

God is three in one

A word about the "Trinitarian Heresy"

by Leon King

One evening after a service ended, a man approached me and said, "I believe the Holy Spirit is not a person of the Godhead, but just God's spirit. I think this whole idea was conceived by an heretic." With those words, he left the building. I stood wondering what prompted his words. I learned later that he was opposed to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a personality because he thought some heretic believed it. Another evening, after a service, some young women approached me. One of them said, "You believe the Trinitarian doctrine, don't you? You must have been brought up by somebody who believed and taught you the Trinitarian doctrine because you didn't get it from the Bible. The Jews brought the Trinitarian heresy back from Babylon in the Mishnah," she insisted. She said that several times earnestly trying to convince me.

I knew in my heart that what she had alleged was not true, but I had to prove it for myself. So, I went to a number of local book outlets and libraries looking for a readable copy of the *Mishnah*. Finding none, I had to order one. When it came in, it was in the form of an interlinear. It had the Hebrew text along side the English. It had a lot of commentary from the various Jewish teachers. The *Mishnah* contains nothing about the trinity whatsoever. Having read every word of the text, I can attest to that fact. So, what the young woman said to me was a lie (probably one repeated from her teachers). I confessed to her that I had been brought up by godly parents who believed in the trinity of the Godhead. I told her, though, that I believed the doctrine of the trinity because I was convinced that the Bible taught it. Later on, this same woman told me that she had been mistaken. She said "Mishnah," when she really meant to say "*Talmud*." When I learned that the *Mishnah* was only a part of the *Talmud*, and that the *Talmud* apparently was in two

sets with multi-volumes, I was appalled. I decided right then and there that I was chasing one of the Devil's imaginations.

The doctrine of the three-in-one God is very difficult for some. I have no problem believing it though I'm sure I do not completely comprehend everything about it. This teaching is much like many other things in scripture in the respect that the theme is not plainly seen in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is, however, replete with references to the plurality of God. As far as I know, the Old Testament doesn't identify the trinity as such. That comes in the New Testament. I want to show why I believe the Bible teaches the trinity. I do not intend this to be an argumentative paper but simply want to say what I believe about the subject so others can study and come to their own conclusion. After all, it really doesn't matter what one believes if that belief isn't fully substantiated in the Word of God. I believe this doctrine is fully set forth in scripture. Just because Roman Catholics and others with whom I cannot agree believe the doctrine of the trinity, it doesn't mean that I cannot believe it as well.

● **I believe it because of the plural expressions God used when he spoke of himself.**

Under this heading, I will show only those passages which refer to God in a plural sense as they appear in the King James Bible. I am no scholar of the original languages, so I must rely mainly on the English language. The first instance I bring to your attention is Genesis 1:26.

*"And God said, Let **us** make man in **our** image, after **our** likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." -- Genesis 1:26. I have made the pronouns "us" and the two instances of "our" bold for emphasis. "And God said, Let **us**..." The pronoun "us" certainly is plural as are both instances*

of the possessive pronoun "our" which follow. Suffice us to say that the scripture shows here that God is more than one in number. We notice that the words "image" and "likeness" are both in the singular number which point to the oneness of God. Notice next Genesis 3:22. *"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of **us**, to know good and evil: and now, les he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:"* Again, we notice the plural pronoun used in the expression "one of us."

*"And the LORD said, Behold, the people <is> one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. {7} Go to, **let us go down**, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." -- Genesis 11:6,7.*

Isaiah 6:8 *"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for **us**? Then said I, Here <am> I; send me." As the Lord speaks to Isaiah in this passage, he refers to himself as "us." -- Isaiah 6:8.*

*"Produce your cause, saith the LORD; bring forth your strong <reasons>, saith the King of Jacob. {22} Let them bring <them> forth, and **show us** what shall happen: let them show the former things, what they <be>, **that we may consider them**, and know the latter end of them; or declare **us** things for to come. {23} Show the things that are to come hereafter, that **we** may know that ye <are> gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that **we** may be dismayed, and behold <it> together." -- Isaiah 41:21,23.* In this passage, we see Jehovah's challenge to false gods. He speaks of himself in the plural number by a succession of plural pronouns.

John 14:23 *"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and **we** will come unto him, and make **our** abode with him."* Here, the blessed son of God speaks referring to himself and his Father. Then, he uses the plural pronouns "we" and "our." This certainly indicates more than one in number. If there is no plurality in the Godhead, then expressions like the following make no kind of sense at all.

2 Corinthians 13:14 *"The grace of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, and the love of **God**, and the communion of the **Holy Ghost**, <be> with you all. Amen."* Was Paul (writing as he was moved by the Holy Ghost) trying to confuse us? I think not. It is abundantly clear to me that he believed in God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost.

• **I believe it because of the nature of the names of God in the original languages. Genesis 1:1-2**

*"In the beginning **God** created the heaven and the earth. {2} And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness <was> upon the face of the deep. And the **Spirit of God** moved upon the face of the waters."* I have been taught that the word "God" in Genesis 1:1 is a plural noun. The following information comes from *Strong's Concordance* concerning the word "God" in Genesis 1:1. As you can see in the second line of the definition, it is a plural, masculine noun.

0430 'elohiym {el-o-heem'} Plural of 0433;

AV - God 2346, god 244, judge 5, GOD 1, goddess 2, great 2, mighty 2, angels 1, exceeding 1, God-ward + 04136 1, godly 1; 2606 (The words and numbers

following "AV" show how the Hebrew words were translated in the King James Bible)

Youngs Analytical Concordance to the Bible also shows the word God to be "Elohim" in Genesis 1:1. Mr. Young says it means God, gods, objects of worship. Notice the plural. Elohim is a plural noun which, in the words of the Hebrew, indicates no fewer than three. We can plainly see that the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. The New Testament tells us that Jesus created all things and that he was with God in the beginning and that he was God. A man would have to be dim sighted to not see the plurality in that.

Observe: *"In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with **God**, and the **Word was God**. {2} The same was in the beginning with God. {3} All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. {4} In him was life; and the life was the light of men." -- John 1:1-4. "And the **Word was made flesh**, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the **only begotten of the Father**,) full of grace and truth." -- John 1:14. "For **by him** were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether <they be> thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: {17} And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." -- Colossians 1:16-17.*

Read within its context, this passage shows that it speaks of Jesus Christ. If I believe what I read, I must conclude that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were all three present in the creation as the Hebrew word for "God" indicates.

● **I believe in the trinity because of the personal manifestations of all three in the New Testament.**

At the baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ, all three persons of the godhead were manifested. Jesus, the Son of God, had just been baptized by John the Baptist. The Holy Spirit descended upon him like a dove. The Father spoke from heaven. Notice: "*And **Jesus**, when **he** was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the **Spirit of God** descending like a dove, and lighting upon **him**: {17} And lo **a voice from heaven**, saying, **This is my beloved Son**, in whom I am well pleased."* -- Matthew 3:16-17.

God sent John the Baptist to baptize with water.. The Father told him that the one whom he would see the Holy Ghost descend on and remain was the Lamb of God. All three were involved with this proof to John the Baptist. In John 1:31-34, we read: "*And John bare record, saying, I saw the **Spirit** descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon **him**. {33} And I knew **him** not: but **he** that sent me to baptize with water, **the same said unto me**, Upon **whom** thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on **him**, the **same** is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. {34} And I saw, and bare record that this is the **Son of God**."* These two texts would be proof enough to me of the trinity. But, there is more.

*"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and **these three are one**."* -- 1 John 5:7. This is the text the devil obviously wants to take out of the Bible. Translations, other than the King James Bible, as well as many reference Bibles which contain men's notes say this passage "is not in the best manuscripts." I keep wondering how

they declare lately found manuscripts the best. Can it be that the advocates of the translations other than the King James are deceived by the wiles of the devil when they believe this was not in the original manuscript? I believe God has preserved it in my Bible. There are three that bear record in heaven, (1) the Father, (2) the Word (the Son, the logos), and (3) the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. This statement brings us to the idea of the trinity. That means three in one. There are three in number, but one in agreement. They are in complete and total harmony, but they are distinct persons. They are not mere manifestations of God because each has personality.

When you really think about it, the trinity is no more difficult to receive than the concept that a man and his wife become one flesh. There are two entities, but one flesh. That's what God says. Notice Genesis 2:24 *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and **they shall be one** flesh."*

In the very same sense that 1 John 5:7 and Genesis 2:24 are written, the beloved son of God claimed that he and the Father were one. He did not mean they were one numerically, but one in essence and purpose. John 10:30 **"I and <my> Father are one."** Now some would say, "that doesn't prove they are not one numerically." Consider the prayer of Jesus in the seventeenth chapter of John. He earnestly prayed that his people be one as he and the Father were one. It is preposterous to believe he was praying for them to be one in number. He was praying that they be one as he and the Father are. Let's read some passages from this great chapter: John 17:11 *"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, **that they may be one, as we <are>.**"* John 17:21-

23 ***"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, <art> in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."***

● **I believe in the trinity because of the testimony of scripture concerning the grace of God toward us.**

a. In the inspiration of Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16 *"All scripture <is> given by inspiration of **God**, and <is> profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"* 2 Peter 1:21 *"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of **God** spake <as they were> moved by the **Holy Ghost**."* In these two passages, we see inspiration by God and that men were moved by the Holy Ghost. There were two entities of the godhead at work in inspiration. We see the same thing in the Old Testament in 2 Samuel 23:2,3. *"The **spirit of the LORD** spake by me, and his word <was> in my tongue. **The God of Israel** said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men <must be> just, ruling in the fear of God."*

b. In the work of salvation and sanctification.

*"Elect according to the foreknowledge of **God the Father**, through sanctification of the **Spirit**, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of **Jesus Christ**: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." This verse shows us the work of the Father, the Spirit and the Son in our salvation. -- 1 Peter 1:2.*

Now, look at 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. *"But we are bound to give thanks alway to **God** for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because **God** hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the **Spirit** and belief of the truth: {14} Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our **Lord Jesus Christ**." In this passage, all three persons of the godhead are shown in the work of salvation in us.*

Observe Revelation 5:9: *"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for **thou** wast slain, and hast redeemed us to **God** by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;" Here is the son redeeming the multitude to God by his blood.*

c. In the continuing work of God in our behalf.

Who would not say that Jesus Christ has ascended to the right hand of the Father, ever living, to make intercession for us? *"But this <man>, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. {25} Wherefore **he is able** also to save them to the uttermost that come unto **God** by him, seeing he*

*ever liveth to make intercession for them." -- Hebrews 7:24-25. With this passage, let us also look at "Who is he that condemneth? It is **Christ** that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of **God**, who also maketh intercession for us." -- Romans 8:34.*

The Father sent the Holy Ghost to remain with us as a comforter as the Son appears with the Father as our intercessor. *"And **I** will pray the **Father**, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; {17} <Even> the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." -- John 14:16-17.* The Son of God prayed the Father to send us another comforter, the Holy Spirit. He is with us today while the Son is with the Father waiting the time of his return for us.

This is sufficient to prove the trinity. God is three, and God is one. These scriptures are true and I believe them as well as I believe the ones which amplify the fact that there is one God.

*"Hear, O Israel: **The LORD our God <is>one LORD**: {5} And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." -- Deuteronomy 6:4-5.*

*"But to us <there is but> **one God**, the Father, of whom <are> all things, and we in him; and **one Lord Jesus Christ**, by whom <are> all things, and we by him." -- 1 Corinthians 8:6.*

*"**One Lord**, one faith, one baptism," -- Ephesians 4:5.*