

Does Everyone Really Believe that the Trinity is Biblical? Obviously Not.

Collected by Anthony Buzzard. Please use freely, for everyone

“So that all the peoples of the earth may know that the LORD is God; there is no one else” (1 Kings 8:60).

“Our one Lord” (LXX of Dan. 3:17).

“Do we not all have one Father? Has not one God created us” (Mal. 2:10).

Jesus: “Why do you call me good? Only one Person is good, that is God alone” (Mk .10:18).

Paul in 1 Cor. 8:4-6: “There is no God but one. There is one God, the Father.” (Paul repeats the Shema cited by Jesus in Mk 12:29 as the greatest and most important command of all.)

Psalm 110:1 is the key text more often quoted than any other verse from the OT. It gives us an oracle of YHVH to my lord. The title “my lord” for Jesus is ADONI in the Hebrew, and in all 195 times it occurs it defines non-Deity someone who is not God! Deity by contrast is ADONAI, the Lord God (449 times).

“There is in the OT no indication of interior distinctions in the Godhead. It is an anachronism to find either the doctrine of the Incarnation or that of the Trinity in its pages. The God of the OT is emphatically a self-communicating God, as opposed to a metaphysical abstraction, or a solitary remote Deity... Angel of the Lord is not a mere messenger from God, a created being, neither is he strictly Yahweh, but Yahweh in a particular form of self-manifestation, a special revelation of the divine presence...” (*Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 6, p. 254, 255).

“It must be admitted by everyone who has the rudiments of an historical sense that the doctrine of the **Trinity, as a doctrine, formed no part of the original message.** St. Paul did not know it, and would have been unable to understand the meaning of the terms used in the theological formula on which the Church ultimately agreed” (Dr. W. R Matthews, *God in Christian Experience*, p. 180).

Simmonds, *What Think Ye of Christ?*

“Now the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation is that in Christ the place of a human personality is **replaced** by the Divine Personality of God the Son, the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, Christ possesses a complete **human nature without a human personality.** Uncreated and eternal Divine Personality replaces a created human personality in Him. The incarnation, if it is a reality, if it really means the Word-made-flesh, cannot mean anything else. The Eternal Word of God has joined to Himself a human body and the human soul and henceforth is both God and man.”

Dr. Martin Werner, *Formation of Christian Dogma:*

“The Church found itself in a dilemma as soon as it tried to harmonize the doctrine of the Deity of Jesus and the Deity of the Father **with monotheism.** For according to **the NT witnesses,** in the teaching of Jesus relative to the monotheism of the OT and Judaism, there had been no element of change whatsoever. Mk 12:29ff. recorded the confirmation by Jesus himself, without any reservation, of the supreme monotheistic confession of faith of Israelite religion in its complete form... The means by which the Church sought to demonstrate the agreement of its dogma of the Deity of both Father and Son with monotheism, remained seriously uncertain and **contradictory** (p. 241).

“There was certainly no need nor justification to substitute, in the interpretation of the person of Jesus, for the original concept of the Messiah simply a Hellenistic analogy such as that of a redeeming

divine being... Indeed it was entirely invalid. It was a myth behind which the historical Jesus **completely disappeared**, because there was nothing common between them” (p. 298).

Canon Goudge of the Church of England:

“When the Greek and Roman mind rather than the Hebrew mind dominated the Church there occurred a disaster from which we have never recovered.”

Tom Harpur on the Trinity (*For Christ's Sake*, p. 81):

“What is most embarrassing is trying to prove the Trinitarian doctrine from the NT documents. You simply cannot find the doctrine of the Trinity set out anywhere in the Bible. St Paul has the highest view of Jesus role and person, but nowhere does he call him God. Nor does Jesus himself anywhere explicitly claim to be the Second Person of the Trinity, wholly equal to the heavenly Father. As a pious Jew, he would have been shocked and offended by such an idea. This research has led me to believe that the great majority of regular churchgoers are for all practical purposes **Tritheists**. That is, they profess to believe in One God, but in reality worship Three. Small wonder Christianity has always had difficulty trying to convert Jews and Muslims. Members of both these faiths have such an abhorrence of anything that runs counter to their monotheism, or faith in the unity of God, that a seemingly polytheistic gospel has little appeal for them.”

Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:

“One”: “Early Christianity consciously adopts from Judaism (Deut. 6:4) the monotheistic formula, ‘God is one.’... According to Mark 12:29, 32, Jesus explicitly approves the Jewish monotheistic formula.”

***The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, Jacob Jocz, London SPCK, 1949 (p. 262):**

“Room for the Master of Nazareth within the structure of Jewish thought is only possible on the condition of a clear distinction between the Christ of the Christian dogma and Jesus the historical *Jew*... The Christian perception of Jesus in terms of the Holy Trinity rests upon a tragic misunderstanding... The rehabilitation of the ‘historic Jesus’ at the expense of the orthodox Son of God... It is only a vague and diluted Christian theology which imagines it possible to come to terms with Judaism. In reality there is no understanding between the two faiths: They possess no common denominator which could form the basis for a ‘bridge theology.’... That Montefiore is well aware of the difficulty can be seen from an earlier remark: ‘The center of the teaching of the historic Jesus is God: the center of the teaching of the Church is he (i.e. Jesus himself). It is this peculiar attitude to Jesus which divides for ever the Church from the Synagogue” (p. 262).

The Unity of God: “The essence of **Judaism** is the doctrine of the absolute and **unmodified unity of God**. Prof. Moore’s masterly definition of the Jewish conception of that unity can hardly be surpassed. He calls it ‘**the numerically exclusive and uncompromisingly personal monotheism**.’ With it Judaism stands or falls. Indeed the **absolute unity** of the God of Israel together with the Torah, i.e., the revelation of this one and only God, form the heart and essence of Judaism. The rest of Jewish thought and practice is of secondary importance when compared with these two fundamental truths.... This most vital tenet, as conceived by orthodox and liberal Judaism alike, stands thus in **direct opposition** to the Trinitarian doctrine of the Christian Church.” (p. 265).

Dr. Leonard Hodgson:

“Christianity, as I said last week, began as a trinitarian religion with **a unitarian** theology. It arose within Judaism and **the monotheism of Judaism was then, as it still is, unitarian**... Could the monotheism be revised so as to include the new revelation without ceasing to be monotheistic?... I shall

now try to show that the upshot of this development was a revision both of the theological idea of monotheism [the unitarian Jewish idea, as he just said, held by Jesus] and of the philosophical idea of unity” (*Christian Faith and Practice*, 7 lectures. L Hodgson, D.D, Regius Prof of Divinity, 1951).

So then Jesus was revised! The church gives you a revised version of Jesus.

Otto Kirn, Ph D. Th .D. Professor of Dogmatics in the University of Leipzig

“The Trinity: The Biblical Doctrine; Early dogmaticians were of the opinion that so essential a doctrine as that of the Trinity could not have been unknown to the men of the OT. However, no modern theologian who clearly distinguishes between the degrees of revelation in the OT and the NT can longer maintain such a view. Only an inaccurate exegesis which overlooks the more immediate grounds of interpretation can see references to the Trinity in the plural form of the divine name Elohim and the use of the plural in Gen. 1:26. or such liturgical phrases of the three members of the Aaronic blessing of Num 6:24-26 and the Trisagion of Isa 6:3” (*New Schaff Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, 1950).

Pannenburg, *Jesus God and Man*

“Jesus is what he is only in the context of Israel’s expectation. Without the background of this tradition, Jesus would never have become the object of a Christology. Certainly this connection is also clear in other titles and generally throughout the New Testament, especially in Jesus’ own message. His message can only be understood within the horizon of **Jewish apocalyptic** expectations, and the God whom Jesus called Father was none other than the **God of the Old Testament**. This context is concentrated in most particular way in the title *Christos*... This justifies the formulation of the content of the confession of Jesus at the beginning of this chapter: He is the ‘Christ of God’” (p. 32).

[What nonsense then to say he IS God!]

“**Strict monotheism** has been one of the central characteristics of **Judaism** throughout the ages” (Alan Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, p. x)

Murray Harris: *Jesus as God: The New Testament Use of Theos in Reference to Jesus*, Baker, 1992

“It was not the Triune God of Christian theology who spoke to the forefathers in the prophets... **It would be inappropriate for Elohim [2,570 times] or Yahweh [6,800 times] ever to refer to the Trinity in the OT when in the NT theos regularly refers to the Father alone, and apparently never to the Trinity.** [James White says the opposite!]

“To the men of the NT, God was the God of the OT, the Living God, **a Person**, loving, energizing, seeking the accomplishment of an everlasting purpose of mercy the satisfaction of his own loving nature.... Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the monotheism of the OT was never abstract, because the God of the OT was never a conception, or a substance (essence), but always a **person**. Personality has never indeed the bare unity of a monad.” (*Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels, DCG, Incarnation*).

“No attempt has been made in the preceding summary to be exhaustive. But we have seen that throughout the NT (*o*) *theos* is so often associated with and yet differentiated from *kurios Yesous Christos* that the reader is forced to assume that there must be a hypostatic distinction and an interpersonal relationship between the two. The writers of the New Testament themselves **supply the key** by speaking not only of *o theos* (Go) and *Yesous* but also of *Pater* (Father) and *Uios* (Son), of the Son of God, and of “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” God is the Father (in the Trinitarian sense), Jesus is the Lord (I Cor 8:6). **When *o theos*, “the God,” is used, we are to assume that the NT writers have o**

pater (the Father in mind unless the context [twice for certain] makes this sense of *o theos* impossible. (fn. 112, p. 47)

“A related question demands brief treatment. To whom did the NT writers attribute the divine action described in the OT? To answer ‘the Lord God’ is to beg the question for the authors of the NT wrote of OT events in the light of *their trinitarian understanding* of God. [Yet above he just said God never refers to the Trinity]. A clear **distinction** must be drawn between **what the OT text meant to its authors and readers and how it was understood by the early Christians who lived after the advent of the Messiah and the coming of the Spirit.**

“Certainly the person who projects the Trinitarian teaching of the NT back into the OT reads the OT through the spectacles of the dynamic trinitarian monotheism of the NT is thinking anachronistically. On the other hand it does not seem illegitimate to pose a question such as this: To whom was the author of Hebrews referring when he said (1:1) “At many times and in various ways **GOD spoke** in the past to our forefathers through the prophets”? That it was not the Holy Spirit in an ultimate sense is evident from the fact that neither in the OT **nor in the NT is the Spirit called “God” in so many words.** And, in spite of the fact that the Septuagint equivalent of YHWH, viz. *kurios*, is regularly applied to Jesus in the NT so that it becomes less a title than a proper name, it is not possible that *o theos* in Heb 1:1 denotes Jesus Christ, for the same sentence (in Greek) contains “(The God who spoke...) in these last days has spoken to us in a Son (*en uio*).”

“Since the author is emphasizing the continuity of the two phases of divine speech (“God having spoken, later spoke”), **this reference to a Son shows that *o theos* (God) was understood to be “God the Father.” [no one ever said “God the Son”!].**

“Similarly, the differentiation made between *o theos* as the one who speaks in both eras [throughout the entire Bible] and *uios* (Son) as his final means of speaking shows that in the author’s mind *it was not the Triune God of Christian theology who spoke to the forefathers in the prophets.*

“That is to say, for the author of Hebrews (as for all NT writers one may suggest) ‘the God of our fathers,’ Yahweh, was no other than “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (compare Acts 2:30 and 2:33; 3:13 and 3:18; 3:25 and 3:26; note also 5:30)” (fn. 112, p. 47).

“In classical Greek *to theion* often signifies divine power or activity or the **divine nature considered generically**, without reference to one particular god. There appears to be no NT instance where *theos* (God) signifies merely *to theion* (= *numen divinum*, as in Xenophon, *Mem* 1:4;18, deity in general, although both Philo (Agric 17) and Josephus (Ant. 14:183; Bell 3:352) use *to theion* of the one true God of Israel’s monotheism. In Acts 17:29 (see also the reading of D in Acts 17:27 and the addition to Titus 1:9 in miniscule 460) *to theion* is used of the Deity that is often represented “by the art and imagination of man” (Footnote 113, p. 48).

Harris says *Theos* applies to Jesus Christ:

Certainly in John 1:1; 20:28; [only if you put Word and not word]

Perhaps in John 1:18

Possibly in Acts 20:28; Heb 1:9.

Karl Rahner:

“We may outline our results as follows: **Nowhere in the NT** is there to be found a text with ‘*o theos*’ (God) which has unquestionably to be referred to the Trinitarian God as a whole existing in three Persons [the God Trinity]. In by far the greater number of texts *o theos* refers to the Father as a Person of the Trinity... In addition *o theos* is never used in the NT to speak of the holy spirit. Fn. Thus for example **in the whole OT** saving history is ascribed to the God who sends Jesus, thus to the Father (Acts 3:12-26; cp. Heb 1:1). In Acts 4:24, Eph 3:9 and Heb 1:2 the God who created all things is clearly characterized as the Father in virtue of his distinction from the Son (Servant, Christ). Now if creation

and saving history are ascribed to God the Father, there can hardly be a single statement about God (o theos) which is not included therein.

“Where Christ’s Person and Nature are to be declared with the greatest theological strictness and precision, Christ is called the Son of God... For these [NT writers] the expression *o theos* was just as exact and precise as ‘Father.’... When in consequence of all this we say that *o theos* in the language of the NT signifies the Father... all that is meant is that when the NT thinks of God, it is the concrete individual uninterchangeable Person who comes into its mind, who is in fact the Father and is called ‘*o theos*.’; So that inversely, **when o theos (God) is being spoken of, it is not the single divine nature that is seen, subsisting in three hypostases, but the concrete Person who possesses the divine nature unoriginately** and communicates it by eternal generation to a Son too, and by spiration to the Spirit” (*Theological Investigations*, Vol 1).

How many persons is the God of Israel?

“YHVH the God of Israel” (203 times). YHVH is the God of Israel, how many Persons is He? God of Jacob (28 times), God of Abraham (17 times), God of Isaac (17 times). Never: God of Europe?! But God of Jews and Gentiles. **God of the Hebrews (Ex. 3:18; 5:3; 7:16; 9:1; 9:13; 10:3). None of these titles denotes a Triune God.**
Mal. 2:10: One God = One Father

Professor L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 1969, p. 89:

“The Church confesses the Trinity to be a mystery beyond the comprehension of man. The Trinity is a mystery, not merely in the biblical sense that it is a truth, which was formerly hidden but it now revealed; but in the sense that man cannot comprehend it, and make it intelligible. It is intelligible in some of its relations and modes of manifestation, but **unintelligible in its essential nature**. The many efforts made to explain the mystery were speculative rather than theological. They invariably resulted in the development of tritheistic or modalistic conceptions of God... The church has never tried to explain the mystery of the Trinity, but only sought to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity in such a manner that the errors which endangered it were warded off.”

“It was reported by the Associated Press of London, June 25, 1984 that a majority of Anglican bishops interviewed by a Television program said ‘**Christians are not obliged to believe that Jesus Christ was God.**’ The poll was of 31 of England’s 39 bishops. The report further stated that 19 of the 31 bishops said it was sufficient to believe that Jesus was the supreme Agent of God.” From London’s weekend TV Program, Credo.

Church of England Archbishop Ramsay: “Jesus did not claim Deity for himself” (*Jesus and the Living Past*, p. 39).

A. H. Newman on the Trinity:

“The Trinity is a **contradiction, indeed, and not merely a verbal contradiction, but an incompatibility in the human ideas conveyed**. We can scarcely make a nearer approach to an exact enunciation of it, than of saying that **one thing is two things**” (Sadler’s *Gloria Patri*, p. 39). (Me: i.e. it is mathematical nonsense!)

Dr. A.T. Hanson on the Trinity

“**No responsible NT scholar would claim that the doctrine of the Trinity was taught by Jesus, or preached by the earliest Christians, or consciously held by any writer of the NT.** It was in fact

slowly worked out in the course of the first few centuries in an attempt to give an intelligible doctrine of God” (*The Image of the Invisible God*, SCM Press, 1982).

“The puzzling fact is that the synoptic gospels, which as **publications are later than Paul** and contemporary with Hebrews, do not exhibit any tendency to elaborate a doctrine of preexistence [and thus no Trinity]...

“In Hebrews it is not even certain that the name ‘Son’ is unhesitatingly applied by the writer to the preexistent state. Heb. 1:2 could be rendered: ‘He has in these last days spoken to us in the mode of a Son, which would imply that the sonship only began at the incarnation’ (*Image of the Invisible God*).

Dr. Hey, lecturing on the Trinity at Cambridge

“It might tend to moderation and in the end agreement, if we were industrious on all occasions to represent our own doctrine of the **Trinity as wholly unintelligible**” (Dr. Hey, *Lectures in Divinity*, 2, 235).

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: “As regards Trinitarianism in John, there is no express doctrine of the Trinity in the metaphysical sense of oneness of essence and substance. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are formally interrelated only in the non-authentic comma Johanneum [a spurious forgery, omitted from modern translations]” (Vol. V, 1003)

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament: “For the first beginnings of Trinitarianism...” see the quote above. [That the Trinity did not begin in the Bible is admitted.] “The NT does not actually speak of Triunity. **We seek this in vain in the triadic formulae of the NT.** The Spanish texts of the 6th century are the first to offer a clear trinitarian formula in the so-called Comma Johanneum of I John 5:7ff.. The Spanish Catholics made of this a trinitarian formula by continuing, after ‘bear witness’...in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.’ They thus imported a conclusion of early dogma into the NT. **Early Christianity itself, however, does not yet have the problem of the Trinity in view**” (Vol. 5, p. 1010).

New International Dictionary of NT Theology, ed. Dr. Colin Brown at Fuller Seminary: The Trinity.

“The NT does not contain the developed doctrine of the Trinity...That God and Christ belong together and that they are distinct, are equally stressed, with **the precedence** in every case due to God, the Father, who stands above Christ... There is no strict dogmatic assertion... All this underlines the point **that primitive Christianity did not have an explicit doctrine of the Trinity such as was subsequently elaborated in the creeds of the early church**” (Dr. J. Schneider, Prof. of Theology in Berlin).

New International Dictionary of NT Theology, ed. Dr. Colin Brown

“The New Testament rests **firmly on the foundation of the Old Testament**, when it speaks **about God**. But its emphases are new. He is the God who is near, **the Father** of Jesus Christ who justifies freely by his grace. His action in election bursts all claims to exclusiveness. But it is **the same God who reveals Himself here as in the Old Testament, and whose plan of salvation, there promised, comes to fulfillment here.** **The one God, o theos**, is the most frequent designation of God in the New Testament. Belief in the **one, only and unique God** (Matthew 23:9; Romans 3:30; I Corinthians 8:4, 6; Galatians 3:20; I Timothy 2:5; James 2:19) is an **established part of primitive Christian tradition.** **Jesus himself made the fundamental confession of Judaism his own and expressly quoted the Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4ff.; Mark 12:29ff. cf. Matthew 22:37; Luke 10:27).** **This guaranteed continuity between the Old and the New Covenant.** For the God whom Christians worship is the **God of the Fathers** (Acts 3:13; 5:30; 22:14), **the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob** (Acts 3:13; 7:32;

cf. Matthew 22:32; Mark 12:26; Luke 20:37), **the God of Israel** (Matthew 15:31; Luke 1:68; Acts 13:17; cf. II Corinthians 6:16; Hebrews 11:16), and **the God of Jesus Christ** (II Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3; first Peter. 1:3). Just as God once made Israel his people so now He has chosen those who believe in Christ as an elect race and a holy people for His possession (Acts 15:14; 20:28; I Peter 2:9; Hebrews 11:25)."

"Faith is in Him (Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6; Titus 3:8; James 2:23; Hebrews 6:1; I Peter 1:21), hope is in Him. The community of Jesus may have no false gods beside Him, whether Mammon (Matthew 6:24), the "belly" (Philippians 3:19) or the cosmic powers. Galatians 4:8ff.. It must serve Him alone, do His will and remain faithful to Him" (Vol. 2).

So if the Shema was God's attempt to reveal a compound unity in God, the attempt was an epic failure. It makes much more sense that God gave the verse to the Jews and intended it to mean what the Jews say it means. Furthermore, the Jews did not take the Shema as their primary statement of monotheism because many other verses made that point (we will cover that shortly). Third, the context of the Shema in both the Old and New Testaments, backed by the Scope of Scripture, shows that the Shema is not [only] saying "God is 'one,' but rather is saying that Yahweh "alone" is our God.

Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, p. 865:

"But for Israel there was only one God and sole devotion to this One God was a paramount essential. To serve or follow other gods was a cardinal offense, emphasized particularly in Deuteronomy and Isa. 40-55." **"The NT follows this tradition by taking for granted the established monotheism of Judaism."** "In the NT the monotheistic convictions [the all-essential Shema, he has just said] of Judaism are taken for granted. (p. 701, "monotheism"). "The first of all commandments according to **Jesus** is the shema, the affirmation of the Oneness of God" (Mark 12:29) (p. 701) Jewish opponents are not represented as criticizing Christianity for abandoning monotheism. The close association of Jesus with God seems to lead towards the seeing of monotheism in a different way [John 17:3 and Mark 12:28ff. contra!!]. The implications of this are not yet worked out within the NT" (James Barr, distinguished prof. at Vanderbilt) **"The NT follows this monotheistic tradition in taking for granted the established monotheism of Judaism.** The NT does not depict Jewish opponents as criticizing Christianity for reintroducing polytheism." (p. 865)

Harper Collins Bible Dictionary:

"The explicit doctrine of the Trinity was thus formulated in the **post-biblical period**, although the early stages can be seen in the NT. Attempts to trace the Trinity origins still earlier to the OT [Jesus believed in the monotheism of the OT, Mk 12:29; Deut. 5:4!] cannot be supported by historical critical scholarship" and these attempts are readings back. (p. 1179)... The formal doctrine of the Trinity as defined in councils of the 4th and 5th centuries **is not to be found in the NT.**"

Oxford Companion to the Bible:

"Because the Trinity is such an important part of **later** Christian doctrine, it is **striking** that the term does not appear in the NT. Likewise the developed concept of three coequal partners in the Godhead found in **later** creedal formulations cannot be clearly detected within the confines of the canon" ("Trinity," Daniel Showalter, Prof of Religion, Carthage College, WI, 1993, eds. Metzger and Coogan, p. 782).

"The Apostles did not identify Jesus with Yahweh. There were passages which made **this impossible**, for example **Ps. 110:1**, Malachi 3:1."

“It would be rash to conclude that St. Peter identified “Jehovah with Christ” (citing Prof. Hort). (Charles Bigg, DD, Regius Prof. of Ecclesiastical History, University of Oxford, in *International Critical Commentary on I Peter*, 1910, pp. 99, 127).

“The word Trinity is not found in the Bible.... It did not find a place formally in the theology of the church until the fourth century” (*Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, part 3, Intervarsity Press, Tyndale House Publishers, 1980, p. 1).

The Trinity “is not directly and immediately the Word of God” (*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, Vol. XIV, p. 304).

“In Scripture there is yet no single term by which the Three Divine Persons are denoted together. The word ‘Trias’ (of which the Latin ‘Trinitas’ is a translation) is first found in Theophilus of Antioch about 180 AD.... Shortly afterwards it appears in its Latin form of ‘Trinitas’ in Tertullian” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1912, Vol. 15, p. 47).

“Hasty conclusions cannot be drawn from usage, for [Tertullian] does not apply the words [which were **later** applied to Trinitarianism] to Trinitarian theology” (Michael O’Carroll, *Trinitas: A Theological Encyclopedia of the Holy Trinity*, 1987, p. 208).

“The Revelation of God in the Gospels: The Father” from *Hastings Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*:

“We must never forget that **Christianity was built upon the foundation of Jewish monotheism**. A long providential discipline had secured to the Jewish people their splendid heritage of faith in the one and only God. "Hear, O Israel, Yahweh our God is the one and only Yahweh, and you are to love Yahweh your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:4). This was **the cornerstone** of the religion of Israel [and of Jesus, Mk 12:29] these were perhaps the most familiar of all sacred words to the ears of the pious Jew [including Jesus], they were recited continually. **Our Lord himself had them frequently in his mind** (Matthew 22:37 Mark 12:28, 29, Luke 10:27). That Jesus thought of God always as the supreme **One is unquestionable**. Indeed the very idea of fatherhood, which with our Lord, is the characteristic conception, and which is capable of being presented in a way which might weaken or injure a true monotheism, becomes **in his teaching absolutely monotheistic** because absolutely universal Matthew 5:45, 48; 7:11, 8:11; 10:29; Luke 6:35, 13:29, 30; 15). To the Jewish mind the sovereignty of God was the natural and characteristic thought. In our Lord's teaching the divine Fatherhood overshadows and also transforms the divine sovereignty but never threatens to dissolve **the pure and splendid monotheism** of the original doctrine...

“God is the universal Father. He is, in a very intimate and special way, **the Father** of the disciples of Jesus. He is in a highest and unique sense the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We find then that **the teaching of our Lord Jesus and of the Gospels concerning God is the union of a true and unwavering monotheism**, with a great doctrine of mediation, according to which God and man enter into very close relationship in the person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (“Trinity,” Vol. 2, p. 761).

Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics (Judaism): “Abraham, Moses and Elijah were all equally zealous monotheists and in none of their successors was there any retrogression from the highest and **purest form of unitarian belief**” (Vol. 7, p. 582).

“Mark’s point in Mark 12:28ff was to emphasize **the essential orthodoxy of Jesus and his faithfulness to the law**...Mark’s emphasis on the strict monotheism of Christianity was particularly necessary” (Dr. D. Nineham, *Pelican Commentary on Mark*, pp. 323, 327)

The Jewish Encyclopedia:

“Judaism has always been rigorously **unitarian**” (“Deism,” *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906).

Emil Brunner:

“Judaism [is] **Unitarian**” (*Dogmatics*, Vol. 1. p. 205).

Richard E. Rubenstein:

“The monolithic God worshipped by the Jews [is worshiped] by...**unitarians**” (*When Jesus Became God*, 1999. p. 209).

Bishop Beveridge:

“The Jews... to this day... still assert that **God is only one in person**, as well as nature” (*Private Thoughts on Religion*, 1829. p. 66).

“There was no real doubt as the great commandment, **the Shema** was repeated daily by the Jews. It was the foundation text of their **monotheism**, which was not a speculative theory but a practical conviction.” (Arthur Peake, *A Commentary on the Bible*, Mark 12:28ff. 1920, p. 696).

Hugh Anderson, *New Century Bible Commentary on Mark*, p. 280. Mk 12:29:

“We must suppose that the Markan form goes back to oral tradition passed on by a Church that **did not any longer recite the Shema** [!]. But here at least in his statement of the first commandment **Jesus stands foursquare within the orbit of Jewish piety**.”

[Why do we not follow Jesus?]

“**The Unitarians** were originally nothing less than the **whole body of Christians** and the Trinitarians were the innovators; appearing at first modest and candid, as was natural, while they were a **small minority**” (**Joseph Priestley**, *A History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, p. 334).

“It is difficult to understand how and why **Jesus’ affirmation of the Shema**, which is **neither remarkable nor specifically Christian** [!], would have been created by an early Christian prophet” (*Commentary on Mark 8-16*, Craig Evans, pub. Thomas Nelson, 2001, p. 261).

So the teaching of Jesus about God is not Christian! This is a huge eye-opener! His point is that the recorded saying of Jesus, defining God, must surely be genuinely the words of Jesus. But he gives himself away with his astonishing remark that Jesus’ affirmation of the **Shema** is “neither remarkable nor specifically Christian.” The point should not be missed. Apparently the teaching of Christ at **the most essential point** of defining the true God, is not remarkable or important for us today! Christ, then, can be happily divorced from his teaching, and the Church can go confidently on its way, disregarding the theology of Jesus. This points surely to a huge need for a reformation of the Reformation, to achieve a real return to Jesus, allowing for the savior’s words to be the controlling factor of all Christian teaching. (See 1 Tim 6:3; 2 John 7-9 for apostolic warnings against losing the teaching of Jesus!)

Dr. James Dunn in his recent *Did the First Christians Worship Jesus?* gives us reason for hope that the Trinitarian system may reconsider and return to Jesus — may in fact thus be revived. (Revival is not achieved by anything less than a revolutionary return to the Gospel and words of Jesus!). Dr. Dunn must be read carefully — and he sometimes blunts clear statements with various qualifications and retractions, but he does say this very clearly: “The New Testament writers are really quite careful at this point, **Jesus is not the God of Israel, he is not the Father, he is not Yahweh**” (p. 142). The New Testament writers “recalled that this was Jesus of Nazareth, who affirmed the **same monotheistic creed as they did**, who forbade worship to any other than God and who prayed to God as an expression of his own need and reliance upon God” (p. 145). “In an important sense, Christian monotheism, if it is to be truly monotheism, has still to assert, that only God, only the one God, is to be worshiped” (p. 146). [Note that Jesus is worshiped as Messiah, but never as the One God]

Dr. James Dunn, “Early Christian and Jewish Monotheism”: (p. 109)

“The point then is that Jesus is remembered in earliest Christian tradition not simply for putting the love commandment (‘love your neighbor as yourself’) at the heart of his teaching. The influence of that teaching on the first Christians is clear enough from first century Christian writings, and there are no grounds for denying that the inspiration of that focus in early Christian teaching is to be attributed to Jesus. For such a consistent singling out of just this commandment (Lev. 19:18) can hardly be coincidental. More to the point, Jesus is remembered as also putting the love commandment second to the primary command to love God with all one’s being (Mark 12:30, par.). **For Jesus the Shema was fundamental and fundamentally determinative of the whole orientation of life. It is not the case that Jesus’ ethic can be boiled down to love your neighbor. On the contrary, the implication is that the two go together and perhaps is only possible in long-term reality as the corollary to the first.**

“The conclusion is strong then that **the Shema [Mk 12:29]** continued to be of central importance for Jesus during his mission and the teaching he both gave and lived out, which also means that the conviction that God was One continued to be a basic axiom for Jesus, a core principle from which he drew his inspiration and instruction. To that extent, at least, in other words, we have to answer the question ‘was Jesus a monotheist’ of our title with a clear affirmative.

“The clear implication of Mark’s account (10:18) is that Jesus declined the epithet ‘good’ because properly speaking **only God is good**... Its theological rationale is obvious: **God alone** is worthy of such devotion because **God alone** is the source and definition of all goodness...the God-foundation of his whole mission.”

Dr. James Dunn (*Christology in the Making*)

“There is always the possibility that popular pagan superstition became popular Christian superstition by a gradual assimilation and spread of belief at the level of popular piety (we must be beware of assuming that all developments in Christian thought stem from the Pauls and the Johns of Christianity)” (1980, 1989, p. 251).

Dr. James Dunn on preexistence:

“To avoid confusion, therefore it would be better to speak of the Johannine Christ as the incarnation of God, as God making Himself known to human flesh, **not as the incarnation of the Son of God** ... To speak of Christ as himself preexistent, coming down from heaven, and so forth, has to be seen as metaphorical; **otherwise it leads inevitably to some kind of polytheism**” (Intro. to *Christology in the Making*, xxvii)

‘That the Messiah himself existed before creation is nowhere stated in the Tannaitic [Jewish] literature... the name of the Messiah is the *idea* of the Messiah, or more exactly the idea of redemption through the Messiah. This idea did precede creation’ (Klausner, *Messianic Idea*, p.460). Strack

Billerbeck II, 334ff., Vermes, *Jesus*, 138, Mowinkel, *He That Cometh*, 334 (p. 294, *Christology in the Making*).

“God’s begetting the Messiah” in IQSa. Morton Smith (NTS 5, p. 218-224). See also “the begotten Messiah” by Gordis in VT 2, 1957.

Smith says: “But the most generally accepted opinion is summed up by Black’s statement that it is an order for the plenary session of the council of the assembly as it will be in the end time when a meal of bread and wine is celebrated **when God begets the messiah** or anointed one of Israel. There are rules for assembly to study Torah, in the event of God’s begetting the Messiah.”

Me: How can Jesus *be* God if he speaks of “our God”? Is he his own God?

The Only True God by Eric Chang (**free online: theonlytruegod.org**):

“But the fundamental problem created by elevating Jesus to the level of Deity is that a situation is created in which there are at **least two persons who are both equally God; this brings trinitarianism into conflict with the monotheism of the Bible**...In regard to the N.T. it is Trinitarianism that is on trial; it will have to explain why it has taken the monotheistic Word of God and interpreted it in polytheistic terms, thereby utterly distorting its fundamental character.” “Could it not be this distortion that is the reason for the disastrous disappearance of the Shema from our prayer lives? Jesus was a thorough-going, monotheistic, Shema-reciting Jew. We have redefined the core principle inherent in the Shema. Is this valid?” (p. 2).

“The one true God for Justin is the God of the Jews and is one and the same as the father of Jesus. Justin is a unitarian” (**Dr. Dale Tuggy**, *The Lost Early History of Unitarian Christian Theology*, paper delivered at Theological Conference, Atlanta [May, 2013], 7:24-32)

The comment of the writer on “Christ and Christology” in the *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, C. Anderson Scott, is instructive:

“The writer [of Revelation] carries the equating of Christ with God to the furthest point short of making them eternally equal. Christ is still “the beginning of the creation of God” by which is probably to be understood (cp. Col. 1:18, “the beginning, the firstborn from the dead”; also Col. 1:15) that *Christ himself was part of the creation*.”¹

As the Harvard theologian F. Auer says so well:

“Fourth-century Trinitarianism did not reflect accurately early Christian teaching regarding the nature of God; it was, on the contrary, a deviation from this teaching. It therefore developed against constant unitarian, or at least anti-Trinitarian opposition, and it was never wholly victorious...It must be reemphasized that the concept God, understood as a single, undivided personality, precedes the Nicean notion of a Deity defined as three persons sharing one essence. Unitarianism is the early norm, Trinitarianism a later deviation from this norm. It is therefore more proper to speak of Trinitarianism as an anti-Unitarian movement than of Unitarianism as an anti-Trinitarian mode of theological speculation” (*Encyclopedia Americana*, 1956, Vol. 27, p. 294L).

“The doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere expressly taught in the OT...The plural form used to designate the Deity in the account of the creation and many other incidental circumstances or expressions are however held as implying, if not teaching, this doctrine...In the NT it is evident that the doctrine of a

¹Lowell Institute Lectures, Boston, 1933.

Trinity in the divine nature **is clearly and copiously taught**" (*Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol 27, p. 69, 1949).

Mackintosh DD, *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, speaking of Prof. S. S. Faut:

"Granting the absolute character of the redemption which Jesus mediates and in consequence the absolute character of the Mediator's person, he yet holds that the **difficulties of predicating real Deity of Jesus are insurmountable**...But if we go so far, in logic [describing the position of the exalted Jesus to the RH] we must go still further and attribute Godhead also to Jesus of Nazareth — which gives us pause. It is unfitting to speak of the historical Christ as GOD, medium of the final revelation though he be. For it blurs the interpretation of his earthly life; also it conflicts gravely with Jesus' monotheism. **The one thing we dare not do is to create antagonism between Jesus and his own creed.** It is simply unevangelical to dim the clear shining of the Gospel by dogmatic assertions which collide with trust in One only God, the Father Almighty" (cited from *Die Christologie seit Schleiermacher*, 1901, pp. 97, 98).

International Critical Commentary. (John 1-4), 2009, p. 51

"Since most readers of the Gospel of John approach the gospel with a firm belief in the Nicene dogma of the Holy Trinity, a plea for caution is here imperative. Those who listened to Jesus during his life-time [and the warning should apply to those who desire to listen to him today] did not come already endowed with faith in a Trinitarian Godhead, nor did those who heard the preaching of the Apostles; it was not a matter of teaching people who already believed in a Holy Trinity that one of those divine persons had become a human being. **Neither in Judaism nor elsewhere is there any trace of such a belief.**"

"The primary **sense of logos** [word, Jn. 1:1] is equivalent to Memra, the very embodiment of God's everlasting protective Presence (sein ewiges Dasein, his eternal being) as disclosed in Exod. 3:15" (p. 30)

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Vol. 4, p. 133, 134) on **Logos [word]**:

"Jesus Christ is the incarnate form of the Logos.... grace and truth are the nature of the logos [Paul speaks of grace and truth and logos]. They are the content of the revelation [**IT, the logos**] given in Jesus Christ (v. 17b). **which** replaces the **Mosaic nomos**, the Torah [David calls the Torah logos also]...The terms logos and nomos are interchangeable in Ps. 119. The statements **concerning the pre-existence and majesty of the Torah** but they are now intentionally heaped upon **the logos**. **IT** was in the beginning with God. **IT** was with God and was God, or divine. All things were made by [through] **IT**. In **IT** was life. **IT** was the light of man. In the rabbis theses are sayings about the Torah. But they are now statements about Christ. In him the eternal word of God and the word of creation, the word of the Law is not just passed on ("given") but **enacted** (*egeneto*). [cp. the script is enacted in the actor]

"Christ is not just a teacher and transmitter of the Torah. He is himself the Torah, the new Torah [for the new creation]. Mosaism which is provisional and intermediary, has passed. In Jesus Christ the word of God has taken place in truth. What they behold is the content of this true, final and only Torah: grace and truth [so Paul when speaking of grace and truth is speaking of the new Torah of Messiah] 'Through the firstborn God created the heaven and earth and the firstborn is none other than the Torah' (rabbis). The divine nature of the Torah. The Torah is life, **life** for the world. Light: the Torah is **light**. The world lies in darkness and its inhabitants are without light. The Torah is truth...

"Seven things were created before the world was created, namely the Torah, repentance, Garden of Eden, Gehenna, throne of glory [Matt. 19:28], sanctuary, **and the name of the Messiah.**" [not the Messiah himself] **The eternal being of the Torah was with God. IT lay on God's bosom while God sat on the throne of glory.**"

Dr. John A. T. Robinson on John 17:3

“In the first place it should be noted **that John is as undeviating a witness as any in the New Testament to the fundamental tenet of Judaism, of unitary monotheism (Rom. 3:30; James 2:19. There is one true and only God (John 5:44; 17:3) Everything else is idols (I John 5:21).** In fact nowhere is the Jewishness of John [and of Jesus], which has emerged in all recent study, more clear. The only possible exception is in I John 5:20, where ‘this is the true God could grammatically relate not to the Father, but to the immediately preceding words ‘His Son Jesus Christ, though the ‘his’ in ‘His Son’ must refer to ‘the one who is true,’ that is God the Father, as everywhere else [including Mal. 2:10: ‘Do we not all have one Father? Has not one God created us?’]”

“The ambiguities of phrasing in the Johannine epistles are notorious, but I find it very difficult to be persuaded by such as Schnackenburg, Bultmann and Brown that is Christ who is being designated as ‘the true God’ [contradicting Jn. 17:3 and the rest of the Bible!]. I am convinced with Westcott, Brooke and Dodd that the remaining Johannine usage (particularly ‘This is the true God, this is eternal life, I John 5:20 and “This is eternal life, to know thee who alone art true God (John 17:3) which I believe the former deliberately echoes, **requires the reference to be to the Father.** There is also the parallel in II John 7 where ‘this is the deceiver and the Antichrist’ must refer to the secessionists and not to the immediately preceding words ‘Jesus Christ coming in the flesh.’”

“Despite **the clear evidence of the Gospel that Jesus refuses the claim to be God (10:33) or in any way to usurp the position of the Father, this is clearly for John not the whole picture.**”

He goes on to point out that the *logos* is God. But he has said above that John’s Jesus is a **unitarian**. The *logos* is therefore the wisdom/word of God and **not a second Person in a Triune Godhead**. Jesus is thus what the word (not Word) *became*. God, the Father is still “the only one who is true God,” which excludes the Son from Godhead, although Jesus is the human expression of God. **Jesus and John were unitarians**, as were all Jews.

Goppelt on the word:

“The logos of the prologue [John 1:1] becomes Jesus. Jesus is the incarnate logos **not the logos as such**” (*Theology, II*, p. 634).

Lee Strobel: *Case for Christ*

“The truth is that Jesus was a bit mysterious about his identity, wasn’t he? [!!!] He tended to shy away from forthrightly proclaiming himself to be Messiah or Son of God...[Witherington:] It is not because he did not think of himself in those terms...If he had simply announced ‘Hi, folks, I’m God,’ that would have been heard as ‘I’m Yahweh’ because the **Jews of his day did not have any concept of the Trinity**. They only knew of God the Father, whom they called Yahweh and not God the Son or God the holy spirit.”

[If he said ‘I am Yahweh,’ that would be a clear announcement of two Yahwehs.]

Augustine on John 17:3

He violates the Scripture, tampering with the words of Jesus’ prayer to force it to yield a Trinity:

“The proper order of the words is, ‘That they may know Thee **and Jesus Christ**, whom Thou hast sent, as the only true God.’ Consequently, therefore, the Holy Spirit is also understood, because He is the Spirit of the Father and Son, as the substantial and consubstantial love of both. For the Father and Son are not two Gods, nor are the Father and Son and Holy Spirit three Gods; **but the Trinity itself is the one only true God**. And yet the Father is not the same as the Son, nor the Son the same as the Father, nor the Holy Spirit the same as the Father and the Son; for the Father and Son and Holy Spirit are three [persons], yet the Trinity itself is one God” (*Homilies on John*).

[4,300 occurrences of God: and none of these = Triune God]

Karl Barth on the Trinity:

“The Bible lacks the express declaration that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of equal essence and therefore in an equal sense God himself. And the other express declaration is also lacking, that God is God thus and only thus, i.e. as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These two express declarations, which **go beyond the witness of the Bible**, are the twofold content of the Church doctrine of the Trinity” (*Church Dogmatics*, I.1.437, emphasis added).

Donald Guthrie on the Trinity:

Donald Guthrie's evangelically-oriented *New Testament Theology*, while arguing that there are “adumbrations” (foreshadows) of Trinitarianism in the New Testament, is similarly obliged to admit that:

“It cannot be said that the doctrine (Trinitarianism) is expounded. **Indeed, it is significant that none of the NT writers sees the need to speculate about such a doctrine.** They are content to present data which imply the divine nature of both Christ and the Spirit and which naturally gave rise to reflections about the unity of God” (p. 122).

Dr. R. M Grant on “Substance”

R. M. Grant likewise agrees in his discussion of the Trinitarian controversy that there is no recorded mention of the Godhead's “oneness of substance” before the Apology (“A Plea for the Christians”) of Athenagoras (ca. A.D. 177), when for the first time anywhere we read that “the Son of God is the Mind and the Word of the Father,” the latter being “the One uncreated, eternal invisible, impassable, incomprehensible, uncontainable God” (*The Early Christian Doctrine of God*, p. 91).

Thomas Jefferson, US President, 1801-1809 (There were 5 unitarian presidents of the USA.)

“When we shall have done away with the **incomprehensible jargon** of the Trinitarian arithmetic, that three are one and one is three; when we will have knocked down the artificial scaffolding, reared to mask from view the simple structure of Jesus; when, in short, we shall have unlearned everything which has been taught since his day, and got back to the pure and simple doctrines he inculcated, we shall then be truly and worthily his disciples; and my opinion is that if nothing had ever been added to what flowed purely from his lips, the whole world would at this day be Christian.”

F.F. Bruce on Preexistence, in personal correspondence with me:

“On the preexistence question, one can at least accept the preexistence of the eternal Word or **Wisdom** of God **which** (who?) became incarnate in Jesus. But whether any New Testament writer believed in his separate conscious existence as a ‘second Divine Person’ [i.e. of the Trinity] before his incarnation is not so clear. On balance I think John did. I am not nearly so sure about Paul” (June 13th, 1981 letter)

“Paul identifies Christ with the creative word or **wisdom** of God which certainly existed as long as God did” (July 29th, 1981).

F. F. Bruce on Acts 13:33

“raised up” – that is by raising him up in the sense in which he raised David (v.22). For *anistemi* in this sense, see 3:22; 7:37; 13:26 (‘raised him up and sent him’). The promise of v. 23, the fulfilment of which is described in 13:33, has to do with the sending of the Messiah, not his resurrection (for which

see v. 24). The addition of ‘from the dead’ in v. 34 differentiates this use of ‘raise up’ from its use in v. 33” (*Acts of Apostles, Commentary on the Greek text*).

Dr. Gregory Boyd in *Trinity and Oneness Pentecostals*

“Trinitarians are quite clear that God is one: “There can be no question that the Bible does uniformly and unequivocally teach that there is One God. Certainly it was the proclamation ‘Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,’ that formed **the cornerstone for everything** that was distinctive about the faith of God’s people in the OT. The message of God’s uniqueness and **singularity** is driven home literally **hundreds of times throughout** the pages of the OT (Isa 42:8; 43:10; 44:6.) This **strict monotheism** is by no means forgotten when we enter the NT era. Rather **it forms the presupposition of the Christ-centered faith** articulated in the NT (Mark 12:29ff. I Cor 8:4-6; Eph. 4:4; I Tim. 2:5). It is therefore an incontestable fact that the Bible is monotheistic through and through. No biblical author would have entertained the idea that there could be more than one supreme being. This is the cornerstone to ancient and to contemporary Judaism.”

[And powerfully confirmed and commanded by Jesus! (Mk 12:29)]

Dr. W. N Clarke, 1909, Professor, Colgate University

“[In the NT] there is no mystery about their oneness **and no attempt to show that there are three in one**. The word Trinity is never used and there is no indication that the idea of Trinity had taken form. It has long been a common practice to read the NT as if the ideas of a later age upon this subject were in it, but they are not. **In the days of the Apostles the doctrine of the Trinity was yet to be created**. But the materials for it were already there, and the occasion for the growth of the doctrine was sure to arise.”

Elohim is Not a Proof of Plurality in God

Sir William Smith, *Dictionary of the Bible*, “Jehovah”:

“With regard to *Elohim*, it has been held by many that in the plural form of the word there was shadowed forth the plurality of persons in the Godhead and the mystery of the Trinity was inferred therefrom. Such according to Peter of Lombard, was the true significance of *Elohim*. But Calvin, Mercer, Drusius, Bellarmine have given the weight of their authority against an explanation so **fanciful and arbitrary**.”

Bishop Colenso:

“The word *Elohim* is a plural noun; it is the general name for Deity in the Hebrew language, and may be used, accordingly for a heathen god... **It is therefore quite a mistake to think of proving the doctrine of the Trinity, as some do, from the fact that Elohim is a plural name**... And as above it is used of an idol, Dagon (I Sam. 5:7); Astarte (I Kings 1:2, 3, 6), as of the true God.... Thus we have ‘a cruel lords’ (*adonim*) (Isa. 14:4).”

Kitto, *Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*:

“An old opinion is that... the usage of a plural noun with a singular verb [proved] that God has revealed Himself in His word as subsisting in Trinity, One yet Three... This has few supporters among the scholars, and has been formally repudiated by several who were strongly attached to Trinitarian views: Calvin, Drusius, Buxtorf, Bellarmine, Hottinger.”

Sixtus Senensis, Bibliotheca Sanctor, bk 5, annotation. 1

“With the exception of Peter of Lombardy and Paul of Burgos, there has not been amongst the Greek, Latin and Hebrew writers, **one commentator worthy of imitation who has explained the word Elohim [God] of the Trinity.**”

Dr. South, a disputant in the controversy over the Trinity in the later middle ages, in which the King interposed (*Consideration on the Trinity*)

“It must be allowed that there is no such proposition as this, that One and the same God is three different Persons, formally and in terms to be found in the sacred writings, either of the Old or New Testaments; neither is it pretended that there is any word of the same signification or importance as the word Trinity, used in Scripture with relation to God.”

Rev. Mozeley, brother in law to Cardinal Newman:

“I ask with all humbleness where the idea of the Threeness is expressed in the New Testament with a doctrinal sense and force? Where is the Triune God held up to be worshiped, loved and obeyed? Where is he preached and proclaimed in that threefold character? We read ‘God is one.’ and ‘I and the Father are one.’ but never do we read that the three are one, except in one interpolated text, (I John 5:7). To me the whole matter is most painful and perplexing and I should not even speak as I do now, if I were not on the threshold of the grave, soon to appear before the throne of all truth.

“Certainly we do not find in Scripture the expression God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost. Whenever I pronounce the word God simply, and first, I mean God the Father, and I cannot help meaning that if I am meaning anything.” [NT means Father 1300 times, when speaking of GOD.]

James Hughes, Roman Catholic Priest:

“My belief in the Trinity is based on **the authority of the Church**: no other authority is sufficient. I will now show from reason that the Athanasian creed and Scripture are opposed to one another. The doctrine of the Trinity is this: There is one God in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Ghost is God. Mind, the Father is one person, the Son is another person and the Holy Ghost is another person. **Now according to every principal of mathematics, arithmetic, human wisdom and policy, there must be three Gods, and yet only One God.** The Athanasian creed gives the universal opinion of the Church, that the Father is uncreated, the Son uncreated and the Holy Ghost uncreated—that they existed from all eternity. Now the Son was born of the Father; and, if born, must have been created...therefore to assert that the Son is eternal is absurd and bangs of nonsense.

“Each has his distinct personality: each his own essence. How then can they be one Eternal? How can they all be God? Absurd; extravagant. This is rejected by Arians, Socinians, Presbyterians and every man following human reason. The creed says further that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Son of Man, ‘not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God.’ Now I ask you, Did the divinity absorb the manhood? He could not at the same time be one person and two persons. I have now proved the Trinity opposed to human reason.”

Bishop Smallridge (Anglican) on the Trinity

“**It must be owned that the doctrine of the Trinity as it is proposed in our Articles, our Liturgy and our Creed, is not in so many words taught us in the Holy Scriptures.** What we profess in our prayers we nowhere read in Scripture, that the one God, the one Lord is not only one person, but three persons in one substance. There is no such text in Scripture as this; that the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped. None of the inspired writers has expressly affirmed that in the Trinity none is before or after the other, none is greater or less than the other.”

Athanasius on the Trinity:

“The Jews at the time **being in error and** thinking that the Messiah would be a mere man of the seed of David, for that reason the blessed Apostles in great wisdom first instructed the Jews in the things concerning our savior’s humanity.

“All the Jews were so firmly persuaded that their Messiah was to be nothing more than a man like themselves, the apostles were obliged to use great caution in divulging the doctrine of the proper divinity of Christ.”

John of Damascus (675-749) on the Trinity

John of Damascus replied to the criticism that icons are unscriptural by admitting the fact and adding that you will not find in Scripture the Trinity or the “one substance” or the two natures of Christ either. But we *know* these doctrines are true. And so having acknowledged that the icons, and the incarnation are innovations, John goes on to urge his readers to hold fast to them as venerable traditions delivered to us by the fathers. If they were lost the whole gospel would be threatened.

He adopted the argument of John of Damascus that the Trinity should be accepted just as tradition. Professor Don Cupitt comments: “It brings out an odd feature of Christianity, its mutability and **the speed with which innovations come to be vested with religious solemnity to such an extent that anyone who questions them finds *himself* regarded as the dangerous innovator and heretic** (*Myth of God Incarnate*, p. 133)

Gregory of Nazianzus (leading church father) on Spirit

Gregory was “*the* theologian.” Born in 328, friend of Basil of Caesarea, nominated patriarch by Theodosius, wrote in 380:

“Of our thoughtful men, some regard the holy spirit as an operation, some as a creature, some as God; while others are at a loss to decide, seeing the Scripture determines nothing on the subject.”

In 387 the Nicene creed was added to: “With the Father and the Son the Spirit is worshipped and glorified.” **Before that the creed in 325 attempted no definition of the Spirit.**

Dr. Longley, Bishop of Ripon.

“It was our blessed Lord’s divinity which, we have seen, he **studiously concealed, but wished all men to come to the knowledge of**” (*Tracts for the Times*, Vol. 4, 80).

Richard Armstrong (1904) (*Trinity and Incarnation*)

“Most of those who profess and call themselves Christians, both in this country and in the rest of the world are in the habit of saying that Jesus is God. It is taught by the creeds. The average Englishman holds this opinion in a vague and loose sort of way. He has not thought out exactly what he means by it. So he carries about with him in his mind four propositions:

- 1) Jesus Christ is **God**.
- 2) **God** is our heavenly Father.
- 3) Jesus Christ is not our heavenly Father.
- 4) There are **not two Gods**.

“Yet he has never considered how to reconcile these four separate opinions of his together. It has probably not occurred to him that they are **inconsistent** with one another... The average Englishman has not troubled himself with the matter.”

Dr. James Dunn on Luke 1:35

“Luke is more explicit than Matthew in his assertion of Jesus’ divine sonship from birth (1:32, 35). But here too it is sufficiently clear that it is **a begetting**, a becoming, which is in view, the **coming into existence of one** who will be called, and will in fact **be** the Son of God, not the transition of a preexistent being to become the soul of a human baby, or the metamorphosis of a divine being into a human fetus... Luke’s intention is clearly to describe the creative process of begetting... Similarly in Acts there is no sign of any Christology of preexistence.

“For Matthew and Luke there was no thought of preexistence or incarnation associated with the mystical [sic] dogma of the virgin birth. **The fact is that Virgin Birth and preexistence cannot be reconciled.** A preexistent being who becomes man reduces himself to the state of a human embryo, but he is not conceived [or begotten] by action exterior to himself in the womb of a woman. Conception is the point at which an individual is formed who did not exist before at least as an individual.” (*Christology in the Making*, p. 43, 51)

Fitzmeyer on Luke (*Anchor Bible*)

“Luke presents Jesus as a Palestinian Jew, born in Bethlehem of Davidic lineage and raised in Nazareth. He speaks of him as ‘a man attested to you by God with mighty deeds, wonders, and signs, which God did through him in your midst.’ With many a deft stroke of the artist’s brush he has painted a portrait of Jesus as a human being with great concern for others... In Lukan Christology there are four phases of Christ’s existence. The first begins with his virginal conception... In Lukan Christology there is **no question of Jesus’ preexistence or incarnation**.... Neither of these aspects of his existence emerge in the Lukan portrait of him... In the time of Jesus the title ‘Messiah’ would have denoted an expected anointed agent sent by God either in the Davidic, kingly or political tradition for the restoration of Israel and the triumph of God’s power and dominion, or in the priestly tradition... We have no certain way of assessing what form that relationship would have taken in his own consciousness... Luke’s [concept of Son] does not yet carry the later connotations of physical or metaphysical sonship or identity of substance associated with the later Nicene or Constantinopolitan creeds. Nor adoptive sonship. Luke’s explicit relation of the title Son to the conception of Jesus connotes much more.”

Fitzmeyer on Luke 1:35

“Holy spirit is understood in the OT sense of God’s creative and active power present to human beings. Later church tradition made something quite other out of this verse. Justin wrote: ‘It is not right therefore to understand the Spirit and power of God as anything else than the Word, who is also the first begotten of God (*Apology* 1:33). In this interpretation the two expressions, spirit and power, are being understood of the Second Member of the Trinity. It was scarcely however before the 4th century that the Holy Spirit was understood as the third person.... There is no evidence here in the Lukan infancy narrative of Jesus’ preexistence or Incarnation. Luke’s sole concern is to assert that the origin of God’s Messiah is the effect of His creative spirit on Mary” (p. 350, 351).

[He says the elements of the Trinity but not the doctrine itself are found in Luke.]

Professor Godet, Commentary on Luke 1:35: “Therefore the holy thing begotten in you will be called the Son of God.”

“By the word ‘therefore’ the angel alludes to his preceding words: he will be called the son of the Highest. We might paraphrase it: ‘And it is precisely for this reason that I said to you....’ We have then here, from the mouth of the angel himself, an authentic explanation of the term SON of GOD, in the former part of his message. After this explanation Mary could only understand the title in this sense: a human being of whose existence God Himself is the immediate author. **It does not convey the idea of**

preexistence... But it implies more than the term Messiah which only refers to his mission. The word *upsistou*, of the Highest also refers to the term ‘Son of the Highest., v.32 and explains it... how could we assign any serious meaning to the moral struggles in the history of Jesus, the temptation for example, if his perfect holiness was the necessary consequence of his miraculous birth? But it is not so.... Entering into life in this way he was placed in the normal condition of man before his fall and put in a position to fulfill the career originally set before man, in which he was to advance from innocence to holiness... Jesus had to exert every instant his own free will and to devote himself continually to the service of good and to the task assigned to him, namely the keeping of his Father’s commandment. His miraculous birth in no way prevented this conflict from being real. It gave him liberty not to sin but did not take away from him the liberty of sinning” (p.58, 1881)

Dr. John Owen on the Trinity:

“What is there in the whole book of God that nature at first sight more recoils at than the doctrine of the Trinity? How many still stumble and fall at it?” (*Divine Origin of Scriptures*, p. 132)

Bishop Hurd on the Trinity

“In this awfully stupendous manner (the scheme of redemption by the sacrifice of a person of the Godhead as maintained by Trinitarians) at which Reason stands aghast, and Faith herself is half confounded, was the grace of God at last manifested” (*Sermons at Lincoln’s Inn*, 2, 17).

Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence* 2000, p. 30)

“Luther said of the Trinity that he did not so much believe it as find it true in **experience....** Can Luther have done anything but allegorize, if it was experience and not faith alone which made him a Trinitarian?... Servetus, a Spanish physician, paid with this life at the hands of Calvin for disbelieving that three could simultaneously be one.”

Moody Bible Institute on the Trinity, Statement of Faith, 1994-5:

“God is a **Person** who has revealed Himself as a Trinity in unity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit — **three Persons** and yet one God (Deut. 6:4; Matt 28:19; I Cor. 8:6).”

[3 x = 1x]

Trinitarians Contradict their Creed

Expositors Commentary on I Cor. 15:27: (10: p. 286):

“God will be recognized by all as sovereign and He — **the Triune God** — will be supreme.” cp. Rev. 22:3-5. [“He” means one Person!]

So they admit the one God is a He, and not a “What”?

Dr. John Blanchard on *ECHAD*. the Hebrew word for ONE (I had written to him to challenge the idea that ONE in Hebrew means more than one).

“Following our recent correspondence I have taken theological and academic advice and it seems clear that in the final paragraph on page 450 of *Does God Believe in Atheists?* my comments on the Hebrew word *echad* are inaccurate. I am very grateful to you for pointing this out, and assure you that in the future printings of the book the paragraph will be replaced by one that uses other OT arguments for the plurality of Yahweh’s being. Thank you again for preventing that particular error being perpetuated in the book.” (11th April, 2005)

Dr. Emily Palik on “one”

“One place (Gen. 1:9), one man (Gen. 42:13), one law (Ex. 12:49) one side (Ex 25:12) one ewe lamb (Lev. 14:10), one of his brethren (Lev. 25:48), one rod (Num. 17:3), one soul (Num. 31:28), one of those cities (Deut. 4:42), one way (Deut. 28:7) one ephah (I Sam 1:24) one went out into the field (I Kings 4:39). One shepherd (Ezek. 37:24), one basket (Jer. 24:2). One thing (Ps. 27:4), two are better than one (Ecc. 4:9), for one day or for two (Ezra 10:13) Abraham was only one person (Ezek. 33:24), a unique day Zech. 14:7.”

Is Orthodoxy Orthodox?

Dr. Norman Snaith, leading Methodist:

“Your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece’ (Zech. 9:13) arose first as a rallying cry in days long ago when some Jews sought to reinterpret Judaism in order to make it more acceptable to Greek ways of thought and life. There have always been Jews who have sought to make terms with the Gentile world and it has in time meant the death of Judaism for all such... the question needs to be faced as to whether it is right. Our position is that the reinterpretation of Biblical theology in terms of the ideas of the Greek philosophers has been both widespread and everywhere **destructive to the essence of Christian faith**. Father Hebert (RC) rightly sees in the Catholic system a conception of salvation conceived in Aristotelian terms and ‘an idea of Beatitude... closely related to the Neo-Platonic idea of the Vision of the One and bearing little relationship to the Beatitudes of the Gospel.’ Equally rightly he sees a marked tendency in contemporary Protestantism ‘to lay emphasis on the development of personality and a human movement towards the realization of ethical ideals. The KG is regarded as something achieved by human effort’

“If these judgments are sound, and we believe they are sound, **then neither Catholic nor Protestant theology is based on biblical theology. In each case we have a domination of Christian theology by Greek thought.**

“What, then, is to be done with the Bible? It is to be regarded as the norm, and its distinctive ideas as the determining factors of Christian theology? Or are we to continue to regard Plato and Aristotle with their pagan successors as contributing the norm, and the main ideas of Greek philosophy as the determining factors of Christian theology, with the Bible as illustrative and confirmatory when and where suitable?... We hold that there can be no right answer to the question what is Christianity until we have come to a clear idea of the distinctive ideas of both the OT and the NT and their difference from **the pagan ideas which have so largely dominated ‘Christian’ thought.**

“We find in the OT no passages at all which speak of the any immortality of the soul, which is not a biblical idea at all.”

Dr. Millard Erickson, *God in Three Persons* [He is promoting the Trinity]

“There is a fundamental difficulty that lies at the heart of the doctrine of the Trinity; It seems to be impossible to believe, because at its very core it is contradictory... We have here a dilemma that resembles in some ways the dilemma which faces Christians with the problem of evil. The truth of one premise, namely ‘God is one’ seems to imply the falsity of the other, namely ‘God is three’” (p. 130-131).

“Davis has examined the major contemporary explanations [of the Trinity], and having found them not to accomplish what they claim to do, has been honest in acknowledging that he feels he is dealing with a mystery. In so doing he has been **more candid than many of us**, who when pressed may have to admit **that we really do not know in what way God is one and in what different way He is three**” (p. 258).

“It is claimed that the doctrine of the Trinity is very important, crucial and even basic doctrine. If that is indeed the case, should it not be somewhere more clearly, directly and explicitly in the Bible?... Little direct response can be made to this charge. It is unlikely that any text of Scripture can be shown to teach the doctrine of the Trinity in a clear, direct and unmistakable fashion.” (p. 109).

Erickson, *Making Sense of the Trinity*

“Thus the **begetting** passages should be seen as referring to the earthly residence of Jesus rather than some everlasting continuous generation by the Father.” (p. 86)

“The status of the propositions forming the doctrine of the Trinity is not that they can be shown directly, either from Scripture or from experience. They are however part of a coherent whole, which can be shown to fit well and integrate and explain well the data that it is called on to tie together. As a necessary (or at least the best available) explanation of the data of biblical revelation, this doctrine is meaningful... **It is simply not possible to explain [the Trinity] unequivocally...** It may also be necessary, in order to convey the unusual meaning involved in this doctrine, to utilize what analytical philosophers would call ‘logically odd language.’ This means using language in such away **as intentionally to commit grammatical errors.** Thus, I have sometimes said of the Trinity, ‘**He are three,**’ or ‘**They is one.**’ For we have here a being whose nature falls outside our usual understanding of persons, and that nature can perhaps only be adequately expressed by using language that call attention to the almost paradoxical character of the concepts” (pp. 267, 268, 270).

Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vol. 2, p. 61:

The mixture of God and man is “**logical nonsense.**”

John Hick, *The Myth of God Incarnate*, 1977, p. 35:

“The simple equation ‘Jesus = God’ not only fails to represent what Christian tradition has claimed, but is distinctly odd. To reduce all of God to a human incarnation is virtually inconceivable.”

Apostle Peter on Jesus

“You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God” (Matt. 16:16-18),

Apostle John on Jesus

“**These things have been written [Gospel of John] that you might know that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**” (John 20:31).

Dr. Dorner on the defects of the Trinity

“It must be allowed of course that the doctrine of the Trinity, as laid down even by the Nicene fathers, leaves much to be desired. In one point above all, that is to say, that the Father is represented not merely as the logical commencement of the trinitarian process, but often as the root and source of all Deity and identified with the Monas. He thus acquires a predominance which necessarily involves the subordination of the Son and the Spirit.

“The second defect is that these [Nicene] teachers determine rather negatively than positively what ‘hypostasis’ is. But when the idea of the Father suffering (patripassionism) was rejected, the question naturally suggested itself: How shall we determine the nature of the distinction **between the God who became man and the God who did not become man**, without destroying the unity of God on the one hand, or interfering with Christology on the other. Neither the Council of Nicea, nor the Church Fathers of the 4th century satisfactorily answered that question...Through their labors the pantheistic and deist conception of God and the heathen and Jewish error was excluded...the How of the procession of the Son and the Spirit is unsearchable” (*Person of Christ*, Div. 1, Vol. II, p. 327, 330-331).

Encyclopedia Britannica, 1949

Unitarianism. “It is usually conceded that even though it might not be correct to speak of Christianity during the first two or three centuries as being substantially Unitarian, it at least was not Trinitarian. It was this generally held belief that Jesus was a man that Arius was trying to save in his conflict with Athanasius... those who held to the simple humanity of Jesus were usually subjected to bitter persecution... Later at the Reformation Servetus was burned at Geneva at the direct instigation of Calvin for the sin of writing (1531) “errors of the Trinity.” Bishop Mant in his history of Ireland records that in 1326 at Dublin, **one Adam Duff was burned alive for his denial of the Trinity**. In 1551 George Van Parris was **burned alive** for the same offence. Martin Cellarius (1499-1564), a close friend of Luther, had written against the Trinity; and Ludwig Haetzer, whose views were not disclosed until after his execution for anabaptism in 1529. Servetus first put the issue squarely before the world; “Your Trinity,” he wrote, “is a product of subtlety and madness. The Gospel knows nothing of it. The old fathers are strangers to it. It is from the school of the Greek sophists, that you, Athanasius, prince of tritheists, have borrowed it. “

Professor Loofs on the Trinity

“Orthodoxy **cannot say what ‘begetting’** in the case of the Son strictly signifies The Trinity is said to be the One God of the ‘Hear, O Israel.’ [According to orthodoxy] It is not a human personality that the Son of God assumed... The Divine subject in the life of Christ properly speaking did not suffer or die.

“I wish at the outset to state quite openly that I cannot hold this old Christology. 1) To rational logic it is quite untenable. 2) It does not agree with the NT. 3) We can show that it was influenced by antiquated conceptions of Greek philosophy.... Reason cannot approve such thoughts as hopelessly contradict themselves.

“It is the orthodox doctrine that the incarnated Son of God retained the human nature he had assumed, even after the ascension. The oneness of the Trinity is dissolved after the Incarnation. The Trinity has become something different after the Incarnation from what it was before.

“The criticism of orthodox Christology which I have described is not the property of a few people. To a certain extent it may be considered as generally recognized by the whole German Protestant theology of the present time (1911)... At present all learned Protestant theologians of Germany really admit unanimously that the orthodox Christology does not do justice to the truly human life of Jesus and that the orthodox doctrine of the two natures in Christ cannot be retained in its traditional form. All our systematic theologians... are seeking new paths in their Christology (*What is the Truth about Jesus Christ?* p, 165, 202-3).

Dr. Edwin Hatch. *The Influence of Greek Ideas on Christianity*, 1888

“I do not propose to dwell on the sad and weary history of the way in which for more than a century these metaphysical distinctions [*ousia* and *hypostasis*] formed the watchwords of political as well as ecclesiastical parties— of the strife and murder, the devastation of fair fields, the flame and sword connected with it.

“These evils mostly came from that which has been a permanently disastrous fact in Christian history, the interference of the state which gave the decrees of councils that sanction the resolutions of the majority upon the deepest subjects of human speculation to the factitious rank of laws which must be accepted on pain of forfeiture, banishment or death” (p. 280)

Professor Colin Brown, Fuller Seminary, CA

“The title ‘Son of God’ is not in itself a designation of personal deity or an expression of metaphysical distinctions within the Godhead. Indeed to be a ‘Son of God’ one has to be a being who is *not* God”

“It is a common but patent misreading of John’s gospel to read it as if it said: ‘In the beginning was the Son, and the Son was with God and the Son was God.’ What has happened here is the substitution of Son for word (logos), and the Son is thus made a member of the Godhead which existed from the beginning” (“Trinity and Incarnation,” *Ex Auditu*, 7, 1991).

Colin Brown and unitarians:

“I thought you would appreciate hearing that you [AB] were given honorable mention by Dr. Colin Brown in class the other day. He briefly commented on how the NT does not establish a trinitarian creed and that there are some scholars who do not follow the early church’s venture to establish such a doctrine. He mentioned one such scholar with whom he has a warm friendship, who teaches in Atlanta, an Englishman such as himself: you.” (27th March, 2007)

Professor Mackey on Preexistence

“It is best to begin with the problem of preexistence, not only because there are linguistic difficulties here, because it leads directly into the main difficulties encountered in all Incarnational and Trinitarian theology. As soon as we recoil from the suggestion that something can preexist itself, we must wonder what exactly preexists what else, and in what sense it does so.

“It does not take a systematician of any extraordinary degree of perspicacity to notice how exegetes themselves are the unconscious victims in the course of their most professional work of quite dogmatic (that is, uncritical) systematic assumptions” (*The Christian Experience of God as Trinity*, p. 51).

Dr. Simon Gathercole, *The Preexistent Son*, 2006

[That there is no preexistence in the synoptics certainly would represent the **majority view of commentators.**]

“Raymond Brown notes the fundamental difference between the Virgin Birth and preexistence. In preexistence christology, conception cannot be a real begetting. For Kuschel the absence of preexistence is virtually determined by the presence of the virginal conception...”

“[In preexistence Christology] it is the person of Jesus who is continuous with the preexistent one” (p. 9, 41).

[This means that no new person came into existence in Mary, thus eliminating the Son of David/Son of God/ New Adam/New creation.]

Dr. H.R. Mackintosh on Preexistence

“We need have no hesitation in confessing that the preexistence of Christ outstrips our faculty of conception, and that no theoretic refinements alter this in the very least. Christ cannot after all be preexistent in any sense except that in which God himself is so relatively to the incarnation... When we speak of the preexistent one, what is, as logicians say, the subject of discourse? *Who* preexists? Not the historical Jesus, exactly as he is known in the Gospels. The church has never affirmed that the humanity of Christ was real prior to the birth in Bethlehem [note how Jesus has been reduced to ‘human nature’ which is NOT the Son of David, and thus not the Messiah]... These are a few of the perplexities we meet in the effort to derive from history the content of ‘the Preexistent.’

“And if problems so baffling gather around it, the pretemporal being of the Son cannot surely be a datum for faith [but you may be excommunicated for not believing it today!]]” (*The Person of Jesus Christ*, 1912, p. 457-8)

Dr. A Reville, *History of the Dogma of the Deity of Christ*, 1905

The Gospel of the Hebrews made the holy spirit the mother of Jesus. "My mother the holy spirit," Jesus is made to say. For the NT writers Jesus was not the less a man, but a man born miraculously. **No thought either of preexistence or of Incarnation was associated in their minds with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth.** The fact is that the two ideas cannot be reconciled.

"A Preexistent being who becomes man, reduces himself, if you will, to the state of a human embryo; but he is not *conceived* by action exterior to himself in the womb of a woman. Conception is the point at which an individual is formed, who did not exist before, at least as an individual."

Dr. Hanz Schwartz, *Christology*

"Preexistence should not be construed to mean that Jesus waited in some heavenly realm until the time 'was fully come,' and he could be incarnated. As the analogy and even interchangeability of *logos*, *sophia*, and Jesus indicates, preexistence does not imply a preexistent **person** but the certainty and insistence that that which appeared in the human form of Jesus of Nazareth was indeed of divine origin and had occurred with divine sanction" (p. 236).

Hastings Bible Dictionary on Micah 5:2:

"The reference to the remote antiquity from which the origin of the Messiah dates... Deut. 32:7 shows that this is the meaning of *y'me olam* (not 'days of eternity' as if what were spoken of were the eternal preexistence of the Messiah)" (Vol. 5, p. 696).

New International Dictionary of OT Theology and Exegesis

"**Micah 5:2** predicts the coming of a Messianic King from Bethlehem whose origin was "from old, from ancient times." Here the phrase could well refer to the pristine days of the Davidic monarchy (as the reference to Bethlehem, David's hometown suggests. It probably expresses the hope for the new David who would take control of the decrepit monarchy and restore Israel's glory (Cp. Ezek.34:23-24; 37:24-25. While it is tempting to see here a reference to the eternal preexistence of the Messiah, no such an idea is found in biblical or post-biblical Jewish literature before the time of the similitudes of Enoch, 1st cent BC – 1st cent AD (I Enoch 48:2-6). Joel 2:2 says that the Day of the Lord is such as "never was of old," the phrase essentially means forever. There has never been a day like it before" (Vol. 3, p. 347):

Dr. Dean Inge

"The intelligent study of Christianity is impossible without knowledge of Greek and Roman religion. We generally assume that there is an unbroken line of continuity between the religion of the Jews and our own, and that there is none between paganism and Christianity. But the opposite is the truth..."

"The Catholic Church was the last creative achievement of classical antiquity; it owes far more to Greece and Rome than to Palestine...Christian ethics are a blend of Platonic and Stoic teachings about the good life" (*Lay Thoughts of a Dean*).

Marcellus of Ancyra on the Trinity

On the basis of a work of Valentinus, entitled *On the Three Natures*, Marcellus claimed that the latter was the first to conceive of a trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Ps. Anthimus, *de sancta ecclesia*, 9 = Valentinus frag. 9) (Alistair Logan, *Gnostic Truth and Christian Heresy*, 1996, p. 60).

Marcellus of Ancyra wrote: "Now with the heresy of the Ariomaniacs, which has corrupted the Church of God...These then teach three hypostases, just as Valentinus the heresiarch first invented in the book entitled by him 'On the Three Natures'. For he was the first to invent three hypostases and three persons of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and he is discovered to have filched this from Hermes and Plato."

(Logan A. Marcellus of Ancyra (Pseudo-Anthimus), 'On the Holy Church': Text, Translation and Commentary. Verses 8-9. *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, Volume 51, Pt. 1, April 2000, p.95).

Dr. Alistair Logan on the Trinity

“It would only make sense for Gnostics claiming to be Christians and evidently influenced by the 4th Gospel and its community, to compose a pseudographical work in the name of John, son of Zebedee, when the Gospel had come to be accepted in the Great Church, i.e., by the time of Irenaeus and Theophilus. The next stage of **adding the frame story**, developing the *pronoia-epinoia* scheme with its final *pronoia* hymn... dates from the last quarter of the second century” (p. 44).

[Note the frame story implies putting the picture into a new frame— reframing the theology of John as the Apocryphon of John, Jesus talking to John personally. Composing a new story, or plot, just as *The Da Vinci Code* composes a new plot, altering the story drastically.]

Strong's Concordance on Logos

3056 logos (log'-os), word

“Meaning: 1) of speech 1a) **a word**, uttered by a living voice, embodies a conception or idea 1b) what someone has said 1b1) a word 1b2) the sayings of God 1b3) decree, mandate or order 1b4) of the moral precepts given by God 1b5) Old Testament prophecy given by the prophets 1b6) what is declared, a thought, declaration, aphorism, a weighty saying, a dictum, a maxim 1c) discourse 1c1) the act of speaking, speech 1c2) the faculty of speech, skill and practice in speaking 1c3) a kind or style of speaking 1c4) a continuous speaking discourse - instruction 1d) doctrine, teaching 1e) anything reported in speech; a narration, narrative 1f) matter under discussion, thing spoken of, affair, a matter in dispute, case, suit at law 1g) the thing spoken of or talked about; event, deed 2) its use as respect to the MIND alone 2a) reason, the mental faculty of thinking, meditating, reasoning, calculating 2b) account, i.e. regard, consideration 2c) account, i.e. reckoning, score 2d) account, i.e. answer or explanation in reference to judgment 2e) relation, i.e. with whom as judge we stand in relation 2e1) reason would 2f) reason, cause, ground 3) In John, denotes the essential Word of God, Jesus Christ, the personal wisdom and power in union with God, his minister in creation and government of the universe, the cause of all the world's life both physical and ethical, which for the procurement of man's salvation **put on human nature** in the person of Jesus the Messiah, the second person in the Godhead, and shone forth conspicuously from His words and deeds.”

Strong's on God (*theos*)

2316 theos {teh'-os}

“Meaning: 1) a god or goddess, a general name of deities or divinities 2) the Godhead, **trinity [no verse given!]**. 2a) God the Father, the first person in the trinity 2b) Christ, the second person of the trinity 2c) Holy Spirit, the third person in the trinity 3) spoken of the only and true God 3a) refers to the things of God 3b) his counsels, interests, things due to him 4) whatever can in any respect be likened unto God, or resemble him in any way 4a) God's representative or vice-regent 4a1) of magistrates and judges

“Origin: of uncertain affinity; a deity, especially (with 3588) the supreme Divinity; TDNT - 3:65,322; n m”

Strong's on ADON (lord)

113 'adown {aw-done'} or (shortened) 'adon {aw-done'}

“Meaning: 1) firm, strong, lord, master 1a) lord, master 1a1) reference to men 1a1a) superintendent of household, of affairs 1a1b) master 1a1c) king 1a2) reference to God 1a2a) the Lord God 1a2b) Lord of the whole earth 1b) lords, kings 1b1) reference to men 1b1a) proprietor of hill of Samaria 1b1b) master 1b1c) husband 1b1d) prophet 1b1e) governor 1b1f) prince 1b1g) king 1b2) reference to God 1b2a) Lord

of lords (probably = "thy husband, Yahweh") 1c) my lord, my master 1c1) reference to men 1c1a) master 1c1b) husband 1c1c) prophet 1c1d) prince 1c1e) king 1c1f) father 1c1g) Moses 1c1h) priest 1c1i) theophanic angel 1c1j) captain 1c1k) general recognition of superiority 1c2) reference to God 1c2a) my Lord, my Lord and my God 1c2b) Adonai (parallel with Yahweh)"

“Origin: from an unused root (meaning to rule); TWOT - 27b; n m

“Usage: AV - lord 197, master(s) 105, Lord 31, owner 1, sir 1; 335”

NAB Notes on Psalm 110:1

“[Psalm 110] A royal psalm in which a court singer recites three oracles in which God assures the king that his enemies are conquered (Psalm 110:1-2), makes the king "son" in traditional adoption language (Psa. 110:3), gives priestly status to the king and promises to be with him in future military ventures (Psalm 110:4-7). <2> The LORD says to you, my lord: literally, "The LORD says to my lord," a polite form of address of an inferior to a superior. Cf. 1 Sam 25:25; 2 Sam 1:10. The court singer refers to the king. Jesus in the synoptic gospels (Matthew 22:41-46 and parallels) takes the psalmist to be David and hence "my lord" refers to the Messiah, who must be someone greater than David. Your footstool: in ancient times victorious kings put their feet on the prostrate bodies of their enemies.”

J. Skinner, D.D. pointed out in 1902 in his *Cambridge Commentary for Schools and Colleges*:

“Isa. 49:14. ‘my Lord,’ better as RV, The Lord. The word when pointed as here (ADONAI) is always equivalent to Yahweh. The suggestion that it may be used in the sense of husband (Gen. 18:12) would require a different vocalization (ADONI)” (p. 94).

Robert Morey, *Jesus Is God* (1983) cannot read the Hebrew!

“Jesus’ reference was to the **oft-quoted Ps. 110:1**, readily acknowledged by the Jews of his day to be both Davidic and Messianic, where King David called the Christ ‘my Lord’, using one of the names of Deity, Adonai.” (p. 321) [The text does NOT say *Adonai*!]

“Messiah’ was not merely David’s son after the flesh by genealogical descent, he was God’s Son in eternity past— one known and loved and acknowledged by David...”

“Incidentally note the Trinitarian reference in this passage, Jehovah, Adonai, Spirit!” (p. 321)

Strong’s on *gennao*, beget, procreate

“Meaning: 1) of men who fathered children 1a) to be born 1b) to be begotten 1b1) of women giving birth to children 2) metaph. 2a) to engender, cause to arise, excite 2b) in a Jewish sense, of one who brings others over to his way of life, to convert someone 2c) of God making Christ his son 2d) of God making men his sons through faith in Christ’s work

“Origin: from a variation of 1085; TDNT - 1:665,114; v

“Usage: AV - begat 49, be born 39, bear 2, gender 2, bring forth 1, be delivered 1, misc 3; 97

5685 Tense - Aorist (See 5777) Voice - Passive (See 5786) Mood - Participle (See 5796) Count - 215

1080 *gennao* {ghen-nah'-o}

Geneva Bible Notes:

Mat 1:20: but while he pondered on these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, fear not to (1) take to *thee* Mary, thy (2) wife, for that which is (3) **begotten** in her is of *the* Holy Spirit.

Young's Literal Translation: Matthew 1:20 And on his thinking of these things, lo, a messenger of the Lord in a dream appeared to him, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, thou mayest not fear to receive Mary thy wife, for that which in her was **begotten** *is* of the Holy Spirit,

Darby, Matthew 1:20: but while he pondered on these things, behold, an angel of *the* Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, fear not to take to *thee* Mary, thy wife, for that which is **begotten** in her is of *the* Holy Spirit.

Thayer's Lexicon on *gennao*

“Passive, *to be begotten: to en aute gennethen* ‘that which is **begotten** in her womb,’ Matt. 1:20.

Bauer's Lexicon on *gennao*

1624 gennao

See A Rahlfs, Genesis 1926, 39. Generate, to cause something to come into existence, primarily through procreation or parturition.

1. become the parent of, beget

Liddell and Scott on *gennao*

8263 gennao

Gennao.) Causal of *gignomai*. of the father, *to beget, engender*, Aesch., Soph.; rarely of the mother, *to bring forth*, Aesch

German on 1 John 5:18: Munchener NT, 1998

MNT **1 John 5:18** Wir wissen, daß jeder aus Gott Gezeugte nicht sündigt, sondern der aus Gott **Gezeugte** bewahrt ihn, und der Böse berührt ihn nicht. [The one begotten, Jesus, protects him, the believer.]

My Question to Dr. Paula Fredriksen

“I have read your interesting account of early Christianity and gained much from your research and vigorous writing. I do have an observation on a point which has been of concern to me as a teacher of NT and biblical languages. You say on p. 139 that Ps. 110:1 refers to the Messiah as adonai. But this is not actually so. The Hebrew is not the divine title Adonai, Lord God, but adoni, my lord, RV, RSV, etc. It seems to me that this is rather a crucial issue, since the early Christians were not thinking of Jesus as the Lord God, as kurios=Yahweh, but as the human lord Messiah (Luke 2:11) Adoni as opposed to Adonai, is not the divine title in all of its 195 occurrences.”

Reply from Dr. Frederiksen

“Thank you for this note. I have just grabbed my Jewish Bible. You are absolutely right. I made a mistake. My English transliteration is wrong (also misleading) and I will take advantage of your notice to me to fix it in the next printing. I am terribly grateful to you for bringing this to my attention. We all depend on each other. Yours with thanks.”

The Torah of Christ (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21)

“In rabbinical circles there was talk of the Torah of Messiah... a new interpretation of the Old Torah, not a suppression of it, but in some sense a new Torah: Midrash on Qoh (Ecc.) 11, 8: “The Torah which a man learns in this world is nothing compared with the Torah of Messiah” (Strack-Billerbeck, Vol. 3, p. 577)

Prof. Dale Brown of Bethany Seminary, on Abrahamic Faith

“It is an honor to have had the privilege of working with a student who edits a Journal of substance and impeccable diction and style. What you and your church put together as theology increasingly makes more sense to me.

“I wonder whether your Journal [*Journal from the Radical Reformation*] is getting the reviews and reading it deserves. I wonder about the nature of the dialogue, if any, you may have with liberal Unitarians. The revised hermeneutic of premillennialism is both prophetic and useful to many rooted in or attracted to the chiliastic tradition” (Aug. 4, 1992).

Henry Alford on 2 Peter 1:2

“Undoubtedly as in Titus 2:13, in strict grammatical propriety, both God and savior would be predicates of Jesus Christ. But here as also in Titus 2:13, considerations interpose which seem to remove the strict grammatical rendering out of the range of probable meaning.

“In II Pet. 1:1 I think that God refers to the Father and the savior Jesus Christ to the Son. Here there is the additional consideration in favor of the view that the Two are distinguished most plainly in the next verse.”

Dr. John Meagher (three PHD's)

“I think it is relevant for me to say that I am a professor of theology and of New Testament at a Roman Catholic institution...and that I think that your publication *Focus on the Kingdom* is theologically important, however much it may be neglected by the sector that I thus represent. You address radically important issues in Christian theology which are entirely appropriate because in fact the theological exercise is only adolescent and in need of further guidance. I think you are doing a good work that I hope will eventually have an impact on my own church tradition. There is much work to be done before we can, collectively, think clearly, and I am glad that your magazine's honesty about these things is so unflinching. What you are doing strikes me as a very important contribution. And I thank you for it.” (2002)

Worship

“Worship was sometimes offered to Christ and prayer addressed to him. Some indefiniteness attaches to this subject, partly owing to the two senses of the Gk. *Proskuneo*.

“It cannot be proved in any of the cases where *proskuneo* is used of Jesus that anything more than an act of homage and humble obeisance is intended. Josephus uses the word of the High Priests (BJ, iv 5. 2)... The physical act of prostration in profound humility and as rendering great honor is all that can be meant... The prayers of the saints are presented to him (Rev. 5:8) and songs are sung in honor of him (9. 11, 12). 2 Cor 12: 8, 9 Paul speaks of praying to Christ (lord).” (*HDB*, Vol. 4, p. 943, W.F. Adeney)

William Barclay on John's human Jesus:

“The blood at the cross was the final unanswerable proof [for John] that Jesus was a real man with a real body. Here was the answer to the gnostics with their ideas of phantoms and spirits and unreal manhood. Here was proof that Jesus was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh” (*Comm.* II, p. 304)

Dr. Heinrich Wendt on John 17:3:

“Jesus is not speaking in John 17:3 about eternal life, as to its *essence*, but about how eternal life is to be obtained. ‘Jesus is the resurrection’ means that Jesus is the answer to the question about how we get resurrected... **his words are the means to achieving eternal life (6:63)**... John 17:3 tells us that the knowledge of God and Messiah is the exclusive and perfect means of obtaining eternal life... Jesus was sent to impart life for ever... in 6:63 he was conscious that a divine spiritual power operated [energized]

through his preaching – a power shared in by all who received his message in faith” (*Teaching of Jesus*, p. 244-247) [Cp. I Thess. 2:13]

Dr. Bultmann, *Primitive Christianity*.(1956)

“The proclamation of Jesus must be considered within the framework of **Judaism**. **Jesus was not a ‘Christian’ but a Jew**, and his preaching is couched in the thought forms and imagery of Judaism” (p. 71).

Isidore Epstein, *Judaism*, 1959

“Philo’s conception of the logos was totally alien to Judaism. The God of the Bible is a living God, not the impersonal being of Greek metaphysics. He does employ intermediaries to execute His will, but is certainly not inactive Himself. Furthermore the conception of the Logos as a second God seemed to impair the absolute monotheism of the Jewish religion... all this accounts for the little influence Philo exerted on Jewish thought. His works were however studied eagerly by Church Fathers who found in them much material for the synthesis of Jewish and Greek thought that came to be known as Christian theology” (p. 198).

Basil of Caesarea, on holy spirit:

“We confess one God, **not in number** but in nature”

Gregory of Nazianzus:

“The divine is **indivisible in its divisions**” (*Oration* 31, 14).

Dr. J. S Whale, *Christian Doctrine*, 1952

“Christian thought, working with the data of the NT and **using Greek philosophy** as its instrument, constructed the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. It acknowledged in the Godhead, **not one Individual**, nor three Individuals, but a personal unity...

“The systematic thought of **the church** inevitably involved **a further definition of monotheism [i.e., goes beyond Jesus]**, an elaboration of the unitary conception of the Godhead, not in terms of Tritheism but of Triunity.”

Dr. Gromachi

“Nor did Jesus ever use ‘we’ or ‘us’ in reference to his theanthropic [God-Man] person. **He always used ‘I’ or ‘me’ because he was just one person**” (*The Virgin Birth: A Biblical Study of the Deity of Jesus Christ*)

[God defines Himself as the Divine “I,” thousands and thousands of times, because He wants us to know that He is one divine Person, not Three. “I will be what I will be,” Exodus 3:14. Jesus never claimed to be the “I am” of Exodus. For Jesus “I am he” means I **am the Messiah**.” John 4:26.]

[God also described himself as ‘I’ and ‘Me’ ‘He’ because He was one Person. Thousands of singular personal pronouns tell us that God is a single Person. This elementary fact of language known to all has been submerged and drowned out by the massive counter-power of ecclesiastical authority.]

Dr. Harold O.J. Brown, *Heresies*, 1984

“There was a **transition** within biblical monotheism, itself: from **the unitary monotheism of Israel [and of Jesus!]** to the Trinitarianism of the Council of Chalcedon. The difference was symbolized by the transition from the prayer ‘**Hear O Israel the Lord our God is one Lord**’ to the confession of the Athanasian Creed, ‘we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.’

“Was the transition from the personal monotheism of Israel to the tripersonal theism of Nicea a legitimate development of OT revelation? **Christians affirm that it is**, holding that Nicea represents a fuller unfolding and not a distortion of the self-disclosure of the God of Israel... a valid and necessary interpretation of the claims of Jesus Christ.” (p. 341).

Me on Harold O.J. Brown:

If the Trinity was a valid interpretation of the claims of Jesus Christ, how is it that Jesus’ own claim was that he fully believed in the Shema of Israel (Mark 12:29) which Brown *admits* was unitary monotheism.?

The evidence shows that Christians have “progressed” beyond Jesus, and 2 John 7-9 warns against going beyond the teaching of Jesus. Jesus’ teaching — his affirming of the unitarian creed of Israel — remains as a witness against Trinitarianism. Why don’t Christians follow Christ? Christians are supposed to follow Jesus and sound like him!

Luther on Isaiah 48:16, still used by some to support the Trinity:

“This passage has been amazingly darkened. The Jews understand it of the prophet and this opinion I adopt...It will not validly support the mystery of the Trinity.”

Dr. Joseph Klausner on Messiah:

“Paul the Jew did not go so far as to call Jesus ‘God’” (*Messianic Idea*, p. 528).

Klausner on the false development:

“The second step was to identify Jesus with the Word [losing the message behind the messenger] by which the world was created acc. to Judaism Aboth 5:1), or with the Logos which for Philo is a sort of angelic being, This identification we find in John [no]. It was natural that Gentiles whom Paul brought into Christianity should take the third and final step and make Jesus a God-Man, one Person with two natures, God and man at the same time. Thus Jesus’ Messiahship was gradually obscured. Jesus the Messiah gave way to Jesus the God-man or the God Jesus. And matters finally reached such a pass that the name Christ became the essential cognomen of Jesus (Jesus Christ and not Jesus the Messiah) The Messiahship of Jesus became secondary to his deity” (*Messianic Idea*, p. 528).

Dr. W. A. Brown, *Outline of Christian Theology*

“**Steps to the Trinity**: The first is the identification of the preexistent Christ with the Logos of Greek philosophy. 2) Origen’s doctrine of eternal generation of the Son. 3) the victory at Nicea of the Athanasian formula ‘of the same substance.’

150 AD “In the theology of Justin and the apologists we note a change of emphasis. Here the preexistent Christ is identified with the Logos of **Greek philosophy**, and whatever the philosophers have attributed to the latter is affirmed of Christ. The **human Jesus falls into the background** and the marks of limitation in his life [he is ignorant of the day of his return] are either overlooked or explained away. The Catholic fathers vindicate the orthodoxy of the Logos and against the simple Messianic christology [Matt. and Luke give this in detail] and so determine the lines of the **later dogmatic** development.”

Finally note the brilliant testimony of the three young men about to be burned alive by Nebuchadnezzar for refusing belief in other than the God of Israel. The LXX of Dan 3:17 (cp John 17:3!) reads “our one Lord...will save us.”

One Lord is one Person! Three can never make one.

The Amplified Bible, Galatians 3:20: “God is only one Person.”

Dr. Alister McGrath (from my *Jesus was Not a Trinitarian*)

The ultimate admission!

Attempts to sustain a Trinitarian view of God from Scripture are unimpressive and often confusing. A leading modern exponent of the Trinity, Alister McGrath, rightly tells us that Jesus Christ reveals God. He makes no mention of Jesus' express revelation of God as the One God of Israel. He notes that one can find three examples in the whole New Testament of the term "God" being applied to Jesus. McGrath attributes the sparseness of references to Jesus as "God" to the fact that the writers were mostly Jews. But, one might ask, weren't they also authentic Christians, and did they not know which God to worship? Were they not apostolic exponents of the Christian faith? McGrath says:

"The New Testament was written against a background of the **strict monotheism** of Israel... Given the strong reluctance of New Testament writers to speak of Jesus as "God," because of their background in the strict monotheism of Israel, these three affirmations are of considerable significance" [John 1:1; 20:28; Heb. 1:8].²

Dr. McGrath's remarks provide eloquent evidence that Jesus and his followers did not alter the Jewish creed. If they were strongly reluctant to speak of Jesus as God, could this not simply be because their creed, affirmed by Jesus, forbade them to call anyone but the Father the supreme God? They show no sign of being Trinitarians. Nor, of course, did Jesus.

The three examples of the word "God" for Jesus, as compared with over 1300 references to the Father as "God" in the New Testament, are easily explained.³ They provide no justification at all for departing from the creed of Jesus, who believed that "The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark 12:29).

When it comes to the Trinity itself McGrath remarks:

The casual reader of Scripture will discern a mere two verses in the entire Bible which seem, at first glance, to be capable of a trinitarian interpretation: Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14. Both these verses have become deeply rooted in the Christian consciousness... Yet these two verses, taken together or in isolation, can hardly be thought of as constituting a doctrine of the Trinity.⁴

This is a significant admission. McGrath then goes on to give us twenty pages of post-biblical historical development of the Trinity. He has only a page and a half to offer us for its biblical foundation. Then comes this amazing statement. How securely does he really find the Trinity in the New Testament?

The doctrine of the Trinity can be regarded as the outcome of a process of sustained and critical reflection on the pattern of divine activity revealed in Scripture, and continued in Christian experience. *This is not to say that Scripture contains a doctrine of the Trinity*; rather, Scripture bears witness to a God who demands to be understood in a trinitarian manner. We shall explore the evolution of the doctrine and its distinctive vocabulary in what follows.⁵

I suggest that Dr. McGrath's faith is rooted firmly in post-biblical tradition, against his own Protestant principle of *sola scriptura*. He seems internally conflicted. There is no doctrine of the Trinity in the Bible, he admits, and yet in its pages, God demands belief in the Trinity.

²Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Blackwell, 2006, 280, 281.

³John 20:28 is in the context of Jesus saying he is going to ascend to "my God and your God" (v. 17). Thomas had failed to recognize that in seeing Jesus one was seeing God at work (14:7, 9). Thomas' exclamation "My Lord and my God!" beautifully summarizes his realization that in meeting his Lord Jesus, he is also meeting the One God who is at work in him. The address is to both "my Lord" (the Messiah) and "my God," the God of Jesus and of Thomas. See further Appendix 1.

⁴McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 248.

⁵Ibid., 249, emphasis added.

I invite some prolonged reflection on the statement italicized above: “This is not to say that Scripture contains a doctrine of the Trinity.” Yet God “demands to be understood in a Trinitarian manner.” There is curious illogicality and irrationality at work here. Can anyone explain how the absence of a Trinitarian doctrine in the Bible is good evidence that God demands to be worshipped as a Trinity? If Scripture is taken as the foundation of faith, as Protestants claim, its pages yield no information about “God in three Persons.” The God of Jesus and of the New Testament is a single divine Person, the Father of Jesus and of Christians.

Frank admissions about the creed of the earliest Christians are found frequently in standard works on the New Testament: “The first Christians were orthodox Jews who had been brought up to believe that God was one. They never abandoned their belief that God was one, but they gradually came to understand the oneness of God in a new way.”⁶ But was that novelty justified? Were later disciples of Jesus authorized to abandon his unitarian creed?

Hebraic Theism presupposed by the Christian Movement (Rawlinson)

“Our Lord Jesus Christ was a Jew and the Christian movement was in its beginnings a movement within Judaism. Even the fourth gospel, written as many scholars believe, specially for the purposes of showing Jesus to the Greeks (John 12:20-21), is emphatic in its assertion that ‘salvation is from the Jews’ (John 4:22). Through all the stages of its Hellenization [who said that this is legitimate?!], Christianity presupposes and takes for granted that Jewish belief in God. Its distinctive spiritual dynamic is lost whenever for practical purposes the living God of religion is lost behind the abstractions of philosophical theology. And belief in the living God was the gift of Judaea to the world.”

Finally, a note on the importance of Jesus and the Book of Revelation:

“Nothing is more important for an understanding of the author’s [Jesus’s] mental and literary processes [mind of Jesus] than a close study of the OT. Revelation is full of OT allusions from beginning to end...Out of the total number 404 verses in the book about 265 verses contained OT language, and about 550 references are made to Old Testament passages. One of the most simple cases is the prophetic denunciation of the fall of Babylon in chapter 18. It is composed almost wholly of material taken from the prophetic world of OT prophecy in Isaiah 13, 14, and Jeremiah 50, 51, Tyre, Isaiah 23, Ezekiel 26 to 28 and to a slight degree Edom, Isaiah 34, even the admonition that might seem to have direct reference to the historical situation, ‘come forth my people out of her,’ Rev. 18:4, is directly borrowed from the prophetic utterances, Jeremiah 51:6, 9, 45, Isaiah 50:8, Isaiah 48:20, 52:11, and has there rather than here its historical explanation.

“This chapter does not make the impression of being a laborious patchwork; it has the unity of the sermon and a high degree of impressiveness and seems to be the work of one **whose mind is filled with the language of prophecy [Jesus’ mind]** and who draws abundantly and of course consciously from his storehouse, yet with freedom and from a strong inner impulse of his own, and elaborates with his own conceptions the themes which the prophetic words contain. He [Jesus] makes out of the whole a product in a real sense new, a poetical whole. But what shall we say of his putting this product into the mouth of Jesus [God did that!]

“The allusions which Jesus gives in Revelation agree in part with the Hebrew, in part with the LXX, Westcott Hort mark 33 references as distinctive from Hebrew, 15, as from the LX X, 5 are marked Hebrew and LX X viz four references to Exodus 19:16, 4:5, 8:5, 11:19, 16:18 and one to Zechariah 3:1 and following, 12:9 cites 9:20, 10:5, 13:7, 20:4 citations from Daniel which follow, Theodotian (Greek) more closely than LX X.

⁶Colin Chapman, *The Case for Christianity*, Eerdmans, 1981.

Comment from *The Abomination of Desolation in Prophecy*, by Desmond Ford, doctorate supervised by F.F. Bruce. Ford quotes Torrey on how **Jesus' mind assumes the OT Messianic program in Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21:**

"Jesus has obviously viewed the times of Antiochus (167 BC) as pre-figurative of what lay ahead. Furthermore, Jesus has taken elements from the several presentations of Daniel to express his convictions, citing from Daniel 7, 8, nine, 9, 11 and 12. Some of Torrey's remarks are interesting in this particular. He notes that the Gospels take into account **the Old Testament program of the end.** Then Torrey proceeds to set forth his understanding of that program: First of all, according to the prophets a hostile Army is to capture and devastate Jerusalem [Luke 21:1]. Half of the inhabitants will be carried away into captivity, and yet it will continue to be a Jewish city, Zechariah 12:3 (LXX) 13 and 14:2. Thereupon will follow a season of wars of famine and pestilence of **unexampled tribulation**, including a persecution of princes = Daniel 12:1 which will continue for "a time, times, and half a time," 12:7. This interval is to be especially a time of missionary activity. The truth must be proclaimed first to the Jews then to the Gentiles in every land (Matt. 24:14), in preparation for the scenes described in Isaiah 45:14; 49:22ff. 60:3 to 14, 66:19ff. And in other similar passages, when the saved of all the peoples of the earth join the Israelites in worship of the one God [=the Kingdom on earth]. Finally, the hostile nations will unite their forces to **make an end of Jerusalem (Zech. 12, 13, 14)** and the religion of Israel. That onslaught will be preceded by warning portents in the heavens and on earth, Joel 2:30ff, 3:4. The heavenly hosts will encounter them in the valley of Jehoshaphat. The Messiah will come in the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13ff.) and at [after being at] the right hand of Yahweh (Isaiah 41:12 ff. 45:1, Habakkuk 3:13, Psalm 110:5) will see the destruction of the last enemies of Israel." Then the Kingdom of God will begin as the new world order on earth.

I add this: This precis of the Old Testament picture of the end is certainly that of the pattern given in the New Testament itself. For example, the author of the Revelation 11:1-2ff [Jesus]. speaks of the holy city which is being attacked and *then trodden down for 3 1/2 years, during which the church witnesses to the gospel of Christ before the nations.* The finishing of that testimony is succeeded by a final attack from the beast [antichrist] out of the abyss, the beast which had formerly attacked and then retired for a season. "In the time of the fourth beast of course, understood by the Jews of the first century as the Roman Empire the great world catastrophe is to come: the last King of the last Empire presses Israel and will bring an army against Jerusalem, Dan. 9:26; 11:31. He will set up the abomination of desolation in the holy place and he will exalt himself, and at last he will plant his tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain but he shall come to his end and none will help him (Dan. 11:45). Then the resurrection and Kingdom (Dan. 12:2).

Who was the enemy who was destined to come to his end in the manner described? Certainly no one thus far known to history. Must it not be the Roman Emperor city which must indeed be taken and devastated following the capture of the city and the death of the empire's Gentile monarch "there will be a time of trouble; the world powers in their last throes will do terrible things." Alders believes that the Olivet discourse discusses two themes the **destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the age (Cp Matt 24:3).** Thus he looks upon the Roman invasion as a shadow the final onslaught of Antichrist [at the Parousia], and so takes a position that the Roman invasion was a manifestation of Antichrist, though a manifestation which was to swell into greater dimensions, eventually enshrining supernatural events. Weiss says **"Already Jesus himself has thought of the future in terms of OT Jewish eschatology."**

Jesus knew of trouble in the temple at the end-time, an invasion at the end time of Jerusalem and temple, Great Tribulation (Dan 12:1=Matt. 24:21), and immediately after that (Matt. 24:29, MK 13:19) the Parousia, second coming. Even Jesus did not know (Acts 1:7) the long stretches of time that might elapse (now nearly 2000 years!) But Jesus knew what Zechariah and other prophets, especially Daniel had taught about trouble in the Temple, Gt Trib. and Second Coming. Try that model!