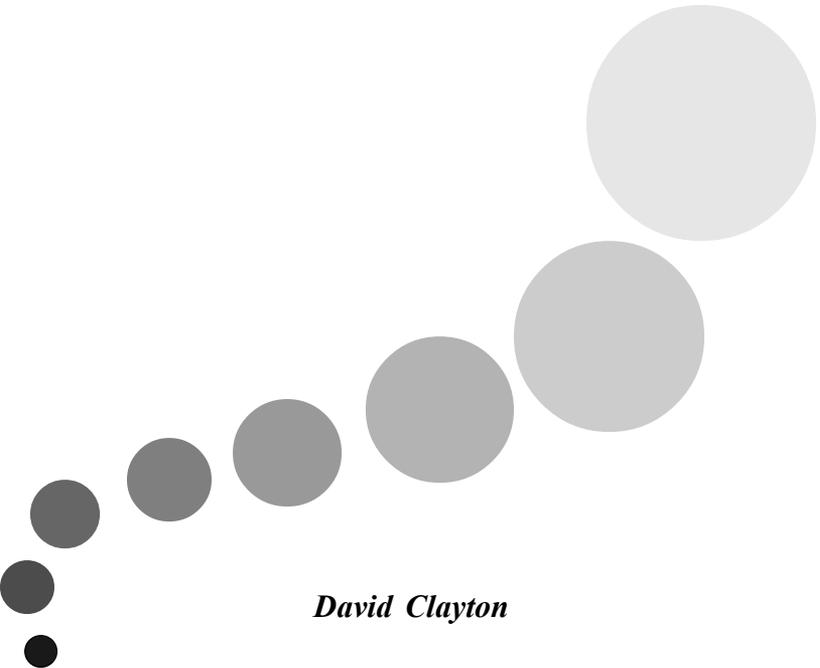


THE MYSTERY DEMYSIFIED

The TRUTH about God



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PREFACE

What does the word, “God” mean? Generally the word refers to anything which is regarded as superior, or which is worshipped. However, the Bible teaches that there is only one **true** God, and that this God is the greatest Being in the universe. All things come from Him, all power belongs to Him and He is ruler over all.

Who is this God? Among Christians there are several different ideas about who He really is? In actual fact when we consider this carefully we will realize that there are several different Gods worshipped in Christendom, although only **one** of them is the true God. Many of us may be actually worshipping a false God, if our ideas of God are wrong. The question is, which God do you worship? Do you worship the true God of the Bible or do you worship a false idea of God? Let us remember that those who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).

The Bible teaches us that those who do not love the truth **will be deceived** and will believe a lie. Because they believe this lie they will be damned (condemned) and destroyed (2 Thess. 2:10-12). Jesus Himself said: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee **the only true God**, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3). And yet, how can we know God if we do not even know who we are talking to when we call upon God?

The outstanding Christian writer A.W. Tozer was absolutely right when he wrote the following passage:

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

The history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man’s spiritual history will positively demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God. Worship is pure or base as the worshiper entertains high or low thoughts of God.

For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like. We tend by a secret law of the soul to move toward our mental image of God. This is true not only of the individual Christian, but of the company of Christians that composes the Church....

Were we able to extract from any man a complete answer to the question, "What comes into your mind when you think about God?" we might predict with certainty the spiritual future of that man. Were we able to know exactly what our most influential religious leaders think of God today, we might be able with some precision to foretell where the Church will stand tomorrow...

That our idea of God correspond as nearly as possible to the true being of God is of immense importance to us. Compared with our actual thoughts about Him, our creedal statements are of little consequence. Our real idea of God may lie buried under the rubbish of conventional religious notions and may require an intelligent and vigorous search before it is finally unearthed and exposed for what it is. Only after an ordeal of painful self-probing are we likely to discover what we actually believe about God.

A right conception of God is basic not only to systematic theology but to practical Christian living as well. It is to worship what the foundation is to the temple; where it is inadequate or out of plumb the whole structure must sooner or later collapse. I believe there is scarcely an error in doctrine or a failure in applying Christian ethics that cannot be traced finally to imperfect and ignoble thoughts about God. " (from the book, "The Knowledge of the Holy," by A.W. Tozer)

In this booklet we examine the subject of God and remove the veil of "mystery" which has been placed upon the doctrine for so long.

CHAPTER ONE

WHO IS GOD?

HOW MANY GODS

There is only one God. This is a clear biblical truth. Both the Old and the New Testaments declare this fact in unmistakable language (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29). Every single person who holds the Bible as supreme authority acknowledges this truth. The biblical insistence on monotheism requires that God be defined as a unit. As a He. There is only one of Him.

Paul stated:

- “...there is but one God,...” (1 Cor 8:6)
- “For there is one God,” (1 Tim 2:5)

James says:

- *Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. (James 2:19)*

Jesus says:

- “... The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:” (Mark 12:29)

HOW DID ONE GOD BECOME THREE PERSONS?

The Bible also clearly teaches the divine nature of Jesus and the Holy Spirit as well as the Father (John 1:1; 1 Cor.3:16). how can this be reconciled with the fact that there is only ONE God? At the council of Nicea in 325 AD theologians argued over this question, and there, laid the groundwork for the doctrine of the Trinity by declaring that Jesus was God. (see chap. 6) At a later council in Constantinople in 381 AD, they decided that the holy spirit was also God, and formulated the doctrine of the Trinity which has remained with us (with slight modifications) ever since.

This doctrine says that instead of the word “God,” referring to a single great, almighty individual who is Lord over all, it really refers to a divine “substance.” A mysterious entity which is made up of three parts, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, all three together making up God. This is the popular concept of the Trinity which was formulated by the Catholic Church and which has been embraced by the majority of Christian

denominations.

THE HISTORICAL CONCEPT OF THE TRINITY

The doctrine as finally formulated teaches that the word “God” really refers to a single substance or Being. This substance manifests Himself (itself) as three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, who are not three Gods, but one God in three modes. This term “being” does not mean that He is one Person, but rather that He is a single **substance** called “God,” and that this substance expresses Himself (itself?) in three ways, as three manifestations or persons, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore Jesus and the Holy Spirit are said to be “consubstantial” (of the same substance) with the Father. This is a radical departure from the Scriptural concept of God who is always regarded in the Bible as a personal, individual Being whom we may regard as Father and with whom we may enjoy personal fellowship. The Trinitarian concept of God turns Him into a faceless impersonal substance.

While the word **being** normally refers to a person it is given a different definition when used in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity. The following excerpt from an article on the subject of the Trinity describes this definition of God.

“The doctrine of the Trinity is simply that there is one eternal being of God - indivisible, infinite. This one being of God is shared by three co-equal, co-eternal persons, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

“It is necessary here to distinguish between the terms “being” and “person.” It would be a contradiction, obviously, to say that there are three beings within one being, or three persons within one person. So what is the difference? We clearly recognize the difference between being and person every day. We recognize what something is, yet we also recognize individuals within a classification. For example, we speak of the ‘being’ of man—human being. A rock has ‘being’—the being of a rock, as does a cat, a dog, etc. Yet, we also know that there are personal attributes as well. That is, we recognize both ‘what’ and ‘who’ when we talk about a person.

“The Bible tells us there are three classifications of personal beings—God, man, and angels. What is personality? The ability to have emotion, will, to express oneself. Rocks cannot speak. Cats cannot think of themselves over against others, and, say, work for the common good of ‘catkind.’ Hence, we are saying

that there is one eternal, infinite being of God, shared fully and completely by three persons, Father, Son and Spirit. One what, three whos. (Taken From: A Brief Definition of The Trinity - by James E. White)

Again however, this completely destroys the biblical concept of God as a loving feeling individual. A character with whom we may interact and have fellowship, rather than an impersonal existence inhabited by three persons. Notice that in this excerpt, God is referred to as a “**What**,” while the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are referred to as “**Whos**.”

In actual fact, the Trinity concept is not far removed from the pantheistic ideas of the New Age movement and eastern mysticism which view God as a universal existence encompassing and including everything in the universe, rather than as a personal individual with His own unique personality.

In the Bible, God is a Person! He is a distinct individual. **He is not a committee, an essence, a substance or a nature inhabited by three. This is a man-made definition and it will not fit the Scriptures.**

Consider how ridiculous the following verses would be if we were to think of God as three Persons:

For God(S) so loved the world, that he (they) gave his (their) only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

But to us there is but one (three) God (Gods), the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him (them); and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. (1 Cor 8:6)

One (three) God(s) and Father(s) of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph 4:6)

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God(s), even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (1 Cor 15:24)

If God is three, why does the New Testament say over and over that He is one, who is the Father (only)? In trying to explain this I heard one person say that God had deliberately put misleading statements in the Bible to mislead those who are predestined to be lost (he believed in predestination). It is interesting that people who believe in the Trinity/ Three-God doctrine will say that the doctrine is “implied” in verses such as Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14. What does this word “implied” mean? Something which is merely implied or inferred cannot

overthrow a plain “thus saith the Lord.” A plain statement beats an implied doctrine any day, and over and over we find plain statements in the Bible declaring that the only God is the Father.

VARIOUS DEFINITIONS

It is true that there are some Christians who have rejected the traditional doctrine of the Trinity and have realized that it is a false doctrine. Unfortunately, few have taken the simple route of merely accepting all that the Bible says on the matter. Instead, they have “sought out many inventions (Eccl. 7:29).”

- (a) Some have concluded that Jesus and the Father must be ***the same Person*** operating in different roles at different times. These persons are often referred to as the “oneness” or the “Jesus only” people.
- (b) Others have concluded that the word, “God” is a collective noun, which really refers to ***three Gods (!)*** working together in unity. This belief in three co-equal, co-eternal, co-omnipotent Beings who are ***not related to each other*** clearly teaches Tritheism, a doctrine of three Gods, even though it is claimed that the three are one in the sense that they are united in character, goals and purposes.
- (c) Some, like the Jehovah’s Witnesses have concluded that Jesus was a created being who has been elevated above all other created beings, thus making Him into a kind of god, but not a divine being in the same sense as the Father.

Sadly, none of these theories have attempted to harmonize **ALL** the biblical evidence. Indeed they have all served to becloud the truth in a fog so dense that the only explanation, which they can give to the contradictions of these theories, is to declare that the subject of God is a ***mystery***. That the particular theory (depending on which group you encounter) must be accepted and its contradictions and inconsistencies assigned to the realm of “mystery.”

The Bible truth, however, is so wonderfully plain and simple that every child who reads the Bible without being poisoned by human influence will readily discern it.

One of the major reasons for all this confusion is the fact that we have not been using the biblical definitions when we use words. Can anybody show ONE place in the Bible where the word “God” means more than one person? If the Bible does not do it, how dare we take the liberty of doing it? Some will suggest that the word “*elohim*” does, but the evidence against this word meaning more than one when used with

reference to the true God is too strong for anybody to fairly use this word as proof of a three-in-one God.

Elohim:

The word “*elohim*” is a Hebrew word which is used hundreds of times in the Old Testament to refer to the true God. Defenders of the Trinity have often stated that the use of this word proves that God is a Trinity, because it literally means “gods.” One supporter of the doctrine of the Trinity insists that Genesis 1:1 should read, “*In the beginning GODS created the heaven and the earth.*” The reason for this suggestion is the fact that the word “God” is translated from the word “*elohim*” which he insists should be translated as “gods.”

However, it is the opinion of many Bible scholars that the word does not necessarily mean more than one, but that it is often used to denote the majesty and greatness of God, rather than to indicate that God consists of more than one Being. A little common sense will easily demonstrate that the conclusion of these scholars is evidently correct. Let us examine a couple of facts:

1. The Hebrews themselves never ever did believe in a God who was made up of several persons, neither did they believe in more than one God. They did not do so in Bible times and they do not do so today. They *never* found the idea of plurality in the word “*elohim*” when used with reference to the true God. Do present day scholars who insist that the word “*elohim*” should be translated as “gods” understand the Hebrew language better than the Hebrews themselves did?
2. In Exodus 7:1 we read, “*And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god (Elohim) to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.*” What are we to understand by the use of the word “*elohim*” here? Are we to believe that Jehovah made Moses into several gods!! Perhaps into a three-fold deity! Read also, Judges 16: 23; Judges 16:24; and you will find where even individual heathen deities (Dagon and Baal) were referred to as “*elohim.*” 1 Kings 18:27 is particularly interesting. It reads, “*And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god (elohim); either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.*”

Here Elijah was referring to Baal, a single false god and referred to him as, “*elohim.*” Below you will find some quotations taken from highly respected publications which support the above stated facts concerning

the word “elohim.”

“The fanciful idea that Elohim referred to the Trinity of persons in the Godhead hardly finds now a supporter among scholars. It is either what the grammarians call the plural of majesty, or it denotes the fullness of divine strength, the sum of the powers displayed by God” (William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. Peloubet, MacDonald Pub. Co., 1948, p. 220).

“Elohim must rather be explained as an intensive plural, denoting greatness and majesty” (The American Journal of Semitic Language and Literature, 1905, Vol. XXI, p. 208).

“It is exegesis of a mischievous if pious sort that would find the doctrine of the Trinity in the plural form elohim [God]” (“God,” *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*)

“Early dogmaticians were of the opinion that so essential a doctrine as that of the Trinity could not have been unknown to the men of the Old Testament...No modern theologian...can longer maintain such a view. Only an inaccurate exegesis which overlooks the more immediate grounds of interpretation can see references to the Trinity in the plural form of the divine name Elohim, the use of the plural in Genesis 1:26 or such liturgical phrases as three members of the Aaronic blessing of Numbers 6:24-26 and the Trisagion of Isaiah 6:3” (The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, Vol. 12, p. 18).

“The plural form of the name of God, elohim, in the Hebrew Scriptures has often been adduced as proof of the plurality of persons in the Godhead...Such use of Scripture will not be likely to advance the interests of truth, or be profitable for doctrine...The plural of elohim may just as well designate a multiplicity of divine potentialities in the deity as three personal distinctions, or it may be explained as the plural of majesty and excellency. Such forms of expression are susceptible of too many explanations to be used as valid proof texts of the Trinity” (Milton Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 587).

When Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:4 in his reply to the scribe (Mark 12:29), He did not say, “The Lord our GodS . . .”. He did not understand “elohim” to mean Gods, but quoted the word as **God**. The scribe agreed with this when he replied

“... Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one

God; and there is none other but he.” (Mark 12:32).

He also understood the Hebrew word *elohim* to mean One Person, to whom he referred as “he.” The interpretation of Christ is of more value than that of James Strong or a thousand such scholars.

NEW TESTAMENT EVIDENCE

Did the apostles believe in a trinity? Apart from the books of Luke and Acts the entire New Testament was written by men who had been personally taught by the Lord Jesus. Even the apostle Paul, though he never knew Jesus personally while He was on earth testifies that he was taught personally by Christ (Galatians 1:11,12). Did Jesus reveal a Trinitarian God to these apostles? Did He teach them this doctrine which was so radically different from the Old Testament concept of God? If He did, why didn't they proclaim it as forcefully and as clearly as they proclaimed that Jesus was the **Son** of God? Why is it that this doctrine “is not explicitly taught in the New Testament (Encarta Britannica)” but is rather “inferred” from certain passages? Is this the way that God reveals important truths? Merely giving hints and leaving us to formulate our conclusions? Why is it that the statements of the New Testament consistently declare that there is only **ONE GOD** and that this one God is the Father (1 Cor. 8:4-6; John 17:3; Eph. 4:6)? Didn't these apostles know the truth about God? How can we conclude that their writings suggest that God is a Trinity when they themselves proclaimed Him to be an individual? Do we have the contradictory situation where Christ's appointed depositories of His truth hinted that God was a Trinity, but declared that He was a single Person? Why would they do this? Is it that they were suggesting something which they weren't sure of and which they left to later generations of “theologians” to properly work out?

The New Testament evidence is critical for several reasons:

1. The New Testament is a reflection of the life and teachings of Jesus Himself, the only Being who ever came down from heaven to teach us of heavenly things.
2. The New Testament expands on, and explains the teachings of the Old Testament.
3. the writers of the New Testament were inhabited by God Himself in the form of His holy spirit. Their teachings were the purest ever given to men apart from the teachings of Christ Himself.

Why do the New Testament writers in several places refer to the Fa-

ther as the **ONLY** God? (1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; etc.). Why did Jesus refer to His Father as the **ONLY** true God? (John 17:3) Shall we accept the Bible definition of God?

there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things...” (1 Cor 8:6)

“One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph 4:6)

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee [His Father] the only true God,...” (John 17:3)

“... I ascend unto my Father; and your Father; and to my God, and your God.” (John 20:17)

UNMOVED

*Truth never dies. The ages come and go,
The mountains wear away, the seas retire;
Destruction lays earth's mighty cities low.
The empire, states, and dynasties expire,
But caught and handed onward by the wise,
Truth never dies.*

*Though unreceived and scoffed at through the years;
Though made the butt of ridicule and jest;
Though held aloft for mockery and jeers
Denied by those of transient power possessed;
Insulted by the insolence of lies,
Truth never dies.*

*Truth answers not, it does not take offence;
But with a mighty silence bides its time,
As some great cliff that braves the elements
And lifts through all the storms its head sublime,
So truth, unmoved, its puny foes defies,
and NEVER dies!*

CHAPTER 2

DID GOD HAVE A SON TO GIVE?

Many Christians today claim that Jesus was not the Son of God until he was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary, or until He was resurrected after His crucifixion (Rom. 1:4). Others say He is not truly God's Son in the sense of having originated from God, but He is God's "Son" in the sense that He is a part of the being called God.



Do these claims bear the test of close investigation? Are these conclusions reasonable in light of all the facts? Jesus, as well as the entire New Testament reveals that God's love was supremely manifested when He gave His "only begotten Son" for men.

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. (John 3:16)

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:10)

Let us pause to think about this. God wants men to appreciate how much He loves them. His whole purpose from the beginning of the world has been to reveal the degree of His love for mankind. When He finally unveiled the fullness of His love in all its splendor for the universe to see, it was in the act of sending someone to earth to die for men. In this action of sending this person, God revealed His love in a way that it had never been seen before and would never again be equaled in all eternity.

A VITAL QUESTION

There are two vital questions which we need to ask ourselves. the first one is, who was this person that God sent? This question is critical because if the sending of this person is the key factor in the revelation of God's love, then it must be clear that the key question is, "What was the relationship between this person and God?"

Let me illustrate my point. If John 3:16 had read, “God so loved the world that He gave an angel whom He created....” or, “God so loved the world that He gave His friend....” Would the action really have impressed us with the fact that God’s love for us is very great? Men would have understood if God had claimed to have given an angel. We would have comprehended it if God had claimed to have given His friend. But would this really have revealed God’s love for man? The plain fact is, God’s consistent testimony is that He gave His SON. In the very words of that Son, “His only begotten Son.” How great is God’s love for us? The answer to that question centers around the issue of who Jesus really was. Only as we can discern the true identity of Christ can we appreciate the enormity of the sacrifice which God made for man, and therefore the magnitude of His love for us.

Why does the Bible call Jesus the “Son of God.” Is this term one that was coined by the gospel writers, was it a figurative term, was it a title like the term “prophet (as some have suggested)?” The plain fact of the matter is that God Himself in the presence of a multitude of people proclaimed, “This is my beloved Son (Matt. 3:17).” Again, Jesus Himself over and over declared that He was the SON of God, and more than that, the “only begotten Son of God.” (John 3:16) The testimony of these two Beings none dare contradict, or ascribe to tradition or custom or misunderstanding. Surely, God knew the identity of Jesus and Jesus Himself must have known His own identity. Let us then make note of the fact that in seeking to convey to human minds the relationship between God and Jesus, both Jesus and God have used the word “Son” and “Father”. Any human being therefore is guilty of the greatest presumption if he concludes that Jesus is anyone other than the **Son** of God.

DID JESUS KNOW HIS OWN IDENTITY?

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. (John 3:16)

The truth expressed in these few lines is so profound, thrilling and uplifting that it will serve as the basis for the research and study of our entire world for a hundred million years. Simply stated, easily read, but vast and comprehensive in its scope, it encompasses the most precious truths ever revealed to the universe!

- God’s love for unlovely sinners.
- The unfathomable depths of that love.

- The infinite value of the gift which He gave.
- The simplicity and completeness of the salvation provided.

It seems incredible that a truth so simply and clearly stated, and at the same time so critical to man's recovery from the consequences and penalty of sin should be so desperately and wholeheartedly attacked by men who claim to be believers in the Scriptures. It is amazing to see the lengths to which men will go and the devices they will utilize in their attempts to destroy these truths so unmistakably stated in this precious verse.

One man confidently affirms: "Well, you see, the Greek word from which we get the word "begotten" is "monogenes," and it does not really mean, "only begotten," it means "unique."

Another "theologian" confidently asserts, "Jesus was not the Son of God before he came to this earth. You see, He was not begotten until He was born in Bethlehem."

Still another of these learned men scoffs at the ignorance of those of us who believe that Jesus was actually the literal Son of God who proceeded from the Father in the days before time began. "What you need to understand," he says, "is the style of the Bible writers. The term 'son of God' was a Hebrew term which was applied by the disciples to Jesus because in their eyes, He was somebody special."

And so they heap up theory upon theory, all of which are aimed at destroying the simple truth that Jesus was, and is, the Son of God, begotten of the Father from the days of eternity. It is not surprising that the enemy of truth should try with all his might to destroy or obscure this truth. If he has his way, men will never understand the love of the Father for mankind, for this is the truth which will free us from the bondage of sin. This is the truth which is the central theme of study of the entire universe.

The title, "only begotten Son," was not a title imposed upon Jesus, or chosen by the disciples. If we accept the scriptures as being factual and accurate, then it was Jesus Himself who first referred to Himself as God's "only begotten Son (John 3:16)." We may say that the disciples had confused ideas about who Jesus was, at first. Perhaps some may have thought He was a great prophet. Others, maybe, that He was Elijah returned. Most, perhaps, believed that He was the Messiah (but not necessarily a divine being). But what about Jesus? **Did He know His own identity?** When He referred to Himself as God's "Only Begotten Son," what was He trying to do? Why did He use those words?

Was He trying to confuse Nicodemus or to enlighten him? What was the message which He was trying to get across to Nicodemus?

Can't we see that He was trying to get Nicodemus to appreciate the degree of God's love? In essence, he was saying, "Nicodemus, do you know how much God loves men? he loves them so much that he was willing to give His **ONLY BEGOTTEN SON!**" Can you see how critical it is that we understand the meaning of that term, "only begotten Son?" It is only as we understand it that we can begin to comprehend how much God loves us.

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (1 John 4:9)

MONOGENES

The term, *Only begotten* is a translation of the Greek word "MONOGENES". This Greek word **MONOGENES** means: "**only born, ie. sole - only (begotten child).**" This word comes from two greek words, *Monos* and *Genos*.

Monos means: ***sole, or single; alone, only.***

Genos means: ***kin, offspring, stock, generation***

What does this word really mean? A literal translation of the word obviously means ***only offspring***. This word is used a total of nine (9) times in the Bible. Five times, it applies to Jesus and is translated as "only begotten." Below, we see how it is used in the other four instances:

*Luke 7:12 - "Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold there was a dead man carried out, **the only son** (monogenes) of his mother and she was a widow."*

*Luke 8:42 - "For he had **one only** (monogenes) daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying.*

*Luke 9:38 - "And behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech Thee, look upon my son: for he is **mine only child** (monogenes).*

We will come to the other reference in a moment. But first of all we must ask in the name of reason and good sense, what is the meaning of the word, *monogenes* in the scriptures quoted above? What are we expected to understand from the use of the word? Obviously, in each instance we are being told that this was the **ONLY** child **BORN** to that particular parent. There is really very little room for misunderstanding

what the word means as it is used in the scriptures. It means, *The only one born of*. Did it mean that in these cases the child in question was a **unique** child?

However, there is one other place in which the word is used and this is with reference to Abraham's son Isaac.

Heb.11:17 - "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son (monogenes)."

We deal with this reference separately, because in this case, Isaac was not actually the only son born to Abraham. Abraham had another son, Ishmael, who had been born before Isaac. Why then, is Isaac called the only begotten son of Abraham? It is not difficult to see why. Ishmael was not the son of Sarah, Abraham's legitimate wife. The scriptures make it plain that God's plan was for the son of Abraham to be the offspring of both Abraham and Sarah, therefore God did not accept Ishmael as Abraham's son. His word to Abraham was, "cast out the bondwoman and **her** son (Gal.4:30)." When God told Abraham to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on mount Moriah, He stated in carefully chosen words, "*take now thy son, THINE ONLY SON whom thou lovest...*" (Gen.22:2)

In spite of this, some have pounced triumphantly on this verse in Hebrews 11:17 and tried to use it as a key for interpreting *monogenes* to mean something other than *to be born of*. They state that in the case of Isaac, it simply meant that he had a special unique place in the affections of Abraham, and therefore, that is what it means when referring to the relationship between God and Jesus. But we must ask in the name of reason, was not Isaac literally the Son of Abraham by birth?

Even if it were true that this is the way the word is used in the single case of the relationship between Isaac and Abraham, it is nevertheless clear that in the majority of instances, this is not its meaning. In seeking to decide on the meaning of any word, we must look at the way the word is used in the majority of cases and in this way come to a reasonable conclusion as to the meaning of the word, bearing in mind the context in which it is used. When we apply these rules to *monogenes*, its meaning is plain. It is only a determined effort to destroy the truth of the literal Sonship of Jesus Christ which makes scholars, contrary to all the rules of proper scholarship, define the word *monogenes* as, *unique*.

Some have suggested that God would have needed a wife to bring forth a literal son. But this suggestion is childish and disrespectful. Even the physical creation teaches us that there are organisms such as amoeba

which reproduce without the need of a sexual partner. How can we then dare to question God's power to reproduce without a female? We need only accept the word of God, not question the hows and wherefores. God was the first Father in the universe. When He gave man the ability to reproduce, He gave him a precious gift, which He had not given to angels. It was just one way in which man was a little more like God.

Did God merely use human terminology when He referred to Jesus as His "beloved Son," so that we could understand how He feels about Jesus? Was this an attempt on the part of God to mislead us, or to enlighten us? Does God want us to believe something is so, even though it isn't? If God wanted us to think of Jesus as His Son, why should we think of Him as being God Himself? Are we wiser than God? When God says, "this is my beloved Son," how can we be so presumptuous as to say, "He was not really God's Son. He was God Himself!!" Let us be certain of this: God has given us the information which we **need** and what He tells us is what He expects us to **believe** and to **receive**. Furthermore, the only safety in this world lies in believing and receiving that word.

THE SECOND VITAL QUESTION

The second vital question which we must ask is, when did Jesus become the Son of God? This question is a critical one because God's love for us is revealed in the gift of His Son. Yet, God could not have loved Christ as a Son *until* He became His Son. Does this sound logical? God's love for His Son must be measured from the time when He had a Son. If Jesus had existed before He became God's Son, then God may have loved Him as a brother, as a friend, may even have been said to love Himself, if as some say, Jesus was God Himself. However, He could not have loved Him as His **Son** until He became His Son.

When did Jesus become the Son of God? Strenuous efforts have been made to prove that God never had a Son before Jesus came to earth. Such efforts have come from all quarters, but all of them fail in the light of the plain simple word of God. Was there a time when God said, "Son, you may go?" 1 John 4:9 says that God sent His only begotten Son *into* the world. When did this happen? Was it before Jesus came into the world or was it after He came into the world? Did God first send Jesus into the world and then after His arrival here, say, "Son, you may go into the world?" These questions may seem ridiculous but they need to be asked in order that the truth may become clear. Basic logic should tell us that if God sent His Son into the world (John 3:17; 1 John 4:9) then He must have had a Son to send (Mark 12:6). He did not send Himself

to become His Son, He did not send His friend to become His Son, He did not send a part of Himself to become His Son. At the moment when Jesus was sent, He was already the Son of God.

To believe that Jesus was not God's Son until He was conceived in Mary's womb would present the ridiculous idea that Jesus arrived before He was sent. Or that God sent His Son before He had a Son.

TESTIMONY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Though the testimony of the Old Testament is not as clear as that of the New, there are several verses in the Old Testament which clearly reveal the truth that God had a Son long before Jesus ever came to the earth.

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?”
(Prov 30:4)

Which two beings was this verse speaking of? One of them is clearly the Creator of all things the one who “bound the waters in a garment” and “established all the ends of the earth.” However, there is another person mentioned. Here long before Christ was born in Bethlehem the question is asked, “what is His Son's name?” If God did not have a Son at that time what is the meaning of the question?

Again when we look at Proverbs 8:22-31 it is difficult for us to misunderstand the meaning of the passage. The passage says:

The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth ... Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth ... When he prepared the heavens, I was there ... when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men. (Prov 8:22-31)

Of whom is this passage speaking? The first few verses of the chapter indicate that it is speaking of “wisdom.” However, as often happens with Old Testament prophetic or poetic passages the subject changes from a general application to specific application to someone in particu-

lar. It is clear that these verses must be speaking of a person rather than the abstract quality of wisdom because it states that “I was brought forth” (v 24, 25). If we were to conclude that this refers to the *quality* of wisdom, then we would also have to conclude that there was a time, before God brought forth wisdom when wisdom did not exist and that therefore at one point, God was not wise. This person mentioned in verses 22-31 has some very particular specifications which could apply to only one Being in the universe. Let us look at some of these specifications:

1. The person was “**brought forth**” (born, begotten. v 24, 25) The term “brought forth” is translated as “**given birth**” in the *New International Version* and also in the *Bible in basic English*. In the *New Living Translation* and the *New Jerusalem Bible* as “**I was born.**” Nearly every other version translates it as “brought forth.”
2. the person was “set up”(born) before anything was created. A period referred to as “**everlasting**” (v 23)
3. The person was present during all the creative acts of God (v 27-29)
4. The companionship of this person with God was constant and brought “**delight**” to God (v 30)

Who is it that the Bible says was “begotten” by God (John 3:16) from the days of “everlasting” (Micah 5:2) Who was present and active during the creation of the entire universe (Eph 3:9; Gen 1:26). And who brought delight to the heart of God (Matt 3:17)? Only one Being in the entire universe fits the description. This passage is clearly referring to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who, according to 1 Cor 1:24 is the wisdom of God.

Those who deny that Jesus is truly the Son of God have two problems with this passage. Firstly, they see clearly that it speaks of a starting point for Christ. A time when He was “brought forth.” Regardless of the fact that this time is so far back in eternity as to be referred to as “everlasting,” they have a problem because they feel that Jesus is God Himself and as such could not have had a beginning. Secondly, they feel that the term “brought forth” implies creation and of course, if Jesus was created then He could not have been a divine being and it would not have been possible for Him to have paid the price for man’s redemption.

BORN OR CREATED?

Yet, the Scriptures are greater than the opinions, the fears, the miscon-

ceptions and the biases of men. Accepting what the Scriptures say as they simply read would bring understanding and would clear up the difficulties. Let us examine the second objection first. Are we suggesting that Jesus was CREATED if we accept that He was BORN of God? Let us be reasonable. Is there anywhere in the Bible where “born” means “created” or vice versa? This matter is very simple. Creation has to do with forming, or bringing something into existence using materials which are not a part of myself or without the use of pre-existing materials. Begetting or the birth process is entirely different. In birth, the new entity was once a part of the original and is composed of the same substance and possesses the same qualities as the original. The new entity may even be said to have existed before he was born in the sense that his life was already present in his parent’s life (Heb 7:9,10). The Biblical testimony everywhere concerning Christ is that He was born of God, not created by God.

The other objection has to do with the question, could Christ truly be God if He had a beginning? Well, first of all Jesus could never be God (Himself). There is only one Being in the Bible who bears the title “God” in the ultimate sense, and this is the Father (John 17:3; 1 Cor 8:6; Rev 21:22). However, the relevant question is, could Jesus be a divine being, could He possess the qualities of God if He had a beginning?

When a child is born, what qualities is he born with? Apart from the fact that his development is not complete, does he come short of his parents in any way? Obviously, if Jesus was BORN, BEGOTTEN, BROUGHT FORTH by God, then He must possess ALL the qualities of God! It is evident that He is not inferior to God in any way but possesses in His nature every attribute which by nature belongs to God. How does the fact that He had a beginning trillions of years ago negate His divinity? This is like saying that because a human son is not as old his father, he is not as human as his father! The key question, is whether Jesus was BORN or CREATED. Jehovah’s Witnesses claim that He was created. Trinitarians say He was neither born nor created. The Bible however, teaches that He was begotten of God way back in the days of “everlasting”. This is the only conclusion which fits all the facts of Scripture.

ENLIGHTENED OR CONFUSED?

Many and varied are the ways in which the enemy of all truth has sought to obliterate this truth. Another group of Christians, zealous for the traditions of past centuries have speculated (and pushed these speculations on others) that Jesus, who was **God Himself**, decided billions of

years ago to act in the role of a son, while **God Himself** (another one) would act in the role of a Father. At the same time **God Himself** (still another one!) would act in the role of Holy Spirit. This decision was taken by God Himself who was not three Gods, but one God acting in three roles!!

UNPOPULAR TRUTH

Why is the devil so fiercely opposed to the truth that Jesus is the true Son of God? It is not difficult to find the answer to this question. The Bible declares that God's love is revealed in the fact that God gave His Son to die for mankind (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9,10). How can we understand and appreciate the wonder of that love if we fail to discern the identity of the One who was sent? If we fail to grasp the value of the gift that was given and what it cost God to give it? It is only as we understand Christ's identity that we shall love God as we should (1 John 4:19). Therefore our love for God and our victory over sin are linked to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. "*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God* (1 John 5:5)?" No wonder the devil hates this truth!

What is difficult to understand is why **Christians** should so determinedly oppose the plainest statements of the word of God. Why should persons who claim to love God and to desire His glory so stubbornly oppose the one truth which reveals the love of God more fully than anything else in the universe? This truly is a mystery almost as great as the so-called Trinity!

Hundreds of years ago during the fourth century AD the spirit of compromise, the desire for worldly popularity combined with the influence of paganism, brought the doctrine of the trinity into the Christian faith. Since that time it has become so deeply ingrained into the traditions of Christendom that it has become the foundation doctrine of most Christian denominations and it is considered blasphemy to speak against it. But why do Christian men and women cling so tenaciously to the error? Why, in the light of the plain statements of Scripture, do they continue to embrace a Trinitarian God? The answer is popularity. No church will be accepted today (this has been true for the past 1500 years) unless it professes belief in the trinity. A denial of the trinity will result in a church instantly receiving the label of **CULT**. Therefore, this doctrine which is entirely founded upon the traditions of men rather than the word of God has risen to such universal prominence that when one simply expresses the biblical truth that Jesus is the Son of God, he is accused of heresy.

JOHN'S TESTIMONY

Of all the disciples of Jesus, John is the one who dwells most of all on the theme of the sonship of Jesus. In fact, he is the only one of the Bible writers who refers to Jesus as God's "only begotten Son."

Trinitarians pounce upon this fact and declare that the use of this phrase was just a quirk of John's style of writing. Is this true? Was it merely John's style of writing that gave Jesus the title, "Only begotten Son," or was John an accurate, truthful, honest Christian who wrote straight facts?

John was the last of the apostles to die, living until somewhere between the years A.D. 95 - 100. He was also the last of the Bible writers, with his books being the last writings added to the biblical canon. It is believed that Revelation (written A.D. 95) was the first of his writings (of those included in the Bible) being followed by his epistles and the gospel which bears his name.

The epistles of John, written after all the other apostles were dead, reveal that by the time these letters were written, certain deadly influences were beginning to rear their heads in the church. Several references in the epistles of John make it clear that some were beginning to teach dangerous heresies. (1 John 2:18)

In his first epistle, John emphatically states, several times, that Jesus is the Son of God. Here he describes Him as the, "only begotten Son." What was the reason for the emphasis? Was there a reason why he chose to describe Jesus in such a particular way?

Chapter 2: 22,23, Makes it clear that there were certain people arising in the Christian church who were beginning to teach that Jesus was not the actual Son of God in the truest sense of the word "Son" (the first Trinitarians?). John, the last of the apostles, one of the twelve specially chosen by Jesus to be His special witnesses, one who had "*heard, ... seen with our eyes, ... looked upon, and ... handled, of the Word of life*" (1 John 1:1) found it necessary to repudiate this dangerous false teaching, in clear and unmistakable language. Those who taught this heresy possessed the "*Spirit of Antichrist.*" Emphatically, he stated that, Jesus was not only "God's Son," He was God's "only **BEGOTTEN** Son (1 John 4:9)." This was not an idea which John fabricated, but was a truth which he had heard himself from the lips of the Master (John 3:16).

Clearly, he makes it known that this truth is the central pillar which is the basis of all genuine Christian experience. Without this truth, we

cannot overcome the world (1 John 5:5). Confession of this truth that Jesus is God's Son, is an indicator that we are abiding in God (1 John 4:15) and through understanding the truth of the relationship between God and His Son, we may appreciate the extent of God's love for us (1 John 4:9).

Why is it that none of the other Bible writers had made the same emphasis? The answer is simple. Note John's words:

"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. (1 John 2:18)"

It is clear that the denial that Jesus was God's Son was a teaching that had not been around before the time of John's writing. No Christian had ever questioned the fact that Jesus was the Son of God, begotten of the Father, changed into flesh and sent into the world. But now that John was old, the only apostle left alive, the devil focused his attack upon the most critical point of Christian faith: the doctrine of the love of God, revealed in the gift of His Son.

The Bible has not been warped or distorted by the literary style, or idiomatic expressions of its writers. So called "scholars" would have us believe that the plain, simple words of the Bible are not to be comprehended, believed and accepted until they have first been interpreted by the "men of learning." This fallacy has always been and always will be rejected by those who believe in a sovereign God. One who intends that His word shall be read, understood and obeyed, and who therefore has made it simple enough for even a child, guided by His spirit, to understand.

CHAPTER 3

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

IS JESUS CHRIST TRULY GOD?

The word “God,” when used with reference to the true God has two applications *in the Scriptures*.

1. Firstly, it is used as a title with reference to the Supreme Being in the universe, the One who is over all others in authority, the source of *all* things.
2. Secondly, it is used to refer to the qualities and attributes of divinity.

When the word, “God” is used as a title to refer to the supreme Being in the universe, how many Beings, or Persons does it refer to? If the Scriptures are true, then it can refer to *one* Being only. In this sense, the Father is, “the only true God (John 17:3),” there is but “one God, the Father (1 Cor. 8:6),” there is “none other (God) but He (Mark 12:32),” there is but “one God and Father of all (Eph. 4:6).” These verses clearly declare that the supreme Ruler of the universe, the One who is above all others, barring none, is, God the Father.

However, the word “God” is used in a few places with reference to the fact that Jesus, as the Son of God possesses all the attributes and qualities of divinity. One striking example of this is John 1:1 where it says,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

“The word was with God.” How many beings are referred to here? There are two of them. Who are they? One is the word, (who is this?) and one is God (who is this?). Are they both the same being, or do we have two separate persons? Note again, one of them is God. The other one is called the word and He is *with* God. However, immediately following it says, “and the word was God.” How shall we understand this then? Does it mean,

- a. There are two Gods, or
- b. He was the same God that He was with (that is, that He was with Himself)?

The first suggestion defies Scripture, while the second abuses reason and common sense. Evidently there is a third meaning, one often ig-

nored or overlooked. When the verse says that the word was God, it is not suggesting that Jesus is God Himself. There is only one person who has the identity of God in the sense of being the supreme authority in the universe, and that is the Person that the Word was with. The verse is really saying that Jesus had the nature of God, or that He was divine by nature - not that He was God Himself. The Greek rendering of John 1:1 says, "*the word was with **the** God and the word was God.*" The Word, Jesus Christ, is not the Being called God. Rather, it is stating that He possessed the attributes of divinity. This verse clearly teaches the truth that there is one God, but two divine Beings.

Jesus then, is truly God **by nature!!** He possesses all the fullness of the godhead (Col. 2:9). He possesses "all power" in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). The ability to give life, to create, to know all things, to see all things, to do all things are His. The apostle Paul declares that in His pre-existence He was "in the form of God (Phil. 2:6)," that He is "the express image" of God (Heb. 1:3)," that He is before all things (Col. 1:17) and that He upholds all things "by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). Therefore, none can deny the divinity of Jesus Christ. To do this, one must first of all deny the Scriptures.

Yet, even as we recognize the truth of the full divinity of Jesus Christ, we must also acknowledge, if we are honest, that the Bible consistently speaks of God as a single individual Person, and makes it clear that this Person is exclusively, God the Father. The following verses illustrate this truth clearly. 1 Cor. 11:3; John 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; Rev. 21:22. These verses are just examples. There are dozens more which teach the same truth. How then can we reconcile these two truths, both of which are clearly taught by Scripture, yet which seem to contradict each other?

- (a) That Jesus is God by nature, fully divine.
- (b) That there is only one God, who is the Father.

The Bible truth, is so wonderfully plain and simple that every child who reads the Bible without being poisoned by human influence will readily discern it. Over and over the Scriptures declare that Jesus Christ is the "Son of God," the "only begotten Son of God." In this simple, yet profound truth lies the clear answer to the seeming contradictions.

A TRUE SON, SUBJECT TO GOD

Jesus Christ was, is, and always will be the only begotten Son of the only true God, the Father. Truly begotten (why do I need to emphasize this when the Bible says it so clearly?), truly the Son of God. Born of

the Father (not created) begotten of the Father in the distant eternity past, he is a separate, distinct Person from the Father. He possesses by inheritance all the attributes and qualities of His Father, therefore is truly divine, is truly God in His nature in the fullest possible sense. Yet we can clearly see how the Biblical insistence that there is only one God, the Father, is also true, because the Father is the source of all things - the absolute highest authority, even above Jesus Christ. This relationship between Father and son where Jesus is ruler over all, but still subject to His Father who is God over all, is brought out clearly in 1 Cor. 15:27-28.

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. {28} And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Here we see that it is God (the Father) who put all things under Christ, but that He Himself is not subject to Christ. Rather, even though Christ rules over all, He is still subject to the Father. This plain biblical teaching, explains simply and clearly how Jesus Christ is a divine Being, God by nature, and yet, how it is still true that the only true God is the Father.

WHO DIED ON CALVARY?

Every false idea builds a wall of other falsehoods around itself. This it must do in order to answer the contradictions which inevitably result from every lie. Yet always, whenever this wall, or chain of lies is examined it is found to be rotting at the foundations, full of gaping holes which cannot be patched by all the lies in the world. Thus it is with the falsehood of the three-in-one, or the one-in-three god. Let us examine some of the stones in this decaying wall.

Those who insist that Jesus Christ is the eternal, almighty God, Himself, encounter serious difficulty in explaining the death of Christ. You see, the Bible clearly teaches that God cannot die. This is impossible (1 Tim. 6:16). Yet the Scriptures plainly declare that Jesus Christ died for our sins (Heb. 2:9,14). Jesus Himself declares, “*I am He that liveth and was dead...*” (Rev. 1:18).

Believers in a three-in-one God attempt to get around this difficulty by suggesting that Jesus Christ was made up of two distinct and separate personalities. There was the human side and there was the divine side. They claim that the human side died, but the divine did not, because of

course, God cannot die. Yet this unscriptural suggestion only creates a greater difficulty. If it is true that only the **human** part of Christ died while the divine part continued to live, undisturbed on the eternal plane, then we would have two serious accusations to make against God. The first is that God has provided only a human sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world. Can a human sacrifice redeem humanity and satisfy the claims of God's broken law? The second accusation would be that God Himself did not make a sacrifice at Calvary. What He really would have done, according to this theory, was create a human being in Mary's womb, then come to share the body of that human being for 33½ years, but when that being was put to death on Calvary, He abandoned him and left him to pay the price alone. If this is true, what sacrifice then did God make? It would not be God who suffered, but rather the poor human creation, the son of Mary whom God allowed to suffer and die.

According to this theory, Jesus Christ was a three-part being. First, there was the human body, secondly there was the human spirit or mind, and thirdly, there was the divine spirit. What part of this being did God give? It must have been the divine spirit. This spirit, according to this theory, was the second person of the godhead and was a part of Jesus which could be separated from the rest of Him. The **human** body and **human** spirit were created in Mary's womb. Their existence began the year, the month and the day that Mary became pregnant. The creation of this **human** part did not require a sacrifice on God's part. God's sacrifice consisted of the divine spirit which He placed in that body. The Being who had been with the Father from the days of eternity.

Yet if that Spirit did not, and could not die, but left the human part at the moment of death to continue conscious existence, would the death of this being have demonstrated the love of God? Could we then agree that God poured out all heaven in one gift, that the Son of God suffered and died for our sins, if all that died on Calvary was a human being, created for the purpose of being sacrificed?

DIVINITY AND HUMANITY COMBINED

Only in the truth will we find an end to all these contradictions. The truth is simply and clearly outlined in the Scriptures. The word of God plainly declares that the divine, pre-existent Son of God **became** a human being. He did not merely visit a human body, only to depart when that body got into trouble. He became a human being. It is what He was. It was His new identity.

(John 1:14) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among

us...

(Heb 2:9) But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels....

Yet we need to understand something before we go any further. No matter what form He took or how weak He became, Jesus Christ could never cease to be who He really was, that is, the only begotten Son of God. As long as He existed He would always possess the **nature** He was born with. He could not cease to be who he was, and because He was God's Son, He possessed the divine nature.

As an illustration of what I mean, we may dress a man in the disguise of a chimpanzee, but he will still be a human being. Or, we may cut off his hands, legs and remove his tongue so that he cannot speak, but he will still be human. What he is cannot change, because the spirit within him is a human spirit. His identity does not depend on how he looks or upon how much of his human capabilities he retains, but upon the nature of the spirit within him. In the same way, Jesus' divinity did not rest in the **glory** of God, or in the **power** of God (Jesus Himself said that these belong to the **Father** for ever. Matt. 6:13). Rather, His divinity consisted of the fact of His identity. He was God's Son. He possessed the mind, the characteristics, the nature of God, whether in human or divine form. Therefore He was divine, whether in heaven or on earth. Whether possessing all power, or having laid it aside.

THE HALLMARK OF DIVINITY

The quality of God which is most emphasized in the Scriptures is His love; His selfless character of love. John stated that, "God is love." (John 4:8). Not that God **has** love, but that God **is** love. It is His identity, His nature, His character. Jesus declared it when He stated, "there is none good but one, that is God (Matt. 19:17)." Again, when Moses beseeched God to show him His glory, the Lord passed by before him and rather than giving Moses a demonstration of His awesome **power**, He proclaimed to Moses His awesome **character** of love and mercy, justice and truth (Ex. 34:6,7). These cases illustrate the truth that the true identifying mark of the true God is not how much power He has, but rather, the purity and holiness of His character. Many believe that the chief mark of divinity is **absolute power**. This, however is not true. The greatest attribute of divinity is a pure holy character of perfect love. This is why Jesus could say in such an unqualified way to Philip, "*he that hath seen me hath seen the Father* John 14:9)." Clearly, He was not referring to the Father's literal visible glory, for no man can see this and live (Ex. 33:20; 1 Tim. 6:16).

Satan possesses a great deal of power and he would like humans to think that this power makes him God. However, even if he could raise the dead and create life this would not make him God. God is good and God is love. This, Satan will never be. This is why, as God tries to reveal Himself to the world through Christian men and women He does not focus so much on giving them supernatural gifts and abilities to impress the world with His power. These gifts Satan can, and does counterfeit. However, there is one thing which the devil cannot imitate and this is God's love. This is why Jesus could say in such an unqualified way, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13:35)."

The point is that when Jesus was on earth, He did not in Himself, possess the divine *power* of God. All this glory and power He laid aside. All His miracles were performed by the Father, dwelling in Him by the holy Spirit (John 14:10). This divine power in a sense belonged to Christ, because as He said, "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you (John 16:15)." However, these things were not His inherently.

THE DIFFERENCE WITH CHRIST

We find then, that Jesus was a partaker of divine power, through the indwelling of His Father's Spirit. We also may become partakers of divine power and the divine nature by the indwelling of that same spirit. But was this the only sense in which Christ was divine? If we partake of the holy Spirit will we become divine in the same way that Christ was divine? Absolutely not! Christ had one quality which we will never have. Something which would set Him apart from all creatures and proclaim His divinity in trumpet tones even if He were to take the form and abilities of a worm. This quality was His character of infinite love and goodness. This was His divine nature, His spirit of stainless purity. This was what He was, regardless of whether or not He possessed all the powers of God, or only the limited abilities of humanity. No other being in the universe possesses such a character except God the Father. This is why Jesus, even when on earth was *fully* divine although He had laid down His divine power and glory. It was because His character, His spirit, His nature was the same divine, pure, holy character of matchless love which had existed with the Father from the days of eternity. His divinity was not in His power, but in His character.

The power and the glory belong to the Father. He is the source of *all* power. The power and authority which Christ possessed both in His pre-incarnation and after His return to heaven were bestowed upon

Him by His Father.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. (Mat 28:18)

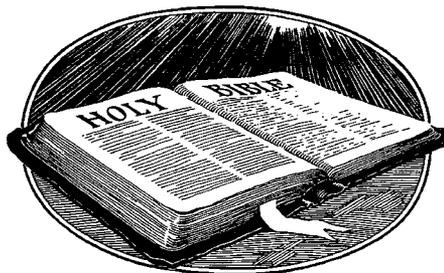
For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; (Col 1:19)

This is why the Scripture says that although it was Jesus Christ who did the actual work of Creation, yet it was God who created all things by Him. It was by means of God's power at work in Him that Christ accomplished the creation of the entire universe. (Eph. 3:9; Heb. 1:2)

DID DIVINITY DIE?

Now that we understand this, let us return to the question: Did divinity die on Calvary? We have seen that there were two aspects to the divinity of Jesus Christ. First, there was the divine Spirit and power of the Father dwelling in Him, and secondly, there was His own divinity, His character, His nature of perfect love and purity. The Bible makes it clear that Christ **Himself** died. He was **made** lower than the angels specifically so that He could die. (Heb. 2:9,14). But what is death? Death is a separation of body and spirit where the body ceases to function and the spirit lapses into a state of **unconscious** sleep. This is exactly what happened to Jesus.

There was no part of Jesus which remained alive and conscious on another plane. Jesus Christ was the begotten Son of God, possessing in His own nature the pure spotless character which belongs **only** to divinity - to God and His Son. Therefore **it was a divine Being who died on Calvary**. It was a divine sacrifice that was made for the redemption of mankind and not merely a human substitute that suffered and died two thousand years ago.



CHAPTER 4

THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

God is Omnipotent. This means that He has all power. He has no limitations. There is nothing that He cannot do, there is nothing too hard for Him to accomplish. (Mat 19:26)

God is Omnipresent. This means that He is at this moment, and at all moments, literally and personally present everywhere in the universe. This is true without qualification. He Himself, personally is here with me in this room as I write, while at the same moment He is trillions of light years away in space, in His throne room in heaven. (Ps. 139:1-12)

How can God be here with me, while He is at the same time in heaven? How can He be said to, “fill heaven and earth?” (Jer. 23:24). Does it mean that His head is in heaven while His feet are on earth? Obviously not. What we need to understand is that the form of the Person which sits on the throne in heaven is not all there is of God. Though this is the form in which God appears to angels and to men. The wise man Solomon stated:

But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? (1 Ki 8:27)

If the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain God, then evidently, the part of God which is contained in heaven is not all there is of God. God Himself is actually the great conscious, living, presence which fills the entire universe.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. (Acts 17:28)

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Eph. 4:6)

There was a point, before time began, when God was all alone in the universe. Before planets, stars, systems, galaxies or angels were created, before He brought forth His Son, God existed, all alone. What was the universe like at that time? Was it an infinite nothingness? The

apostle Paul described God as, “...*Him that filleth all in all.*” (Eph. 1:23) God Himself declares that He “*fills heaven and earth.*” (Jer. 23:24) Solomon declared that “*heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee...*” (1 Kings 8:27)

What do these statements mean? As we read these statements we see that God is a Being who literally fills the entire universe. He always has and always will. It is in Him that “we live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:28). Of course we are not speaking of some “universal intelligence,” or “collective consciousness,” we are not speaking of an unfeeling, impassive presence. God is a personal, warm, loving Being who is as much a person as I am a person, but whose powers and abilities are infinitely greater than mine. One of these abilities is the capability of being literally in all places at the same time.

Who will dare to say that this is not possible for God? Who will even suggest that this is not the plain teaching of the Bible?

Some have suggested: “God is everywhere, yes, but it is by means of His angelic messengers.” Others have stated, “yes, He is everywhere, but it is by means of another divine being called ‘The Holy Spirit.’” Still others say, “yes, He is everywhere, but it is only His *power* which is omnipresent. He Himself is limited to His throne in heaven.” All of these ideas limit the power of God, and deny the Scriptures.

In John chapter four when Jesus met the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well, she asked Him a question which was very important to her but which showed that she was as ignorant of the nature of God as many people today are:

Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. (John 4:20)

Her implied question was, “where is the true place of worship?” or, to rephrase it, “where should we go to find God?” Jesus’ answer was that from that time onwards, men would no longer worship in either Jerusalem or that Samaritan mountain. Why? Because “*God is spirit ...*” (John 4:24). When we recognize that God is spirit, then we will realize that He cannot be limited to one place. Not to Jerusalem, not to that mountain, not to Jacob’s anointed stone at Bethel, not to Moses’ burning bush. Wherever we are, God is there (Ps. 139:7,8), therefore we worship Him anywhere and everywhere. This is what is meant by spiritual worship.

WHO AM I?

Is my body an integral and essential part of my identity? Please consider this question carefully. Man was made in the image of God and according to the Scriptures, we humans consist of both body and spirit. (See Ecc. 12:7; Eccl. 3:21; James 2:26; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Cor. 2:11; Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59) However, while we may, and will one day change bodies, we will never change spirits!!

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (1 Cor 15:50-53)

What this tells me is that the real me is my spirit. My body is just basically the house in which I live. It is true that, the spirit cannot exist in a conscious state while separated from the body except God performs a miracle (2 Cor 12:2). However, all that makes me, **ME**, my memories, my thoughts, my being, are contained in my spirit. In other words, **my spirit is my identity.**

This is also true with God. God's true state is a spirit who has the capability of being in all places at the same time. Though He has revealed Himself to His creation in a bodily form, sitting on a throne in one specific location in the universe, we should not think that this is all there is of God. "*The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee ...*" is what Solomon stated. Yet the heavens do contain His bodily form. This bodily form is confined to one location, sitting on a throne in the heavenly sanctuary. Yet at the same time, in one, effortless act, God is everywhere else in the universe. In His real identity, which is His Spirit, He is in all places, invisible, but very real and very present.

The Bible describes our relationship with God and His Son as being real fellowship. (1 John 1:3). This could not be a reality if we were dealing with an agent – a third person, or if we were only interacting with the **power** of God. Fellowship requires personality, real presence, mind interacting with mind on a personal level.

THREE PERSONALITIES

Jesus is one manifestation of divinity. He is one person and also one personality of the godhead. God, on the other hand, manifests Himself in two ways. He has two personalities. He reveals Himself on two levels. Firstly, He is a visible, tangible, bodily Being, sitting on a throne in a specific location in the universe. On the other hand He is also an invisible, intangible, omnipresent Being who fills all infinity. One great Being, but two ways of manifesting Himself, so, two personalities.

WHOSE HOLY SPIRIT?

Inspiration is clear that the Holy Spirit is the spirit, the life, the person of God, and as we are told in Eph. 4:4-6, there is only **one** Spirit. How is it then, that the Holy Spirit is often referred to as the ‘spirit of Christ?’ (Rom.8:9)

God has a quality which is vital to the plan of salvation. This quality is the ability to unite Himself with the spirit of another person.

But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. (1 Cor 6:17)

We cannot tell how this happens, but we know that it does happen. God says it is so and the experience of every genuine Christian testifies that it is a reality. The spirit of God truly unites with our spirit and we become one.

The verse that best explains the relationship between Jesus and the spirit of His Father is John 17:23. It says,

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.... (John 17:23)

Jesus explains in this verse that in the relationship which will exist between God, Himself and His people, the Father will dwell in Him, “*thou in me ...*” and He will dwell in His people, “*I in them*” How does Jesus dwell in His people? He dwells in them by means of the holy spirit (John 14:16-18). But how does the Father dwell in His Son? Again, it is by means of the holy spirit. When Jesus was here on earth He declared,

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. (John 14:10)

When we understand this, then it is easy to see why the Bible insists

that our fellowship is with both the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3) and why Jesus said that both His Father and Himself would come and make their abode with the believer (John 14:23). The same spirit of the Father dwells in His Son, and is the means by which both the Father and the Son dwell in God's children and this is why the spirit is most often referred to as the spirit of God but in a few places as the spirit of Christ. The apostle Paul explains it in this way:

For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and gentiles) have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (Eph 2:18)

When you or I go out and witness to someone and he is won to the truth, do you say, "I won him," or do you say, "God won him?" Of course we say, "God won him," don't we? Why do we say this? Because we recognize that although our voice was heard, our mouth spoke, our hands turned the pages of the Bible, yet it was God who was doing the work through us. God did it, but He did it through us. In the same way, Jesus created all things (John 1:3; Col. 1:16), but it was really God in Him that did it (Eph. 3:9). Therefore God is really the One who created all things (Rev. 4:11). He is the source of all power and all being.

And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. (Rev 5:6)

We see then that it is the spirit, the power, the life of God, but working through Christ, uniting with His spirit, which comes to us as both the spirit of God and of Christ. Then when that same Spirit dwells in me and works through me it is the work of God, Jesus and myself. All three spirits united in one. *"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one (John 17:23)"*

When this truth is properly understood and appreciated it will make a great change in the religious experience of those who receive it. The apostles were filled with the wonder of the truth that God Himself had literally come to live within men. They strove to make their hearers understand the wonder of it all. They knew that no one could really understand what God had done through His Son, by His spirit without being filled with joy and being filled with the motivation and the power to overcome all sin.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (1 Cor 6:19)

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:3)

CHAPTER 5

WHERE IS THE THIRD PERSON?

In studying the word of God we sometimes encounter passages which seem to contradict each other, or to be in conflict. One example of this is the two statements by the apostles Paul and James concerning justification. Paul says:

“... A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”
(Rom. 3: 28)

But James says:

“... By works a man is justified and not by faith only.” (James 2:24)

Do these statements contradict each other? At first sight they may seem to. The person who has little faith in the Bible will say, “see the Bible is not dependable. It contradicts itself.” However, the person who knows that the Bible is the true infallible word of God, will say, “well, here is something that needs to be examined more carefully. Let me see how these two verses. can be harmonized with each other.”

Which of these two attitudes is the proper one? Of course it is the second one. Such a person will find that the Bible is indeed consistent in its teachings when it is properly understood. He will find that it is he who needs understanding and not the Bible which needs correcting. He will discover that what at first seemed to be contradictory and puzzling was really the Avenue to a richer and deeper understanding of God and his ways.

This is the approach which we should take when studying the subject of the godhead? Why is it that so many of us seem to believe that the subject is taboo and must not be discussed? Why is it that we cling to the popular long-accepted theory and refuse to examine all of its contradictions? Is this the true spirit of a learner? Of a humble Bible student? Of a child of God?

As soon as the subject of the godhead is raised and the inconsistencies of the popular belief are pointed out, one word is trumpeted:

Mystery! Mystery!

This is supposed to cover all. This word is the end of all discussion and the end of all reasonable examination of the subject. This is not a safe attitude to take towards any doctrine of the Scriptures. The moment we

take that attitude that is the moment when our learning comes to an end.

Does the Bible teach that there is a third Being in the godhead called *The Holy Spirit*? There are some Scriptures which may seem to suggest that there might be such a being. On the other hand, there are many Scriptures which indicate that there is no such person. What are we to do with these Scriptures? As believers in the truth of God's word, let us examine them without bias and without traditional leaning and see if we can find how these verses are in harmony with each other.

TRINITARIAN VERSES?

Let us first of all examine some of the more popular verses which are said to teach that the Holy Spirit is a third member of the godhead, separate from God the Father and His Son.

1. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:
.... (Gen 1:26)*

Here we find that God was talking to somebody, but not necessarily to more than one person. Who was He talking to? After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God said to His Son, "Let us make man in our image." there is nothing here to suggest that there was a third Person there.

2. *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
(Mat 28:19)*

In this verse we are told that we should baptize in a certain name. A name in the Bible, of course, indicates authority and character. The apostles went out and baptized in the name of Jesus. Were they disobedient to the command of Christ? No. They understood that what He meant was that every new believer should accept the authority, character and work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in his life. The Father Gave His Son and His life to mankind. We must accept the gifts of His love in the gift of His Son, and His life and power in His Holy Spirit. If we fail to receive one or the other, then our salvation would not be complete. Is there any teaching here that the Holy Spirit is a third Being separate from Father and Son? No. Only if we read something into the Scriptures which they do not say.

3. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. (Mat 3:16,17)*

Here, we are told, there were the three members of the godhead all in one place. The Son was baptized, the Father spoke, and the Holy Spirit descended on the Son in the form of a dove. Again we see that there is a Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But what is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is an extension of the Father. It comes directly from the Father. In Luke 11:20, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as “*The Finger of God.*”

But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. (Luke 11:20)

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. (Acts 10:38)

4. *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen. (2 Cor 13:14)*

In this verse, three powers are mentioned, but notice, only **one** of them is called God. One is the Lord, and the other is the Holy Ghost (spirit) through which we have communion or fellowship with God and Jesus. A little later we will see how other Bible passages explain this one very clearly.

5. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. (1 John 5:7)*

The great majority of Bible Commentaries tell us that this verse has no legitimate place in the Scriptures. In the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, it says,

“The passage as given in the KJV is in no Greek MS earlier than the 15th and the 16th centuries. The disputed words found their way into the KJV by way of the Greek text of Erasmus (see Vol. V, p. 141). It is said that Erasmus offered to include the disputed words in his Greek Testament if he were shown

even one Greek MS that contained them. A library in Dublin produced such a MS (known as 34), and Erasmus included the passage in his text. It is now believed that the later editions of the Vulgate acquired the passage by the mistake of a scribe who included an exegetical marginal comment in the Bible text that he was copying. The disputed words have been widely used in support of the doctrine of the Trinity, but, in view of such overwhelming evidence against their authenticity, their support is valueless and should not be used. In spite of their appearance in the Vulgate A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture freely admits regarding these words: "It is now generally held that this passage, called the Comma Johanneum, is a gloss that crept into the text of the Old Latin and Vulgate at an early date, but found its way into the Greek text only in the 15th and 16th centuries" (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1951, p. 1186) (The SDA Bible Commentary, comments on 1 John 5: 7)

However, even if we were to accept this verse as a legitimate part of Scripture, does it teach three Beings? In verse 8 we are told that there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, the water and the blood. Here we see that one does not have to be a living person to bear witness. The water bears witness and the blood bears witness, yet no one would suggest that the water and blood are persons. Why then should we insist that because the spirit bears witness in heaven it must be a living person?

There are three ways in which witness is borne to the truth in heaven. These witnesses are one, or they bear a united witness. It does not mean that they are one person, one being, or one God. Jesus explained what this oneness means when He prayed that we all might be one as He and His father are one. Not that we might become one human, but simply that we might be in perfect harmony even as He and His Father are in perfect harmony.

In heaven, God bears witness to the truth, so does Christ, and so does the holy spirit! However, while God and Jesus may witness audibly by the words they speak, the holy spirit, whether in heaven or on earth, witnesses by making impressions on the hearts of those who are willing to learn, giving them understanding of the truths of the plan of salvation. In heaven there are three avenues of witness, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, on the earth, there are three, the water, the spirit and the blood. Are the three in heaven a trinity because they are mentioned in the same breath? By this reasoning we would have to conclude that the water, the spirit and the blood are also a trinity, and that the water and

the blood are persons.

THE THIRD PERSON IS MISSING

Let us now examine some of the places where the Holy Spirit is missing. In these places, the Holy Spirit would have to be present if he were a third member of the godhead.

1. *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* (John 14:23)

Where is the Third Person?

2. *And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.* (Rev 21:22)

Where is the Third Person?

3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* (John 17:3)

Where is the Third Person?

4. *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* (1 John 1:3)

Where is the Third Person?

5. *All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.* (Luke 10:22)

Where is the Third Person?

6. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* (John 17:23)

Where is the Third Person?

HARMONIZING THE SCRIPTURES

The truth is, there are times when the holy spirit is referred to as “he” in the Scriptures. Why is this so? The reason is that the Holy Spirit is not just a force, but is actually the very real presence and personality of both the Father and the Son.

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Cor 3:17)

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. (John 14:23)

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. (John 14:18)

God the Father and Jesus Christ are with us, but not in a form where we can see, or touch them, but in an invisible, intangible, but very real spiritual form. Because this is the presence of God, it is holy. Because it is in a spiritual form, it is spirit. Hence, *The Holy Spirit*.

This is the only explanation of the godhead which will fit all the facts. God has a Son, and He has a Spirit. The Son **proceeded** from God:

“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (John 8:42)”

But the Holy Spirit **proceedeth** from God:

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: (John 15:26)”

The Son is a separate Being from the Father, while the Holy Spirit is an extension of the Father, by means of which He is present everywhere.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? (Psa 139:7)

The Father dwells in His Son by His spirit. Thus, they are one. Then the Son dwells in us by that same spirit, so we also are one in God, as He and His Son are one:

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (John 17:21)

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that

they may be one, even as we are one: (John 17:22)

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (John 17:23)

CHAPTER 6

ROOTS OF THE TRINITY

The doctrine of the Trinity has been, from the moment it was first introduced into the Christian faith, a subject of heated debate and fierce controversy. Today many centuries later the situation is no different. Still there is argument and division concerning this doctrine which its advocates have declared to be a “great mystery.”

Sometime, during the first four hundred years after the death of Christ, this doctrine crept into the teachings of popular Christianity. While it was officially embraced and defined at the Council of Nicea (AD 325), there seems to be evidence to suggest that even before this time it had already insinuated itself into the think-

ing of some Christians. However, what is absolutely certain is that this doctrine was not introduced into the Christian Church until more than a century after the death of the last of the apostles. The Encarta Encyclopedia describes its introduction into Christianity in the following way:

Trinity (theology), in Christian theology, doctrine that God exists as three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who are united in one substance or being. The doctrine is not taught explicitly in the New Testament, where the word God almost invariably refers to the Father...

The term trinitas was first used in the 2nd century, by the Latin theologian Tertullian, but the concept was developed in the course of the debates on the nature of Christ. In the 4th century, the doctrine was finally formulated...



Trinitarian Buddha
12th Century BC

The Encyclopedia Britannica states that “*The doctrine developed gradually over several centuries and through many controversies.*” (Article – Trinity). The doctrine, according to these articles, was “developed” during the first four centuries AD. Now think carefully. Protestants believe in the **Scripture**. Catholics believe in **Tradition** plus **Scripture**. Protestantism says, “all necessary truth is taught in the Scriptures.” Catholicism says, “no, the Church continued to discover and proclaim more truth over the centuries (tradition).” It is upon this basis that the Roman Catholic Church claims that its teachings are above the Scripture. This doctrine of the Trinity falls right into the camp of Catholic tradition, rather than Scripture. Therefore the following statement by a Roman Catholic was quite justified: “*Our opponents sometimes claim that no belief should be held dogmatically which is not explicitly stated in Scripture But the Protestant Churches have themselves accepted such dogmas as **the Trinity for which there is no such precise authority in the Gospels.***” (Life Magazine, Oct. 30, 1950)

Yet, as we examine the doctrine of a three-in-one God more carefully, an even more startling fact comes to light. The doctrine of a trinitarian god existed for many centuries before it was embraced by the “Christian Church” in the first four centuries AD.

*The Papacy has in some of its churches, as, for instance, in the monastery of the so-called Trinitarians of Madrid, an image of the Triune God, with three heads on one body. The **Babylonians** had something of the same. Mr. Layard, in his last work, has given a specimen of such a triune divinity, worshipped in **ancient Assyria**. The accompanying cut of such another divinity, worshipped among the **Pagans of Siberia**, is taken from a medal in the Imperial Cabinet of St. Petersburg, and given in Parson’s “Japhet.”.... **In India**, the supreme divinity, in like manner, in one of the most ancient cave-temples, is represented with three heads on one body, under the name of “Eko Deva Trimurti,” One God, three forms.” **In Japan, the Buddhists** worship their great divinity, Buddha, with three heads, in the very same form, under the name of “San Pao Fuh.” All these have existed from ancient times. While overlaid with idolatry, **the recognition of a Trinity was universal in all the ancient nations of the world....** (The Two Babylons - by Alexander Hislop, p.17,18)*

Over and over again as we examine the beliefs of ancient pagan religions which existed for hundreds of years before Christ came to this earth we find a trinity being worshipped. If the doctrine of the trinity

was not understood by the people of God until several hundred years after Christ, where did the heathen religions get the idea from? Benjamin Wilkinson, who wrote the book, "Truth Triumphant," proposed an interesting answer:

"The revelations of the Old Testament had disclosed the Trinity. "In a disfigured and uncouth semblance" Zoroaster proclaimed his species of a trinity. He placed at the head of his celestial hierarchy Ormazd (or Ahura-Mazda), the great wise spirit, and

Ahriman, the supreme evil spirit, who was the coeval and rival god of darkness dwelling in the bottomless pit of night. With them he associated in a marked way, Mithra, the god of light, who was the sun and an embodiment of sun worship. As the sun was neither in the heavens nor on earth, but swung in an intermediate position between heaven and earth, so Mithra was the great mediator. When Mithraism had overspread the Roman Empire, Mithra was said to be the champion of sinners, the companion after death, and the guide of the soul into the heaven of heavens." (Truth Triumphant, p.120 - by Benjamin Wilkinson)



Assyrian Triune divinity

In the book, "The Two Babylons," the same suggestion is made by the author, Alexander Hislop:

"While overlaid with idolatry, the recognition of a trinity was universal in all the ancient nations of the world, proving how deep-rooted in the human race was the primeval doctrine on this subject which comes out so distinctly in Genesis the triune emblem of the Assyrian divinity shows clearly what had been the original patriarchal faith." (The Two Babylons – p.18)

Both Benjamin Wilkinson and Alexander Hislop have made the unreasonable suggestion that the heathen nations received their concept of a trinitarian God from the early Hebrews. Most of the attempts made to explain the doctrine of the Trinity reveal a lack of clear thinking, and the above suggestion is a clear example of this. Did the heathen nations

receive their concepts of a Trinitarian god from the Hebrews? Does it make sense to suggest that they did? Is there any evidence to suggest that they were imitating the children of Israel in their ideas of a three-in-one God? What are the facts of the matter? Let us examine them.

DID THE ISRAELITES EVER BELIEVE IN A TRINITY?

One of the primary beliefs of Judaism is that there is only one God. This is not a new belief for the Jews, but has been one of their foundational beliefs from their very beginning as a nation. They do not, and have never believed in, or taught the doctrine of a God who was made up of three parts or persons.

It has been said that the Hebrew word, “elohim,” signifies a plurality of persons within the godhead, since it is the plural form of the word, “el (god).” However, what is very significant is the fact that although this is a Hebrew word, the Hebrews themselves who best understand their own language, have never, and still do not believe in a plurality of Gods, or in a Trinitarian godhead. In fact, the shema, “hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord,” contains the very word, “Elohim,” yet it is the immovable basis upon which the Jews anchor their concept of a single God who is one great Being. The Hebrews who then had the most complete revelations from, and the highest conceptions of God had absolutely no concept of a Trinitarian God but instead, insisted upon the very opposite. Surely it bears thinking about that the people whom God chose, and to whom He revealed Himself most fully, had absolutely no concept of a Trinity, while the heathen all around them had this concept. Did these heathen have a better understanding of the nature of God than did the Jews?

Of striking significance is the fact that in several of these heathen trinities, the third person of the trinity was an evil representation whose description could only equate him with Satan. Let us look for example at the trinity of gods which was worshipped in ancient Egypt, in Persia and even today, in the Hindu faith of India:

IN EGYPT:

From the 1st dynasty (c. 2525-2775 BC), Horus and the god Seth were perpetual antagonists who were reconciled in the harmony of Upper and Lower Egypt. In the myth of Osiris, who

became prominent about 2350 BC, Horus was the son of Osiris. He was also the opponent of Seth, who murdered Osiris and contested Horus' heritage, the royal throne of Egypt.... (Encyclopædia Britannica - art. "Horus")

Seth was represented as a composite figure with a canine body, slanting eyes, square-tipped ears, tufted (in later representations, forked) tail, and a long, curved, pointed snout....

Originally Seth was a sky god, lord of the desert, master of storms, disorder, and warfare—in general, a trickster. Seth embodied the necessary and creative element of violence and disorder within the ordered world.... (Encyclopædia Britannica - art. "Seth")

IN PERSIA:

According to Zoroaster, Ahura Mazda created the universe and the cosmic order that he maintains. He created the twin spirits Spenta Mainyu (Mithra) and Angra Mainyu (Ahriman)—the

former beneficent, choosing truth, light, and life, the latter destructive, choosing deceit, darkness, and death. The struggle of the spirits against each other makes up the history of the world.... (Encyclopædia Britannica - art. "Ahura Mazda")



**Horus, Osiris, Isis
2nd Millennium B.C.**

Ahriman, ANGRA MAINYU ("Destructive Spirit")

The evil spirit in the dualistic doctrine of Zoroastrianism. His essential nature is expressed in his principal epithet—Druj, "the

Lie.” *The Lie* expresses itself as greed, wrath, and envy. To aid him in attacking the light, the good creation of Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord, Ahriman created a horde of demons embodying envy and similar qualities. Despite the chaos and suffering effected in the world by his onslaught, believers expect Ahriman to be defeated in the end of time by Ahura Mazda. Confined to their own realm, his demons will devour each other, and his own existence will be quenched.....

The origin of evil is traced in Zoroaster’s system to an exercise of free will at the beginning of creation, when the twin sons of Ahura Mazda entered into an eternal rivalry. One, Spenta Mainyu {Mithra} (Bounteous Spirit), chose good, thus acquiring the attributes of truth, justice, and life. The other, Angra Mainyu {Ahriman} (Destructive Spirit), chose evil and its attendant forces of destruction, injustice, and death....(Encyclopædia Britannica - art. “Ahriman”)

IN INDIA:

Hindu Trinity

The book “*The Symbolism of Hindu Gods and Rituals*” says regarding a Hindu trinity that existed centuries before Christ: “Siva is one of the gods of the Trinity. He is said to be the god of destruction. The other two gods are Brahma, the god of creation and Vishnu, the god of maintenance.... To indicate that these three processes are one and the same the three gods are combined in one form. “-Published by A. Parthasarathy, Bombay.

....Vishnu is often regarded as a special manifestation of the preservative aspect of the Supreme and Shiva as that of the destructive function. Another deity, Brahma, the creator, remains in the background as a demiurge. **These three great figures (Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva) constitute the so-called Hindu Trinity (Trimurti, “the One or Whole with Three Forms”).** This conception attempts to synthesize and harmonize the conviction that the Supreme Power is singular with the plurality of gods in daily religious worship (Encyclopædia Britannica - art. “Hinduism”)

...Historians show that at this time (c. 500 B.C.) the Hindu priests changed their teachings and adopted the adorable conception

of a loving heavenly Father. A new literature sprang up, and innumerable tractates were written to place Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Siva (the destroyer), the Hindu trinity, on a par with Jehovah. These more abstract and less materialistic concepts of religion were the beliefs of the Brahmans and the educated classes, but they left the masses to their coarse idolatry. (Truth Triumphant, p.126 - by Benjamin Wilkinson)



**Palmyra. Triad of Moon God, Lord of heavens, Sun God
1st Century A.D.**

THE THIRD PERSON

In these versions of the Trinity we find the following striking elements.

- (a) A creator-god who is good and merciful.
- (b) In two of these versions we find another god who is his son, who is also a good being.
- (c) A third god (in some cases who was also the son of the father and brother to the second god) who is evil and who makes war against the father and the son.

Can we miss the significance of this? Is this the concept of the Trinity which the heathen supposedly adopted from the Jews? The Hebrew Scriptures do reveal three beings who may be equated with the above descriptions but they most definitely do not constitute a trinity. They are:

- (a) God the Father the supreme ruler of the universe. Absolutely and totally good.
- (b) Michael, the chief Prince (Dan. 10:13; 12:1), the Lord (Ps.110:1), the Son of the Father (Prov. 8:22-31; 30:4), also absolutely and totally good.

(c) The enemy, Satan, the accuser and destroyer (Job 1:6; 2:7) The serpent (Gen. 3:14,15) The fallen angel (Isa. 14:12-15; Ezek. 28:12-19) who rebelled against, and makes war against God and His Son.

These heathen concepts of the Trinity, rather than pointing to a true Trinity, actually reveal very clearly the falsehood of the trinitarian doctrine and unmasks its origin.

There was one who made war against the true God and His Son. One who is an enemy of all righteousness. This being greatly desired to be a part of a trinity. He desired to be equal with the Son of God and in an attempt to achieve this he rebelled against the Father and His Son. This person was Satan, the adversary, the destroyer.

(Rev 12:7-8) And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, {8} And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

It is this same Satan who clearly appears in the heathen trinity as the third being in the godhead. What Satan could not achieve in heaven, he achieved on earth – worship as the third person in a Trinitarian godhead.

The heathen nations did learn something from the Hebrews, but it was not the doctrine of a Trinitarian god. How could they? The Hebrews did not believe in a Trinity! What they did learn was the truth of a cosmic conflict between God, His Son and a powerful heavenly being named Lucifer who aspired to godhood. Satan, through his heathen worshippers easily distorted the facts so that he appeared as a member of the godhead, a brother of the Son of God, and therefore, worthy of worship. What a terrible tragedy that this heathen concept should have so completely permeated Christendom that the Trinity is now the first foundational belief of nearly every Christian denomination!!

Today Christendom worships a third “god.” In fact, this “god” truly receives the greatest attention these days of all the members of the so-called Trinity. He is called the “Holy Ghost,” but holy he is not. He leads Christians into the most uncouth demonstrations and the most inappropriate, and even indecent behaviour. Yet he is worshipped as the Lord and giver of life. Who is this “third member of the Trinity?” It is the same person whom the Hindus worship as Shiva, the god of death and destruction; whom the Persians worshipped as Ahriman, the evil brother of the god Mithra. He is the same god that the Egyptians worshipped as Set, or Seth, the evil half brother of the god Horus. In other words, it is Satan himself.

ENTRY INTO CHRISTIANITY

As we have already seen, this doctrine of the Trinity was not taught in the New Testament. It was taught by neither Jesus nor His disciples. The testimony of historians is that it “developed gradually” during the first four centuries of the Christian era. When we realize that the doctrine of a triune god was prevalent among the heathen of that time and that this doctrine, rather than being a direct teaching of the Bible was “developed” during the years of the great apostasy by the very power which was responsible for wedding paganism with Christianity, we may justifiably begin to have grave doubts concerning the Christian origins of the trinity.

The historian, Edward Gibbon in the preface to his book, “History of Christianity,” stated:

“If Paganism was conquered by Christianity, it is equally true that Christianity was corrupted by Paganism. The pure Deism of the first Christians . . . was changed, by the Church of Rome, into the incomprehensible dogma of the trinity. Many of the pagan tenets, invented by the Egyptians and idealized by Plato, were retained as being worthy of belief.” (History of Christianity - by Edward Gibbons)

History has been so doctored and distorted by the religious bias of mainstream religion that it is very difficult to find many historians who will give a clear, truthful picture of the influences which led to the introduction of the trinity into Christian belief. However, again we find another historian, Siegfried Morenz, in his book, “Egyptian Religion,” stating:

“The trinity was a major preoccupation of Egyptian theologians . . . Three gods are combined and treated as a single being, addressed in the singular. In this way the spiritual force of Egyptian religion shows a direct link with Christian theology.”(Egyptian Religion, - Siegfried Morenz)

In the fourth century AD a controversy arose concerning the teachings of Arius, a Christian priest of Alexandria, Egypt. The Encyclopedia Britannica, comments thus on the teachings of Arius:

...It affirmed that Christ is not truly divine but a created being. Arius' basic premise was the uniqueness of God, who is alone self-existent and immutable; the Son, who is not self-existent, cannot be God. Because the Godhead is unique, it cannot be shared or communicated, so the Son cannot be God....

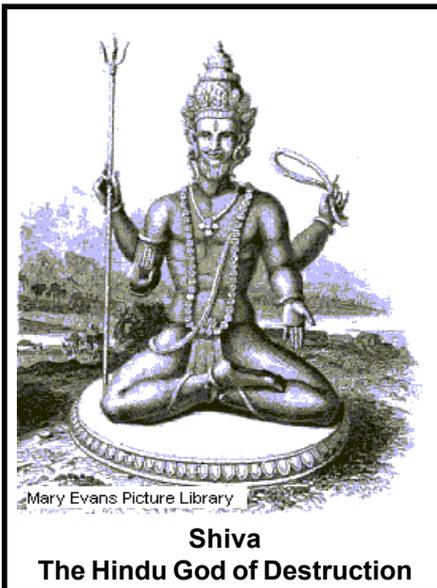
According to its opponents, especially the bishop Athanasius, Arius' teaching reduced the Son to a demigod, reintroduced polytheism (since worship of the Son was not abandoned), and undermined the Christian concept of redemption since only he who was truly God could be deemed to have reconciled man to the Godhead.

The controversy seemed to have been brought to an end by the Council of Nicaea (AD 325), which condemned Arius and his teaching and issued a creed to safeguard orthodox Christian belief. This creed states that the Son is homoousion to Patri ("of one substance with the Father"), thus declaring him to be all that the Father is: he is completely divine. In fact, however, this was only the beginning of a long-protracted dispute. (Encyclopedia Britannica: Article – Arianism)

This Arian controversy was really the focal issue which led to the formal adoption of a trinitarian creed by the Roman Catholic Church. The definitive statement was drafted at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD where the writings and teachings of Arius were condemned and the view of God promoted by the other side was adopted as the orthodox Christian position. If one slight adjustment was made to Arius' teaching, it would have been perfectly in harmony with Scripture. All that was needed was the correction that Jesus was not a created Being, but was the begotten Son of God, thus being fully divine and so fully able to effect man's salvation from sin.

Please note that even though the council formally declared that Jesus was "begotten, not made," the statement that He was of the "same being" as the Father made a mockery of the term begotten. Since He was of the same substance, of the same being, then He could not have been the Son of God in any understandable sense. Arius was closer in saying that Father and Son were of "similar" but not the "same" substance.

This then, is the root of the
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Trinitarian belief. This is how it made its way into the teachings of Christianity. From this beginning the doctrine of the Trinity has steadily and relentlessly insinuated itself into the beliefs of nearly all of Christendom so that today, there is scarcely a Christian group which is not infected with its poison in one way or another. Learned theologians refer to it as one of the “eternal verities” of the Christian faith. So powerfully has it permeated the thinking of men that a failure to accept it will result in a religious group being instantly labeled as a cult.

Yet, the truth is overwhelmingly plain to those who are willing to honestly examine the evidence. God help us to be true to our consciences. “All truth is safe and nothing else is safe.” May we be faithful to it, regardless of tradition and popular opinion.

APPENDIX

THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

HOW MANY GODS ARE THERE?

Mark 12:29,32,34

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: {32} And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: {34} And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

1 Corinthians 8:4

As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.

WHO IS THIS GOD?

1 Corinthians 8:6

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

John 17:3

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Revelation 21:22

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

1 Corinthians 11:3

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

Ephesians 4:6

One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

2 Corinthians 1:3

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

1 Cor 15:24-28

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (25) For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. (26) The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. (27) For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. (28) And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

2 Thessalonians 2:16

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JESUS AND GOD?

1 John 4:15

“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.”

1 John 2:22, 23

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

1 John 4:9,10

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

John 3:16

“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.”

1 John 5:5

“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”

John 8:42

“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.”

John 5:18

“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”

Prov. 30:4

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell?”

John 10:36

“Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?”

Mark 5:7

“And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.”

Prov 8:22-25

“The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth.”

Prov 8:30

“Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;”

WHO SITS ON THE THRONE OF THE UNIVERSE?

Matthew 5:34

But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for **it is God’s throne:**

Matthew 23:22

And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by **the throne of God**, and by him that sitteth thereon.

Revelation 4:2

And immediately I was in the spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and **one sat on the throne.**

Revelation 7:10

And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Hebrews 8:1

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of **the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;**

Hebrews 12:2

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of **the throne of God.**

Revelation 3:21

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with **my Father in his throne.**

JESUS' THRONE IS THE THRONE OF DAVID**Hebrews 1:8**

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Luke 1:32,33

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Acts 2:30

Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

JESUS HAS ALL POWER AND AUTHORITY BUT BY WHAT RIGHT**DOES HE POSSESS THIS?****Matthew 28:18**

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

John 5:26

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.

Col. 2:9

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

Col. 1:19

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.

1 Cor. 15:27,28

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

IT WAS AN "ANGEL" (MICHAEL) HAVING THE AUTHORITY TO USE GOD'S NAME, THAT LED ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS

Exo 23:20-23

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. {21} Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. {22} But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. {23} For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

Judges 2:1-4

And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. {2} And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? {3} Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. {4} And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

Exodus 3:2,6

And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not burnt.

(6)Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

Exodus 3:14,15

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Exodus 13:21

And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:

Exodus 14:19

And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went

behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

Isaiah 63:9

In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Acts 7:38

This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

WHERE IS THE THIRD PERSON?

2 John 1:3

Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

1 Timothy 5:21

I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Titus 1:4

To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Ephesians 1:2

Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:2

To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1. When we speak of a person's spirit, we mean the inward part of the person; the part of the person which is different from the body.

1 Corinthians 5:3-5

For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, {4} In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, {5} To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the

Lord Jesus.

Luke 23:46

And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father , into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

Acts 7:59

And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

Colossians 2:5

For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

Ecclesiastes 3:21

Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

Ecclesiastes 12:7

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Ezekiel 13:3

Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!

Matthew 26:41

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Luke 1:80

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.

2. God's Spirit is related to God in the same way as man's spirit is related to man.

1 Corinthians 2:11; (Rom. 8:16)

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

3. The Holy Spirit has an owner

Genesis 6:3

And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

Isaiah 61:1

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-

hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Acts 2:17

And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Matthew 10:20

For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

4. The Spirit has no independent will. The Spirit cannot come, or go, at will. The Spirit must be given, or taken by God, or Christ.

Luke 11:13

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

John 7:39

(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Psalms 51:11

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

John 15:26

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

Acts 2:33

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

5. The Spirit is the actual presence of the Father and the Son, in mind and power, but not in bodily form.

Psalms 139:7

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

Acts 20:28

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Luke 1:35

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

2 Corinthians 3:17

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

1 Corinthians 2:16

For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:16

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

Ephesians 3:16

That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Ephesians 3:17

That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

6. When Jesus says that God will send the Spirit, He explains what He means by saying, "I will come."

John 14:17-23

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 14:28

Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

7. Christ's divine power, when on earth, was the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:38

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

John 5:26

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 14:10

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Acts 2:22

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

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