

Notes: August 8, 2015

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tov
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Countering The Contradictions – Part 2

A subject that is rather controversial and by all means not supported by Jewish people is that of God's identity as expressed through the doctrine of the trinity.

This is a major stumbling block for Jewish people in accepting Yeshua as Messiah. What I talked about last week would make the top 10 list, but I would categorize this as number 1 in terms of contradictions from a Jewish perspective.

When asked about God, a Jewish person will likely provide you with a response “there is only One God”

Yet, when you ask about Yeshua, as being that One God, you get emphatic No's, because as I conveyed last week, one contradiction I addressed was the notion that God could not be a man.

So, how do you approach this apparent contradiction?

To review, if you recall, last week I had talked about the appearance of contradictions in Scripture and asked the question is it the Scriptures or is it the theology.

Theology - “The science of God or of religion; the science which treats of the existence, character, and attributes of God, his laws and government, the doctrines we are to believe, and the duties we are to practice.

Doctrine - is the codification of beliefs or a body of teachings or instructions, taught principles or positions, as the essence of teachings in a given branch of knowledge or belief system.

So based on these definitions, the concept of the Trinity is most certainly a theology and doctrine.

Just because it is an established theology and doctrine, does that mean that God is a trinity? Not necessarily!!!

His Lordship is spoken of in a plural nature, ultimately expressing the intensity of His power.

It is meant to convey what the attributes of God are and are part of a belief system that teaches them as a foundational view. Yet, the word (trinity) itself, is nowhere to be found in Scripture.

So, you have a position being taught about God that is pieced together in the New Covenant writings while the emphasis found in the Tanakh is of the oneness of God. And, I will even show you that the oneness of God is found equally in the New Covenant.

It is true that we see God manifest Himself, reveal Himself in many ways throughout the Tanakh, yet it is Him and Him alone that is revealed. There are not different versions of God or different parts, but God alone.

The first words we read in Genesis 1:1 are:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God here, is translated from Elohiym, the plural of Eloah meaning deity with the plural meaning the only Supreme being, God. Yet this word can also be translated as "gods" and "judges. So, one needs to be careful when reading the Hebrew to pay attention to the overall context of what is written in order to not misinterpret the meaning being conveyed.

In the very next verse we are introduced to His Spirit...

Gen 1:2 The earth was unformed and void, darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God hovered over the surface of the water.

In the first two verses we are already being exposed to the complexity of Adonai, yet it is Adonai alone.

We read more about the complexity of Adonai when He creates us in His image...

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, in the likeness of ourselves; and let them rule over the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the animals, and over all the earth, and over every crawling creature that crawls on the earth."

Some call this two parts of the Godhead, which I have recently discovered is a doctrine in and of itself.

Wayne Jackson writes the following:

*Any elementary student of logic knows perfectly well that the Godhead cannot be both one and three without a logical contradiction being involved—if the adjectives “one” and “three” are employed **in the identical sense**.*

*But the fact of the matter is, they are not used in the same sense. There is but **one** divine **nature**, but there are **three** distinct **personalities** possessing that unified set of infinite qualities. Thus, there is no contradiction at all.*

Ultimately calling this a “Divine Plurality”

Confused yet?

Trinity and Godhead, are doctrines developed by man in an attempt to help us identify and understand the complexity of who God is.

When I say identity, I am referring to how we perceive Him, rather than how He identifies Himself.

In Scripture, the Tanakh, “I am Adonai” is found 160 times (73 times in Torah)

In His own words aniy Adonai.

Aniy means I, singular. Representing me, mine, myself

The Tanakh clearly substantiates the “oneness” of God.

When we recite the Sh'ma, we affirm His oneness as well.

Deu 6:4 "Sh'ma, Yisra'el! Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad [*Hear, Isra'el! Adonai our God, Adonai is one*];

This verse can be understood in two different ways from a Jewish perspective...

1. He is one in composition
2. “The Lord alone” not His nature, but He is the only one, there is no one else beside Him

Prophets, represent and worship God and God only – no other god

Yet there is a complexity in who God is that is challenging for us to comprehend...echad a oneness that conveys a plurality...

- Echad first used in Genesis 1 regarding evening and day (one day)

Gen 1:5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. So there was evening, and there was morning, one day. (echad yom)

Two elements composing one.

- Genesis 2 – adam vahavah – the two coming together are echad

Gen 2:23 The man-person said, "At last! This is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh. She is to be called Woman [*Hebrew: ishah*], because she was taken out of Man [*Hebrew: ish*]."

Gen 2:24 This is why a man is to leave his father and mother and stick with his wife, and they are to be one flesh. (echad basar)

We see this again in marriage.

- Building of Tabernacle in Exodus 33 – many pieces joined together, comprising one structure

Echad – represents fusion, a deeper unity than Yached.

When we look at a verse that commonly is used to support the doctrine of trinity or godhead, we come to Matthew 28:19...

Mat 28:19 Therefore, go and make people from all nations into talmidim, immersing them into the reality of the Father, the Son and the Ruach HaKodesh,

This is the closest the New Covenant comes to stating the proposition that *YHVH, Adonai*, the one God of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, consists of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The word "trinity" appears nowhere in the New Covenant; it was developed later by theologians trying to express profundities which God has revealed about himself.

The New Covenant does not teach tritheism, which is belief in three gods.

It does not teach unitarianism, which denies the divinity of Yeshua the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

It does not teach modalism, which says that God appears sometimes as the Father, sometimes as the Son and sometimes as the Holy Spirit, like an actor changing masks.

It is easy to wander astray into error or nonsense in thinking about God, since his ways are not our ways and his thoughts are not our thoughts ([Isa 55:8](#)).

Some Messianic Jews use the term "triunity" in conscious avoidance of the word "trinity," which has such a non-Jewish, traditionally Christian ring to it, and in order to emphasize the unity of God as proclaimed in the *Sh'ma* without neglecting what this verse highlights.

I am not a fan of the word "triunity", and therefore consider it more important to believe God's Word and to trust Him than to argue over particular doctrinal or verbal formulas used in attempting to describe the nature of God. If I don't like this term, how would I express who God is? I will convey that in my conclusion.

There is also a textual issue, debate as to whether Matthew 28:19 is actually presented in this manner. Although nearly all ancient manuscripts have the "trinitarian formula", Eusebius, the Church historian, who may have been a non-trinitarian, in his writings preceding the Council of Nicea in 325 C.E., quotes this verse without it.

Yet in the New Covenant, we find a consistency of the oneness of God being presented:

Yeshua continually conveyed the oneness of God...

Mar 14:61 But he remained silent and made no reply. Again the cohen hagadol questioned him: "Are you the Mashiach, Ben-HaM'vorakh (Son of the Blessed / Son of God)?"

Mar 14:62 "I AM," answered Yeshua. "Moreover, you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of HaG'vurah and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Joh 8:56 Avraham, your father, was glad that he would see my day; then he saw it and was overjoyed."

Joh 8:57 "Why, you're not yet fifty years old," the Judeans replied, "and you have seen Avraham?"

Joh 8:58 Yeshua said to them, "Yes, indeed! Before Avraham came into being, I AM!"

Joh 8:59 At this, they picked up stones to throw at him; but Yeshua was hidden and left the Temple grounds.

Or in other ways that often get overlooked as Yeshua merely speaking in the first person...

Joh 11:25 Yeshua said to her, "I AM the Resurrection and the Life! Whoever puts his trust in me will live, even if he dies;

Joh 11:26 and everyone living and trusting in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

God is the Resurrection.

Joh 14:6 Yeshua said, "I AM the Way — and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.

God is the Way.

We do not see anywhere in Scripture Yeshua conveying these doctrines (trinity or godhead), but in essence emphasizing the oneness of God, and more specifically that He is God.

Joh 14:9 Yeshua replied to him, "Have I been with you so long without your knowing me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Joh 14:10 Don't you believe that I am united with the Father, and the Father united with me? What I am telling you, I am not saying on my own initiative; the Father living in me is doing his own works.

Joh 14:11 Trust me, that I am united with the Father, and the Father united with me. But if you can't, then trust because of the works themselves.

We use these methods (doctrines) to help us understand Scripture that doesn't always make sense. So, when someone reads Psalm 110 in relation to Hebrews 1:13...

Psa 110:1 [*A psalm of David:*] Adonai says to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."

This verse is used by the writer of Hebrews to emphasize who Yeshua is...

Heb 1:13 Moreover, to which of the angels has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

The immediate understanding is that there are two people with one sitting at one's right hand.

But can this be taken literally? Will we see two thrones?

Will we see one throne and one place reserved as a place of honor?

What does Scripture tell us?

Heb 8:1 Here is the whole point of what we have been saying: we do have just such a cohen gadol as has been described. And he does sit at the right hand of HaG'dulah (the Greatness) in heaven.

Heb 10:12 But this one, after he had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, sat down at the right hand of God,

Heb 10:13 from then on to wait until his enemies be made a footstool for his feet.

Yet, what many fail to understand, let alone realize is that this is not a literal fulfillment. You do not see Yeshua sitting at the right hand of the Father, but that this is a Hebrew idiom that conveys - the right hand is the place of honor where one sits.

Rev 3:21 I will let him who wins the victory sit with me on my throne, just as I myself also won the victory and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Yeshua presents himself as the model for anyone who wants to **win the victory** over evil, temptation and apathy. Compare [Php 2:6-11](#), and also [Heb 2:9-11](#), [Heb 2:18](#); [Heb 4:15-16](#). There too the Messiah is depicted as having overcome temptation, and we are invited to "approach" God's throne boldly when we have need. Here Yeshua promises that believers who overcome will actually **sit** with him on the **throne** (see [Rev 20:11](#)) which he shares with God the Father.

[Rev 4:2](#) Instantly I was in the Spirit, and there before me in heaven stood a throne, and on the throne Someone was sitting.

Yochanan saw one throne. And only one was sitting on it.

[Rev 5:6](#) Then I saw standing there with the throne and the four living beings, in the circle of the elders, a Lamb that appeared to have been slaughtered. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the sevenfold Spirit of God sent out into all the earth.

[Rev 22:1](#) Next the angel showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

[Rev 22:2](#) Between the main street and the river was the Tree of Life producing twelve kinds of fruit, a different kind every month; and the leaves of the tree were for healing the nations —

[Rev 22:3](#) no longer will there be any curses. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him;

[Rev 22:4](#) they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

The throne of God and of the Lamb is connected by a conjunction in English, indicating that both are on the same throne, indicating only one throne.

Ultimately conveying that as one throne, being of God and the Lamb, in essence substantiates that God and the Lamb are one and the same.

They will see His face, singular, meaning we will see one face of God, while His name (singular) will appear on our foreheads, as His servants.

Ultimately, there are not two seated but one. This is a Hebrew idiom.

A central belief in Christianity is the trinity, yet in Judaism the central belief is in One God. In that Christianity was birthed out of Judaism, how is it that you have such diametrically opposed views of God.

The answer is clear and something that I have stated in previous sermons. The issue isn't the Scriptures. The Scriptures are clear. Both the Tanakh and the New Covenant speak of One God, yet it is the doctrines created, with the intent to help us understand who God is that has caused the problem.

So, how do we as a congregation convey who God is...

We believe that God has existed before time began. In His complex unity He created the universe and everything in it. Having created mankind in His image, comprising both male and female further conveying the complexity of who God is. Through His creation, God would bring forth His Son, born of a woman.

The Son of God would come to live on the earth for a time, in order to redeem His creation from their separation from Him. He died. He rose from the dead. He returned to His Father. He will return to establish His Kingdom through Israel and upon all the earth.

We understand that Yeshua is the very image of God, the one in whom God caused His fullness to dwell, the one through whom He revealed Himself complete. Since the Son came forth from the Father, and shares His divine nature in one sense, it is correct to say Yeshua is God (divine), while keeping in mind that the testimony of the New Covenant writings is that He is the Son of God.

Supported by the Hebrew scriptures, there is nothing idolatrous regarding what we believe. God has always revealed Himself to His people. He did it most permanently and completely through Yeshua, His Son.