

The
TRINITY

**DIVINE MYSTERY
OR
PAGAN MYTH?**

THE TRINITY—DIVINE MYSTERY or PAGAN MYTH?

Perhaps on no doctrine are the differing sects of Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant, more agreed than on that of the trinity. Men have been anathematized, excommunicated, and persecuted to the extent of being roasted alive, all because they refused to believe in the trinity.

Says the *Catholic Encyclopedia*: "The Trinity is the term employed to signify the central doctrine of the Christian religion. . . . 'The Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three Gods, but one God.' . . . The Persons are co-eternal and co-equal: all alike are uncreated and omnipotent."

How can there be three Gods and yet but one God? How can there be three Omnipotents? The claim is made that the trinity is a divine mystery and therefore cannot be comprehended. True, some things we cannot comprehend; such as how God always existed. But to hold such is both reasonable and Scriptural; in fact, to hold otherwise is but to raise more questions. But is the trinity Scriptural and reasonable?

Pagan Origin

The term "trinity" is not found in the Bible; and first toward the end of the second century did it creep into ecclesiastical writings. It became the chief doctrine of the newly adopted state religion at the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, when its presiding officer, the pagan emperor Constantine, championed it.

Even apart from what political considerations may have entered, Constantine doubtless had no difficulty in deciding for the trinity, as it was a part of the popular pagan philosophy of Plato. Not that it began with Plato. Far from it. Actually it goes back to the time of Nimrod, the "mighty hunter before the LORD", the grandson of Ham. (Genesis 10:9) He mar-

ried his own mother and was later deified. His mother and wife Semiramis was also deified and so the ancient Babylonians had a triad of deities, Nimrod, as both the father and the son, and Semiramis, the mother.

According to the historian Hislop: "The recognition of the trinity was universal in all the ancient nations of the world." And says the *Religious Dictionary* (Abbott), "Trinity is a very marked feature in Hindooism, and is discernible in Persian, Egyptian, Roman, Japanese, Indian and the most ancient Grecian mythologies." In one of India's ancient cave-temples was the inscription: "One God, three forms."

Taoism has its trinity or triad of gods with its founder, Lao-tse, occupying second place. The Mahayana Buddhists also have a trinity, a triple-bodied deity, Trikaya. Some Japanese worship a three-headed deity, San Pao Fuh. In Vedic writings is found Agni, "the three-headed fire god" of sun, fire and lightning.

The following table lists some of the various triads or trinities, showing the deities that comprise them:

Egyptian	Serapis (the bull)	Isis (the cow-moon)	Horus (the child)
Babylonian	Anu	Enlil	Ea
Zoroastrian	Ormuzd	Anahita	Mithra
Hindu	Brahman	Vishnu	Shiva
Buddhist	Buddha	Bodhisat	Gotama
Grecian	Zeus	Athene	Apollo
Scandinavian	Odhin	Thor	Frey

(Hopkins' *Origin & Evolution of Religion*, pp. 293-307)



ASSYRIAN STATUE
SUPPOSEDLY NIMROD

No Scriptural Support

The fact that the Scriptures frequently associate the Father, the Son and the holy spirit together does not of itself prove that the three are coequal, co-eternal, etc. At most it indicates a condition of unity or complete harmony.

The favorite text to prove the trinity has been 1 John 5:7, it being the only one in the Bible stating: "the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." However, this phrase has been rejected as spurious by all modern Bible authorities. It is not found in such authoritative manuscripts as the Alexandrine, the Sinaitic, the Vatican, and many manuscripts of the Catholic Vulgate. In fact, it did not creep into any Greek manuscript until more than 1,300 years after John wrote his epistle!

Another text used to support the trinity is John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." At best this would prove a duality, but not a trinity. However, the Greek text shows the definite article before the first term "God" but not before the second one, and so we find modern translations reading "and the Word was divine". (*Goodspeed; Moffatt*) Or, "The Word was with God, and the Word was a god."
—*New World Trans.*

Further support for the trinity doctrine is claimed by Jesus' words as found at John 10:30: "I and my Father are one." Here again note that a duality and not a trinity is involved. That no equality but only oneness in purpose was intended by Jesus is apparent from his prayer in behalf of his followers: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."—John 17:21.

"God was manifest in the flesh" is another text used to support the trinity. (1 Timothy 3:16) However, note that modern translations substitute "he"

for "God", the pronoun referring to Christ Jesus.—See *American Standard Version; Moffatt; Good-speed; Rotherham.*

If the Son is coeternal with and uncreated by the Father, why is he called "the firstborn of every creature", "the beginning of the creation of God," whereas his Father is said to be "from everlasting to everlasting"? (Psalm 90:2; Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14) And if coequal and omnipotent with God why did he say: "I can of mine own self do nothing" and "my Father is greater than I"? And how can one God be two witnesses?—John 5:30; 8:17; 14:28.

Trinity Unreasonable

The Son learned "obedience by the things which he suffered". Obedience to whom? Himself? And when he prayed "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" did he mean not as I will but as *I* will? It simply does not make sense! And when he thus prayed to his Father was he talking to himself? "Christ pleased not himself." But he did please God. If Christ is also God then Christ did please himself. He told the Devil that he could worship only the true God, Jehovah. Did he engage in worshiping himself?—Matthew 4:10; 26:39; Romans 15:3; Hebrews 5:8.

And what about the holy spirit ("ghost")? Can a person be poured out on others? Can people be



OR



HOW
DOES
IT
ADD UP
TO YOU
?

baptized *with* a person? And if he is equal with the Father and the Son, why so little mention of him? Stephen and John saw the Father and the Son in heavenly visions, but not the "Holy Ghost". Why?—Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:17; 7:55; Revelation 5:1-6.

God says: "Come now, and let us reason together." (Isaiah 1:18) Advocates of the trinity teaching admit that it is "most impenetrable to reason", and the foregoing is but representative of the abundant testimony proving that it is also unscriptural. Briefly the Bible shows that there is just one true God, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things. (1 Corinthians 8:6) And the holy spirit (Greek, *pneuma*: literally—wind) is God's active force sent forth to accomplish his purposes.—Zechariah 4:6.

"EACH TREE IS KNOWN BY ITS OWN FRUIT"

Dedicated to the peace and unity of all persons of good will of whatever race or nation the book *What Has Religion Done for Mankind?* examines the fruits of the major religions of mankind in the light of the reliable criterion, the Bible. It gives further information regarding the trinity teaching as found in both Eastern and Western religions and traces the history of religion from the time when there was but the one true religion on earth to the present, and points with confidence to the time when again there will be but one true religion. Containing 352 pages, with scripture and subject indexes, it is bound in beautiful canary-yellow cover, gold-leaf stamped, and is available on a contribution of fifty cents.

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