

under the earth—and every tongue may confess that Jesus Christ is Lord [*kyrios*], to the glory of the Deity, the Father” (cf. Holloway 2017, 114–29). The assertion that Jesus is “Lord” can also be understood to reflect Jesus’s possession of the divine name, in light of the fact that *kyrios* (“Lord”) by this time period was overwhelmingly the preferred substitute for the Tetragrammaton in Greek Jewish literature.⁶ We may also point to the book of Revelation, which in the nineteenth chapter describes Jesus as “having a name written that no one knows except he himself” (Rev 19:12).⁷

The gospels add an additional rhetorical layer by repeatedly putting the Greek verbal phrase *egō eimi*, “I am,” into Jesus’s mouth (e.g., Matt 24:5; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:70; John 4:26; 8:58). While this verbal phrase is not incredibly unusual, the contexts of its usage in the gospels is understood by many to allude in two specific ways to the divine name and to the deity’s self-identification in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. One of these allusions appears to be to the Greek translation of Exod 3:14, which renders the Hebrew Bible’s folk etiology for the Tetragrammaton, *’ehyeh ’āšer ’ehyeh* (“I will be what I will be”), with the Greek *egō eimi ho ōn* (“I am the one who is”). *Egō eimi* is also the rendering for the Hebrew *’anî hû*, “I am he,” which appears most prominently in Isaiah (Isa 43:10; 48:12; 52:6) and in Deuteronomy (Deut 32:39) as the deity’s emphatic self-identification (Williams 2000). These allusions are most pervasive in the gospel of John, where *egō eimi* occurs twenty-four times, all either in Jesus’s own statements or in the narrator’s quoting of Jesus. Bauckham (2008, 40) is most emphatic about the weight of this usage: “The series of sayings thus comprehensively identifies Jesus with the God of Israel who sums up his identity in the declaration ‘I am he.’”

Viewed through the framework developed within this book, the Christian scriptures are not including Jesus within the “unique identity” of the deity of Israel, they are literarily asserting his endowment with the divine name, enabling

⁶ Note Bauckham (2008, 37) describes the climax of this hymn as “when Jesus is exalted to the position of divine sovereignty over all things and given the divine name itself, which names the unique divine identity.” He then highlights parallels between the hymn and YHWH’s self-revelation in Isa 45:22–23, concluding, “The Philippians passage is, therefore, no unconsidered echo of an Old Testament text, but a claim that it is in the exaltation of Jesus, his identification as YHWH in YHWH’s universal sovereignty, that the unique deity of the God of Israel comes to be acknowledged as such by all creation” (38).

⁷ The text does not specify where the name was written, but the statement follows immediately after a reference to “many diadems” [*diadēmata polla*] on his head, and so suggests the name was written on the diadems, similar to the inscription of the divine name on the high priest’s turban (Exod 28:36–37) and the writing of the deity’s name on those who are victorious [*ho nikōn*] and are made a pillar in the deity’s temple in Rev 3:13 (cf. Isa 56:5).