God's word. God created all things by His word (Gen. 1; Ps. 33:6-9). This word *logos* is used over 1,600 times in the Greek Septuagint and not once refers to a person, but rather always a thought, plan, word, utterance, etc. This is why many English translations prior to the 1582 Rheims New Testament

translate John 1:3, “All things were made by it...” These translations include Tyndale’s NT (1526), the Matthew’s Bible (1537), the Great Bible (1539), the Geneva bible (1560), and the Bishops Bible (1568). This plan, thought, or word of Yahweh that was with Him in the beginning (Job 10:13; 23:14; 27:14) later became flesh in the person of Yeshua of Nazareth (John 1:14). The late professor of exegesis of Holy Scripture, G.B. Caird, translated John 1:1, 14 in the following manner, “In the beginning was the purpose, the purpose in the mind of God, the purpose which was God’s own being... this purpose took human form in Jesus of Nazareth.” (*New Testament Theology*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995, p. 332) Remember, John 1:1 does not say “In the beginning was the Son,” but rather “In the beginning was the word.”

All things were made through God’s word; His thought, plan and purpose. Without this word was not anything made that was made. Yeshua the Messiah doesn’t come on the scene until this word of God becomes flesh in John 1:14. I do agree, however, that passages such as Colossians 1:15-17 and Hebrews 1:2 teach that all things were made *through* Yeshua the Messiah, but this does not mean that all things had to be made through him actively. It can indeed be understood passively. For example: Revelation 13:8 tells us that Yeshua is the Lamb of God slain before the foundation of the world. Now, was Christ literally hanging on the cross next to the Father in eternity past? Don’t we understand that Christ was slain before the foundation of the world in the foreknowledge of God? When Yahweh created all things, He did it because the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8) needed a venue or a stage, so to speak, for that to be fulfilled. Therefore, the impetus for creation was the Son. Without the Son in Yahweh’s mind there would be no creation. It was done “through” the Son. At the same time, Yahweh created everything “for” His Son. It was part of His plan to give all power and authority to His Son so that he would rule the entire Kingdom forever.

I do not have much space left, but I do want to address the issue of worship given to Yeshua. Does Yeshua being worshiped by angels (Heb. 1:6) or even the Disciples (Mt. 14:33) prove that Yeshua is God? Not if you understand the concept of worship in the Scriptural sense. The basic word for worship in Hebrew is *shachab*, and in Greek *proskuneo*. The Hebrew term is used in reference to Lot worshiping two angels (Gen. 19:1); Abraham worshiping the Hethites (Gen. 23:7); Moses worshiping Jethro (Ex. 18:7); Ruth worshiping Boaz (Ruth 2:10-11); David worshiping Saul (1 Samuel 24:8); and Joab worshiping a King (2 Sam. 14:22). The Greek word is used in reference to people worshiping at the feet of the Philadelphian Assembly in Revelation 3:9. The key was the reason for which the individual or being was worshiped. In Yeshua’s case, Matthew 14:33 tells us that his Disciples worshiped him as God’s Son, *not* as God. Worship literally means to bow or make obeisance to. Any worship that should go directly to Yahweh God cannot go to me, Mr. Martignoni, Peter, angels, Yeshua, etc. For example: in Revelation 4:8-11 Yahweh is worthy to receive worship because He created all things for His pleasure, but in Revelation 5:6-10 Yeshua is worthy to receive worship because he has redeemed us unto God by his blood. Notice again that Yeshua redeemed us *unto* God. God and Yeshua are separate here, and everywhere else in Scripture.

John Martignoni

Third Rebuttal

This debate is all about what the Bible says in regards to Jesus Christ being God or not being God. In his last response, Matthew Janzen simply regurgitated much of what he said in the first two rounds. Things like: The Son, Scripture tells us, is at the right hand of God, therefore that “proves” the Son is not God. He also tells us that the phrase “Son of God,” never refers to God in Scripture. He further claims that because Jesus says believe in God and “also” in Me, that “proves” Jesus isn’t God. And other such things.

Well, what’s going on in all of these instances is a combination of things that I would like to address first, and then get back to Scripture. First, the debate is on whether or not the Bible teaches Jesus is God, yet Matthew has decided, on his own and by his own apparently infallible authority, that if the Bible does not say, specifically, that Jesus is either: a) The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or b) God Almighty, or c) God the Son, or d) the Living God; then it proves that Jesus is not God...at least, not in the Trinitarian sense of Jesus being God. In other words, Matthew has rigged the contest in such a way that he will only accept specific verbiage from Scripture, that he knows does not exist in Scripture, as proof that Jesus is indeed God the Son.

To which I respond: “Nuts!” Who gave Matthew the authority to decide what constitutes “proof” as to whether or not Jesus is God? Further, one needs to realize that much of what you read in Matthew’s responses, in fact most of it, is nowhere found in the pages of Scripture, yet this is a debate about what is contained in Scripture.

Authentic Scripture says, “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30). Matthew’s version of Scripture says, “I and the Father are of one purpose.” Authentic Scripture says, “He who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). Matthew’s version of Scripture says, “He who has seen the seal has seen the ring.” Authentic Scripture says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” Matthew’s version of Scripture says, “In the beginning was the purpose, the purpose in the mind of God, the purpose which was God’s own being.” Authentic Scripture says, “For in [Jesus] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible...all things were created through [Jesus]” (Col 1:15-16). Matthew’s version of Scripture says, “All things were made *through* [Jesus] the Messiah, but this does not mean that all things had to be made through him actively.” (I still haven’t figured out exactly what he’s saying with that last one.)

My question for Matthew is, did you get these fallible, man-made, non-authoritative interpretations by simply picking up the Bible and reading it for yourself, or did someone have to teach you these things? My point being that these interpretations that Matthew is tossing out are man-made and taught to him by men. They were not taught to him by Scripture.

Second, Matthew gets caught up in some circular reasoning. He claims that the term “Son of God” never applies to God. That in all of Scripture it is used to mean one who is “uniquely fathered by Yahweh.” He can claim that only because he first assumes that Jesus is not God. In other words, he assumes Jesus is not God, then he states that the term Son of God never refers to God. Isn’t that nice and tidy?!

Plus, Matthew’s statement about how the term “Son of God” is used in Scripture is false on the surface of it. In John 10:33, the Jews tell Jesus that He is making Himself God. What did Jesus say to make them think He is making Himself God? Verse 36 tells us...the Jews think Jesus is making Himself God because He called Himself the “Son of God.” They didn’t take the phrase “Son of God” to mean one who is “uniquely fathered by Yahweh.” They took it to mean Yahweh Himself. Notice, they didn’t say, “You are making yourself the ‘Son of God.’” They said, “You are making yourself God.”

Same thing in John 19:7. The phrase “Son of God” is taken to mean God. That’s why Jesus has to die...it is blasphemy to make yourself God. I know of no laws on the Jewish books that said calling yourself the “Son of God” was blasphemy and was punishable by death. No, it’s only because they equated the term “Son of God” with God Himself that they say Jesus has to die. And, in John 20:31, when it refers to Jesus as the Son of God, John would know that his Jewish audience would take that to mean that Jesus is indeed God.

More circular reasoning: He states that the Greek word “logos” never refers to a person. Well, that is only after he has first assumed that it does not refer to Christ in John 1:1. In other words, he assumes that Jesus Christ is not being referred to as the Word (logos) of God, then he claims that nowhere does the word “logos” refer to a person. Again, isn’t that nice and tidy?!

In response to Matthew’s argument on this, whether the word “he” is used in John 1:1-14, or the word “it” or the word “word,” they are all referring to the same entity. An entity that is identified as the Word of God in John 1:1 and then undeniably identified as Jesus Christ in John 1:14. That’s why almost all translators use the word “he” throughout John 1:1-14, because they know that the Greek is referring to the same entity...the same thing...the same person...Jesus Christ, all the way through these verses. To try and use the Greek to make a disconnect between the Word in verse 1 and the person of Jesus in the Word made flesh in verse 14, appears a bit disingenuous, or perhaps it is simply the result of having to twist the Scriptures to make them say what you want them to say.

Another thing Matthew is doing, again, all on his own, is authoritatively and infallibly deciding for all of us what particular passages of Scripture mean...even though they don’t actually say what he says they say, and these authoritative interpretations of his all “prove” Jesus is not God.

For example, when he states that because the Son is at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55-56), it means Jesus cannot be God...that the Son can’t be God because He is on the right hand of God. Well, first of all, this is a phrase that means something

other than what the words actually say. We know this because God has no right hand. The Bible tells us that God is Spirit. The Father is Spirit, not flesh. So, God has no right hand for Jesus to be on. So, when we are told that the Son is at the right hand of God, it is telling us about the relation of Jesus to the Father, but it is not telling us that Jesus is not God. In a figurative sense, Jesus is at the right hand of God...a position of power that everyone hearing the phrase would understand. This verse in no way states that Jesus is not God and in no way contradicts Trinitarian theology.

And, if you notice, I quite often say “God,” when I specifically mean “God the Father.” Other times I use “God” to mean God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. You can tell by the context which meaning I intend in each instance. This is along the lines of what is being done in Scripture. When I say “God” to mean God the Father, I am in no way implying that Jesus is not God. Just so in Scriptures. But, Matthew has authoritatively and infallibly decided that this cannot be. I don’t think he’s even considered the possibility that the writers of Sacred Scripture are frequently using the convention of “God the Father” simply being called “God,” and Jesus Christ simply being called by His name, Jesus, and/or by His title, Christ. So, when Scripture says that Jesus is standing at the right hand of God...it merely means that Jesus is standing at the right hand of the Father...it does not mean Jesus isn’t God. Neither this passage, nor Matthew 16 which states Jesus is the Son of the living God, nor any other such passage, do anything to argue against the Trinity.

Matthew 14:33 states that the disciples worshipped Jesus. Matthew tries to argue that this simply means they respected him along the lines of what people would do in the Old Testament. Well, if you look at Matthew’s O.T. examples, they all refer to a sign of respect...bowing...that one would give to another upon greeting them or when getting up to address a crowd. Like bowing when Queen Elizabeth comes up to you or what a conductor does when he first appears before the audience to lead the orchestra.

This, however, is not the context of what the disciples did in “worshipping” Jesus. They worshipped Him because He did something that they thought only God could do...He controlled nature. He walked on water; by His power Peter walked on water; He calmed the storm. They worshipped Him because He performed acts they believed only God could perform. Matthew tries to argue that they worshipped Him as God’s Son, but not as God. But, I have already shown that for the Jews of Jesus’ time, the phrase “Son of God,” basically meant God Himself.

And, even if Matthew wants to argue against that interpretation, then we have Hebrews 1:6 where God tells the angels to “worship” His Son. Nowhere, in any of Matthew’s examples from the O.T., do we see angels worshipping anyone...bowing down to anyone...other than God. As the angel in Rev 22:9 says, “Worship God.” That’s what the disciples are doing in Matt 14:33 and that’s what the angels are doing in Heb 1:6.

Now, let’s look again at Scripture. I will simply give you the verse, and ask you to read what Scripture says, and then read what Matthew Janzen says. The two don’t

match up well. Titus 2:13, "...our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." In Titus 2:10 and 3:4 we read "God our Savior." In Titus 2:13 and 3:6, we see Jesus Christ is our Savior. It doesn't say God, one of our saviors; or Jesus Christ, one of our saviors...we have one Savior, who is clearly identified as Jesus Christ, God and Savior, in Titus 2:13.

Rom 9:5, "...the Christ, Who is God over all, blessed for ever."

John 2:19-21, Jesus states the He will raise His own body from the dead. Matthew has stated that only God can raise the dead. So, either Jesus is lying; or the Scriptures got it wrong; or Jesus is indeed God. Which is it, Matthew?

Rev 19:16, Jesus is referred to as "King of kings and Lord of lords." Yet, Deut 10:17 refers to Yahweh as "God of gods and Lord of lords." Jesus and Yahweh can't both be the "Lord of lords," it's either one or the other. Unless, of course, Jesus and Yahweh are one. Which, of course, Jesus tells us is the case in John 10:30..."I and the Father are one."

Sticking with Revelation, let's go to Rev 22:1-3. What do we see? God and the Lamb sit on the same throne. One throne for both God and the Lamb. How can that be? How can Jesus sit on the throne of God the Father? Unless, of course, He is indeed God.

Rev 22:12, Jesus is coming to bring His recompense. But, Isaiah 40:10, tells us that it is the Lord God Who is bringing His recompense. And, in Rev 22:12, it says that Jesus will repay everyone for what they have done. Yet, Jer 17:10 says that it is Lord (Yahweh) Who will give to every man according to his ways. Also, Jer 17:10 says that it is the Lord Who searches the mind and the heart. Yet, Rev 2:23 tells us that Jesus searches the mind and the heart.

Rev 1:8 tells us that the Lord God Almighty is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end (also Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12), but Rev 22:13 tells us that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. How many Alphas and Omegas are there? How many beginnings and how many ends? Well, for Matthew's theology to hold there has to be at least 2 of each. In Trinitarian theology, there is nothing to explain away here, it makes perfect sense because Jesus is God.

And, in Rev 22:6, it says that the Lord God has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place, but in 22:16, it says that "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you..." So, Matthew, who sent the angel? God, or Jesus?

In other words, over and over again throughout the New Testament, and especially in Revelation, we see things attributed to Jesus - titles and powers and such: raising the dead, healing by power that goes out from Him (Mark 5:30), controlling nature, forgiving sins, being Lord of lords, being Thomas' Lord and God, being worshipped by men and by angels, having all things created through Him, being with God from the beginning, being the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, calling Himself by God's name (I AM), sitting on the throne of God Almighty, searching the hearts and minds of men - that are strictly the prerogatives

of God the Almighty...strictly the prerogatives of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Yet, Matthew, time and time again, ignores this evidence for Jesus being God the Son, and comes up with extra-scriptural, fallible, man-made “opinions” for what all of these verses “really” mean. And, all of his opinions essentially boil down to this: Jesus is the Son, so that proves He’s not God.

Matthew, I would simply ask you to put down your preconceived notions that someone has erroneously taught you, and pick up the Scriptures with an open mind and an open heart. Do not limit God to that which you can get your finite mind around. You are saying God cannot be one God, yet three persons in God, mostly because you simply cannot understand how that can be. You limit God to whatever it is you can understand about God. But God is not limited by your understanding. To make that mistake could jeopardize your salvation and the salvation of all those who listen to you.

Matthew Janzen

Closing Statement

This is my closing and I regrettably will not be able to address all of my opponent's arguments in detail. I have chosen what I feel is the most pertinent for my closing. Anyone desiring further discussion of my beliefs can visit my website for articles and books on this subject.

One basic thing we must remember about this good discussion is that Yeshua is referred to as the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:13-18), the Son of God Most High (Luke 8:27-28), and the Son of the Father (2 John 1:3). In each of these phrases we see two distinct individuals. Taking the second phrase (for example), we have (1) God Most High, and (2) the Son of God Most High. Therefore, when Yeshua is called the Son of somebody else in the same sentence he cannot be that same somebody else. God Most High is the Father, and if Yeshua is not the Father then it is impossible for him to be God Most High.

Using this as a basis, when we come to passages that refer to Yeshua as God (John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8) we have to understand that he cannot be the God that he is the Son of, so he must have the term God applied to him in a different way. This is no problem. God is a term that does apply to exalted humans and angels without distorting their distinction with the one God of heaven, Yahweh. Therefore the phrase Yeshua is God is true in one sense, just as the phrase Abraham is our Father is true in one sense.

Mr. Martignoni claims that I have rigged this "contest" in such a way as to not lose. I say that the Bible is what has won in this discussion, and I most certainly have not rigged it. Please do not just take my opponent's word for anything he says, nor mine own, you go and check what we both say by the Scriptures and see if our statements are made in Scripture. You go and examine the context of Scriptures like John 10:30 and determine for yourself who is being honest with the text.

Lastly, let me again explain the term Son of God in Scripture. This phrase applies to angelic beings (Job 38:7), Israelites (Hosea 1:10), Adam (Luke 3:38), believers in Christ (John 1:12), and Yeshua (Luke 1:35). This is not a term that is a mask for someone really being Yahweh Almighty. It is clearly a term that refers to a person or persons that Yahweh has fathered uniquely and has a special relationship with. When the Jews erroneously reasoned that Yeshua's claims in John 10 were making him out to be God, he quickly corrected them by quoting Psalm 82 – a passage about *others* who were God in a secondary sense. If these human judges can be called God, why did they think Yeshua blasphemed for calling himself the Son of God (John 10:36)? Why not go and study it out for yourself?

John Martignoni

Closing Statement

Again, Matthew uses circular reasoning. He first assumes that God is one and only one person. Therefore, when he shows that Scripture refers to two distinct persons, "God" and the "Son of God," then that "proves" that Jesus is not God. But, it "proves" that Jesus is not God only if...only if...you've first made the assumption that God is one person and not three. Circular reasoning.

Matthew has proven nothing except that the Son and the Father are two distinct persons. Well, I grant that point to my opponent. He has not disproven, though, anything in regard to Trinitarian theology. God and the Son of God are two different persons - I agree.

I quite often say "God," when I specifically mean "God the Father." Other times I use "God" to mean the Trinitarian God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When I say "God" to mean God the Father, I am in no way implying that Jesus is not God. Most Christians use the convention of referring to God the Father as simply "God," but that doesn't mean they think Jesus isn't God. Just so in Scripture. When it mentions the Living God and the Son of the Living God, it is indeed saying that they are two separate persons, it is not, however, saying Jesus is not God. Matthew has done nothing to prove otherwise.

The Bible and what it says are not in dispute here. What is in dispute, is Matthew's fallible, man-made interpretation of the Bible vs. the ancient Trinitarian interpretation of the Church that gave us the Bible. Do you believe the Church's interpretation, or Matthew Janzen's?

Please do read the Bible for yourself and see if the Jews of the time did not interpret the term "Son of God" as meaning God Himself. It is quite obvious that they did. That was the extent of the point I was making. Matthew claimed that the term was "always" used to mean "one who is uniquely fathered by God." Well, the Jews of the day obviously disagree with Matthew as to the meaning of that phrase. And, Jesus would have known that. So, when He stated that He was the Son of God, He knew how they would take it. Does Matthew believe that Jesus deliberately misled them?

Re-read my last newsletter. Read the Scriptures that I point out. Read how abilities and titles that are proper to God Almighty alone are applied to Jesus over and over and over again. He forgives sin. Power goes out from Him to heal. He sits on the throne of God Almighty. Lord of lords. He raises the dead. And, concerning that, there was an important question I asked that Matthew passed on twice. In John 2:19-21, Jesus says He will raise the dead - which Matthew has agreed only God Almighty can do. So my question: Was Jesus lying or did Scripture get it wrong? It has to be one or the other in Matthew's theology. Since neither option is possible, the problem must be with Matthew's theology.