

THE **100**  
**MOST ASKED**  
**QUESTIONS**  
**ABOUT**  
**HEAVEN, HELL,**  
**AND THE AFTERLIFE**

• • •

*Scripture's Answers to  
What Happens after You Die*

**S. Michael Houdmann**

Founder and CEO of [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

*“The 100 Most Asked Questions About God and the Bible* is essential for anyone who has ever had a question about the Bible; and let’s be honest, that includes all of us. It is fascinating to see what the top one hundred questions are and encouraging to see them answered from God’s Word. This book is indispensable for anyone seeking to speak truth into a culture ruled by lies.”

—Pastor Jack Hibbs, Calvary Chapel Chino Hills

*“The 100 Most Asked Questions about God and the Bible*, tackling a hundred challenging questions, is brimming with wisdom and a beacon of clarity for all Christians. I love how the book flows and invites you to jump into a wide range of topics that provide solid biblical answers that will build confidence as you grow and share your faith.”

—Jason Jimenez, founder and president of Stand Strong Ministries  
and bestselling author

*“This book is an invaluable resource for anyone who is searching for biblical answers to some of the most popular questions people have about the Christian faith. It’s also a great apologetic resource to use in conversations with your children and those seeking to obtain a deeper understanding of what Christians believe. I encourage all Christians to not only get a copy of this book, but more importantly, read it in depth to provide a solid foundation to their theological beliefs.”*

—Allen Parr, author of *Misled: 7 Lies that Distort the Gospel*  
and Christian YouTuber on The B.E.A.T.

*“Our children have questions, and the Bible has answers. The problem is we are not always sure how to help our children find those answers. The 100 Most Asked Questions About God and the Bible helps solve this problem, modeling how to examine the Bible as a whole to answer challenging questions. I highly recommend that every Christian parent keep this book on hand as they seek to guide their children in the truth.”*

—Elizabeth Urbanowicz, founder, Foundation Worldview

“GotQuestions.org is my go-to resource and recommendation for people who have questions about the Christian worldview. It is arguably the best collection of answers for questions in a skeptical age. That’s why *The 100 Most Asked Questions About God and the Bible* is such a valuable book. No one is better equipped to collect and answer these questions than S. Michael Houdmann. If you’re looking for a powerful, concise, and targeted resource to grow your faith or reach your friends, get this book!”

—J. Warner Wallace, *Dateline* featured cold-case detective, senior fellow at the Colson Center for Christian Worldview, professor of apologetics, and author

“My good friend, S. Michael Houdmann, has done all of us a huge service in writing and now making available this amazing resource: *The 100 Most Asked Questions About God and the Bible*. Anyone serious about the Bible and being ready to give reasons for their hope in Christ needs this book!”

—Mark Yarbrough, PhD; president, Dallas Theological Seminary

“S. Michael Houdmann, founder and president of GotQuestions.org, has compiled the most asked questions into an outstanding resource for Christians and for churches. Both detailed and accessible, Houdmann provides straight answers to tough questions, common confusions, and outright challenges to the faith. Covering the Old and New Testament, core Christian doctrine, ancient historical trivia, and practical applications, *The 100 Most Asked Questions About God and the Bible* consistently communicates with grace and truth. Most of all, Houdmann doesn’t hold back from declaring—firmly but lovingly—the gospel of Jesus Christ. Pick up this book! It is a must for every Christian and church library!!”

—Dr. Christopher Yuan, speaker; author of *Holy Sexuality and the Gospel*, and producer of *The Holy Sexuality Project*

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**ABOUT**  
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# THE 100 MOST ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT GOD AND THE BIBLE

...

*Scripture's Answers on Sin, Salvation, Sexuality,  
End Times, Heaven, and More*

**S. Michael Houdmann**



**BETHANYHOUSE**

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# Introduction

Little did I know what God had in mind when I launched GotQuestions.org over twenty years ago. What my wife and I thought would be a fun hobby turned out to be something God intended to expand into one of the most impactful Christian websites in the world. Now, not only do I have my dream job, but I also get to watch God take our limited vision and use it in ways far beyond anything we could ask or imagine.

GotQuestions.org has received over seven hundred and fifty thousand personally submitted questions. Each month, the articles on GotQuestions.org are read approximately twenty million times. Over the years, our articles have been read well over two billion times. These interactions give GotQuestions.org plenty of data regarding what questions people are truly asking. We *know* what people are asking. We *know* the information people are searching for. And, after years of God refining us and the content we produce, we have improved at answering questions in an understandable and applicable way.

This book contains the top one hundred questions we have received. Some of the questions are of vital importance. Some of the questions are immensely personal. Some of the questions are fairly obscure. None of the questions are trivial.

My sincerest hope is that you will find this resource interesting, informative, biblically accurate, and worth sharing with others. May this book motivate you to continue asking questions and continue looking to God's Word for the answers.

—S. Michael Houdmann

# SECTION 1

## Questions about God

### **1. Is Jesus God? Did Jesus ever claim to be God?**

Some who deny that Jesus is God make the claim that Jesus never said that He is God. It is correct that the Bible never records Jesus saying the precise words “I am God.” This does not mean, however, that Jesus never claimed to be God.

#### ***Is Jesus God?—Jesus claimed to be God.***

Take for example the words of Jesus in John 10:30, “I and the Father are one” (ESV). We need only to look at the Jews’ reaction to His statement to know He was claiming to be God. They tried to stone Him for this very reason: “You, a mere man, *claim to be God*” (John 10:33, emphasis added). The Jews understood exactly what Jesus was claiming—deity. When Jesus declared “I and the Father are one,” He was saying that He and the Father are of one nature and essence. John 8:58 is another example. Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, before

Abraham was born, I AM!” (NLT). This is a reference to Exodus 3:14 when God revealed Himself as the “I AM.” The Jews who heard this statement responded by taking up stones to kill Him for blasphemy, as the Mosaic law commanded (Leviticus 24:16). Their indignation showed He was claiming to be God.

### ***Is Jesus God?—His followers declared Him to be God.***

John reiterates the concept of Jesus’ deity: “The Word [Jesus] was God” and “the Word became flesh” (John 1:1, 14). These verses clearly indicate that Jesus is God in the flesh. Acts 20:28 tells us, “Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.” Who bought the church with His own blood? Jesus Christ. And this same verse declares that God purchased His church with His own blood. Therefore, Jesus is God.

Thomas the disciple declared concerning Jesus, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28). Jesus does not correct him. Titus 2:13 encourages us to wait for the coming of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ (see also 2 Peter 1:1). In Hebrews 1:8, the Father declares of Jesus, “But about the Son he says, ‘Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever, a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.’” The Father refers to Jesus as God, indicating that Jesus is indeed God.

In Revelation, an angel instructed the apostle John to only worship God (Revelation 19:10). Several times in Scripture Jesus receives worship (Matthew 2:11; 14:33; 28:9, 17; Luke 24:52; John 9:38). He never rebukes people for worshiping Him. If Jesus were not God, He would have told people not to worship Him, just as the angel in Revelation did. Beyond these, there are many other passages of Scripture that argue for Jesus being God.

### ***Is Jesus God?—The reason Jesus must be God.***

The most important reason that Jesus must be God is that if He is not God, His death would not have been sufficient to pay the penalty for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2). A created being, which Jesus



would be if He were not God, could not pay the infinite penalty required for sin against an infinite God. Only God could pay such an infinite penalty. Only God could take on the sins of the world (2 Corinthians 5:21), die, and be resurrected, proving His victory over sin and death.

Is Jesus God? Yes. Jesus declared Himself to be God. His followers believed Him to be God. The provision of salvation only works if Jesus is God. Jesus is God incarnate, the eternal Alpha and Omega (Revelation 1:8; 22:13), and God our Savior (2 Peter 1:1).

## **2. What does the Bible teach about the Trinity?**

The most difficult thing about the Christian concept of the Trinity is that there is no way to perfectly and completely understand it. The Trinity is a concept that is impossible for any human being to fully understand, let alone explain. God is infinitely greater than we are; therefore, we should not expect to be able to fully understand Him. The Bible teaches that the Father is God, that Jesus is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. The Bible also teaches that there is only one God. Though we can understand some facts about the relationship of the different persons of the Trinity to one another, ultimately, it is incomprehensible to the human mind. However, this does not mean the Trinity is not true or that it is not based on the teachings of the Bible.

The Trinity is one God existing in three persons. This is not in any way suggesting three Gods. Keep in mind when studying this subject that the word *Trinity* is not found in Scripture. This is a term used to attempt to describe the triune God—three coexistent, coeternal persons who are God. Of real importance is that the concept represented by the word *Trinity* does exist in Scripture. The following is what God's Word says about the Trinity:

1. There is one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; 1 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:5).

2. The Trinity consists of three persons (Genesis 1:1, 26; 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8, 61:1; Matthew 3:16–17, 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). In Genesis 1:1, the Hebrew plural noun *Elohim* is used. In Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; and Isaiah 6:8, the plural pronoun for *us* is used. The word *Elohim* and the pronoun *us* are plural forms, referring in the Hebrew language to more than two. While this is not an explicit argument for the Trinity, it does denote the aspect of plurality in God. The Hebrew word for *God*, *Elohim*, definitely allows for the Trinity.

In Isaiah 48:16 and 61:1, the Son is speaking while making reference to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Compare Isaiah 61:1 to Luke 4:14–19 to see that it is the Son speaking. Matthew 3:16–17 describes the event of Jesus' baptism. Seen in this passage is God the Holy Spirit descending on God the Son while God the Father proclaims His pleasure in the Son. Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 are other examples of passages that present three distinct persons in the Trinity.

3. The members of the Trinity are distinguished one from another in various passages. In the Old Testament, *LORD* is distinguished from *Lord* (Genesis 19:24; Hosea 1:4). The *LORD* has a Son (Psalm 2:7, 12; Proverbs 30:2–4). The Spirit is distinguished from the *LORD* (Numbers 27:18) and from God (Psalm 51:10–12). God the Son is distinguished from God the Father (Psalm 45:6–7; cf. Hebrews 1:8–9). In the New Testament, Jesus speaks to the Father about sending a Helper, the Holy Spirit (John 14:16–17). This shows that Jesus did not consider Himself to be the Father or the Holy Spirit. Consider also the other instances when Jesus speaks to the Father. Was He speaking to Himself? No. He spoke to another person in the Trinity—the Father.
4. Each member of the Trinity is God. The Father is God (John 6:27; Romans 1:7; 1 Peter 1:2). The Son is God (John 1:1, 14; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:8; 1 John 5:20). The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3–4; 1 Corinthians 3:16).

5. There is subordination within the Trinity. Scripture shows that the Holy Spirit is subordinate to the Father and the Son, and the Son is subordinate to the Father. This is an internal relationship and does not deny the deity of any person of the Trinity. This is simply something our finite minds cannot understand concerning the infinite God. Concerning the Son, see Luke 22:42; John 5:36; 20:21; and 1 John 4:14. Concerning the Holy Spirit, see John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7; and especially John 16:13–14.
6. The individual members of the Trinity have different tasks. The Father is the ultimate source or cause of the universe (1 Corinthians 8:6; Revelation 4:11), divine revelation (Revelation 1:1), salvation (John 3:16–17), and Jesus' human works (John 5:17; 14:10). The Father initiates all of these things.

The Son is the agent through whom the Father does the following works: the creation and maintenance of the universe (1 Corinthians 8:6; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16–17), divine revelation (John 1:1, 16:12–15; Matthew 11:27; Revelation 1:1), and salvation (2 Corinthians 5:19; Matthew 1:21; John 4:42). The Father does all these things through the Son, who functions as His agent.

The Holy Spirit is the means by whom the Father does the following works: creation and maintenance of the universe (Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30), divine revelation (John 16:12–15; Ephesians 3:5; 2 Peter 1:21), salvation (John 3:16; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:2), and Jesus' works (Isaiah 61:1; Acts 10:38). Thus, the Father does all these things by the power of the Holy Spirit.

There have been many attempts to develop illustrations of the Trinity. However, none of the popular illustrations are completely accurate. The egg (or apple) fails in that the shell, white, and yolk are parts of the egg, not the egg in themselves, just as the skin, flesh, and seeds

of the apple are parts of it, not the apple itself. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not parts of God; each of them is God. The water illustration is somewhat better, but it still fails to adequately describe the Trinity. Liquid, vapor, and ice are forms of water. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not forms of God; each of them is God. So, while these illustrations may give us a picture of the Trinity, the picture is not entirely accurate. An infinite God cannot be fully described by a finite illustration.

The doctrine of the Trinity has been a divisive issue throughout the entire history of the Christian church. While the core aspects of the Trinity are clearly presented in God's Word, some of the side issues are not as explicitly clear. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God—but there is only one God. That is the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. Beyond that, the issues are, to a certain extent, debatable and nonessential. Rather than attempting to fully define the Trinity with our finite human minds, we would be better served by focusing on what is specifically written, on God's greatness, and on His infinitely higher nature. "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?" (Romans 11:33–34).

### **3. What are the different names of God, and what do they mean?**

Each of the many names of God describes a different aspect of His many-faceted character. Here are some of the better-known names of God in the Bible:

**EL, ELOAH [el, el-oh-ah]:** God "mighty, strong, prominent" (Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 139:19)—etymologically, *El* appears to mean "power" and "might" (Genesis 31:29). *El* is associated with other qualities, such as integrity (Numbers

23:19), jealousy (Deuteronomy 5:9), and compassion (Nehe-  
miah 9:31), but the root idea of “might” remains.

**ELOHIM [el-oh-*heem*]:** God “Creator, Mighty and Strong”  
(Genesis 17:7; Jeremiah 31:33)—the plural form of *Eloah*.  
Being plural, *Elohim* accommodates the doctrine of the Trin-  
ity. From the Bible’s first sentence, the superlative nature of  
God’s power is evident as God (Elohim) speaks the world into  
existence (Genesis 1:1).

**EL SHADDAI [el-shah-*dahy*]:** “God Almighty,” “The Mighty  
One of Jacob” (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 132:2, 5)—speaks to  
God’s ultimate power over all.

**ADONAI [ah-daw-*nahy*]:** “Lord” (Genesis 15:2; Judges  
6:15)—used in place of *YHWH*, which was thought by the  
Jews to be too sacred to be uttered by sinful men. In the Old  
Testament, *YHWH* is more often used in God’s dealings with  
His people, while *Adonai* is used more when He deals with  
the Gentiles.

**YHWH / YAHWEH / JEHOVAH [yah-way / ji-*hoh-veh*]:**  
“LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4; Daniel 9:14)—strictly speaking,  
the only proper name for God. Translated in English Bibles  
“LORD” (all capitals) to distinguish it from *Adonai*, “Lord.”  
The revelation of the name is given to Moses: “I AM WHO I  
AM” (Exodus 3:14). This name specifies an immediacy, a pres-  
ence. Yahweh is present, accessible, near to those who call  
on Him for deliverance (Psalm 107:13), forgiveness (Psalm  
25:11), and guidance (Psalm 31:3).

**YAHWEH-JIREH [yah-way-*ji-reh*]:** “The LORD Will Provide”  
(Genesis 22:14)—the name memorialized by Abraham when  
God provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

**YAHWEH-RAPHA [yah-way-*raw-faw*]:** “The LORD Who  
Heals” (Exodus 15:26)—“I am the LORD who heals you” both  
in body and soul: in body, by preserving from and curing dis-  
eases, and in soul, by pardoning iniquities.

**YAHWEH-NISSI** [*yah-way-nee-see*]: “The LORD Our Banner” (Exodus 17:15), where *banner* is understood to be a rallying place. This name commemorates the desert victory over the Amalekites in Exodus 17.

**YAHWEH-M’KADDESH** [*yah-way-meh-kad-esh*]: “The LORD Who Sanctifies, Makes Holy” (Leviticus 20:8; Ezekiel 37:28)—God makes it clear that He alone, not the law, can cleanse His people and make them holy.

**YAHWEH-SHALOM** [*yah-way-shah-lohm*]: “The LORD Our Peace” (Judges 6:24)—the name given by Gideon to the altar he built after the Angel of the Lord assured him he would not die as he thought he would after seeing Him.

**YAHWEH-ELOHIM** [*yah-way-el-oh-him*]: “LORD God” (Genesis 2:4; Psalm 59:5)—a combination of God’s unique name *YHWH* and the generic word for “God,” signifying that He is the Lord who is God.

**YAHWEH-TSIDKENU** [*yah-way-tzid-kay-noo*]: “The LORD Our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 33:16)—as with *YHWH-M’Kaddesh*, it is God alone who provides righteousness to man, ultimately in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, who became sin for us “that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV).

**YAHWEH-ROHI** [*yah-way-roh-hee*]: “The LORD Our Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1)—after David pondered his relationship as a shepherd to his sheep, he realized that was exactly the relationship God had with him, so he declares, “The LORD is my shepherd [Yahweh-Rohi]; I shall not want” (Psalm 23:1 ESV).

**YAHWEH-SHAMMAH** [*yah-way-sham-mahw*]: “The LORD Is There” (Ezekiel 48:35)—the name ascribed to Jerusalem and the temple there, indicating that the once-departed glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 8–11) had returned (Ezekiel 44:1–4).

**YAHWEH-SABAOOTH** [*yah-way-sah-bah-ohth*]: “The LORD of Hosts” (Isaiah 1:24; Psalm 46:7)—*hosts* means “hordes,”

both of angels and of men. He is LORD of the hosts of heaven and of the inhabitants of the earth, of Jews and Gentiles, of rich and poor, master and slave. The name is expressive of the majesty, power, and authority of God and shows that He is able to accomplish what He determines to do.

**EL ELYON [el-el-*yohn*]:** “Most High” (Deuteronomy 26:19)—the name is derived from the Hebrew root for “go up” or “ascend,” so the implication is that which is the very highest. *El Elyon* denotes exaltation and speaks of absolute right to lordship.

**EL ROI [el-roh-*ee*]:** “God of Seeing” (Genesis 16:13)—the name ascribed to God by Hagar, alone and desperate in the wilderness after being driven out by Sarah (Genesis 16:1–14). When Hagar met the Angel of the Lord, she realized she had seen God Himself in a theophany. She also realized that *El Roi* saw her in her distress and testified that He is a living God who sees all.

**EL-OLAM [el-oh-*lahm*]:** “Everlasting God” (Psalm 90:1–3)—God’s nature is without beginning or end, free from all constraints of time, and He contains within Himself the very cause of time. “From everlasting to everlasting you are God” (Psalm 90:2).

**EL-GIBHOR [el-ghee-*bohr*]:** “Mighty God” (Isaiah 9:6)—the name describing the Messiah, Christ Jesus, in this prophetic portion of Isaiah. As a powerful and mighty warrior, the Messiah, the Mighty God, will accomplish the destruction of God’s enemies and rule with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15).

#### **4. What does it mean that Jesus is God’s only begotten son?**

The phrase “only begotten Son” occurs in John 3:16, which reads in the King James Version as, “For God so loved the world, that he gave

his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The phrase “only begotten” translates the Greek word *monogenes*. This word is variously translated into English as “only,” “one and only,” and “only begotten.”

It’s this last phrase (“only begotten” used in the KJV, NASB, and the NKJV) that causes problems. False teachers have latched on to this phrase to try to prove their false teaching that Jesus Christ isn’t God; i.e., that Jesus isn’t equal in essence to God as the second person of the Trinity. They see the word *begotten* and say that Jesus is a created being because only someone who had a beginning in time can be “begotten.” What this fails to note is that *begotten* is an English translation of a Greek word. As such, we have to look at the original meaning of the Greek word, not transfer English meanings into the text.

So what does *monogenes* mean? According to the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BAGD, 3rd edition), *monogenes* has two primary definitions. The first definition is “pertaining to being the only one of its kind within a specific relationship.” This is its meaning in Hebrews 11:17 when the writer refers to Isaac as Abraham’s “only begotten son” (KJV). Abraham had more than one son, but Isaac was the only son he had by Sarah and the only son of the covenant. Therefore, it is the uniqueness of Isaac among the other sons that allows for the use of *monogenes* in that context.

The second definition is “pertaining to being the only one of its kind or class, unique in kind.” This is the meaning that is implied in John 3:16 (see also John 1:14, 18; 3:18; 1 John 4:9). John was primarily concerned with demonstrating that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20:31), and he uses *monogenes* to highlight Jesus as uniquely God’s Son—sharing the same divine nature as God—as opposed to believers who are God’s sons and daughters by adoption (Ephesians 1:5). Jesus is God’s “one and only” Son.

The bottom line is that terms such as *Father* and *Son*, descriptive of God and Jesus, are human terms that help us understand the



relationship between the different persons of the Trinity. If you can understand the relationship between a human father and a human son, then you can understand, in part, the relationship between the first and second persons of the Trinity. The analogy breaks down if you try to take it too far and teach, as some pseudo-Christian cults (such as the Jehovah's Witnesses), that Jesus was literally "begotten" as in produced or created by God the Father.

## **5. If His name was Yeshua, why do we call Him Jesus?**

Some people claim that our Lord should not be referred to as Jesus. Instead, we should only use the name Yeshua. Some even go so far as to say that calling Him Jesus is blasphemous. Others go into great detail about how the name Jesus is unbiblical because the letter *J* is a modern invention and there was no letter *J* in Greek or Hebrew.

Yeshua is the Hebrew name, and its English spelling is "Joshua." *Iesous* is the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew name, and its English spelling is "Jesus." Thus, the names Joshua and Jesus are essentially the same; both are English pronunciations of the Hebrew and Greek names for our Lord. (For examples of how the two names are interchangeable, see Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8 in the KJV. In both cases, the word *Jesus* refers to the Old Testament character Joshua.)

Changing the language of a word does not affect the meaning of the word. We call a bound and covered set of pages a book. In German, it becomes a *Buch*. In Spanish, it is a *libro*; in French, a *livre*. The language changes, but the object itself does not. As Shakespeare said, "That which we call a rose / By any other name would smell as sweet" (Romeo and Juliet, II:i). In the same way, we can refer to Jesus as Jesus, Yeshua, or *YehSou* (Cantonese) without changing His nature. In any language, His name means "The Lord Is Salvation."

As for the controversy over the letter *J*, it is much ado about nothing. It is true that the languages in which the Bible was written had

no letter *J*. But that doesn't mean the Bible never refers to Jerusalem or Judah. And it doesn't mean we cannot use the spelling "Jesus." If a person speaks and reads English, it is acceptable for him to spell things in an English fashion. Spellings can change even within a language: Americans write "Savior," while the British write "Saviour." The addition of a *u* (or its subtraction, depending on your point of view) has nothing to do with whom we're talking about. Jesus is the Savior, and He is the Saviour. Jesus and Yeshua and Iesous are all referring to the same person.

The Bible nowhere commands us to only speak or write His name in Hebrew or Greek. It never even hints at such an idea. Rather, when the message of the gospel was being proclaimed on the Day of Pentecost, the apostles spoke in the languages of the "Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene" (Acts 2:9–10). In the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was made known to every language group in a way they could readily understand. Spelling did not matter.

We refer to Him as Jesus because, as English-speaking people, we know of Him through English translations of the Greek New Testament. Scripture does not value one language over another, and it gives no indication that we must resort to Hebrew when addressing the Lord. The command is to call "on the name of the Lord," with the promise that we "will be saved" (Acts 2:21; Joel 2:32). Whether we call on Him in English, Korean, Hindi, or Hebrew, the result is the same: the Lord is salvation.

## **6. What are the seven spirits of God?**

The "seven spirits of God" are mentioned several times in the book of Revelation:

- Revelation 1:4–5, "John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and

who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ . . .”

- Revelation 3:1, “To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God . . .”
- Revelation 4:5, “From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.”
- Revelation 5:6, “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

The identity of “the seven spirits” is not explicit in these passages, but arriving at the proper interpretation is fairly straightforward. The “seven spirits” cannot be seven angelic beings such as seraphim or cherubim because of the context of Revelation 1:4. John says that “grace and peace” are coming to the churches from three sources: “him who is, and who was, and who is to come” (verse 4), “the seven spirits before his throne” (verse 4), and “Jesus Christ” (verse 5). This is a depiction of the Trinity: grace and peace are given by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three coequal persons of the Godhead.

In Revelation 3:1 Jesus “holds” the seven spirits of God. In John 15:26, Jesus “sends” the Holy Spirit from the Father. Both passages suggest the superordinate role of the Son and the subordinate role of the Spirit.

In Revelation 4:5 the seven spirits of God are symbolized as seven burning lamps that are before God’s throne. This picture agrees with Zechariah’s vision in which he sees the Holy Spirit symbolized as “a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it” (Zechariah 4:2).

In Revelation 5:6 the seven spirits are the “seven eyes” of the Lamb, and they are “sent out into all the earth.” The seven eyes speak of the Spirit’s (and the Lamb’s) omniscience, and the fact that He is sent into all the earth speaks of His omnipresence.

Once we identify the “seven spirits” as the Holy Spirit, the question remains, why are there seven of Him? The Bible, and especially the book of Revelation, uses the number seven to refer to perfection and completion. John’s vision includes a picture of the perfect and complete Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 11:2 also references the Holy Spirit using a seven-fold description: “The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.” The prophecy is that the Messiah would be empowered not by seven individual spirits but by the One Spirit, described seven ways:

1. The Spirit of the LORD
2. The Spirit of wisdom
3. The Spirit of understanding
4. The Spirit of counsel
5. The Spirit of power
6. The Spirit of knowledge
7. The Spirit of the fear of the Lord

The “seven spirits of God” in the book of Revelation are thus a reference to the Holy Spirit in the perfection of His manifold ministry.

## **7. Who is the Holy Spirit?**

There are many misconceptions about the identity of the Holy Spirit. Some view the Holy Spirit as a mystical force. Others see the Holy Spirit as an impersonal power that God makes available to followers of

Christ. What does the Bible say about the identity of the Holy Spirit? Simply put, the Bible declares that the Holy Spirit is God. The Bible also tells us that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, a being with a mind, emotions, and a will.

The fact that the Holy Spirit is God is clearly seen in many Scriptures, including Acts 5:3–4. In these verses Peter confronts Ananias as to why he lied to the Holy Spirit and tells him that he had “not lied just to human beings but to God.” It is a clear declaration that lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God.

We can also know that the Holy Spirit is God because He possesses the characteristics of God. For example, His omnipresence is seen in Psalm 139:7–8, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.” Then, in 1 Corinthians 2:10–11, we see the characteristic of omniscience in the Holy Spirit. “These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”

We can know that the Holy Spirit is indeed a divine person because He possesses a mind, emotions, and a will. The Holy Spirit thinks and knows (1 Corinthians 2:10). The Holy Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). The Spirit intercedes for us (Romans 8:26–27). He makes decisions according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:7–11). The Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity. As God, the Holy Spirit can truly function as the Comforter and Counselor that Jesus promised He would be (John 14:16, 26; 15:26).

## **8. When/How do we receive the Holy Spirit?**

The apostle Paul clearly taught that we receive the Holy Spirit the moment we receive Jesus Christ as our Savior. First Corinthians

12:13 declares, “For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (CSB). Romans 8:9 tells us that if a person does not possess the Holy Spirit, he or she does not belong to Christ: “You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.” Ephesians 1:13–14 teaches that the Holy Spirit is the seal of salvation for all those who believe: “When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.”

These three passages make it clear that the Holy Spirit is received at the moment of salvation. Paul could not say that we all were baptized by one Spirit and all given one Spirit to drink if not all of the Corinthian believers possessed the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9 is even stronger, stating that if a person does not have the Spirit, he does not belong to Christ. Therefore, the possession of the Spirit is an identifying factor of the possession of salvation. Further, the Holy Spirit could not be the seal of salvation (Ephesians 1:13–14) if He is not received at the moment of salvation. Many passages make it known that our salvation is secured the moment we receive Christ as Savior.

The ministries of the Holy Spirit are often confused. The receiving/indwelling of the Spirit occurs at the moment of salvation. But the filling of the Spirit is an ongoing process in the Christian life. We hold that the baptism of the Spirit also occurs at the moment of salvation. Some Christians believe that the baptism of the Spirit comes subsequent to salvation.

In conclusion, how do we receive the Holy Spirit? We receive the Holy Spirit by simply receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior (John 3:5–16). When do we receive the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit becomes our permanent possession the moment we believe.

## **9. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives today?**

Of all the gifts given to mankind by God, there is none greater than the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit has many functions, roles, and activities. First, He does a work in the hearts of all people everywhere. Jesus told the disciples that He would send the Spirit into the world to “convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment” (John 16:8 NASB). Everyone has a “God consciousness,” whether or not they admit it. The Spirit applies God’s truths to people’s minds to convince them by fair and sufficient arguments that they are sinners. Responding to that conviction brings us to salvation.

Once we are saved and belong to God, the Spirit takes up residence in our hearts forever, sealing us with the confirming, certifying, and assuring pledge of our eternal state as His children. Jesus said He would send the Spirit to us to be our Helper, Comforter, and Guide. “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever” (John 14:16 CSB). The Greek word translated here “Counselor” means “one who is called alongside” and has the idea of someone who encourages and exhorts. The Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence in the hearts of believers (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19–20; 12:13). Jesus gave the Spirit as a “compensation” for His absence, to perform the functions toward us that He would have done if He had remained personally with us.

Among those functions is that of revealer of truth. The Spirit’s presence within us enables us to understand and interpret God’s Word. Jesus told His disciples that “when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13). He reveals to our minds the whole counsel of God as it relates to worship, doctrine, and Christian living. He is the ultimate guide, going before, leading the way, removing obstructions, opening the understanding, and making all things plain and clear. He leads in the way we should go in all spiritual things. Without such a guide, we would be apt to fall into error. A crucial part of the truth He reveals is that Jesus is who He

said He is (John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:3). The Spirit convinces us of Christ's deity and incarnation, His being the Messiah, His suffering and death, His resurrection and ascension, His exaltation at the right hand of God, and His role as the judge of all. He gives glory to Christ in all things (John 16:14).

Another one of the Holy Spirit's roles is that of gift-giver. First Corinthians 12 describes the spiritual gifts given to believers in order that we may function as the body of Christ on earth. All these gifts, both great and small, are given by the Spirit so that we may be His ambassadors to the world, showing forth His grace and glorifying Him.

The Spirit also functions as fruit-producer in our lives. When He indwells us, He begins the work of harvesting His fruit in our lives—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23). These are not works of our flesh, which is incapable of producing such fruit, but they are products of the Spirit's presence in our lives.

The knowledge that the Holy Spirit of God has taken up residence in our lives, that He performs all these miraculous functions, that He dwells with us forever, and that He will never leave or forsake us is cause for great joy and comfort. Thank God for this precious gift—the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives!

## **10. What is the glory of God?**

The glory of God is the beauty of His spirit. It is not an aesthetic beauty or a material beauty, but the beauty that emanates from His character, from all that He is. The glory of man—human dignity and honor—fades (1 Peter 1:24). But the glory of God, which is manifested in all His attributes together, never passes away. It is eternal.

Moses requested of God, “Now show me your glory” (Exodus 33:18). In His response, God equates His glory with “all my goodness” (verse 19). “But,” God said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live” (verse 20). So, God hid Moses in “a cleft



in the rock” to protect him from the fulness of God’s glory as it passed by (verses 21–23). No mortal can view God’s excelling splendor without being utterly overwhelmed. The glory of God puts the pride of man to shame: “Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, from the terror of the LORD, and the glory of His majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day” (Isaiah 2:10–11, NKJV).

Often, in the Old Testament, the manifestation of God’s glory was accompanied by supernatural fire, thick clouds, and a great quaking of the earth. We see these phenomena when God gave the law to Moses: “Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently” (Exodus 19:18; see also Deuteronomy 5:24–25; 1 Kings 8:10–11; and Isaiah 6:1–4). The prophet Ezekiel’s vision of the glory of God was full of fire and lightning and tumultuous sounds, after which he saw “what looked like a throne of lapis lazuli, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man. I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD” (Ezekiel 1:26–28).

In the New Testament, the glory of God is revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Jesus came as “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of [God’s] people Israel” (Luke 2:32). The miracles that Jesus did were “signs through which he revealed his glory” (John 2:11). In Christ, the glory of God is meekly veiled, approachable, and knowable. He promises to return some day “on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30).

Isaiah 43:7 says that God saved Israel for His glory—in the redeemed will be seen the distillation of God’s grace, power, and faithfulness. The natural world also exhibits God’s glory, revealed to all men, no matter their race, heritage, or location. As Psalm 19:1–4 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

Psalm 73:24 calls heaven itself “glory.” Sometimes Christians speak of death as being “received unto glory,” a phrase borrowed from this psalm. When the Christian dies, he or she will be taken into God’s presence and surrounded by God’s glory and majesty. In that place, His glory will be seen clearly: “For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face” (1 Corinthians 13:12). In the future New Jerusalem, the glory of God will be manifest: “The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Revelation 21:23).

God will not give His glory to another (Isaiah 42:8; cf. Exodus 34:14). Yet this is the very thing that people try to steal. Scripture indicts all idolaters: “Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles” (Romans 1:22–23). Only God is eternal, and His perfect and eternal attributes of holiness, majesty, goodness, love, etc., are not to be exchanged for the imperfections and corruption of anything in this world.