

What data do we have about how Jesus saw YHWH of the OT?

PRIMARY: Passages where He quotes or refers to explicit YHWH-connected texts from the Hebrew Bible (using terms with LORD or GOD or titles/circumlocutions --e.g. "Most High", "Power"-- in them.)

First: The 3-fold temptation before starting His ministry – Matthew 4 (parallel in Luke):

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written,

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, *"He will command his angels concerning you,"* and *"On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone."*

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written,

"You shall not put the Lord your God to the test."

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

"You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve."

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Let’s make some observations about this passage:

- First, we must remember the basics of Jesus’ knowledge:
 - He knows perfectly well who YHWH is, who Satan is, who HE is, who the Father is, etc.
 - He knows perfectly well who wrote every passage in the Hebrew bible.
 - He knows perfectly well that how He responds and what He says will be the example we are to follow.
- Then, some basics about the passage:
 - Since this occurred in isolation from people, it will have been **Jesus Himself** that related this event to his followers, by whom it was recorded for US.
 - This passage is given in **Luke 4** also, with the main extra detail given is that the **devil CLAIMS that the ‘kingdoms of the world’ were GIVEN to him by a higher authority**, and were not his originally, and that he could somehow give them to someone else.
- The ‘tempter’ is stated to be the devil, whom Jesus calls ‘Satan’ in Matthew’s account.
- Each attempt of Satan to get Jesus to do something, is met by a refusal by Jesus, and **each refusal is explained as being based on Jesus’ commitment to some passage / principle in the Hebrew bible**.

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Let’s look at the 1st of the 3 quotes that Jesus uses in thwarting the devil’s attack:

But he answered, “It is written,

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God [*theos*].”

This is from **Deut. 8:3**, spoken by Moses about Israel’s Wilderness journey:

“The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you **may live and multiply**, and go in and **possess the land** that the Lord [YHWH] swore to give to your fathers. And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God [YHWH Elohim] has **led you these forty years** in the wilderness, that he might **humble you, testing you** to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and **let you hunger and fed you with manna**, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, **that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord [YHWH]**. Your clothing did not wear out on you and your foot did not swell these forty years. Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God [YHWH Elohim] disciplines you.

“So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God [YHWH Elohim] by walking in his ways and by fearing him. For the Lord your God [YHWH Elohim] is **bringing you into a good land**, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land in which **you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing**, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. And **you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the Lord your God [YHWH Elohim] for the good land he has given you.**

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Let’s make some observations about what is going on in that first part:

- A. The deity speaking in the quoted OT passage is said to be the “YHWH” / “YHWH Your Elohim” of Moses/Deuteronomy:
- B. This deity promised on oath the land of Palestine to the Patriarchs of Genesis.
- C. The passages in which the land grant covenant/promises/oaths were made or recalled by Abraham had **YHWH** and **God** (Elohim) **of Heaven & Earth** as the covenant partner.
- D. This deity led Israel through the Wilderness wanderings – the fiery cloud that hovered over/in the tabernacle and moved when leading Israel to its next stop.
- E. YHWH let the Israelites be humbled through hunger and then provided them with the manna.
- F. YHWH sustained them during their journey (e.g. clothes, feet) w/o them asking
- G. YHWH disciplined them like a father...
- H. YHWH was bringing them into a good, fertile, luscious land.
- I. Jesus expresses complete loyalty and obedience to the deity speaking in the quoted passage. There is no hesitancy whatsoever.

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Let’s look at the 2ND of the 3 quotes that Jesus uses in thwarting the devil’s attack:

Jesus said to him, “Again it is written,

‘You shall not put the Lord your God [kyrios su ho theos] to the test.’”

This is from **Deut. 6:16**, also spoken by Moses about Israel’s Wilderness journey:

“And when the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] brings you into the land that **he** swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, then take care lest you forget the LORD [YHWH], who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. It is the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear*. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you— for the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] in your midst is a jealous God—lest the anger of the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] be kindled against you, and he destroy you from off the face of the earth.

“You shall not put the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] to the test, as you tested him at Massah. You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim], and his testimonies and his statutes, which **he** has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD [YHWH], that it may go well with you, and that you may go in and take possession of the good land that the LORD [YHWH], swore to give to your fathers by thrusting out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD [YHWH], has promised.”

*See later below on the meaning/history of oaths/swearing in Old Testament times.

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Let’s make some observations about what is going on in that 2nd part:

- A. The deity speaking in the quoted OT passage is said to be the “YHWH” / “YHWH Your Elohim” of Moses/Deuteronomy:
- B. This deity promised on oath the land of Palestine to the Patriarchs.
- C. The passages in which the land grant covenant/promises/oaths were made or recalled by Abraham had YHWH and God (Elohim) of Heaven & Earth as the covenant partner.
- D. This deity was the YHWH of the Exodus, who brought them “out of Egypt” and “out of slavery”
- E. He demanded complete loyalty, with consequences for disloyalty (reverential ‘fear’, exclusive service, exclusive enforcement authority in legal oaths).
- F. When oaths were required, they could only be done in YHWH’s name—and NOT the names of the gods of the peoples around them.
- G. He was tested by the Israelites at Massah (but without being punished).
- H. He promised to ‘thrust out’ the peoples of the Promised Land before Israel (implying more ‘eviction’ and ‘expulsion’ than mutually-bloody ‘executions’ and ‘exterminations’).
- I. Jesus expresses complete loyalty and obedience to the scripture and the deity speaking in the quoted passage. There is no hesitancy whatsoever.

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Let’s look at the 3rd of the 3 quotes that Jesus uses in thwarting the devil’s attack:

Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

“You shall worship the Lord your God [kyrios su ho theos] and him only shall you serve.”

This is from Deut. 6:13 (cited in context, as above), along with Deut 10:20:

“... when you eat and are full, then take care lest you forget the LORD [YHWH], who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **It is the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] you shall fear. Him you shall serve** and by his name you shall swear. You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are around you— ...” [10:12]
“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] require of you, but to fear the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim], to walk in all his ways, to love him, to **serve the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim]** with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD [YHWH], which I am commanding you today for your good?

“Behold, to the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. ... For the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim] is God of gods [Elohim (of Elohim)] and Lord of lords [Adon (of Adonai)], the great, the mighty, and the awesome God [El], who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. **You shall fear the LORD your God [YHWH-Elohim]. You shall serve him** and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. He is your praise. He is your God [Elohim], who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen.”

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Let’s make some observations about that 3rd/last part:

- A. This deity was the YHWH of the Exodus, who brought them “out of Egypt” and “out of slavery”
- B. He demanded complete loyalty, with consequences for disloyalty (reverential ‘fear’, exclusive service, exclusive enforcement authority in legal oaths).
- C. When oaths were required, they could only be done in YHWH’s name—and NOT the names of the gods of the peoples around them.
- D. He demanded a heart-level response of loyalty and love (all your heart and all your soul), not just cold obedience.
- E. He gave them the Mosaic Law for their good/benefit.
- F. He claimed to be God of gods and Lord of Lords.
- G. He claimed to be a champion of social justice and social welfare, especially for the marginalized.
- H. He ordered Israel to live a life of love, based on empathy
- I. He claimed to have done the ‘great and terrifying things’ the Israelites had seen in the Exodus and Wilderness.
- J. He claimed to be possessor of the earth, heaven and the ‘heaven of the heavens’, and all that is in it [cf. Abraham in Genesis 14 and Jesus in Matthew 11.26 and Luke 10.21*]

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Quick note on the point about:

“He claimed to be possessor of the earth, heaven and the ‘heaven of the heavens’, and all that is in it [cf. Abraham in Genesis 14 and Jesus in Matthew 11.26 and Luke 10.21*]”

In Genesis 14.22, Abram says that he has made an oath to “**The LORD, God Most High, Possessor/Creator of heaven and earth**”. This identifies YHWH, with the “possessor/maker of heaven and earth” (Later Jewish literature uses the term ‘Lord of Heaven and Earth’.)

In Matthew 11.26 and Luke 10.21, Jesus refers to the Father using that terminology:

- “I thank you, **Father, Lord of heaven and earth**, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children;
- “In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, “I thank you, **Father, Lord of heaven and earth**, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children”

Jesus expresses PASSIONATE, complete and exclusive loyalty and obedience to the scripture and the deity speaking in the quoted passage. There is no hesitancy whatsoever.

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Let's test something in the passage:

If **Satan really is the YHWH** of those OT passages [and Jesus KNOWS that], then we have a most unusual interchange, **substituting 'SATAN' in for "YHWH" and making the context explicit and the pronouns fit:**

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he [Jesus] answered, "[**I will not, because You, Satan, have written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of you Satan"**]"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for **I Satan** have written, "***I, Satan, will command my/Satan's angels concerning you,***" and "***On the hands of Satan's angels they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.***"

Jesus said to him, "Again **I will not, Satan, because you, Satan, have written, 'You shall not put me Satan to the test.'**"

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me, **Satan.**"

Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, **Satan!** **I will not worship you, Satan, because you, Satan, have written, "You shall worship Satan and Satan only shall you serve."**

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Honestly, can it get any CLEARER and/or more explicit than that?!

There is no symbolism, no ambiguity, no indication of sarcasm—

1. Jesus will not obey or worship Satan.
2. Jesus will only serve and worship YHWH.
3. Jesus trusts the passages He quotes—they were not written by the Satan, the father of lies.
4. Jesus trusts the passages to be about YHWH and not about Satan.
5. Jesus will obey the directives of YHWH in those passages.
6. The YHWH Jesus worships and serves is the YHWH of the Patriarchs, the Exodus, the Wilderness Sojourn, and the promise of the Conquest.

Nothing negative here, and this FIRST EVENT would have been a PERFECT PLACE to reveal such. For example, if it had been an interchange where Jesus was the attacker, castigating Satan for usurping the name of YHWH and for deluding God’s chosen people by creating a fraudulent Mosaic law and for perpetrating massive ‘crimes against humanity’ and ‘terrorist acts’, then THAT would have been a great start to a ministry of repudiation/replacement theology.

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**Note: There is NO WARNING GIVEN BY JESUS
HERE TO HIS DISCIPLES.**

Instead, we have the OPPOSITE –

**Complete submission to the Torah and to the
YHWH of those passages.**

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