

Binitarian/Ditheistic Monotheism & the Exalted Christ in Church of God Doctrine

Different concepts of God exist throughout the Church of God community and even within each Church of God group. What is the history and background to these beliefs and how do we know which is the correct doctrine?



Craig M White

*A Summary of
Research & References*

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Our purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.

Table of Contents

Some Notes and Comments.....	5
Introductory Remarks	5
In Defence of Binitarianism (or two powers in heaven)	6
Concepts of God.....	11
Difficult Scriptures.....	14
Subordinationism and Two YHWHs	21
Concluding Remarks: Continuing our belief in the exalted Christ and Monotheistic Binitarianism	29
Chart comparing Christ, YHWH, the Angel of the Lord and Michael	30
Appendix. Pre-1978 WCG Quotes on the Nature of God	49
Appendix. The Nature of God and Christ	61
Appendix. List of Scriptures on the Father.....	64
Appendix. Two Divine Beings, not Three	73
Appendix. YHWH and Christ compared	76
Appendix. Notes on John 1:18	78
Appendix. <i>The Divine Christ</i> by David Capes.....	85
Appendix. <i>Seeing the Lord's Glory</i> by Christopher Kaiser.....	89
Appendix. What the Earliest Church 'Fathers' believed	91
Appendix. Scholars Admissions about the 'Trinity' and holy spirit	96
Selected References & Suggested Further Reading.....	99

Some Notes and Comments

Introductory Remarks

In this article we explore a certain aspect of Christology to present to Christians information, proofs and references to bolster the Church of God position.

By way of background, Christology has always fascinated me and has not been an easy doctrine to study or formulate. As a child I was raised a Trinitarian, but upon discovery of the old Worldwide Church of God I was awakened to Binitarianism in its Ditheistic form.

I appreciated the Church's candour and approach and in particular the easy explanation of the composition of the Godhead (sometimes called the 'nature of God') by Herbert W Armstrong and other Church of God authors.

In this short article, I aim to be relaxed and chatty and no attempt is made to be scholarly in approach. Rather I decided to update an earlier short article on this subject and assemble a chart to assist Church members who are puzzled by the various concepts of the nature of God. Also offered in this short article are books and articles one may wish to view or use for research purposes to assist readers in their quest.

Different concepts of God exist throughout the Church of God community and even within each Church of God group. Much of this discussion is kept discrete and this variation was extant even within the old Worldwide Church of God.

This article briefly describes the various views of the Godhead while supporting the Binitarian view that apparently became the official doctrine of the Radio Church of God (name changed to Worldwide Church of God in 1968) around 1938 and Church of God (seventh day) in around 1994. Since the mid-1800s the Church of God and its various daughter churches were divided roughly evenly between Arianism and Unitarianism (with some ministers and members subscribing to binitarianism and even trinitarianism). Even the Seventh-day Adventist Church was predominantly Arian but trinitarianism crept in and they formally adopted the trinity doctrine in 1931.¹

You can read more about the Church of God's historical Christology in various articles and books including chapter 15 of *The Journey. A History of the Church of God (Seventh Day)*, simply titled "Christology."

Appendix. Pre-1978 WCG Quotes on the Nature of God presents quotes from old Worldwide Church of God literature on the subject which the reader would find interesting, particularly if they are of a Church of God background.

¹ The Seventh-day Adventist church holds to the view that Christ is the YHWH of the Old Testament. Refer to Stephen Bauer's two articles on the subject listed in the **Selected References** section.

In Defence of Binitarianism (or ‘two powers in heaven’)

After the Worldwide Church of God fell into apostasy in the early/mid-1990s most the various offshoots continued the binitarian doctrine although some became lax, not taking much of an interest in this doctrine – the usual, tired excuse for their sloppiness in research and lack of zeal and understanding of God’s Word is “it is not important for salvation” – the influences of the years of apostasy has taken its toll and is still among us. Who on earth are they to determine what is important for salvation or not?

Other groups adopted Arian or even Unitarian views (these concepts will be defined in a plain fashion below to assist members confused by all these concepts).

One such group that subscribes to the binitarian view is the United Church of God. It was pleasing to read the section on ‘Were the First-Century Jews Strict Monotheists?’ in a paper *The Nature of God and Christ. Doctrinal Study Paper* by the United Church of God (extract available in **Appendix. The Nature of God and Christ**. Indeed, during the straddling Christ’s ministry, a minority of Jews did subscribe to belief in a second Divine Being as this and other works prove.

Further research over the years confirmed this binitarian view from an historical perspective based on the information I found in two remarkable works. Margaret Baker’s *The Great Angel, A Study of Israel’s Second God* is one work that I somehow came across in the early or mid-1990s (probably from an advertisement in a publication such as *Biblical Archaeology Review*, *Bible Review* or *Bible an Spade*). It is highly recommended reading. The *Two Powers in Heaven* by Alan Segal is another excellent work I stumbled across in the University of Sydney library, around the early 1990s.² These two publications led me to delve deeper into Binitarianism.

While the article “The Gospel of the Memra: Jewish Binitarianism and the Prologue to John” I came across in 2005 (either saw it in a library or was quoted somewhere) but could not find a copy in Australia. However, a kind member in America found the article in a library and scanned it for me.

Following is one quote from *Two Powers in Heaven* referred to above which demonstrates that a form of Binitarianism was a minority view amongst the Jews anciently:

“Though it was difficult to date the rabbinic traditions accurately in many cases, the results showed that the earliest heretics believed in two complementary powers in heaven ... At its beginning, Christianity was rather more “Binitarianism” than Trinitarian, emphasizing only Christ and the Father as God ... There is warrant to believe that “two powers” heresy was manifested in some kinds of Christianity in the first century. The evidence seems to show that Johannine Christianity, at least, was condemned by Jews as “ditheism” and would have considered itself to be “Binitarian”” (pp. x, 7, 218).

Consider also that the early Church was Jewish so to accept Christ as Divine was a big step if the

² “Our understanding of early Judaism and its relationship to Christianity has been significantly advance by Alan Segal’s formative work on the two powers heresy ... Segal’s work has widely influenced Jewish and Christian scholarship. Among its contributions, the study firmly placed early Christological development and controversy in a Jewish setting” (James McGrath and Jerry Truex (2004) in “‘Two Powers’ and Early Jewish Christian Monotheism,” *Journal of Biblical Studies*, Butler University, January, p. 43)

members were strict monotheists or a smaller step if they accepted the heretical position of “two powers in heaven”:

“... the essential steps in treating the exalted³ Christ as divine were taken while Christianity was still almost entirely made up of Jews and dominated by Jewish theological categories.” (Hurtado, LW “The Origins of the Worship of Christ,” p. 5)

... “Nazarene” Christianity [Sabbatarians and adherers to the Law], had a view of Jesus fully compatible with the beliefs favored by the proto-orthodox (indeed, they could be considered part of the circles that made up proto-orthodox Christianity of the time). Pritz contended that this **Nazarene Christianity was the dominant form of Christianity in the first and second centuries** ... the devotional stance toward Jesus that characterized most of the Jewish Christians of the first and second centuries seems to have been congruent with proto-orthodox devotion to Jesus ... **the proto-orthodox “binitarian” pattern of devotion**” (Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ, Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*, pp. 560-561, 618). (emphasis mine)⁴⁵

Further information on the Nazarene’s binitarian belief can be found in the article *Are the Nazarenes and Ebionites the only True Christians?* – details are contained in the bibliography.

So, God is one (Ex 3:2,4; 20:3-4; Deut 6:4; ICor 8:6; John 20:17, 28; Is 44:6; Rev 11:15) but currently composed of two Beings – such is the binitarian formula in its simplest form. While similar to ditheism, it is more unified in concept. However, it has a spectrum of emphasis ranging from Christ inhabiting eternity with the One Who came to be called the Father; to Christ being eternally begotten and of the same substance of the Father; to Christ having a beginning as a created Being; to Christ having been created of a different substance or spirit than God, but is divine. The trinity doctrine, adoptionism et al also have spectrums across their doctrinal positions.

Recently, some trinitarians even accept that the early Church was Binitarian and not Trinitarian:

“The **binitarian formulas are found** in Rom. 8:11, 2 Cor. 4:14, Gal. 1:1, Eph. 1:20, 1 Tim 1:2, 1 Pet. 1:21, and 2 John 1:13 ... No doctrine of the Trinity in the Nicene sense

³ Note the word *exalted* to describe Christ. He is exalted because of His infinite time with the Father. But also because of the Father’s raising to glory His Son:

“Exaltation normally refers to an event in which someone is raised to a position of importance, glory, or public esteem. Jesus’ exaltation is that act of God whereby Jesus was raised from death itself, through resurrection and ascension to the position of preeminence in the cosmos and heaven, to share in the power and glory of the Father, and to sit at the right hand of the Father as His Vice-regent.” (Peter Toon in “Historical Perspectives on the Doctrine of Christ’s Ascension, Pt 1: Resurrected and Ascended: The Exalted Jesus,” *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 140, No. 559, 1 July 1983, pp. 203-204.)

⁴ Hurtado has been acclaimed for his research efforts in his published work *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* wherein He demonstrates the binitarian nature of God.

Refer also to <https://trinitities.org/blog/podcast-100-dr-larry-hurtado-on-god-in-new-testament-theology/> where Hurtado’s book *God in New Testament Theology* is discussed.

⁵ It is interesting that Sabbatarians promoted the belief that Christ was the YHWH of the Old Testament:

“At the same time, English Puritans were probably the first to teach that Jesus was none other than YHWH, the God of the Old Testament. Edward Stennet and John Spittlehouse called Christ Jehova Jesus in the 1650s. Anglican Francis Bampfield, a graduate of Oxford, and at one time prebend of Exeter Cathedral, wrote in his 1677 book *The Seventh Day Sabbath - The Desirable Day*, that “The LORD Jesus Christ, who is Redeemer, was Creator...Jehovah Christ as Mediator did himself at Mount Sinai proclaim the law of Ten Words.” His brother, Thomas Bampfield, also held in 1692 that Jesus Christ, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, instituted the Sabbath in the beginning in *An enquiry whether the Lord Jesus Christ made the world, and be Jehovah, and gave the moral law? and whether the fourth command be repealed or altered?* Thomas had been Speaker of the House of Commons in 1659.” (Wesley White (2008) *The Roots of Our Belief*, pp. 6-7)

is present in the New Testament ... **There is no doctrine of the Trinity in the strict sense in the Apostolic Fathers...**" (William Rusch, *The Trinitarian Controversy*, pp. 2-3) (emphasis mine)

For additional information regarding how flimsy the trinity doctrine is and the admissions of scholars and theologians, refer to **Appendix. Scholars Admissions about the 'Trinity.'**

Now turn to ICor 8:16 which is sometimes known as the Christian Sh'ma:

"yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist."

"This text, written within twenty years of the Lord's Resurrection – arguably in the spring of 55 - testifies to a Christological understanding common among believers ("for us"). Paul does not introduce it as expressing a new insight. On the contrary, he delivers it with the assurance of a recognized creedal formula ...

The "our God" (*Eloheinu*) in the Sh'ma was the "one Father" of the "one Lord" (*Adonai 'echad*), Jesus Christ. Thus, the assertion "Jesus is Lord" did not add anything to the monotheistic faith of the apostles. It simply illustrated what the Sh'ma already contained; it expressed Jesus' association with God by confessing him within the terms of Israel's monotheism. It identified Jesus as the "Lord," *Ho On* (the "I AM") who spoke to Moses in the Burning Bush." ("The Christian *Sh'ma*," *Touchstone*, July/August, 2016, p. 56).⁶

Bucur in his "Early Christian Binitarianism: From Religious Phenomenon to Polemical Insult to Scholarly Concept" notes how early Christians such as Justin Martyr believed in this concept while others such as Gregory of Nazianzus strove against binitarians and urged them to adopt trinitarianism (refer to the **Appendix. What the Earliest Fathers believed** for actual quotes from the earliest decades after Christ on what was taught even by non-Sabbatarians). Another is Callistus whom Bucur quotes as stating:

"I will not profess belief in two Gods, Father and Son, but in one ... I shall not indeed speak of two Gods, but of one, yet of two persons" (*Noet.* 10-11, 14 quoted in Bucur, p. 115).

In footnote 21 Bucur provides us with the following insight:

"Hurtado (*Lord Jesus Christ*, pp. 4, 7, 2) stresses the idea that "the origins of cultic veneration of Jesus have to be pushed back into the first two decades of the Christian movement" and that the high Christology implied by this Christian binitarianism "began amazingly early", "astonishingly early", "phenomenally early"."

My recommended references to interested readers who wish to explore binitarianism further are⁷:

⁶ Andrew Chester provides a good explanation: "Christ is given the supreme, distinctive divine name *YHWH* (denoted as *kyrios*) the fact that he [Paul] uses the Shema shows that beyond any doubt. Thus he makes Christ fully one with God, in the strongest possible Jewish terms, sharing in the divine name as well as the divine act of creation" ("High Christology— Whence, When and Why?" *Early Christianity* Vol. 2, pp. 36-37)

⁷ Refer also to Shayne Cohen's lecture *The One God Who is Two* <https://www.courses.com/harvard-university/the-hebrew-scriptures-in-judaism-and-christianity/21> For some further interesting information, refer to *Jesus Monotheism* by C Fletcher-Louis

- Margaret Barker - *The Great Angel, A Study of Israel's Second God*.
- Alan Segal - *Two Powers in Heaven*.⁸
- Daniel Boyarin - "The Gospel of the Memra: Jewish Binitarianism and the Prologue to John," *Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 94, No. 3 (July, 2001), pp. 243-284.
- Brian Fulton - "Two Powers in Heaven. The Nature of God Controversy in First-Century Judaism".
- James McGrath and Jerry Truex – "'Two Powers' and Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism".
- Christopher Kaiser - "YHWH Texts in Early Judaism and the New Testament: Disjunctive or Doxological?" *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 64, Nos. 3–4, pp. 27-70.
- Shaul Magid - *The Case of Jewish Arianism: The Pre-existence of the Zaddik in Early Hasidism*, pp. 97–110 in *Time and Eternity in Jewish Mysticism: That Which is Before and That Which is After*.
- Carey Newman (et al, eds), *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism*.

Of great interest to binitarians is how close some trinitarians are to admitting they are wrong. For example

"In sum, the NT does [sic] testify to the Spirit's distinct personhood and divinity, but **mutedly and ambiguously**. The Spirit is the NT is personally less distinct than the Father and Son, and His divinity less clearly stated; He appears as nearly transparent

⁸ Michael Heiser discusses Segal's book on his website <http://twopowersinheaven.com/>:

"For the orthodox Israelite, Yahweh was both sovereign and vice regent—occupying both "slots" as it were at the head of the divine council. **The binitarian portrayal of Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible** was motivated by this belief. **The ancient Israelite knew two Yahwehs—one invisible, a spirit, the other visible, often in human form**. The two Yahwehs at times appear together in the text, at times being distinguished, at other times not.

Early Judaism understood this portrayal and its rationale. There was no sense of a violation of monotheism since either figure was indeed Yahweh. There was no second distinct god running the affairs of the cosmos. During the Second Temple period, Jewish theologians and writers speculated on an identity for the second Yahweh. Guesses ranged from divinized humans from the stories of the Hebrew Bible to exalted angels. These speculations were not considered unorthodox. That acceptance changed when certain Jews, the early Christians, connected Jesus with this orthodox Jewish idea. This explains why these Jews, the first converts to following Jesus the Christ, could simultaneously worship the God of Israel and Jesus, and yet refuse to acknowledge any other god. **Jesus was the incarnate second Yahweh**. In response, as Segal's work demonstrated, Judaism pronounced the two powers teaching a heresy sometime in the second century A.D." [emphasis mine] Refer also to Michael Burgos, "The Angel of Yahweh", *The American Journal of Biblical Theology*, 1 August 2021, pp. 1-24.

In another "The Divine Council," *Lexham Bible Dictionary*, Heiser states "The way Yahweh filled the positions both of supreme ruler and vice-regent is also shown by His occasional visible appearances (Hamori "When"; Hamori, "Embodiment"; Sommer, *The Bodies of God*). For example, the Angel of Yahweh is sometimes indistinguishable from Yahweh (e.g., Exod 3:1–14). The Angel is said to have Yahweh's "Name" in him (Exod 23:20–23). Scholars have long noted the presence of a "name theology" in the Hebrew Bible (Mettinger "Dethronement"; Huffmon, "Name") where the name is another way of referring to Yahweh Himself. Thus, Yahweh was in the Angel, and yet Yahweh and the Angel could be simultaneously present (Judg 6). Both the God of Israel and the Angel are said to have brought Israel out of Egypt (Judg 2:1–3; 1 Sam 8:8; Micah 6:4)—an observation that makes Deut 4:37 **an important consideration for binitarianism**, since that verse tells us the "Presence" of Yahweh was responsible for the deliverance from Egypt. **The divine presence must be understood as Yahweh Himself, His "essence" as it were**. The angel—as co-regent—fills Baal's role as El's warrior. It is the angel who led Israel to the promised land as the captain of the Lord's host, "sword drawn in his hand" (חַרְבּוֹ שְׁלוֹפָהָ) *ḥarbo sheluphah beyado*—a precise description found in only two other places in the Hebrew Bible, both of which describe the angel of Yahweh (Num 22:23; 1 Chr 21:16). The result is that—while orthodox Yahwism could not accommodate cosmic rule being shared by two separate and distinct deities (El and Baal)—it could tolerate Yahweh in two personages. That the angel had the presence/name/essence of Yahweh in him, but was a distinct personage, meant he "was but wasn't" Yahweh.

The Israelite binitarian godhead is also indicated by the "rider on the clouds" motif in the Hebrew Bible. This epithet was a well-known title for Baal (Herrmann, "Rider upon the Clouds")." [emphasis mine]

agent for God and Christ. **One properly concludes that the NT is overall clearly binitarian in its data, and probably trinitarian**" (C. Plantinga, "Trinity," *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, pp. 916-17). [emphasis mine]

Further detail for the above references are found in the *References* section at the rear of this article.

Another view, known as Unitarianism, holds to a belief that Christ did not have pre-existence until His human birth. This is now a growing belief throughout Christendom and the Churches of God and you will find that it is still taught by the Christadelphians, Church of God (Abrahamic Faith), Ken Westby (Associates for Christian Development), Ron Weinland (Church of God – Preparing for the Kingdom of God) and various websites and articles which abound.

Some Church of God (seventh day) affiliates have readopted this belief in recent years, reviving what was a doctrine almost dead among the Church of God (this doctrine had some life in the 1930s, but was still a minority belief in those days).

Researcher Douglas McCready has discussed some scholars who argue for adoptionism. To understand this heresy better and to therefore be able to hold one's own in conversation on this topic, one may wish to read his article "He Came Down from Heaven: The Preexistence of Christ Revisited," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 40, no. 3, 1 Sept 1997, pp. 421-28.

Even Messianics are going into battle over it. On one end some Messianics are compromising more and more with Protestantism. On the other extreme others are becoming so 'Old Testament only' as to minimise Christ - the war is over Christ's true identity and I wonder where it will all end?

This variation of Unitarianism, traced to the second century, is known as Adoptionism and later a form of it became known as Socianism after Laelius Socinus and Faustus Socinus. The latter formed the Unitarian Church in Poland in the 1500s, although this extreme form of Unitarianism predated them by centuries. Some are even trying to attribute this belief to Dr Arius, although this seems implausible for I have seen quotes by him which are clearly of the firm belief that Christ pre-existed (ie Christ was God's first creation or firstborn) but at other times seem almost Binitarian.⁹

My hope is that the Church of God community does not over-react to Socianism so that we put greater emphasis on Christ than the Father. For instance, some have said that the sabbath-observing groups over the ages chiefly proclaimed Christological connections to the holy days - this is inaccurate:

Thoughts that come to mind regarding those advocating such a position are:

1. The onus is on those making such claims to prove it;

⁹ Concerning the Jehovah's Witness organisation's view on the concept of Christ being God's firstborn of creation, a Protestant critic states: "It is evident, therefore, that the matter is likely not settled. Millions of Jehovah's Witnesses, although honestly seeking to uphold the truth of God's Word, may or may not have a proper understanding of the Son of God and Saviour of humanity. Regardless of the conclusion of this study, many God-seeking and honest people cannot help but benefit by having a clearer picture of the theology implied by declaring Jesus to be the firstborn of creation." (p. 77) "The very fact that scholars are still debating these teachings today implies that the answer is not so categorically conclusive." (p. 80) (Lucy Trahan, *Is there Scriptural Legitimacy for Jehovah's Witnesses' Christology of the 'Firstborn's the First of God's Created Beings?*) Many Church of God groups take the 'firstborn' to refer to Christ being the first in order of entry into God's Kingdom via the resurrection.

2. What little we know of what was taught about the holy days over the centuries was more on their ceremonial requirement and prophetic connections;

3. IF they taught mainly Christological connections in the past, why should we go back to that – to a lower order of understanding? We must go forward with deeper understanding because during the past century we have witnessed an explosion in Biblical knowledge.

The Scriptures indicate that knowledge shall increase in the end time (Dan. 12:4). This is often accomplished by building on the understanding, knowledge and research of predecessors. Not only is raw knowledge increased, but so is qualitative value-adding to doctrine with deeper and more meaningful insights.

4. Finally, it is the few Protestants that take an interest in feast day typology who chiefly see Christ in them. Not us! And it is those within our various fellowships that have watered-down so many of our beliefs that want to preach Christ. He is indeed in the Holy Days, but that is not the Biblical emphasis: Rather, He is the agent for the Father to manage His Plan which is outlined in the Holy Days.

That is the chief emphasis for these days. Diminishing the Father is not an option.

The Holy Days have many levels or facets of which Christ's role is one and of course, very important. But these days are chiefly concerning the seven stages in God the Father's Plan which is implemented through Christ. These Days are not mainly about Christ at all.

Consider also what the old Worldwide Church of God taught was that the Holy Days first and foremost showed us the Plan of God. These days have Christological, historical, spiritual, and prophetic aspects to them demonstrating important parts of His Plan for mankind and us personally.

Protestant writers who see typology of Christ in these feast days are often blurred in their interpretation of them. Why? Because most of them are so overwhelmed by 'preaching Christ' in the wrong sense rather than in the way HWA taught, that they put wrong emphasis on Christ being in or the main aspect of the Holy Days. However, God's Plan for man is the main emphasis of these days with Christ as the facilitator of these days. Of course, He is in them and that should be taught and one can undertake a wonderful Bible study on that part of it - however, emphasising Christ often leads to watering-down other aspects of the Holy Days and this then leads to watering-down of the Gospel to emphasise Christ's name and person rather than His message (including a warning message).

Concepts of God

Concepts of Father, Son and Holy Spirit by Matthew Alfs is a work I found advertised in a periodical and ordered a copy around 1987 or 1988. Alfs explores the various definitions of the nature of God in a succinct and straight-forward format and I highly recommend it for the inquisitive mind. I

recommend it as it is short and an easy read.¹⁰

However, below I offer my own very brief definitions concerning the nature of God which I trust the reader will find beneficial.

Trinity:

The union of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit which together form one Godhead – three separate but one Being. This, they admit, is a mystery. Trinitarians claim to be monotheistic, but this is not possible unless they interpreted this belief in a Modalistic fashion.

Around 18 versions of the trinity doctrine are extant. For instance the Greek Orthodox Church's definition:

“the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Logos, and the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, are of the same essence, *Homoousios*, of the Father. In the personal attributions of the Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity, **the Father begot the Son and from the Father proceeds the Holy Spirit**. The Son, the Second Person of the Trinity, sends the Holy Spirit to guide His Church (cf. John 15:26). The nature and attributes of the Persons of the Holy Trinity are revealed through Jesus Christ. The truth can be reached only by faith, being above and beyond human comprehension.” (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, <http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith7063>) [emphasis mine]

From the above we can see that the Eastern Orthodox formula contains strong elements of Binitarianism,¹¹ likely an iteration or continuum of its original, ancient position on the doctrine, but now wrapped up into a Trinitarian formula.¹²

Binitarianism:

Two Beings or Persons composing the Godhead. Classic Binitarianism claims to be monotheistic – two separate Beings yet a single Godhead. One form of Binitarianism may be labelled ‘ditheism’ because of its emphasis on the twoness of God. This concept is known nowadays as ‘two powers in heaven.’

¹⁰ Another is *The Son of God. Three Views of the Identity of Jesus* which contains discussions and debates from three scholars representing the Trinitarian, Arian and Socinian views. The Binitarian view is not represented despite its growing acceptance.

¹¹ Authors Kovach and Schemm attempt to prove to their fellow Christians that early (non-Sabbatarian) Christianity's trinity formula had Christ as subordinate to the Father (which actually shows that it was initially Binitarian but later added in the Holy Spirit as a third Being. They even quote the Nicene Creed which included “one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten from the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things came into being ...” (Kovach Schemm (1999), “A Defense of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son”, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Vol. 42, No. 3, p. 465)

“Jesus Christ is eternally the Son of God ... Only one already existing could be sent ... Thus, the Son is seen as the eternal Son of God sent by the Father ... God is the eternal origin of all things and Christ is the eternal agent (1Cor 8:6)” (pp. 471, 472)

In footnote 69 they add: “There is never any reference in the biblical text to the Holy Spirit as the agent of creation. Jesus is not only the agent of creation, but also sustainer of the universe (Col 1:17)”. How true, for the Holy Spirit is not a third personage.

¹² I recall from my readings many years ago that the earliest references to a ‘trinity’ amongst Christians was not like that which evolved and developed later. Instead, it appears to be more like the eternal Father Whom eternally begot Christ (ie He was begotten, not made) from Whom the non-person Holy Spirit emanated. This appears similar to Unitarianism than later Trinitarianism.

A further interpretation of Binitarianism is that at some time in the distant past, the Beings we call God the Father and Christ somehow agreed to different roles as explained by Herbert W Armstrong. So Christ became subordinate to the Father Whom thereafter became the Most High God. This understanding led to the view that the YHWH of the 'Old' Testament referred to the One Who became Christ in many instances; in a few instances YHWH, however, referred to God the Father.

The word YHWH occurs around 6,800 times in the Scriptures – it would be a mammoth but worthwhile task to determine which occasions it refers to the Father and on which occasions to the Son. Or perhaps a computer specialist could attempt computer modelling to assist with such a determination.

Another view of Binitarianism exalts Christ to Godship and worship. It basically suggests or states that Christ was eternally generated or formed directly from the very substance of the Father (or generated from eternity). Or that He brought forth Christ from His very spirit, giving Christ eternal spirit and memory, power and authority, making Him fully Divine and very God. This elevates Christ to full Godship or Divinity.

Of course, there is every interpretation and belief between the two aforementioned views ranging from Christ's eternal co-existence with the Father to one which is very close to Arianism.

The above views are also known as 'High Christology' given his status as God.

It should also be explained here that Binitarianism is not just a 'cut down' version of the Trinity – in other words it is not just an expression of two compared to an expression of three as the above proves.

Arianism:

Relating to Arius and his doctrine on Christ, this view maintains that Christ was created by the Father. As such he could be neither of the same substance nor coeternal with the Father. Rather, Christ was created in the eternal past to be God's agent to create everything else, including angels and the worlds. He is a god and not God. (this is another variant of 'two powers in heaven')

There are various forms or interpretations of Arianism ranging from an almost Binitarian position to one described above to an almost Unitarian belief as described below.

NB: Both Binitarianism and Arianism come under the 'two powers in heaven' research that is continuing to be developed and extended by scholars. Also, note that some forms of Trinitarianism, Binitarianism and Arianism believe that Christ was also Michael the Archangel or God's chief messenger, but that is only a minority view.

Unitarianism (One God):

Unlike Trinitarianism which defines God as three persons in one and as an unfathomable mystery, this belief maintains that there is only one God and that Christ did not exist before his human birth. To Unitarians Christ is God's Son either at his conception or birth or baptism or resurrection or his

ascension – in other words, like all other definitions of the nature of God, it also has rival interpretations and explanations.

Unitarianism, or interpretations thereof, is sometimes known as Adoptionism or Dynamic Monarchianism or Conception Christology. It contains all sorts of forms which are close to Arianism and even a form which seems a bit Trinitarian!

Faustus Socinus in the 16th century revived Unitarianism in Poland which has become known as Socinianism. You can read all about him and his theological successors in various encyclopaedias.

This view is called ‘Low Christology’ by scholars because it maintains Christ as the human Messiah only. One who is empowered by God to act in His name and whom is normally appointed by oath – a sort of divine man, but not God or pre-existing Being.

Their stance that Christ had no existence prior to His birth except in the mind and plans of God is a serious error. As academic Christopher Wright explains:

“For without the Old Testament, Jesus quickly loses reality and becomes a stained-glass window” (*Knowing Jesus Through the Old Testament*, p. 251).

Modalism:

This view of the Godhead sees God as a single Being who projects or manifests Himself in various ways as God the Father in the Old Testament; Jesus Christ in the New, was the mode God manifested Himself as. However, after Christ’s ascension, then God manifested Himself as the holy spirit.

Unlike the Trinity doctrine, it believes in one God and not in the distinctiveness of three Beings in one. To the Modalist, these three various modes are consecutive (not simultaneous).

Each of the above concepts have their own interpretations or explanation of course, adding to the confusion in many minds, even within the Church of God community.

Difficult Scriptures

When we delve into the Scriptures in an attempt to understand the nature or composition of the Godhead, we find that difficulties in understanding them arise due to modern interpretation¹³, misunderstandings and tradition.

So that the reader has a grasp of this situation, I present sample Scriptures below that illustrate this.

For instance is the Father the particular YHWH (Jehovah) called “Almighty God” in Gen 17:1 as He is called the Lord God Almighty in the Book of Revelation (Rev 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22)?

¹³ “One of the greatest obstacles we face in trying to interpret the Bible is that we are inclined to think in our own cultural and linguistic categories.

This is no surprise since our categories are often all that we have, but it is a problem because our own categories often do not suffice and sometimes mislead” (John Walton, “Genesis”, *NIV Application Commentary*, pp. 67-68).

Or is it the One Whom became Christ?

“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the **Almighty God**; walk before me, and be thou perfect.” (Gen 17:1)

But in Genesis 48:3 we read:

“And Jacob said unto Joseph, **God Almighty** appeared unto me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me”

...

“And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.” (Gen 48:15-16)¹⁴

So Who is the Almighty God of Genesis 17:3? The One Who is known as the Most High God or the subject Being Who became Jesus Christ? Remember, Christ can also be the Angel of the Lord.

So what of the Angel of the Lord?

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

And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them” (Ex 13:21-22).

“Behold, I **send an Angel before thee**, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.

Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: **for my name is in him**” (Ex 23:20-21).

One of my favourite researchers, Walter Kaiser explains the above:

“The angel mentioned here cannot be Moses, God’s messenger, or an ordinary angel; for the expressions are too high for any of these: “he will not forgive your rebellion” (who can forgive sin but God alone?) And my Name is in him” (v.22). This must be the Angel of the Covenant (cf. Isa 63:9; Mal 3:1) ... Just as Yahweh’s name resided in his temple (Deut 12:5,11; 1 Kings 8:29), **so this Angel with the authority and prestige of the name of God was evidence enough that God himself was present in his Son**. Obedience to the Angel would result in all of the blessings listed in the text. Israel was commanded: “Do not rebel against him (v.21); yet they did just

¹⁴ Hannah 1999, p. 19 notes that “In nearly every case when one of these terms appears in a patriarchal narrative there is a curious oscillation between the angel and Yahweh. At times ... speaks not as a messenger, but as if he is to be identified with Yahweh. In some cases the identification of the angel with Yahweh seems explicit ...” and “the Exodus angel carries the divine Name. The Name of God was a way of affirming God’s presence, especially in the Tabernacle or Temple” (p. 21). [emphasis mine]

that (Num 14:11; Ps 78:17,40,56)" (Walter Kaiser, *Exodus, Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, p. 446).

Earlier in the volume he claims

"How God led the Israelites (v.17) is now explained. This single "pillar" (14:24), which was a cloud by day and a fire by night, ... was a visible presence of Yahweh in their midst. The pillar of the cloud and fire was but another name for "the angel of God," for Exodus 14:19 equates the two as does 23:20-23. In fact, God's Name was "in" this angel who went before them to bring them into Canaan (23:220-23). He was the "angel of his presence" (Isa 63:8-9). Malachi 3:1 calls this angel the "messenger of the covenant," who is equated with the Lord, the owner of the temple. **Obviously, then, the Christ of the NT is the Shekinah glory or [the 'ultimate'] Yahweh of the OT. Through this cloudy pillar the Lord would speak to Moses (33:9-11) and to the people (Ps 99:6-7). Such easy movement from the pillar of cloud and fire to the angel of the Lord himself has already been met in the same interchange between the burning bush, the angel, and the Lord in chapter 3" (p. 385).¹⁵**

Noted binitarian author, David Capes, similarly explains:

"The angel of the Lord," for example, refers to an angel in whom the name of God dwells (Exod. 23:20-21). In some cases, it is difficult to distinguish between the angel of the Lord and the Lord himself (Gen. 16:7-14; 22:11-18)." (p. 7)

Here is further Scriptural proof:

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord [Gr = despotēs] God, and **our Lord [Gr = kurios] Jesus Christ.**

I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that **the Lord [Gr = kurios], having saved the people out of the land of Egypt,** afterward destroyed them that believed not." (Jude 1:4-5)

The above shows us the Kurios or Lord (or Angel of the Lord) who saved Israel from Egypt, was none other than the One Who became Jesus Christ.¹⁶

¹⁵ Note also Ex 33:2. **"The move in verse 2 from the messenger to the first person pronoun (as also in 23:20-23; cf: 3:2; 14:19) indicates that the messenger is God himself."** [emphasis mine].

Joyce Baldwin, *The Message of Genesis 12-50, The Bible Speaks Today*, notes "The angel had appeared at three crisis-points in his life, at Bethel (28:13), in Paddan-aram (31:11,13) and at Peniel (32:24-30). **Jacob had recognised this angel as God himself**, so that he called the place where he wrestled with the angel **'the face of God'** (Peniel). **Through the intervention of the angel God had rescued him** from both Laban and Esau, and had brought him home in safety, according to his promise. The angel who had so protected him he calls his 'redeemer' (Heb. *go'el*), the one who stepped in to rescue a relative in time of trouble (cf. Lv 25:25-28; Nu 35:19) ... This then was the God whom Jacob-Israel prayed as he adopted his two grandchildren so that they could play a leading part as inheritors of the promises" (p. 202) [emphasis mine] "... he *became their Saviour ... saved them. Angel of his presence*: literally 'of his face'. We recognize people by face; **'face' is the Lord's very own presence** (Ps 139:7), among them in the person of his angel - that unique 'angel of the Lord' (e.g. Gn 16:7ff; 21:17; 22:11,15; Ex 3:2; 14:19; 23:20-23; Mal 3:1) who speaks as the Lord and is yet distinct from him, in whom the holy God 'accommodates' himself to live among sinners, an Old Testament anticipation of Jesus" (Alec Motyer, *Isaiah. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries*, pp. 386-87). [emphasis mine]

¹⁶ Refer to the articles *Lord of Jesus? Metzger's Comments on Jude 1:5* and "Who Led the Israelites Out of Egypt? An Examination of Jude 5," *Foundations*, Nov 2018, pp. 21-33 for proof that Christ is referred to in this scripture.

By 'rightly dividing the Word of truth' we can determine which references to the Angel of Lord is YHWH and which are possibly another angelic being whom is empowered by God to act in His name. This is not an easy exercise and takes some thought, contemplation, patience and discipline.

Another Scripture that puzzles many is Isaiah 9:6:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **The mighty God, The everlasting Father**, The Prince of Peace." (Is 9:6)¹⁷

Note that this prophecy concerning Jesus Christ calls Him "The mighty God" which reminds us of Genesis 17:1. Yet God the Father is called "the Almighty God" in other Scriptures such as those listed above.

"*Everlasting Father* has no exact parallel; ... *Father* signifies the paternal benevolence of the perfect Ruler over a people whom He loves as His children" (Derek Kidner, *Isaiah, New Bible Commentary*, p. 597).

So we continue to ask the question: "how can Christ, God the Father's Son, also be called "the everlasting Father"?"

"... *Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*" At least, this is the way it is usually translated. But the basis for so doing is very dubious, since the Hebrew reads *'abi 'ad*, which literally means "Father of Eternity." It is true that both *'abi* and *'ad* are often used as constructs in an adjectival sense and might be so construed here, were it not for the context. The preceding portion of the verse stresses His sonship in terms suggestive of His incarnation, in such a way as to make an assertion of His paternity or paternal status within the Godhead seem quite incongruous. For this reason we should understand this phrase in the most literal way, that He is father of (that is, the author of) *'ad*, a term meaning "perpetuity," used at least nineteen times in connection with *olam* ("age," "eternity"). It usually points to the indefiniteness of continuing future and is often used to imply "eternal" or "everlasting," in much the same way as *olam* is used. In other words, *'abi* and *olam* seem to be synonymous and may even be substituted for each other without any change of meaning.

"In view of the above, it seems reasonable to understand the phrase as *'abi 'ad* "Father of Eternity" - not in the sense of beginningless and endless eternity (such as would be predicated of God), but in the sense of all the stretch of time between the beginning of creation and its ultimate termination. In other words, **this title points**

¹⁷The Brenton's *Translation of the Septuagint* translation has it as "For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, whose government is upon his shoulder: and his name is called the Messenger of great counsel: for I will bring peace upon the princes, and health to him. ⁷His government shall be great, and of his peace there is no end: *it shall be* upon the throne of David, and *upon* his kingdom, to establish it, and to support *it* with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth and forever. The seal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this."

Grudem in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son* writes: "A reasonable explanation is that the term "**Father**" is not used here in the sense of a Trinitarian title but rather in another Old Testament meaning, that of a "**Benevolent Protector.**" The note to the *ESV Study Bible* explains, "a 'father' here is a benevolent protector (cf. Isa. 22:21; Job 29:16), which is the task of the ideal king and is also the way God himself cares for his people (cf. Isa. 63:16; 64:8; Ps. 103:13). (That is, this is not using the Trinitarian title, "Father" for the Messiah; rather, it is portraying him as a king.)" *ESV Study Bible*, page 1257" (pp. 237-38) [emphasis mine]

to Christ as the Creator of the world - the world viewed as a continuum - the fullest statement of which is found in John 1:3 ("All things came into being through Him...")" (Gleason Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*, p. 268).

Or perhaps it is because Christ represents the Father in a number of facets, a concept which is found throughout the Bible. Similarly there are various ones whom are empowered by God to act in His name and whom may be appointed by oath for this purpose.

Here is another view concerning this mysterious Scripture:

"Jesus is not only our shepherd; He is our "everlasting father." ... in whom dwells "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (George R. Knight (editor), *Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 508-509).¹⁸

Then there is Bishop Alexander of Alexandria's (4th century AD) Christological formula:

"*always [a] God, always [a] Son, at the same time [a] Father, at the same time [a] Son, ...*" (quoted in Adolf Harnack, *History of Dogma*, vol. 1, ch. 1).

Yet another view is that the Hebrew title "Everlasting Father" is correctly translated "My Father is Everlasting."

While others feel it should be translated as

"For a child has been born to us, a son given to us, and the authority is upon his shoulder, and the wondrous adviser, the mighty EL, the everlasting Father, called his name, "the prince of peace."

In any event, following are some of the most noteworthy verses that lend to this understanding and which throw further light on the issue:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, See, **I have made thee a god [elohim] to Pharaoh**: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." (Ex 7:1)

"And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and **thou shalt be to him instead of God.**" (Ex 4:16)

"Then **Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father**, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him." (IChron 29:23)

"And of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen **Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD** over Israel." (IChron 28:5)

¹⁸ "The parable of the good shepherd in Jn 10:1-16, which has this oracle [Ezekiel 34:23-31] as its OT background, implies Jesus' claim to be the Davidic Messiah: the 'one shepherd' of Jn 10:16 is a deliberate echo of the same phrase here in v.23 (see also 37:22-24) ... See also the close relation between I, the LORD, and my servant David in v.24 is reproduced in the close relation between the Father and the Son in their joint protection of the sheep in Jn 10:27-29" (Frederick Bruce, *Ezekiel, The Pickering Bible Commentary for Today*, p. 890).

“Blessed be **the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne, to be king for the LORD thy God**: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice.” (IIChron 9:8)

“**I have said, Ye [a senior council of angels or perhaps priests] are gods**; and all of you *are* children of the most High.” (Ps 82:6)

“In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and **the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD** before them.” (Zech 12:8)

Scholars recognise that

“At its most basic level, Jesus is God’s envoy. In the ancient world, a duly authorized representative (an agent) had the power to speak and act in the name of the sender. Thus the rabbinic saying “A man’s agent is like himself” (*m. Berakoth* 5:5) means that Jesus (as God’s agent) is authorised both to work for and to speak for the Sender” (Gary Burge, *John, NIV Application Commentary*, p. 193).

“since in Hebrew thought the occupant of the throne of David was regarded as God’s representative, it is in this sense that the king could be addressed as God.” (Donald Guthrie in *Hebrews: An Introduction and Commentary, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, Vol. 15, p. 81. Professor James McGrath exhibits similar sentiments in his article “How Jesus Became God: Scholar’s View”, p. 4).

It is in this sense that the above Scriptures may be understood.

Note for example

“And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.” (John 12:45)

“Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father?” (John 14:9)

“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.” (Deut 18:18)

“For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.” (John 12:49)

Take another example, this time dealing with Saul’s persecution of the Christ’s followers:

“As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.

Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”
(Acts 8:3-4)

“And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,
And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*” (Acts 9:1-5)

By attacking the Church, Saul was also attacking Jesus Christ! Here are what two commentaries have to say about this:

“Saul came to realize something of the organic and indissoluble unity that exists between Christ and his own. For though he believed he was only persecuting the followers of Jesus, **the heavenly interpretation of his action was that he was persecuting the risen Christ himself**” (Richard Longenecker, *Acts, Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9, p. 371).

“Thus the effect of this vision was to indicate to Saul that in persecuting Christians he was persecuting Jesus (Lk. 10:16), but above all that in persecuting Jesus he was persecuting One who had now attained to a heavenly status and was thus shown to be vindicated and upheld by God. **Paul's zeal for the cause of God had turned into an attack on the God who raised Jesus from the dead ...**” (I. Howard Marshall, *Acts, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, p. 170).

Parents and families would identify with this. An attack upon one of their own is as if it were very personal.

Other Scriptures portray similar sentiments:

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.”
(Matt 25:40)

“And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;
Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.” (Col 3:23-24)

“Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.” (Eph 6:6-7)

Because Christians are God's precious children, woe to anyone that causes them to fall or falter – to

leave the Truth and lose salvation. Their fate is sealed:

“But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” (Matt 18:6-7)

Finally, the texts are not easy to categorise or fully understand Whom is the One that is referred to as YHWH: the Father, Son, Angel of the Lord and so on. This is because one must be dedicated to reading the text in context so that its true meaning and aspect can be comprehended and understood. Bible study, therefore, takes effort and nurturing.

Subordinationism and Two YHWHs

We should now turn to another matter that puzzles some members – the concept of subordinationism and if there was more than one YHWH recorded in the Bible. (refer to **Appendix. *Seeing the Lord's Glory by Christopher Kaiser*** for further proofs)

The subordinationist position is usually associated with Arianism. However, it is also found within Binitarianism/Ditheism. Herbert W Armstrong, for instance, taught that sometime in the past, one God Being became the Most High God and was named such in the Old Testament; or God the Father in the New Testament.¹⁹

The other became known as YHWH (although the Father is also YHWH in many instances), the Angel of the Lord and Melchizedek in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New.²⁰

The old WCG was, therefore, clearly Binitarian with a Ditheistic flavour.

A good, succinct definition of this concept may be found in *Wikipedia*:

“Subordinationism is a doctrine in Christian theology which holds that the Son and the Holy Spirit are subordinate to God the Father in nature and being. Subordinationism, in its various forms, was an Early Christian doctrine until the mid 4th century, when the Arian controversy was finally settled, after many decades of debates, with the formulation of the doctrine of Trinity.

¹⁹ Herbert W Armstrong in a Bible Study, “The Spiritual Law vs Rituals” (21 January 1984):

“But in the early Church, when it was all Jewish, there was opposition. And the first opposition to the Church was simply... Well, in the first place, they didn't even believe that Jesus was the Christ. Once they accepted that, then wanted to fasten on the Church the RITUALS of the law of Moses and circumcision. Now the rituals of the law of Moses is something I'm going to explain a little later, as we go along.

All right, the third thing that happened next — this opposition put an emphasis on Jesus as the Messiah, and it had a tendency to de-emphasize God the Father. Now bear that in mind ... And so the de-emphasizing of God the Father came on, and they began to look on Jesus as God.”

https://www.hwalibrary.com/cgi-bin/mobile/m_hwa.cgi?action=getbstudyav&InfoID=1334763361

²⁰ The word YHWH occurs around 6,800 times in the Scriptures – it would be a mammoth but worthwhile task to determine which occasions it refers to the Father and on which occasions to the Son. Or perhaps a computer specialist could attempt computer modelling to assist with such a determination.

Subordinationism has some commonalities with Arianism, but has some differences. While Arius and his followers were certainly also subordinationist, the Arians went even further to assert that the Son, as a creature, is virtually ignorant of the Creator, the only One who was accepted to have the full divine nature according to the Christian apophaticism. Subordinationism thrived at the same time as Arianism (fourth century AD), but long survived it. Its chief proponents in the fourth century were Eusebius of Caesarea and Eusebius of Nicomedia, both of whom had once given support to Arius. Athanasius battled Subordinationism throughout his career as bishop of Alexandria, often labelling it as Arianism. This was a rhetorical tactic which both highlighted what he believed was its logical outworking, and caricatured it.

Subordinationism is to be distinguished from the widely held view of "relational subordination" or "economic subordination." In relational subordination, both God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are said to be subordinate to God the Father because they never command the Father, but rather do the will of the Father. Consistent with the Trinitarian view, this does not mean that God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are in any way inferior to the Father by nature or being. On the contrary, both the Son and the Spirit are held to be co-equal and co-eternal with the Father because they are of the same being or substance as the Father. Yet, Christ would not be seen as equal to the Father in his essence and in his attributes.

In many Christian theological circles (mostly orthodox), subordinationism is treated as heresy, while "relational subordination" is not. In other circles, subordinationism is seen as biblical middle ground between extremes of Modalism and Unitarianism. (Christology has been the source of many (but not all) hot disputes and subsequent divisions of Christianity since the 1st century AD)." (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subordinationism>)

According to the old Worldwide Church of God, God was uni-plural but God probably did not become a Family until Christ's birth or His baptism. Prior to that time the Most High God and the One Who became Christ were both called Jehovah or YHWH in the Old Testament (ie two YHWH's may be identified from careful reading and analysis of the Bible).

The view on Who YHWH is falls into at least one of the following streams of thought. That He

- Only refers to the Father
- Refers chiefly to the Father
- Refers chiefly to Christ
- Refers only to Christ²¹

The old Worldwide Church of God promoted the third position (ie that YHWH usually refers to Christ and sometimes to the Father) from at least the 1950s forward (refer to **Appendix. Pre-1978 WCG**

²¹ It would take an immense study to determine when YHWH refers only to determine when YHWH refers to the Father and when it refers to Christ. Christopher Kaiser notes: "In this doxological sense, the range of Hebrew Bible YHWH texts that are referred to Jesus in the New Testament turns out to be much broader than the verbal quotations that Capes analyzed in his initial study. A complete list of New Testament texts that quote or allude to YHWH texts with reference to Jesus (or the risen and returning Lord)—with or without a divine title—could run into three figures. I find that they are embedded in all major strata of the New Testament." (p. 31) "Most YHWH texts are not "used for God the Father in the NT (although many other OT texts are)." (p. 58) "Some New Testament texts may indeed suggest a "degree of subordination" like that of the hypostatic Glory or Wisdom of God." (p. 67) ("YHWH Texts in Early Judaism and the New Testament: Disjunctive or Doxological?" *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 64, Nos. 3–4, pp. 27-70).

Quotes on the Nature of God for details).

For example refer to Herman L Hoeh's article "What is the Father's Name," *Good News*, February 1964:

"The Hebrew name YHWH—the Greek *Kyrios*, the "Eternal" or "Lord" in English - Is but one of God the Father's numerous given *personal* names.

It is also one of the *personal* names of the Son, because both are eternal. But the whole message of Jesus Christ, the Gospel, was the message about the Family NAME - the "GOD" Family. Jesus Christ came in the name of God, His Father. He called Himself the "Son of God" numerous times." (p. 23)

Writing what the Church's position was on the subject, Lawson Briggs declared:

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom..." (Dan. 7:13-14). **Here the "Ancient of days" must refer to the Father, although in verse 9, the Son is perhaps also called "Ancient of days," just as either may be called the Eternal (YHVH).**" ("Where Is God the Father in the Old Testament?" *Good News*, July 1974, p. 32) [emphasis mine]²²

Herbert Armstrong himself wrote:

"In **almost** every Old Testament passage, the LORD YHVH - The Eternal - is Jesus Christ. Clearly, Jesus is the God of the Old Testament." ("Is Jesus God?" *Good News*, December 1982, p. 23) [emphasis mine]

Refer also to **Appendix. YHWH and Christ compared.** Carl Franklin's articles on this subject and another by David Larsen are listed in the bibliography.

Christopher Wright in his, *The Mission of God. Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, comments:

"Paul application of an Old Testament text about YHWH to Jesus in Philippians 2:10-11 is the most notable but far from the only example of its kind. There are a

²² This article identifies the Father as The Most High God: "is that this Me1chizedek, the YHVH, the one who later became Jesus Christ, becoming God the Son, was at that time the priest (compare Hebrews 7:1 and verses following with Hebrews 8:1) of "the MOST HIGH God" (Gen. 14:18-22). Now who was God MOST High, the one to whom the Eternal Himself was priest? Let Jesus Himself answer: "... My Father IS GREATER than I" (John 14:28).

Of course.

But let's be sure. Who was Jesus Christ the son of? "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," the angel told Mary before Jesus was begotten, "therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.... He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest..." (Luke 1:35, 32).

Luke 8:28 and Mark 5:7 verify that Jesus is the "Son of God most high" and "Son of the most high God." The Father is mentioned twice more by this term in the New Testament — Acts 7:48 and 16:17.

To whom did Jesus tell us to pray? The Father (Matt. 6:9). And who did David pray to? "I will cry unto God most high..." (Ps. 57:2). Again, "I will praise the Lord... and... the name of the Lord most high" (Ps. 7:17).

Yes, David may indeed have known of the One who was to become the Father. (Remember, he could not have been called the Father yet, because He had not yet begotten the Son. Me1chizedek, YHVH, was not yet the Son.) "The Lord [YHVH] said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool" (Ps. 110:1; Heb. 1:13).

Sang David, "The Lord thundered from heaven, and the most High uttered his voice" (II Sam. 22:14).

Did Moses also know? "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance..." (Deut. 32:8)."

considerable number of places where Paul quotes Old Testament Scriptures in which YHWH/*ho kyrios* stood, when he (Paul) is referring to Jesus. Nor is Paul the only New Testament writer to do so. The author of Hebrews, for example, launches his epistle with a whole salvo of God texts applied to Jesus. **Many of these Scriptures are functional - that is, they speak of things that YHWH does or provides or accomplishes. By such scriptural quotations those functions are then attributed to, or closely associated with Jesus ...** Paul did not originate this practice. Nor did the early church. It goes right back to Jesus himself. For the Gospels preserve numerous way that Jesus in word, deed and implicit claim linked himself with the unique **functions** of the God of Israel ..."²³ (pp. 108-110) [emphasis mine]

Whether or not Wright is correct in his assessment that Yahweh relates chiefly to the Father is debateable – but at least he accepts the connection between Christ and Yahweh. As such he is in agreement with David Capes, author of *The Divine Christ* (an outline of the book may be found in **Appendix. *The Divine Christ* by David Capes**).²⁴

Capes notes that the way that Paul uses *kyrios* “is best taken here as a name. If so, it can be none other than God’s unique covenant name, the tetragrammaton, YHWH.” (p. 51)²⁵

²³ Christopher Wright, also notes in *Knowing God the Father through the Old Testament* that: “... the most remarkable thing that happened in the faith of **the earliest followers of Jesus is that they came to identify him - Jesus - with Yahweh**, in calling him Lord, and in many other ways. So, yes it is certainly true, from a whole-Bible perspective, that the God Yahweh of the Old Testament ‘embodies’ (if that is not too human a word) the Son ... But on the whole it is probably more appropriate in most cases that, when we read about Yahweh, we should have God the Father in mind” (p. 17).

²⁴ On his website Larry Hurtado summarise “The Early High Christology Club’s” background. Capes, who is a member of this “club” notes that he demonstrates that Paul has a “propensity” to equate Christ with YHWH by application of Jesus to OT texts that refer to YHWH. Paul does this to show all and sundry the significance of Christ: “Yet on occasion the apostle also used *kyrios* in reference to God the Father” (p. xv).

However, Hurtado explains: “In his massive recent opus on Paul [*Paul and the Faithfulness of God*], N. T. Wright contends that the theme of the personal return of YHWH to Zion was appropriated and interpreted with reference to Jesus in earliest circles of the Jesus movement.” (*YHWH’s Return to Zion. A New Catalyst for Earliest High Christology?* p. 1)

Jesus temple behaviour was actually Him enacting judgment as God upon the Temple and His claiming to be Messiah (p. 2). Hurtado writes that “Wright points to the second Temple Jewish belief that YHWH would “return in person,” “in glory,” “to judge and save,” “to establish his glorious, tabernacling presence,” “to rule over the whole world,” and “to be king” (emphasis his).” (p. 3)

In any event, Capes shows that when the Paul refers to the Father he uses the term *patrological* texts and to Christ as *christological* texts.

“Pre-Christian Jewish monotheism is therefore not the same as the latter rabbinic (and modern) version. It was not unitary, but it did allow for the inclusion of divine manifestations to be identified with an yet remain distinct from God [the Father]. Jewish monotheism before Christ therefore would not have precluded the identification of Jesus with God or calling him “Lord.”” (p. 43)

“The Early High Christology Club” is a jocular self-designation coined by a group of scholars of various backgrounds with research interests in earliest Christianity who emphasize that an exalted place of Jesus in belief and devotional practice (including corporate worship) is evident in the earliest Christian sources and likely goes back to the first circles of Jesus’ followers from shortly after his crucifixion. The nickname originated among several scholars who formed the steering committee of a program-unit in the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in the 1990s, the “Divine Mediators in Antiquity Group,” which was focused on the Roman-era historical context in which the “high Christology” (beliefs that Jesus is in some way worthy of divine honor) reflected in the New Testament first emerged. This initial group included David Capes, Wendy Cotter, Jarl Fossum, Larry Hurtado, Donald Juel, John R. Levison, Carey Newman, PHEME Perkins, Alan Segal and Marianne Meyer Thompson.” (<https://larryhurtado.wordpress.com/2013/02/06/the-early-high-christology-club-ehcc/>)

²⁵ “... when Paul speaks about the relation between Christ believers and the risen Jesus, he uses the same language and themes found in Second Temple Jewish texts to speak of Israel’s relation to YHWH.” (p. 61)

“... we need to consider the way Jesus is remembered as having applied to himself concepts and texts that the OT applied to YHWH.” (p. 179)

The old Worldwide Church of God and many of its 'daughter' churches aligned with the third view.

However, notice Zech 14:5

"And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD [Heb = YHWH] my God [Heb = Elohim] will come, and all the holy ones with him."

The Brenton's *Translation of the Septuagint* has it

"... and the Lord [Gr = Kurios] my God [Gr = Theos] shall come, and all the saints with him." (Cp IThess 3:13 and Jude 14).²⁶

One scholar observes

"The christological import of this sentence lies with the fact that the *kurios* of the Septuagint is "Yahweh *my* God," who will himself come to the Mount of Olives and carry out his eschatological victory over the nations. In Paul's theology, the future coming of the *Lord* is always seen as the return of the present reigning Lord, Jesus Christ. **What Paul has done seems clear enough: the future coming of Yahweh is now to be understood as the future coming of "our Lord Jesus,"** who alone is *kurios* in Paul's new understanding, resulting from his own encounter with the risen Lord (see 1 Cor 9:1). **One can scarcely miss the ease with which Paul now reads the *kurios* (= YHWH) of Zechariah as referring to Christ, the Lord.** So much so that in 2 Thess 1:7-10, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ has altogether assumed the role of judging God's enemies as well ...

"Once one recognizes Paul's intertextual appropriation of the language of the Septuagint, whereby *kurios* = Yahweh is now *kurios* = Christ, one becomes aware of **the many exclusively Yahweh-phrases from the Septuagint that are also applied to Christ ...**" (Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 43-45)²⁷ [emphasis mine]

Similarly, Keil writes thus of Zechariah 12:10

"... the Lord Jesus Christ is so closely associated with God that he bears the divine "name" and is the rightful recipient of devotion (Phil. 2:9-11). To put it another way, early Christians included Jesus precisely and unambiguously in the identity of the God of Israel." (p. 189)

²⁶ "Just when it seems all hope is gone, "then the LORD himself appears as "divine warrior" and delivers his beleaguered people... But who is the "LORD"? When one compares this scene, including v.4, with Acts 1:9-12 and Revelation 19:11-16, it appears certain that "the LORD" here is ultimately the Messiah. **The passage is indirectly messianic** (see comments at 2:10)" (Kenneth Barker, *Zechariah, Expositors Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7, p. 690).

²⁷ "So thoroughgoing is Paul's christocentric worldview that he can hardly talk about God without also mentioning Christ ... God the Father is always the "first course" of everything and thus always appears in the primary position as the "prime mover"; nonetheless, the focus of Paul's life is on Christ himself ... the title *ho kurios* [Lord] is the special province of 1 Thessalonians ... The first instance in the corpus where Paul uses language from the Septuagint and applies the *kurios* = YHWH directly to Christ appears in the eschatological goal of Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians in 3:11-13 ... Here our focus is on the final phrase, where, after Paul has prayed that *ho kurios* [Christ] will cause their love to increase and abound (in the present time), he offers as the goal of such love that "[the Lord] may strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father *at the coming of our Lord Jesus, with all his holy ones.*" Here Paul's intertextual appropriations of Zech 14:5 seems certain, since the language is too close to be merely accidental." (Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology*, pp. 1, 8-9, 43)

“It is true that we have not to think of a slaying of Jehovah, the creator of the heaven and the earth, but simply of the slaying of the *Maleach* Jehovah, who being of the same essence with Jehovah, became man in the person of Jesus Christ. As Zechariah repeatedly represents the coming of the Messiah as a coming of Jehovah in His *Maleach* to his people, he could, according to this view, also describe the slaying of the *Maleach* as the slaying of Jehovah. And Israel having come to the knowledge of its sin, will bitterly bewail this deed ... over him they have pierced. Thus the transition from the first person ... to the third points to the fact that the person slain although essentially one with Jehovah, is personally distinct from the Supreme God...” (Carl Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, “Minor Prophets”, *Zechariah*, p. 610).²⁸

Scriptures which prove Christ’s subordination to the Father include:

- "He said to them, "My cup you shall drink; but to sit on My right and on My left, **this is not Mine to give**, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by My Father."" (Matt 20:23)
- "And He was saying, "**Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt.**" (Mark 14:36)
- "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because **He anointed Me** to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden." (Luke 4:18)
- "**Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing;** for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner." (John 5:19)
- "For I have come down from heaven, **not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.**" (John 6:38)
- "Jesus therefore answered them, and said, "**My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.**" (John 7:16)
- ""You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' **for My Father is greater than I.**" (John 14:28)
- "Jesus said to her, "Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren, and say to them, '**I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.**'" (John 20:17)
- "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus." (Acts 4:27,30)
- "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and **the head of Christ is God.**" (1Cor 11:3)

²⁸ John Gill’s commentary on Hosea 12:4 states: “Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed This is repeated in different words, not only for the confirmation of it, it being a very extraordinary thing, and difficult of belief; but to direct to the history here referred to, where the person Jacob prevailed over is called a man, and here the angel; and so Josephus {u} calls him a divine Person; not a created angel, not Michael, as the Rabbis say, unless the Messiah is meant by him; nor Jacob's guardian angel, as Kimchi, every man being thought by some to have one; and much less Esau's evil angel, that was against Jacob, as Jarchi and Abarbinel; for of him he would never have sought nor expected a blessing; **but an uncreated Angel, the Son of God, the same that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, and that redeemed Jacob from all evil, Genesis 48:16; called an Angel, being so not by nature, for he is superior to angels in both his natures, divine and human; but by office, being sent to reveal the will of God, and to do the work of God in the redemption and salvation of men; the same that is called the Angel of the great council in the Greek version of Isaiah 9:6; and the Angel of God's presence, Isaiah 63:9; and the Angel or messenger of the covenant, Malachi 3:1; the phrases used denote, as before, the power and prevalence Jacob had with this divine Person in prayer; whereby he obtained the blessing of him, even deliverance from his brother Esau, as well as others respecting him and his posterity:**” [emphasis mine]

- "Now when all things are made subject to Him, then **the Son Himself will also be subject to Him** who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." (1Cor 15:28)
- "Blessed **be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" (2Cor 1:3)
- "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself by becoming obedient** to the point of death, even death on a cross." (Phil 2:5-8)

Clarification may be found in the *New International Version Study Bible* note on 1Cor 8:6

"God the Father is the ultimate source of all creation (Ac 4:24). God the Son is the dynamic one through whom, with the Father, all things came into existence (Jn 1:3; Col 1:16)."²⁹ [cp Deut 6:4 with 1Cor 8:6]

The Father is supreme as the Church of God has traditionally taught. In all of this there is not the slightest hint of a trinity.

Yet the exalted Christ shares glory and eternity with Him: when we assemble all the Scriptures together on the topic, it is clear that He shares the Father's throne and His honours; has God's attributes and names; and can even perform the deeds of the Father.³⁰

²⁹ ""Our Lord and ... his Christ" reflects Ps 2:2, which was interpreted messianically by the early church (Acts 4:26-28). Although the Son will ultimately be subjected to the Father (1 Cor 15:28), he will nevertheless share the eternal rule of God. The singular ("he will reign") emphasizes the unity of this joint sovereignty" (Robert Mounce, *The Book of Revelation, New International Greek Testament Commentary*, p. 226.) While Gordon Fee explains that Paul "has kept the "one" intact, but has divided the Shema into two parts, with *theos* (God) now referring to the Father, and *kurios* (Lord) referring to Jesus Christ... [Paul] is reasserting for the Corinthians that ... there is indeed only *one* God... but at the same time, he insists that the identity of the one God also includes the one Lord..." (Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study*, pp. 90-91). See John 20:17, 28; Deut 6:4; 1Cor 8:6; Rev 11:15.

³⁰ "God the Father is always the "first course" of everything and thus always appears in the primary position as the "prime mover"..." (Gordon Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study*, p. 9).

"In the birth story, as in the passion story, Jesus is passive and **God is the actor**. This is the nature of the Gospel as such. **It is not the story of amazing things done by Jesus, but of what God has done for humanity in the event of Jesus Christ**" (M. Eugene Boring, *Matthew-Mark, The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 8, p. 137).

"Zion is the place where Yhwh reigns, and where the kings sits at Yhwh's right hand, and from which Yhwh acts (e.g., Amos 1:2). The king shares in that authority and action" (John Goldingay, *Psalms: Psalms 90-150, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament. Wisdom and Psalms*, p. 294).

There seems to be a pre-Christian Judaism concept that the "Son of God" was a recognised messianic title" (David Thiele, *From Son to High Priest: The Christological Rhetoric of Hebrews*. A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Queensland, p. 11)

"Hence Hasidism does indeed have a notion of the pre-existent *zaddik*, one who precedes creation yet is still begotten and, under certain circumstances, is given the power to create." (p. 97)

"The notion of the Logos being the "Firstborn Son of God," or "Man of God", or "Second God" already exists in Alexandrian Jewry as transmitted by Philo of Alexandria. This already suggests a pre-existence that does not imply or require coeternality." (p. 98)

"We could ponder whether the term "creation" (*bara*) used to describe the *zaddik's* coming-to-be in these texts is best read as "made" or "begotten" (to import for a moment Christian nomenclature). To cite one example, reading Nahmanides' rendering of Genesis 1:1 *Bereshit bara Elohim . . .* as a description of the higher *sefjirah hokhmah* to the lower *sefjirah binah*, Frank Talmage chooses to translate *bara* as emanate rather than create, a term that may gesture toward the Christian distinction between "made" and "begotten."" (p. 104) [emphasis mine]

Christ is therefore the second Being of the Godhead and Who was pre-existent.

Some of the most senior Protestant scholars are creeping toward Binitarianism without even realising it. For instance, Wayne Grudem, Professor of Theology and Biblical Studies, General Editor of the *ESV Study Bible* and author of a number of books, has written about Christ's subordination to the Father, yet for the present holds to the trinity doctrine. Anyone reading his article "Biblical Evidence for the Eternal Submission of the Son to the Father", in the book *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son* would get a sense of how powerful the Binitarian argument is compared to trinitarianism – yet does not at this time fully comprehend that.

"Scripture speaks of the Father having a unique role of initiating, planning, directing, sending, and commanding; it speaks of the Son as having a role of joyfully agreeing with, supporting, carrying out, and obeying the Father ...

"If the Father-Son relationship as revealed in Scripture looks like authority and submission, and acts like authority and submission, then it is authority and submission. We should not hesitate to call it what it is. It seems to me that, rather than giving in to cultural pressures that seek to portray all authority as oppressive and evil, we should push back and insist that the Bible portrays a Father-Son relationship of authority and submission that is not oppressive but is pure and holy ...

"These relationships between the Father and the Son are never reversed, not once in the entire Bible. The Son does not *predestine* us in the Father. The Son does not create *through* the Father. The Son does not *send* his only Father into the world. The Father does not *come* and obey the Son's will. The Father does not *sit* at the Son's right hand. The Father does not *pray* to the Son or *intercede* for his people before the Son. The Father does not, at "the end" of the age, *subject* himself to the Son. If the "temporary submission" view is correct, we would expect to see at least some variety, some reversal in these relationships. But there is none." (pp. 225, 226, 260)³¹ [emphasis mine]

"Even if the *zaddik* is created (or "begotten") and not coeternal or consubstantial with God the Father, he is created before the rest of creation and thus has a divine status exhibited by his ability to alter divine creation. The *zaddik* here is no simple angelic emissary without a will but a divine entity, a willful authority that can alter a divine decree." (p. 105)

³¹ "The submission of the Son to the authority of the Father was not limited to the period of Jesus' life on earth. From ... before the world began to the eternal state of the new heavens and new earth after the final judgment, Scripture shows a consistent pattern. The Son has always been subject to the authority of the Father:

- In eternity past, as indicated by the eternal names "Father" and "Son."
- In eternity past, as the Father chose us in the Son, predestined us in the Son, and planned the entire history of salvation that would be carried out by his Son. This was the "eternal" purpose of the Father.
- In creation, as the Father created through the Son. The Father planned and directed and the Son carried out the will of the Father.
- Prior to the Incarnation, the Son was subject to the Father, for the father "gave" his Son and "sent" his Son into the world.
- During Christ's earthly ministry, for the Son was always obedient to the Father.
- After Christ's ascension into heaven, where he intercedes before the Father on our behalf as our great High Priest.
- After Christ's ascension into heaven, where he received authority from the Father to pour out the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
- After Christ's ascension into heaven, where he received revelation from the Father and gave it to the church
- After Christ's ascension into heaven, where he sat down at the right hand of God the Father, a place of second authority over the universe, where he still reigns today

Refer to **Appendix. List of Scriptures on the Father** for further proofs.

The old Worldwide Church of God was therefore correct in its position on this doctrine, but little space was given to explain it or to provide greater detail (refer to **Appendix. Two Divine Beings, not Three** which demonstrates proofs for two Divine Beings, not three or a trinity in any sense).

Concluding Remarks: Continuing our belief in the exalted Christ and Monotheistic Binitarianism

It would behove the Church of God community not to let its guard down – there are many pressures, academic arguments, apostate infiltrators and unlearned ministers and members whom give place to a wrong understanding of the composition of the Godhead.

Various Scriptures, as demonstrated above, prove the Binitarian nature of God. Even Deuteronomy 32:8 appears to do so:

“When the Most High [Elyon] gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God.

But the LORD's [YHWH's] portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.” (Deut 32:8-9)³²

It seems from this that God the Father fixed the borders of the gentile nations to preserve their identities and characteristics. He even gave YHWH His portion - Israel. This refers to a supreme or Most High God (God the Father) and the One subject to Him (the One Whom became the Son – Jesus Christ).

Alas, some today within our midst slyly hold to the Trinitarian heresy; others cannot give an explanation for their stance; in certain areas sermons and studies are not delivered on basic doctrines as the above. All of this is leading to compromise and doctrinal degradation.

Let us follow God's instructions that He revealed to the Apostle Paul:

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Tim 2:15)

-- After the final judgment, when he will in a new way be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him.” (pp. 258-59)

³² That is why scholars such as Walter Kaiser see faith and the law as remaining the same in both Old and New Testament – God has not changed His ways: “... all sides agree that faith is the same in the OT as it was in the NT and as it is today.” (Walter Kaiser, “Is it the case that Christ is the same object of Faith in the Old Testament? (Genesis 15:1-6)”, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Vol. 55, No. 2, p. 292.

Chart comparing Christ, YHWH, the Angel of the Lord and Michael

Assembled by Craig M White v1.7

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
NB:	<i>He is the second Being of the Godhead – Son of the Father and very God.</i>	<i>It has been debated that only God the Father is YHWH. However, another view is that YHWH is Christ and yet another that there are two YHWH's referred to in the Old Testament.</i>	<i>This Being is sometimes the pre-incarnate Christ and other times another being who may be Michael and other times perhaps another angel. One has to view the Scriptural context to conclude the matter. NB: some of these statements may refer to a being whom is empowered by God to act in His name.</i>	<i>I am not here saying that Michael is the Angel of the Lord or Christ. But it seems that in some instances he is the Angel of the Lord. His name means 'Who is like God?' But may also mean 'One who is like God.' NB: some of these statements may refer to a being whom is empowered by God to act in His name.³³</i>	<i>NB: I have not included a column on Melchizedek given that too little is said about him in the Scriptures. However, it should be noted that in ancient Judaism, there existed a tradition that equated Michael and Melchizedek as well as Michael and Yhwh.</i>
Creator	"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:1, 3.)	"Thus saith the Lord, ... I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded" (Is 45:11–12).			

³³ It is this similarity in descriptions sometimes between the Angel of the Lord and Michael that leads to some groups and some scholars in identifying Christ with Michael. For instance John Gill in his commentary on Daniel 10:13 states: "but, lo, Michael one of the chief Princes, came to help me; called in the New Testament an Archangel, the Prince of angels, the Head of all principality and power; and is no other than Christ the Son of God, an uncreated Angel; who is "one", or "the first of the chief Princes", superior to angels, in nature, name, and office; he came to "help" Gabriel, not as a fellow creature, but as the Lord of hosts; not as a fellow soldier, but as General of the armies in heaven and earth, as superior to him in wisdom and strength; and he helped him by giving him fresh counsels, orders, and instructions, which he following succeeded: and I remained there with the kings of Persia."

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
As God, called God or like God	<p>"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." (John 20:28)</p> <p>"I and <i>my</i> Father are one." (John 10:30)</p> <p>"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou <i>then</i>, Shew us the Father?</p> <p>Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.</p> <p>Believe me that I <i>am</i> in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.</p> <p>Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and <i>greater works</i> than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.</p> <p>And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." (John 14:9-13) Cf Rev</p>	<p>"And when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush.</p> <p>When Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord came unto him,</p> <p>Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Acts 7:30-32).</p>	<p>"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. ...And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?" (Gen 16:10, 13)</p> <p>"And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I ...</p> <p>"I am the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me." (Gen 31:11, 13).</p> <p>"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush ...</p> <p>"God called unto him out of the midst of the bush."</p> <p>"I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of</p>		<p>Another argument is for some of these statements referring to a person or being whom is empowered by God to act in His name and whom is normally appointed by oath, is my understanding.</p> <p>Here are some examples:</p> <p>"And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, <i>even</i> he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." (Ex 4:16)</p> <p>"Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him." (IChron 29:23)</p> <p>"And of all my sons, (for the LORD hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel." (IChron 28:5)</p> <p>"Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee to set</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	1:8, 17; 2:23; 21:6; 22:13 (cp Isa. 44:6; 48:12); 22:16		<p>Jacob." (Ex 3:2, 4, 6)³⁴</p> <p>"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night" (Exodus 13:21).</p> <p>"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them" (Exodus 14:19).</p> <p>"And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.</p> <p>And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down</p>		<p>thee on his throne, <i>to be</i> king for the LORD thy God: because thy God loved Israel, to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee king over them, to do judgment and justice." (IIChron 9:8)</p> <p>"I have said, Ye <i>are</i> gods; and all of you <i>are</i> children of the most High." (Ps 82:6)</p> <p>"In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David <i>shall be</i> as God, as the angel of the LORD before them." (Zech 12:8)</p>

³⁴ Fretheim notes that "The move in verse 2 from the messenger to the first person pronoun (as also in 23:20-23; cf: 3:2; 14:19) **indicates that the messenger is God himself**. It is important to note that there is no basic change in how this is to happen from 23:20-23, 29-30; the golden calf incident has not occasioned a change in God's agenda at this point or in the use of messenger language in its implementation. Though the messenger's tasks are not as fully stated here as in 23:20-23, certainly the basics are the same; the change in God's way is not to be found at this point." (*Exodus: Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*, p. 293)

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
			their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?' (Judg 2:1-2)		
I Am	"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58)	"And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Ex 3:14)			Refer to Henry Morris's article "The I Am's of Christ" for a complete list of these "I Am" statements. Also Vasilios Avramidis' article "I AM: Jesus' Claim to be Jehovah. The God of the Israelites in the Old Testament." ³⁵
Sent by God and begotten by Him	<p>"Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me</p> <p>For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:37-38)</p> <p>"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)</p>		"And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her." (Judg 13:9) [ie he was sent by God]		

³⁵ Avramidis draws parallels between Jehovah-Jireh and Christ as the Bread of Life; Jehovah-Raah and the Good Shepherd; Jehovah-Raphah and The Life; Jehovah-Nissi and The Way; Jehovah-Mekoddishkem and the True Vine.

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	<p>“For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?” (Heb 1:5)³⁶</p> <p>“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether <i>they be</i> thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all <i>things</i> he might have the preeminence. For it pleased <i>the Father</i> that in him should all fulness dwell.” (Col 1:15-19)</p>				

³⁶ Christ is called a Son of God in a number of places such as Matt 14:33; 26:63; Mark 3:11; 15:39; Luke 1:35. But so are created angels (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7 and Israel (Ex 4:22-23; Hos 11:1). Note also that stars and sons are synonyms. Lucifer was also a star of God in Is 14:12 and Christ is likened to a star in Num 24:17; Rev 22:16.

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
<p>Chief of the angelic realm or armies</p>	<p>“For to which of the angels did He ever say: “You are My Son, today I have begotten You”? And again: “I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son”? But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.” And of the angels He says: “Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire.” But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” And: “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.” But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at</p>		<p>“And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so" (Josh 5:13-15).</p> <p>“And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.” (IChron 21:27)</p>	<p>"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me." (Dan 10:13)</p>	<p>However, Heb for <i>one</i> is <i>echad</i> which can mean first as we would say “first lady.” Cf Gen 1:5; 8:13. Ie Michael is the chief of the princes. Unless “one of the chief princes” suggests one or two others (ie Day Star (Lucifer) and Gabriel).</p> <p>Note: "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God," (Luke 1:19). Similarly Day Star (Lucifer) was a covering cherub at God's throne (cp Ex 25:19; 37:9).</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	<p>My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? (Heb 1:5-13).³⁷</p> <p>The angels worship Christ: Heb:6; 2:5; Phil 2:10; IPet 3:22; Rev 5:11-13.</p>				
Prince	<p>"Prince of Peace" (Is 9:6)</p> <p>"Prince of Princes" (Dan 8:25) unless this applies to Michael. But see Ps 136:3; Deut 10:17; Rev 19:16</p> <p>"Prince of the host" (Dan 8:11)</p> <p>"Messiah the Prince" (Dan 9:25). Heb here for Prince is <i>nagid</i>.</p> <p>"Prince of life" (Acts 3:15)</p> <p>"a Prince and a Saviour." (Acts 5:31)³⁸</p> <p>"the prince of the kings of the</p>			<p>"prince" (Dan 10:13)</p> <p>"your prince" (Dan 10:21)</p> <p>"the great prince" (Dan 12:1)</p> <p>"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people" (Dan 8:25). Here he is called "the great prince" who defends Israel – possibly even as an intercessory. Heb here for prince is <i>sar</i>. In other versions he is called "prince of princes."</p>	

³⁷ "Hebrews 1.10 ("In the beginning, Lord [God's Son], you founded the earth") is almost word for word the same as Septuagint Psalm 101.25. Even though most early citations of Psalm 102.25/26 refer to YHWH, a case can be made that the writer of Hebrews understood the Septuagint version of the Psalm to portray the Messiah as the Κύριος and creator of the earth" ("YHWH Texts in Early Judaism and the New Testament: Disjunctive or Doxological?" *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 64, Nos. 3–4, p. 65).

³⁸ In opposition to this Prince is the evil prince, Satan (John 5:21; 14:3, 30; 16:11; Eph 2:2. Satan is also the god of this world or age (II Cor 4:4)

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	earth." (Rev 1:5)				
Warrior Chief	<p>"And the armies which are in the heaven followed him upon white horses, clad in white, pure, fine linen.</p> <p>And out of his mouth goes a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he might smite the nations; and he shall shepherd them with an iron rod; and he treads the wine-press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.</p> <p>And he has upon his garment, and upon his thigh, a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." (Rev 19:14-16)</p>	<p>"Jehovah is a man of war; Jehovah, his name." (Ex 15:3)</p> <p>NB other Scriptures that point to Yahweh as a great Warrior, eg Deut 7:1-2, 17-24; Is 24:21-23; 27:1; Ps 18:6-19; 68:1-35.</p> <p>Similarly the Messiah is regarded as a Warrior in Ps 2:9 and Is 11:4</p>		<p>"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels" (Rev 12:7)</p>	<p>The term "Lord of hosts" is mentioned over 240 times in the Scriptures and the Angel of the Lord around 68 times.</p> <p>Hosts means armies</p>
Worshipped	<p>"For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Luke 4:8).</p> <p>"And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him" (Heb 1:6).</p> <p>"That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the</p>		<p>"And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought <i>it</i> out unto him under the oak, and presented <i>it</i>.</p> <p>And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay <i>them</i> upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so.</p> <p>Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that <i>was</i> in his hand, and</p>		<p>"You received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus" (Gal 4:14).</p> <p>In Rev 19:19; 22:8-9 we are told that angels cannot be worshipped</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	<p>earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2:10, 11).³⁹</p> <p>"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him." (Matt 28:9)</p>		<p>touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight." (Judg 6:19-21)</p>		
Comforts	<p>"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.</p> <p>Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.</p> <p>For my yoke <i>is</i> easy, and my burden is light." (Matt 11:28-30)</p>		<p>"And when he saw <i>that</i>, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which <i>belongeth</i> to Judah, and left his servant there.</p> <p>But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I <i>am</i> not better than my fathers.</p> <p>And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise <i>and</i> eat.</p>		

³⁹ "In Phil 2:11 ... Jesus is identified as the Lord God of the Jewish bible, as YHWH" (Bert Peerbolte, "The Name above All Names (Philippians 2:9)," in George van Kooten, ed., *The Revelation of the Name YHWH to Moses: Perspectives from Judaism, ... and Early Christianity*, p. 203)

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
			<p>And he looked, and, behold, <i>there was</i> a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.</p> <p>And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise <i>and</i> eat; because the journey <i>is</i> too great for thee.</p> <p>And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." (IKings 19:3-8)</p>		
Makes major promises	<p>"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.</p> <p>In my Father's house are many mansions: if <i>it were</i> not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.</p> <p>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, <i>there</i> ye may be also." (John 14:1-3)</p>		<p>"And the angel of the LORD said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." (Gen 16:10)</p>		
Raises the dead	<p>"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear</p>	<p>"I [Jehovah] will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues;</p>		<p>"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump</p>	<p>Why is this so? Does Michael accompany Christ when He raises the dead?</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	<p>the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.</p> <p>For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.</p> <p>... Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth" (John 5:25-26, 28, 29).</p> <p>"And if Christ be not raised your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. (1Cor 15:17, 18)</p> <p>"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (1Cor 15:22)</p>	<p>O grave, I will be thy destruction" (Hosea 13:14).</p>		<p>of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1Thess 4:16)</p> <p>"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation <i>even</i> to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.</p> <p>And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame <i>and</i> everlasting contempt.</p> <p>And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."</p>	<p>Archangel = Chief Messenger or One who is over the angels - ie in charge of them and leads them (inc into battle)</p> <p>Michael is associated with Israel's Deliverer and even with the resurrection.</p>
<p>Restorer and Defender of Israel (second exodus)</p>	<p>"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"</p> <p>And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the</p>			<p>"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation <i>even</i> to that same time [id the Great Tribulation]: and at that</p>	<p>Heb for "standeth" = <i>aw-mad'</i> = stand up, repair, set forth, appoint, establish.</p> <p>NB: this refers to the second Exodus which occurs at the same time as the first resurrection. Cf Zech 9:13-14;</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	Father hath put in his own power. (Acts 1:6-7)			time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (Dan 12:1)	Is 1:11; 27:13
Rock	“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ” (1Cor 10:1–4). Cf Matt 16:18; Eph 2:20	“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: he took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people” (Ex 13:21–22). Cf Deut 32:4, 15; IISam 22:2; Is 17:10; 26:4; 30:29	"And an 'angel of the LORD' came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you" (Jud 2:1).	Cp Zech 12:8. Does this refer to Michael?: “In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David <i>shall be</i> as God, as the angel of the LORD before them.”	"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father." (John 1:18; 6:46; IJohn 4:12) Refer to Appendix. Notes on John 1:18. on this issue.
Saviour	“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Titus 2:13-14) “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this	“Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no saviour beside me” (Hos 13:4). See also Hos 12:3-5 "I, even I, am the LORD, And besides Me there is no savior; Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer" (Is 43:11, 14). “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,	"God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads" (Gen 48:15, 16). "And the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham:' and he said, 'Here am I.' And he said, 'Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do		

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	<p>condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord [Gr = despotēs] God, and our Lord [Gr = kurios] Jesus Christ.</p> <p>I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord [Gr = kurios], having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." (Jude 1:4-5)</p>	<p>which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).</p>	<p>thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me" (Genesis 22:11, 12).</p> <p>"... the angel of the Lord said unto Balaam, Go with the men: but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shall speak" (Num 22:35).</p> <p>"And God met Balaam: ... And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak" (Numbers 23:4-5).</p>		
<p>Judge & Avenger</p>	<p>"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him <i>was</i> called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.</p> <p>His eyes <i>were</i> as a flame of fire, and on his head <i>were</i> many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.</p> <p>And he <i>was</i> clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.</p>		<p>"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, <i>Art</i> thou for us, or for our adversaries?</p> <p>And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my</p>		<p>"What is important for our discussion here about the name is the fact that Michael was actually a battle cry among the Israelites. Exodus 15:9-11, for example, says "the enemy boasted, 'I will pursue, I will overtake them... I will draw my sword and my hand will destroy them.' But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them... 'Who among the gods <i>is like you</i>, O Lord? <i>Who is like you</i> – majestic in holiness?'" (emphasis of the author) The context here is clearly a</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	<p>And the armies <i>which were</i> in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.</p> <p>And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.</p> <p>And he hath on <i>his</i> vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev 19:11-15)</p> <p>"It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 1:14-15)</p>		<p>lord unto his servant?" (Jos 5:13-14)</p> <p>"And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?" (Judges 6:14).</p> <p>[NB: Throughout the rest of the narrative, the person speaking to Gideon is identified interchangeably as the Lord, the angel of the Lord, and the angel of God.]</p> <p>"And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders <i>of Israel, who were</i> clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces." (IChron 21:16)</p>		<p>military one. The victory of Yahweh against the Egyptian army inspired the Israelites to ask: <i>Who is like you, O Lord? – Mi - ka – el!</i>" (Assis in "Who is Like God? ...")</p>

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
Alpha and Omega	<p>“And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward <i>is</i> with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.</p> <p>I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.</p> <p>Blessed <i>are</i> they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.</p> <p>For without <i>are</i> dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.</p> <p>I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, <i>and</i> the bright and morning star.” (Rev 22:13-16)</p> <p>See also Heb 12:2</p>	<p>“Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God” (Is 44:6. Cf 48:12).⁴⁰</p> <p>“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: 'The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life.’” (Rev 2:8).</p> <p>“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (Rev 22:13)</p>			<p>"In 1:8 and 21:6 it was God who identified himself as the Alpha and the Omega. Now the risen Christ applies the title to himself. Its meaning is essentially the same as that of the two following designations - "the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End" - the first of which Christ has already applied to himself in 1:17 and 2:8. The names set him apart from the entire created order. He is unlimited by time, and in that all things are found both in the Father and in the Son the attributes of the former belong to the latter as well" (Robert H. Mounce, <i>The Book of Revelation, Revised, The New International Commentary on the New Testament</i>, p.407).</p>
Wonderful	<p>"Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace"</p>		<p>“And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold</p>		

⁴⁰Cp “I am he” at Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:10, 13; 46:4; 48:12

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	(Isaiah 9:6).		<p>now, thou <i>art</i> barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.” (Jud 13:3)</p> <p>“And Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What <i>is</i> thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour?</p> <p>And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it <i>is</i> secret? [the margin has <i>secret as wonderful</i>]</p> <p>So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered <i>it</i> upon a rock unto the LORD: and <i>the angel</i> did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on.</p> <p>For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on <i>it</i>, and fell on their faces to the ground.</p> <p>But the angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah</p>		

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
			<p>knew that he <i>was</i> an angel of the LORD.</p> <p>And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.” (Jud 13:17-22)</p>		
Messenger	<p>"Behold, I will send my messenger [Heb mal'āk], and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts." (Mal 3:1)</p>		<p>Angel of the Lord means Messenger of God</p>		<p><i>Strong's Exhaustive Concordance:</i></p> <p>"H4397 מַלְאָךְ mal'āk mal-awk'</p> <p>From an unused root meaning to <i>despatch</i> as a deputy; a <i>messenger</i>; specifically of God, that is, an <i>angel</i> (also a prophet, priest or teacher): - ambassador, angel, king, messenger.</p> <p>Total KJV occurrences: 213"</p>
Redeemer	<p>"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption <i>for us</i>." (Heb 9:12)</p> <p>"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law [which is death]" (Gal 3:13). See also Heb 9:28; IJohn 2:2;</p>	<p>"Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (Is 43:14). See also Is 49:26; 53:4; 53:15</p>			

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
	Rev 1:5; John 1:29				
Forgives sin	“And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.” (Matt 9:2)		“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” (Zech 3:3-4)		
Rebuking of Satan	"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan" (Matthew 4:10).		The “angel of the Lord” (Zech 3:1) seems to be called “the Lord” in v 2: “And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan” (Zech 3:2).	"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee" (Jude 9). ⁴¹	
Husband	“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” (Rev 19:7–8.)	“For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called” (Is 54:5).			

⁴¹ D Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity*, p. 131 asserts “Even Michael, the angelic advocate of the righteous, did not dare pronounce a verdict against Satan, for that right belongs to the Lord alone as the only true Judge. For Michael to have done so would have been an infringement upon divine prerogative.”

Similarities	Christ	YHWH & God	Angel of the Lord	Michael	Comment & Other Scriptures
Piercing	“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. ... For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.” (John 19:34, 36–37)	“And I [YHWH] will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn” (Zech 12:10).			

Appendix

Pre-1978 WCG Quotes on the Nature of God

Calvin Lashway

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There seems to be some confusion over what Herbert W. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) taught on the nature of God prior to 1978. The following quotes are from WCG publications printed before 1978. I personally acquired these publications in 1974 or 1975. I originally compiled these quotes for a paper I wrote in 1995 entitled: A SUMMARY OF THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GODS TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS ON THE NATURE OF GOD. This paper also includes quotes from WCG publications published after 1978.

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THE WORD

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Ambassador College Correspondence Course Lessons 8

Page 5

The Greek word translated into English as Word in John 1:1 is Logos. It can also mean spokesman, or one who speaks. It was actually the Logos, the Spokesman - the Word of the God Family - who said, Let US make man in OUR image (Gen. 1:26), thus executing His awesome office as the executive of the God Kingdom. And so everything was created and made by the divine being who later became the human Jesus Christ!

Page 9

Before Christ (the Logos) was conceived in Mary, He was not the Son of God. He was one of the two original members of the God Kingdom. He, like the one who became the Father, had existed eternally. But He is nowhere in God's Word referred to as a SON of God prior to His conception in Mary. His human birth was His first birth. He gave up the glory he had shared with the other divine being, who became His Father, in order to be born into the world as a human being, live a perfect life, and then give His life to pay the penalty of all the sins of mankind.

JESUS CHRIST IS GOD

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Is Jesus God?

Page 4

First, if Jesus had been only human, His death could have paid the penalty for but one other human who had incurred that penalty by transgression of God's spiritual Law (Roman 6:23). Since God the Father created all things, by Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9), and since all things, including man, were made by Jesus Christ, He is our Maker therefore God, and His life which He gave was of greater value than the sum total of all human beings.

Page 4

Since eternal life is the GIFT of God (John 3:16), only a God possessing immortality could give it. If Jesus were only human, we could not receive eternal life through Him and He could not be our Savior. Man does not have eternal life inherit in himself. But as God the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. And God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son hath not life (John 5:26 and 1 John 5:11-12).

Page 4

Jesus, in nature, is equal with God.

Page 4

He is called God in Titus 2:10,13. Therefore He is God.

Is God A Trinity?

Pages 23 and 26

Two different Lords are mentioned here [Ps 110:1]. One is God the Father and the other is the One who became Jesus Christ. Paul quoted this passage to the Jewish Christians - applying it directly to Jesus Christ...(Heb. 1:13).

ELOHIM

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Page 5

The original Hebrew word for God here [Gen. 1:1] and throughout the account of creation is Elohim, which actually means more than one. It is the plural form of Hebrew Eloah, which in English means Mighty One. So Elohim means Mighty Ones - more than just one person.

Elohim is a uniplural or collective noun, such as church, or family, or kingdom. In other words, Elohim stands for a SINGLE CLASS composed of TWO or MORE individuals. Elohim, then, is the God KINGDOM or God FAMILY. (In actual usage the word was also applied to any single member of the God Family or, by analogy, even to a heathen idol.)

Is God A Trinity?

Page 42

The Hebrew word for God used in Genesis 1:1 and 26 is Elohim. Elohim is plural in form. Though this word taken by itself does not prove that there are two beings in the Godhead, it does allow for the plurality that is clearly indicated in other parts of the Bible.

GOD IS ONE

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Is Jesus God?

Page 5

A church or a family consists of more than one person, yet is one church, or one family. In this sense Elohim - The God kingdom - includes both God the Father and YHVH who was the Logos or the WORD of God, and also their Spirit emanating from them, the Holy Spirit, the LIFE, CHARACTER and POWER of God. Jesus, in praying for the welfare of the Church, prayed that its many members might be ONE as we are one (John 17:11, 21, Moffatt). The Church is ONE body, yet composed of many members (1 Cor. 12:12). A husband and wife are ONE FLESH, yet two persons.

The word God has two meanings - the God kingdom or the family of God, AND the persons composing that kingdom or family. Christ and the Father are ONE God, not two Gods - one Elohim. That is why Elohim said, Let us make man in OUR image (Gen. 1:26).

Page 6

God is not merely one Person. God is a divine Family - only one Family - but more than one divine Person. Jesus Christ spoke of His divine Father as God. Jesus said He was the Son of God (Matt. 27:43; John 10:36). Jesus is called God in Hebrews 1:8 and elsewhere. All the holy angles are commanded to worship Jesus (Heb.1:6) - and none but God many be worshipped.

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Page 9

The Father and Son are one in purpose and attitude. But the Father is greater in authority since Christ - the Word or Logos - made all things by His authority. The Father has always been in supreme command in the Family or Kingdom of God - long before the Word became a human being.

Is God A Trinity?

Page 25

The New Testament speaks of God the Father and God the Son, the One who became Jesus. They are two distinct beings, but both are God. Both of them have been together since eternity.

Page 25

Thus the Bible reveals that there were actually two spirit beings - two distinct personalities who united their efforts in the creation.

Page 42

By what we can understand from the rest of the Bible, this word Elohim can act like our English words family, group, church, or crowd. These words are often regarded as singular and take a singular verb form, but they all contain more than one member.

The Apostle Paul exemplifies this for us in 1 Corinthians 12:20. Speaking about the Church he says: But now are they many members, yet but one body.

GOD IS A FAMILY

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Is God A Trinity?

Page 41

When we understand that God is a family - that God is reproducing after His kind - we are no longer confronted with the problems inherent in the Trinity doctrine, nor are we faced with the problem of worshipping many gods.

There is only one God family, yet there are presently two members, and in the future there will be many more. Jesus was called the firstborn of many brethren (Rom. 8:29).

Page 42

It was God who created man and put him on the earth. He created marriage and the family relationship as a type of His divine family.

Page 42

God is a family. There presently are two members in that God family, God the Father - the Head of the family, the Lawgiver - and Jesus Christ the Son - the Spokesman, the Creator. But the word Elohim is not just dual. There is a dual number in Hebrew, but this would have to be Elohim. The God family, however, is destined to be truly plural - to have many members. And this is what the word Elohim describes and allows for.

Pages 42-43

Look at the creation account in Genesis 1: God created the fish after the fish kind, birds after the bird kind, and animals after the animal kind. But in verse 26 God made man - not after any of the animal kinds, but after the God kind - in God's image and God's likeness. And God (Hebrew, Elohim) 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 creepth upon the earth.

Is Jesus God?

Page 6

So God is presently a Family of two Persons - God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. And the wonderful truth is that human beings may be born into this same ONE God Family as distinct, separate Personalities by a resurrection from the dead.

JESUS CHRIST IS THE CREATOR

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Page 5

John 1:1 and Genesis 1:1 are two accounts of the same event - the original creation of the universe. They both reveal that these two Supreme Beings of the God Family created all things.

JESUS IS THE ROCK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Is Jesus God?

Page 5

As a fragment of the evidence, compare Isaiah 8:13-14 with 1 Peter 2:7-8. Isaiah said, The LORD of hosts - YHVH - shall be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. Peter said, in quoting this text in reference to Christ, He is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. Jesus Christ is the LORD - the Eternal of the Old Testament.

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Page 6

Thus the Bible [1 Cor. 10:4] identifies the Rock as Christ! How surprising to those who have assumed that the God of the Old Testament was the one the New Testament calls The Father!

And so the LORD who spoke and was seen of men was always the one who became Jesus Christ. For no mortal man has ever seen or heard the Father! (John 1:18; 5:37.)

Is God A Trinity?

Page 28

There can be no denying the fact that Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament, the Stone over which many people stumbled.

JESUS CHRIST CAME TO REVEAL GOD THE FATHER

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Page 5

No one has seen God Jh. 1:18, 5:37. God has appeared to human beings Gen. 17:1; 18:1, 22; 32:30; Ex. 24:9-11; 33:18, 20-23. Clearly, then, the God of the Old Testament could not have been the Father.

Is God A Trinity?

Page 27

So we see that even in the first book of the Bible the plurality of God is shown, although clear understanding of this truth could not be known until Jesus came to reveal it in the New Testament...(Luke 10:22).

A clear distinction is made in the New Testament between Christ and the Father. The God that Moses saw and heard was not God the Father, again proving that Christ was the God of the Old Testament. No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him (John 1:18). Christ came to earth to, among other things, reveal the Father and to show a family relationship that exists in the Godhead.

How You Can Be Imbued With The Power Of God

Page 4

In the Old Testament, men did not pray to the Father. But we pray to the Father. No one addressed God as Father in Old Testament times. Christ came to declare who the Father is - to declare that we may be begotten of Him.

JESUS IS THE YHVH OR YHWH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

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Is Jesus God?

Page 5

It is commonly supposed that YHVH [Also spelled YHWH], or, as commonly called, Jehovah, or, as in the Authorized Version, The LORD, of the Old Testament was God the FATHER of Jesus Christ. This is a flagrant error!

YHVH was the God of Israel, the only One of the Godhead known to ancient Israel - When He came in human flesh they did not recognize him...(John 1:10). Neither did they know God the Father.

Page 5

Jesus Christ calls Himself the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.

Page 5

In reference to Isa. 41:4; 44:6; 48:11-12. All of these scriptures show that YHVH is the First and Last. Christ is the YHVH of the Old Testament.

Page 5

The person of the Godhead who is our REDEEMER [or Savior] is Jesus Christ.

Page 5

That Jesus, the Savior, is YHVH. See Isaiah 49:7 and Isaiah 60:16, where He - YHVH - is also the [M]ighty One of Jacob - to be OF Jacob means a son, or descendant of Jacob - the Mighty One of all Jacobs children. Also in Isaiah 48:17, YHVH is called the Redeemer, and the Holy One of Israel - the One of Israel who is Holy! The same is expressed in Isaiah 43:14, Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel... Also note the next verse (15), YHVH is Israel's Holy One, Creator of Israel, Israel's King. Now notice in Acts 3:14-15 that the Christ who was denied was the same HOLY ONE-YHVH! But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One... the Prince of Life (Panin). See also Acts 2:27 and Mark 1:24.

Page 6

The Great Shepherd who is coming to RULE as King over all kings is YHVH.

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Pages 5-6

Most scholars believe YHWH to be some form of the verb to be or to exist. Hence YHWH signifies the self-existent-One, One who lives - from eternity, and to eternity. Revelation 1:8 clarifies

the meaning of this name, speaking of Christ, the beginning and the ending...which is, and which was, and which is to come...

Page 6

The Hebrew word for Lord in Exodus 20 [Ex. 20:1-2] is YHWH. So here again it was the Logos, the Spokesmen - who later became Christ - who actually spoke the Ten Commandments.

Is God A Trinity?

Page 28

Putting them all together, YHVH actually means the Was - Is - Will Continue to Be Being. Even Hebrew linguistic scholars agree that YHVH must be derived from some form of the verb to be (was, is, will be).

By His very name, then, God quite literally encompasses all aspects of time - past, present, and future. This is in complete accord with Malachi 3:6...; Hebrews 13:8...; and Revelation 1:8...

JESUS CHRIST IS THE LORD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

=====

Is Jesus God?

Page 5

Now compare Isaiah 40:3 with Matt. 3:3 and Mark 1:3. John prepared the way before YHVH (Isaiah 40:3) who was CHRIST (Mark 1:14-15).

Page 6

In almost every Old Testament passage, the LORD YHVH - The Eternal - is Jesus Christ. Clearly, Jesus is the God of the Old Testament.

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Pages 6-7

But what difference does this revelation [that Jesus is the God of the Old Testament] make? It makes all the difference.

Understanding the true identity of the God of the Old Testament is vital to becoming re-born with the spiritual nature of God. For the God of the Old Testament, commonly assumed to have been harsh and stern, was really our SAVIOR - loving, kind, merciful and just (Ex. 34:5-7).

Is God A Trinity?

Page 22

If we read no further in the New Testament than this [Jh. 1:1-3,14], we would be able to know beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus Christ was God and that He is the One who created man in Genesis 2:7. Because John clearly states that the Word - the One who became Christ - created all things.

Page 23

Paul clearly tells us [1 Cor. 10:1-4] that Jesus Christ was the God of the Old Testament - the One who spoke to Moses and led the Israelites out of Egypt. This clearly shows us that the One who became the Son was the God of the Old Testament, not God the Father.

How You Can Be Imbued With The Power Of God

Page 4

How did they [the prophets and patriarchs in the Old Testament] have access to the Spirit of God? Through the One who was to become Christ (1 Peter 1:11). Christ, one of the members of the God-Kingdom, was the One who administered the Spirit to Moses, to Abel and to all the faithful of old. He sent the Holy Spirit of the Father to be in them, to give them faith and POWER.

THE IMAGE OF GOD

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Page 9

To be glorified means to have GREAT POWER and BRIGHTNESS! The power of the Father and Christ is so great that it makes their spirit bodies shine as BRIGHT AS THE SUN IN FULL STRENGTH!

How You Can Be Imbued With The Power Of God

Page 5

God is Spirit (John 4:21). The God family is composed of spirit. The Father and the Son, who are composed of spirit, have definite shape. From one end of the Bible to the other we are told about the shape and the parts of each member in the God family. The Father and the Son each have a head, hair, eyes, nose mouth, arms, fingers, a torso, legs, feet, plus inward parts. Man is in the image of God. Man is matter, but God is spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHRISTIAN

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Is God A Trinity?

Page 40

The Spirit of God unites with our minds, and we are begotten (or conceived) again - this time spiritually - not as we originally were physically. We become a new person.

Page 40

The Holy Spirit impregnates us with Gods nature. That spiritual begettall imbues us with the nature and mind of God. Throughout our Christian lives we continue to grow and develop in the understanding and mind of God until we are finally born into the God family and made immortal at the return of Jesus Christ to this earth (1 Cor. 15:49-52).

Page 40

Here again we can see why the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are mentioned in the baptismal formula in Matthew 28:19. God the Father is the One who brings us to repentance; Jesus Christ - God the Son - is the one who died that we can have are past sins forgiven; and the Holy Spirit is the power by which God the Father begets us.

How You Can Be Imbued With The Power Of God

Pages 1-2

That is what has happened today! Paul warned about receiving a DIFFERENT SPIRIT and a DIFFERENT GOSPEL.

Page 2

Then the Holy Spirit is not something we were born with, nor is it anything we earn. It is the source of spiritual power we need, but which we receive as a GIFT upon asking God for it.

Page 2

. That is how! You begin by REPENTING - by turning away from your past sins, through the blood of Christ, by being baptized (immersed). You are then unconditionally promised the Holy Spirit. God has bound Himself to perform His part if you first perform yours. You can ask God thereafter to direct you through His Holy Spirit to lead a new life in conformity with His revealed Word, the Bible.

Page 2

God expects a submissive obedient attitude before we receive the Holy Spirit. How plain it is that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of total submission and obedience to the Father.

Page 2

It is by the fruits of the Spirit that you know you have received the Holy Spirit of God.

Page 2

Love is a godly, spiritual force, imparted by the Holy Spirit, that channels the human will into obedience - obedience to Gods Law. If you love God, you will - by the power of God, not by your human strength - be keeping all his commandments - all ten of them.

Page 3

How plain. The Holy Spirit imparts the power to commence eternal life. We inherited mortal life through Adam. We become heirs of eternal life - heirs of God - by being begotten through the Holy Spirit which is the LIFE of God.

Page 3

Eternal life with unending spiritual power is a gift of God. It is an attribute of the Holy Spirit.

Page 3

It requires the addition of another Spirit - Gods Holy Spirit - to open the human mind to comprehension of spiritual things (1 Cor. 2:9-11).

THE NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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Page 7

It was by the Spirit of God that the Eternal (YHWH) - the Logos (Christ) - created the entire vast universe. Invisible spirit energy was literally transformed into the material creation we see about us (Heb. 11:3). And by His Spirit, God reformed the surface of the earth (Ps. 104:30). No wonder the Bible calls it the power of God!

Pages 7-8

God, the ultimate source of all power, willed that spirit energy emanating from Himself be TRANSFORMED into physical energy and matter. Christ - the Logos, or Word (John 1:1) - spake and it was done. He is the One who said Let there be light. And the Spirit of God, moving over the face of the waters performed the command, and there was light (Gen. 1:3).

Page 8

God sits at the controls of the entire universe - He rules and sustains everything by the POWER of His Spirit.

How You Can Be Imbued With The Power Of God

Page 5

The Holy Spirit, like matter, exists in various states. It not only composes the members of the God Family, it also flows through our minds, and empowers us to do good works.

Even though the Father and the Son are in definite locations with respect to each other, spirit proceeds from them and fills the entire universe much like air fills everything on earth! See Ps 139:7-11.

Page 5

The divine Spirit that fills the entire universe is the channel by which the Father and Son create. The Spirit of God transformed the creative energy of Father and Son into the physical world we see around us.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT A PERSON

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Page 8

Gods Spirit is not a third person in the God Family. It is His divine POWER that emanates from Him and permeates the universe!

Page 8

6. Is the Holy Spirit referred to in the Bible simply as it - not a person? John 1:32; Rom. 8:16, 26; I Peter 1:11.

COMMENT: In Greek, as in English, the word spirit is neuter. It naturally requires a neuter pronoun which is rightly translated into English as it, and is usually so translated. However, in some cases the translators have used a masculine pronoun where the original Greek uses it. John 14:17 is such a case. The pronouns he and him should have been rendered it. No doubt the translators erred because they themselves assumed the Holy Spirit to be a person.

In John 14:26; 16:7-8, 13-14 the Holy Spirit is personified as the Comforter (Greek *parakletos*, which is grammatically masculine), hence the pronoun *he* (*ekeinos*) was used in the original Greek to agree with Comforter, but should also be translated it in an English version.

Page 9

And so Jesus was begotten within His human mother Mary. But unlike all other men, He was miraculously begotten by the One who became the Father, through the agency and power of the Spirit of God (Matt. 1:20; John 1:14 - here is further proof the Spirit of God is not another person). Christ thus became the Son of God and He called the other person of the God Kingdom His Father. And so began the Father - Son relationship, which is a FAMILY relationship!

Is God A Trinity?

Page 32-33

The OT(Old Testament) clearly does not envisage Gods spirit as a person, neither in the strictly philosophical sense, nor in the Semitic sense. Gods spirit is simply Gods Power. If it is sometimes represented as being distinct from God, it is because the breath of Yahweh acts exteriorly (Isa. 48:16; 63:11; 32:15). So say the authors of the New Catholic Encyclopedia [Vol. XIII, p. 574]. But let them continue:

Very rarely do the OT writers attribute to God's Spirit emotions or intellectual activity (Isa. 63:10; Wis. 1:3-7). When such expressions are used, they are mere figures of speech that are explained by the fact that the *ruah* was regarded also as the seat of intellectual acts and feeling (Gen 41:8)...New Catholic Encyclopedia Vol. XIII p. 574.

In the Old Testament, Gods Spirit is pictured as His power. The power by which the one who became Jesus Christ, as Executive for the Father, created the entirety of the universe. These theologians also recognize that when the Spirit is spoken of as a person or in a personal way, the Bible writer is merely personifying the Spirit, as he would wisdom or any other attribute.

Pages 33, 35

When a quasi-personal activity is ascribed Gods spirit, e.g., speaking, hindering, desiring, dwelling (Acts 8:29; 16:7; Rom. 8:9), one is not justified in concluding immediately that in these passages Gods spirit is regarded as a Person; The same expressions are used in regard to rhetorically personified things or abstract ideas (see Rom. 6:6; 7:17). Thus the context of the phrase blasphemy against the spirit (Mt. 12:31; cf. Mt. 12:28; Lk. 11:20) shows that reference is being made to the power of God. (New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. XIII, p. 575).

Page 35

In the Greek language, like the Romance languages (Italian, Spanish, French and others), every noun has what is called gender; that is, it is either masculine, feminine or neuter. The gender of a word has nothing to do with whether it is really masculine or feminine - it is more of a grammatical tool.

Page 35

In John 14, 15, and 16 The pronoun he is used in connection with the word comforter - parakletos - however, the reason for the use of the personal pronoun he is for grammatical, not theological, or spiritual reasons.

Page 35

Pneuma ...is the Greek equivalent of ruah, the Hebrew word for spirit used in the Old Testament. Pneuma is a grammatically neuter word and is always represented by the pronoun it.

Pages 35, 38

Johns use of the parakletos [comforter] is no proof the Spirit is a person. For if the simple gender of a noun were the basis for the personality of the Spirit, then the Spirit changed gender from the Old to the New Testament, The Hebrew word for spirit in the Old Testament being in the feminine gender in a majority of cases and in a masculine sense less often.

Page 37

Here [Mt. 1:20] we read that Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Yet Christ calls God His Father, not the Holy Spirit (John 14:16). If the Holy Spirit were a person, it would be Christs Father - proof positive that the Holy Spirit is not a person but the power God the Father uses - much as a man uses electricity.

Consider further. If the Holy Spirit were a person, Jesus Christ prayed to the wrong individual. Throughout the four Gospels, we find Christ speaking to God - not the Holy Spirit - as His Father.

Page 39

Paul Did Not Recognize the Trinity

All of these greetings [Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:3; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Philem. 1:3] are without variation - the Holy Spirit is consistently left out (a great oversight - indeed blasphemy, provided the Trinity doctrine is correct).

Only in II Corinthians 13:14 is the Holy Spirit mentioned with God and Jesus and there only in connection with communion or fellowship. The Holy Spirit is not the third member of the Godhead.

Appendix

The Nature of God and Christ

Doctrinal Study Paper

Approved by the Council of Elders

August 2005

Page 59

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Appendix E

Were the First-Century Jews Strict Monotheists?

One of the arguments against the deity of Christ is the argument from silence. This argument assumes that the Jews of Christ's day were strictly monotheistic and if Christ had professed to being God in the flesh this would have been a big issue at that time. But is it true that the Jews of the first century believed in "strict" monotheism?

There is no question but that the Jews were monotheistic, but how were they monotheistic? In the past 30 years much new information has come to light that sheds doubt on the traditional view of Jewish belief about the Godhead. More and more evidence shows that the Jews did struggle with the issue of plurality in the Godhead.

The Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament: Second Commonwealth Judaism in Recent Study by J. Julius Scott, Jr. of the Wheaton College Graduate School shows clearly that it is a mistake to believe that the Jews of the New Testament period were "strict monotheists" and they would never have accepted Jesus as God. Scott shows that the idea of "strict monotheism" did not develop until the Middle Ages and was an attempt to stop the encroachment by Christianity. Here are some quotes from Scott:

The immediate Jewish background of the New Testament was shaped by three cataclysmic events and their results as various groups of Jews reacted to them differently.

First came the destruction of the Jewish state by the Babylonians in 587/6 BCE. The Hebrews lost their land, monarchy, holy city and temple and were scattered throughout the world. Consequently, they faced a theological crisis involving the nature, power, and goodness of God. They were also threatened culturally, racially, and ceremonially as they were thrown into proximity with other peoples and religious groups. In addition, the absence of recognized prophets left the Hebrews without divine guidance at a time when they felt most in need of support and direction.

Debate and disagreement continue about many facts and interpretations of the remains of Second Temple Judaism. Yet, something of a general agreement on a number of significant points has emerged. This includes new understandings, recognitions of previously obscure facts and emphases,

and changed opinions. Some of the more important elements in this “new consensus” may be described as follows.

1. Intertestamental Judaism is a descendant of the Old Testament Hebrew faith and culture but is not identical with it... [Also we] must distinguish it from Rabbinic Judaism, which developed after the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and the Jewish state. This distinction must be carefully noted in, among other things, attempting to use certain types of source materials, especially the Old Testament and Rabbinic writings, as witnesses to the faith and practices of this period.

2. Although Second Commonwealth Judaism had cardinal tenets, such as monotheism [which was not clearly defined], covenant, Torah, and the implications of these, it was essentially a religion of orthopraxy rather than orthodoxy. Behavior and practice, not precise theological subscription, demonstrated faithfulness to the national or sectarian commitment.

3. The society, culture, faith and practice of Intertestamental Judaism were far from a monolithic whole. As we have already mentioned diversity was a major characteristic of the society and period; accordingly it is folly to seek a mainline or correct position or to assume that one particular group or trajectory can be identified as the “normative Judaism” of the period. The diverse elements which made up the fabric of Intertestamental Jewish society must be taken into account, both individually and together, in attempting to understand the period.

4. Our “new consensus” sees Second Temple Judaism, not as a “holding pattern” between the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, but as a dynamic civilization which faced and was given form by its response(s) to genuine tensions arising from political, cultural, sociological, existential, and religious situations and issues. This challenge took place within the context of commitment, on the one hand, to the abiding relevance of Jewish socio-nationalistic-religious heritage, as it was then understood, and, on the other hand, to the need to face realistically the changing circumstances of life in the world in which they lived.^{42[64]}

Samson H. Levey, in *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation: The Messianic Exegesis of the Targum* published by Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in 1974, further confirms this diversity in Jewish thought in the time of the first century when it came to the Messiah. There is evidence that would include the Messiah being “divine” or God.

The diversity of this period is probably no where more evident than in eschatological expectations. Would the Consummation be simultaneous with or subsequent to the arrival of the Final Age? Would there be a divine agent (a Messiah), or would God personally intervene? If the former, would the Messiah be human, spiritual-angelic, or divine? Is the “Messiah” a personal, corporate, or idealized figure? Would there be a single Messianic figure or several? Would the role or task of the Messiah or Messiahs be primarily political, military, social, or religious? Would he be concerned solely for the affairs of the Hebrews or would he also benefit Gentiles and the natural order? What would be the status of Temple and Torah during the Final Age, of various Jewish groups, of the Gentiles? Although the majority of common people in The Land of Israel (the “Am Ha-Eretz” or “Average Jews”) seem to have held to some loosely defined hope of an essentially military-political-nationalistic Messiah(s) who would both deliver from enemies and enable God’s people to “serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness,” it is impossible to speak categorically about “the single pre-Christian Jewish belief” of

^{42[64]} J. Julius Scott, Jr., *The Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament: Second Commonwealth Judaism in Recent Study*.

almost anything [emphasis added].^{43[65]}65

Survey of the New Testament—Intertestamental Judaisms by Thomas L. Long has this to say about Judaism of the first century and just prior:

The period between the second century BCE and the second century CE is known to biblical historians as the “Intertestamental Period,” that is it marked the closure of the canon of the Hebrew scriptures and the formation of the canon of the Christian scriptures.

This period is important to Jews because it includes the devastating Jewish revolt against the Roman empire, which resulted in the destruction of the Second Temple and the end of sacrificial worship, and it is important to Christians because it represents the matrix in which Jesus of Nazareth and his earliest disciples were formed. Because it was a period of tremendous theological diversity within Jewish practice, recent scholars of religion have tended to characterize it in the plural—Judaisms—rather than representing it as a single monolithic religious orthodoxy. What we know about this period comes from several sources: the Christian scriptures (not a particularly reliable historical document because they were often hostile to Jewish authorities), the first-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus and the philosopher Philo of Alexandria, the Dead Sea Scrolls, archaeological remains, and inscriptions.^{44[66]}

In “Monotheism—A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?” Peter Hayman states:

In the academic world of twenty or thirty years ago it was conventional to hold that the story of Judaism was one of a gradual, but inexorable, evolution from a Canaanite/Israelite pagan and mythological environment into the pure light of an unsullied monotheism. It is hardly ever appropriate to use the term monotheism to describe the Jewish idea of God, that no progress beyond the simple formulas of the Book of Deuteronomy can be discerned in Judaism before the philosophers of the Middle Ages, and that Judaism never escapes from the legacy of the battles for supremacy between Yahweh, Ba’al and El from which it emerged.^{45[67]}

It is also quite revealing to read the writings of the early writers as to how they viewed Christ. Ignatius (A.D. 110 to 117) wrote in his epistle to the Ephesians: “By the will of the Father and of Jesus Christ, our God... God Himself being manifested in human form.” In his epistle to the Trallians he writes: “Jesus our God.” In his epistle to the Romans: “Jesus Christ our God.” In Magnesians 6, Ignatius writes: “Jesus was with the Father before the beginning of time...”

Polycarp was another early writer. In his epistle to the Philipppians he wrote about Jesus Christ as “God and our Lord.” This is further proof that the Jews and the Christians of the first century did have a grasp of the concept of plurality in the Godhead. While they were monotheistic, one needs to explain exactly what is meant by the term. There was clearly room in their theology for Christ to be God.

^{43[65]} Samson H. Levey, *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation: The Messianic Exegesis of the Targum*, Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1974.

^{44[66]} Thomas L. Long, *Survey of the New Testament—Intertestamental Judaisms*.

^{45[67]} Peter Hayman, “Monotheism—A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?” *Journal of Jewish Studies*, Vol. 42, 1991.

Appendix

List of Scriptures on the Father

Many downplay the part of God the Father in the New Testament. They either think that Christ replaces Him (one actually stated words to the effect 'Christ pushes Him aside') or diminishes Him to the sidelines. Yet that is not what the Bible teaches or what Christ taught.⁴⁶

Below are most or all Scriptures on the subject of the Father (God). In addition to this list are many others where He is referred to, alluded to or called 'God' but I have not included them in this list.

This simple study easily disproves the modern notion that the Father is not that important anymore or that there is a Trinity.

Scriptures	Quotes
Matt 5:16	Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
Matt 5:45	That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.
Matt 5:48	Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.
Matt 6:1	Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.
Matt 6:4	That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.
Matt 6:6	But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
Matt 6:8	Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
Matt 6:9	After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
Matt 6:14	For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
Matt 6:15	But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
Matt 6:18	That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.
Matt 6:26	Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

⁴⁶ In many cases, the belief is that the Old Testament God was too harsh and law oriented; and that Christ almost did away with that God and the Law. This is rather blasphemous. Note the following from the article "Gnosticism," *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*.

Scriptures	Quotes
Matt 6:32	(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.
Matt 7:11	If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?
Matt 7:21	Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
Matt 10:20	For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.
Matt 10:29	Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.
Matt 10:32	Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.
Matt 10:33	But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.
Matt 11:25	At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.
Matt 11:26	Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.
Matt 11:27	All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.
Matt 12:50	For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.
Matt 13:43	Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.
Matt 15:13	But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.
Matt 16:17	And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.
Matt 16:27	For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.
Matt 18:10	Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.
Matt 18:14	Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.
Matt 18:19	Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.
Matt 18:35	So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.
Matt 20:23	And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Scriptures	Quotes
Matt 23:9	And call no man your Father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.
Matt 24:36	But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.
Matt 25:34	Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
Matt 26:29	But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.
Matt 26:39	And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
Matt 26:42	He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.
Matt 26:53	Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?
Matt 28:19	Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
Mark 8:38	Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.
Mark 11:25	And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.
Mark 11:26	But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.
Mark 13:32	But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.
Mark 14:36	And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.
Luke 2:49	And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?
Luke 6:36	Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.
Luke 9:26	For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.
Luke 10:21	In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.
Luke 10:22	All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.
Luke 11:2	And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

Scriptures	Quotes
Luke 11:13	If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?
Luke 12:30	For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.
Luke 12:32	Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
Luke 22:29	And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;
Luke 22:42	Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.
Luke 23:34	Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.
Luke 23:46	And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.
Luke 24:49	And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.
Jn 1:14	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.
Jn 1:18	No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.
Jn 2:16	And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.
Jn 3:35	The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.
Jn 4:21	Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.
Jn 4:23	But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.
Jn 5:17	But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.
Jn 5:18	Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.
Jn 5:19	Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.
Jn 5:20	For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.
Jn 5:21	For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.
Jn 5:22	For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:
Jn 5:23	That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.
Jn 5:26	For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

Scriptures	Quotes
Jn 5:30	I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.
Jn 5:36	But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.
Jn 5:37	And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.
Jn 5:43	I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.
Jn 5:45	Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.
Jn 6:27	Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.
Jn 6:31	Our Fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.
Jn 6:32	Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.
Jn 6:37	All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.
Jn 6:39	And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.
Jn 6:44	No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.
Jn 6:45	It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.
Jn 6:46	Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.
Jn 6:57	As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.
Jn 6:65	And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.
Jn 8:16	And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.
Jn 8:18	I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.
Jn 8:19	Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.
Jn 8:27	They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

Scriptures	Quotes
Jn 8:28	Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.
Jn 8:29	And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.
Jn 8:38	I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your Father.
Jn 8:41	Ye do the deeds of your Father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.
Jn 8:42	Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.
Jn 8:49	Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.
Jn 8:54	Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:
Jn 10:15	As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.
Jn 10:17	Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.
Jn 10:18	No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.
Jn 10:25	Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.
Jn 10:29	My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.
Jn 10:30	I and my Father are one.
Jn 10:32	Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?
Jn 10:36	Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?
Jn 10:37	If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.
Jn 10:38	But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.
Jn 11:41	Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
Jn 12:26	If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.
Jn 12:27	Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.
Jn 12:28	Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Scriptures	Quotes
Jn 12:49	For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.
Jn 12:50	And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.
Jn 13:1	Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.
Jn 13:3	Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;
Jn 14:2	In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.
Jn 14:6	Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
Jn 14:7	If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.
Jn 14:8	Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.
Jn 14:9	Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?
Jn 14:10	Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.
Jn 14:11	Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.
Jn 14:12	Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.
Jn 14:13	And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
Jn 14:16	And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;
Jn 14:20	At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.
Jn 14:21	He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.
Jn 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.
Jn 14:24	He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.
Jn 14:26	But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Scriptures	Quotes
Jn 14:28	Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.
Jn 14:31	But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.
Jn 15:1	I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.
Jn 15:8	Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.
Jn 15:9	As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.
Jn 15:10	If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.
Jn 15:15	Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.
Jn 15:16	Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.
Jn 15:23	He that hateth me hateth my Father also.
Jn 15:24	If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.
Jn 15:26	But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:
Jn 16:3	And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.
Jn 16:10	Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
Jn 16:15	All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.
Jn 16:16	A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.
Jn 16:17	Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?
Jn 16:23	And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.
Jn 16:25	These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.
Jn 16:26	At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:
Jn 16:27	For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.
Jn 16:28	I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Scriptures	Quotes
Jn 16:32	Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.
Jn 17:1	These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:
Jn 17:5	And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.
Jn 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.
Jn 17:21	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.
Jn 17:24	Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.
Jn 17:25	O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.
Jn 18:11	Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?
Jn 20:17	Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.
Jn 20:21	Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.
Acts 1:4	And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.
Acts 1:7	And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.
Acts 2:33	Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Appendix

Two Divine Beings, not Three

Scripture	Comments or quotes
Matt 20:23	Father and Son mentioned
Jn 3:16	For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son
Jn 3:17	God sent His Son into the world
Jn 5:37	You have not heard or seen the Father
Jn 5:37	There are two witnesses which are Father and Son
Jn 5:43	Christ came in His Father's name
Jn 8:18	There are two witnesses which are Father and Son
Jn 8:19	You know neither me nor my Father
Jn 10:29	The Father is greater than all
Jn 12:28	"Father, glorify Thy Name" Christ prayed and a voice out of heaven answered
Jn 14:1	You believe in God, believe also in Me
Jn 14:25	My words are not mine, but His who sent Me (ie the sender and sent)
Jn 14:28	My Father is greater than I
Jn 15:1	I am the vine. My Father is the vine dresser
Jn 15:9	The Father loved me, so I have loved you
Jn 15:10	If you love me you will keep my commandments just as I have kept my Father's commandments
Jn 15:24	They hated both me and my Father
Jn 16:3	You have not known the Father nor me
Jn 16:28	I came down from the Father and go to the Father
Jn 16:32	I am not alone, for the Father is with me
Jn 17:1	Jesus prayed to the Father
Jn 17:3	Eternal life is knowing the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you sent.
Jn 17:4	I glorified you on earth, and finished the work you gave me to do
Jn 17:5	Now Father, glorify me
Jn 17:11	Father, keep my disciples, that they may be one as we are one
Jn 17:18	As you sent me, so I send them into the world
Jn 17:21	That they may all be one in us
Jn 17:22	That the Apostles may be one as we are one
Acts 2:24	Here we have TWO persons: One ALIVE, one DEAD. Jesus, being dead, could not raise himself. Who did? God raised him from the grave – from death (Acts 3:14,15).
Acts 2:27	Jesus was raised from the dead by God
Rom 1:3	Jesus is declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. If there is a Son there must be a Father
Gal 1:1	God raised Jesus from the dead
Eph 6:23	Peace to all from God the Father and from Jesus

Scripture	Comments or quotes
Ph 1:2	Grace from God our Father and from Jesus Christ
Col 1:1	Paul an Apostle of Jesus by the will of God
1Th 1:1	Peace from God the Father and the Saviour Jesus
2Th 1:2	Grace and peace from God the Father and from Jesus
1Tim 1:1	Paul, an Apostle of Jesus by the command of God and Jesus
1Tim 1:2	Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Jesus
2Tim 1:2	Grace and peace from God the Father and from Jesus our Saviour
Titus 1:1	Paul, a servant of God and an Apostle of Jesus
Phil 3	Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and from Jesus
Heb 1:1	God in times past spoke through the prophets, but in these last days spoke to us by His Son
Jam 1:1	James, a servant of God and Jesus
1Pe 1:3	Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
2Pe 1:2	Grace to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus
1Jn 1:3	Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus
1Jn 2:1	If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ
2Jn 1:9	Whoever abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son
Jude 1	God the Father and Jesus Christ
Jude 4	Some deny the only God and our Saviour Jesus Christ
Rev 1:1	The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him
Rev 1:4-6	Mention of the Father and Christ
Rev 1:9	The word of God and the testimony of Jesus
Rev 2:26-27	He who overcomes, I will give power over the nations, even as I Myself received power from my Father
Rev 3:5	Father God and Jesus Christ referred to
Rev 3:12	He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God
Rev 3:14	The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation
Rev 3:21	Overcomers will sit with me in my throne, as I overcame and sit with my Father in His throne
Rev 4:2-11	He who sat upon the throne was God (Rev 4:2,3,9,10; 5:1,7;19:4; 20:11; 21:5). It was Jesus who opened the seven seals (Rev 5:2-10), not God
Rev 5:11-13	Praises were given to Him who sits on the throne, and the Lamb who was slain.
Rev 6:16	Hide us from Him who sits on the throne, and the wrath of the Lamb
Rev 7:9,10	Salvation belongs to our God, and to the Lamb
Rev 7:17	The Lamb will be their Shepherd leading them to living waters and God will wipe away all tears
Rev 11:15	The kingdoms of the world have become the kingdom of our God, and of His Christ
Rev 12:17	Those who keep the commandments of God and who bear testimony of Jesus
Rev 14:1,4	These have the Father's Name written in their foreheads and are the firstfruits to God and the Lamb
Rev 14:12	Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus
Rev 15:3	God and the Lamb mentioned

Scripture	Comments or quotes
Rev 19:4-7	God the Almighty and the Lamb are mentioned
Rev 20:6	They will be priests of God and of Christ
Rev 21:9, 10	God the Almighty and the Lamb are mentioned
Rev 21:22	God the Almighty and the Lamb are mentioned in the New Jerusalem
Rev 22:1	The river of life flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb
Rev 22:3	No more curse will be there for the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city

Appendix

YHWH (Jehovah) and Christ compared

Title or Depiction	YHWH	Christ
Alpha and Omega	Is 48:12	Rev 22:13-14
Creator	Is 44:24	Col 1:16
Eternal	Ps 102:26, 27*	Is 9:6
Forgives sins	Dan 9:9	Mark 2:1-12
Gives life	Deut 32:39	Joh 5:21
God	Gen 1:1	Titus 2:13
Husband	Is 44:24	2Cor 11:2
Immutable	Mal 3:6	Heb 13:8
Jehovah (I Am)	Ex 3:14	Joh 8:58
Judge	Gen 18:25	2Cor 5:10
King	Is 43:15	Rev 19:16
Light	Ps 27:1	Joh 8:12
Lord	Is 45:23	Phil 2:10, 11
Lord our Healer	Ex 15:26	Acts 9:34
Omnipotent	Is 40:10-31	Mark 1:29-34
Omnipresent	Ps 139:7-12	Matt 28:19-20
Omniscient	1 Kings 8:39	Joh 16:30
Our righteousness	Is 45:24	Rom 3:21, 22
Pre-existent	Gen 1:1	Joh 17:5
Receives worship	Joh 4:24	Matt 28:9
Redeemer	Is 48:17	Eph 1:7
Rock	Deut 32:3,4	1Cor 10:3, 4
Saviour	Is 43:11	Joh 4:42
Shepherd	Ps 23:1	Joh 10:11-16

Note Christopher Wright's observation:

"... the most remarkable thing that happened in the faith of the earliest followers of Jesus is that **they came to identify him - Jesus - with Yahweh, in calling him Lord, and in many other ways. So, yes it is certainly true, from a whole-Bible perspective, that the God Yahweh of the Old Testament 'embodies' (if that is not too human a word) the Son** ... But on the whole it is probably more appropriate in most cases that, when we read about Yahweh, we should have God the Father in mind" (Christopher Wright, *Knowing God the Father through the Old Testament*, p 17).

While Wright believes that the Yahweh usually refers to the Father, this doesn't seem to be the case as it seems the Father operates through His Son.

*M James Penton notes:

“I would also argue that preexistence is taught in Hebrews 1:10-12 which quotes Psalm 102:25-27 ... Significantly, the writer of Hebrews applies these verses to the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Yet in the Psalm from which they are quoted, it is clear that what is said refers to Yahweh or God the Father, a fact which has caused Trinitarians to assume that Yahweh is ... what we may well have is the preexistent Christ serving as a divine agent in the fullest sense” (pp. 4-5)

“In John 1:18, the most weighty textual evidence indicates that the Word is called *μονογενής θεός*,⁹ an expression which may be translated “the only begotten god.” Some translators, in trying to deal with the problem of an “only begotten god” from a Nicene sense, have translated *μονογενής θεός* as “God, the only” or “God the unique who is in the bosom position of God.” This will not do, however, for even from a Trinitarian standpoint such translations make no sense. They make the Word the “only God” or the “unique God” and thus deny Godhood to God the Father or the Holy Spirit. Such renderings lead logically to Modalism. Professor John Dahms has surveyed the ancient literature on this matter and has come to the definite conclusion that the most accurate translation of *μονογενής* is “only begotten.”” (p. 6)

“There were other concepts that these Fathers used to buttress their idea of the preexistence of Christ. These included the word of God, the beginning ... of creation, and the angel of Yahweh” (p. 7) (“Christology in the Early Church,” *A Journal from the Radical Reformation*, Fall 1996, Vol. 6, No 1)

Appendix

Notes on John 1:18

We are told in John 1:18 and IJohn 4:12 that no one has seen the Father. Yet He was known in the Old Testament as Most High God and El. He was also known as the Ancient of Days and seen in vision (Dan 7:9, 13, 22. Cp Is 43:13; 44:6; Ps 90:2)

As with all Scripture, we need to ascertain whether the matter is contextual (referring to the local situation or those within earshot) or overall blanket statement (referring to all and sundry).

Below are extracts from authors and commentaries that demonstrate the principle behind John 1:18.

Walter Kaiser (et al), *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, (pp. 492-93):

“1:18 No One Has Ever Seen God?”

This verse is clearly saying that no one has ever seen God, but in Exodus 33:20 we read, “You cannot see my face ... and live,” and in Exodus 24:11, “They saw God, and they ate and drank.” How can John claim that no one has ever seen God when the Old Testament text indicates that people did see God on at least two occasions?

First, notice that even the Old Testament indicates that no one has seen the face of God: “You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live” (Ex 33:20). It is in this context that the two theophanies occur. In the earlier theophany it appears that what the elders see is “a pavement made of sapphire” (which will appear again in the early chapters of Ezekiel as the floor of the divine chariot). No form is seen, although they may have had some awareness of a Being above the pavement. **In this sense they “saw God” but apparently did not see his “face.”** In the later theophany Moses asks to see God’s “glory” (Ex 33:18). In the view of the author of Exodus, he is asking for more than what he saw along with the elders of Israel. God grants more, but not all that Moses asks for. The only experience God will allow is for Moses to be hidden while God passes by and declares his character audibly; then Moses will get to see God’s “back,” which some commentators identify with an “afterglow,” but which could mean the back side of a retreating form (in Near Eastern fashion this would be shrouded with clothing so only an outline would be visible). Even this experience is so powerful that Moses’ face glows afterward (Ex 34:29).

John is clearly contrasting Jesus with Moses (Jn 1:17; Moses’ theophany was at the giving of the law), but even later theophanies in the Old Testament do not contradict our observation. Isaiah has some awareness of a throne and a being on it, but the only things that he can describe are the hem of God’s “robe” and the seraphim who are associated with him (Is 6:1–5). Ezekiel in a vision sees a form on a throne (Ezek 1:26–28), but there is no face and no features, only burning fire in a vaguely human shape. The face of God is never seen. **Now we can understand what John is saying. The Word is with God (Jn 1:1), and the image implied in the preposition is the face-to-face position of equals.** What is more, the Word is what God is (as we noted in the previous chapter). Now the Word becomes a human being (“flesh,” Jn 1:14), and he has a “glory” or character or reputation which is that of one who is exactly like his Father, full of grace and truth (which are Greek equivalents of “love and faithfulness” of Ex 34:6). So Moses brought law from God (Jn 1:17), but Jesus brought the very character of the Father to us. Thus while no one has ever seen God, Jesus makes him known with an accuracy brought

about by his being in the most intimate contact with him (“at the Father’s side” in the NIV or, better, “in the bosom of the Father” [RSV]). They may have seen a form or outline in the Old Testament, but **Jesus, the Word incarnate, has not only seen the Father face to face, but has also looked into his soul and contains within himself his very character.**

This is an important theological point. Ever since Marcion in the second century there have been those who contrast the distant and harsh Father with the gracious and kind Son. The Father seems to be law and the Son grace. The Father seems to be difficult or impossible to relate to, apparently existing without feeling, and the Son seems to be caring and even warm and friendly. [NB: many evangelicals and Pentecostals subscribe to this view] This contrast is entirely false. What John is saying is that if we want to find out what the Father is like, we only have to look at the Son. The “love and faithfulness” we see in Jesus is the “love and faithfulness” of the Father. The kindness we see in Jesus is the kindness of the Father. The healing we seen in Jesus is his doing the works of the Father (Jn 5:19). In sum, Jesus is the place where we get our best view of the face of the Father; in Jesus we can see what the Father’s heart is really like. When this truth sinks into our heart, many of us will receive a renewed vision of the Father and thus develop a new love for and intimacy with God.”

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Bible Commentary:

“18. No man—“No one,” in the widest sense.

hath seen God—by immediate gaze, or direct intuition.

in the bosom of the Father—A remarkable expression, used only here, presupposing the Son’s conscious existence distinct from the Father, and expressing His immediate and most endeared access to, and absolute acquaintance with, Him.

he—emphatic; As if he should say, “He and He only hath declared Him,” because He only can.””

Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament (pp. 118-122):

“If we fix our eyes upon the method of the divine revelation, we find a new beginning in this respect, that as soon as Abram is called, we read of the *appearing* of God. It is true that from the very beginning God had manifested Himself visibly to men; but in the olden time we read nothing of appearances, because before the flood God had not withdrawn His presence from the earth. Even to Noah He revealed Himself before the flood as one who was present on the earth. But when He had established a covenant with him after the flood, and thereby had assured the continuance of the earth and of the human race, the direct manifestations ceased, for God withdrew His visible presence from the world; so that it was from heaven that the judgment fell upon the tower of Babel, and even the call to Abram in his home in Haran was issued through His word, that is to say, no doubt, through an inward monition. But as soon as Abram had gone to Canaan, in obedience to the call of God, *Jehovah appeared* to him there (Genesis 12:7). These appearances, which were constantly repeated from that time forward, must have taken place from heaven; for we read that *Jehovah*, after speaking with Abram and the other patriarchs, “went away” (Genesis 18:33), or “went up” (Genesis 17:22; Genesis 35:13); and the patriarchs saw them, sometimes while in a waking condition, in a form discernible to the bodily senses, sometimes in visions, in a state of mental ecstasy, and at other times in the form of a dream (Genesis 28:12.). **On the form in which God appeared, in most instances, nothing is related.** But in Genesis 18:1. it is stated that three men came to Abram, one of whom is introduced as *Jehovah*, whilst the other two are called angels (Genesis 19:1). Beside this, we frequently read of appearances of the “angel of *Jehovah*” (Genesis 16:7; Genesis 22:11, etc.), or of “*Elohim*,” and the “angel of *Elohim*” (Genesis 21:17; Genesis 31:11, etc.), which were repeated throughout the whole of the Old Testament, and even occurred, though only in vision, in the case of the prophet Zechariah. The appearances of the angel of *Jehovah* (or *Elohim*) cannot have been essentially different from those of *Jehovah* (or *Elohim*) Himself; for **Jacob describes the appearances**

of *Jehovah* at Bethel (Genesis 28:13.) as an appearance of “the angel of *Elohim* ,” and of “the God of Bethel” (Genesis 31:11, Genesis 31:13); and in his blessing on the sons of Joseph (Genesis 48:15-16), “The God (*Elohim*) before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God (*Elohim*) which fed me all my life long unto this day, the *angel* which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads,” he places the angel of God on a perfect equality with God, not only regarding Him as the Being to whom he has been indebted for protection all his life long, but entreating from Him a blessing upon his descendants.

The question arises, therefore, whether the *angel of Jehovah* , or of *God* , was God Himself in one particular phase of His self-manifestation, or a created angel of whom God made use as the organ of His self-revelation.

(Note: In the old Jewish synagogue the Angel of *Jehovah* was regarded as the *Shechinah* , the indwelling of God in the world, i.e., the only Mediator between God and the world, who bears in the Jewish theology the name *Metatron* . The early Church regarded Him as the *Logos* , the second person of the Deity; and only a few of the fathers, such as *Augustine* and *Jerome* , thought of a created angel (vid., Hengstenberg, *Christol.* vol. 3, app.). This view was adopted by many Romish theologians, by the Socinians, Arminians, and others, and has been defended recently by *Hoffmann* , whom *Delitzsch* , *Kurtz* , and others follow. But the opinion of the early Church has been vindicated most thoroughly by Hengstenberg in his *Christology*.)

The former appears to us to be the only scriptural view. For the essential unity of the Angel of *Jehovah* with *Jehovah* Himself follows indisputably from the following facts. In the first place, **the Angel of God identifies Himself with *Jehovah* and *Elohim* , by attributing to Himself divine attributes and performing divine works:** e.g., Genesis 22:12, “Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from *me* ” (i.e., hast been willing to offer him up as a burnt sacrifice to God); again (to Hagar) Genesis 16:10, “ *I* will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude;” Gen 21, “ *I* will make him a great nation,”-the very words used by *Elohim* in Genesis 17:20 with reference to Ishmael, and by *Jehovah* in Genesis 13:16; Genesis 15:4-5, with regard to Isaac; also Exodus 3:6., “ *I* am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: *I* have surely seen the affliction of *My* people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, and *I* am come down to deliver them” (cf. Judges 2:1). In addition to this, He performs miracles, consuming with fire the offering placed before Him by Gideon, and the sacrifice prepared by Manoah, and ascending to haven in the flame of the burnt-offering (Judges 6:21; Judges 13:19-20).

Secondly , the Angel of God was recognised as God by those to whom He appeared, on the one hand by their addressing Him as *Adonai* (i.e., the Lord God; Judges 6:15), declaring that they had seen God, and fearing that they should die (Genesis 16:13; Exodus 3:6; Judges 6:22-23; Judges 13:22), and on the other hand by their paying Him divine honour, offering sacrifices which He accepted, and worshipping Him (Judges 6:20; Judges 13:19-20, cf. Genesis 2:5). The force of these facts has been met by the assertion, that the ambassador perfectly represents the person of the sender; and evidence of this is adduced not only from Grecian literature, but from the Old Testament also, where the addresses of the prophets often glide imperceptibly into the words of *Jehovah* , whose instrument they are. But even if the address in Genesis 22:16, where the oath of the Angel of *Jehovah* is accompanied by the words, “saith the Lord,” and the words and deeds of the Angel of God in certain other cases, might be explained in this way, a created angel sent by God could never say, “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” or by the acceptance of sacrifices and adoration, encourage the presentation of divine honours to himself. How utterly irreconcilable this fact is with the opinion that the Angel of *Jehovah* was a created angel, is conclusively proved by Revelation 22:9, which is generally regarded as perfectly corresponding to the account of the “Angel of *Jehovah* ” of the Old Testament. The angel of God, who shows the sacred seer the heavenly Jerusalem, and who is supposed to say, “Behold, I come quickly” (Revelation 22:7), and “I am Alpha and Omega” (Revelation 22:13), refuses in the most decided way the worship which John is about to present, and exclaims, “See I am thy fellow-servant: worship God.”

Thirdly, the Angel of *Jehovah* is also identified with *Jehovah* by the sacred writers themselves, who call the Angel *Jehovah* without the least reserve (cf. Exodus 3:2 and Exodus 3:4, Judges 6:12 and Judges 6:14-16, but especially Exodus 14:19, where the Angel of *Jehovah* goes before the host of the Israelites, just as *Jehovah* is said to do in Exodus 13:21). - On the other hand, the objection is raised, that ἄγγελος κυρίου in the New Testament, which is confessedly the Greek rendering of יהוה מלאך, is always a created angel, and for that reason cannot be the uncreated Logos or **Son of God**, since the latter could not possibly have announced His own birth to the shepherds at Bethlehem. But this important difference has been overlooked, that according to Greek usage, ἄγγελος κυρίου denotes an (any) angel of the Lord, whereas according to the rules of the Hebrew language יהוה מלאך means *the* angel of the Lord; that in the New Testament the angel who appears is always described as ἄγγελος κυρίου without the article, and the definite article is only introduced in the further course of the narrative to denote the angel whose appearance has been already mentioned, whereas **in the Old Testament it is always “the Angel of Jehovah” who appears, and whenever the appearance of a created angel is referred to, he is introduced first of all as “an angel”** (vid., 1 Kings 19:5 and 1 Kings 19:7).

(Note: The force of this difference cannot be set aside by the objection that the New Testament writers follow the usage of the Septuagint, where יהוה מלאך is rendered ἄγγελος κυρίου. For neither in the New Testament nor in the Alex. version of the Old is ἄγγελος κυρίου used as a proper name; it is a simple appellative, as is apparent from the fact that in every instance, in which further reference is made to an angel who has appeared, he is called ὁ ἄγγελος, with or without κυρίου. All that the Septuagint rendering proves, is that the translators supposed “the angel of the Lord” to be a created angel; but it by no means follows that their supposition is correct.)

At the same time, it does not follow from this use of the expression *Maleach Jehovah*, that the (particular) angel of *Jehovah* was essentially one with God, or that *Maleach Jehovah* always has the same signification; for in Malachi 2:7 the priest is called *Maleach Jehovah*, i.e., the messenger of the Lord. Who the messenger or angel of *Jehovah* was, must be determined in each particular instance from the connection of the passage; and where the context furnishes no criterion, it must remain undecided. Consequently such passages as Psalms 34:7; Psalms 35:5-6, etc., where the angel of *Jehovah* is not more particularly described, or Numbers 20:16, where the general term *angel* is intentionally employed, or Acts 7:30; Galatians 3:19, and Hebrews 2:2, where the words are general and indefinite, furnish no evidence that *the* Angel of *Jehovah*, who proclaimed Himself in His appearances as one with God, was not in reality equal with God, unless we are to adopt as the rule for interpreting Scripture the inverted principle, that clear and definite statements are to be explained by those that are indefinite and obscure.

In attempting now to determine the connection between the appearance of the Angel of *Jehovah* (or *Elohim*) and the appearance of *Jehovah* or *Elohim* Himself, and to fix the precise meaning of the expression *Maleach Jehovah*, we cannot make use, as recent opponents of the old Church view have done, of the manifestation of God in Gen 18 and 19, and the allusion to the great prince *Michael* in Daniel 10:13, Daniel 10:21; Daniel 12:1; just because neither the appearance of *Jehovah* in the former instance, nor that of the archangel *Michael* in the latter, is represented as an appearance of the Angel of *Jehovah*. We must confine ourselves to the passages in which “the Angel of *Jehovah*” is actually referred to. We will examine these, first of all, for the purpose of obtaining a clear conception of the form in which the Angel of *Jehovah* appeared. Gen 16, where He is mentioned for the first time, contains no distinct statement as to His shape, but produces on the whole the impression that He appeared to Hagar in a human form, or one resembling that of man; since it was not till after His departure that she drew the inference from His words, that *Jehovah* had spoken with her. He came in the same form to Gideon, and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah with a staff in His hand (Judges 6:11 and Judges 6:21); also to Manoah's wife, for she took Him to be a man of God, i.e., a prophet, whose appearance was like that of the Angel of *Jehovah* (Judges 13:6); and lastly, to Manoah himself, who did not recognise Him at first, but discovered afterwards, from the miracle

which He wrought before his eyes, and from His miraculous ascent in the flame of the altar, that He was the Angel of *Jehovah* (Judges 13:9-20). In other cases He revealed Himself merely by calling and speaking from heaven, without those who heard His voice perceiving any form at all; e.g., to Hagar, in Genesis 21:17., and to Abraham, Genesis 22:11. On the other hand, He appeared to Moses (Exodus 3:2) in a flame of fire, speaking to him from the burning bush, and to the people of Israel in a pillar of cloud and fire (Exodus 14:19, cf. Exodus 13:21.), without any angelic form being visible in either case. Balaam He met in a human or angelic form, with a drawn sword in His hand (Numbers 22:22-23). David saw Him by the threshing-floor of Araunah, standing between heaven and earth, with the sword drawn in His hand and stretched out over Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 21:16); and He appeared to Zechariah in a vision as a rider upon a red horse (Zechariah 1:9.). - From these varying forms of appearance it is evident that the opinion that the Angel of the Lord was a real angel, a divine manifestation, "not in the disguise of angel, but through the actual appearance of an angel," is not in harmony with all the statements of the Bible. **The form of the Angel of *Jehovah*, which was discernible by the senses, varied according to the purpose of the appearance; and, apart from Genesis 21:17 and Genesis 22:11, we have a sufficient proof that it was not a real angelic appearance, or the appearance of a created angel, in the fact that in two instances it was not really an angel at all, but a flame of fire and a shining cloud which formed the earthly substratum of the revelation of God in the Angel of *Jehovah*** (Exodus 3:2; Exodus 14:19), unless indeed we are to regard natural phenomena as angels, without any scriptural warrant for doing so.

(Note: The only passage that could be adduced in support of this, viz., Psalms 104:4, does not prove that God makes natural objects, winds and flaming fire, into forms in which heavenly spirits appear, or that He creates spirits out of them. Even if we render this passage, with *Delitzsch*, "making His messengers of winds, His servants of flaming fire," the allusion, as *Delitzsch* himself observes, is not to the creation of angels; nor can the meaning be, that God gives wind and fire to His angels as the material of their appearance, and as it were of their self-incorporation. For עָנַן, constructed with two accusatives, the second of which expresses the *materia ex qua*, is never met with in this sense, not even in 2 Chronicles 4:18-22. For the greater part of the temple furniture summed up in this passage, of which it is stated that Solomon made them of gold, was composed of pure gold; and if some of the things were merely covered with gold, the writer might easily apply the same expression to this, because he had already given a more minute account of their construction (e.g., Genesis 3:7). But we neither regard this rendering of the psalm as in harmony with the context, nor assent to the assertion that עָנַן with a double accusative, in the sense of making into anything, is ungrammatical.)

These earthly *substrata* of the manifestation of the "Angel of *Jehovah*" perfectly suffice to establish the conclusion, that the Angel of *Jehovah* was only a peculiar form in which *Jehovah* Himself appeared, and which differed from the manifestations of God described as appearances of *Jehovah* simply in this, that in "the Angel of *Jehovah*," God or *Jehovah* revealed Himself in a mode which was more easily discernible by human senses, and exhibited in a guise of symbolical significance the design of each particular manifestation. In the appearances of *Jehovah* no reference is made to any form visible to the bodily eye, unless they were through the medium of a vision or a dream, excepting in one instance (Gen 18), where *Jehovah* and two angels come to Abraham in the form of three men, and are entertained by him—a form of appearance perfectly resembling the appearances of the Angel of *Jehovah*, but which is not so described by the author, because in this case *Jehovah* does not appear alone, but in the company of two angels, that "the Angel of *Jehovah*" might not be regarded as a created angel.

But although there was no essential difference, but only a formal one, between the appearing of *Jehovah* and the appearing of the Angel of *Jehovah*, the distinction between *Jehovah* and the Angel of *Jehovah* points to a distinction in the divine nature, to which even the Old Testament contains several obvious allusions. The very name indicates such a difference. יהוה מלאך (from לאך to work, from which come מלאכה the work, *opus*, and מלאך, lit., he through whom a work is executed, but in ordinary usage restricted to the idea of a messenger) denotes the person through whom God works

and appears. Beside these passages which represent "the Angel of *Jehovah*" as one with *Jehovah*, there are others in which the Angel distinguishes Himself from *Jehovah*; e.g., when He gives emphasis to the oath by Himself as an oath by *Jehovah*, by adding "said *Jehovah*" (Genesis 22:16); when He greets Gideon with the words, "*Jehovah* with thee, thou brave hero" (Judges 6:12); when He says to Manoah, "Though thou constrainedst me, I would not eat of thy food; but if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering to *Jehovah*, thou mayest offer it" (Judges 13:16); for when He prays, in Zechariah 1:12, "*Jehovah* Sabaoth, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem?" (Compare also Genesis 19:24, where *Jehovah* is distinguished from *Jehovah*.) Just as in these passages the Angel of *Jehovah* distinguishes Himself personally from *Jehovah*, there are others in which a distinction is drawn between a self-revealing side of the divine nature, visible to men, and a hidden side, invisible to men, i.e., between the self-revealing and the hidden God. Thus, for example, not only does *Jehovah* say of the Angel, whom He sends before Israel in the pillar of cloud and fire, "My name is in Him," i.e., he reveals My nature (Exodus 23:21), but He also calls Him פני , "My face" (Exodus 33:14); and in reply to Moses' request to see His glory, He says "Thou canst not see My face, for there shall no man see Me and live," and then causes His glory to pass by Moses in such a way that he only sees His back, but not His face (Exodus 33:18-23). On the strength of these expressions, He in whom *Jehovah* manifested Himself to His people as a Saviour is called in Isaiah 63:9, "the Angel of His face," and all the guidance and protection of Israel are ascribed to Him. In accordance with this, Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Testament, proclaims to the people waiting for the manifestation of *Jehovah*, that is to say, for the appearance of the Messiah predicted by former prophets, that the Lord (יהוה , i.e., God), the Angel of the covenant, will come to His temple (Genesis 3:1). This "Angel of the covenant," or "Angel of the face," has appeared in Christ. **The Angel of *Jehovah*, therefore, was no other than the Logos**, which not only "was with God," but "was God," and in Jesus Christ "was made flesh" and "came unto His own" (John 1:1-2, John 1:11); the only-begotten Son of God, who was sent by the Father into the world, who, though one with the Father, prayed to the Father (John 17), and who is even called "the Apostle," ὁ ἀπόστολος , in Hebrews 3:1. From all this it is sufficiently obvious, that neither the title Angel or Messenger of *Jehovah*, nor the fact that the Angel of *Jehovah* prayed to *Jehovah* Sabaoth, furnishes any evidence against His essential unity with *Jehovah*. That which is unfolded in perfect clearness in the New Testament through the incarnation of the Son of God, was still veiled in the Old Testament according to the wisdom apparent in the divine training. The difference between *Jehovah* and the Angel of *Jehovah* is generally hidden behind the unity of the two, and for the most part *Jehovah* is referred to as He who chose Israel as His nation and kingdom, and who would reveal Himself at some future time to His people in all His glory; so that in the New Testament nearly all the manifestations of *Jehovah* under the Old Covenant are referred to Christ, and regarded as fulfilled through Him.

(Note: This is not a mere accommodation of Scripture, but the correct interpretation of the obscure hints of the Old Testament by the light of the fulfilment of the New. For not only is the Maleach *Jehovah* the revealer of God, but *Jehovah* Himself is the revealed God and Saviour. Just as in the history of the Old Testament there are not only revelations of the Maleach *Jehovah*, but revelations of *Jehovah* also; so in the prophecies the announcement of the Messiah, the sprout of David and servant of *Jehovah*, is intermingled with the announcement of the coming of *Jehovah* to glorify His people and perfect His kingdom.)"

Vincent's Word Studies:

"No man hath seen God at any time (Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε)

God is first in the Greek order, as emphatic: "God hath no man ever seen." As to the substance of the statement, compare John 3:11; Exodus 33:20; 1 John 4:12. Manifestations of God to Old Testament saints were only partial and approximate (Exodus 33:23). The seeing intended here is seeing of the divine essence rather than of the divine person, which also is indicated by the absence of the article from Θεὸν, God. In this sense even Christ was not seen as God. The verb ὁράω, to see, denotes a

physical act, but emphasizes the mental discernment accompanying it, and points to the result rather than to the act of vision. In 1 John 1:1; 1 John 4:12, 1 John 4:14, θεάομαι is used, denoting calm and deliberate contemplation (see on John 1:14). In John 12:45, we have θεωρέω, to behold (see on Mark 5:15; see on Luke 10:18). Both θεάομαι and θεωρέω imply deliberate contemplation, but the former is gazing with a view to satisfy the eye, while the latter is beholding more critically, with an inward spiritual or mental interest in the thing beheld, and with a view to acquire knowledge about it. "Θεωρεῖν would be used of a general officially reviewing or inspecting an army; θεᾶσθαι of a lay spectator looking at the parade" (Thayer)."

Christos Karakolis , "Jesus as Yahve of the Old Testament epiphanies: Aspects of Jesus Divinity in the fourth Gospel," *Bulletin for Biblical Studies*, vol 21-22, pp. 55-65:

John 12:41 states the following concerning Isaiah's prophecy in chapter 6: "Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory and spoke of him." (ESV). Of this Karakolis poses the question:

"How then is it possible for John to interpret the OT text in such a way that he can attribute the glory of Yahve to Jesus? Only by assuming that the person of Jesus is identical with the self-revealed Yahve ... What he [John] does question, however, is that a human being can see a manifestation of the self-revealed God, since he accepts the epiphany at Isa 6. What he does question, however, is that God the Father was in fact the divine person seen in the OT epiphanies, especially in the theologically fundamental revelation of divine glory to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exod 33:11, 20; Num 12:8)" (p. 57).

J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John. The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, pp. 710-11:

"Now for the third time he mentions Isaiah by name. Having appealed to "the word of Isaiah the prophet ... which he said" (v.38; also v.39, "again Isaiah said"), he concludes, "These things Isaiah said because he saw his glory, and he spoke about him." The reference is to Isaiah's vision in the temple, the setting of the second quotation (in vv.39-40). There "I saw the Lord," he claimed, "seated on a throne, high and lofty and the house was full of glory" (Isa 6:1, LXX), and he heard the seraphs crying one to another, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; all the earth is full of his glory" (6:3, LXX). **The Gospel writer's startling claim is that "the Lord," or "Lord of hosts," in Isaiah's vision was none other than Jesus, that the "glory" filling both "the house" (or temple) and "all the earth" was Jesus' glory, and consequently that when Isaiah spoke he was speaking of Jesus..."** (J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, NICNT, p.710).

"While Jesus is without question the intended antecedent of "his" and "him," Jesus has not been mentioned by name since verse 36, and the Gospel writer leaves it to the reader to infer that the "glory" of the God that Isaiah saw was in fact the glory of Jesus, now revealed in his signs and words (see 1:14; 2:11). It is not a difficult inference, given Jesus' own claims earlier that Abraham "rejoiced that he would see my day, and he saw and was glad" (8:56), and that "before Abraham came to be, I am" (8:58). As in that passage, **the point is not simply that Isaiah saw the glory of Jesus by seeing into the future, but that Isaiah saw the glory of the preexistent Jesus, the Word who was "in the beginning" (1:1-2), already in his own time"**.

[Emphasis mine throughout the above quotes]

Appendix

The Divine Christ by David Capes

Another specialist on binitarianism who produces research that ‘locks in’ proofs for this doctrine is David Capes.

Capes is part of the small group of researchers which includes Larry Hurtado and Alan Segal whose works I have read with interest. These sorts of works should interest Church of God people given that they have given credence to our binitarian position that Herbert W Armstrong taught from around the late 1930s or so. This does not mean that the Church of God position coincides completely with their views, rather their research and uncovering of information throws further light on this critical doctrine.

They come from a different perspective but arrive at similar conclusions: that is there are “two powers in heaven” (Father and the Son) and two YHWHs. (However, some are still trinitarian though make extremely little mention of that doctrine. I suspect that they have come to realise how weak their argument is for elevating the holy spirit into a third Being within the Godhead and therefore downplay this doctrinal position).

Capes’s work summarises many years of thorough study and analysis of how Christ is known as YHWH by Paul in the New Testament and sometimes so is God the Father.

This book updates previous published research that articulates the argument for Christ’s Divinity and pre-existence. His arguments may be termed “YHWH Christology.”

The book is unfoiled in 6 chapters:

In chapter one, he examines the Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew words for Lord and how the word *kyrios* in the Greek Old Testament (*Septuagint*) is used in the New Testament for Christ.

The following chapter delves into the works of scholars who have examined early Christianity as an historical phenomenon by observing the early writings in their historical context. By doing so, Paul is situated into the cultural context of his day. As Capes points out, the converted Jews at that time were Aramaic speaking and monotheistic and it is they who called Jesus Lord, thereby identifying Him with YHWH of the Old Testament.

When we read chapter three we begin to understand the thoroughness of his research and what can also amount to a ‘common sense’ approach to the subject. In particular is the way Paul uses the word *kyrios* in several aspects as well as to associate Christ with YHWH.

Capes argues that Paul does not use *kyrios* indiscriminately but in three specific contexts: “ethical statements when Jesus’s authoritative status is on display, in matters pertaining to eschatology, and in instruction concerning the church’s worship or its liturgy” (p. 56). Actions that are reserved for YHWH in the Old Testament are also those to be commanded by Jesus. Joel 2:32 has application to

Jesus in Rom 10:9-13. Further, he demonstrates the oneness of the Father and Son, yet they are distinct.

God is therefore binitarian, not ditheistic

In chapter four he considers where the Father is referenced in the New Testament linking to YHWH in the Old Testament. He terms these references as “patrological” (referring to the Father). This is usually in the context of justification, election, gentile inclusion and the church described as a temple (Rom 4.7–8; 9.27–29; 11.34; 15.9–11; 1 Cor 3.20; 2 Cor 6.17–18). The Father is Lord of Hosts or Lord Almighty.

Capes moves forward in chapter five with the examination of uses of YHWH texts as Christological both direct and as allusions (Rom 10:13; 14:11; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17; 1 Cor 2:16; 1 Cor 10:26; 1 Cor 10:21, 22; 1 Thess 3:13; 4:3; 2 Cor 3:16; Phil 2:6-11). He shows that the YHWH texts for Christ are within the context of the Gospel message, end-time judgment, Christ’s resurrection, wisdom etc.

Finally, in chapter six he contends with various views and argues that there is a pattern that emerges in Paul’s writings that equate Christ with YHWH, the divine name for God.

Although Christ holds the YHWH name and God’s attributes at the resurrection, this is also what He held prior to his conception.

Some important quotes/information from Capes:

“The angel of the Lord,” for example, refers to an angel in whom the name of God dwells (Exod. 23:20-21). In some cases, it is difficult to distinguish between the angel of the Lord and the Lord himself (Gen. 16:7-14; 22:11-18). (p. 7)

Capes demonstrates that Paul has a “propensity” to equate Christ with YHWH by application of Jesus to Old Testament texts that refer to YHWH. Paul does this to show all and sundry the significance of Christ.

“Yet on occasion the apostle also used *kyrios* in reference to God the Father.” (p. xv)

He shows that when the Paul refers to the Father he uses the term *patrological* texts and to Christ as *christological* texts.

“Pre-Christian Jewish monotheism is therefore not the same as the latter rabbinic (and modern) version. It was not unitary, but it did allow for the inclusion of divine manifestations to be identified with an yet remain distinct from God [the Father]. Jewish monotheism before Christ therefore would not have precluded the identification of Jesus with God or calling him “Lord.”” (p. 43)

The way that Paul uses *kyrios* “is best taken here as a name. If so, it can be none other than God’s unique covenant name, the tetragrammaton, YHWH.” (p. 51)

“... when Paul speaks about the relation between Christ believers and the risen Jesus, he uses the same language and themes found in Second Temple Jewish texts to speak of Israel’s relation to YHWH.” (p. 61)

“Marshaling powerful apocalyptic imagery from the prophets Isaiah (66:4, 15) and Jeremiah (10:25), Paul portrays the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with his mighty angels in flaming fire to execute divine judgment and ultimately to exclude the unrighteous from the Lord’s presence. These phrases echo OT prophetic and apocalyptic passages that depict YHWH as Ruler and Judge. Here Jesus stands as *kyrios* and therefore the judge who will correct the injustices being suffered by his people at his coming.” (p. 69)

Capes refers to binitarian statements in the New Testament, giving credence to the doctrine (pp. 74-6 80, 137, 159)

The confession of Paul in ICor 8-10 “is, of course, binitarian. It sees the two – God, the Father, and the Lord, Jesus Christ – in unity. The two are one. We are not dealing with any sort of primitive ditheism, that is, two separate and distinct gods. As a Jew Paul was a monotheist, but now – given all that the God of Abraham has been up to – he understands that Jesus somehow must be reckoned within God’s unique covenant identity. We should not fail to notice here that the title “Lord,” associated as it is with Jesus, has its roots in the Shema.” (p. 80)

“The day of YHWH has become the day of the Lord Jesus Christ. The promise/threat of YHWH’s return is now taken up in the promise/threat of the arrival, appearance, and revelation of the Lord Jesus. Additionally, the apostle recasts the final judgment of God in and around the second coming of Jesus ...” (p. 82)

“Whether a passage refers to God or Christ must be worked out through contextual and exegetical analysis.” (p. 86)

“... it seems only natural to read “Lord of hosts” as “God the Father” and not the “Lord Jesus Christ.” (p. 91)

“The subordination of Christ to God is a consistent theme in Paul’s Letters even when he associates Jesus closely with the Father (see ICor. 15:20-28).

“... that Paul associates these passages so closely with God via a title he most often uses for Jesus indicates he knew the divine name was an appropriate way of depicting the one, true God of Israel. Furthermore, had the apostle quoted these texts [from the Old Testament] and made only christological applications of them, we may well conclude he failed to distinguish the two figures.” (p. 109)

“Jesus Christ is cocreator with God the Father ...” (p. 137)

“... scholars agree that Isa. 45 contains the most stridently monotheistic language in all the Hebrew Bible ... Paul’s clear use of Is. 45:23 as a reference to Christ” once again ties Christ in with the YHWH of the Old Testament. (p. 147)

“... whether Paul intends God or Christ as reference must be worked out through a rigorous exegetical and contextual analysis. We find that Paul reserves YHWH texts for God primarily in theocentric passages such as Rom. 9-11. Additionally, when Paul wants the reader to understand the Father rather than the Lord Jesus, he states it clearly in the context and/or an introductory formula. When discussing the following themes, the apostle customarily utilizes the YHWH text with God as its referent” (p. 149)

All this suggests that Paul “considers Jesus the Messiah to be more than a man. It suggests he includes Jesus within the name and dignity of God. In a crucial sense, then, he identifies Jesus with YHWH in remarkable ways.” (p. 156)

“... Paul remains a monotheist, and he chooses his words carefully so that no charge of ditheism can apply” (p. 158). This is the reason for the title of this article.

“... the NT writers include Jesus within the identity of the one God of Israel. They acknowledge him as Creator and sovereign Lord.” (p 163)

“God the Father is the source of creation and the goal of redemption. The Lord Jesus is the agent of creation and redemption.” (p. 166)

“... we need to consider the way Jesus is remembered as having applied to himself concepts and texts that the OT applied to YHWH.” (p. 179)

“... the Lord Jesus Christ is so closely associated with God that he bears the divine “name” and is the rightful recipient of devotion (Phil. 2:9-11). To put it another way, early Christians included Jesus precisely and unambiguously in the identity of the God of Israel.” (p. 189)

Appendix

Seeing the Lord's Glory by Christopher Kaiser

Christopher Kaiser provides further proofs for identifying Christ with YHWH.

“Following the execution of Jesus, according to New Testament accounts, the disciples “saw the Lord” (1 Cor. 9:1; Acts 9:17, 27; 26:16; John 20:18, 20) and “beheld his glory” (2 Cor. 3:18; cf. Luke 9:32; John 1:14; 12:41). When taken in the context of early Judaism, these phrases are unambiguous descriptions of YHWH/Adonai” (p. 1)

“In other words, early disciples of Jesus talked about him in the exact same way that Jews of their time talked about YHWH. They affirmed that:

- Jesus is “Lord of all” (a confessional formula in Rom. 10:12; Acts 10:36; cf. Eph. 4:6).
- Jesus is to be invoked as the Lord who saves (1 Cor. 1:2; Rom. 10:9-13; Matt. 8:25; 14:30; 15:25; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 7:59; 9:14, 21; 22:16).
- Jesus is the Lord to whom unbelievers must turn as a sign of repentance (2 Cor. 3:16; Acts 9:35; 11:21b).
- Jesus is called upon and visualized as the Lord who comes to save and to judge (1 Cor. 16:22 [Aramaic *mar*]; 3 Rev. 22:20; *Did.* 10:6, all with probable eucharistic settings).

The identification with YHWH, the Lord God of Israel, is unmistakable in these texts.” (p. 1)

“Such elevation and lordship placed him on the same level as God the Father in heaven and soon led to affirmations of Jesus own identity as “Lord” (YHWH)” (p. 3)

“As Wright puts it: “The creator God has raised Jesus from the dead, and he was therefore Israel’s Messiah, the world’s true Lord, and [therefore] the strange second self of Israel’s God himself.” (p. 3)

“Even our earlier New Testament documents describe Jesus with “Yahweh texts”—texts that describe the coming of YI-IWI-I, the God of Israel, in the Hebrew Bible (or the lxx) —and Aramaic formulas like *Marana tha* (Our Lord, come!” 1 Cor. 16:22) date back to the Jerusalem church ... Moreover, binitarian formulas that exhibit just as much parity as that in the Gospel of John are present in the earliest New Testament documents” (p. 5)

“Perhaps the solution to our dilemma was readymade in the binitarian pattern of prior Jewish beliefs about their Deity. If early Judaism was not strictly monotheistic and entertained various ideas about a second god alongside *HaShem*, early Christians may simply have developed a new variant of Jewish binitarianism.” (p. 6)

“These [New Testament binitarian] formulas actually belong to traditional Judaism—they carried on the binitarian beliefs of the Old Testament (as Barker reads it), for which YHWH was a second God alongside the Most High.” (p. 7)

“The simplest explanation for the fact that Jesus was confessed as YHWH in the New Testament would be that the first disciples experienced a manifestation of YHWH in a glorious anthropic (humanlike) form anal that (at some point) they recognized the face and voice as those of their teacher.⁵⁷ Early Christian affirmations of deity Christology can be viewed as relics of such a founding revelation (based on subsequent reenactments).” (p. 9)

Appendix

What the Earliest Church 'Fathers' believed

It is clear that the earliest non-Sabbatarian Church 'Fathers' (so-called) did not hold to the trinity. It was either an early form of Arianism (or similar) or a form of binitarianism.

The quotes below provide some proof for this. Emphasis mine throughout.

Ignatius of Antioch (cAD40–110):

"He, **being begotten by the Father before the beginning of time, was God the Word**, the only-begotten Son, and remains the same for ever; for "of His kingdom there shall be no end," says Daniel the prophet." (*The Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians*, Chapter VI.—Preserve harmony)

"But our Physician is the only true God, the unbegotten and unapproachable, the Lord of all, the Father and Begetter of the only-begotten Son. We have also as a Physician the Lord our God, **Jesus the Christ, the only begotten Son and Word, before time began**, but who afterwards became also man, of Mary the virgin." (*Epistles to the Ephesians*. Chapter VII.—Beware of false teachers)

Justin Martyr (cAD100-165):

"But to the Father of all, who is unbegotten, there is no name given.... And His Son, who is properly **called Son, the Word, who also was with Him and was begotten before the works** [of creation], when at first He created and arranged all things by Him, is called Christ..." ("The Second Apology of Justin," Ch 6, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, p. 190). [emphasis mine]

"'I shall give you another testimony, my friends,' said I, from the Scriptures, that **God begat before all creatures a beginning, a certain rational power [Who came] from Himself, who is called by the Holy Spirit, now the Glory of the Lord, now the Son, again Wisdom, again an Angel, then God, and then Lord and Logos; and on another occasion He calls Himself Captain, when He appeared in human form to Joshua the son of Nave (Nun). For He can be called by all those names, since He ministers to the Father's will, and since He was begotten of the Father by an act of will**; just as we see happening among ourselves: for when we give out some word, we beget the word; yet not by abscission, so as to lessen the word [which is] in us, when we give it out: and just as we see also happening in the case of a fire, which is not lessened when it kindled, but remains the same; and that which has been kindled by it likewise appears to exist by itself, not diminishing that from which it was kindled.

"**The word of wisdom, who is Himself this god begotten of the father of all things, and Word, and Wisdom, and Power, and Glory of the Begetter**, will bear evidence to me, when He speaks by Solomon the following: 'If I shall declare to you what happens daily, I shall call to mind events from everlasting and review them. The Lord made me the beginning of His ways for His works. From everlasting He established me in the beginning, before He had made the earth, and before He had made the deeps, before the springs of the waters had issued forth, before the mountains had been established. Before all the hills He begets me...

"When He made ready the heavens, I was along with Him, and when He set up His throne on the winds: when He made the high clouds strong, and the springs of the deep safe, when He made the foundations of the earth, I was with Him arranging. I was that in which He rejoiced; daily and at all times I delighted in His countenance, because He delighted in the finishing of the inhabitable world, and delighted in the sons of men..." (*Dialogue of Justin, Philosopher and Martyr, with Trypho, a Jew*, Ch 61).

"These are the words: 'And God said, Behold, Adam has become as one of us, to know good and evil.' In saying, therefore, 'as one of us,' has declared that number of persons associated with one another, and that they are at least two... But this Offspring, which was truly brought forth from the Father, was with the Father before all the creatures, and the Father communed with Him; even as the Scripture by Solomon has made clear, that He whom Solomon calls Wisdom, was begotten as a beginning before all His creatures and as offspring by god" (*Dialogue with Trypho*, Ch 62).

Theophilus of Antioch (cAD115–180):

"You will say, then, to me: "You said that God ought not to be contained in a place, and how do you now say that He walked in Paradise?" Hear what I say. The God and Father, indeed, of all cannot be contained, and is not found in a place, for there is no place of His rest; but His Word, through whom He made all things, being His power and His wisdom, assuming the person of the Father and Lord of all, went to the garden in the person of God, and conversed with Adam. For the divine writing itself teaches us that Adam said that he had heard the voice. But what else is this voice but the Word of God, who is also His Son? Not as the poets and writers of myths talk of the sons of gods begotten from intercourse [with women], but as truth expounds, the Word, that always exists, residing within the heart of God. For before anything came into being He had Him as a counsellor, being His own mind and thought.

But when God wished to make all that He determined on, He begot this Word, uttered, the first-born of all creation, not Himself being emptied of the Word [Reason], but having begotten Reason, and always conversing with His Reason. And hence the holy writings teach us, and all the spirit-bearing [inspired] men, one of whom, John, says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God," showing that at first God was alone, and the Word in Him. Then he says, "The Word was God; all things came into existence through Him; and apart from Him not one thing came into existence." The Word, then, being God, and being naturally produced from God, whenever the Father of the universe wills, He sends Him to any place; and He, coming, is both heard and seen, being sent by Him, and is found in a place." (*Theophilus to Autolytus*. Bk II, Ch XXII.—Why God is Said to Have Walked.)

Hippolytus of Rome (cAD170-235):

"The first and only, both Creator and Lord of all, had nothing coeval with Himself ... But He was One, alone in Himself By an exercise of His will He created things that are, which antecedently had no existence, except that He willed to make them" (*The Refutation of All Heresies*, Bk 10, Ch 28)

"Therefore this solitary and supreme Deity, by an exercise of reflection, brought forth the logos first... Him alone He produced from existing things; for the Father Himself constituted existence, and the being born from him was the cause of all things that are produced. The Logos was in the Father Himself, bearing the will of His progenitor, and not being unacquainted with the mind of the Father. For simultaneously with His procession from His Progenitor, inasmuch as He is this progenitor's first-born, he has, as a voice in Himself, the ideas conceived in the Father. And so it was, that when the Father ordered the world to come into existence, the Logos one by one

complete object of creation, thus pleasing God... The Creator did not wish to make him a god, and failed in His aim; nor an angel... but a man. For **if He had willed to make thee a god, He could have done so. Thou has the example of the Logos.** His [God's] will, however, was, that you should be a man, and He has made thee a man. But if thou art desirous of also becoming a god, obey Him that has created thee... The Logos alone of this God is from God himself; wherefore also **the Logos is God, being *the substance of God.*** " (Chs 28-29)

Origen Adamantius (AD185–254):

"For we do not say, as the heretics suppose, that some part of the substance of God was converted into the Son, or that the Son was procreated by the Father out of things non-existent, i.e., beyond His own substance, so that there once was a time when He did not exist; but, putting away all corporeal conceptions, we say that the Word and Wisdom was begotten out of the invisible and incorporeal without any corporeal feeling, as if it were an act of the will proceeding from the understanding. Nor, seeing He is called the Son of (His) love, will it appear absurd if in this way He be called the Son of (His) will. Nay, John also indicates that "God is Light," and Paul also declares that the Son is the splendour of everlasting light. As light, accordingly, could never exist without splendour, so neither can the Son be understood to exist without the Father; for He is called the "express image of His person," and the Word and Wisdom."

How, then, can it be asserted that there once was a time when He was not the Son? For that is nothing else than to say that there was once a time when He was not the Truth, nor the Wisdom, nor the Life, although in all these He is judged to be the perfect essence of God the Father; for these things cannot be severed from Him, or even be separated from His essence." (*Origen De Principiis*, Bk IV, Ch I)

Athanasius of Alexandria (cAD293–373):

"As we said above, so now we repeat, that the divine generation must not be compared to the nature of men, nor the Son considered to be part of God, nor the generation to imply any passion whatever; God is not as man; for men beget passibly, having a transitive nature, which waits for periods by reason of its weakness. But with God this cannot be; for He is not composed of parts, but being impassible and simple, He is impassibly and indivisibly Father of the Son.

This again is strongly evidenced and proved by divine Scripture. For the Word of God is His Son, and the Son is the Father's Word and Wisdom; and Word and Wisdom is neither creature nor part of Him whose Word He is, nor an offspring passibly begotten. Uniting then the two titles, Scripture speaks of 'Son,' in order to herald the natural and true offspring of His essence; and, on the other hand, that none may think of the Offspring humanly, while signifying His essence, it also calls Him Word, Wisdom, and Radiance; to teach us that the generation was impassible, and eternal, and worthy of God. What affection then, or what part of the Father is the Word and the Wisdom and the Radiance? So much may be impressed even on these men of folly; for as they asked women concerning God's Son, so let them inquire of men concerning the Word, and they will find that the word which they put forth is neither an affection of them nor a part of their mind." (*Four discourses against the Arians*, Discourse 1.28)

Matthew Barrett, "What is Eternal Generation? (and Interview)," *The Master's Seminary Journal*, Spring, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2022, pp. 185-193:

"There is another term that conveys the concept of generation: begotten. Perhaps you've heard the word used when reading those long genealogies in the Bible: so-and-so begat so-and-so begat so-and-so. But John applies this language to Jesus as well, referring to him as the only begotten Son of God (e.g., John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18). This begotten language, however, long predates the King James Bible. Way back in the fourth century, the church fathers who wrote the Nicene Creed used it as well. For

example, the Nicene Creed says, “We believe in ... one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all time.”

Since this is the one, undivided God we are talking about, for the Son to be begotten from the Father means that God is begotten from God, which is why the creed confesses the Son to be “true God from true God.” To confess the Son as true God from true God is not an overstatement since he is, we dare not forget, consubstantial with the Father. **Consubstantial means the Son is equal to the Father in every way, from the same essence or substance as the Father, no less divine than the Father.** But we can only affirm such coequality if the Son is begotten from the Father’s essence. For if the Son is not begotten from the Father, the divine essence cannot subsist (exist) in the Son...

When Is the Son Generated?

That’s a trick question if there ever were one. There is no “when.” Why? The short answer: our triune God is eternal. He is not bound by time but is timeless; he has no beginning. A succession of moments cannot apply to him. He just is. That means the following question is most relevant:

Q: If God is timelessly eternal, what does that mean for the Son and his generation from the Father?

A: Unlike human generation, the Son’s generation is eternal. There never was a time when the Son was not, nor ever a time when the Son was not from the Father.

Or, as fathers like Gregory of Nyssa like to say, there is no “sometime” for the Son because he was not generated in time. “He exists by generation indeed, but nevertheless He never begins to exist.”

It’s not as if God the Son did not exist but then came into existence at a point in time, created by the Father and therefore after the Father. That may describe how generation works in our human existence, but it cannot depict the Son’s generation. **He is, says Nicaea, “begotten not created.” He is, we cannot forget, the eternal Son from the Father.** If the divine essence subsists in him, then he too shares in the attributes of deity, eternity being one of them. He is no creature, and if not a creature, then his generation cannot be temporal. The generation of the Son, said Gregory of Nyssa, “does not fall within time, any more than the creation was before time.”

If the Son’s generation did fall within time, then not only is there a time when the Son was not, but there is a time when the Father was not Father. And if there was a time when the Father was not, then there was a time when the Trinity was not. As Athanasius points out, “If the Son is not proper offspring of the Father’s essence, but of nothing has come to be, then of nothing the Triad consists, and once there was not a Triad, but a Monad.”

Furthermore, if he is Son because he is from the Father, then his sonship must be as eternal as the Father himself, at least if he is begotten from the same essence as the Father. That is why the Nicene Creed stresses that the Son is “begotten from the Father before all time ... begotten not created ... through Whom all things came into being.” The generation within God is unlike any other; it is not susceptible to the limitations of time. The Son’s filial identity has no duration or succession of moments; it is timeless. Everlasting in nature, there never was a time when the Son was not begotten from the Father.

That may sound like a contradiction—how can someone be generated and eternal? It only sounds like a contradiction because we only know generation within the experience of our own finitude. For the infinite, timelessly eternal deity, the confines of our finitude do not apply. Let’s not forget that whatever words are used of God—even scriptural words and metaphors—this is God we have in view, infinite and eternal, immutable and everlasting. Language is, by definition, analogical in every way. The metaphor must then be adapted to the incomprehensible One, not vice versa. So too with generation. As Augustine says, since the generation of the Son is eternal, “one exists not as before the other, but as from the other.”⁶ The Son is not generated after the Father, which would make him less than the Father, but the Son is generated from the Father and from all eternity.

One more thing: Scripture refers to the Son's eternal origin from the Father with a variety of metaphors, including Radiance, Image, Wisdom, Word, and Ancient of Days..." (pp. 186-88) [emphasis mine]

Appendix

Scholars Admissions about the 'Trinity' and holy spirit

Derek Kidner, *Genesis. Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries:*

"In the Old Testament the Spirit is a term for God's outgoing energy, creative and sustaining (cf. Job 33:4; Ps 104:30)." (p. 49)

R. A. Stewart. "Shekinah," *New Bible Dictionary*, 2nd ed:

"The Shekinah" is the "nearest Jewish equivalent to the Holy Spirit... The glory of God (*kabod* in the Heb. Bible, *doxa* in LXX and NT) is another name for the Shekinah... Thunder, lightning and cloud may be outward concomitants of God's glory (Ex 19:16; 24:14ff.; Ps 29; 97; Eze 1:4); or it may be specially associated with the tent of meeting (Ex 40:34-38) or with the Temple (Ezk 43:2, 4)..." (. pp. 1101-02).

John E. Hartley, *Genesis. New International Bible Commentary:*

"The words God said mark off the stages of creation, conveying that God created by the word. God's words were not empty, for the Spirit, who was present over the waters, empowered God's words, bringing into being what God had spoken... The wording of Psalm 33:6, 9 support this claim" "By the word of Yahweh were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth ... For he spoke, and it, came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. **The parallel in this psalm between "word" and "breath" (v.6) communicates that God's Spirit was the energy powering God's word.**" (p. 44)

Roderick. A. Finlayson, "Trinity," *New Bible Dictionary:*

"The word Trinity is not found in the Bible, and though used by Tertullian in the last decade of the 2nd century, it did not find a place formally in the theology of the church till the 4th century... it is not a biblical doctrine in the sense that any formulation of it can be found in the Bible..." (p. 1221)

"In the Being of God there are not three individuals, but only three personal self distinctions within the one Divine Essence." (p. 1300)

Douglas Moo, *Romans. NIV Application Commentary:*

"The closest we get are formulations such as Matthew 28:19, where Jesus commands his disciples to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"..." (p. 255)

John H. Walton, *Job. NIV Application Commentary:*

"It is true that some interpreters have preferred capitalized reading of Spirit and considered it a (veiled) reference to the Holy Spirit. **Trinitarian theology would not be what Elihu would have had in mind, nor would it be something comprehended by Job or the Israelite audience, whatever we might decide the role of the Holy Spirit to be.** If we contend for biblical authority, we must retain the linkage of the author's understanding. Elihu's statement has more to say about his understanding of the human nature than about the divine nature" (p. 352).

"In Israelite thinking the spirit (whether described as God's or human's) is a vitalizing energy rather than a component part" (p. 353).

“Humans are viewed as invigorated by the breath of God. If this were to be viewed as a reference to the Holy Spirit, it would suggest that every human has been granted the presence of the Holy Spirit. **Furthermore, the Israelites knew nothing of the Trinity and would not have used “the Spirit of God” for the third person of the Trinity.** In the Old Testament the “spirit of God” is understood as an extension of the power of God... This statement that the spirit “has made me” is parallel to the statement that God’s breath “gives me life”...” (p. 354)

“**Elihu’s understanding of the divine spirit is nonpersonal; that is, God’s spirit is never articulated in trinitarian terms** in which the Spirit is a distinct person of the godhead. As in the rest of the Old Testament, the spirit is an extension of God’s power, presence and authority. It is viewed as part of God’s person, but not as a distinct person” (p. 376).

J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John. The New International Commentary on the New Testament:*

“... having “breathed,” Jesus added, “Receive Holy Spirit” (v.22b), and for this reason it is customary to translate the text, “he breathed *on them*,” presumably conferring on them the Spirit with his very breath, much as God in the beginning, having “formed the man from the earth, breathed in his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (Gen 2:7, LXX).

“Here [Jn 20:22], as in the first half of the Gospel (1:32-33; 3:5, 6, 8, 34; 4:23-24; 6:63; 7:39), **only the neuter “Spirit” is used (without even the definite article!), leaving little room for the Spirit’s personality...** In the Gospel itself, a variety of expressions have been used for the Advocate’s coming: “I will ask the Father, and he will give you...” (14:16); “the Father will send in my name” (14:26); “whom I will send to you from the Father” (15:26); “if I go, I will send him to you” (16:17). None of these quite match the present scene in which “Holy Spirit” comes on the disciples as breath from Jesus’ mouth.

“The description here is better attuned to the promise John received that Jesus would baptize “in Holy Spirit” - as here without the definite article (1:33) - or to the experience of being “born of water and Spirit” as the qualification for entering the kingdom of God (see 3:5-6). In short, the accent is on “Life,” even as Jesus is alive (14:19), not on a new personal Companion to be with them forever and lead them into all truth. And yet, this is the only “Spirit” that comes on the disciples within this Gospel...” (pp. 1010-1011).

Gary M. Burge, *John. NIV Application Commentary:*

“In 1 John 4:13 John writes that one feature of our assurance in Christ is the gift of the Spirit. “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of *his own Spirit*” (RSV, italics added). This is no impersonal spirit; this is no ambiguous inspiration from God. This is Jesus *himself* indwelling his disciples, taking up residence promised in 14:23. Jesus desires intimacy with and his followers, but the vehicle of that intimacy will now be experienced through the agency of the Holy Spirit. **The reason that the work of the Spirit in John 14-16 is so highly personal is that this Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus - his own Spirit - that is now poured out at the hour of glorification.** The intimacy of the garden scene is now satisfied. Mary’s yearnings are met. Jesus will be with her in a way she could not formerly comprehend.

“The careful union of Christ and Spirit in John makes an important theological point. Discipleship is defined not only by belief in Jesus but by the indwelling of the Son through the Spirit... To receive Christ is to obtain the Spirit; **to be filled by the Holy Spirit is to experience the living presence of Jesus**

within. Christian transformation is Christ at work within us, bringing about his glory in our Spirit-led renewal (Col 1:27)" (p. 575).

"In all four Gospels the Spirit is further related in some way to God's creative and powerful word, which is able to transform realities (prophetic speech in the Synoptic Gospels; the life-giving and cleansing word in John).

Matthias Wenk, "Holy Spirit," *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels:*

"Both Luke (seeing Luke-Acts as a two-volume work) and John accentuate most the future role of the Spirit in the disciples' lives as the continuation of Jesus' presence in and his ministry through them." (p. 393)

Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John, Revised, The New International Commentary on the New Testament:*

"Having commissioned them, Jesus bestowed on them the equipment they would need for the discharge of their commission. He breathed and said "Receive the Holy Spirit" ..." (p. 747).

[emphasis mine throughout]

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***Binitarian/Ditheistic Monotheism
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