

JESUS – ETERNALLY GOD

Many Christians in the contemporary church believe that Jesus is the eternal Son of God – that He has been God’s Son throughout eternity. This is incorrect however, for eternity is timeless; it has no beginning and no end. Jesus, as man and as the Son of God, did have a beginning. He was brought into being; begotten of God (CP Gen 49:10; Nu 24:17; Psa 2:7; Isa 7:14; 9:6-7; 11:1-5; Mt 1:18-25; Lu 1:26-35; 2:8-11; Jn 1:1-2, 14; Ga 4:4; Php 2:5-8; He 1:5-6; 5:5). These scriptures all prove that the one we now know as Jesus came into being as God’s Son at a particular time in history, and therefore He is not the eternal Son of God. He became God’s Son at His incarnation – when He took on human form. The name *Immanuel* by which Jesus was to be known according to Isa 7:14, means “God with us”. This confirms the deity of Jesus; that He always existed as God. Before He took on human form at His incarnation Jesus had no beginning. He was not begotten; He did not come into being; He was not the Son of God – He was God and scriptures throughout teach this (CP Nu 21:4-9; with 1 Cor 10:9).

We learn in 1Cor 10:9 that God who sent the fiery serpents among the Israelites in Nu 21:4-9 was Jesus. It was Jesus the Israelites murmured against in the wilderness (CP Psa 45:6-7 with He 1:8-12). We see here two distinct and separate persons, both called God – God the Father, and God the Son. The Father calls the Son God, and declares His eternal sovereignty. In He 1:10 we see that in His pre-incarnate state the Son carried out the work of creation (CP Gen 1:1-31 with Psa 90:2; 102:25-27; Jn 1:1-3, 10; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16-17; He 1:1-2; 11:3; Rev 3:14). Rev 3:14 does not mean as some teach that Jesus was the first person God created. It means that He *begun* all creation. As Jn 1:3 teaches, Jesus created everything there is. Nothing exists that He did not make. Jesus was also *the King, the Lord of Hosts* whose glory Isaiah saw in the Old Testament (CP Isa 6:1-12 with Jn 12:37-41). In Isa 6:1, 8 and 11, Jesus is called *Adonay* which means ruler, master, and in V3, 5 and 12, He is called *Jehovah* or *Yahweh*, denoting God in the Old Testament. All these names belong to the one person in these passages, and as it was Jesus’ glory John said Isaiah saw, then they belong to the pre-incarnate Jesus (CP Isa 52:12; Zech 13:7; Jn 1:1-2; Ac 20:28; Ro 9:5).

While Isa 52 pictures the end times and Christ as the suffering servant it also refers to the Israelites’ deliverance from captivity in Babylon during Old Testament times (CP Isa 52:1-15 with Zech 2:6-9). In its Old Testament setting Isa 52:12 refers to the pre-incarnate Jesus as God – *the Lord* – who will lead the way for the Israelites out of their Babylonian captivity, while the *God of Israel* – also Jehovah – will bring up the rear. The eternal pre-existence of Jesus as God is further highlighted in the Old Testament by Micah (CP Mic 5:2). The last defining scripture concerning the eternal pre-existence of Jesus as God in the Old Testament is Zech 13:7 (CP Zech 13:7). Here God – *the Lord of Hosts* – calls the pre-incarnate Jesus, *my Fellow*, which means “another fellow of the same kind and nature; fellow God”. Jesus quoted Zech 13:7 in part on the night of His arrest (CP Mt 26:31).

Jesus is also seen in His pre-incarnate state many times in the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord. In most of the Old Testament scriptures the Angel of (from) the Lord (Jehovah) is regarded as deity, yet is distinguished from Jehovah. The Angel of Jehovah is one person in the Godhead, and Jehovah who sent Him, is another. As the Angel of the Lord, the pre-incarnate Jesus spoke to Hagar – Sarah’s handmaid – after Sarah at first dismissed her, and then cast her out altogether (CP Gen 16:7-13; 21:9-10, 14-18). He wrestled with Jacob (CP Gen 32:24-30 with Hos 12:2-5). He spoke to Moses out of the burning bush (CP Ex 3:1-14 with Lu 20:37; Ac 7:30-38). He was the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night that guided the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan (CP Ex 3:1-14 with 14:19-20, 24). He stood in the way of Balaam and made his donkey speak (CP Nu 22:22-35, 38). He was the Captain of the Host of the Lord who instructed Joshua how to destroy Jericho (CP Josh 5:13-6:5). He told Gideon how He would use him to free the Israelites from the Midianites who had kept them in servitude for seven years (CP Judg 6:11-24). He was the fourth man king Nebuchadnezzar saw walking through the flames in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (CP Dan 3:8-28). Jesus was also the rider of the red horse standing among the myrtle trees who spoke to Zechariah near the close of the Old Testament (CP Zech 1:7-17).

In all those scriptures the Angel of the Lord (Jehovah) is regarded as deity, yet is distinguished from Jehovah, which proves He was an equal member of the Godhead. Other scriptures referring to the pre-incarnate Jesus as the Angel of the Lord are Gen 22:11-18; 24:7, 40; 31:11; 48:16; Ex 23:20-23; 32:34; 33:2; Nu 20:16; Judg 2:1-4; 13:3-6, 9, 13-21; 1Ki 19:5-7; 2Ki 1:3, 15; 1Chr 21:15-17; Psa 34:7; 35:5-6; Ecc 5:6; Isa 37:36 with 2Ki 19:25 and 2Chr 32:21; Isa 63:7-9; Dan 6:22; Zech 3:1-10; 12:1-8. Bible scholars generally agree that those scriptures all refer to the pre-incarnate Jesus as the Angel of the Lord. In all other places in scripture where the Angel of the Lord is found, the term refers to ordinary angels. The pre-incarnate Jesus as the Angel of the Lord, also visited Daniel and spoke to him (CP Dan 10:5-6). Many Christians believe that this was the angel Gabriel, but that is not correct, as we will soon see (CP Dan 7:9 with Rev 1:12-15). The man referred to in all these scriptures is the same person – the pre-incarnate Jesus. His clothing was fine linen; His loins were girded with a golden girdle; His hair was like pure wool; His eyes were like lamps of fire; His arms and feet like polished brass, and His voice was like a multitude – the sound of many waters. Gabriel did not speak to Daniel in Dan 10 until V10 (CP V10-14). Clearly scriptures do not teach that Christ was the eternal Son of God, rather, they clearly teach that Christ was eternally God – an equal member of the Godhead from all eternity. We will look at the Godhead a little later.

There are also many scriptures attesting to the eternal pre-existence of Jesus as God in the New Testament (CP Jn 1:1-2). This is further proof that God and Jesus are two distinct and separate personalities who have existed as co-equals from all eternity (CP Jn 3:13). Jesus teaches here that heaven was always His home. He came down to earth from heaven at His incarnation, and went up again at His ascension (CP Jn 8:56-58).

Jesus declares His deity here. He existed before Abraham. That Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus' day means that he saw Jesus in the flesh (CP Gen 18:1-8, 16-20; 19:24). *The Lord* here is Jesus. In Gen 19:24 both He and the Lord in heaven are Jehovah. One Jehovah on earth (Jesus), rained down fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah from the other Jehovah in heaven (CP Jn 17:5). Here Jesus refers to His pre-incarnate glory which He shared with Jehovah as an equal member of the Godhead throughout eternity (CP Ac 20:28). Here is unassailable proof of Jesus' deity. Jesus as the pre-existent equal member of the Godhead shed His blood for the church (CP Ro 9:5). This is yet another proof of the deity of Jesus. This teaches that He is God over all; forever praised (CP Php 2:5-8). Christ had equal status with God from all eternity, but when He entered the human race at His incarnation He surrendered all the privileges of deity – *He made Himself of no reputation* (CP Col 2:8-9). This is further confirmation of Christ's deity: the full content of the divine nature lives in His bodily form (CP 1Ti 3:16).

This teaches that the previously unknown truth about Jesus is now revealed – He is God. He appeared in human form (CP Ga 4:4); was vindicated by the Holy Spirit (CP Ro 1:1-4); was seen by angels (CP Eph 3:9-10); was preached among the Gentiles (CP Eph 3:1-6); was believed on in the world (CP Eph 2:13-18), and was taken up to glory (CP Ac 2:29-36). In Tit 2 Paul declares Jesus to be the Christian's *great God and Saviour* who sacrificed Himself in order to set them free from all wickedness and purify a people so that they could be His very own (CP Tit 2:13-14). Another scripture clearly defining the deity of Christ is 2Pe 1:1 (CP 2Pe 1:1 (not KJV or NKJV)). The correct rendering of this verse is found in most other versions of the Bible (CP 1Jn 1:1-2). *That which was from the beginning* in VI refers to the eternal pre-existence of Jesus as God together with the Father. This is irrefutable evidence by one who heard, who saw, and who touched Jesus in His incarnate state (CP 1Jn 3:16). Here John testifies to the deity of Jesus as God who laid down His life for the church (CP Rev 1:8) *Alpha* and *Omega* also means the first and the last (CP V11, 17-18; 2:8; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13). *Alpha* signifies that Jesus is the one who brought all things into existence, and *Omega* signifies that Jesus is also the one who will bring all things to their predetermined end (CP Ps 102:25-27; Isa 51:6; He 1:10-12; 2Pe 3:10-13). The fact that the expression *Alpha* and *Omega* is applied to Christ is enough proof of His deity and equality with the Father.

Yet there are still many professing Christians in the contemporary church who deny Christ's deity and vigorously teach against Him, which bring us now to the doctrine of *the Trinity*. This is a core truth of the Christian faith, and is central to an understanding of biblical revelation and the message of the gospel. It teaches that there are three distinct and separate coequal members of the Godhead of Christianity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Although the word *Trinity* is not found in scripture, it is not crucial to

sound Christian doctrine that the word defining it is not scriptural. What is crucial is that the doctrine itself stresses its authority in scripture. The doctrine of the Trinity does this perfectly. In fact the New Testament church was founded on this teaching (CP Ac 2:32-33; 1Pe 1:2).

The doctrine of the Trinity is not a new revelation found only in the New Testament. It is a progressive revelation which underlies the whole teaching of scripture from the very first verse in the Bible (CP Gen 1:1). We referred to this verse earlier in this study to prove the deity of Jesus, but it also proves the deity of the Holy Spirit and His co-equality with the Father and the Son in the Godhead. The very first verse in the Bible indicates that a plurality of persons exist in the Godhead because *God* is the Hebrew work **Elohim**, a plural noun. Its significance becomes more evident as we read further (CP V26; 3:22; 11:6-7; Isa 6:8). These all stress a plurality of persons in the Godhead (CP Also Jn 14:23) **Elohim** is used over two thousand, seven hundred times in the Old Testament, proving that many times there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead (CP Mk 1:9-11; Lu 3:21-22, Jn 1:29-34). Here we see clearly represented for the first time in scripture the three distinct and separate co-equal members of the Godhead. God the Father is represented by the voice from heaven, God the Son is Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit is represented by the Dove. Although there are three distinct and separate personalities in the Godhead (CP 1Cor 12:4-6; 2Cor 13:14; Eph 2:17-18; 4:4-6; 2Th 2:13-14), they all function as one (CP 1Jn 5:6-7). *One* here means one in unity, not in number (CP Jn 17:5, 21-24). This oneness, while clearly emphasizing the plurality of persons in the Godhead, is plainly expressed in the Baptismal formula Jesus gave to the church before being taken up to heaven (CP Mt 28:19). *Name* here is singular, proving the oneness in unity of all three members of the Godhead it includes, even though each one individually is God. The Father is God (CP Ro 1:7; 1Cor 8:6). The Son is God (CP Isa 7:14 and 9:6 with Mt 1:23; Jn 1:1-2; 10:30; 20:26-28; 1Cor 15:45-47; Php 2:5-8; 1Ti 3:16; Tit 2:13; He 1:8; 1Jn 5:20). The Holy Spirit is God (CP Isa 6:8-11 with Ac 28:25-28; Ac 5:3-4; 1Cor 2:10-12; 3:16; 2Cor 3:17-18; He 9:14). Clearly those scriptures all establish the validity of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Lesser known as a co-equal member of the Godhead from all eternity is the Holy Spirit. His works are not as visibly prominent in scripture as that of Jesus and the Father, and therefore He is the least understood member of the Godhead by Christians. It is vitally important though that we be very clear in our mind of His deity and co-equality with both Jesus and the Father in the Godhead. In New Testament teaching the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus (CP Jn 14:15-18; 16:7-15). Nevertheless He is still God, as scriptures clearly teach. He also had a role in creation with Jesus and the Father (CP Gen 1:1-2; Ps 90:2; 102:25-27; Jn 1:1-3, 10; Eph 3:9; Col 1:16-17; He 1:1-2, 8-12; 11:3; Rev 3:14; 4:11). The three-in-one Godhead is plainly evident in all those scriptures: creation is from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. Salvation also portrays the work of the Trinity: the Father sent the Son to accomplish His redemptive plan, and the Father and the Son sent the

Holy Spirit to convict sinners of their need of redemption (CP Jn 14:15-18, 26; 15:26-27; 16:5, 7-11, 13-15). The gifts of the spirit and administrations of the church also portray the work of the Trinity (CP 1Cor 12:1-6). Other scriptures proving the deity of the Holy Spirit and His co-equality with both the Father and the Son in the Godhead are as follows (CP Isa 11:1-5; 42:1-7; 48:16-17; 59:20-21; 61:1-2; 63:1-14; 1Cor 6:11).

We need now to look at some scriptures used by those who reject the doctrine of the Trinity and deny the deity of both Jesus and the Holy Spirit (CP De 6:4; Isa 44:6-8; 45:21-22; Hos 13:4; Mk 12:29; 1Cor 8:6; Eph 4:6; Jas 2:19). The emphasis on all these scriptures is that God is one. Those who use these scriptures to deny the deity of both Jesus and the Holy Spirit believe that because a singular

pronoun – *one* – has been used here with the word *God* that it means there is only one member of the Godhead – God the Father. They have completely ignored all the other scriptures which prove the deity of both Jesus and the Holy Spirit and their co-equality with the Father in the Godhead. Here again, *one* means one in unity, not in number, because the word God is still a plural noun. God is merely contrasting Himself with Idols in Old Testament scriptures, and He is till the same God in the New Testament (CP De 6:14-16; Isa 44:9-11; 46:1-4; Hos 13:1-3). If there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead in the Old Testament, so too there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead in the New Testament as this study clearly shows. The doctrine of the Trinity is irrefutable and those who reject it will forfeit their salvation (CP Jn 5:22-23; 14:6; 1Jn 2; 22-23; 5:10-12).