acknowledges is drawn from contemporary Christian theologizing,[2] and his ontological dichotomy of the creator over and against "all other reality," which is a philosophical principle that presupposes creation *ex nihilo*, a reflective innovation of the second century CE (May 1994; Young 1991; Hubler 1995; cf. Niehoff 2005; Frederiksen 2020). There is certainly emphatic rhetoric in first-century Jewish literature regarding YHWH's creation of "all things"—and this frequently included assertions that there is nothing created that was not created by YHWH—but this rhetoric is clearly aimed at asserting the deity's sovereignty over all things and not at articulating a philosophical model of creation out of nothing.[3] That is a thoroughly counterintuitive and reflective framework that cannot simply be presumed to be present in the absence of any articulation of it. The catalyst for that subsequent articulation and transmission was the accommodation of the Christian gospel to philosophical frameworks by the apologists of the late-second century, and more specifically, their need to defend the resurrection from the dead against the criticisms of Greek philosophy and groups usually labeled "gnostic."

Without the imposition of these two dichotomies, the framework of Jesus's inclusion "within the unique identity of the one God of Israel" (Bauckham 2008, ix) has no evidentiary purchase to gain among the first-century CE material remains. "Divine identity christology" presupposes the salience of philosophical frameworks that did not then exist, and therefore cannot adequately inform our reconstruction of the earliest conceptualizations of Jesus's relationship with the deity of Israel. The relationship of YHWH to the messenger of YHWH, however,

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[2] Citing Kevin J. Vanhoozer (1997), Bauckham states (2008, 6, n. 5), "Reference to God's identity is by analogy with human personal identity, understood not as a mere ontological subject without characteristics, but as including both character and personal story (the latter entailing relationships). These are the ways in which we commonly specify 'who someone is.'" He cites several other late-twentieth-century theologians who, as far as I can tell, all base their concepts of "identity" on contemporary philosophical and theological models. Note that while Bauckham asserts the centrality of "who" the deity is (relationships and story) over and against "what" the deity is (ontology), the concern for "character and personal story" seems aimed primarily at facilitating the identification of the deity as the creator of all things who is therefore distinct from "all other reality," which pivots back to the ontological dichotomy that is the key to the whole model.

[3] Bockmuehl (2012) argues that the "meaning and substance of the doctrine, though not the terminology, is firmly rooted in scripture and pre-Christian Jewish literature, even if in formal terms it seems to be adopted by Jews only in the rabbinic period" (270). Bockmuehl may be going beyond the evidence he adduces if he is arguing the concept of creation out of nothing was in present but just not explicitly mentioned. His evidence seems to me to more securely demonstrate that the central conceptual building blocks of the doctrine were present in the literature of the first century, though their arrangement into that doctrine would not occur until the rhetorical exigencies of the second century compelled it.