

**THE TRINITY -
DIVINE TRUTH
OR
HUMAN TRADITION?**

By Barry C. Hodson
www.bibletruthrestored.org

CHAPTER ONE GOD IS ONE

In both the Old and New Testament, God is revealed as one God: “Hear O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord” (Deu. 6:4. Mk. 12:29). The sense in which God is “one” is indicated when Jesus referred to Him in His prayer as the “only” true God (Jn. 17:3). The Greek word for “only” is “monos” from which the English word “mono” is derived and means sole, single, only, alone. It means “one” in a mathematical sense. For example: a monorail is a single solitary track. Monogamy means being married to one person. A monocle is a single eye glass etc.

Monothesis therefore, by definition, is a single God; one person.

God Himself has indicated many times that He is a single individual, by using personal singular pronouns such as “I,” “Me,” “Myself.” He also does this by making statements stressing that He “alone” or “only” is God, and “there is none else.” “To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal?” (Read Isaiah chapters 44 to 47).

It would be grammatically incorrect to use personal singular pronouns if more than one person was involved.

In passing, it is acknowledged that there are 4 Scriptures in the Old Testament where the plural “us” is used in relation to God, but this is due to conversation taking place between God and His angels, as can be seen for example, in Isa. 6:1-8.

It should also be pointed out that the Hebrew word “elohiym,” translated “God” in the Old Testament, is frequently applied to angels themselves. The reason for this is because they represent God, speaking in His name, acting on His behalf, being energised, empowered and inspired by His Spirit. In fact, the Hebrew word translated “angels” in Ps. 8:5 is elohiym, the same word elsewhere translated “God.” And the fact that Heb. 2:7 quotes Ps. 8:5 and also uses the word “angels,” shows that the New Testament acknowledges that elohiym can relate to angels. However, it is evident that applying the divine title “God” to angels does not make them equal with God or the same person as God! The following Scriptures are a sample of those in which angels are referred to as God: Gen. 16:10-13. 32:24-30 with Hos. 12:3-5. Gen. 48:15-16. Ex. 3:1-6. Judg. 13:20-22. Ps. 97:7 and Heb. 1:6.

The Hebrew word “elohiym” actually has a plural connotation because it is used in relation to the family relationship which exists in heaven between God and His angels who are sometimes referred to as “sons of God.” Being vehicles and manifestations of God’s Holy Spirit,

each angel is a “spirit.” Each one, being holy, is a holy spirit. But it is important to realize that elohiym denotes plurality of persons without stating the number. The word does not mean 3 beings or personalities. There is no Scriptural basis or justification for limiting the word elohim to 3 persons. The plurality of elohiym is not confined to a duality or trinity of persons, but involves a multiplicity of persons! It signifies plurality in unity: One God manifested in many agents. (There are over 100 million angels! Rev. 5:11).

This principle is illustrated in the science of arithmetic which is the science of numbers. The basis of the science is the multitudinous expression of one. “One” is the great power of the arithmetical universe, and all other numbers resulting from the multiplication of one, cannot exclude or expunge the number one without destroying the system. And who would be so foolish to argue the one is three or three is one!

Father God, the creator of the universe is, as Einstein put it: “the number one power.” Being Father, He is the first and primary cause. Everything and everyone, including all the angels and His only begotten son, came from Him. All are a product of His power. By His power He “made” the angels and “begat” His son (Heb. 1:5-7).

Not only is the divine title elohiym applied to angels, but also men, illustrating once again that the title has both a primary and secondary application.

Because Jewish judges judged on behalf of God and dispensed divine decisions, they are called “elohiym.” Being God’s representatives and His name bearers on earth, ruling over His kingdom (the kingdom of Israel) on His behalf, they were invested with the divine title. For example, in Ex. 4:15-16 and 7:1 God told Moses that he would be “as God,” (in connection with this, it should be kept in mind that Moses was also told Messiah would be a prophet like himself (Deu. 18:18. Act. 3:19-26). This implied that Messiah, like Moses, would be “as God”; not equal with God, but representing God, speaking and acting on His behalf).

In the following verses, the Hebrew word elohim, normally translated “God,” is actually translated “judges” in relation to Jewish judges: (Ex. 21:6. 22:8. 1 Sam. 2:25). However, as in the case of angels who are also called elohiym, the bestowal of the divine title on the Jewish judges did not make them equal with God. They were “God” in a secondary sense not a primary sense.

The apostle Paul sums up the situation in 1 Cor. 8:5-6 by saying that although there are those who are called gods in heaven (angels) and in earth (judges, not to mention idols); to us there is but one God the Father.

Ps. 82 also refers to the Jewish judges as “gods” (elohiym) and is particularly interesting because Jesus quoted it during his ministry to defend himself against the charge that he claimed to be equal with God.

Because Jesus said “I and my Father are one,” the Jews as usual, misunderstood and misinterpreted his statement, and imagined that he was claiming to be God Himself and therefore equal with God. They failed to understand that when Jesus said he and his Father were “one,” he neither meant that they were one and the same person nor that they were equal. He simply meant they were united in purpose as in the case when he referred to himself and his church as being “one” (Jn. 17:20-23).

The Jews reacted to Jesus’ statement “I and my Father are one,” by accusing him of blasphemy. They said: “you, being a man, make yourself God.”

Now, if that was what Jesus was really claiming, this was surely the time to say so. But what did he say? His answer clearly shows that he denied equality with his Father and rejected all claim to being “God” in the sense they conveyed, i.e. the primary sense.

Jesus replied saying: “Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, you are gods?’ If those to whom the Word of God was committed are called ‘gods’ (and the Scripture cannot be altered); then why do you charge me, whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, by saying, ‘you blaspheme,’ because I said I am the son of God?”

The last statement in this defence is particularly significant: “Why do you charge me with blasphemy because I said I am the son of God.” Jesus explains in these words what he meant when he said “I and my Father are one.” He was not claiming to be God Himself or equal with God. He was simply claiming to be the son of God. This should have been obvious enough to the Jews by the reference of Jesus to “my Father” in his statement: “I and my Father are one.” Being the son of God, Jesus was united (one) with his Father in Spirit, mind and purpose.

Significantly enough, the Jewish judges, referred to as “gods” in Ps. 82:1, 6, are also called “sons of the Most High” (God) in v6. Not that they were sons of God through divine begettal like Jesus, but they were called sons of God nevertheless. In view of their own judges being called sons of God, the Jews were without ground for accusing Jesus of blasphemy for referring to himself as son of God.

We now come to the main point. Why was it that when Jesus was accused of claiming to be God, that he quoted Ps. 82 in which Jewish judges are referred to as gods? The answer is self evident. Jesus’ reply could be paraphrased like this:

“You have accused me of blasphemy because you have interpreted my statement: “I and my Father are one” to mean I claim to be God. This is not what I claimed at all. I simply claim to be the son of God. However, even if I called myself God, you would still be in no position to charge me with blasphemy, because your own Scriptures (which cannot be altered) call the Jewish judges gods because the Word of God was committed to them. If they can be called elohiym without you concluding they were equal with God, then so can I. After all, I am divinely appointed as judge; the Father has sanctified me and sent me to minister His Word, as is evident in the works and miracles I perform. However, I have not called myself “God,” but “the son of God.”

It is significant that although Jesus was fully entitled to the divine title elohiym, being the greatest judge ever in Israel’s history, he never claimed it or referred to himself by it. He referred to himself as “son of God” and “son of man,” but never “God.” Why? Because he knew that the Jews had become ignorant of the fact that Scripture called God’s representatives God in the secondary sense, and that if he referred to himself by this title and said he was “God,” they would immediately conclude that he was claiming to be God in the primary sense. Jesus clearly did not want people to think that!

Had Jesus been “very God of very God” he would surely have said so. But he never made that claim. If he had, it would have been quickly thrown at him during the interrogation prior to his crucifixion when the Jewish authorities were seeking evidence to put him to death. By this time they seem to have been satisfied that he didn’t claim to be God. This seems to be evident from the fact that while Jesus was on the cross they said: “he trusted in God; let Him deliver him now if He wants him; for he said: I am the son of God.”

The divine title “elohiym” as applied to Jewish judges is clearly used in a secondary sense in Ps. 82, and relates to those who have received authority from the One supreme God to speak and act on His behalf. In view of the fact that Jesus chose this Scripture in which elohiym is used in a secondary sense to defend himself against the charge that he claimed to be God in the first sense; proves that he did not want people to regard him as God in the first sense, but in the secondary sense!

THE SAME MISTAKE AS THE JEWS

Unfortunately, the Roman Catholics and other churches in Christendom who have inherited their teaching, have made the same

mistake as the Jews. To this day they interpret Jesus' statement "I and my Father are one" to mean he was claiming to be equal with God, and have concluded that other references in Scripture to Jesus being "God" must be understood in the primary sense. Ironically enough, their conclusion is based on the false interpretation of the ignorant and apostate Jews! The only difference is that the Jews denigrated Jesus for the statement and the Trinitarians venerate him for it.

Failure to understand how Jesus can be referred to as God without being the same person as his Father or equal with him, led to the doctrine of the Trinity. In the third century A.D. after much debate and controversy over the subject, Athanasius, a Roman Catholic bishop and theologian, formulated the statement on the Trinity. It is known as the Athanasian creed and is regarded as authoritative not only by Roman Catholics, but also Lutherans, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Brethren etc. - most of the churches in Christendom.

The creed states: "We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity; neither confounding: nor dividing the substance ... and in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another: but the whole 3 persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal."

Basically, this creed wants to have its cake and eat it too. Realizing that the Bible affirms there is only one God, the creed states "we worship one God," but then it contradicts this by adding "in Trinity."

The word "Trinity" ever since has been the popular designation for God throughout Christendom, but it is an unscriptural word. It did not appear in Christian literature until the third century after Christ. The word is never used in the Bible to define God. Time and time again the Word of God says God is "one," never three. The only reference to "three" in connection with God is in 1 Jn. 5:7 in the old King James Version. But significantly enough, the statement does not appear in the original Greek manuscript. It was added by a Trinitarian, Virgilius Tapsensis, a Latin writer of no credit, and has been omitted by all modern translations of the Bible.

The only group of 3 parties in heaven referred to in Scripture involves the Father, son and angels (1 Tim. 5:21. Rev. 1:4-5). Elsewhere these 3 are referred to as the Father, son and Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the power of the Father - His divine energy by which He performs all His works. Angels are energized by this power and manifestations of it. Compare Gen. 1:2 with Jer. 32:17. Also see Mic. 3:8. Lk. 1:35. Act. 1:8. 8:18-19. In these verses God's Spirit is described as His power. In other places it is referred to in terms of God's breath and is

likened to the wind. God and His Spirit or power can be compared with the sun and its radiation. The body of the sun remains in heaven but its power emanates and radiates well beyond, imparting light and life. For this reason Ps. 84:11 says: "For the Lord God is a sun."

As mentioned earlier, the angels (spirits) are vehicles and manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and for this reason the Holy Spirit and angels are often synonymous in Scripture. Compare Act. 8:26 and v29. Act. 10:3, 7 and v19. Act. 11:12-13. The "comforter" in Jn. 16:13 who was going to "show things that are to come," was an angel (Rev. 1:1).

The fact that the Holy Spirit is God's power is indicated by references to it being "poured out," "shed," "breathed" etc, and of people being "clothed upon," "anointed," "baptized with," "filled," "possessed" by it. All these characteristics of the Spirit reveal it as the Father's presence or power - an influence rather than an actual person or being.

A person cannot be "poured out" upon another person, and one person cannot drink another person. Neither can one person be anointed (sprinkled or smeared) with another person.

NO PERSONAL NAME

The Father is a person and His name is Yahweh. The son is a person and his name is Yahshuah (Jesus). If the Holy Spirit is a person co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, what is His name? No name is ever given in Scripture because there is no such person. Reference in Matt. 28:19 to baptizing in "the name" of the Father, son and Holy Spirit does not mean that the Holy Spirit is a name. It is a title, as is "Father" and "son."

It is evident from the book of Acts that people were baptized into the name of Jesus (Act. 2:38. 10:48. 19:5. Rom. 6:3). Baptism into the name of Jesus links the believer with the Father and son through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the unifying power or influence which makes all parties one. Hence, the "name" of the Father, son and Holy Spirit is the name of Jesus - the only name given under heaven by which men can be saved. For this reason the word "name" is only mentioned once in Matt. 28:19. It does not say: "In the name of the Father, in the name of the son, and in the name of the Holy Spirit." Orthodox churches recite it like this, and in so doing commit the sin of adding words to Scripture.

NEVER ADDRESSED IN PRAYER OR PRAISE

There is not one prayer or song of praise addressed to the Holy Spirit in the Bible. Nowhere in Scripture are we told to love, honour or worship the Holy Spirit, or pray to it. Why not if it is the third person of a triune God?

Rev. 5:13 says: “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him (the Father) who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb (Jesus) for ever and ever.” Also Rev. 7:10: “Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb.”

Why is there no reference to the Holy Spirit in these hymns of adoration if it is a co-equal member of the God-head. Why is the Holy Spirit omitted?

The Bible frequently pictures the Father sitting upon His throne and Jesus sitting or standing at His right hand, but never refers to the Holy Spirit on the throne with them.

The Father and son are often associated together in judgement and redemption, and the coming kingdom is referred to as the kingdom of God and His Christ (Rev. 11:15), but the Holy Spirit is omitted. Why?

In 1 Cor. 11:3 we read: “The head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” We have here a specific order, involving woman, man, Christ and God, but there is no mention of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is a person like the Father, son, man and woman, and belongs to this “family,” why is he left out?

In his greetings to the churches the apostle Paul never mentions the Holy Spirit. His standard greeting is: ‘Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.’ Salutations and greetings never come from the Holy Spirit, but they do come from angels! (Rev. 1:4).

Because all believers in New Testament times possessed the Holy Spirit, which had a bonding and unifying effect, 2 Cor. 13:14 refers to “the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.”

The Father and His Spirit are inseparable. “God is Spirit” (Jn. 4:24). When the Bible refers to the Spirit speaking (Rev. 2:7), it therefore refers either to God Himself speaking or to someone being inspired to speak on His behalf by His Spirit. When the Spirit is described as making intercession (Rom. 8:26-27), it refers to words of intercession quickened or inspired by the Spirit of God. When Ananias lied to the apostles who were appointed and inspired by the Holy Spirit, he lied to God who was present and working by His Holy Spirit. When men grieve or blaspheme

against the Holy Spirit, they grieve and blaspheme against God Himself.

If the son of God and Holy Spirit are one and the same person, equal in status, how are we to understand Matt. 12:31-32 which says words spoken against the son will be forgiven, but words spoken against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven?

INCOMPREHENSIBLE

As we have seen, the singular pronouns used by God in relation to Himself, and the word “mono” used in Scripture in connection with Him being the one and only God, teach that He is a single individual - “one” in a mathematical sense. To say that He is one person yet 3 persons is incomprehensible, and it is no wonder that this doctrine is called “a blessed mystery.”

How can a father and son be the same person? How can a father be his own son? How can a son be his own father? How can a son pray to his own father or sit next to him on his throne if he is one and the same person? Such a doctrine is nonsense, full of contradiction, complications and confusion and it is an insult on human intelligence to be expected to believe it. That Jesus and his Father are separate individuals is clearly taught in Jn. 8:17. Jesus said: “It is written in the law that the testimony of two men (or 3 men: Deu. 19:15) is true. I am one who testifies and my Father is the other.” Paul confirms this by saying: “There is one God and one mediator between God and man: the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5). One plus one = two!

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches another and different Jesus from the Jesus taught by the apostles, and this has resulted in millions of minds being corrupted from “the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Cor. 11:3-4). Corrupting the simplicity in Christ fulfils the prediction made by Paul that: “The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine ... and shall turn their ears away from the truth” (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

NEUTRALISES FUNDAMENTAL FACTS

The doctrine of the Trinity makes a mockery of the true doctrine of monotheism, and negates some fundamental facts concerning God. For example: Scripture teaches that God is immortal and cannot be tempted (1 Tim. 6:14-16. Jam. 1:13). Being immortal means He cannot die; and not being able to be tempted, according to Jam. 1:14 means He

cannot be drawn away and enticed by the desires of the flesh.

So then, if Jesus was God in the primary sense, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, “very God of very God,” he would not be able to be tempted and neither would he be able to die.

The doctrine of the Trinity has actually forced the Roman Catholics and others, to reach these conclusions and to formulate false doctrines to accommodate them.

For example, the doctrine of the immaculate conception (more will be said about this shortly) was formulated in order that it could be believed that Mary did not impregnate Jesus with any of the genes responsible for the sinful tendencies and desires of the flesh of the fallen human race. Their doctrine of Jesus being the supreme untemptable God, made them believe that in his “incarnation,” (as they define it) he would have to be unaffected by the stain of “original sin,” and therefore be devoid of the impulses and propensities which arise from within the flesh and cause temptation and sin.

It is an experience common to all humans for temptation to arise from their own flesh desires, as taught in Jam. 1:14. And according to Heb. 4:15, Jesus was tempted in the same way. He was “tempted in all points like us, but never sinned.” But the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Trinity cannot and does not accept this. They do not believe that Jesus could experience within his own flesh the inner lurings and propensities common to the sinful flesh of all other men. They do not believe therefore, that Jesus came in the same flesh. However, Heb. 2:14 says he did come in the same flesh.

Neither does the Trinitarian doctrine accept that Jesus really died. On the basis of 1 Pet. 3:19 and Lk. 23:43 it is claimed that it was only Christ’s body that died on the cross, but the real Christ - his “spirit,” lived on, and either went and preached to other “spirits” in hell or went to paradise in heaven, or both! This doctrine involves confusion and contradiction.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The doctrine of the Trinity not only nullifies Christ’s temptations and death, but also has other serious implications. For example: it virtually makes Father God redundant. Let’s face it: if the Holy Spirit is responsible for all creative power, signs, miracles and healings, and the son is Saviour and redeemer, what does the Father do? And if Mary conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit, then God the Holy Spirit should be the Father of Jesus not God the Father!

The concept of the Trinity practically eliminates Father God, and fails to give Him the exclusive status given to Him in the Scriptures.

God the Father is the number One power. He is the supreme fountain and source of all power throughout the universe. He is “the One God and Father of all, who is above all” (Eph. 4:6). He therefore issues this challenge: “To whom then will you liken Me, or set up as My equal?!” (Isa. 40:25).

The doctrine of the Trinity is therefore guilty of presumption for elevating Jesus to equality with his Father, especially in view of the fact that Jesus went out of his way to categorically deny equality.

Jesus never was, still isn't and never will be equal with his Father. The statement in Plp. 2:6 in the Old King James version that Jesus “thought it not robbery to be equal with God” is a poor translation reflecting the bias of the Trinitarian translators. The Greek word translated “robbery” means to desire, grasp, seize. The R.S.V. gives a more accurate translation in these words: “He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped.” The New English Bible says: “He did not think to snatch at equality with God.” Others say he did not count equality with God a thing to be seized.

Instead of allowing his high status to make him proud and reach out to grasp at equality with God, as Adam reached out to grasp the forbidden fruit to become equal with the gods (Gen. 3:5), Jesus humbled himself and was obedient. Instead of teaching he was equal with God, the passage in Plp. 2 teaches the opposite!

When the Jews accused Jesus of claiming to be equal with God (Jn. 5:18), what did he say? Did he agree with them? No, he did not! He said: “Verily, verily I say unto you, the son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do” (Jn. 5:19). This is certainly not the position of the Father! (See Isa. 40:12-18).

During his ministry on earth, Jesus plainly declared “My Father is greater than I” (Jn. 14:28). Jesus did not know the date of his second coming but his Father did (Mk. 13:32). And according to the apostle Paul, the glorification of Christ and his ascension to heaven has not changed this status. He said: “The head of Christ is God” (1 Cor. 11:3). This is confirmed in Rev. 1:1 where we are told that Revelation was given to Christ by God. “Revelation” involves knowledge not previously known. For Jesus to receive such knowledge from his Father after he had been in heaven for around 60 years, reveals he was not omniscient and therefore not equal with his Father.

Even after his second coming, at the end of the millennium, Jesus

will still be subordinate to his Father as we read in 1 Cor. 15:28: “Then shall the son be subject (subordinate) to him who put all things under him.”

* * * * *

CHAPTER TWO THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST.

If Jesus was co-eternal with God, he obviously would have pre-existed prior to his birth. The pre-existence of Christ therefore inevitably forms an integral part of the doctrine of the Trinity, and gave rise to the doctrine of the incarnation, which teaches the pre-existent Christ reduced himself to an embryo and was placed in Mary's womb to be clothed with flesh.

As in the case of the word "Trinity," the words "pre-existence" and "incarnation" do not occur in the Bible. They are unscriptural terms adopted by Trinitarian theologians to support unscriptural doctrines.

Even though the Greeks believed that all men pre-existed and used the term to describe it, the New Testament Greek text studiously avoids the word and never uses it in relation to Jesus or anyone else.

Instead of the Bible using the word "pre-existence," the terms "foreordained" and "predestined" are used instead, and most of the passages of Scripture which Trinitarians regard as teaching pre-existence, can be interpreted and understood in this light.

The doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ is a serious error because it negates a number of fundamental truths relating to Christ. It makes of none effect and virtually nullifies certain basic principles relating to Mary's conception, and the birth, death, resurrection and glorification of Christ. They may be summarized as follows:

A. Nullifies Mary's conception.

It is commonly believed that the pre-existent Christ was transformed into an embryo and then placed into Mary's womb to grow into a baby clothed with flesh. This process is called "the incarnation" and it negates Mary's conception.

It is clearly stated in the Gospels that Mary "conceived" through the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20. Lk. 1:31, 35). Now, "conceive" is a specific biological term with a specific meaning. It involves the female ovum, or egg, being fertilized as it passes down the fallopian tube. After fertilization, the egg divides into 2 then 4 and so on, as the embryo begins to develop. Conception cannot occur without the female ovum being penetrated by a fertilizing seed.

But, if a pre-existent Christ was placed in Mary's womb as an embryo, Mary could not have conceived. An egg from her ovary would not have been used. She would not be the real biological mother. Mary would therefore be reduced to a mere "test tube" into which an already existing Christ in embryonic form was placed, as in the case of embryo

transplants. In other words, Mary would have been simply “used” as an incubator. All references to her conceiving would therefore be artificial and false - a farce!

B. Nullifies sonship.

If Mary’s conception took place through a pre-existent Christ entering her ovum or womb, why doesn’t Scripture say that Mary conceived through the holy son overshadowing and coming upon her? Instead, it says she conceived through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit: “The Holy Spirit shall come upon you” (Lk. 1:35). This is clear enough. It was the Holy Spirit, and not a pre-existent son, that came upon Mary causing her to conceive.

If Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit coming upon her, it is evident that the Holy Spirit must have penetrated and fertilized her ovum, and not a pre-existent son. And if the Holy Spirit is a different person from the Father and son as Trinitarians contend, then why wasn’t Mary’s child called the son of the Holy Spirit? Why was the child called the son of the Father when it was by the Holy Spirit that Mary conceived?

It should be evident from this that the Holy Spirit is what Scripture declares it to be: “The power of the highest” (Lk. 1:35); i.e. the Father’s power. If Mary conceived through the Holy Spirit and the child produced is called the only begotten of the Father, it is evident that the Father and Holy Spirit are one and the same, and not two persons.

Here is another point: If Mary conceived through a pre-existent Christ entering her ovum or womb, how could this change him from being a co-equal co-eternal God with the Father, into a son of the Father? If an eternal God transformed Himself into an embryo, he would surely still remain the eternal God in embryonic form, for it is inconceivable that an immortal God could die during the procedure or transaction.

This example may help: Let us liken the Trinity to 3 brothers who are triplets. If one of them was able to transform himself into an embryo and enter a woman’s womb and develop into a baby, how could that make him the son of one of his brothers, even if one of the brothers placed the embryo in the womb?

The doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ also raises this question: If he is known as “God the son” due to being born of Mary, what was he known as during his pre-existent state prior to that birth? Hardly “God the son.” What then? Who was he? What was he? The unknown God?!

There was only one way in which the Father could have a son through Mary in the full and proper sense of the word, and that was through His own generative or creative power penetrating and fertilizing

Mary's ovum, causing her to conceive. This, precisely, is what the Word of God says took place. Until this took place, there was no son of God, or, to put it more precisely: there was no "only begotten of the Father."

Scripture emphatically declares that Jesus became God's son through begettal - divine begettal, i.e. through the Father's Power coming upon Mary, causing her to conceive. The words of the Father Himself are: "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." This statement stresses that it was through begettal that Jesus became God's son. Prior to being begotten, Jesus was neither the son of God nor God the son. And it is certainly evident from the statement in Heb. 1:5 that he wasn't an angel.

Never before or since in the history of man, has God released His Power to fertilize a female ovum. Except for Mary, no other woman has ever conceived through the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the only man in history to be born through divine conception, and is absolutely unique in this respect. He is distinctly and exclusively "the only begotten of the Father."

Because Jesus came as a result of God's Power being released from heaven to overshadow Mary, he is naturally referred to in Scripture as having come from or proceeded from God, or from heaven, or sent by God etc. These statements do not teach pre-existence but divine begettal. Jesus truly came from above or heaven in this sense.

C. Nullifies hereditary connections.

If a pre-existent Christ entered Mary's womb as an embryo, Jesus would have no hereditary connection with his mother or her ancestral line.

It is a known fact that genes are the minute carriers of our hereditary traits. They are arranged in lines along the chromosomes, the tiny strands of genetic material found in the nuclei of all body cells. During fertilization, 23 single chromosomes are contributed by the father (in a sperm cell), and 23 by the mother (in the ovum). The new individual therefore has 23 pairs, with sets of genes from both parents. The child will therefore inherit characteristics from both parents, which have been passed down a long genealogical line.

So then, if Jesus pre-existed and entered Mary's womb as God in embryonic form, he would not be impregnated with her genes, and therefore would not have any biological connection with her or with her ancestral line. In reality, Mary would not be the mother of Jesus in the true biological sense.

Now, Scripture plainly declares that the Messiah would be the "seed" of Abraham and David, according to the flesh (Rom. 1:3. Gal. 3:16). The word "seed" comes from the Greek word "sperma" from which the English word "sperm" is derived. This does not mean of course that

Abraham's or David's sperm was preserved and used to fertilize Mary's ovum. It simply means that the ancestral line which was impregnated with genes from Abraham and David, would be the same line out of which Christ would come. This is what is meant when God promised the Messiah to David in these words: "I will set up your seed after you, which shall proceed out of your bowels" (2 Sam. 7:12).

Due to Mary being a direct descendant of Abraham and David, her conception would result in the child being impregnated with their genes, making the child their "seed" in a real genetic sense. Through his mother's conception, Jesus would therefore have a personal, organic, family relationship with Abraham and David, qualifying him to sit upon David's throne and reign as king, as many prophecies declared concerning the Messiah.

But if Jesus pre-existed long before Abraham and David were even born, and later entered Mary's womb as God in embryonic form, he would have no hereditary connection with Abraham and David. He would therefore not be the true Messiah or the true heir promised to David. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ nullifies all hereditary connections. It makes him "another" and different Christ from the one promised.

Can anyone think of anything more bizarre than God telling David that one day He, the Eternal Creator God, will proceed out of his bowels, and be born of a woman and become an ignorant baby! This is the ridiculous state of affairs which the doctrine of the Trinity has forced people into!

D. Makes Christ's death artificial.

As pointed out earlier: If Jesus was the immortal God, it would be impossible for him to die. However, Jesus plainly said: "I am he who lives and was dead" (Rev. 1:18). In this statement Jesus makes no distinction between himself and his body. The Jesus who speaks these words is the Jesus who was dead.

As we shall see, according to Scripture, death is a sleep - a state of unconsciousness. This was certainly the case when Jesus was dead, for it is clearly stated in 1 Cor. 15:20 that he "slept." (Sleep is a common euphemism for death in Scripture). This is almost proof positive that Jesus was not the supreme immortal God, for He never slumbers or sleeps (Ps. 121:4). He certainly cannot die. It is therefore indeed "mystery all; the immortal died," as is stated in a Trinitarian hymn. It is a mystery because it is a contradiction.

If Jesus lost consciousness when his body was put to death, he could

hardly have had conscious existence before he had a body, i.e. before he was born. This puts another nail in the coffin of the pre-existence theory.

E. Makes resurrection superfluous.

If Jesus was the immortal God who lived from eternity before he appeared in a human body, and, as Trinitarians claim: lived on after the death of his body on the cross; why was resurrection in his body so important? If men must believe that he pre-existed before he “put on” a body without having been able to see him, could not men equally believe that he continued to exist after the death of his body without resurrection in the body being necessary? If he really was the eternal God who cannot die, and people were expected to believe that, it would be a foregone conclusion that he survived the death of his body and lived on eternally as he was supposed to have done prior to being in it. Such is the conclusion to which the doctrine of Christ’s pre-existence leads, and it renders the resurrection of Christ superfluous.

The fact of the matter is that Christ’s conscious existence and continuance in life depended on resurrection. Like all other men, he would have seen corruption and perished had the Father not raised him from the dead. This is clearly taught in Act. 2:27-31, 13:33-37. The special significance of Christ’s resurrection can only be appreciated when it is realized that he was the first man in history to be raised from the dead to life everlasting (Act. 26:23. 1 Cor. 15:20. Co. 1:18. Rev. 1:5).

Jesus is a representative man - a true representative of the human race. Being “the first fruits” of all who have “slept” in death (1 Cor. 15:20) makes Jesus a “specimen” of man in the totally redeemed state. He is an example of the immortality promised to believers, which involves an immortal body, not a disembodied immortal.

With Jesus and his resurrection from the dead, there has already happened what is yet to occur for all other men who belong to his body the church. His resurrection is an anticipatory resurrection, by which God gives assurance to all His followers that they, like fruit on a tree that follows the first ripe fruit, will be like him.

But if it is believed that Jesus pre-existed as an immortal being, what is so special about him being raised from the dead to immortality? How could he attain to immortality through resurrection if he was already immortal anyway? Wherein lay the great victory and breakthrough from mortality to immortality? If Jesus was “Very God” he couldn’t miss or fail! The thought of an immortal, untemptable, sinless God losing His immortality is incongruous. It makes a mockery - a pantomime out of the whole ministry of Christ if he pre-existed as God Himself.

But once it is accepted that Jesus did not exist before he was born - that although born through divine conception, he nevertheless was a man, sharing the same propensities as other men, and like other men, was mortal and experienced the feelings and infirmities of the flesh, and had to exercise faith and trust in God, and grow in the knowledge and wisdom of God, and that like other men, slept in the death state and would have corrupted and perished had God not raised him from the dead - when this is accepted; then Christ's resurrection and re-appearance from the grave to eternal life becomes deeply meaningful - an astonishing victory and breakthrough! Without it, the hope of the resurrection and eternal life remains theological speculation, with no firm foundation in human experience. History would have no meaning, no goal, no purpose. As a human race we would be going nowhere. We would be, in Paul's words: "of all men, most miserable."

F. Makes a farce of Christ's exaltation.

If Jesus pre-existed as co-equal with Father God, sharing the glory of His highly exalted throne; a farce is made of the Scriptures which declare that the Father has exalted him by placing him at His own right hand on His throne. In terms of a pre-existent status, Jesus would be no higher after his resurrection than what he was before from all eternity.

There is no higher status than equality with God and sitting on His throne. If Jesus occupied that position from all eternity, his return to the same position could hardly be an "exaltation." It would simply be a resumption or reinstatement of a former status. And if Jesus was "very God," nothing in heaven or earth could have prevented him from being restored to that position. It would be quite incongruous to imagine that the eternal God could lose His throne or be denied access to it. If Jesus was the supreme, holy and righteous God Himself; it would be a foregone conclusion that his throne and glory were well and truly secured. This being the case, all references to the "obedience" and "exaltation" of Christ become farcical.

If Jesus has been exalted to the Father's right hand as a result of his obedience, on what basis did he occupy a position on the throne throughout his pre-existent eternity?

Mary was told that her son "shall be great" and that "the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David" (Lk. 1:32). But according to the pre-existent theory, Jesus always was great and sat on a throne throughout eternity. The promise given to Mary therefore promised no more than what Jesus had been and experienced throughout eternity. It offered less in fact because the throne in heaven is higher and greater than

David's throne.

It should be evident then, that the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ nullifies, and makes a farce of many of the promises of God relating to His son.

The following is a list of the contrasts between Bible teaching and terminology on the subject, and the teaching and terminology of tradition:

Bible Teaching.

1. God is one.
2. Jesus was foreordained.
Jesus was predestined.
3. Jesus was conceived.
4. He shared the same flesh.
5. Jesus died and slept.
6. His resurrection was vital
Without it, he would have remained unconscious and would have corrupted away.
7. Jesus, since his resurrection has been exalted to a position never experienced before.

Tradition.

1. God is three.
2. Jesus was foreformed.
Jesus pre-existed.
3. Jesus was transformed;
incarnated.
4. He shared similar flesh.
5. Jesus didn't really die.
6. His resurrection was not vital
He survived the death of his body and remained conscious. He would have lived on eternally whether resurrected or not.
7. In relation to his pre-existent state, Jesus has not really been exalted at all. He is no higher now than what he was as God's equal throughout eternity.

FOREORDAINED

As I said earlier, Scripture never uses the word pre-exist, but it does use the words predestine and foreordain, and many of the passages in Scripture which Trinitarians regard as teaching pre-existence can be interpreted and understood in these terms. Pre-existence is a doctrine of platonic philosophy which believes all men pre-existed. Predestination is the doctrine of the Word of God.

A good example of being predestined or foreordained can be seen in Jer. 1:5. In this verse God says to Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the belly, I knew you, and before you came out of the womb I sanctified you, and ordained you a prophet unto the nations." We are told here that God knew Jeremiah before he was born and ordained him before he came out of the womb. Being "ordained before" means he was "foreordained."

How would this be interpreted if it was affirmed in relation to Jesus that God knew him before he was born? No doubt Trinitarians would quote it as a key verse to prove pre-existence. But no! It relates to being foreordained. Jeremiah did not pre-exist.

Being omniscient, God knows the end from the beginning. He sees and knows everyone long before they are born - they are with Him as clearly as if they already exist, and this applies particularly to His only begotten son, who, as we read in 1 Pet. 1:20: "was foreordained before the foundation of the world.

In God's eternal purpose with mankind, Jesus was first and foremost - the focal centre. We see this in the reference to Jesus in the first prophecy 4,000 years before he was born, way back in the beginning in Gen. 3:15, long before Abraham came on the scene. In terms of God's purpose, Jesus was "before" Abram and all others. We therefore read in the New Testament that he was before Abraham and before John the Baptist. But when Scripture says he "was" before it does not mean existed before i.e. pre-existed. No! That is not the language of Scripture. He was ordained before - destined before. This is also conveyed in the reference in Rev. 13:8 to him being "the lamb slain from the foundation of the world." He did not have to pre-exist of course for this to be the case. No! His ultimate sacrifice to which all animal sacrifices pointed, was foreordained and in the Father's thoughts from the beginning. Every time an animal sacrifice was offered, it was like him being slain.

Another good example of being foreordained can be seen in relation to Cyrus the king of Persia who God anointed to deliver Israel from captivity in Babylon. 300 years before he was even born God addressed this message to him, recorded in Isa. 45:1: "Thus says the Lord to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held... I have called you by name: I have surnamed you."

Imagine if there was a statement in the Scriptures 300 years before Jesus was born, declaring that God had anointed him, held his hand and called him by name! Trinitarians would no doubt regard it as proof positive that Jesus pre-existed and was alive in heaven with God long before he was born.

But no one is prepared to interpret it like that in relation to Cyrus. And neither they should because the language is to be understood in the light of being foreordained - predestined, not pre-existence. Jeremiah and Cyrus were both with God before being born, but not in a pre-existent state, and the same applies to Jesus. If the future destiny of Cyrus in God's purpose was so sure and clear to God, that He could speak of it in terms of

actually being accomplished before Cyrus was even born, then it should not surprise us if God speaks in the same terms in relation to His son prior to his birth. Rom. 4:17 says God speaks of things that do not exist as if they already exist! NB: Lk. 20:38: "I am the God of Abram - all live to him." To God, they are as good as alive.

Consider this: From the very beginning God's plan was to give glory to His son and He declared this many times in His Word before Jesus was born, especially in Isaiah's prophecies. For this reason we read in Jn. 12:41 that Isaiah saw Christ's glory and spoke of him. This doesn't mean that Jesus pre-existed and Isaiah saw him in a pre-existent form. No! God inspired Isaiah with visions of the coming glory of Christ, causing him to speak and write about it. Jesus himself read about his coming glory in the book of Isaiah and other prophecies, and therefore prayed to his Father saying: "Glorify me with the glory I had with you before the world began (Jn. 17:3). This glory "before the world began" refers to the foreordained glory planned by God before the foundation of the world, and which was prophesied from the beginning.

As Cyrus was, so to speak, with God anointed and holding His hand and Jeremiah was appointed prophet before being born, so Jesus was with God glorified with His glory. In his prayer, Jesus was simply requesting the glory that God had reserved for him, which He had promised from the beginning. This glory was the glory that resulted from his suffering and obedience to death on the cross. This is made clear in Isaiah's prophecies. It was impossible therefore for Jesus to have this glory literally and physically before the suffering and the cross, let alone before he was born. It clearly had nothing to do with a pre-existent glory.

WHOSE GOINGS FORTH WERE FROM EVERLASTING

Sometimes Mic. 5 is quoted in support of Christ's pre-existence. It refers to the "goings forth" of Jesus being "from of old, from everlasting." Many have interpreted the words "goings forth" to mean Jesus was moving about on missions prior to his birth and therefore must have pre-existed. However, "goings forth" does not mean that. The Hebrew word "motsaoth" which is translated "goings forth" only occurs here and one other place in 2 Kng. 10:27 where it is translated "latrine." The reason for this is because the word means outgoings and a latrine is a place for human outgoings or emanations. In Mic. 5:2, the reference to "goings forth" relates to seminal outgoings, as is involved in a

genealogical line. For this reason, among the meanings for the word given by Strong's concordance is "family descent." The Good News Bible therefore translates it like this: "The Lord says, Bethlehem Ephratah, you are one of the smallest towns in Judah, but out of you I will bring a ruler for Israel, whose family line goes back to ancient times."

Instead of giving "goings forth," some translations give "comings forth" which is a more accurate translation, because the prophecy relates to Jesus coming forth down the holy genealogical line which started way back in the days of old in the book of Genesis. Both Abraham and David were promised that the Messiah would come forth out of their bowels (2 Sam. 7:12. Gen. 15:4). This is the thought conveyed in Mic. 5:2. Jesus was clearly not a last minute thought. During a 4,000 year period prior to his birth, he was coming forth down a holy genealogical line specially planned by God. As this process was taking place, God was declaring in His Word in each generation, from the very beginning, His purpose in His son.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD

We therefore read in Jn. 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Greek word for "Word" is Logos and according to Strong means "something said (including the thought)..." Jn. 1:1 can therefore be taken to mean that in the beginning something was thought, purposed, spoken, promised by God. And Jn. 1:14 reveals what it was by saying: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us... the only begotten of the Father." This reveals that the thought and promise of God in the beginning related to Jesus. It simply teaches that from the very beginning the Father had thought about and talked about His son, who was clearly with Him in His mind and purpose.

Up until the time that Jesus was born, he was only a purpose in God's mind and a promise in the Word of God. But when he was born, the purpose and promise materialized. Or, as Jn. 1:14 puts it: "The Word became flesh." The promise became substance and physical reality. The birth of Jesus was the fulfilment of promises in the Word that went back thousands of years in time. As I said before: Jesus was not a last minute decision. He was "foreordained before the foundation of the world."

As a result of God's promises, men were able to see by faith the day of Christ's coming long before he was born. On one occasion Jesus referred to this by saying: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it

and was glad.” Some have read this to mean: “Abraham rejoiced to see me and saw me and was glad” and claim it teaches pre-existence.

However, it does not say that. It says Abraham rejoiced to see Christ’s “day” and saw “it,” not him. In 1 Cor. 1:7-8 the apostle Paul refers to the second coming of Christ as “the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” and there are many other examples of this. Abraham saw this day in the promises of God and rejoiced because when it comes, all the promises given to him will be fulfilled.

ALL THINGS WERE MADE THROUGH HIM

Before leaving Jn. 1, a few comments on v3 should be made. It says that “all things were made through him” i.e. it was through the one promised in the Word, that God made all things. This kind of statement is made in several other places in the New Testament and Trinitarians interpret it to mean that Jesus himself made all things and was therefore the Creator.

However, it is important to note that none of these verses actually say that Jesus himself made all things. No! They say the Father made all things through him. What does this mean? Well, the Greek preposition “dia” translated “through” has a variety of applications. For example, it has been translated “by reason of,” “because of,” “by occasion of,” “for,” “for sake of,” “cause.” If we applied any of these to Jn. 1:3 it would read to mean that God created all things by reason of - because of - for the sake of His son. In other words it would teach that the Father’s thoughts and plans for His son at the beginning were the reason and motive for Him creating creation. Without the Father’s purpose in His son, nothing would have been created. It is therefore through Jesus, because of Jesus, on account of Jesus, for Jesus, in Jesus (i.e. as focal centre) that all things have been made by the Father.

We are forced to come to this conclusion because the Bible so categorically teaches that the Father was the Creator. Mal. 2:10 says: “Have we not one Father. Has not one God created us?” Jesus certainly never taught that he was the creator. He attributed creation to his Father. For example, he referred to “creation which God created” (Mk. 13:19). This is very different from saying “creation which I created.” Again in Matt. 19:3-6 we read that Jesus said: “He (God) made them (Adam and Eve) at the beginning.”

Of particular interest is the fact that there are a number of statements

in Scripture which refer to the Father, son and creation in the same context, but creation is attributed to the Father not the son. The son is excluded from having any physical active part in it.

For example: in Rev. 4:8-11 creation is attributed to the One sitting on the throne, which is Father God. Then the Lamb (Jesus) is seen approaching the throne to take the scroll out of his Father's hand. In Act. 4:23-30 a prayer is addressed to God and creation is attributed to Him: "Lord, Thou art God, who has made heaven and earth, and the sea, and everything that is in them." The prayer goes on to say "against Your holy child Jesus who You anointed, both Herod, Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, gathered together..." It is clear from this that the Father created all things - not His son.

Act. 17:24-31 is similar. Paul attributes creation to God and then goes on to say that He has appointed a man (Jesus) to judge the world. It would have been an easy matter for Paul to say that God is going to use the same man to judge the world who He used to create the world if such were the case. But it wasn't so he didn't say that. Many more Scriptures could be quoted from both the Old and New Testament, which confirm the ones already quoted which teach that the Father, not the son, created all things.

IN THE FORM OF GOD

Moving on: Something should be said about Plp. 2:6-7 which refers to Jesus "who, being in the form of God, did not think to snatch at equality with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men."

"Being in the form of God" is usually interpreted by Trinitarians to mean Jesus pre-existed in the very nature of God, co-equal and co-eternal with Him. "Made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant" is interpreted to mean that Jesus divested himself of his pre-existent nature and glory and came down from heaven to be clothed with the body and nature of a man (servant).

Trinitarian theology lays stress on the word "being": "who being in the form of God." They maintain that it means Christ was originally in the form of God before he became a man. The phrase "being in the form of God" is taken to mean that Jesus was "very God" before becoming a man.

However, in the Greek, the word "huparchon" which is used here signifies continual, habitual, repeated action. It expresses action yet, or still in the course of performance. This means that "being in the form of God" means being, and continuing to be in the form of God. In other

words, whatever “the form of God” means, Jesus never ceased to be in it. It involved a continuous state. He did not surrender or divest himself of it.

Other examples of how “huparchon” is used confirms this. For example, reference in Act. 2:30 to David “being a prophet” does not mean “being originally before birth,” but rather being a prophet and continuing to be.

The statement “If you being a Jew” in Gal. 2:14 does not mean “being originally before birth a Jew,” but rather always having been a Jew and continuing to be. Many other examples could be given.

It should be noted that Plp. 2:6 does not say that Jesus was God Himself, but in the form of God. In 2 Cor. 4:4 it is stated that he is “in the image of God.” He is clearly not the original self-existent God, but a replica or manifestation of God.

Basically, what Plp. 2:6-8 is saying is that although Jesus was the divinely begotten son of God, possessing the Spirit of God without measure, and manifesting the power of God in signs, wonders and miracles, and manifesting the name and character of God in holiness, righteousness and sinlessness, - although he was the heir of all things and destined to be king of kings and Lord of Lords over the whole earth, he did not become proud and swelled headed or pursue vain glory, or try and pretend to be God and grasp at equality with God. No! He emptied himself of such things and made himself of no reputation. He took it upon himself to be humble like a servant and manifest the characteristics of a servant, even to the point of getting on his knees and washing his friend’s feet.

That particular episode, recorded in Jn. 13 is particularly relevant to the passage in Plp. 2. When Jesus had finished washing their feet he said: “You call me master and Lord and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”

Christ’s action of washing the disciple’s feet (a duty more suitable for a servant) and his comment on his own example, throws a flood of light on the contrast in Plp. 2 between “the form of God” and “the form of a servant.”

Being “master and Lord” explains how Jesus was “in the form of God,” and the action of washing the disciples’ feet is one of many examples of how he “took upon him the form of a servant.”

And the expression “form of a servant” indicates that the word “form” does not relate to physical shape or outward appearance, because the physical bodily shape and form of a servant is no different from a

master, and the physical bodily shape and form of Jesus was no different from any other man. All, from the highest to the lowest, are made in the image of God, including the angels.

It is important and significant to note the reason for the words being penned in Plp. 2:5-8 stating that Jesus, in spite of being in the form of God, made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant. The reason for this statement is given in v3: “Let nothing be done through strife and vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Let each of you look not on his own things, but every man also on the things of God. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God...” This passage is basically saying that in the same way that Jesus, although son of God and heir of all things, adopted a humble attitude, so also we who are sons of God, should not be proud, but humble servants of God and willing to serve one another, following the example of Jesus.

* * * * *