


ARAMAIC BIBLE COMPANION

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

AN ABC CLASSIC –THE HISTORICAL PROVENANCE OF THEOLOGY

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INTRODUCTION

The doctrine of the Trinity (Describing “The Knowledge of God-triune”) was developed during the early centuries of church history to describe the eternal reality of God’s self-revelation. The ineffable nature of God all glorious, YAHWEH ELOHIM, the majesty on high is clearly best understood from what God reveals of Himself to his servants the prophets and apostles and what our Lord Jesus Christ manifested and taught of the One true God-Father Redeemer and Comforter.

The subject of this study is like a lighthouse to the world beginning with the Old Testament lamp of our knowledge of God through Moses life and writings and adding to that some important reflectors from the prophets and then adjusting to **the magnificent illumination of the teaching of Christ and the apostles**. After that we consider the mechanism of the revolving patristic discussions that gave us the creedal statement “I believe in God the Father Almighty maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord who was conceived of the virgin Mary and born of her yet without sin, who was crucified dead and buried, who descended into hell who rose again the third day and ascended into heaven...I believe in the Holy Spirit...”

It remains to check the prismatic reflectors added by the Reformers and their heirs and to factor in modern work on “The knowledge and doctrine of God” and then asking the question “What have we learned through scripture?” and “Can Christian thinkers who have worked through divine truth since add anything to how we understand or express this great truth?”

So, we look at the **KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AS WRITTEN** communicated & revealed to:-

- (1) **ADAM AND NOAH**
- (2) **ABRAHAM AND DAVID**
- (3) **ISAIAH AND THE PROPHETS**

Subsequently, we survey the approach from 16th-21st century

Finally

- (4) **CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES**
- (5) **EARLY CHURCH FATHERS**
- (6) **MEDIEVAL THEOLOGIANs**
- (7) **REFORMERS AND MODERN THEOLOGIANs**
- (8) **A SOVEREIGN GOD TO LOVE REVEALED MAGISTERIALLY IN SCRIPTURE –GOD’S BOOK CONVENED AND CONVEYED BY GOD’S SPIRIT**

CHAPTER 1
(BIBLICAL THEOLOGY)
THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD REVEALED (A) TO ADAM AND (B) TO NOAH

(A) ADAM AND THE COVENANT OF LIFE

(1) ADAM'S LIFE & HOPE GUARANTEED BY THE DEATH OF CHRIST

In his pristine innocence Adam would appear to be the first to whom God revealed that "The Spirit of God who hovered over the deep" had brought order out of the dark swirling mud and waters in the very first day. (Some believe that the pre-diluvian Genesis account was revealed as a vision to Moses later but this is unsubstantiated surmise). Covenants are most solemn agreements of two parties-involving a promise and often accompanied by oath and sign but generally established in the OT beside an altar. The Orthodox Fathers spoke of God's "covenant of life" with Adam. Covenants are linked with promise and God indeed promised "life" to Adam and detailed that its continuance was dependant on obedience to just one simple but specific command as a condition of the promise. We are not given further detail but clearly Adam showed agreement if not by verbal consent by his acquiescence. It is of interest that there is no sacrifice on man's part connected to *this primary covenant so that its validity depended on God and on the undertaking implicit in the commitment of the "lamb slain at the foundation of the world"* so that if, as subsequently occurred, it was broken the initiative of punishment and remedy lay with God.

(2) THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT GOD CONVERSED WITH ADAM

Adam, we should carefully note, subsequent to his fall, heard God's voice and felt the inner conviction of the Holy Spirit in his conscience. *God in His great love was already prepared to introduce a remedy.* Adam's new life and that of Eve whom he called "Chavah" (The regenerate or living mother of mankind) was given by the **Holy Spirit** and based on the prophesied coming (and redemptive) **Seed** of the woman. In token of this Adam and Eve both were clad by God with skin from a slain animal-typical of their redemption by Christ). Adam and Eve were told (and Satan was forewarned) that in the distant future *the promised seed* (the coming Saviour or Anointed One would bruise the serpent's head. This tends to enforce the counsels in Genesis 1.27 and 3.22). Paul in Philippians 2 speaks of Christ as in the "form of God" (*μορφή* beautiful outward shape outline or semblance as opposed to inner or unseen being) as to His divine person). This would appear to be a plainer statement than the OT idiom "Angel of the Lord" who as the pre-existent Christ appeared to and wrestled with Jacob. Thus it is that God might indeed as recorded in Genesis 3.8 "walk in the garden" with Adam in the evening and converse with him on such occasions. (cf. Genesis 2.15, 2.18, 2.19b and 2.22). From the foregoing it is clear that Adam was aware that *Yahweh elohim* who was walking in the garden calling him was still the **God of love** and God's voice of concern said it all. Short of meeting Adam we cannot at 6000 years distance adduce the minutiae of his knowledge of God though the categories scripture supplies allow us to understand God might as easily appear to Adam as to Abraham or Jacob or Moses or Manoaah. It is even more clear-in fact beyond dispute as biblical truth that God conversed with Adam.

(3) GOD CLOTHED ADAM AND EVE

The act of divine provision of proper clothing of necessity depicts a penitent couple implicitly trusting to mercy and a loving Lord with compassion written all over Him clothing them (but not without the shedding of blood which they must have thought long and hard about). O what Holy Spirit conviction seared their consciences! O what hope of the birth of the seed gripped their souls for the future. O what awesome appreciation of the Father heart of God captured their hearts!

(4) THE COVENANT OF LIFE

What is known to theologians as the “Covenant of Life” was made by God with Adam and as previously shown stands above the narrative of the fall as the hope of our race. This covenant as I have earlier stated is not the Old Covenant of the Law which entered by Moses (John 1.17 & Romans 5.14b) but is that **overlooking** (Romans 5.13) of human folly, vanity and wantonness or **frustration** that made pre-history before the deluge and even history thereafter look as Solomon and Paul testify (Ecclesiastes 1.2 HABEL Romans 8.20 MATAIOTES) look purposeless or vain but this was an exercise in patient hope and love (Romans 8.26). Following that wrath of the deluge by which God was bound to act decisively against the inexorable progress of sin’s reign the Lord continued to show wonderful mercy and exercise patience in hope. This hope was and is still exercised based on the **overflow** of the saving act of Christ (Romans 5.15) and the promise of the Lamb slain at the foundation. God in accordance with this covenant of life (and love) which He everywhere showered on ancient man instructed the head of our race **seeking in man a fellowship of love marked by obedience** as Eve testifies “God said, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ (Genesis 3.3.) Paul confirms this saying “sin entered the world through one man and death through sin” and again “Just as through the disobedience of the one the many were made sinners, so also through the **(love and) obedience** of the one man (Christ) the many will be made righteous”. (Romans 5.1 & 19) This is called a “covenant” because upon one condition—that of obedience—the promise of continued “fellowship with God” and the purity and holiness belonging to that estate or ethos of innocence depended. The moral and spiritual condition of Adam was in one sense kindred to that of the Holy Angels who sinned along with the Covering Cherub—for scripture attests that angels lost their estate along with Satan (Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2.4). In quite another sense which must intrigue and confound Satan to this day man was made to be redeemed. For God said “Let us **make** (ASHAH-“to create by or for sacrifice”) man in our image, in our likeness” and in so doing within the divine councils the Triune God determined the correlative redemption of the creaturely man for His own pleasure and companionship through all eternity to his Glory and praise for “from the foundation of the world Christ was for us “as a lamb slain” (Apocalypse 13.8).

(5) IMAGE AND LIKENESS

Thus the creation of man took full account of man and full account of the manner by which he might both be given the **image of God** and be brought **into the full likeness** of Christ the Lamb. This would be established by a fellowship of loving provision and covenant. When the love bond was broken by man and he was subjected to death through his disobedience as occurred amongst the angels concerning whose rebellious continuance in its displeasing reality we are allowed to know something in the divine counsel of Genesis 3.22 *“The man has now become like one of us (IN THIS CASE CHRIST—*

CONSCIOUS OF THE JUDGMENT AND CURSE HE WOULD BEAR FOR US) or from among us (IN THIS CASE THE FALLEN ANGELS RESERVED UNDER JUDGMENT)[BOTH ARE RELEVANT], knowing (PERSONALLY) good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever.” Divine provision was in the death of Christ so that life fellowship and holiness would be renewed through the atonement of Christ and indwelling of the Holy Ghost in something of the manner described above.

(B) NOAH AND THE COVENANT OF NEVER AGAIN DESTRUCTION OF MANKIND

(1) NOAH THE PREACHER

The overflow of the covenant of love in Christ into pre-history continued after the flood amid the reign of sin and under this work of grace Noah was made righteous along with several previous primitive fathers as Enoch. However, after the insurgency of angels brought with it genetic gigantism and corruption and the downgrade of moral and spiritual living over centuries when violence became a factor impossible to countenance and man's evil imaginations and passions totally corrupted the family purposes of God **the love of God** found a way through as His mercy rejoiced even in the face of essential judgment. **God covenanted with Noah** whom he had inspired as a preacher. Noah understood the terrible condition of mankind and was aware through his grandfather Methuselah that the earth was headed into gross violence and war and divine judgment. Noah preached “repentance” and set forth the purpose of God's loving plan of fellowship and holiness.

(2) GRANDFATHER AND JUDGMENT

God instructed Noah to build an ark for the saving of his house. This task took one hundred years. Noah continued to preach and to build. Despite all Satan and lust and the way the world wanted to go was everywhere prevailing. Except in the heart of a man set apart to God and kept faithful along with Lamech who then died and Methuselah who encouraged him right till the final year before the flood.

(3) NOAH AND THE ARK

We read in scripture that Noah covered the ark with bitumen and the Hebrew word KIPPUR speaks of ATONEMENT. Inside that ark when God closed the door were eight persons living in utter security. When they sat at table sharing food and fellowship by primitive but sufficient lights they had deep, deep thoughts. They would recall the story ancestors told of the earliest creation when the Spirit of God RUACH fluttered in life-giving power over the waters. They would rehearse the words of God “My Spirit shall not be humbled (DON) or brought low in man **to a long age**. Because he is impudently going astray SHAGAG/SHAGAH(as in “reeling through wine” or “intoxicated with women”)-**his days shall be 120 years**. The sons of Noah were already about 100 years old (Shem the eldest was 98)—but they felt fine and indeed as a member of this blest family he was to live another 400 years. But to pick up the main point Noah must have been deeply aware of the “hurt” administered to the Spirit of God who was “depressed” in the sense of having no joy in man whose heart the Holy Spirit desires to enliven with holy Ghost fervour and joy. Noah and the family must have gone over the event of the

shutting of the door by Yahweh (The LORD) and the fact that that door shut miraculously but ever so firmly was both encouraging and frightening. Wrath outside, redemption inside. It was none other than the Lord to whom salvation and judgment are committed who shut Noah in.. Noah dealt with God as GOD ALONE but spoke of God as ELOHIM- a “manifold” holy **creating convicting, and redeeming** majesty and sovereign over all. So Peter says that baptism is the antitype of Noahic salvation through water and in the ark. As Christians we are baptised in the name of the Triune God who inspired Noah’s preaching, accounted him righteous for Christ’s sake and providentially saved him and his family and covenanted with him and mankind whose subsequent lives would be shorter but secured by covenant.

(4) NOAH , GODS COVENANT PROMISE AND COMMANDS

The covenant with Noah has all the essential elements. There is a promise “I will never again destroy man by a flood” . This promise was made on God’s part and associated with a series of four commands: **to increase** towards filling all the earth, **to eat** meat slain by kosher methods, **to observe** the command “to do no murder” by honouring God in whose image man was made and **to recognise** that retribution visits the family and race through blood guilt. Noah accepted God’s will behalf of us all. There is an altar and a “burnt offering”(Genesis8.20-9.17) placed thereupon on very first day on which Noah stepped back on earth. These **further commands supplied greater scope for man to show allegiance by loving obedience** to God and introduced precautions against wholesale enormities of violence in the post flood period whilst the reign of sin continued. God continued to hope and apply the overflow of mercy through the Lamb slain at the foundation of the world to all such as would believe.

(5) NOAH AND THE BURNT OFFERING

What was Noah doing to begin in a new era at the altar of burnt offering? First this along with the meal and peace offerings were described as pleasing and “of sweet smelling” character to the Lord; they had, in other words an aroma of Christ about them.

In the gospel as recorded by John our Lord Jesus Christ is seen as the burnt offering. He offers Himself to God , a sweet-smelling savour and even in that gospel there is no dereliction cry registered. Christ’s death glorifies God in a world where he has been dishonoured.

In the book of Leviticus God speaks to Moses saying “If any man will bring an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of the cattle, of the herd and of the flock.” There is no reference to SIN. The command is for those who are in covenant relation to God and Noah was in such relationship. The offering is made by those whose hearts overflow with gratitude to God for what He has done and who voluntarily desire to bring him of His own –something especially that speaks of His redemption and salvation. So a bullock or ox, sheep or goat, turtle or young pigeon could be brought God would value the outpoured love of the rich and the gratitude of the poor alike. Each offering would be “unblemished” and remind God of His holiness in the remedial purpose of His Son; the bird would mean much to God for from heaven Jesus was to come. The lamb would mean much for as a lamb he was to yield to the shearer. The goat would be equally precious because the remedial substitute was covenanted to take the sinners place. The patient ox would mean much as it prefigured the One who would feed

His people like the ox treading the corn and at the last having waited long yield his life a ransom. We can say again \neg “**God smelled a sweet savour**”.

We could go further-this offering was flayed and skinned. The sacrifice was washed. This offering was without reserve-everything was burnt. The skin as in Leviticus 7.8 was (perhaps always) given to the one who made the offering and he could wrap himself in it. God smelled the savour Noah gained the warmth and felt his joyful acceptance as he wrapped around him and his family the new fleeces and leather coats which God had made. It was like a renewal of the covenant with Adam..

(6) HIGHLIGHTS OF NOAH’S EXPERIENCE OF GOD

Noah’s understanding of God is mirrored in his burnt offering. His experiences of God of which we read in scripture include God’s sharing of the plan for the ark, God’s shutting him in the ark and a very joyous experience of fellowship following the presentation of the burnt offering.

(7) NOAH AND THE RAINBOW

God promised “During all the days of the earth; seedtime and harvest; during cold quiet days and black days of scorching *sun (Hebrew Smj from Smj)*; winter of pulling root crops and summer of fruits, day and night shall have no Sabbath. *Not a single occasion of relenting all the years since the flood-during all these years God has guaranteed our basket and our table as a race This is a promise only the creator and sustainer of mankind could make and keep!*

As a sign of this magnificent promise God set his bow in the heavens. He said that cloud cover would often be accompanied by this prism of coloured light “that would cause itself to be seen” in its glory and remind Him of His covenant in days when He must have anticipated again being displeased with man. He further said the rainbow will appear and “I see it” to remember the long, long covenant to care deeply for every soul or breathing thing that lives in the house of all flesh on the earth.” When the Lord said “I see it”(present not future tense) there was the bow in its beauty-the first bow ever. God then added “This is the sign of the covenant”.

(8) NOAH’S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD-ENIGMA REMAINS

In all these days the Holy Spirit would have been in the thoughts of Noah –and the promise of the coming seed-redeemer but his mind would have been on the only true God ELOHIM and the refinement of understanding of the triune God –though it would come clearer to the prophets-its fuller illumination would have to wait until the high noon of world redemption in the incarnate Christ. One might well ask the question “Did the feet of the One in form as God” as really meet with Noah as when He walked with Adam or wrestled with Jacob and did not Noah hear the audible voice and see the glorious form of the One who as the Hebrew writer says had “the form of God”? Whether we answer the question with a “yes” or “no” does not alter the fact that for Noah God was the sovereign ELOHIM who may well have revealed himself under a form or simply by voice or to the heart and mind. One fact no-one can contradict is that Noah was regenerate. Noah as certainly as any Christian was convicted of sin and drawn of the Spirit to peace with God. The only reserve we can have on his awareness of the work of the triune God is in how far as He was conscious of the “angel of God”. ***At the door of the ark and in***

the statement about judgment he was, however, dealing with the Son of God for He is the way and God has committed all judgment to the Son.

(9) ELOHIM

We know from Hebrew usage that Eloah means “Strong one” and “Elohin” (seldom used) means two strong ones whereas “Elohim” means three (or more than duality of) strong ones. What is classed as the plural of Majesty –the “royal we” of Moses may serve in two ways-either to hide the full glory of the godhead or reveal that Glory. Which is correct? For the lexicographer either is valid though contextually driven hermeneutics runs with the Jewish theological connotation of “”The divine majesty” or ”The name” in preference to the Christian theological connotation of Yahweh who is in the beginning, the Lord who saves and the Spirit that He continues to send. Because of the nature of revelation and the rules of exegesis bible teaching must stick with something less than a formal trinity but by sending the prophets God relieves us of the problem because they had visions of the Lord and were consciously carried along by the Holy Spirit and foresaw the coming of the Messiah. By definition they listened to and obeyed God the Holy Spirit and had a message which message entailed the coming reign of God’s Messianic Christ and the throne of “the ancient of days” (Daniel) or the that was there(at life’s origin as maker”(Isaiah) so their *modus operandi* rendered them and equally renders the apostles and ourselves free from the shackles of reading their visions exclusively with ancient era perspectives. Yet it is not until world redemption reaches its full glory in Christ that the question “Is God three in one or simply one”? was conclusively answered in a manner we might call creedal. In sum, there is with hindsight quite convincing evidence within the earliest biblical narratives of an experience of God not very different from our own in intimacy and converse. There is in Adamic experience anthropomorphic detail that appears to correlate best to “transfiguration style” or “apocalypse one Patmos style” appearances of the very same Lord as we worship though in His pre-incarnate “form” or “morph” as “the angel of the Lord”. There is even a repetitive nature to these experiences not unlike those of the resurrection appearances of our Lord. We are, I think, entitled to conclude that Adam had a fundamental and valid awareness of the love and grace or mercy of our Lord and indeed His wrath and judgment on sin in a personal manner but it remains valid that Adam did not give us a Trinitarian doctrine of God though what he formulated in his mind remains locked in the words ELOHIM AND ADONAI.

CHAPTER 2

(A)ABRAHAM & (B) MOSES & (C)DAVID

THE STORY LINES OF ABRAHAM’S LIFE

Abraham was known as “the friend of God (ELOHIM)” and is familiar to believers the world over for turning his back on the city and pagan culture of Ur to obey Elohim and travel to a land of his dreams. The Hebrew writer tells us he sought a city “whose builder and maker is God”. There is small reason to believe that Jerusalem (Salem of later time) was a city that he already knew about for then he would not have sought such a city as fulfilled his highest ambition nor would he have been in the quandary of “knowing not where he went.” Abraham’s story takes us from Genesis chapter 12 to chapter 25 when he dies at 175 years of age.

The story lines of his life with which we are familiar are: his flight from Ur, his two wife and cousin episodes during Egyptian sojourns(in a vision connected to the second of which God calls him **a prophet**), his break with, intercession for, and rescue of Lot(**which houses a most notable meeting with Melchisadek**), **God's "shield" covenant with him**, the three stage Hagar affair, **the covenant of holiness confirmed by circumcision**, the birth of Isaac his son of promise, the Beersheba treaty, **the meeting with the "angel of the Lord" at Moriah**, the Machpelah burial of Sarah and the long narrative on and the divine guidance in the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah. To establish something of Abraham's knowledge of God we need to look in particular at five of these and at his great intercessory prayer

- (1) ABRAHAM & MELCHISADEK (14.17-24)
- (2) ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD MOST MIGHTY, HIS "SHIELD" (15.1-21)
- (3) ABRAHAM WALKS WITH GOD (17.1-22)
- (4) ABRAHAM PLEADS AT MAMRE(18.1-33)
- (5) ABRAHAM & THE ETERNAL GOD AT BEERSHEBA (21.22ff)
- (6) ABRAHAM & THE ANGEL OF THE LORD(cf.22.11,15 with (24.7)

1. ABRAHAM & MELCHISADEK Genesis 14

THE DUAL WELCOME FOR A HERO OF FAITH

Gen 14.17 After Abram returned from the smiting or killing (*Hebrew hkn*) of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh which is the king's valley. *"Shaveh" is a most interesting term carrying the idea of equalling or compensating. It is recognised as a valley north of Jerusalem It is mentioned in 2Kings 18.18 and it was there that Absalom placed a monument. Today an Absalom monument which is unlikely to be original stands south of David's city. The valley in question is not "cheese makers" to the west of David's city but it could well be the northern reaches of the kidron. There kings of Israel were later buried-but since that fact would not be known to Moses. I do not think these three words in Hebrew were added later. I believe Moses spoke of the valley of the King of Righteousness.* So the first to stand with tired victorious Abram was a grateful king of Sodom who fled the forces that Abram routed.

...18 And **my king of righteousness**, king of retribution restoration or recompense had caused bread and wine to be brought or to come forth -and he is priest **belonging to God Elyon**. *This description declares a person righteous and provider of Moses' righteousness and one who can restore or atone and recompense and one who deals in "bread and wine" in relation to His restoration and one who is an eternal priest belonging to God and not man.* He blessed Abraham (as the greater) and said, "Blessed be Abram belonging to **God Elyon** possessor of heaven and earth and praised be Elyon God (most high) who constantly or again and again delivers (*Hebrew Piel*) your enemy into your hand" and he gave Him a tenth of all. *The assumption that there was a city called Salem is the factor that introduces confusion. Shem alone of all men (who was still alive) would fit the description. He was still alive. He had not been born in the new world but came out of the ark. His parents were deceased. He served the people of God in prayer for a "long age" By tradition he is known to have lived in or around the area we now know as Jerusalem.*

Though Shem is the best candidate as a resident none but the pre-incarnate Lord could fulfil the text of scripture in this prophetic TORAH

2. ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD Genesis 15

After these "promises" or "edicts" (*Hebrew myrbd*) (of the LORD and of Abram) it happened that the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision (*a prophetic seeing* [of God]) saying, "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield and your exceeding great wages or reward. And Abram said, O **Adonai Yahweh**, what will you give me for I walk forsaken of child and the son of inheritance of my house is this **ELIEZER** of Damascus. *Abram was walking around but how he would have loved like other men to have a little son as his companion. This would have completed his life joy. Eliezer(God is help)was a believing Syrian and senior male servant or steward added to Abram's household-possibly in Haran ...3* And Abram said, "You have not given me a seed and behold a stranger in my house is my heir" ...4 And the word of the LORD came to him saying, "This shall not be your heir for truly one that shall spring from your body shall be your heir".

(3) ABRAHAM HOLINESS & CIRCUMCISION LONELY VISION OF TERRIBLE DARKNESS

Gen15. 8-21 And He (God) said to him, "I am the LORD that brought you from Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land to possess. And he said, "LORD God how shall I know that I will possess it." And the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer a she-goat and a ram all three years old and a female dove and a young turtle." Abram brought them, cut them in two and he arranged the divided parts each opposite its fellow; he did not divide the birds. Birds of prey swooped on the carcasses but Abram chased them away. *These 3 animals and 2 birds represent prophetic TORAH of the divine provision for redemption in Jewish history and the eagles represent Satan who would endeavour to prevent the redemption by Messiah while the action of Abram represents faithful witness and obedience. As the sun sank Abram fell deeply asleep and a frightening deep darkness fell upon him. This represented a time after Abram's death. ...13* And the Lord said, "Know for certain that your seed will be a stranger in a land that is not theirs and they will be enslaved and brought low over 400 years. I will punish the nation that enslaves them and after that they will come out with great wealth. You will go to your fathers in peace and be entombed in good grey hairs. In the fourth generation your descendants will return here because the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. *The LORD explains that Israel have to stay out of Canaan pending days of judgement on the Amorites whose practice of infanticide marked them out for judgement. At sunset Look! a great burning smoking furnace(of persecution) and a flame of lightning (representing wrath and divine judgment) which passed between these pieces. ...18-24* On that day the LORD cut a covenant with Abram saying, "To your seed(*singular*) I will give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates." *This promise of the land formerly owned by ten nations is specific prophetic TORAH of the kingdom of Messiah*

(4) ABRAHAM INTERCEDES, GOD PAUSES Genesis19

Genesis 19.16-20 As the mighty ones rose up they were viewing over the land looking (Hebrew *pqv*) towards Sodom and Abraham was walking with them to put them on a direct route (Hebrew *j/v*) And the LORD said, "Shall I continue to hide what I am doing from Abraham?" *Abraham could hardly believe his ears. He was not an immediate party to the discussion between the LORD and the other men or men-like angels from heaven.*

Then the LORD added **prophetic TORAH**, "Abraham is to become a great and powerful nation and all the gentile nations of earth will bring themselves happiness or blessing in him for I know Abraham as to the way he will command his sons and his household after him and they will keep the path of the LORD to do righteousness and justice in order that the LORD may bring about the oracle which is over him." *God was commending the future faithfulness of a man to angels or messengers. Paul has a saying, "We are an academy for angels-O that we had more such academies!" ...20* Then the LORD said, "An outcry against wrong and for help of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the great sin for it is very burdensome. I will go down now and see if they are doing completely according to the cry that has come to Me, and if not I will relate personally. *The LORD was saying that He would be gracious if the plea that reached him did not give the full picture. Someone in Sodom was praying because the situation had gone beyond control. Could it be that someone was Lot?*

...20-22 The men turned their faces and were walking towards Sodom and Abraham witnessed it standing on as he was **before the face of God**. *The presence of God in prayer is deeply reassuring to Abraham at a time when he fears for his extended family. The men had gone on-either by motion of the LORD or because they had been already previously appointed to go down on their own. We need to recall that God cannot bear to look upon sin -yet God had said, "I will go down" but "I was going down" and "I was to see for myself" would suffice for now as fulfilment of the intent since both the imperfect and the future are expressed in these terms though the future purpose is not prejudiced by the departure of the angels but delayed. The more important matter to observe is that Abraham is standing right in front of the LORD and ministering silently. He is sharing the sorrow of the "man of sorrows". This is a deep time of mutual understanding. The LORD has a friend on earth so dear that his company at this time is of great worth so that he relinquishes that of heavenly persons to maintain it a little longer. He is waiting till his beloved Abraham opens his heart.* 23-33 Abraham was acting decisively in urging or urgent approach or sacrifice (Hebrew *vqn* is used for "offering sacrifice" but although Abraham had an altar back at Mamre-they had walked some distance by now and the only sacrifice Abraham had to offer was "prayer"-the offering of his lips) Will you indeed sweep away in a heap the righteous with the wicked?

(a)...24 What if there are fifty righteous persons in the city, will you sweep away them away and not lift up the sins of the place on account of the fifty righteous in its midst? Far be it from you (Hebrew *hlylj* for "God forbid") that you should do according to this oracle(of mine); to kill the righteous with the wicked and that the righteous should be (treated) as the wicked. Far be this from what you would own. **Shall not the judge** (Hebrew *fpvh* meaning "prince", "defender", "judge") **of all the earth do right?** *The LORD replied that if He found fifty righteous He would lift up His overwhelming anger against the place.*

(b)...27-33 Abraham testified, or humbly prayed, "Behold now I have been willing (Hebrew *lay* "content", "foolish enough") to speak to **the LORD** and I am dust and ashes,28 if the number of fifty righteous is diminished by five will the LORD destroy the whole city for five people? *God promised not to destroy Sodom if He found forty five righteous there!*

(c) ...29 Abraham added to speak again asking, "What if there are 40 found there?" I will not do it in anger if there are 40. ...30 May the LORD not be angry -I will speak again-what if there be thirty found there? He said, "I will not do it if I find **thirty** there"

(d) ...31 Abraham again apologised for being as bold or foolhardy as to continue but pleaded, "What if there are twenty?" God said, "I will not do show my wrath for **twenty**"

(e)....32 Abraham said, "May the LORD not be angry, I will speak with one final urgent word (Hebrew *m[p]*) "What if ten find themselves (Hebrew *mizmy*) there? God said He would not bring His wrath upon it for **ten**...33 As soon as the LORD had completed speaking to Abraham he was going and Abraham returned to his place. *This effective pleading of Abraham teaches men and women of faith everywhere the importance of standing before God in His mercy on occasions when He through his judgement men's lives hang in the balance*

The fascinating first hand report we read of Lot's Sodom and the account of its destruction comes from the pen of Abraham who thereafter must have renewed his close ties with his nephew and brother in law. Lot as a chastened and grateful kinsman was spared not least because of the intercession of a godly friend.

And the two messengers came to Sodom in the evening and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom. Officials and Judges sat in city gates to control entrance and to settle disputes.

(5) ABRAHAM & THE ETERNAL GOD Genesis 21 25ff

Whilst in the land of the Philistines Abraham had a problem over the confiscation of a well that had been seized from him by the servants of the Philistine king. They came to an understanding and a treaty was sworn between them. The district where Abraham lived gained its name from a peculiar act of Abraham in setting apart seven ewe lambs which survived from his initial gift. When he seemed to take them back Abimelech asked why and the great patriarch answered that he was stressing that it was a reminder of the well which supplied his water which the Philistines had confiscated in order to get rid of Abraham. But Abraham prayed and stayed. He planted a tamarisk and clearly built an altar and prayed.

(6) ABRAHAM & THE ANGEL AT MORIAH Genesis 22

(5) And he was setting out for the place of which the LORD had spoken (*Future*) *Moriah is a very interesting name. The Rabbis link it to the verb "to see" so it has these connotations (a) a place of seeing and living; (b) a place of provision (c) a place of understanding (d) a place of letting oneself be seen (e) a place of experiencing good or evil. Moriah is all of this and more as it foreshadows Calvary on the northern slope of the same mount.*

4. In the third day Abraham was lifting up his eyes and seeing the place in the distance. *He had made a stop along the way. The first day he didn't get too far-hardly to*

Hebron-15 miles. The second was a full day-again he travelled perhaps just as far as Bethlehem; something on or above 20 miles-leaving at least 5 miles to go. When one compares the huge distance he travelled by camel in pursuit of the kings of the east 30 years before –despite increasing years (cf 23.1 Sarah was soon to die at 127 and Abraham was now at least under 121 years of age if his stay at Beersheba afterward was a “seven” [bv 22.19] 5. Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey and I and the young man will manage to get ourselves there and worship and we will return to you.” Here is a statement of faith. Abraham believed that both would be back shortly even if Isaac was to be the sacrifice. Over three days he had mulled over the words of the LORD and as Paul expounds to us had concluded that in the worst scenario and final analysis Isaac must die and be raised by God (Hebrews 11.19)so as to have seed and fulfil the earlier promise.

*Abraham took the wood and placed it on Isaac his son and he took the fire and the knife and they went along together. There was unity of purpose between the two-they were in step. This walk is a **vivid prophetic TORAH** of the Father and the Son united to provide salvation for mankind at Calvary. This walk shows the weakening of Isaac as its equivalent showed the physical exhaustion of Christ. When the young Isaac arrived at the place of offering every muscle in his body would have ached. He did not leave the load down as they went uphill. Instead he asked one vital question.7. And Isaac spoke to Abraham his Father, “My Father”. He scarce had breath for more. Abraham said, “Here am I, my son” Isaac said, “Behold the fire.....and the wood....and where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” These short statements show the breathless youth had a deep fear and concern on his mind Isaac had probably stopped to gather breathe and ask the question. 8. Abraham said, “God will see or provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering-my son!” And they went on both united. Isaac was content that the provision of the lamb was not Abraham’s responsibility but God’s.*

Every action of this torn heart and soul of Abraham should be studied carefully for love and obedience.

9. They came to the place of which God had spoken and there Abraham built an altar and estimated and put the wood in order. There would be kindling wood and larger stakes provided. And Abraham bound or fortified his son Isaac and placed him on the altar literally from above as possessor of or on to the wood. A man of 120 lifting a man of 12 stone upon an altar 4-5 feet high or more requires either artifice or sheer brawn. That Isaac was let down on the wood suggests that he may have been bound to a wooden pole on the ground and so more readily hoisted on to the altar. The Hebrew does not demand more than a tying of hands and feet and a sheer lift nor does it prevent there being a means of settling the young man down upon the wood.10 Abraham continually lifted up (Hebrew Piel of j l v)his hand and took the knife to slay his son. He was not practicing. He was praying and waiting on God. Then at length he covered the face of his son and took the knife and raised his hand.11. And the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said Abraham Abraham. He said, “Here am I”. That takes us back to the obedience of 22.1. Abraham was obedient all the way along this route of trial by adversity. He said, “Do not send your hand down on the young man; do not do to him anything whatsoever for now I know that you fear or obey God for you have not withheld , kept back or preserved your only son from me.

*Abraham's obedience was complete. Here is a remarkable instance of the **presence of God** in the most critical of circumstances.*

*Abraham had no doubt shared a moment with his beloved Son who had been united with him even in this most extreme trial of faith and love. Then he looked up from that intimate embrace and from the joyful unbinding of his son-which was like receiving him from the dead. Abraham looked up and saw **behind** him a ram had got itself firmly held in intertwined branches by the horns and Abraham **went on a journey** and took it and offered it in place of his son "**Behind**" because long "afterwards" Christ would appear as the true sacrifice for sin. Abraham travelled because it was yet a long journey of his family till the appearance of Jesus.¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, "The Lord will see or provide" which speaks for itself (Niphal) today-who can quibble against this ancient **prophetic TORAH** forecast of Calvary? In the mount of the LORD it will be seen or provided. Moses the writer was adding his comment that the ultimate Lamb would be provided in this mountain in distant time. Moses was himself acutely aware of the Passover lamb and how it covered God's people and substituted for their sin. The God of Abraham had acted in critical times and spared his Son whom he took out of Egypt.*

THE DIVINE BLESSING Genesis 22.15-19

*The angel of the LORD (an OT phrase for the Word of God-the coming Messiah) called a second time from Heaven and said, "I am swearing by myself, whispers the LORD that because you have done this thing or offered this offering legally and not withheld your only son that blessing I will bless you and make your seed great – numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand on the lip of the sea and your seed will possess the gate of their enemies. And in your Seed all the nations of the earth (continually or till the latter end The Hebrew word bq[is redundant as "because" since rva meaning "because" is present so I have taken its other meaning "till the latter end") will have been blessed because you have obeyed my voice Further **prophetic TORAH** of gospel blessing. Then Abraham returned to his young servants and they arose and returned unitedly to Beersheba and Abraham remained or "seven-ed" there at Beersheba Abraham actually lived there for fully 54 years afterward. To discount any significant time lapse between Moriah and the death of Sarah and to take this event of Isaac's offering as one closely related to his mother's death would give us an age for Isaac of 28-which accords closely with that of our LORD as His ministry began. More important we may revel in the fact that Abraham and Isaac began together; they went on together in the hope of substitution and they remained undivided by sacrifice and continued unitedly for the remainder of days. In this they symbolise the "flint like" resolution of Christ and the will of God in giving His Only Son for us. But for the purposes of this file on the Trinity the fact that Abraham's life was so full of the worth of **the Angel of the Lord** is evident when he counselled Eliezer "He will send **His Angel** before you"(Genesis24.7)that Abraham was fully aware that from his call at Ur till his last years "The Angel of the presence" or as Stephen taught the Church to say "Christ at the right hand" was his mentor and friend! He was the "friend of God (in Christ)". It has to be "Yes" to experience of the Trinity in the case of Abraham but the expression of his experience is not and could not be that of Paul in Acts 9 or Colossians 2.9 . However he believed in YAHWEH ELOHE of the heavens*

and ELOHE of the earth in realisation that God walked with Him. His servant Eliezer ere the great patriarch died made full proof of that for himself and learned to pray in utter joy and gratitude to God His Friend and Saviour.

(B) MOSES & THE LAW

1. THE BURNING BUSH EXODUS 3

Moses met with God at Horeb and stood without his leather sandals(bespeaking animal sacrifice) before the Holy One who would provide atonement. Elohim described Himself as Yahweh (Exodus3.14). The Lord insisted that this name was the one He wished to be remembered by through every Jewish generation and “for ever” or during His own eternal life. The “*ardens sed virens*” bush is an ancient picture of the Living One who gives himself a willing offering (cf. the burnt offering) and rises gloriously-the Holy One who conquers death and discards the sacrifice of sheep and oxen.

2. THE INDUCTION OF THE KINGDOM OF PRIESTS & HOLY NATION EXODUS 19

The experience of Sinai was shared. God spoke with Moses but the conversation was relayed as deftly and clearly as by the best broadcasting technique to the several million Jews at the bottom of the Mountain. God said “I am going to come to you in a dense cloud so that the people will hear me speaking with you and will always put their trust in you” So Israel were consecrated and Aaron came up into the mountain with Moses. This intimate experience of God was for ever to be a preventative to lapse into idolatry (Exodus20.22) On this great occasion the nation responded to the 10 words with the voluntary response of obedience “We will do everything the Lord has said”(Exodus 19.8)

3. THE COVENANT CONFIRMED BY 70 ELDERS EXODUS 24.11ff

“And Moses Aaron Nadab and Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel went up and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God and they ate and drank”. This fellowship meal was a very special occasion of fellowship in covenant with ELOHIM whom they had seen (HAZAH “*to see by revelation and vision*). *It appears from the fact that God did not raise his hand against the elders that the eternal form of God of which Paul speaks may have been revealed on this occasion and of this the apostle who was given similar revelation on the Damascus road would be very much aware.*

4. MOSES SEES GOD AGAIN BEFORE THE SECOND LAWGIVING EXODUS 33.19-23

Moses was deeply concerned that God’s “presence” or PANAI (“face, front or appearance”) go before Israel(cf. Ex 23.20&23. 32.34, 33.2. Joshua 5.13-15) In reply to Moses’ request to see God’s glory the Lord caused all “His goodness” to pass before Moses. In that event God proclaimed Yahweh as He passed. He said “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and merciful to whom I will be merciful” But the Lord said “You are not able to see my face for mankind or man will not see my face and live. And Yahweh said “Behold a place along with me where you may have an

appointed place or garrison upon or near the rock and I will place my hand over you until I pass by . Then *I will diminish or withdraw my hand* and you will see my hinder part or back but my face you will not see.” Even so there was a special radiation about the face of Moses as scripture testifies in Exodus 34.29. This radiance continued to be manifested as in 34.34 upon meetings with God at the tabernacle.

5. THE GLORY OF GOD AT THE OPENING OF THE TABERNACLE Ex.40 34-35

Moses was unable to come to the tent of meeting when *the cloud had “resided” or “dwelt” over it and the glory filled it*. There was about God both an impenetrable darkness and a glory that man could not look upon. This is called the “Glory of Yahweh” . We have been shown that God dwells in light unapproachable because it is shielded by thick darkness –otherwise man could not live near God. There is something about the very nature of the divine dignity that cannot per se be revealed to man in our fallen state.

6. THE PARAN PROOF THAT GOD COULD LAY A TABLE IN THE WILDERNESS NUMBERS 11 24-25

Moses brought the seventy round the tent and Yahweh came down in the cloud and spoke with him and the Lord held back or reserved something of the Spirit that was upon Moses and gave to the seventy standing by and when the Spirit rested upon them they prophesied but they did not add, do it any more or increase in it.” Moses further responded when God was pleased with Eldad (*God loves*)and Medad (*What Love [is God’s]*) “Why should God not make all his people prophets when he made these prophets?” Much is conveyed by this incident –there can be no doubt that Moses was utterly conscious of the work of the Holy Spirit in prophesy and that the love of God and love for God was deeply related to cultivating the presence of God and His gifts.

7. MOSES DEATH Deuteronomy 34.5

And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab upon the mouth of the Lord. Moses had been given a remarkable view of the whole land and something of a miracle was involved because Dan was not normally seen from Pisgah. The Lord has caused him to see it with his eyes. The very next thing God did was to take him in his arms and yet his death was considered unusual for he was strong and his eyesight was good and yet he was never found. The 2011 NIV simply says “He died as the Lord said”(cf. 31.14). I believe Moses made full preparation for the people if none for his own funeral-as a prophet he knew the Lord would take care of that. The circumstances are those of great intimacy. “Moses died at the mouth of the life giving Yahweh”. We must say that Moses was never more alive than then but in the nearer presence of the Lord

(C) DAVID & THE PSALMISTS

Two thousand years of man’s story had passed since Abraham and almost half a century from Moses by the time David ascended the throne. A very important divine act had occurred in the interim since Noah. The law had been given . The law of Moses was relevant to mankind but was accepted under the covenant made with Moses by Israel and

provided by ten commands **a still wider base than that of the covenant of Noah for Israel to show loving obedience to God.** The value of the law is that it provided a great curb on evil as it made sin the more evident. It was accompanied by a sacrificial system and tabernacle which were mirrored on the higher and eternal covenant of grace that had its own Melchisadek in glory and its tabernacle of prepared for holy ones in heaven. To that greater tabernacle all incense of prayer ascends and there the sevenfold Spirit dwelt and there man through the blood of the New and Eternal Covenant will dwell with Christ.

ELEVEN RELEVANT PSALMS

1. PSALM 16 A TEACHING PSALM OF DAVID

CHRISTOLOGY *This psalm is quoted 4 times in the New Testament. (1) John 20.9 "They did not yet understand by His mediation(teaching after the resurrection) the scripture that He must rise from the dead (2) Acts 2 25-28 Peter urges that David proposed the Lord's victory over Sheol (cf. Psalms 9.17 & 139.81) (3) Acts 13.35 where David is presented as certain of "sure mercies" as a forgiven man..(4) 1 Cor. 15.4 I make known what was delivered to me-"How that Christ died".*

FOR YOU WILL NOT LEAVE MY SOUL IN SHEOL NOR WILL YOU SUFFER YOUR HOLY ONE TO SEE CORRUPTION *10 Here David is speaking of his own soul God will not allow the psalmist to roam through Sheol like a cow without a bond.(Hebrew bz[)Equally he was convinced-and note this crucial linkage with the first part of the psalm-that God's Holy One-and that ruled him out-because his goodness could not approach God by description(verse3)-so he is speaking of the "seed" -the promised Lord. "He will not see corruption." The body of Jesus saw no corruption -even the painting of the deposition by Rembrandt gives testimony to this doctrine. David by the Spirit calls Jesus Lord and so we are bound to say that David by regeneration and illumination of the Spirit(Matthew 22.43) knew His Lord (the Christ pre-incarnate) and was consciously moved by the Holy Spirit. As the evangelical prophet Isaiah was incorporated into the preaching of the church David the sweet singer of Israel was incorporated both by the early church and by the Reformed Fathers into the praises of the church and doubtless not alone for his felicitous songs but for his many references to the Christ to come.*

2. THE UNIQUE DIVINE NATURE- PSALM 18. 31-50

This song David sang after his deliverance from his enemies.

Who is a rock except my God? Yahweh *These expressions entail "being a founder" and "refuge" of a nation and also having in Himself a witness to His being-whereby the Father can witness to the Son and the Son to the Father. These for David are the authenticating marks of God. The "angel of God" in OT time provided this witness. We find it explicitly in Isaiah 48.16*

Who is God as continually exceptional as Yahweh? *The adverb (Hebrew yd[-l b-m simply means exceptional but it combines three particles(1) "separate from"(as of God unseen and in the heavens) and (2)second "worn out" or "torn"(as of the Christ torn*

and wounded)) and (3)"testifying" or "continuing"(as by the continued witness of the Holy Spirit). This is not a doctrinal formulation but it is a unique adverb chosen by David to do service to the uniqueness of God. Indeed the Father witnesses to the Son and the Son to the Father and the Spirit continues that witness to the end of the Christian age. It appears clear that David had struck gold in his knowledge of God.

3. THE TRINITY IN POETIC CODE PSALM 61 2B

He will raise me by a **Rock higher** than I -You will conduct and guide me. *There are two or three divine persons spoken of in this complex verse. The first is referred to in the third person in the phrase, "He (first person) will raise me up. The second is the "Higher Rock (second person) by which David is to be raised. The third reference "You (third person) will conduct me "may well be to the Holy Spirit who will guide David. The persons referred to all come under the title Elohim.*

4. THE DIVINE PRESIDENT A PSALM OF ASAPH-PSALM 82. 1-7

The strong ones is placed, fixed or settled and **at the ready** [Hebrew *bxn*] in the congregation or family meeting of EL or God. In the midst of "gods" He will give judgment. How long will you (plural) make unjust or distorted judgment? How long will you give hope to rebels? Give right judgment to the weak and the fatherless enable justice to be done for the poor and those who suffer want. Rescue the powerless and abysmally poor. Enable their liberation from the hand of the noisy fraudulent ones. I said, "You are Strong Ones"(Gods).and all sons of Elyon. *As Christ Himself showed in John 10.34-36 the psalm has a double reference. It bears upon the family of the Triune God and it bears on the wider family who hear the word of God-both men and angels. The latter by creation and adoption respectively are members of the household of God. Furthermore in this psalm we have an oracle of death for EL.*

Prepare to die like men. [The Hebrew *nka* is at base a word derived from *nmk* "to prepare"] This is a radical statement from the throne of God. **It gives notice of "death" within the Trinity**, death among the angels and death among men. It is a statement heralding the "atoning death" of Christ who as Son of God in the first instance would die to put all wrongs right; it heralds death amongst the angels who sinned and experienced spiritual death being held in chains awaiting judgment and the lake of fire. It also warns that men who take no cognizance of divine judgment and righteousness will fare no better but will also have their part in the lake of fire. The specifics of the message entail the fall of man whose fall is here compared to the "angels" or "Princes" to whom God gave "command" and station" and power to wage "spiritual warfare"[Hebrew *rv*] *Those whom the psalmist sees defrauding the poor and needy fell in their time as the latter day peers are doomed to fall before the emergence of Messiah's rule.*

ISAAC WATTS' RENDITION

Arise O LORD and let Thy Son
Possess His universal throne
And rule the nations with His rod
He is our Judge and He our God

5. THE GREATNESS OF GOD PSALM —ANONYMOUS. PSALM 99. 2

The LORD is great in Zion and high above all nations. *The “Greatness” of God of which scripture speaks is termed GADHOL in Hebrew. It speaks of the twisting of three strands of a rope in one united powerful cord. The other root of the word is “to struggle”. The LORD is seen as mighty in his historic struggle with Sin and Satan. The LORD is “high” and the root of that word is the capability to “lift oneself”. No other has this capacity. Only the LORD could raise Himself from the dead and mount in the person of Christ to the heavens.*

6. THREE STRANDED LOVE-A DAVIDIC POEM. PSALM 108 4ff

Your **covenant love** is “GREAT”(MAGHOL-THREE STRANDED) from above the heavens *God's love to David was above the sun that rose at dawn and David would be awake in praise to the LORD who is before all. And your faithfulness* is to the “stretching out” *the spread skies or dusty rain clouds of the sky.* Be high above heaven O Strong Triune One and Your glory high over all the earth **that YOU may “draw off YOUR shoe” and let your right hand be the cause of salvation of your beloved** and answer him. *The Hebrew idiom is Niphal HALAZ because the action is “directed to self” and God is thought of as doing something to deprive Himself of comfort to deliver. This accords well with the redemption Christ provided which required divesting Him of glory in order to redeem. This is prophetic PRAISE*

7. PROPHETIC ORACLE OF CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION PSALM 109 21-29

This is a Davidic Psalm with an explicit Messianic theme.

But You O LORD ADONAI must accomplish (sacrifice) for me because of your name. Because of the goodness of your covenant love deliver me for I am afflicted and very needy and my heart is pierced within me. As the shadow lengthens I conduct myself away. *The appropriateness of this statement as prophecy is that Christ died as shadows returned and the sun threw long shadows over the scene of the crosses. I am shaking like foliage of a tree [Heb. NAAR] -as a locust or great increase. This expression suggests the trembling of Christ in pain and also the horror that hypocrites had of Jesus when they would not touch Him or eat with Him My knees are weary from fasting. My flesh is wasted from its fatness. The appearance of Jesus was so changed from that of a few days before. I am an object of contempt to them The cross is as the apostle Paul said, “foolishness” to those who perish but to those who believe in Jesus as God's provision for man's sin eternal redemption it represents the “power of God” to redeem and lay a basis for forgiveness. They who see me shake their heads. This prophetic scripture was literally fulfilled 1000 years later in the death of Christ. (cf Matthew 27.39 and Mark 15.29)David continues to prophecy that the purpose of the cross would become widely known.*

Help me, O YAHWEH MY ELOAH. Deliver me according to YOUR covenant love. And may they know this is YOUR hand. *This expression is the prayer of David and it is taken up into the intercession of Jesus from the cross in his great cry “Father forgive them” and his further cry “My ELOAH my ELOAH why have YOU forsaken me?” You O YAHWEH have caused it to be accomplished. This incredible detail of David's is*

indicative of the fact that such reproach as is crucifixion was purposed by God to be a showcase of the depth of divine love. The wonder is that David could write this data as if it were happening before his eyes!

8. THE MUCH QUOTED DAVIDIC PEREDICTION OF MESSIAH'S RESURRECTION PSALM 110.1

THE LORD SAID TO MY MY ADONAI "Sit on my right hand until (1) **I will** make your enemies a footstool for your feet. *The Psalm is inescapably Trinitarian-David was a Trinitarian (cf Psalm 104.30) as were the ancient prophets-though they would have called themselves ELOHIM ECHADISTS. The fascinating statement speaks of God the Father making a "footstool".*

YOUR PEOPLE [Heb. "a people gathered"-also "concealed"-suggestive both of the re-gathered Israel and the church raptured] (3) **WILL BE WILLING** [Heb. NEDAB "spontaneous" "offer themselves" "ready for anything"] in the day of **YOUR** valour [Heb. HAYIL has the ring of "warlike expedition" -it appears to be everywhere a word having to do with "the hosts" cf. Ex14.28 Ps 18,33-40 Dan3.20,4,32 though it does also mean "uprightness" and "wealth"]

In the house of adornment of apparel for festival of holiness from the womb or tender affections of the breaking dawn you have the light dew of your bringing forth. *The glory of the morning sun and the surrounding covering of dew is symbolic of MESSIAH who can be described as "brought forth" because He was previously "incarnate" and brought forth from the womb of the virgin Mary and also because He was "begotten" by the Father from the dead. The combination of heavenly glory and earthly dew is appropriate to the FIRSTBORN cocooned in a dew- like veil as He was born that early Christmas morn just on sunrise and also to the LORD as He rose in divine glory and continuing perfect humanity that early Easter morning.*

9. CHRIST'S HUMILIATION & EXALTATION PSALM 113 5-7

An anonymous psalm with a clear messianic prophetic reference

Who is like the LORD our God of strength? He causes HIM to sit high or majestic. [Heb yhygmh]

As the power of the sun is unrivalled in our solar system so God is strong beyond all other. The sun is represented as "at rest" and in one sense the LORD is unmoved. He cannot be moved from his throne and endures for ever. He is majestic-elevated. The concept of divine majesty is not "pride" but the ability to "lift HIMSELF" which is seen in being uncreated and in Christ's resurrection from death. It is reflected in the power of a flower to lift its head above the soil. He is the One who causes HIM to be level to see. He sees into the house of heaven and earth

The LORD is wonderful in HIS willingness to come "level" with us. God in Christ lowered HIM to be man and HIS purpose is to be fully involved in the development of things in heaven and on earth-especially with HIS angels and HIS wider creation and mankind on this planet. His care of the two houses of "heaven" and "earth" is aimed at a future coming together and dwelling as one. There shall be a "new heaven and new earth" and the LORD God shall dwell with man in that great city of HIS intimate presence. He is the One who raises the poor [Hebrew l d] from the dust And causes the impoverished to rise from cooking pots

The "poor" are of two types-those who "swing one way and another" like a door [Hebrew ld] being pushed around and those who "breathe after" or "have a consuming desire"[Hebrew hba -the root of the word EBIONITE] for food or clothes or something beyond their grasp.

10. THE OMNISCIENT LORD AND HIS SPIRIT PSALM 139 1-6

A self-evidently Davidic production demonstrating the searching of the soul of its author by the Holy Spirit.

O LORD you have searched me [Heb. HAQAR "investigated" "deliberated over" "found my secrets" from the root "to dig"] and have known me intimately or personally. You are familiar with my Sabbath and resting and my rising up. You can understand like an umpire my friendship [Heb RAAAH "social life" "one love" "delights" or "thought" from the SYRIAC RAA'] YOU are continually winnowing [ZARAH "measuring" or "sifting and discerning"] my travelling by conveyance and my lying with woman. "You have made YOU familiar with or accustomed to all my minor ways. There is not an eloquent declaration on my tongue but behold O LORD YOU were completely aware of it. Behind and before YOU have laid siege to me [Heb TZOR "put a fortress or mound" "advanced"]David feels his most private moments of love are known; his whispered secrets; his great speeches; his social contacts; his idiosyncrasies and even his past and future before it is written or unravels. Such is Omniscience!

Such awareness is a miracle beyond me. It is elevated-high inaccessible- I am not able to have such awareness. Where shall I go from your Spirit? [Heb. RUACH]With the same revelation as St. Paul David is aware that none knows the deepest things but the Spirit of God (ref.1Corinthians 2 10-16) To where can I cross over from your Presence? If I should ascend up to heaven YOU are there! If I spread my bed in Sheol behold you are there! Should I bear up on the wings of the morning and should I dwell in the furthest parts of the sea even there YOUR hand will lead and govern me [Heb NAHAH "to govern"] David thinks of himself as escaping to the heights as astronauts can today or to the depths as submariners do or to the far west by air as air passengers are wont to do-but in all of these locations the LORD is both present and able still to watch and govern.

11. THE GREATNESS OF GOD (DAVIDIC) PSALM 145 1-3

I will exalt my God "the" King and I will bless your name for **ever and still**. *This is the Hebrew expression for "time & eternity"-so it is seven times a day and on and on.* This is a Great God above all gods. In the house of the whole day I will bless you-more than continual-which means daily-this means "while I live"-it is mirrored in the Wesleyan enthusiasm for the Lord "I'll praise my maker while I've breath" And I will praise your name for "time & eternity" Great is the Lord-GADHOL. This concept is not as we would count greatness as "becoming rich" or "famous and celebrated". It is the word for "three twisted cords in a rope" or "wrestling with others." So God is **Great** because of His tri-unity and of his capacity to overcome in spiritual victory - "and I will be a praiser turning about-bowing down-a "power praiser" You can search the sea for wrecks of ships or fish -the land for locations-the earth for treasure-but God's tri-unity and power to excel and overcome are beyond searching.

WHAT THIS SELECTION OF PSALMS TELLS US ABOUT DOCTRINE OF GOD CIRCA 1000B.C.

(1) We appreciate that as applied to Messiah the verse “Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol” immediately implies the action of God the Father and the resurrection of God the Son. (2) The triple particle description of Yahweh as “exceptional” could never stand as a tri-unity proof text but it holds some complementary interest (3) Psalm 61 with its reference to “He” (third person reference) who will raise David and added reference to Messiah as the “higher rock” and third reference in the “second person” to deity bears upon the personae of the godhead. (4) Psalm 82 with its “prepare to die like men die” is a rather notable psalm with reference to death affecting the godhead. (5) Psalm 99 & (6) Psalm 108 apply the Hebrew term “three-stranded” or “great” to God and that gives us the distinctive Christian concept of greatness we hold—God is the “one in three” of love and unity. (7) It is from Psalm 109 that we get our “My God my God why have you forsaken me” and as understood by Christians since Jesus first used the words it must be one of the clearest indications of the Father-Son relationship. (8) The famous 110th is explicit. It reads “The Lord said to my Lord ‘sit thou on my right hand’”. Our Lord pointed to this psalm as prophetic proof positive of David speaking of Christ. As He was the Christ it then appears that the Father-Son relationship is encapsulated. (9) The anonymous 113th withiest “He causes him to sit on high” again twins two persons within the deity’s work of lifting messiah to the heights. (10) David’s “You are familiar with all my thoughts” and his “Where shall I go from your Spirit?” in Psalm 139 enders proof that the Psalmist believed in the omniscience and omnipresence of the Spirit of God. (11) The 145th like many other psalms exalts God as King and so the Messianic status of the second person of the trinity is ever before the Psalmists and His greatness or three-stranded reality runs parallel with this concept in Psalm 145. Some of the references are like “straws in the wind” whilst others which are found in the mouth of our Lord and Saviour fundamentally point to Father and Son in relationship. Yet others indicated David’s patent awareness of the Spirit of God is as real as his awareness that his “seed” will be exalted and King for ever. When it is factored in that he (David) is aware that EL will raise up his seed it is not possible to deny that David had a primitive Trinitarian concept behind his writing. True, the NT references highlight the Father-Son dimension but the dual personae theme is everywhere in David’s presentation of the deity and taken with his awareness of the Holy Spirit and his divine attributes we have to acknowledge David has an economic trinity.

CHAPTER 3 ISAIAH AND THE PROPHETIC ERA

1. THE BRANCH 4.2

In that day the branch of the LORD will be beautiful or splendid (*Hebrew hbx "shine brightly like a star"*) and be glorious (*The concrete meaning of the Hebrew dwbk is "heavy" so Christ as "the Branch" will carry great weight in the world. He will be the noblest and the honoured one*). And the fruit of the earth will belong to a majestic One and to a gleaming glorious One *I have translated literally because in the first instance the "corn" is related to the planting (Hebrew traptl# mag) – the One who gave His life – Who was and is truly majestic and glorious.*

2. THE REDEEMER HOLY, HOLY, HOLY 6.5-8

A GRAMMATICAL & INTERPRETATIVE ERROR CORRECTED

*He spells out three woes. First, "I am a man of sinful lips". Second, "in the centre of a people of unclean lips I remain" Third, "My eyes have seen the King Jehovah of Hosts". The awareness of not being right with God by legal sacrifices was immediate. God's answer – one of those seraphs flew to me (a repentant man) with a live coal (The Hebrew word *hpxr* is a *feminine* word) taken by tongs from the altar of Sacrifice (possibly the annual Passover). He touched my mouth-and he said, "Behold this one (The Hebrew word *JZ* is a *masculine* word – indicative of the Lord) has touched your lips – your iniquity is removed – your sin covered."*

3. THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS 7.10FF

THE THIRD CHALLENGE TO AHAZ

The LORD added to speak by oracle to Ahaz saying in promise (Hebrew *rma*) Ask belonging to yourself a sign from communion with the LORD your God of the deep unsearchable Sheol or the height above (Hebrew *hl/m*) And Ahaz answered, "I will not keep proving or testing the LORD (as with hard questions) The same word was used by Gideon when he asked God for another sign-"that it be dry only on the fleece and upon the ground there be dew" Judges 6.39 In 1Samuel 17.39 David said to Saul "I cannot go in these for I have not proved them" His kingship was 16 years and his life 36 (2Chronicles 28.1) and his evil walk included burning his children and high place and grove sacrifices. Essentially he demurred because he was not keen for a closer walk with God. And he said, "Please listen, O house of David, the wearings of men is a small thing for you, for will you also attempt or execute wearying God in His strength?" **Therefore Adonai Himself will give you a sign,** "Behold "The" virgin (Hebrew *hml* [meaning – Matthew confirms "virgin"; Jerome cites ALMA in the Punic language as meaning "virgin" Isa 7.14 in *παρθενος* and the LXX is clear. It is also linked with *ml* [which means "youth" – of the puberty years. (1Samuel 17.56) In Job 42.3 the earliest use of the root word means "hidden from" and "covered" – so it relates to children protected. The Hebrew *hlwtb* "is an equivalent but is from an Arabic root. used of a "newly married" in Joel 1.8) shall conceive and be the bearer of a son and she shall call his name "God with us" (Hebrew *l a mm*). **If the reference to "Adonai" be taken as God the reference to "Son" it follows is the "Son of God".**

4. THE NAMES OF MESSIAH

(His Person) For a child belonging to us is born, a son is given for us *The combined truths of Christ's humanity and divinity are easily deduced from this verse. The sense in which the "child" Christ belongs to the Jewish nation is that He came from the line of David. The sense in which Christ as the "Son" belongs has to be different. He is the anointed Messiah – but any personal interest in and relationship to Him has to be by faith. Clearly Isaiah has such faith and His prophecy speaks of the Messiah in relation to His atoning work in Chapter 53.*

(His Work) And the contention -hence from contending to save and lead "the government" shall be upon His shoulder (Hebrew *mkv* – the body part below the neck towards the back is meant by this word – just where the cross was laid). In Isaiah 22.22 Eliakim has the key of the house of David on his shoulder. The ancient keys were

heavy – though hardly comparable to the burden of the cross – the key with which Jesus opened the Kingdom of heaven to us through His atoning death.

Ancient keys were as long as the arm and had pins at the end which answered to small bars which dropped into place in a hollow bolt shot across into the doorpost on closure. The key was inserted in a flat slot or hole and its pins knocked the bars up and the bolt was released. The love of Christ at the cross fitted the needs of the heart of man and opens lives to God's glorious entry.

1. His name shall be called wonderful consultant or director (Hebrew $\chi[\text{ny}]$ -can mean "provider") the miracle is that in all His advice to others Jesus was never wrong. He spoke as a prophet to the woman by the well. He told the Centurion his servant was healed. He advised Peter to cast on the other side. He was unerring-miraculous in speech. If we take the other meaning "Provider" we are introduced to the miracles-bread, healing, wine, resurrection, fish, power over the elements.

2. **Warrior God/"divine warrior"** (Binns) (Hebrew rbg) Oesterley unfairly restricts "El" to "strong one" but there is no reason why it should not mean "divine one". I well understand that the word "warrior" like "ish"(man) is used of a human being and it would be strange to say "divine man" but is this not the very reality of who Jesus is!

3. **Founder – author or Father of "still" or "eternity"** (Hebrew $d[\text{t}]$) the word for "eternity" here significantly is one I have for many years taken as the better of "ever and ever" (Hebrew $\text{ml}[\text{t}]$). "Still" is used in Daniel and the psalms to express "eternity". Isaiah's excellent golden lipped Hebrew would seem to confirm its more correct natural aptitude. It speaks of that which just "goes on without end." Jesus said, "I give unto my own eternal life and they shall never perish" This is the third hallmark of Messiah.

4. **Contender or Prince of peace** The word prince (Hebrew hrv) does not just mean one born with a golden spoon in a royal house. It speaks of the "war he must wage" much in the sense that Moses "prince of the house of Pharaoh" would have won his laurels in war and leadership of forces so Christ commanded His church and contended with the devil for the souls of men and withstood sickness and sin and death .He made peace possible by the pro active defeat of Satan.

5. THE BRANCH AND THE SPIRIT 1-5

And a shoot shall come forth from Jesse's "felled" tree (cf. Chapter 10) Judah's kingship was no more and a branch will burst forth (Hebrew hrp is used of the young "issuing from the womb" – and of flourishing buds leaves and flowers and fruit of a tree – especially of swift fruitfulness – which applies to the ministry of our Saviour) **from his root** (Hebrew vrv which signifies both "the lowliest part; the term is used also for the "root of controversy" – so Christ chose to spring from David when the family had come to its lowest ebb and His life was certainly attended with controversy) The Spirit of Yahweh Hebrew hwh shall rest on Him (Hebrew hm "to "settle down" or "be at home" or

"draw breathe" – all of these are appropriate. In the event itself under the ministry of John the Holy Spirit rested from tumbling from heaven as a "wrestler" now that God's champion had come. The Spirit was at home on earth as in heaven with Him and in a momentary rest the triune God rejoiced in this emergent ministry which would lead to the restoration of all things). **A Spirit of pious wisdom** mkj ; skill; and umpiring

mediator-ship or understanding *nyb*; A spirit of divine will & counsel and firm prophecy *hz*[; and warrior might *hrbg*; a spirit of intimacy based knowledge *hdy*; and joyful reverence of Yahweh *ary* His delight (*Hebrew jyr is a variant of jwr meaning that his inner delight shown and affection in evidence [as "odour" or "scent"] is in the house of the trembling joy of the LORD. And He shall not judge (fpv "set straight") from the distance His eyes can see nor reprove (j ky decide or arbitrate) from what comes to His ears. This indicates inner resources and cognitions of Christ. And He will prove or confute with finality and clarity of sunshine by righteousness the poor and He will fully execute by straightness like the sun's rays for the lowly afflicted of the earth (Both Hebrew Hiphil verbs hky and hkn are used of the "sun" – of its brightness and its "power" respectively and reinforce the opinion of the prophet that Christ will have the searching ability that the sun has in the physical world. Both verbs are final indicating Christ's kingdom dawning). He will (finally) [to reflect the Hiphil] strike the earth by the rod of His mouth and by the breath or spirit of His mouth He will slay the wicked.*

6. THE LORD'S COMING 26.19-21

Your dead will live; they will rise with my corpse. The inhabitants of the dust must arise from death's slumber and sing for the dew of lights (*Literally the "life-giving dew" like that which causes grass to grow gives life to the dead. The idea here is "dew that abides longest with the long rays of the morning light or heat. The life giving power of Christ "endures" and is associated especially with the dawn of His return*) is your dew and the earth shall cause her dead to be born (*drop or fall like a foetus*). Walk my people (*an expression the LORD used when first calling Abraham to go out in faith in Genesis 12*) into your chambers of death shut your doors behind you. Hide as a little "wink" or "instant" **until the indignation is passed by**. For behold the LORD comes from His place to visit the evil dwellers on the earth. The earth also will reveal her blood(*guilt*) and not cover any more her slain. *This section heralds the resurrection of the Lord's people. It also speaks of many who are called on to die just like the LORD called for the sacrifice of Isaac. That is the significance of "Walk into the chambers – shut the doors"*

7. THE SECOND COMING 30 30-32

For the voice of the LORD will terrify Assyria. *This indeed happened when the angel of the LORD smote Sennacherib's host – by a Shepherd's rod (Hebrew fbc cf. Psalm 23.4). He will strike. I think with great respect to the translators it is God with whom the initiative remains through this verse not Assyria (a symbolic nation whose name means "steps" which should follow divine footprints but in sliding fall under judgement) – there is no "who" and the Hiphil future tense does not suit the idea of punishing a "past" action, in fact one could say it is both a contextual and grammatical error. And in every place where the "staff" And in every place where the branch or sceptre (Hebrew hfmm) of (Christ's) decree passes or sweeps which the LORD makes to rest upon him it will be with tambourines and harps and battles of sieving or waving to and fro He will cause Himself to fight against him. There is nothing but victory forecast here. This is not hand to hand conflict. It is a sifting of "Who is on the LORD'S SIDE in the only truly "holy war" of history where not machines or bullets are the telling factor but the presence of the LORD*

8. THE COMING KING AND HIS SPIRIT 32.1-4,13-15

Behold a king will reign for righteousness and leaders or nobles will reign for the sake of justice and a man or warrior will be like a hiding place of wind or a secret place of the Spirit. *While the concrete meaning "a rock to protect" is in concert with the sequence of phrases the metaphorical sense- "one who sends (The righteous King/Christ) the Spirit" is linguistically acceptable and theologically correct also for in Isaiah's day the worldwide Pentecostal outpouring was a secret or mystery and a veil or protection from the overwhelming storm...Because the palaces (J.D.Michaelis renders "women's apartments or harems") will be cast down or struck; the multitude or riches of the city will be left; the hill of OPHEL (fortified by a separate wall) and the watchtower will have their places taken by dens or lairs for a whole era-a joy of wild donkeys – a pasture for flocks until the Spirit pours itself (Niphal of the Hebrew word hr[upon us from on high) upon us from on high.*

9. FIRST CHALLENGE OF THE CREATOR 40.12-17

Twelve Questions

1. Who has measured the waters in the house of His palm?
2. and the heavens with a span of the hand or in their spreading out?
3. Who has weighed all the dust of the earth in the third (*part of an Ephah*) or levelled all the dust on the third day?
4. Who has suspended the mountains in equilibrium or weighed them in a balance?
5. And the hills in scales?
6. Who has weighed the Spirit of the Lord – as to proportion or put *the Spirit* into operation?
7. Or experience of Him as a man of His counsel?
8. With whom did he cause Himself to gain experience/knowledge?
9. And who mediated for Him?
10. And disciplined Him in the path of judgement/law
11. Who taught Him wisdom/knowledge of *Me (God the Father)*
12. And caused Him to know the path of distinguishing?

The first five questions may be fairly answered by one who has "a palm" "a span of hand" – namely the Christ! The second seven have the same answer! The 8th indicated the Father and the second series as a whole indicates the final supremacy of Jesus as God. The questions suppose the work of the Trinity

10. THE MISSION OF CHRIST AND HIS PEOPLE 42. 5-9

Thus says El Yahweh Creating One of the heavens and the One who continues to stretch them out (*Hebrew participle hfi*) – the stretcher out of the earth as hammered plates (*Hebrew [qr]*) and its species. The giver of its species (*Hebrew axax*) and the *soul* of its people and *spirit* of breath to those who walk in it, 'I Yahweh have called you in the house of righteousness and (1) Will hold you firmly in the house of your hand and (2) I will lay you up as a treasure and (3) Give you to belong to a covenant of a people (4) To belong to light of the Gentiles, (5) To open the eyes of the blind, (6) To cause the prisoners from being held restrained sitting in darkness in the house of the prison,(7) To have a rising like the sun (*Hebrew Hophal ayxah*)

I am Yahweh – that is my name – and my glory I will not give to "another" or one of another sort or my praise to images. Behold the former or first things happened and "the new things" I am declaring before they take place I am letting you hear of them.' *This is the Father's early prediction of the ministry of His Son. **There are seven statements about Jesus.** His calling centres on building the household of righteousness; the Father is mightily allied to this work; Jesus is to be prepared and opened as treasure is opened in the future; He is to establish a covenant; to enlighten gentiles; to release those bound by Satan and to be author of resurrection life. The Father adds "This, His servant is within the unity of the godhead and though distinct as a person He is not of another 'sort'." The LORD declares that this is a very new concept.*

11. MOMENTOUS PROPHETIC TESTIMONY TO THE TRINITY 48 9-16

On account of my name I will lengthen the time before my anger(falls) For my praise I will restrain myself concerning you and not cut you off. *Here the LORD shows mercy to Hezekiah and forebears with Judah. God is great in longsuffering not willing that any should perish.* Behold I have refined you but not as silver and proved and chosen you in the furnace of affliction. *The image of the LORD was not well formed in Israel so they were not refined but they were selected as the 3 youths in Babylon and doubtless many more whose story is not written. For my own sake for my sake I will do it, for how would He break His covenant and I will not give my glory to another. Here the LORD insists He as Saviour will be gracious and as Father will be faithful. The NKJ "my name" is an interpolation I do not accept. Hear me O Jacob and Israel my called one, "I am He, I am the first – yes I am the last" Yes my hand founded the earth and my right hand stretched out the heavens. When I have continued to call to them they have stood and ministered together. All of you quibbutz yourselves and listen, "Who has declared these things among you? The LORD LOVES Him. He shall prepare His pleasure in Babylon and his scattering *The Hebrew word is [rʔ not [rʔz of the Chaldeans. I, I have declared the matter. I have brought him. I have made his way prosperous. All this 200 years before he was born. Come near, listen to this, from the beginning I have not spoken in secret. From the time it had existence I was there and now the LORD God and His Spirit have sent Me**

This privy and vital statement of doctrine is at the heart of divine revelation concerning the type of Creator God we have. Already in v11 we have a reference to the two persons of Father and Son and now we have the three persons. This revelation is very special and is set out here to testify for all time that God explains Himself and His very nature. He wants His people to know the nature of the God of creation – to understand the concept of ELOHIM.

12. THE FATHER AND SON IN CONCERT PROVIDE SALVATION 49.3-9

And now the LORD says who formed me from the womb to be His servant to bring Jacob back to him and Israel will not gather himself *Hebrew Niphal of psa* and I will be glorious in the eyes of the LORD and my God will be my strength. *Here following the references to the Trinity in the previous chapter is a statement of the*

extraordinary development of a "way of righteousness" within the sovereign execution of Father and Son. This purpose has mutual acclaim and acceptance by Father and Son. The statement of this desolating and exhausting work of atonement comes in this form before the explicit statement we will soon find in Isaiah 53. Notice how complex this statement is by comparing the nation named after a "prince with God" in v.5 with Christ God's true "prince with God" in v.3

And He said, "It is a slight or mean thing for You to be my servant to raise up or resurrect the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved or guarded ones of Israel. I will give you for a light to the Gentiles that You should be my *Yeshua* to the ends of the earth. *Here the recognised value of the cross was such that atonement was to be limited to the Jews but spread in its grand objective and scope over the citizens of the globe in all future eras.*

THE SAVIOUR: DESPISED OF MEN – CHOSEN OF GOD 7-8

Thus says the LORD the redeemer of Israel, their Holy One, "To the One despised ; to the one constantly detested *Hebrew Piel of b[ʔ]* or abhorred, to the Servant of rulers by the nations Kings shall see Him *prophetically and in judgement* and they will rise in *His honour and in the life to be* Princes shall also worship because of Yahweh who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel and He will associate with You as a "Companion" *The union here is a bond in salvation centring on the work of redemption by the cross.*

RESTORER AND LIBERATOR 8-9

Thus says the LORD, "In a time accepted I have heard you and in a day of salvation I have helped You. I will preserve You and give You in respect to a covenant o f the people to raise earth up again to cause them to inherit the heritages of desolation. To say to the prisoners "go free" and to those in darkness "Uncover yourselves!" *The NT Covenant is one under which those bound by Satan and their sins are released by the Holy Spirit who rules for Christ in blood bought lives. Those in darkness need to confess their sin and their lost estate and deal openly and honestly with God and in so doing they will come into His glorious light The earth itself previously devastated in tribulation will be restored by Christ for His classic rule of the last age.*

13. MESSIAH ENCOURAGES THE WEARY : MESSIAH IS REVILED

50.2b-6

Adonai Yahweh has given me a tongue of learned men to know how to speak to continually aid the weary. He awakens me morning after morning. He awakens my ear to hear as the learned.

Adonai Yahweh has opened my ear and I was not disobedient and I did not turn myself back or decline (*from God*). I gave my back to the smiters *Hebrew hkn* and my jaws to those who plucked the hair *Hebrew frm* I did not hide my face from insult or injury and spitting. *Of these three prophecies let it be said that Our LORD went willingly to death as His Gethsemane statement, "Thy will not mine be done" attests. He showed the obedience of the OT servant whose ear was bored in faithfulness to his master. Exodus 21.6 In all things He (our LORD) pleased the Father.*

14. THE MARRIED SERVANT SPRINKLES MANY NATIONS 52.13-15

Behold my servant will deal prudently (*like Israel who crossed His hands in choice Gen 48.14*). We are here to continue to "Behold" the servant as in Isaiah 52.6 .He will be high, He will be lifted up, He will be very great. As when many were astonished or confounded at you so his face and eyes will be more spoiled than any man and his beautiful form *Hebrew* *ḥat* more than the sons of Adam *Abel one of Adam's sons was viciously murdered but Christ's death was more terrible still*. So He shall sprinkle great nations. Kings shall close their mouths upon Him for what they had not read continually they will see prophetically and what they never heard they will have mediated for their understanding. *Kings indeed have ended their lives with Christ's name on their lips and in the course of Christian history many have seen the truth with clarity and have had it explained by chaplains. This prophecy is not so much one of threat of judgment as one of world-wide acceptance of the message. The "sprinkling of nations" is an eastern term by which those who are to be hosted by a monarch at His pleasure are first sprinkled with perfumed liquids as rose-water.*

15. THE SUFFERING SERVANT 53 2-10

He will grow up as a sucker of an old tree (*Hebrew* *qmm*) belonging to the face of God and as a root (*Hebrew* *vrw* often used of the "lowest", "the controversial") out of the sun-baked white ground. No especial delineation of feature and no outstanding honour belongs to Him and when we make ourselves look at Him no sight we take pleasure in. *Here we have the Davidic root and the heavenly link with the Father set together and yet no evidence in His looks set him apart. All servants are plain and Jesus became a true a perfect and a plain man*

Despised for who He was and declined or forsaken of men He was a heroic man of pain of body and sorrow of soul (*Hebrew* *bak*) and acquainted in body and mind with exhaustion /calamity /grief (*Hebrew* *hl/h*) and it was as if we veiled our faces from Him. Despised for whom He was and we did not value Him or reckon to Him what belongs to Him

The Lord is said to be special in being able to bear suffering. Servants often have heavy roles and suffer exhaustion. In this Jesus was outstanding. In Samaria, in Gethsemane and at Calvary to quote but a few cases *απτiov* *He lived to the edge of physical endurance*

Surely He lifted the burden of our exhaustion calamity or grief, He bore for those last months (*as a mother a child in the womb*) in His heart our sorrow of soul and pain of body and we imputed or reckoned to Him "meddling" or "being smitten by calamity"; "having been smitten of God by a plague" and brought low. *This is precisely predictive of what the Jews thought of Jesus. He was meddling in matters where He had supposedly no right. Nemesis overtook Him. He was brought low. Indeed He was* *απτiov* *but for our sakes*

He was pierced through (*Hebrew* *llj*) for our falling away or breaking the covenant (*Hebrew* *[vp]*); He was broken in spirit (*Hebrew* *akd*) **for our iniquity** (*Hebrew* *mm*) [*taking what is not mine in a depraved or barefaced way-as Joseph's cup – Genesis 44.16 or cohabiting Exodus 21.10 – as in Ezekiel 21.30 "The crime of the end" or one without recovery – due final judgement*] The Lord as servant interposed His precious blood in our utter extremity. **The chastening or discipline of our peace was on Him**

and by His striped blows (Hebrew *rbj*) we find healing for ourselves. *The uncanny precision of the Hebrew prophecy details the Roman flogging before its very invention. Rome was founded 752 BC Isaiah wrote 790-740. The "stripes" may be taken not alone as marks deep in the skin like joining rivers but may be taken as "joining that which is thrown down" in resurrection league and fellowship. So the WOUNDS are ghastly rivers of blood on the body but they build the body of Christ into a mighty movement of the Spirit. This is eternal health.*

All we like a flock will go astray/wander (*The word is used for "apostasy"*) – each man turning his face his way but the Living Lord performed the "end of sin" to strike Him-to slay Him-to meet on Him or Himself. *The utter end of the people of God – the individual ruin of each, the final perversion of turning away was prophetically reversed by the judgement of all lighting on Christ.*

He allowed Himself to be driven or harassed (*Heb Niphal *vgn**) and He allowed himself to be humbled or oppressed (*Heb Niphal *hn**) and He did not open His mouth. As a lamb having been caused to run like water (*Hebrew *l by**) to the executioner and like a ewe or ewe lamb before her shearers is mute dumb or silent (*Heb *m/ a**) so He will not open His mouth *The precision of the prophet makes the procession to Calvary like a river. One can imagine the people lining the route as the banks and the Christ being pressed along as the water of life going to the place where in the shedding of His blood a living fountain would be opened up for uncleanness*

From detention or the assembly of people at festival (*Hebrew *rx**) and from judgement he was taken. *Here is the predicted timing and illegality of it all-at Passover a judgement was given on the Son of God by the then Sanhedrin. How shameful! Who will continually speak or celebrate or meditate on this divine thing (Hebrew *j yc*) – "the circuit of His life" "His thirty plus years", "the century He lived in", "his genetic origin"? (Hebrew *rad*) for He cut Himself off or axed Himself or excluded Himself from earth of the living ones-for the covenant breach sin of my people He cut Himself off-for their sake. *The vicarious atonement left no friends who appreciated. Isaiah in 8.16 answers his own question – the disciples!**

He will give the unrighteous or fraudulent His sepulchre. He will give to the rich in the house of His death because He had done no violence and there was no betrayal in His mouth *This appears to be a statement which is fulfilled in two ways. (1)The tomb of Christ would eventually fall into the hands of those who guard it but gain no benefit (Romans) whereas to Joseph – that Jew who stood honest in the synagogue He gave his life giving death and to each who stands for Him*

And the Lord is willing or inclines to continually smite Him with stripes crushing His spirit He makes Himself sick (cf. Micah 6.13 where God makes Himself sick by striking others – clearly He turned to making Himself sick for them! Hebrew *yl jh* Hiphil with the reflexive meaning) because You will place His soul or physical life as an offering -that by which one contracts guilt (Numbers 5.7-8) (*Hebrew *mva**)

*The placing of the life of Messiah is described by the Hebrew verb *mmc* which means "to constitute" "lay as a foundation" and "name Him" – also "to pledge" "to treasure for the future" and "to prepare" This is the counsel of the divine will in eternity past.*

He will see seed, lengthen His days and the "pleasure" of the Lord will finish well or be successful in His hand. *Here we see the desire of the Lord is for seed – those who receive the divine nature. Like "birth" this of necessity involves pain. As husbands and*

wives take "pleasure" in a new-born so the Father and the Son and the Spirit take pleasure in the results of the cross.

16. THE COVENANT LOVE OF THE LORD – THE TRINITY 63. 7-14

I will remember the covenant love of the LORD and the praises of the Lord

(a): according to all the benefits the LORD has heaped on us and His great goodness to the house of Israel which He heaped on them

(b): and according to His mercy

(c): and according to His great loving-kindness of covenant. And He said, "Surely they are my people, sons who will not lie and He became a Saviour to them. In all their distress surely He was distressed and the angel of His presence saved them in His delight /breathing desire (*Hebrew bha*) and in His sparing compassion/gentleness (*Hebrew /mj*) He redeemed them – he lifted them up as a heavy load, He bore them all the days of old. But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit. So he changed to be their enemy and fought against them. But He remembered the days of old – Moses – His people – "Where is He who brought them up from the sea? Where is the Shepherd of His flock? Where is He who placed in their midst His Holy Spirit? Who lead them by the right hand of Moses – the arm of His glory or teaching dividing the waters before their face to make Himself an everlasting name? He who led them into the depths as a horse into the desert they did not stagger /sink? *Useful doctrine and teaching – we learn that the Holy Spirit was given within the camp of Israel. We learn that when Elijah asked such questions God answered. The Lord is willing to answer His people's cry.* As a beast goes down into the valley so the Spirit of the Lord makes him rest to make for Himself a glorious teaching name (*The well-being of His people is a principle of God's action. He gives to His people "rest in Him" not "self-satisfaction" or instinctive habits of life!*)

CHAPTER 4 CHRIST'S TEACHING, ACTS & PAUL ON DOCTRINE OF GOD TRIUNE

I trace statements relevant to the "economic" trinity from Matthew-the teaching gospel and supplement from John which carries a special vista on the Father-Son relationship and this is supplemented by reference to 1John. That which is apropos in Acts and further data of theological interest in the Pauline epistles is assembled in this chapter.

A MATTHEW

1. ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER MATTHEW 1 16-18

The thirty-ninth generation from Abraham was humanly begotten. But at the 40th we have the verb changing from the active to the passive voice (1.16). Jesus is named as "calling himself" Christ (*λεγομενος-middle voice*). Matthew also maintains the angelic association of the coming of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. In Matt. 1.18 "She was found with Child "of" the Holy Spirit" In Luke 1.35 the seed of the woman is called "That holy thing". The GENETIVE CASE *γενικη πτωσις* is really a "case of genus" so that the absolute likeness to the Holy Spirit is able to be argued from this statement – the Christ child was absolutely immaculate and holy as is the Holy Ghost.

2. THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST MATTHEW 3.16

The heavens were opened **for Him, to Him by Him**. This is an opening of heaven once for all. He saw it then and it was something he never lost sight of his entire ministry. That heavenly door lies ajar for all who follow Him. We read of Jesus looking up into heaven and saying “Father”. Another use of the dative is “near” – so that the door of heaven was so very reachable for Jesus. All the glory and treasures of the city of God was His to enjoy while on earth. No wonder He could say “Thy will be done on earth as in heaven”. We must revel in this glorious nugget.

Further He saw the Holy Spirit **descend** (the word *καταβαίνω* means “coming down as a wrestler” to strive with the evil below). This matter also was to be an ongoing campaign. It was to have a wider application within the church to the whole world in the Pentecostal baptism – here foreshadowed.

3. TEMPTATIONS (SATAN’S CRITIQUE HOLLOW MATT.4.1FF

Then Jesus was led as by one united to him in covenant into the desert under the Holy Spirit – escorted unerringly to an encounter with the devil. The traditional spot is Quarantel, which rises steeply above the site of ancient Jericho. It was an arid and dry area – an area of Satan’s choice. In temptation the place and timing is often Satan’s. The Lord was to have had trial under escort of the devil. The devil was late, and his cunning plan was to famish and weaken the Lord. The Lord’s preparation involved prayer and fasting. The Lord was hungry throughout these trials – having neither bread nor fruit on this sun-baked scarp.

The devil came right up to him and said classically “If you are the Son of God make the epic statement that these rocks “shall become bread”.

4. CHRIST REJOICES WITH THE FATHER’S SEASONABLE PLAN MATT.11.25-30

At that highly significant moment when three points of history were in view – the Sodom period, the current time and the postponed future kingdom Jesus said, “Father Lord of heaven and earth, thank You that these things are hid from wise and able ones who can line up thought and reality, and You have unveiled them to those using the milk of scripture. This, Father, is as how your pleasure in heaven’s inner council works. All things are handed over to me by my Father and no-one can read the Son but the Father nor the Father but the Son and whoever the Son is resolved to unveil Him.”

5. PETER’S CONFESSION MATTHEW 16.13-17 & 20

Jesus gives another lesson on discipleship at the “cave of Pan”. Caesarea Philippi was a shrine for tutelary gods. Here Peter made the unqualified confession, “You are Christ, God’s Son”; Jesus in framing the question consciously terming Himself Sovereign as “The Son of man” of scripture. (*Daniel 7.13 & Ezekiel 40.3-48.35 with 8 references to “the man” and 14 to the “Sovereign Lord”*)

The verses 17-19 are a quite vital private statement of Jesus (v.20) – opening to faith the signal prophecy of the church – soon to break upon the Jewish scene.

Christ consciousness was not taught to Peter by his father Jonah but by God the Father.

6. THE TRANSIGURATION VOICE OF THE FATHER MATTHEW 17:5B

BEHOLD a voice from the cloud, saying, “This is my Son the beloved, in whom I have been content, acquiesced, been content, glad – you must listen to Him.” Suddenly deity and trinity, prophecy and law all came together in Jesus.

7. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST MATTHEW 28.19

“All authority [εξουσια] is given me in heaven and on earth. Therefore set out to march and keep on marching [πορευθεντες] and never accept defeat – never surrender – never cease to campaign – never grow weary – march once for all – and “make disciples” once for all [μαθητευσατε] – of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you”

The teaching authority of Christ is enhanced in this statement and even the prophetic detail of future history is subject to the teaching role of the Son though as ever co-ordinate with the sovereign will of God.

(B) JOHN

1. THE FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP JOHN 1.1FF

In the opening syllogism of the gospel “In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God.” We learn that: –

- (1) There was our Lord, in the most ancient circle
- (2) There was our Lord, abiding in God – in His bosom and counsels –
- (3) There was our Lord the divine oracle or mouthpiece was God. Thus the existence of Christ in the circle of deity, that intimacy with the heart and mind of God ipso facto demanded His sharing the true nature of God. This is put elsewhere in Luke 10.22 “No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father and who the Father is but the Son – excepting to whom the Son is willing to reveal Him from behind the veil

2. JESUS CLAIM TO BE THE FORM OF GOD “ANGEL OF THE PRESENCE” 3.13

Now Jesus says something even more worth listening to. ‘No-one has gone up to heaven save the Son of Man (*who appeared to Daniel*) who constantly comes down *καταβας* to carry the spiritual battle among men’ Nicodemus was out of his depth – this is really radical theology – and then Jesus added” *even the Son who is in heaven*’. *John does not include this statement or anything of this debate in his aggregate of cumulative evidences. They are mighty evidences but the dialogue was of a private nature.*

3. JESUS THE DEITY OF CHRIST 5. 19

A series of four *γαρ* statements expounds “The Son can do nothing unless what he longingly watches the Father do

- (a) **Equal renown.** For what that “renowned” One (*εκεῖνος* is a term John uses five times in his epistle for Jesus and it is his synonym for Jehovah – whose name Jews do not mention because of its holiness.) wants to do the Son does likewise
- (b) **Equal love.** For the Father loves the Son (as His intimate friend) and shows Him (*δεικνυμι* – it maybe by model and detail as to Moses) everything that He is doing – and greater works He will show Him that you may **wonder** – this *θανυμαζω* speaks of having to square with the intimacy of Father & Son
- (c) **One in purpose** For as the Father raises the dead & gives life so the Son gives life to those he **wills** to live.
- (d) **One in honour** For on the other hand the Father judges no-one but has given all judgment to the Son that all **honour** him – to fail so is to dishonour the Father.

4. JESUS CLAIMS THE KEYS OF DEATH ARE HIS 8.48

So the Jews reply, ‘Did we not say handsomely and precisely ‘You are a Samaritan with a demon?’ Jesus replied ‘I have not a demon, but I honour my Father and you dishonour me. I seek not my own honour. He who seeks that is judge. Verily if anyone keeps my word he shall not see death into eternity (*i.e. dissolution of soul & body*).

Christ as God has the “keys” of death.

5 ALONGSIDE GOD 9.28

If this person were not ‘along with God’ He would be able to do nothing.

6. JESUS AND THE FATHER ONE GOD 10.24

So the Jews encircled Him and said, ‘How long until you take your life?’ If you are the Christ, tell us openly. He replied ‘I spoke epic and clear-you did not believe. The works in my Father’s name witness of me but you don’t believe.

He spelled out the “why”. You are not my sheep. “My sheep hear and follow and I give them eternal life, no-one plucks them from my hand. My Father who gave them me is greater than all, no-one is able to take them from His hand **“I and the Father are one”** This is a distinctive statement of deity.

So Jews were carrying stones about with them (as we would suitcases) that they might stone Him.

Jesus said, ‘Many beautiful works I have shown you from my Father; on account of which are you stoning me?’ The Lord took the intent to be equal to the act, a sin. Here also is the perception of God. ‘For none’ they said, ‘but for blasphemy **because being man you are self-made God.** Jesus referred to *Psalm 82.6* urging that the word of God introduces mankind to the divine nature c.f. *2Peter 1.4*. Scripture cannot be loosed – like a naked woman – a prey; like a horse – unbridled and wild; like a market – selling at one price here and another there; like a city – in ruins.

You dare to call the sanctified Son precisely “a blasphemer” precisely because I say epically **“I am Son of God”**.

‘If I don’t do the works don’t believe. If I do, believe the works – in order that you may know the Father is in my circle and I in His.’

7. CHRIST ANTICIPATED RESUMING LIFE IN GLORY 13.31

So when he went out Jesus said plainly “**Now the Son of man has been glorified, and God will have been glorified in his own circle of deity.**” When God is glorified in his own circle God will also glorify Him in his own being, and He will immediately glorify Him. This speaks of the absolute resumption of glorious prerogatives willingly laid aside.

8. THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT 16.7FF

The specific role of the Holy Spirit as “guide” to the soldiers of Christ is to “bring tidings” from Christ to the disciples and the specific task of being **a messenger** (*αγγελῶ* *one who reports with news of those who survive the battle*). Christ whose glorious victory at Calvary is the Gospel Message was to send the Holy Spirit to embolden and equip for the worldwide task of getting this message out. His stay would be “little while” because He was going up with company to the Father.

9. JESUS CLAIMS DEITY 19.6-10

Pilate counters the “crucify” shriek of the high priests and their men-at-arms with the taunt “You do it” for to me there is no issue – no crime. Their answer comes back like a boomerang – “**We have a law under which He ought to die for He made Himself Son of God.**” Christ is charged with claiming deity. The “Therefore” of the absolute Lord. “**When Pilate heard that word ‘God’**” He was frightened “more”. It is soon after this that Pilate’s wife warms by dream to avoid acting against “the just man” cf. *Matthew 27.19*. Pilate’s fear was compound. It came from acting vindictively – then from the charge from the menacing crowd and finally from the omen his wife sent. Pilate becomes absolutely frank. “Where do you come from?” he asks. Christ gives no reply. It is the third time in the judgment hall – cf. *18.29 & 33 with 19.9*. He came out first because there was no charge; second because the charge of “kingship” was unsustainable; now the issue was between Caesar and Christ as God – it was **the Lordship of Christ nothing less over the world at large** in contest with that of Caesar. In this the answer of Christ is THE SILENCE OF GOD.

v.10 The “Therefore” of power versus omnipotence “Are you not going to talk to me?” said Pilate stressing his delegated authority *ἐξουσία* for capitol sentencing under Caesar. Christ is in full contention now. You have not one scrap of authority except what has been given long ago from above – and if the Lord did not point above he made it known his “above” meant heaven. Now Jesus deals with the other trial and charges Herod with greater sin – having through his steward greater understanding and knowing full well of Jesus’ innocence he sent him back to Pilate though he had the power of release. So Herod shrewd as ever sought favour from Pilate and evaded a delicate case – but sinned against God. Pilate was saddled with the ultimate decision and outwitted by the Jews yet of himself he did not charge Christ. He buckled finally when the *external* debate renewed and “majestas” charge swelled as a public demand. Pilate himself had to escape being guilty of appearing to allow Jesus to contest the rule of Caesar politically.

10. THE INSPIRED CREATIVE ACTIVITY OF CHRIST AS GOD JOHN 21.23

“There are many other things Jesus did as creator which if they were written in detail, I think the world itself could not store the books that might have been written. Amen.” *The apostle has selected a mountain of evidence from the 3 year ministry of Jesus and he can say with joy that under the ministry of the Holy Spirit he has written after the intuitive logic of love and can rest his case for the deity of our heavenly Lord. Here he points to the Lord’s pre-existence, there he adduces His omniscience. Here he speaks of his peerless life and there he demonstrates His miraculous power. Here he shows his unbroken contact with the Father and there he shows his unbroken victory over evil. In these and many other ways he attests the Son of God is Lord over all.*

(C) ACTS

In this section I invite you to observe that the continued work of God in Christ is enacted by the Holy Spirit just as the work of the Father was enacted by the Son of God. This mechanism of triune co-operation is displayed in the Gospels and Acts to the glory of the One Almighty God acting both through the **“schema”** of God in the servant life of Christ in a located or Israel-centred manner and in the **“eidos” (as distinct from “phorme”)** of God through the Holy Spirit in a church wide manner.

1. THE SHEDDING FORTH OF THE SPIRIT ACTS 2.29FF

This **“very Jesus”** God raised to heaven. He shed forth **the Spirit** “alongside the **Father**” – the Spirit of “Jehovah”, wisdom(prophecy dreams vision), discerning/interpreting Christ, of divine counsel, of courageous gospel warriors, of experience of God, of awe hnhj hmkj hmyb hx[hrwbj t[d tary Here Peter sensing the Spirit working urges God wants Israel to know **ασφαλως** without disappointment that Jesus is Christ. The hearers were “nudged” by the Spirit **κατενυγησαν** – spurred as if by a rider to go on faster under the “rein” of the Holy Spirit.

2. PETER’S DEFENCE ACTS 5.31-32

Peter further brought the bad news that the Jewish leaders had put **Christ** to death by crucifixion but God raised him up so that by this man’s absolute authority God now proclaimed repentance and forgiveness and a long amnesty for sinners. He added “We are witnesses to these things **as is the Holy Spirit** whom **God** gives to those who “obey Him as the authority”

3. STEPHEN ON THE TRINITY 7.51-53

Stephen spoke of the “stiff neck” and “un-circumcision of heart”. He speaks of the nation as “resisting or falling upon the Holy Spirit” and killed the prophets of the coming “Righteous one”. The angels came in a great battle-order with the law and God gave warning lest the people offend immediately. Stephen sees Israel’s history as a catalogue of disobedience of which the latest episode was the severest iniquity. The greatest fault was not “watching” for the coming of the righteous. Now observe what Stephen did. He looked steadfastly into heaven and saw what he was speaking about – the **Glory of God and Jesus at the right hand of God**. He testified “Look, I see heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. *Stephen’s experience is written into the “Apostle’s creed” and is of utmost*

significance as our only ever glimpse of the majesty in heaven where “in the circle of divinity” or the “Majesty on high” Christ is apparent to the believer’s eye whilst in the unapproachable glory of the Father the eternal proceeding motion and mighty dynamic of the Holy Spirit remains unseen.

4. SAUL AND ANANIAS ADD THEIR TESTIMONY 9.5-12

Suddenly there shined around about Saul a light from heaven (“above the brightness of the sun at noon” Acts 26.13) **He heard the voice of Jesus** and **saw the Lord** (9.17) The Lord identified with His persecuted followers. He was told “**I am Jesus whom you are persecuting**” (E Oxford “It is hard to kick against the horse spurs” elided in 2010 NIV. Saul’s was instant surrender and obedience. He was quivering outside and astounded inside. Those near him “took it all in” i.e. considered it as they listened to Jesus speaking. Paul was in Damascus 3 days in the house of Judah-and fasting.

All this began “suddenly” v3 **εξαφνης**. The word means “unseen” “with no lead in” or better “the precise point of change from rest to motion”. To this “meeting Jesus” we can put down our whole spiritual progress

The **Lord** next appeared to Ananias (the one Jehovah guards) He was told to go to “Straight Street” or “express way” **ευθειαν**. It was not only straight but also busy. In the house of Judah Saul was “**giving himself to prayer**” It seems the Lord showed Saul to Ananias. In a vision Saul had seen Ananias coming and laying on of hands as the answer to his prayer. Ananias whom God protects faltered – “I have heard of him – creates havoc!” The Lord responded – “He is a chosen vessel” “He will carry my name before nations & kings. I will show him what he must suffer – this means “by presenting my sufferings to him” **υποδειξω**

Ananias went and spoke to Saul as a brother. He told him why he came and became agent of sight restoration and the infilling of *the Holy Spirit*.

5. PETER’S TEACHING ON THE TRIUNE GOD 10 34-43

Peter sets out GOSPEL principles. He introduces “Of a truth I have taken myself down a peg for God is no respecter of persons”

1. All who fear him & energetically work righteousness are “accepted” – he sent his word – the good news of peace to Israel. This is the Christmas message “Peace on earth to men on whom his favour rests”
2. He is **Lord of all**. You know the one who became the message through Judea originating from Galilee – Jesus of Nazareth.
3. Along with the baptism John heralded – Jesus of Nazareth
4. Whom “**the God**” anointed with the Spirit and Power
5. Who went throughout voluntarily doing good works
6. And haling all who had been down under the devil’s power. God was with him. We were witnesses of all done in Judea & Jerusalem
7. They killed Him & hanged Him on a tree
8. This Christ “**the God**” raised the third day
9. He was seen not of all but of witnesses handpicked before by “**the God**”. We ate and drank with Him after the resurrection

10. He announced alongside us then that we herald and witness that he is “ordained” on the horizon by “the God” as Judge
11. All the prophets witness to Him as the name of our forgiveness – Isa. 33.24,53.5-6, Jer31.34 Dan. 9.24
12. Forgiveness is through His name

6. PAUL’S PREACHING AFFIRMS THE TRIUNE GOD ACTS 13 25-52

1. Repentance is vital and proud rebellion is its major target cf.v24B and the contrasting humility v.25
2. “Leading in”(Greek *εισοδος*) the bridegroom of the heart v.24A
3. Covenant mercies v.34 & Isa.55.3
4. **The cross or tree** v.29. With Deut. 31.23 (Gal.3.13) is at the heart of preaching i.e. **The curse** taken away only in *Jesus* whom *God* raised up v.30.
5. The perfect lamb v.33 and Psalm 2.7 (cf. Mark1.11)
6. Forgiveness available to the obedient v.38 Jeremiah 31.34
7. Justification by faith v.39 (cf. Romans 5.1)
8. The reality of Judgement v.41 with Habakkuk 1.5
9. Covenant Grace v.43
10. A call for decision v.46
11. The divine overarching sovereignty v.48 “enrolled” – cf. the book of life
12. The fullness of *the Spirit* v.52

7. PAUL IN TYRANNUS HALL & IN SYNAGOGUE ACTS 19 1-8

In its day Ephesus was a great city, its Diana temple a wonder of the world – its lighted streets, its library, baths, and its trade in metals, wool and timber renowned. But when Paul followed Apollos visit he found people disciplined in repenting but unaware of the coming of the Spirit. He taught baptism in the name of Christ as Lord (Adonai). He laid his hands on the group who were remarkably 12 men – it was like Pentecost in Asia. They gave their experience animatedly and spoke of the light that had entered their lives.

Paul spoke boldly in the synagogue – using the dialectic method i.e. asking questions that supposed dogmatic answers *διαλεγομαι* and persuaded of the kingdom of God.

8. PAUL SPEAKS OF THE “FATHERLY GOD” BEFORE FELIX ACTS 24 10-21

“Because I know you have been for many years in office as judge of this nation, so the more cheerfully I make my defence as you are able to check that not above 12 days ago I came up to Jerusalem to worship; and I was neither found debating with any in the temple or inspiring a riotous throng, either in the synagogues or in the city. Nor are they able to substantiate the charges alleged. But on the one hand I confess this to you, that according to the Way – which they call heresy – so it is I worship *the Fatherly God* (Greek *τω πατρω θεω*), believing all those things written in the law and by the prophets, holding hope in God, which these men also have received, that there is to be a resurrection of the dead, both just and unjust.

9. PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA EMPHASISES MESSIAH ACTS 26 19-23

“Whence O King Agrippa I did was no disobedient to the heavenly vision, but first to those in Damascus and Jerusalem – also in the whole land of Judea and among the Gentiles I preached that they should repent and turn to God and do works worthy of repentance. Because of these things the Jews having laid hold of me in the temple were trying to slay me. Therefore (*because of obedience*) obtaining reinforcement **ἐπικουρία** – that from **God**, I have stood my ground as a witness to small and great – saying nothing except what the prophets and Moses prophesied would come. Here Paul speaks with especially strong emotion as is shown by his use of **εἰ** for when “if” is used in a highly charged emotional statement it becomes “that”. So we read “That **Christ** should suffer and that He should be first to rise from the dead and proclaim light is come to the nation and the world”

10. PAUL IN ROME IN A HIRED HOUSE DECLARES THE TRIUNE FAITH ACTS 28 23FF

They left without agreement (Greek ἀπολυω..αὐσυμφωνοι..) among themselves with Paul speaking one historic word. “**The Holy Spirit** spoke once for all beautifully through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, ‘March to this people and proclaim, ‘Hearing you will hear and not put it all together; seeing you will see and not behold. For the heart of this people has been clotted/enlarged and they are hard of hearing and they have closed their eyes i.e. dropping off to sleep – deadly sleep! (*Again Paul’s ironic humour closes the evening session with this wake up call to sleepy Jews*) Lest they should behold and hear and understand and be converted and I should heal them.” The condition stems not from age but from an unwillingness to look and listen and so the other inner faculties of conscience & emotion remain unmoved and understanding is impaired. Therefore let it be clear and understood by you, that the salvation of **God** is sent to the Gentiles and they will hear. As he spoke these things the Jews left leaving with a lot of searching among themselves. But Paul was a whole two year period in his own rented accommodation and received all who came to him, heralding the kingdom of God and teaching the things of **the Lord Jesus Christ** with all.

(D) THE EXPLICIT TEACHING OF THE EPISTLES OF PAUL ROMANS

1. ROMANS 1.4 & 7

Paul opens his letter with a crystal clear “trinity” statement “*The gospel regarding His(God’s)Son who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by His resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord*”.(Peterson has it “*His descent from David roots him in history; his unique identity as Son of God was shown by the Spirit when Jesus was raised from the dead, setting him apart as the Messiah, our Master*”).

That **spirit of holiness** endued Christ who began to pull down Satan’s kingdom; *the apostles’* continued this task, in which Roman Christians, called to holiness, played an increasing role. The introduction is rounded off in the blessing of our Melchisadek in v.7. Paul writes, **Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the LORD Jesus Christ.**

2. ROMANS 8 14-17

In this one of the greatest chapters of scripture Paul makes reference to the working Trinity in the first paragraph; a second in the third paragraph and this third reference in the fifth paragraph thus winding his truth about holiness around the holiness of God Himself. Let me from this point quote Peterson's version *"This resurrection life you received from **God** is not a timid, grave-tending life. Its adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike "What's next, Papa?" **God's Spirit** touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are : Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us-an unbelievable inheritance! We go through exactly what **Christ** goes through. If we go through hard times with him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with him!*

Being "led" in a love relationship to Christ means sharing His future as Heirs. This conscious experience began with "Abba Father" v.15 **When a person is converted the soul first senses its riches – its privilege – its adoption and destiny!** We live repentant lives – that is what mortification means – cf. v.29 "conforming more to His likeness as the days go by. As Christ "led by the Spirit" into the wilderness overcame we will be enabled to be victors by faith. The world "groans" because of decay & seduction and we groan expectant of the rapture and the Spirit of God 'groans' [*Greek στεναζω – to sigh over 'others' plight' or 'for lack of food' or 'evil things'*] for mercy – which Christ takes further following Gods ground plan as He 'intercedes' [*Greek ευτυχανω – meaning to come to assist 'when the bridge is broken'*] When "we do not appear on the landing place" reaching out to the Lord then the Spirit of God is straitened. He keeps the plan on the road before God [*Greek κατα θεος*]; v27 so that what *Matthew Henry* calls the **4 golden links** are not broken i.e. "we grow into the image of Christ" from (a) predestinated plan to (b) sinners called to be sons(c) believers justified from all things and (d) saints ready for glory in the great 'redemption'

3. ROMANS 9 1-5

I will quote from "The Message" (Because Dr. Eugene Peterson's version-which allows 500 verses to be used freely- reads easily and lacks nothing relevant to my purpose) *"You need to know that I carry with me at all times a huge sorrow. It's an enormous pain deep within me, and I'm never free of it. I'm not exaggerating-**Christ and the Holy Spirit** are my witnesses. It's the Israelites...If there were any way I could be cursed by the Messiah so they could be blessed by him, I'd do it in a minute. They're my family. I grew up with them. They had everything going for them-family, glory, covenants, revelation, worship, promises, to say nothing of being the race that produced the Messiah, the Christ, who is **God over everything**, always, Oh, Yes!"* This statement as made by Paul is of huge importance because it is made within the context of speaking about the Jews who in the Shema confess "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" which the New NIV footnote offers also as "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone."

4. ROMANS 10.9 (with 1 Cor12.3)

*"This is the core of my preaching. Say the welcoming word- "**Jesus is my Master**"- embracing , body and soul, **God's** work of doing in us what he did in raising Jesus*

from the dead” with “You know perfectly well that the Spirit of God would never prompt anyone to say “Jesus be damned!” Nor would anyone be inclined to say “Jesus is Master!” without the insight of **the Holy Spirit**”.

5. ROMANS 14.17

At this point I have to depart from *Eugene Peterson* because he omits what is vital –so I quote the 2010 NIV “The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” *The Kingdom of God is not fully described without the **righteousness of Christ**, the **peace of God** and the **joy of the Holy Ghost**.*

6. ROMANS 15.17-19

Again to quote the 2010 NIV we read “I glory in **Christ Jesus** in my service to **God**. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey **God** by what I have said and done-by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of **the Holy Spirit of God**”.

7. ROMANS 15.30

“I have one request, dear friends: Pray for me. Pray strenuously with and for me-to **God the Father**, through the power of our Master Jesus, through **the love of the Spirit**-that I will be delivered from (the lion’s den of rather unwelcome addition) **unbelievers in Judea**.” Prayer is an area of relationship to God that always involves the Triune membership as it entails calling n Abba and invoking the merit of Christ and depending on the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit who energises our feeble requests. Every time we pray or see believers in prayer the triune God is dynamically engaged.

FIRST CORINTHIANS

1. 1 CORINTHIANS 2 7-10FF

“We declare God’s wisdom...these are the things God has revealed to us by His Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God”(2010 NIV) Paul argues that revelation discloses the thoughts of God and that revelation is enabled by the Holy Spirit. **Scriptural revelation of Christ is not possible without the Trinity**

2. 1 CORINTHIANS 3 11-16

“No-one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is **Jesus Christ**...Don’t you know that you yourselves are **God’s temple** and that **God’s Spirit** dwells in your midst?” When the apostle speaks of the church and its foundational nature he speaks of the “Church of God”-God’s temple-God’s building- for in its construction the triune God is fully exercised. **The church cannot exist without the trinity not just as an idea but as a reality**

3. 1 CORINTHIANS 6.15-19

The apostle in speaking of the holiness of the body of the Christian again invokes the Trinity for The beauty of God’s holiness, likeness to Christ and the indwelling of the

Holy Spirit are of one piece in creating the holy walk. (15) *“Do you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ himself?”* (19) *“Do you not know that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you received from God?”*

Holiness is not possible without the trinity

4. 1 CORINTHIANS 8.4-7

This passage on idolatry is not strictly Trinitarian but has relevance for the unity of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ. It reads *We know “**There is no God but one**” for us there is but one God, **the Father**, from whom all things came and for whom we live and there is but one Lord, **Jesus Christ**, through whom all things came and through whom we live. But not everyone possesses this knowledge.*” **Knowledge of God is not possible without the trinity.**

5. 1 CORINTHIANS 12. 4, 5, 6.

Paul shows that the Spirit distributes gifts as He determines; the Son uses gifts for God’s glory and our profit and the Father is operating or energising the work.

“(4)There are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit distributes them” “(5)There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord”. “(6) There are different kinds of working or energising, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work”.

A gifted ministering Christian Church is not possible without the triune God

6. 1 CORINTHIANS 14.36-37

The sovereignty of the triune God in outreach is put plainly by Paul.

*Did the word of **God** originate with you? Or are you the only people it reached? If anyone things they are a prophet or otherwise gifted by **the Spirit**, let them acknowledge that what I am writing to you is by **the Lord’s** command.*” **Reaching the world is not possible without the triune God**

7. 1 CORINTHIANS 15.15

“...We have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead.” Jesus also said *“I have power to lay down my life and power to take it up again”* But Paul additionally argues that *“If the Spirit of Him who raised up Christ dwells in you then He who raised up Christ from the dead(God) will enliven your bodies which are liable to death through his Spirit that indwells you”.* Thus the indwelling Holy Ghost is also vital to Resurrection. **Resurrection is not possible without the work of the Triune God.**

SECOND CORINTHIANS

1. 2 CORINTHIANS 3.3

“You are making plain that you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on flat tomb like stones(πλαζι) but on the flat tomb-like stone of fleshly hearts” Paul is saying that their old life has upon it an inscription through his ministry that they are converted. They are going around with the end of the past written all over them, This is only possible by the work of the triune God and the believers are also like a “letter” to everyone they meet telling of what Christ can do.

2. 2 CORINTHIANS 5.1-5,10

*"For We know that if the earthly house of this tent should have been destroyed, we have or hold a building from God not formed by hands –eternal in the heavens. For in this(earthly body) we also are groaning(στεναζομεν cf. Romans 8.22)desiring greatly to put on over us as an outer garment- our delightful fixed dwelling place (οικητηριον)which is that out of heaven."... "(5)But the one who has wrought (as a workman cutting and polishing stone)us towards this same is **God**, who has given us the down payment of **the Spirit**...(10)"For the whole lot of us must essentially appear before the **Bema of Christ** that each may carry off a benefit or acknowledge the debt (κομιζω) of the things he or she has done through the body-be it either good or a paucity."*

3. 2 CORINTHIANS 13.14

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the intimate intercourse of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen". Paul desires the Corinthians to manifest grace and love and a walk that is in step with the Holy Spirit.

THE EPISTLE OF THE GALATIANS

1. GALATIANS 3. 1-6

*"O foolish Galatians, who has cast a spell on you that you should not have confidence in the truth, to whom in front of your very eyes **Jesus Christ** has been advertised as by public notice as having been crucified. This one matter I wish to learn from you 'Did you receive the **Spirit** from works of law or from hearing or obedience of faith? Are you so mindless? Having begun in **the Spirit** are you now paying everything off or doing religion in the flesh? Have you suffered as you have in vain? Or is it (the suffering-yours and His) also in vain? Therefore He who additionally supplies the **Holy Spirit** to you and works mighty deeds among you, is it from works of law or from obedience of faith? Abraham alike believed **God** and it was counted to him for righteousness. Surely you know that they who are from faith-these are the sons of Abraham. For scripture foreknew that **God** would justify the nations from faith" Paul desired the Galatians to see the work of God in Christ sending His Spirit as one work of one God three in one.*

2. GALATIANS 4 4-6

*"But when the set time had fully come, **God** sent **His Son**, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to son-ship, Because you are his sons, God sent **the Spirit** of his Son into our hearts, the spirit who calls out, "**Abba**", **Father**." Paul further apprises the Galatians of the special relationship Christ introduces –namely "Son-ship".*

3. GALATIANS 6 2 & 7-8

*"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fill up **the law of Christ**...Do not be deceived: **God** cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction, whoever sows to please the Spirit, from **the Spirit** will reap eternal life".* Paul shows the perfect linkage of Christ's brotherly love, the Spirit's fruit and the Father's approval.

THE EPHESIAN EPISTLE

1. EPHESIANS 1 13-14

*"You were chosen...to the praise of His glory-you who first hoped in **Christ**, in whose circle you all have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whose circle having believed you were sealed with the **Holy Spirit** of promise who is the earnest of the inheritance leading towards the redemption of the acquired or purchased possession to the praise of **His(God's)** glory."*

2. EPHESIANS 2 17-18

*"**He (Christ)** came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to **the Father** by **one Spirit**."*

Paul speaks of Christ as reaching Galatia and just as in the form of a man from Macedonia the Lord was (Paul assuredly Gathered that "God had called" in the form of this sweet figure) there first so He was there first in Galatia.

3. EPHESIANS 3 2,5-6

*"Surely you have heard of the economy(or household arrangements) of **God's** grace that was given to me for you...which was not made known to people in different generations as it has now been revealed to God's holy apostles and prophets in the circle of **the Spirit**. This mystery is that **through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with the same body life and the same fellowship participation of His promise in Christ**." This passage brings the Gentile world under the promises of Christ –not precisely those to Israel-but in any future disposition of the promises to David the Gentiles who believe will participate. This has far-reaching implications*

4. EPHESIANS 3 14-17

*"For this reason I bow my knees before **the Father** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, from whom the Father's whole family in heaven and earth takes its name, that he would give you –in accordance with the riches of His glory to have been strengthened as prevailers by power (increasing capacity) through **his Spirit** in your inner man, that **Christ** should settle in as governor in your hearts through faith." Paul's prayer is for "victory" in Ephesian lives-the capacity to rise to all new challenges not so much in the outer world but the heart-which God would hold and cleanse and bring to joyful confidence.-filled with love and energised by the fullness of the Holy Spirit.*

5 EPHESIANS 4 3-6

*"Study and be quick to keep the oneness of **the Spirit** in the mutual bond of peace-one body one Spirit- just as you have been called in one hope of your calling. There is one **Lord**, one faith, one baptism, one **God and Father** of all who is over all and through all and in you all." Paul has eight singularities which emphasise the unity of the godhead and the unity of the church yet allow for the diversity of the ministry of the member of the Christian body as for the members of the trinity. MEMBERSHIP appears to be an parallel unequalled in felicity to use in the context of the Trinity.*

6. EPHESIANS 4 30-32

*“Do not grieve the **Holy Spirit** of God in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Bear away as rubbish(αρθητω) of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be Christly kind and with heartfelt compassion continue swiftly gracious to one another just as **God in Christ** has been very gracious (χαριζω) to you.”* Paul appeals for the Charity of speedy resolutions and first approaches to help and heal and encourage.

7. EPHESIANS 5.18-20

*“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery, instead, **be filled with the Spirit, speaking** to one another in psalms hymns and spiritual songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to **God the Father** for everything, in the name of **our Lord Jesus Christ**.”* These are the words of an apostle to whom it is second nature to be “inclusivist” of the three “members” of the Trinity in the unapproachable light of deity.

8. EPHESIANS 6 10 & 17

For the rest, my brothers, be inwardly strengthened in the circle of the Lord and in the mighty grip of His strength. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **active word** of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions through every vow of prayer and request continue praying in every time-frame in the Spirit. of prayers and requests.

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS

1. PHILIPPIANS 1.2 & 18B-19

*Grace to you and peace from **God our Father** and our Lord Jesus Christ. For what (of it)? Above or apart from each method, whether in ostentatious superficiality or a shifting changeable manner (**prophasis**) or in truth Christ is preached as victor. And in this I rejoice and will rejoice. For I know from watching it that this will prove or go out tentatively (disembarking gingerly) from me through your prayer and **the continuous provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ** for salvation.”* The 2011 Biblica NIV adds “God’s provision” to the Spirit which most intimately links the Spirit with Jesus and the Father and this is seen in prayer itself where the Son is the medium of approach and the Spirit the provision that issues and the Father the Almighty origin of Loving care.

2. PHILIPPIANS 1.27-30

*“Only be citizens worthy of the gospel-that whether I am coming and looking at you or whether I am away, I will hear of the affairs that surround you –that you stand in one **Spirit**, as athletes contesting with one soul and mind for the faith of the gospel and not alarmed in anything by those who are placed against you- which is an exhibition or indictment to them that they will be vanquished (in the contest) but of your salvation and this **from God**. For you have been favoured not only to believe in **Christ** but also to suffer for His name having this same agonising contest that you see in me and now hear to centre in me.”* Paul stirs the believers in Philippi to assurance about the victory

of the faith and galvanises them to a unity with him which reflects the triune membership of God's own being.

3. PHILIPPIANS 2:1 & 5-8

If there is anything as drawing alongside in Christ, if there is any softening of love, if any common care of the Spirit, if there is any deep feelings that go out sacrificially and sense of pity or sorrow fulfil my joy that you be of like (humble) mind having the same love... For you must have this mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus-who being beyond beginning in the form (MORPHE) OF God, thought it not plunder to be snatched to be equal with God-but He poured out of Himself (KENOO expended to the point of destitution), taking the form of a servant, becoming or being born in the likeness of men, and having been found in the appearance (SCHEMA) as man, He humbled Himself becoming obedient to death even that of the cross." Paul carefully threads us through the incarnation maintaining the deity of Christ whilst discovering the wonderful humility of God. If God is love He must be free of pride. This was utterly demonstrated in Christ's life and death and continued manhood yet is there no declining membership in the triune majesty of God.

4. PHILIPPIANS 3:3

For we are "the" circumcision who serve God with our all in the Spirit and make our boast in Christ Jesus and have not placed our trust in the flesh. Paul is speaking of that work in the heart of the Christian which applies the blood of Christ, brings the peace of God and is marked by the seal of the Spirit. We have the MARK of separated ones.

THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS

1. COLOSSIANS 1:9B-10

We continually ask that you will be filled with the knowledge that conveys (EPIGNOSIS) His will in all wisdom and understanding (SUNIESIS-NT for "getting it together") belonging to the Spirit, conducting your life worthy of the Lord to all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing towards that capacity of knowledge of God that teaches. (EPIGNOSIS)" Paul is speaking of a "competence" that comes of the Spirit's work in his fullness in the heart-reflecting the "divine nature" in the life of Christ.

2. COLOSSIANS 3: 15-16

And let the peace of God arbitrate or become umpire in your hearts, to which peace you were called in one body and be thankful people. Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom teaching and nurturing yourselves in mind and heart with psalms hymns and Spirit inspired odes singing with joy in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever it is you do, in word or action, do everything in the circle of the name Jesus is Lord, rejoicing in God the Father through Him. The praise of God is to be uttered in the words David sang-however translated or adapted. This is a true guide to the composition of divine praise for all who would author Christian music. "Jesus is Lord" is to be at the centre of our life and of our worship. This promotes our joy in the relationship with God as our Father from whom such peace as we have comes.

Jesus is Lord ! creation's voice proclaims it
For by His power each tree and flower was planned and made.
Jesus is Lord! The universe declares it;
Sun moon and stars in heaven cry: Jesus is Lord!
Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Lord!
Praise Him with "Hallelujahs"
For Jesus is Lord!

THE LETTERS TO THE THESSALONIANS

1. 1 THESS 1.4-6

"Knowing, beloved brothers and sisters, your commission and choice(EKLOGE) is by God for our gospel did not come to you in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit, and in full assurance(literally "full measure" or a "full cart")as you know what we had been among you on your account, and you became mimics of us and of the Lord." Paul tells the new church in Europe that they got the full message and the apostle and his team sought to provide with it the Christian model. They got the doctrine of God and of Christ and the Spirit from Paul's teaching.

2. 1 THESS 5.16-19

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing leaving off throughout your prayer vow, In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ `Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit, do not set prophesy at naught, test everything!" The young church is being reminded as Paul closes his letter from Athens that the Holy Spirit continues to speak to us as we keep daily and minute by minute in touch with God.

3. 2 THESS 2 13b-14

"God won and carried you off or raised you(AIREOMAI)from the beginning for salvation in the Holy Spirit and by faith of truth into which He called you through our gospel to secure and possess you –the expectation or glory of our Lord Jesus Christ . Paul's imagery appears to be that of a bride which the Lord won and will keep for He looks to her full beauty when He comes.

PAUL'S PASTORAL LETTERS TO TIMOTHY & TITUS

1. 1 TIMOTHY 1.17 & 3.16 & 6.15-16

"To the king of the aeons immortal invisible the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen" "God has appeared in flesh, has been justified in the circle of the Spirit, seen of angels, preached among nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory." ... King of kings, Lord of lords, the only one having deathless life, light dwelling beyond approach, whom no man is able to see, to whom be eternal honour and power ." Paul as he writes to Timothy sets out most plainly the triune relationship and maintains the deity of Christ alongside his humanity.

2. 2 TIMOTHY 1.6-9

On this account I remind you to stir up the charisma of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands. For **God** did not give us the **Spirit** of fear but of power and love

and spiritual wisdom. Do not therefore be ashamed of the *witness of our Lord Jesus* nor of me His bond slave but join me in suffering ill for the gospel according to the power of God *who saved us and has called us with a holy calling* not according to our works but according to His own purpose notice or calculation and grace provided for us *in Christ Jesus* before the ages of time.

3. 2 TIMOTHY 1.13-14

That pattern or outline of sound teaching which you have heard from us, with faith and love that is in *Christ Jesus*. Guard the lovely foundation placed alongside you by means of *the Holy Spirit* who dwells within us.

4. TITUS 3 4-6

But when *Christ-like kindness* and friendly clemency or benevolence (PHILANTHROPIA) of *God our Saviour* appeared, not from works in righteousness that we had accomplished, but according to his mercy He saved us through the laver of the new birth and the *renewal of the Holy Ghost* which He poured out upon us richly through *Jesus Christ our Saviour*, that justified by the grace of that man we should become inheritors in accordance with the hope of eternal life.

TRINITARIAN REFERENCES ENUMERATED

In **Matthew** there are 7

In **Mark** there are 2 namely 1.10-11 & 3.29-34

In **Luke** we find 5 namely 1.35, 1.41-43, 1.67-69, 2.25-26 & 4.38

In **John** there are 10

In **Acts** 10

In **Paul's writings** 41 (Rom7 1Cor7, 2 Cor3, Gal3, Eph8, Phil4, Col2 Thess3, Tim-Tit 4

Within the remaining NT books **Hebrews to Jude** there are 12 additional references namely Hebrews 2 3b-4, 9.14, 10.12-15; James 4 5-10. 1Peter 1 3,10-12; 4.14.

2 Peter 1.17-20; 1 John3 23-24, 4.1-2, 4 13-14, 5.7-9.

Then in the **Apocalypse** there are 12 more: Rev. 1 8-10, 2.7with 28&11, 2.12& 17, 2.18 with 27&29, 3.1, 3.7 with 12 & 13, 3.14 &22, 4.2 with 5 & 7, 14.12-14, 19 9-10, 22 16-18 –making **99 at least**-and I'm fairly certain I have missed one!

The tremendous effect of these references is that God is immanent among His people throughout the New Testament and especially so at the time of the incarnation and subsequent to Pentecost in the life of the early Church.

CHAPTER 5

(HISTORICAL THEOLOGY)

THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

COUNCILS, HERESY AND COMPLEXITY

"Christianity Today" in April 1997 carried an article by *Christopher Hall* entitled "Adding up the Trinity" in which there appeared a quote from *Gregory of Nyssa* that ran as follows "If you ask for change (from the banker) someone

philosophizes to you on the begotten and the un-begotten. If you asks the price of bread you're told the Father is greater and the Son inferior. If you ask is the bath ready, someone answers "the Son was created from nothing". The article then quotes *Kierkegaard* as saying "The doctrine of the Trinity provides nothing, absolutely nothing of practical value. The distinction of persons be it three or ten offers absolutely no guidance for conduct." *Dr. Tom Torrance* insists that "it is precisely the doctrine of the Trinity that prevents us from separating the loving work of the Son from the Father or the Holy Spirit."

As we turn to the church fathers it has to be said that their writings appear very clinical and **sophistry abounds** in the technical language not least because the church thought in Greek in the early centuries but more often because **sharp disputation between bishops was widespread** in particular on the doctrine of God and Christ and great conference like councils met to hammer out the fine balance between heresy and orthodoxy. Such councils were NICEA 325 *Arianism*, 787 *against icon smashers* CONSTANTINOPLE 381, 553, 680, *I against Apollinarianism*, *II against "the 3 chapters (the work of three Nestorian theologians)"*, *III against monothelism* EPHESUS 431 *against Nestorianism & Pelagianism* CHALCEDON 481 *against Apollinarianism, Nestorianism & Eutychianism*. It is hard to avoid the impression that there is very little exercise of mind about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit of God in this period and maybe there is a correlative between that want of attention and the lack of anointed ministry in the church.

The best that can be said beyond this early philosophical approach is that **God who relates** and is **immanent** among His own as the writings of prophets and apostles attest is **the economic Trinity**. This was put well by *Jonathan Edwards* in his expression of the Trinity as "a sharing in divine love".

APOSTLES CREED

The creed we know as "**The Apostles' Creed**" was given to *Julius bishop of Rome* by Marcellus the exiled bishop of Ancrya whose position was challenged by Arianism and found himself in Rome and the residence at Rome was circa 340. About 400 A.D. The creed reads "*I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ hi only Sp our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell: The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into beaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost...*" The papal library has reference to another symbol (the Creed of Aquileia) which a priest of that province compared it to the one now used as a baptismal creed in Rome and argues that it (*Marcellus' creed*) had been the rule of faith of the Apostles at Jerusalem. The weakness is there are no historical links over 300 years, the strength is that vital doctrine including the doctrine of God is preserved in these creeds.

EUSEBIUS' CREED

The Eusebian Nicene Creed of 325 states "*We believe in one God, the Father All sovereign, the maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, Son only-begotten, Firstborn of all creation, begotten of the Father before all ages, through whom also all things were made; who was made flesh for our salvation and lived among men, and suffered, and rose again on the third day, and ascended to the Father, and shall come*

again in glory to judge the living and dead; we believe also in one Holy Spirit.” This creed was composed by **Eusebius** bishop of Caesarea and Church Historian. Its teaching on Christ was modified to counter Arianism.

MODIFIED CREED OF NICEA

That section of the **Creed of Nicea** reads *“We believe...in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father, through whom all things were made, things in heaven and things on the earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, and became man, suffered, and rose on the third day, ascended into the heavens, is coming to judge living and dead.”*

NICENE OR CHALCEDONIAN CREED

As if this were not complex enough The Nicene Creed arrives from an extract of the lecture notes of **Cyril of Jerusalem** dated 374 A.D. and is approved by 318 fathers met at Nicea and 150 who met later at Constantinople and finally read and approved at Chalcedon 451 A.D. Thus the Chalcedonian Creed is virtually the Nicene Creed with an important statement about the gift of the Holy Spirit as being “from Father and Son” (The filioque clause) added.. It reads *“We believe in one God the Father All-sovereign, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all the ages, Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of one substance (homousios) with the Father, through whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from the heavens, and was made flesh of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man, and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures, and ascended into the heavens, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and cometh again with glory to judge living and dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end: and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and the Life-giver, that proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and Son is worshipped together and glorified together, who spake through the prophets.”*

ATHANASIUS ON TRINITY AND UNITY OF THE GODHEAD

Henry Bettenson in “Documents of the early church” (**World’s Classics Oxford Univ. Press 1959**) refers to a letter of rebuke by **Athanasius** to Dionysius of Alexandria who came close to Tri-theism when engaging with Sabellianism. He was in danger of setting forth three gods in place of one with three faces. The relevant passage reads *“The Divine Word must of necessity be united to the God of the Universe, and the Holy Spirit must have his habitation and abode in God; thus it is absolutely necessary that the Divine Triad be summed up and gathered into a unity, brought as it were to an apex, and by that unity I mean the all sovereign God of the universe...Equally to be censured are they who hold that the Son is a work (cf. Arius) and think that the Lord came into being, whereas the Divine Oracles testify to a generation fitting and becoming to him, but not to any fashioning or making...for if he came to be a Son, there was when he was not; but he was always, if, that is, he is in the Father, as he himself says, and if the Christ is Word and Wisdom and Power, as you know, the Divine Scriptures say he is, and if these are attributes of God. For if the Son came into being there was when these attributes were not; which is most absurd...Neither then must we divide into three deities the wonderful and divine Monad: not hinder the dignity and exceeding majesty of the Lord by describing him as “a work”. But we must believe in God the Father all sovereign, and in Jesus Christ his Son and in the Holy Spirit, and hold that the Word is united to the God of the universe.*

For “I” says he. “and the Father are one” and “I in the Father and the Father in me” For thus both the Holy Triad and the holy preaching of the Monarchy will be preserved.”

THE ATHANASIAN CREED

There can be no dispute but that *Athanasius* was the champion of the faith and known in his time for his courage and clarity as “Athanasius against the world”(for his stand against Arianism and other heresies) . As a young man he wrote “On the Incarnation of the Word” in which he said “*The Word, who is above all, offered his own temple and bodily instrument as a ransom for all, and paid their debt through his death. Thus the incorruptible Son of God, being united with humanity by likeness to them naturally clothed all humanity with incorruption, according to the promise of the resurrection*”.(We have to understand that Athanasius speaks of the benefits of the death of Christ as coming to those “like him” who receive “his birth”).

The relevant section of the ATHANASIAN Creed reads “*We worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; Neither confounding the Persons; nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal. Alike uncreate, incomprehensible, eternal. Yet there are not three Eternals, Incomprehensibles or Almightyies or Gods but One God and one Lord. The Father is of none. The Son is of the Father alone begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son proceeding. In this Trinity none is afore, or after other; none is greater, or less than another. He that will be saved must thus think Trinity. Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Man-one Christ not by confusion of Substance(i.e two distinct natures); but by unity of Person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ; Who suffered for our salvation...*” The glory of Athanasius is that he is able to comprehend in his teaching and creed in amazing short compass the essential quintessence of long convoluted thought that had gone before in the statements orthodox councils and bishops. All Christian history stands in his debt.

CHAPTER 6 (HISTORICAL THEOLOGY) THE MEDIEVAL SCHOLASTICS THOMIST THEOLOGY

Before entering the medieval world proper one has two facts to present that are of scholarly interest. First, the labours of two sisters born at Irvine-the misses *Agnes and Margaret Smith*(afterward Agnes Lewis & Margaret Gibson) –in the Sinai desert and St Catherine’s monastery led to the discovery that a Christian Arab apology for Christianity written in 750AD (Mohammed was born 570AD and received his first “divine” revelation at 40 i.e. 610AD-after death of *Khadiga* 619 at Medinah the Muslim era began in 622 and the prophet died 632) has included a treatise “On the Nature of the Triune God”. The second notable fact is that one of the important influences on the thinking of Thomas Aquinas was that of the Rembam, *Moses Maimonides*.(fl 1200’s) on Aquinas-both men were admirers of the Aristotelian method.

There are two significant books coming respectively from the eleventh and thirteenth century which make compulsory reading even today. They are *Anselm’s* “*Cur Deus*

homo?” and *Thomas Aquinas’ “Summa Theologica”* The first majors on “the atonement and the second on “the Incarnation”.

Anselm (1033-1109) established the “ransom theory” first set out by Irenaeus of Lyons circa 180. It is **Irenaeus**, incidentally, that shows us that just as Jesus passed through infancy childhood boyhood youth and into manhood He sanctifies each stage (cf. I John) being Himself a model of affection righteousness and obedience. Irenaeus shows that Christ the true man redeemed **us by His own blood and gave Himself a ransom** for those who have been led into captivity. This he deemed a sacrifice in the setting of divine justice not alone *giving His life for ours but bringing down God to men through the Spirit while raising man to God through the incarnation*. Thus the trinity is seen as active in redemption. Later circa 400 AD **Gregory of Nyssa** developed the heretical idea that the incarnation of the Son of God deceived Satan and the death of Christ was a bait that completely wrong-footed the devil. **Gregory of Nazianzus** (fl 380) called this a “Monstrous thought” though even **Augustine** (354-430) used it and called it “the mousetrap idea”. From this utter nonsense we were delivered by the wise Anselm.

COUNCIL OF TOLEDO

In 675 this 11th council met in the Spanish city of Toledo. It declared that whereas the Son is begotten the Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son and is like the Son of one nature and substance with the Father. “Yet He is called the Spirit not of the Father alone nor of the Son alone but of both the Father and the Son. For He does not proceed from the Father to the Son, nor from the Son to sanctify creatures, but He is shown to have proceeded from both at once, because He is known as the love or the holiness of both. *Toledo defined the use of “God” as representing the unity but not the tri-unity of relationship*. This latter definition of “God” as referring to “one substance” is hardly as flexible as the original Hebrew terms “ELOHIM ADONAI.

ANSELM (PLATONIC IN THOUGHT PATTERNS)

Anselm called his verdict on the atonement “the satisfaction theory” and this position still holds sway today. Anselm argues that not to punish sin is to remit it uncorrected and to treat the sinful and the sinless alike, constituting injustice. Anselm argues further that there is nothing in all creation that counterbalances “disobedience to God’s stated will” so something greater than what is in the world must satisfy the demands of His righteousness. The only answer to the search for a ransom greater than creation itself is God Himself. Then the second consideration enters: if the kingdom of heaven must be completed by man being admitted there but if God only can and man only ought to make such satisfaction as opens the kingdom to man the sinner the One who makes such satisfaction must be both God and (perfect) man. None other than Christ is such and no other is needful. Besides as the Hebrew writer says “He must have something to offer great than all that is below God or created and He must give voluntarily. But since Christ was in no way bound to suffer death for He never sinned and because He offered so great a gift as His life to God that ought not to be without reward –but He needed no reward nor craved any gift but because he was willing to make over the claim he had on God to man we receive pardon and God receives us to the joy and fellowship of His kingdom. It

is as if the Father says “Receive my only Son and offer Him for thyself” while the Son says “Take me and redeem yourself?”

This theory is fine as far as it goes but it makes no reference to the **Holy Spirit of God**. We do have to factor in the fact that Christ “**through the eternal Spirit** offered Himself to unblemished to God”(Hebrews 9.14) in order that our consciences might be cleansed and we might (in the power of the Spirit) serve the living God. Thus the will of God has both a mediator and a guarantor or trustee. The benefit that is Christ’s reward is redeemed humanity and the regeneration and sanctification of that new humanity is the **work of the Holy Spirit**.

RICHARD OF ST VICTOR circa 1250

Whereas *Augustine* chose to expound the Trinity by allusion to the inner working he observed in the human mind. Richard by contrast, chose to expound the glory of the sharing or social love of the triune God. He said “If there were but one person in the divinity there would be none with whom to share the riches of his greatness. The fullness of goodness does not permit the supremely good One to keep riches for himself. On account of the greatness of his honour he rejoices at sharing his riches. If he is of such great power that nothing is impossible for him and of such great happiness that nothing is difficult for him, then it is necessary to acknowledge that a Trinity of divine persons must exist.” The argument has no logical necessity but has of course social necessity on the basics of ethics.

AQUINAS (ARISTOTELIAN IN THOUGHT PATTERN)

(1) *Aquinas* puts the falsetto statement in place like a theological clay pigeon to shoot down saying that had it not been for the fall there would have been no incarnation. (2) He quotes Augustine *Of the Trinity* had saying “He(God the highest good) joins created nature to himself so that one person comes into being from three constituents, the Word, the Spirit, and the flesh” and Aquinas adds “That was fitting”. (3) Aquinas then places another clay pigeon to shoot down stating that the incarnate Word of God gained no virtue by assuming flesh and might have repaired human nature without assuming flesh. (4) Aquinas goes further to place another clay pigeon urging that God should not expect more from man than he can give. Then (5) he adds a third heretical clay pigeon notion that for Christ to become man reduces or ruins man’s reverence for God.

There Aquinas halts, turns about and insists that **man needs to be delivered from perdition**. He sees John 3.16 and the giving of the Son of God to death as **essential on that account**..

The fallacy that Aquinas sets up to knock down, namely that **God could have restored man through His omnipotence** is of course disannulled by the question in the garden of Gethsemane “Father take this cup from me nevertheless not my will but thine be done!”

THE MOUSETRAP THEORY OF AUGUSTINE

Augustine for his part ends up consenting to the incarnation and the cross simply as a “demonstration of love” and believed that God could have saved man another way. Augustine says the Son of God established “the faith” and took on manhood that man should walk towards faith with more assurance. He thinks God became man as an example-that we might know whom we are following. He became man

to confer full divinity and to enable man to reckon the devil is not his superior. Augustine believed that the incarnation alone dealt with the presumption that "the grace of God could be conferred without previous merits on our part." Why then, we might ask Augustine did Christ die? He would reply "That the devil should be overcome"(His mousetrap theory).

AQUINAS' CONCLUSION

Aquinas continues to establish the truth saying that sin against God has about it "infinity" because of the majesty against whom it is perpetrated. Hence worthy **satisfaction** must have **infinite efficacy** or be the Act of **God**. Aquinas then turns his earlier proposition on its head showing that increased knowledge of God in Christ the man really increased not diminishes reverence for God. Aquinas simply points out from scripture that without sin there would have been no incarnation for indeed Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He gave Himself for us the just for the unjust to bring us to God.

Aquinas then picks up another set of false ideas (1) that "satisfaction" could not be made by the cross since it was a "greater offence". Aquinas (2) sets up another false trail that Christ's satisfaction is smaller than the sins of the human race so the real satisfaction must lie in the "love and obedience offered to God" in His suffering, the worth of His divine life and because of the comprehensiveness and greatness of his sorrow and passion (1John2.2)

So did Christ save by his death? Aquinas replies "A sacrifice is that which pays homage by **propitiating**." As Christ's sacrifice was done to bring us into fellowship with God and was voluntary it was acceptable. His final reply is that Christ's death **freed man from the bondage of sin** and freed man **from servitude to the devil**. Second by incurring the penalty of the justice of God Christ's death made a sufficient and superabundant sacrifice for the human race, freeing us from the **penalty of the divine justice**.

We see in the propositions and counter statements of Aquinas how he thought of God the Father and Christ our redeemer but again he has little room and apparently no need for the Holy Spirit in his system of theology. Truth like that stated by God at the time of the flood "My spirit shall not always strive with man" and that of Stephen who spoke of the Spirit speaking through the prophets saying to the Jews "You do always resist the Holy Ghost" bring into relief the absolute need for more than simply stating Gods love or Gods will or even God's judgment. There was need for a redeemer and the propitiation of Christ. This to his credit Aquinas fully realised.

CHAPTER 7 (SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY) THE REFORMERS AND MODERN THEOLOGAINS

LUTHER

Therefore we cling to the Scriptures, those passages which testify of the Trinity of God, and we say: I know very well that in God there are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; but how they can be one I do not know, neither should I know it."

In this very context, **Luther** asserts that the first concern of a theologian is to be a "good textualist (bonus textualis)," which in turn begins with listening to and comprehending the word of God in faith.⁶⁶ Here again, the work of the Holy Spirit is pre-eminent, for finally only the Holy Spirit is able to create

listeners and such listeners and pupils have as their sole concern what God has revealed and commanded in the word, in baptism, and in the Lord's Supper. A good textualist, moreover, will adhere strictly (nude adhaerendum) to the word and truth of the Bible and will decline to argue from "philosophical reasons (rationibus philosophicis)" in such articles of faith. Luther applies this counsel to a consideration of the Trinity:

Luther's three most striking candidates are (1) *Speaker, Spoken Word, and listener* (2) *the Father as the one who wants to comfort, the Son who prays for the comforter, and the Spirit who is the comforter* and, admittedly in more scattered form (3) *the Promiser, the Promised One, and the one who points to, illumines, and glorifies the one promised.*' Such depictions, born not of rational reflection but of Gospel-informed exegesis, represent an evangelical Trinitarianism of the highest theological order. At their best, today's Trinitarian theologians express themselves in these kerygmatic terms (*D.Lumpp Concordia Theological quarterly*)

When Christ speaks of the Father, do not flutter about, do not run away, do not seek God in heaven while you ignore this Man Christ. Outside this Man Christ I must not search for God, and I will find no God. If I do find one, it will not be the true and the right God, but a wrathful one. Thus the Father draws us to the Son by His mouth, His doctrine, and His word. The doctrine passes from the Father through the Son, and at the same time He thereby draws us to the Son. And when you have Him, you are grasping the very Son of God; and then you see and grasp God' the Father Himself. The entire Holy Trinity is known in the Person of Christ. If we come to the Son, we are at the same time with the Father. He who sees the Person born of the Virgin Mary also sees the Son of God, for the Father places the Son's word and Person before you. This includes all, so that all comes to rest in that Person, lest anyone conceive of God otherwise. Whenever this Person speaks, whenever you hear the Son's word and voice, it is God the Father's voice that speaks and proclaims that the Son was sent into the world for you, suffered and died, etc. With this message He delights your heart and leads you only to Christ. He does not lead you beyond that; nor does the voice of the Father direct you elsewhere when He speaks through the Son." (*Sermon on John 6.46*)

CALVIN

In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, *John Calvin* wrote with deep insight into the doctrine of the Trinity. He dismissed as "an absurd fiction" (*Institutes XIII:29*) the scholastic teaching on the eternal generation of the Son. To him, the idea that the Father eternally generated the Son's divine essence was the worst kind of theological speculation. Instead, he proposed that "the Godhead is absolutely of itself [*autotheos*]. And hence also we hold that the Son, regarded as God, without reference to his person, is also of himself [*autotheos*]; though we also say that, regarded as Son, he is of the Father. Thus his essence is without beginning, while his person has its beginning in God". (*Institutes XIII:25*).

BB Warfield "In his assertion of the *autotheos* of the Son Calvin, then, was so far from supposing that he was enunciating a novelty that he was able to quote the Nicene Fathers themselves as asserting it "in so many words". (*Warfield "Calvin's doctrine of the Trinity"*)

KARL BARTH

My own BD work on *Karl Barth* in earlier years leads me to appreciate the comment of Bromiley and Torrance on the Trinity in his *Church Dogmatics* as "*undoubtedly the greatest treatise on the Trinity since the Reformation.*"

Let me cite a few considerations that come from Barth's work. Barth believed that the very distinctiveness of Christianity is constituted by this datum-hence he places the Trinity at the head of his masterpiece as utterly fundamental.

- (1) In his *Epistle to the Romans (London 1933)* he systematically demolished ready accommodation of Christianity to contemporary culture-a disjunction that many today are one hundred per cent in favour of diminishing. His dialectic borrowed from the philosophical approach of Kierkegaard led him to a theology of crisis or judgment and of paradox or co-existent realities of time and eternity which I call dimensions.
- (2) For Barth God's act in Jesus Christ is the exclusive source of spiritual knowledge and supremely inclusive for in Christ the Trinity of God is revealed along with the full potential of Christian doctrine. Trinity for Barth is *divine being in revealing action* throwing light on creation, reconciliation etc.
- (3) Barth's neo-orthodoxy appears in his "analogy of faith" which simply means we should talk not in terms of what may be deduced (a) *from scripture* or (b) *tradition* but (c) *from Christ* as our contemporary. He places "explication" or "unfolding" beyond "exposition". Thus kerugma is autonomous knowledge-a pure act of grace and divine will analogous to the incarnation itself. When we say "the word became flesh and dwelt among us" Barth believes we are saying that *all revelation* inheres in this "will of God and mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit". The only analogy of the Trinity is the Word of God(preached, written and revealed). The ultimate ground of revelation is "God revealing himself as Lord". The "triple one" voice of Father Son and Spirit speak in revelation Scripture and proclamation. Thus the Trinity creates its own evidence in the kerugma, the bible and church proclamation today.
- (4) As to the Trinitarian being of God Barth speaks of "ways of being" and Barth argues that "from creation past revelation and reconciliation to the redemption to come He who acts is the Father and Son and the Spirit"
Doctrine of the Trinity 2.6
- (5) The positive value of Barth's treatment is that the revelation of the trinity yields the creation of reality so joyfully our existence is "held by him and only him over the abyss of non-existence" *Church Dogmatics 1.1.446*
- (6) Barth sees the beginning in terms of the *ontological compression* of Trinity in Creatorhood and Fatherhood and history itself is posited on the history of God under which the natural order is extinguished and recreated in the Trinitarian abyss of being. God triune is *ultimate reality*. For Barth "we

cannot call God the Father without the Son and the Spirit, and we cannot call the Son Saviour or the Spirit Comforter without implying the Father in both cases.” **Church Dogmatics 1.1446**

- (7) Barth has re-unified the ”immanent”(God in himself) and “economic”(God in revelation) aspects of the Trinity in presenting God as inwardly and outwardly in a distinctively Trinitarian act which is indivisible through mutual appropriation both in Creation and Redemption and Judgment.

JURGEN MOLTSMANN

During wartime a young German airman was held in a Scottish prison and when his theological prowess was recognised top Scottish theologians visited and conversed with him. In the 1980’s this young man, *Jurgen Moltmann* had become professor of systematic at Tübingen and the premier systematic theologian of his time. In his *Theology of Hope* Moltmann persuades his constituency that eschatology provides the interpretative category for understanding the Christ event. He writes “*The eschatological is not one element of Christianity, but it is the medium of Christian faith as such, the key in which everything is set... There is therefore only one real problem in Christian theology... the problem of the future. The God spoken of is a God with “future as his essential nature”-the God who is always only before us who encounters us in his promises for the future. A proper theology would therefore have to be constructed in the light of its future goal. Eschatology should not be its end but its beginning.*” It is for this reason the doctrine of the Trinity as analysis of revelation must not stand at the beginning of systematic theology but rather eschatology- such is Moltmann’s contrast with Barth. ***Theology of Hope Page 16***

We have to think of our Lord Jesus as still awaiting His future, of the Spirit in connection with the forthcoming resurrection and of God who waits to be “all in all”. What we read in the bible is good-it is God triune at work-the economic Trinity-but it should not pronounce on how God is in Himself. This was an issue between Barth and Moltmann as indeed it must be. New Testament exegesis favours Barth. The danger is that Christ meantime becomes God’s deputy preparing for the eternal kingdom where the handing over of the kingdom to the Father is the consummation of obedience. Moltmann has categorised the relationship of Father and Son in love for sinners as a matter of “will” not “substance” so Jesus is one with the Father in “self-giving”. In the *Crucified God*” Jurgen speaks in patristic language ***The crucified God: God and the Trinity today Concilium 8.6***. Moltmann refines his “Death of God” idea in expounding what the cross means for God as “death in God”-an event within the relationship of the three persons, from which the meaning of God emerges. ***The crucified God London 1974 Page 207*** The cross is the saving event of God’s love because in it the love between the Father and Son spans the gulf that separates sinners from God. ***One God in Trinity Article by Richard Bauckham on Jurgen Moltmann*** God is love means God exists in love and constitutes his existence in the event of his love ***Crucifixion of God Page 244*** Richard Bauckham rightly observes that as to “Whether the trinitarian being of God from eternity could be said to be constituted by the temporal event of the cross” Moltmann is silent. **For my part the fact that God subjected all things in hope Romans 8.20 does not mean that his own nature was**

imperfect or in process. Moltmann believes that the history of the world events involves events between the persons of the Trinity that cannot leave the relationships between the persons of the triune God the same as before. The unity of God is defined as “community of will” which is what HOMOUSIOUS is then taken to mean. I am persuaded that there is “one will” by which the triune God moves in the plethora of historical events and that the imputation of the orthodox fathers of a second “permissive will” to God is neither an ethical nor ontological requirement in a holy good and righteous creator who hates nothing he has made and desires not the death of the sinner and takes ultimate steps in humiliation to defend us though in the last analysis in respect of the covenant of love He affirms the decisions of his creatures.

PROCESS THEOLOGY

This separate branch of theology has developed on the basis of the philosophy of *A.N.Whitehead, Process and Reality 1929*. Process theologians do not hold any distinction between general and special revelation and the “Jesus-event” as our Lord’s life and ministry is termed is central to Church life and theology. The Church works out her meaning in the secular context. For the process theologian just as the species evolve and weather patterns change so I am not what I was 10 years ago and not what I will be ten years hence. The keys are interdependence and interrelatedness. Each present occasion “grasps” the past. The past is not fully encompassed in the present and so, for example, Pentecostal and Lutheran experiences are very different with different historical experiences at their base. The theologian *Norman Pittenger* in *The Holy Spirit* (1974) notes the limited emphasis during the 20th century on the Holy Spirit as a “poor relation” it would seem of the Trinity. *Henri Bergson* *The two sources of morality & religion* said “A doctrine that is but a doctrine has a slim chance of creating enthusiasm illumination and faith that moves mountains” This position is tantamount to saying “You cannot claim absolute finality for dogmatic without claiming commensurate finality for the sphere of thought in which it arose” *Whitehead Religion in the Making P142*

Pittinger rightly views Trinitarian thinking as an effort to give conscious expression to and make sense of a living reality “the inescapable face, the absolute heart ;and centre of Christianity” *The Holy Spirit Page 44* . He goes on “The entire apparatus of technical language about the Trinity results from the attempt of the Christian fathers to make sense of Christian life.” One might observe that the new idiom and apparatus sometimes makes less sense. To reduce God to a terse philosophical proposition as “Creative Source, Self-Expressive Act and Responsive Movement” (*The Holy Spirit 124*) is neither highly engaging nor incentivising. As *James Spiceland* says if we leave the criteria of doctrine in the melting pot of experience we cannot judge what is true and what is false. Process theology is doomed on this account.

To take us back to reality I quote another modern Theologian and philosopher of religion *D.M.MacKinnon* who got something right and something confused when he said “What is the doctrine of the Trinity if not the effort to reconstruct the doctrine of God that *the descent from heaven* may be seen as supremely, indeed, paradigmatically, declaratory of what God is in himself”. *Creation Christ and Culture 1976* The other consideration of course is the eschatological hope realised in which

God subjects all things to Himself and events on this earth yield to the more glorious reality of a New heaven and earth the eternal home of righteousness. The “raising of man” in Christ to a higher sphere and new dimension of living is the supreme eschatological hope. Jesus said **“I will that those you have given me in the world be with me where I am and behold the glory which I had with You before the world was”**.

CHAPTER 8

SOVEREIGN LORD FATHER SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

AS YAHWEH ELOHIM

The Hebrew descriptive of God (ADONAI ELOHIM) in His essential being are indispensable though over 3500 years in circulation. There are 2,700 uses of ELOHIM in the Old Testament. The plural usage is often accompanied by the singular YAHWEH and as frequently with the plural ADONAI. I have never been satisfied that the argument for the “plural of majesty” carries any weight-especially in the light of the primeval divine self manifestation in the creative pronunciation “Let us make man in our image”.

YAHWEH is known as provider (Gen22.14), healer (Ex15.26), banner or victor (Ex 17.15), sanctifier (Ex. 31.13, Lev.20.8, Ez.20.12), peace-sender (Jud6.24), warrior God of hosts (1Sam1.3), our righteousness (Jer23.6 &33.16), our present help (Ezekiel 48.35) and my shepherd(Psa.23).

PLURAL OF MAJESTY A NON STARTER

Wayne Grudem clearly shows very similar diffidence when he states “Some have suggested they(“let us” and “we” in Genesis 1.26) are plurals of majesty, a form of speech a king would use in saying, for example, “We are pleased to grant your request”. However , in the Old Testament Hebrew there are no other examples of a monarch using plural verbs of plural pronouns of himself in such a “plural of majesty”” so this suggestion receives no support in the OT. Grudem dismisses the further idea that God is speaking to angels is not convincing because “angels did not participate in man’s creation.” The Church Fathers saw in these words the plurality of persons we call the Trinity. Just as in Psalm 110.1 David refers to two persons of the Trinity as ADONAI so the Hebrew writer affirms a similar double reference of God(ELOHIM) to Father and Son(Hebrews 1.8 & Psalm 45.6). If we add from Scripture itself that “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters”(Genesis1.2) we have from the dawn of history and before prophets spoke or the New Testament was convened a plain statement of the nature of God as triune. All that councils needed to do was to read scripture opening at virtually any section-whether law prophets or writings, gospels epistles or apocalyptic writings and God triune was there from the first and throughout.

AS KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

In Judah God **has made Himself known** [Hebrew *Niphal* of [*dy*]] In Israel His name is great [Hebrew *lqg* "twisted like a threefold cord"] Psalm 76.1. The event of the judgment of Sennacherib by the angel of the Lord is in mind.

The psalmist rightly observes "The Lord is known by the judgment he executes" (Psalm 9.6). Conversely the psalmist constantly refers to God as personal speaking of the Lord as "My Shepherd". The Old Testament reveals God as "My provider (Gen 22.14), my healer (Ex 15.26), my victor (Ex 17.15), sanctifier (Ex. 31.13, Lev. 20.8, Ez. 20.12), my peace (Jud 6.24), my defender (1 Sam 1.3), my righteousness (Jer 23.6 & 33.16), my present one nearby (Ezekiel 48.35) and my shepherd (Psa. 23). God even in OT times was intimately known to his saints.

There is in God much mystery. Paul speaks of the "mystery of godliness" and in Romans defines what can be known by general revelation. He says "That which may be known of God is manifest in them...for the invisible things of him from the creation are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made-even **his eternal power and godhead**.

It is again in one of Paul's postscript letters -1 Timothy (3.16) that he looks at the overall witness of the heaven-born Son of God among men and states "God was manifest in the flesh (incarnate); justified in the Spirit (victor over temptation); seen of angels (resurrection); preached to the Gentiles (evangelisation) and believed on in the world (regeneration) and received up into Glory (glorification and ascension). All these aspects of the knowledge of God are particular to faith and so Paul describes this awareness as "an open secret" (MUSTERION).

Withal there is an abiding aspect of the majesty on high that is **ineffable**. We are obligated by love to "bow our knees" daily to the Father desiring that the family know the work of the Spirit and the indwelling Christ and the love of Christ and fullness of God. Paul then tops his prayer with his belief that God can do more than we ask. He adds that God can do abundantly above our asking. He further supplements that God can do exceeding more than what abundance represents. This takes us to Glory and eternity and things neither seen or comprehended but reserved in heaven and still deeply mysterious-but leaving in our hearts the certitude of the expansive dynamic of God's power to love with immensity of practical eternal provision. We do not always appreciate the immensity of such love but in the cross and the view of the wounded hands and side we stand to have it confirmed when we see Jesus.

By and by when I look on his face

I'll wish I had given Him more

More, more so much more

More of my life than I ere gave before.

By and by when I look his face

I'll wish I had given Him more.

AS UNCHANGEABLE

The "immutability" of God is a treasured doctrinal reality. It has been assaulted by the Statement of Jurgen Moltmann "We have to think of our Lord Jesus as still awaiting His future, of the Spirit in connection with the forthcoming resurrection and of God who waits to be "all in all"."

What we read in the bible is good-we read of God triune at work-the economic Trinity-but we should not pronounce on how God is in Himself. This was an issue between Barth and Moltmann as indeed it must be an issue for any Christian. We dare not depart from the “essential” being of God or redefine it in terms of our experience; The “death of God” theologians in the main have now died and YAHWEH ELOHIM abides unchanged Ethical perfection of the triune sort needs nothing added. The humiliation of Christ and His obedience show the impeccable and courageous perfection of the love of God. God has not changed but by his great love he has changed everything. The “eternal form” of God that Christ had took upon him the “schema” of man but even in that wonderful action God was in Christ and was not thereby changed.

AS THREE MEMBERS OF ONE GODHEAD

The term “Trinity” is felicitous though Paul appears to use the term “members” and construct a “familial” picture of God glorious living in the original dimension of his power in heaven. As Moses understood God could visit the earth and even be present in the tabernacle so the glorious majesty has from time to time engaged with man as at Sinai or the Mount of Transfiguration or in the face of Paul above the Damascus Road Turnpike.

Paul’s reference to “membership” is familial only insofar as love is shared and light is revealed by one and all of the members of YAHWEH ELOHIM. Clearly Genesis 1.20 takes us into the council of deity. We speak of the decrees of God. We speak of the equality of the personae.

The apostle speaking to the Ephesians says “*Study and be quick to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the mutual bond of peace-one body one Spirit- just as you have been called in one hope of your calling. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in you all.*” Paul has eight singularities which emphasise ***the unity of the godhead and the unity of the church*** yet allow for the diversity of the ministry or work of the members in one visible Christian body and fellowship of love light and power as for the fellowship of the trinity in the invisible Glorious substantial unity of omniscient wisdom, omnipresent love and omnipotent dynamic (Ephesians 4 3-6). One is quite certain that Paul would not be embarrassed at his choice illustration or exchange it for the shamrock of *St. Patrick* or even Barth’s word-play of “revelation scripture and proclamation”. Christ like the Holy Spirit and both along with the Father has fellowship-cum-membership in YAHWEH ELOHIM the light, the dynasty, the majesty on high than whom there is nor ever shall be any greater life or love or power. This dynasty is as singular as the Melchisadekian priesthood of Christ in its singularity.

AS LOWLY AND GLORIOUS

We may be obliged for the sake of rounded understanding or academic interest to read the findings of systematic theologians but we are not bound to their conclusions or their methodology. When *MacKinnon* speaks of the “descent of God from heaven as Christ” being the supreme declaration of what God is his statement has the ring of truth about it for God is love and this demonstrates the courage of love. Jesus said “be of good cheer” (*θαρσείτε*) “take heart for the struggle” “venture on” “Be boldly

confident” “be audacious to dare”. The Lord’s words were the corollary of His statement “I have overcome the world”(John 16.33)

The wonder of Christ’s reception in glory must stand alongside the incarnate act of love as patience stands alongside courage. Through all eternity our Lord Christ will continue with His church which has been steadily building in glory since the Father greeted him as “Jesus” with saints who also rose as the first-fruits from the dead after His joyous resurrection. The patience with which Jesus has dealt with mankind ever since through the work of the Holy Spirit and the patient tenderness of love we anticipate in eternity is the other aspect of the love of God in Christ demonstrated still gently in His glorification. His “glory” is the final state and as he share in our humility so we shall see Him and dwell alongside Him in His glory which He has familiarly with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

AS IMMORTAL

God alone has immortality. This is absolute. The apostle Paul in his postscript letters to Timothy declares what most nearly approaches a complete doctrine of God. He speaks of Christ as the one “who brought immortality to light in the gospel”(2 Tim.1.10) and declares in 1Timothy 6.16 that in His times or measured and proper seasons Jesus Christ shall show his illustrious manifestation. Paul is referring to His coming for the saints and his revelation as judge of nations and Messiah at the inception of the kingdom realised.

Jesus is the blessed and only ***dynasty***, the king of kings, the Lord(Yahweh Adonai) of lords, the only one who has deathless immortality and ***dwelling familial (οικων)*** as light unapproachable whom no man has seen nor is able to see (cf. Moses experience) to whom belongs honour and eternal hold ability to remain sovereign or victorious. In his first letter to Timothy Paul speaks of Christ’s first “appearing” or “glorious epiphany” as Saviour when he abolished, voided death leaving it unemployed when he beamed out and taught or instructed on(***φωτιζω***) life and immortality through the gospel. Thus the gospel is both an enjoyment of the life and light of Christ and a gaining of that experience through the gospel.

AS LOVE

O the wonder of it all the wonder of it all
Is the wonder that Jesus loved me.

Karl Barth was once asked what was the greatest think he ever found in his time as a theologian. His answer was “Jesus loves me”. Paul said exactly the same averring “The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me”(Galatians 2.20)

Paul was rather more emphatic than Barth on the substitutionary atonement for Paul could never speak but as a herald of the cross. In his Philippian epistle the apostle teaches the church he loved so well and whose fellowship he enjoyed so richly that Christ ever had the “form” of God and the capacity to move among men even before His incarnation but he took the humble detail of a human body and in His flesh gave himself an offering for sinners outside the gate of the city historically named the “foundation of peace” and forever sealed the peace of those who would believe. I still remember the beloved teenage daughter of a miner by the name of Gus Whiteford who came to Christ not least because a fellow miner and believer knelt

beside him for many a day in living fellowship-I remember that young lady singing the gospel after the home-call of her father and the words she sang were:

Such love, pure as the whitest snow;
Such love weeps for the shame I know;
Such love, paying the debt I owe;
O Jesus such love.
Such love, springs from eternity;
Such love, streaming through history;
Such love, fountain of life to me,
O Jesus, such love.

When in 1Corinthians 13 Paul goes off the scale of human language in his glorious paean on love he says "Love never fails". With *Zinzendorf* and John the divine he was ever a profound worshipper of the lamb slain and risen victorious. His ten references to the cross make essential devotional reading (1Cor.1.17,18, Galatians 5.11, 6.12,6.14, Ephesians 2.16, Phil.2.8, 3.16 and Col.1.20 with 2.14). John the divine writes in 19.25ff "Now there stood in under the cross of Jesus his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom Jesus loved. He said to his mother "Woman behold your son". Then he said to the disciple "Behold your mother." The bond of that moment would not be broken until the disciple saw to it that the lady whom the world can never forget Mary the blessed was laid to rest. There can be no doubt that Mary was never far from John while he lived in Galilee and when he served in Ephesus. That tryst of the cross was sacred. That undying love which John saw in the Master's last glance was mightier than ever. As Zinzendorf glanced at a mere portrayal of that love with the words "All this I did for thee, what hast thou done for me?" his heart was fired to establish the Moravian witness which blessed many nations and turned John Wesley into England's greatest evangelist.

At the cross at the cross where I first saw the light
And the burden of my heart rolled away
It was there by faith I received my sight
And now I am happy all the day.

GLORY BE TO THE FATHER AND TO THE SON
AND TO THE HOLY GHOST
WORLD WITHOUT END
AMEN

Bob Coffey
Aramaic Bible Companion