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The Exalted Son

2: 9-11

The Exalted Son DIG: What is Yeshua's exaltation in response to? Who will bow the knee? Will anyone escape? What is the source of Messiah's exaltation? What is the title of Messiah's exaltation? What is the response to Messiah's exaltation? What is the purpose of His exaltation? Why is this Hymn important?

REFLECT: Since the way to exaltation is always through humiliation. And since that was true for Yeshua, how much more is it true for you? What is the difference between Messiah being your Lord and being your Savior? The Philippians had to be brave to declare that Messiah was Lord and Savior. How so today?

One day all will acknowledge that Messiah is all He claimed to be - very God of very God.

Verses 2:6-11 represent a "Messianic Hymn" which tells of the coming of **the Messiah** into a world as **a bond-servant, His death** on a Roman cross, and **His exaltation** (meaning: *to be lifted up, glorified, or referring to God's supreme authority*) to being **Lord** of all creation. **In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Messiah Yeshua:**

6 Who, being in very form God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to be seized by force.

7 Rather, He emptied Himself by taking the very form of a bond-servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man.

8 He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!

9 For this reason, God highly exalted Him, and gave Him THE NAME above

all other names.

10 So that at THE NAME of Yeshua, every knee will bow, both in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth.

11 And every tongue confess that Yeshua Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

As the prayers of the siddur (the Jewish prayer book) express Jewish theological concepts and development, this liturgical hymn gives us an early look at the evolution of Messianic Jewish theology and early liturgical development with the growing Messianic Jewish and Messianic Gentile communities. The construction of liturgical prayers and hymns like this one, taken from **Isaiah 45:23**, a passage from the TaNaKh that applied to **the One God of Isra'el**, and referred to **Yeshua**. This showed an early understanding of the divine nature of **Yeshua** by the earliest of those who put their trust in **Him**. We can also see in this liturgical development an early theological understanding of first century Messianic Jews that the nature of **the God of Isra'el** is far more complicated than a strict monotheism. In **Yeshua**, the divine nature is shared, and yet, is within the framework of **One God**.

Through two millennia of theologians they would wrestle with the place of **Yeshua** as well as **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** within **One God of Isra'el** expressed in **the Sh'ma** (see **Deuteronomy**, **to see link click [Bw](#) - Sh'ma Isra'el**). However, it appears that the earliest **Yeshua** followers accepted that **the God of Isra'el** became a human being in **Yeshua**. In line with the liturgical use of **the Psalms**, the early believers created liturgical songs honoring **Yeshua** as **Messiah** and **Lord** that were used during worship and private devotionals.

In addition to containing one of the most potent and straightforward teachings on the eternal divine nature of **Yeshua**, this hymn also teaches **the Philippians** essential lessons of humility modeled on **the Messiah's** humility and servanthood. Such servanthood and self-sacrifice offered a way for **the Philippians** to model the kind of unity **Paul** laid out in the first four verses of the chapter (see **[Au](#) - To Model the Messiah**). The first half of the hymn (**2:6-8**) describes what **Messiah** did (see **[Av](#) - Obedient to Death**); the second half of the hymn, seen here (**2:9-11**), describes what **ADONAI** did. Let's take a look at the second half of this hymn, line by line.⁷⁹

The source of Messiah's exaltation (2:9a): For this reason refers back to

Yeshua's humiliation of **His** death described earlier. **His exaltation** was referred to as **the joy set before Him (Hebrews 12:2-3)** for which **He** willingly endured the cross, despised the shame, and suffered the hostility of sinners.

Since **Messiah** fully succeeded in **His** mission to bring mankind to **God, God highly exalted Him (Philippians 2:9a)**, and was seated at **the Father's right hand (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:44)**, where **He** shares **honor, glory, and power with the Father (Revelation 5:13)**. **His exaltation** involved four steps upward: **His** resurrection, **His** ascension, **His** coronation, and **His** intercession.

First, **Yeshua** was resurrected from the dead. **When the women came to the tomb where the Master had been buried, an angel said to them, "Do not be amazed; you are looking for Yeshua the Nazarene, who has been crucified. But He has risen; He is not here; behold, here is the place where they laid Him (Mark 16:6)**. Peter explained to **his** hearers at Shavu'ot that, **"God raised up this Yeshua! And we are all witnesses of it (Acts 2:32)**. Many years later, **Paul** wrote that **God the Father raised Yeshua from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places (Ephesians 1:20)**.

The second aspect of **the Father's exaltation** of **Yeshua** was **His** ascension. When **the Lord** appeared to **Mary Magdalene** after **His** resurrection, **He said to her: Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My [apostles] and say to them, "I have ascended to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God (John 20:17)**. Later, after **He** had given last instructions to the eleven on the Mount of Olives: **He was lifted up while they were looking, and a cloud received Him out of their sight (Acts 1:9)**. As **Paul** explained to **Timothy**, **Yeshua was taken up in glory (First Timothy 3:16)**.

The third aspect of **Yeshua's exaltation** was **His** coronation. When giving the Great Commission, **the Master** proclaimed: **All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18)**. Having ascended, **Yeshua is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven (First Peter 3:22)**. Peter and others testified to the Great Sanhedrin that **Messiah is the one whom ADONAI exalted to His right hand as Prince and Savior, to grant repentance to Isra'el, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:31)**. As **Stephen** was about to die, **he saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55-56)**.

The fourth and final aspect of **the Messiah's exaltation** is **His** honored position of **High Priest**, from which **He** continually intercedes for believers. **Yeshua**, who died and was raised for us and **who is at the right hand of God . . . also intercedes for us (Romans 8:34)**. As our **Great High Priest: He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For it is fitting**, the writer to the **Hebrews** goes on to say: **for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners and exalted above the heavens (Hebrews 7:25-26)**.

For the most part, **the Master's exaltation** involved the restoration of what **He** had eternally possessed before **His** incarnation (**John 17:5**). Yet, from the Scriptures stated above, it seems clear that in some ways, **Yeshua** received even more in **His exaltation** than **He** surrendered in **His** incarnation. **He** was not, of course, any more divine or perfect. It was not possible for **Him** to be further elevated in any way as far as **His** essential nature and being are concerned. But because of **His** perfect redemptive work **the Father** gave **His Son** even more rights, privileges, honors, and responsibilities than **He** had before. The **exaltation** was therefore more than merely a reversal of the incarnation. It was **the Father's** giving **His Son** honor and tribute **He** could only receive after **His** redemptive sacrifice, which **He** made in obedience to **the Father's** will.⁸⁰

The title of Messiah exaltation (2:9b): And gave Him THE NAME. That which was graciously bestowed was not "a name," but **THE NAME**. The definite article appears in the Greek text and refers to a specific name. **Paul** does not reveal the supreme name, **THE NAME above all other names (Philippians 2:9b; Isaiah 52:13 and 53:12)**, until **verse 11**, where **he** declares that **And every tongue confess that Yeshua Messiah is Lord**. For the largely Gentile church at **Philippi** living in a roman colony, the claim that **Yeshua Messiah** possessed **THE NAME** above all names would have stood in sharp contrast to imperial propaganda that proclaimed Caesar as Lord and Savior. Indeed, the ideology of the imperial cult, Jupiter and the gods gave divine authority and divine names to Augustus Caesar. Yet **Paul** insists that through **His** incarnation, death, and resurrection the **exalted Yeshua Messiah** is the true **Lord** with **THE NAME** above every other name and Caesar was merely a pathetic imposter.⁸¹

Lord is the title of majesty, authority, honor, and sovereignty. One day **THE exalted NAME** will be expanded to **King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16)**. The man **Messiah Yeshua**, who had voluntarily laid aside **His glory of deity** during **His** incarnation, now has placed upon **His** shoulders all the majesty,

dignity, and glory of **deity** itself. This is the answer to **Yeshua's high priestly prayer** of **John 17:5: And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.** This is the greatest goal of human history, that **Messiah** would be seen as supreme **above all things (Colossians 1:15-20).**



The response to Messiah's exaltation (2:10-11a): So in THE NAME of Yeshua, every knee will bow (Philippians 2:10a; Isaiah 45:23) and acknowledge Him for who He really is. Isaiah had prophesied the same truth seven-hundred years earlier. Through him ADONAI declared: Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me, every knee will bow (Isaiah 45:22-23). Paul stressed the same truth in his letter to the Roman church (Romans 14:11). In the Greco-Roman world this would have been a familiar means of expressing loyalty, whether to another person or to a god.

The extent of **Messiah's** sovereign authority is given in the three-fold phrase: **Both in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth (Philippians 2:10b).** No intelligent being – whether angels or believers **in heaven**, people living on **the earth**, or the Adversary, demons, and those who have rejected the Gospel **under the earth** in hell – in all **ADONAI's** universe will escape. All **will bow the knee** either willingly or they will be forced to do so.⁸² **And every tongue confess (Isaiah 45:23) that Yeshua Messiah is Lord.** The word **confess** means *to agree with someone or publicly declare.* Someday, the entire universe will agree with **God**

the Father on the testimony which **He** has given of **His Son**.⁸³ For all believers, **Messiah** is our **Savior**; but for **Him** to be our **Lord** means that we have surrendered every aspect of our lives to **His** control. The universal reign of **Yeshua Messiah** should be a great source of comfort to us. In a world that often seems out of control, where evil often seems to go unpunished and justice remains elusive, we can rest in the sweet truth that one day the entire created order will be in submission to **Yeshua Messiah** in the fullest sense of the word.⁸⁴

The purpose of Messiah's exaltation (2:11b): One day all will acknowledge that **Yeshua Messiah** is all **He** claimed to be – very **God** of very **God** (from the Nicene Creed in 325 AD). Sadly, for many it will be too late for the salvation of their souls. The **exalted** place **the Savior** now occupies and the universal **bowing** in the future in acknowledgement of **His** lordship is all **to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:11; Isaiah 45:24-25)**.⁸⁵ But **Messiah's** universal acknowledgment as **Lord** does not make **the Father** jealous. Instead, this is the supreme objective and fulfillment of **the Father's** divine will as **He** demonstrates **His** perfect love for **His Son**.

This **exaltation** of **Yeshua** by **the Father** is related to the vision of **Dani'el** (see the commentary on **Dani'el Ce - A Vision of the Heavenly Court**). In **verse 9** we see that there are two thrones, one for **the Ancient of Days (God the Father)** and one for **the Son of Man (Yeshua Messiah)**. Later in **2:13** and **14**, **the Ancient of Days** grants eternal, universal rulership to **the Son of Man** in line with **the exaltation** of **Yeshua** by **the Father** that we read about here in **Philippians**.⁸⁶

Here, of course, is a great mystery, a mystery that confounds everyone who presumes to fully understand **the Trinity**. **The three Persons** are but one **God**, wholly united and indivisible. **They** never compete, disagree, or differ with one another in the slightest degree. We, therefore, are not called to worship **ADONAI** through **Yeshua** (let alone Mary), but to worship **Messiah** as **God**. **Yeshua** explained that **The Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him; if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself (John 13:31-32; cf. John 14:13; Romans 9:5, 11;36 and 16:27)**. It is **the Father's** and **the Son's** supreme pleasure to glorify each other. In **His** High Priestly Prayer, **Yeshua** said: **Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You . . . I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with**

the glory which I had with You before the world was created (John 17:1 and 4-5). Whoever honors **the Son** honors **the Father**, and whoever dishonors **the Son** dishonors **the Father (John 5:23)**. Throughout all eternity, **the Father** will continue to say of the **exalted Lord Yeshua Messiah: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Matthew 3:17).**⁸⁷

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** for being so very great and almighty! Though some people think they can live their lives doing as they please without thinking of **You**, there will come a day when at **THE NAME of Yeshua, every knee will bow to You**. How foolish that some people think that because they cannot see **You**, that **You** – the almighty, omniscient, omnipotent, all- seeing sovereign **Ruler** of the world, cannot see them. **So they say: ADONAI does not see –the God of Jacob pays no attention (Ps 94:7, Ezekiel 8: 7, 9:9)** Of course **You** see everyone! **For He [ADONAI] does not see a man as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but Adonai looks into the heart (1 Sam 16:7c)**. What comfort it brings to know that **Your** power is supreme over all kingdoms and in **Your** plan, **Messiah** will be **exalted** and will reign forever! No plan of Satan or of any man will ever defeat **Messiah** from ruling from his eternal Kingdom! All who are wise will worship and **exalt Messiah Yeshua** now, for **He** is worthy of all **exaltation** and **His** rule is absolutely sure and certain! In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*