

“ MONOTHEISM vs TRINITARIANISM ”

An Exercise in Mutual Contradiction?

Regarded as THE Most Essential Teaching from the Entire New Testament, Often THE Prime ‘Litmus Test’ for Inclusion into the Fellowship of Faith. At the Same Time, It’s One of the Most Unexplainable and Misunderstood Theological Constructs to Ever be Imposed upon the Church. The profound yet essential question, Was God actually made Flesh in Christ?

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If you were intending to enroll as a student or teacher at Wheaton College in Illinois, Azusa Pacific or Fuller Theological Seminary in southern California, each a prestigious institution in the Evangelical Community, or at many others like them, you would be required to sign a ‘statement of beliefs’ acknowledging that you firmly believe in the Trinity. A southeastern U.S. minister was not allowed air time on a religious radio station in his area, unless he would first agree to acknowledge and endorse the Trinitarian position, which he honestly could not. In most Protestant circles, a person often isn’t even extended a ‘right hand of fellowship’ without professing this essential doctrine. As the old hymn puts it, “*Holy, Holy, Holy, God in three persons: Blessed Trinity*”.

How many of us truly understand this fundamental doctrine? Of those who are quick to profess belief in the Trinity, how many really do? How many fully understand the doctrinal implications and the resulting positions they must accept under this theological discipline?

While most religious people today rest comfortably within the Trinitarian camp, at least nominally, it is the exceptional person who understands what he or she is actually ascribing to. The Trinitarian View is not simple and is not set forth by clear Scripture. It was the product of decades of contentious theological process, finally receiving formal declaration in the early fourth century. It took another full generation before it was generally accepted. Even then, there remained a wide divergence of opinion among the major proponents of the doctrinal statement then set forth. It didn’t end there. In the following centuries, the doctrine underwent further

re-definition, along different veins of thought. It is a doctrine having a wide array of opinions as to its actual intent and meaning. Setting the outer bounds of theological development is the unquestioned and underlying premise of Monotheism. It was long ago determined that Christianity was a Monotheistic religion. There is but one God! At the same time, it was blatantly obvious that holding the view of God as a single Being is not a viable position, considering the massive amount of scriptural references to there being more than one Person involved in the God-Head.¹ The Trinitarian View, as presented, was the result of recognizing the obvious while attempting to accommodate the requirements of the basic Monotheistic premise. It was the need to offer a viable explanation of how the Father and the Son (both Biblically derived personal terms), and the Holy Spirit are at all times simultaneously one and the same Being, in order to at least tacitly enter a claim of being Monotheistic.

Know What You Believe

What most unsuspecting churchgoers have failed to realize is how the underlying belief structure of these fundamental premises are to some degree mutually exclusive of one another. They are not sufficiently educated as to the dynamics of these positions to realize that when embracing one discipline, the believer must to a degree contradict the basic premise of the other. From the Monotheistic position, we must acknowledge that God is One Single Being. From a Trinitarian position, we recognize that God is more than one Person! In coming to understand this, one will see questions

¹ John 8:16-18 Christ saying: “...I am not alone...” for one!

emerge that inevitably are profoundly unanswerable. Thus we have clear admission by the religious establishment that the Trinity is an “*Unexplainable Mystery*”! They say, “*To those who don’t believe, no answer is possible: To those who do believe, no answer is necessary!*”² This avoids having to address the obvious logical contradictions rather conveniently, while subliminally discouraging the truth seeker from asking the obvious questions, by casting doubts upon his faith.

So we see a theological persuasion, that admittedly is biblically ‘mysterious’ and logically unexplainable being used as the ‘litmus test’ for acceptance into the fellowship of faith in many denominations. Add to this the fact that so many churchgoers are abysmally ignorant of the contrasting implications of Monotheistic / Trinitarian doctrines and we see a really curious situation. (In other words, many don’t really know or understand the doctrine they profess!) Are we comfortable with a “no answers” explanation? Shouldn’t we strive to operate on a higher plane of awareness? Shouldn’t we ask the important questions? Does our exclusion from the fellowship of faith of a certain segment of the Christian community ‘purify’ it, or does it leave it deficient of diversity of balanced input on these all-important matters? Let’s remember that prior to the Council of Nicea in the fourth century, such diversity was present in the church!

Anyone inclined toward a Trinitarian persuasion, needs to realize there are obligations imposed, there are defined theological limitations in place, that one must accept, in order to remain within its basic theological parameters. Being that it can have such profound interpersonal implications, understanding these should be our foremost personal obligation.

Considering Essential Questions

Simply put, how many individual Beings are there in the Godhead? We know we must say ‘There is but One God’, but then are compelled by considerable evidence to explain multiple persons and how they interact or inter-relate to each other. It was this express inter-relationship, when presented, that

² Bishop Sheen on TV in the 1950’s often used this dodge! I also heard this back then in a Conservative Baptist Church.

got Christ condemned to death and Steven stoned!³

For the Trinitarian debate to be as contentious as it was, more than two centuries after the Apostolic era, we can know that the question was regarded differently in the decades prior to the Council of Nicea in 325 AD. The early Church was not of one opinion on the matter from the beginning. It was not of a single opinion as late as the Council of Constantinople in 381 AD.

What many fail to consider in the debate regarding the validity of the Trinitarian View is the fact that it emerged during that era in the Christian Religion know as ‘the apostasy’! The apostasy was a result of external contaminants being brought into evolving Christian theology from the world around them. Some of these ‘issues’ were apparent in the Apostolic Era, and are found mentioned in the New Testament. These are most revealing, when taken into account for what they truly say!

The Early New Testament Church was originally regarded as a Sect of Judaism.⁴ But, we need to remain aware that the Jewish religion of the day had diverged considerably from the religion of the Old Testament. It is well known that Hellenistic philosophy had altered many fundamental beliefs. With the inclusion of Gentile (Greek) converts, the pressure to incorporate ‘elements’ of Hellenistic thought (*Gnosticism*) intensified greatly. Paul, James, Jude. Peter and John wrote against these encroaching concepts. In some places, rather expressly!

GOD in the FLESH

Of the many theological arguments that emerged in the late first century, none was more contentious and subliminally destructive than the concept we identify as ‘Docetism’. Though this doctrinal contaminant also helps shape the ‘dispensational view’, it is that input into the Trinitarian thought development that this article will consider.

To define the term ‘Docetism’ the Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry offers the following on

³ Allusion to the interaction between the two ‘Lords’ in Psalm 110:1&5 drew passionate rage from the religious Jews of His day: that one could sit next to the other! (Acts 7:56)

⁴ Acts 28:22, Matt. 16:12, Matt. 23 all, Mk. 12:38, etc.

their website: www.carm.org/heresy/docetism.htm

Docetism: an error with several variations concerning the nature of Christ. Generally, it taught that Jesus only appeared to have a body, that he was not really incarnate, (Greek, "dokeo" = "to seem"). This error developed out of the dualistic philosophy which viewed matter as inherently evil, that God could not be associated with matter, and that God, being perfect and infinite, could not suffer. Therefore, God as the word, could not have become flesh per [John 1:1,14](#), "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us..*" This denial of a true incarnation meant that Jesus did not truly suffer on the cross and that He did not rise from the dead.

The basic principle of Docetism was refuted by the Apostle John in [1 John 4:2-3](#). "*By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; ³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.*" Also, [2 John 7](#), "*For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.*"

Ignatius of Antioch (died 98/117) and Irenaeus (115-190), and Hippolatus (170-235) wrote against the error in the early part of the second century.

Docetism was condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

Now do we recognize what we have here? Though this 'error' was refuted and condemned, yet a basic component of that philosophy had been retained and was incorporated in the development of later-accepted concepts regarding what we today refer to as 'the Nature of God'.

It was the existence of a person, appearing to be flesh, on a par with God, that upset the Jews of the late first century. Not only that, but also the suggestion that God was any more than One individual Being. To the strict Monotheist, such was not a possibility. No less so with some converts from Hellenism. Where early Christianity conceptually allowed a 'second person', some still had problems with the idea of that second person being both physical, yet Divine. Here the Docetist would have fits, as would the Jew, but for different reasons!

Docetism arose out of a fundamental premise of Gnosticism, that matter embodies evil, but spirit embodies good. Upon that base, it became unacceptable to consider that the Savior could have existed in the physical dimension. The very thing that the Apostle John expressly set forth in his epistle, John 1:1&14, and the backlash to that, as he re-addresses in 1st John 4:2-3.

It was from this limited theological climate that the Trinitarian view began to take shape. Each of the personal roles revealed, of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were conceived to be non-material. Further, each was defined as being **one** and the same Being, manifest in any of three *hypostases*,⁵ to hold to the limitation of monotheistic definition. This provided some accommodation to the obvious that more than one 'person' exists, while attempting to remain at least tacitly monotheistic.

What few acknowledge, even if they noticed, is that the enormously dangerous doctrinal problem, **refuted** by John, remains a major component of Trinitarian theology. The question of whether or not Jesus Christ was truly born of and composed of flesh is denied, though not openly! Docetism left its imprint! That aversion of a Divine One existing in the material dimension, originating within Gnostic philosophy, was accommodated, at the expense of clear Biblical affirmation. To allow that one of the three 'persons' in the Trinitarian Godhead existed for some 34¼ years, (From His conception to His death) in the physical dimension, (in the flesh), completely disallows and destroys the Trinitarian construct!

If one of their 'three persons' was truly composed of flesh, then that one could not have been a '*hypostasis*', and thus their theory becomes profoundly untenable!

Let's keep in mind also that the Apostle John identified a major false teaching 'that Jesus Christ was not truly manifest in the flesh as being the doctrine

⁵ An un-translated Greek word, found in five places in the NT, but translated '**person**' only in Hebrews 1:3. Few notice that this verse, after using the word '*hypostasis*' then goes on to provide the actual definition immediately thereafter!: "*Upholding all things*". This one mis-translation was then built-upon, providing basis for a Trinitarian explanation. My article, "*The Hypostasis Hoax*" addresses this error in detail.

of antichrist!⁶ More is at stake than just the Trinitarian definition. IF He wasn't fully physical, he couldn't really have bled out and died, and thus could not have been our Savior! Our Paschal Sacrifice slain! It is amazing what great extremes theologians will resort to, in order to preserve their cherished theory. If He was flesh, then He wasn't one and the same Being as the Father, and couldn't have been one of a tri-part '*hypostasis*' manifestation as some allege, when attempting to stand under their 'essential doctrine', as they've long conceived it.

To accept the Trinitarian definition, one must at least tacitly allege that Jesus Christ was **not** come in the flesh. To accept that He was flesh, then the Trinitarian view is demolished, in that one of their three Beings was unique! God was manifest in the physical dimension! God, for a time, living in, of and by physical material, yet without losing His Divinity.⁷ A God Being that **could** actually die! But, in allowing the possibility that the Father and the Son are two distinct and separate Beings, we violate the dictates of the monotheistic definition! Here's where the two: Trinitarianism and Monotheism are 'mutually contradictory'. As soon as we allow the idea that the Father and Son are **two** separate individual Beings, we must re-define the term 'monotheism'. Monotheism is supposed to mean "One God". Some take it to mean One Being!

Trinitarians have a problem bigger than most realize. It is this complication that prompted the earlier comment, "How many fully understand the doctrinal implications and the resulting positions they must accept under this theological discipline?" Can we then understand why Bishop Sheen and other apologists are quick to seek refuge behind that old dodge, "*To those who don't believe, no answer is possible: To those who do believe, no answer is necessary!*" It is a matter of *faith*, not a matter of fact! At least, the Bishop understood!

A most interesting passage is that very one that is used in support of the '*hypostasis*' explanation.

⁶ 1st John 4:3, 2nd John 7 See also my article on "*The DOCTRINE of Antichrist*".

⁷ Surrendering His *GLORY*, yes, as John 17:5 so clearly reveals. Divinity is a result of ones righteous nature, not a result of ones composition! That's how angels, fallen and true, are not divine, though living of spirit.

They extract and apply an untranslated word, inferring a definition to it not consistent with the other four places it's used, *and* without taking note of what the passage that contains it is actually saying!

Upholding All Things

The passage is in the first verses of the Book of Hebrews, (God's inspired reproof against Jewish religion). 1:1 "**God**, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his **Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his **person**, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:" What God first determined that these Hebrew people needed to know, and get straight in their theology, was the fact of there being more than One Being in the Godhead. Their Strict Monotheism disallows that! We have Him affirming God, (the Father) and then a *second* communicator, His Son! (His personal affirmation of that fact is what got Him crucified! (Mk. 14:62))

But it's the body of this passage that's most revealing. There are so many ways that reveal the duality of persons in this phraseology, that even we are without excuse. (And, remember, this is the key passage that is represented as giving so much basis to the Trinitarian concept.)

"*God...Has...spoken unto us by his Son,*" Here, God is identified as speaking to mankind thru intermediaries. In former times, thru His prophets, but presently, thru another intermediary, identified as His Son! Dual persons are clearly evident, and those two being not now of the same generation. In His choice of words, we are introduced to the concept of a multi-generational Family of Beings. Do we believe Christ when he said, "*I am not alone...*"? (John **8:16**, & 5:30-39, & 6:44,)

"*whom he hath appointed heir of all things,* " Again, One Being appointed the other to an inheritance he hadn't previously possessed, otherwise this statement wouldn't have been necessary. But, it's one conveying something to the other, AND after the accomplishment of some objective.

“by whom also he made the worlds;” Here also a controversial revelation: That One Being worked thru another in the accomplishment of physical creation. The CREATOR was not the Father, at least not directly. This second Being was the instrument in Creation. Paul affirms the same where he says that the Being that led Israel out of Egypt and thru the wilderness, “...**that Rock was Christ.**” (1st Cor. 10:4) One made the worlds thru another. Here again affirming more than One Being! Without His involvement, nothing was made. (John 1:3)

“Who being the brightness of his glory,” One is equally brilliant in His Glorified state. One is fully and gloriously equal to the other.

“and the express image of his **person**, (*hypostasis*)” One, if we could see thru the brilliance, is a perfect visible image-match to the other.

“upholding all things by the word of his power,” Even to the point of sustaining the existence the universe of matter. One does so using the power of the word of the other.

“when he had **by himself** purged our sins,” Here we have evidence of something accomplished by one of these two Beings **alone!** The Father didn’t die for our sins! We know who did! The Father couldn’t have, as He never became flesh, thus was incapable of death. (Heb. 2:9-10) *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* (We’ll leave the astounding revelation of “bringing **many sons unto glory**” aside for the present!)

Two things to Think About

We have two considerations in this point. **1.)** The Father could not have **died**. He is and always was Spirit. But the Son left His former Glorified Spirit state in order to become capable of experiencing death. (John 17:5) **2.)** If there were not two Beings, and the only one there was truly were to die, what conscious power would remain to have **sustained** the universe for that three day interval?

This passage tells us quite a lot, but the capstone is the phrase that says, “He...**sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:**” This is that quote from Psalms 110 that got Christ crucified and Stephen stoned. A linguistic construct that post-exilic Jews couldn’t emend, though they did emend 134 other places.⁸ It is worded in such a way in verse 1 and counter-worded again in verse 5, such that the Jews were stymied. It infuriated them! It shows Yahweh talking to Adonai, but in verse 5 we see that the seated Adonai is now also a Yahweh!! (These ‘emenders’ had the choice of two Yahweh’s (YHVH) or two Adonai’s, depending how they chose to ‘emend’ their texts!) This one locks up the affirmation that there are two Beings. One in Psalm 110 is seen as talking directly to the other! In this passage in Hebrews, one is seen seated next to the other! There’s no way we can use Hebrews 1 to represent there being less than TWO Beings!

Yet, it is from this passage that Trinitarian theologians extract and isolate one Greek word from its definition to suggest that these two (or even three) are One and the same person, merely ‘hypostasis manifestations’ of that One, in different contexts!

Yet, we see the definition of that word represented right there in the text: “*Hypostasis*” means, one who upholds the other! Paul used the word, as he did in four other places, and immediately clarified what he meant by repeating what he was saying using other words. Who recognizes that? *Stasis* means ‘stand’. *Hypo* means ‘under’. We see one standing in support of the other. One stands behind or stands under (upholding) the other. It takes an inter-position of two things to make the use of the word ‘*hypo-stasis*’ appropriate!

The very passage that contains the word Trinitarians want to use, it turns out, contains the most potent refutation of their premise! There are two separate Beings here. The fact is driven home over and over. Seven successive phrases all allude to the existence of two related Beings, compared to or contrasted with one another, and then the final (eighth) sets a cap-stone in saying: One sits at the right hand of the other, in position of subordina-

⁸ Request my article “*The 134 Emendations of the Sopherim*” Jewish theologians in the 200’s BC changed their original texts to remove evidence of this dual-person Godhead!

tion, just as Psalm 110 states, and as is referred to no less than twenty times in the New Testament!

For a statement to get that kind of ‘press’ in the New Testament, it must be really important!

But, the essential question we need to settle in our minds is whether the Father and the Son are two *separate* Beings, with separate consciousnesses, separate personalities and separate existence. We need to clarify whether “One God” means one person numerically, or one collaborative existence. Is “One” a numerical term, or a collective unity?

(As to the separate personalities issue, “New Testament” antinomians are quick to accuse the God of the Old Testament as being *harsh* and *vindictive*, while they assign the God of the New as being kind and merciful. But, how can One single Being (as they on the other hand profess) have two vastly distinct personalities? The amusing wrinkle is, that the “*they*”, as the New Testament affirms, are actually one and the **same** Being! I’m not saying that the Father (the God of the Old Testament) is the same Being as the Son (the God of the New), but rather, that it was the same ‘person’ in BOTH Old and New! The “Creator” (John 1:4) and “*That Rock that followed them...*” in the wilderness, who gave the Ten Commandments, “... *that Rock was Christ*”! (1st Cor.10:4), not the Being we know now as the Father. The Father was an unknown entity in Old Testament times! ⁹ The *YHWH* of the Old Testament was the one who later became Jesus Christ.)

Framers of the Trinitarian Doctrine had several seemingly insurmountable issues to satisfy. First, the Judaic persuasion that God is a single Being. Secondly, the Gnostic prohibition that God could not exist in and of vile ‘physical matter’. Third, a definition of ‘monotheism’ that excluded a “God-head” comprised of more than one Being. Out of this ‘wonderful mix’, fourth century theologians, under considerable political ‘inspiration’ no doubt, put together a conceptual construct that forever confounded and confused their successors.

In the process, they were compelled to redefine the term ‘monotheism’ to allow three distinct person-

⁹ John 5:37 See Part 4 of “*The Hypostasis Hoax*” for more thoughts on this identification.

alities as being the simultaneous manifestation of a lone entity.

We have, as a result, a definition that *excludes* the Truth! No matter how clear and how explicit, unsuspecting worshippers are, by their pre-installed conception, compelled to read **out** of the scriptures what they actually state! When scripture reveals the Father and the Son as being **separate** Beings, the ‘*reject*’ mechanism kicks-in! We make it so hard for ourselves, on account of the limitations imposed by a man-made discipline!

What Does God Want us to Think?

Perhaps if the scriptures were vague, we might be able to justify creating such an explanation as to who and what God is. But, they’re **not** vague! We have mounds of evidence. The problem has been the monotheistic conception, processed through the strict monotheistic Jewish theology of the post-exilic era and then reprocessed again by Gnostic Docetism of the early AD’s.

I am NOT Alone ¹⁰

In John 8:16 is one of those rarely quoted passages, that we can count on to be rejected by both the Unitarian (Strict Monotheistic) and Trinitarian (God in three persons) persuasions. Here Christ Himself, at great personal risk, revealed His Being. It was a confrontational situation with the Pharisees in which they were accusing Him of speaking falsehood. (v.12) In reply, He said: “*You judge after the flesh, but I don’t judge as man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.*” He then goes on to make it perfectly clear what He was referring to, in His not being alone, “*It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me bears witness of me.*” Now, this is profound in more than one way. First, He states specifically that the Father is a distinct and separate witness than He Himself. (The passage He refers to is found in Deuteronomy 17:6. That passage says, *two or three witnesses!* If there were three persons in the Godhead, here would have been a perfect opportunity to say so! But, He said *two!*)

¹⁰ He repeated this again in John 16:32

What is important here is that IF He wasn't being accurate, He was playing into the hands of His accusers, and was as they said: a false witness, in that He had no corroborator! Rejecting His affirmation, that He and the Father were two separate sources of witness, would make Him a liar, AND further establishing the matter, by mis-representing His personal existence! Our question is, Do we believe what He said, or do we reject the fact that He is not alone?

My Father is Greater than I

If that weren't enough, we have frequent and pointed mention, by Christ Himself, that the Father sent Him, (see above) and that the Father was the **greater** of the two!

Sitting at the Father's Right Hand

A most awkward moment occurred when, at the end of Christ's trial before the Sanhedrin, the High Priest demanded to know who Christ professed to be. Prior to this, He had not answered the accusers, but as the trial was going rather badly for the prosecution, (Mt.26:60) a key question was put to Him, the answer to which negated all that night's testimony. He answered with that incendiary quote from Psalm 110, "*You have said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power,*" (Matt. 26:63-64) Now, this is provocative in two ways: First, that one Being could sit next to the other (as we saw in Hebrews 1:3) AND, the claim of being the Son of Man, identified in Daniel 7:13. More will be said about these two momentarily.

David Understood

King David, in the Psalms, as Christ Himself ¹¹ affirmed, was inspired of God to write Psalm 110. The significance of this passage is further elaborated upon in the two articles: *Who IS the Ancient of Days?*, and *The Hypostasis Hoax*. David wrote a passage that clearly reveals, not only one Being speaking to another Being, but that BOTH of those Beings are called Yahweh! There are two equal Beings, (except during the incarnation, during which interval, one of the two was known as the Son of Man) both referred to by the same name!

¹¹ Mark 12:36, Matt. 22:43-46, Luke 20:42-44

We see it also in the name, 'the Ancient of Days'! (Read Daniel 7:9, 13 & 22 carefully. The one who was *brought before* the Ancient of Days is then later referred to as the Ancient of Days Himself!)

Daniel Understood

Five hundred years after David, Daniel wrote of the re-investiture to Glory of the second Being, who left His Glorified state to become the Christ, as He prayed for ¹² in the Garden that Passover evening. Sunday following the resurrection was Wave Sheaf Day. Daniel 7:13 shows our Wave Sheaf being presented. (The first fruits of them that slept!) ¹³ Psalm 110:1 shows what was said at that occasion. Christ in his quote to the High Priest, quoted this and Psalm 110:1 together. Do we discern the significance? Both these passages demand the existence of two distinct and separate Beings. One (inferior for a time) is brought up and presented by the heavenly court before the Father. (Dan.7:13) He is there accepted, and given place at His (the Father's) right hand. (Ps.110:1 & 5)

Different in Knowledge

To further illustrate the existence of two Beings, we see one having time-determination power that the other doesn't possess, and that the other DOES NOT KNOW what was decided! It's the Father's exclusive and personal prerogative to set the timing of fulfillment of prophetic events! "*It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father has put in His own power.*" (Ac.1:7) "*But of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only*". (Mt. 24:36)

Different in Responsibilities

Though the timing of the prophetic fulfillments is the Father's domain, 'judgment' is another matter entirely. "*For the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son:*" (John 5:22) Here, another essential process in the Plan of God is designated as being the exclusive domain of one Being, not the other. This time the Son!

Different Reigns

Not only two distinct and different areas of know-

¹² John 17:5

¹³ 1st Cor. 15:20 & 23, Jas. 1:18, Rev. 14:4

ledge and responsibilities, but also two very different Monarchical Reigns! A most revealing scripture is found in Rev. 3:21, where God says, *“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.”* The Son will assume the throne of his earthly ‘father’ David (Lk. 1:32)¹⁴ If that isn’t enough, we see that after the Great White Throne judgment, and after the final sentencing of the second death, the Son yields His Throne to the Father, as the next paragraph shows!

One Subordinate to the Other

To further illustrate the distinct and separate Thrones, consider 1st Corinthians 15:27-28. *“For he has put all things under his feet. But when he says 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 that put all things under him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”* With His mission accomplished, the Son will then surrender His throne to the Father (Who gave Him all power in heaven and Earth¹⁵) Clearly, the picture presented is of two separate Beings, one empowering the other’s Reign, and then later, the empowered one surrendering His Reign into the greater Reign of the Father, the LORD God: Yahweh Elohim!

The Shema

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to a correct perception has historically been what is known as the ‘*Shema*’, found in Deuteronomy 6:4. A passage as much the *result* of man’s mis-perceptions as its cause. The sentence as rendered is, *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.”* From the original Hebrew, we have this sentence which reflects the strict monotheistic view, that the God of Israel is but a single Being. What they rendered this translation from is basically four words: *“Yahweh, Elohim, Yahweh, only.”* The statement you read in Deuteronomy was configured from just

¹⁴ *“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.”* This and also Psalms 132:11, Isaiah 9:6-7, Jeremiah 23:5

¹⁵ Matt. 28:18, Rev. 11:17

these four words in the original Hebrew. What we could understand this to be indicating, if we were to step away from a strict monotheistic interpretation, is that ‘*Yahweh, only Yahweh is Elohim*’. In other words, revealing to Israel that there are two Yahweh’s which comprise the Elohim. The way they’ve translated it attempts to say, ‘*Elohim (plural) is One Yahweh*’! That’s logically out of order!

A similar announcement is contained in Hebrew Scripture in one other place. Let’s see how that one is translated.

On Mount Sinai, Moses asked to see God (that Being who was speaking to him). The account is recorded in Exodus 34. The Being who gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, *“...spoke unto Moses face to face, as a man speaks unto his friend.”* (Ex. 33:11) But Moses asked to see Him in His Glorified form. In verse 18, Moses asks, *“I beseech thee, show me thy glory.”* Yahweh agreed. *“And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD (YHWH) before you...”* So, along with this self-exposé, letting Moses see ‘His goodness’, He is to proclaim God’s NAME! v.20 *“And he said, you can not see my face: for there shall no man see me (in full glory) and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and you shall stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passes by, that I will put in the clift of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.”* In 34:5 we read, *“And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.”* And that name was: *“The LORD, The LORD: God,...”* Here, a similar expression is translated differently. (If the other translation is the only way it can be worded, why is it so different here?) *“Yahweh, Yahweh, Elohim.”* Two Yahweh’s: one Elohim! (Where you see LORD in the Old Testament, with all letters capitalized, it indicates that the original Hebrew word was YHWH, Yahweh) Rather than saying the LORD God is a single Being, this indicates that there are two Yahweh’s in the Elohim. That’s why Yahweh is singular and Elohim is plural. Either Yahweh is one of the Elohim.

The Church taught that Yahweh was the personal name of the Christ, and Elohim was the personal name of the Father. (Close but no cigar.) But many found scriptures referring to the Father as Yahweh. (Ps.110 for one) In fact, there are two Beings, both named *Yahweh Elohim* as we can detect from Psalm 110:1&5. Christ Himself specifically reminded the Jews of this passage, in Matthew 22:41-45, which they refused to answer **and** thereafter were too afraid to ask any more questions!

One of the primary purposes for doing this exposé with Moses was to **‘proclaim the name of the LORD’!** Why would the LORD have three names, with two of those names the **same**? In this, God was revealing that there are two Co-Equal Beings in the Godhead, having the same name. (Both are also known, according to Daniel 7’s wording, as ‘the Ancient of Days’!) From this, one can discern why strict monotheists would render the translation of their ‘*Shema*’ to conceal this plain evidence that there is more than one single Being.

What’s a Binitarian?

The Church of God is often accused of being ‘Binitarian’. Those who recognize God’s Spirit, not as a ‘third person’ of a triune Godhead but the *essence* or agency in which God **exists** and by which He projects His Power, His Will, and by which He can project into us His Mentality, are regarded as **bi**.nitarian, as opposed to being **tri**.nitarian. What most don’t recognize is that Binitarian logic is only slightly improved from Trinitarian logic. The fundamental construct needs to change. It isn’t that these **two** Beings are ‘hypostasis’ manifestations of a single Being, (perpetuating the same idea, but with two instead of three. In other words, just a numerical scale-back of ‘accepted’ opinion.) There is a substantial difference between Biblical Truth and accepted theological perception. There actually are two distinct and separate Beings in the Godhead, as we’ve seen much evidence of above.

Now, some would label this idea ‘**polytheism**’, as it’s incompatible with the preferred definition of ‘monotheism’ as it’s come to be understood. Now, Trinitarianism is not labeled polytheism, only by a catwhisker of theological nuance. But it just as well could be, depending on how the apologist explains himself. But theological definition aside,

how does each worshipper in Trinitarian congregations understand the matter? Are their perceptions fully in perfect accord with Trinitarian doctrine? I’ll bet not!

What Are We to Think?

Now, if God wanted us to conceive of Him strictly as a **single** Being, why would He go to such great lengths to seemingly reveal otherwise? We have a picture of the Father engendering a Son, then that Son being born of a particular human lineage, exactly in accordance with ancient prophecies. This scenario intentionally showing that Son diverging from God’s Spirit-Existence. Then personal claims of Divinity,¹⁶ affirmations of personal inter-actions with patriarchs of old,¹⁷ claims of inspiration of Davidic writings¹⁸ which show one Being speaking to another Being, and one being enthroned **beside** the other! If a triune manifestation of one single Being was God’s ultimate intent that we believe, why do and say all these amazing things?

We have one Being subordinate to the other; One Being strictly representing the words and decisions of the other; One Being controlling fulfillment of prophecy without the other’s awareness, with the other making all judgments relative to matters of salvation (He having paid the penalty, after all, where the other Being didn’t, and remaining in Spirit form, couldn’t have!) We have one Being reigning on Earth while the other remains in Heaven for at least a thousand years, then the other leaving Heaven to come to Earth and being given ultimate sovereign control of the Throne of that reigning Being, incorporating it into His own!¹⁹

What we need to clarify in our own minds is whether we regard the theological definitions of men or God’s inspired Word as the authoritative source of our beliefs. It doesn’t really matter what men think. If their ideas aren’t true, they aren’t true! We need to allow that **TWO** Beings can and do comprise the Godhead. Nothing, in the face of what is written, is more logical or substantial, even if doesn’t meet some people’s restricted definition of ‘monotheism’! What is it we’re afraid of? **Ω**

¹⁶ the glory which I had before the world was... John 17:5

¹⁷ Having seen Abraham’s day: John 8:58

¹⁸ David in the spirit wrote... Matthew 22:43

¹⁹ as the Father gave me commandment... John 14:31