

## THE ONLY GOD IS ONE PERSON

### GOD'S DESCRIPTION OF HIMSELF IS AS A SINGULAR PERSON

It is the Trinitarian proposition that because God calls Himself “I am” that Jesus must be God because he said in John 8:58 “before Abraham was I am” and therefore making a second person in the God-head. However, the two phrases are quite different as is shown in STUDY 8. Nevertheless, God speaks of Himself as a single person in Exodus:

❖ ““Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is *his name*?’ Then what shall I tell them?” God said to Moses, “**I am** who I am (Or ‘**I will be what I will be**’). This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (*Ex. 3:13, 14*).

Here, in the Hebrew, the grammar of these pronouns and verbs is singular, thereby showing that God speaks of Himself as a singular person. This is a very important fact for those seeking to know if God is one, two or three persons.

### THE SINGULAR PERSON YAHWEH IS THE ONE GOD

Personal pronouns indicate the number of PERSONS speaking or being spoken about. So how many persons must there be in Yahweh God according to God’s statement in Isaiah?

❖ “Thus says Yahweh...**I** am the first and **I** am the last...there is **no God except me**” (*Isa. 44:6 NJB*).

Evidently Yahweh is only one person and not the very alien concept of multiple personalities within one essence as Trinitarianism states. However, when we look at the entire Bible there are more than **20,000 singular personal pronouns and verbs attributed to God** (e.g. *Deut. 4:35; Ex. 20:3-5; Matt. 4:10; Matt. 19:4*) indicating that He is a **single person**. If the Scriptures teach Trinitarianism then all references to the PERSONS of God require the use of plural personal pronouns and verbs. Yet this never occurs.

NOTE: The “we/us” passages (Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7 and Isaiah 6:8) all have a natural explanation as found in 1 Kings 22:19, 23; Job 15:8 and Jeremiah 23:18 showing that God is speaking, **not within Himself**, but so as to include others – most likely the angels.

#### YAHWEH ALONE

Whenever one is told that someone did something alone, one never imagines that three persons did it, but rather it is common sense to think that a single person did that particular deed. This is true of the picture that the Bible gives us concerning Yahweh God:

❖ “...the LORD [*YHWH*] **alone** guided him, no foreign god was with him” (*Deut 32:12*).

If there were two or three persons within the name “Yahweh” then no one individual could be said to be alone. So the word ‘alone’ refers to a single individual, in this case Yahweh. There are many Hebrew Scripture texts that show us that Yahweh is one person because of His being alone in His actions: Ex. 22:20; 2 Kings 19:15, 19; Neh. 9:6, Ps. 4:8, 72:18, 83:18, 148:13; Isa. 2:11 and 44:24.

### THE SHEMA – YAHWEH IS ONE AND NOT THREE

The Hebrew word *shema* means “hear” and is the first word in Deuteronomy 6:4 which gives Israel’s declaration of the oneness and uniqueness of God:

❖ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD (Heb. **Yahweh**) our **God** (Heb. *Elohim*), the LORD (*Yahweh*) is **one**”  
(*Deut. 6:4 NIV*).

Here the NIV is carefully following the Hebrew grammatical structure as do most other translations and so leads to the conclusion that God is one person because he is Yahweh and “Yahweh is one.” This usage of the Hebrew words **Yahweh** and *Elohim* in Deuteronomy 6:4 leads Trinitarian apologist Murray Harris to conclude that:

[In Heb. 1] *o theos* [God] was understood to be ‘God, the Father.’ Similarly the differentiation made between *o theos* as the one who speaks in both eras, 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 by the prophets. That is to say that 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.’ Such a conclusion is entirely consistent with the regular NT usage of *o theos*. It would be inappropriate for *Elohim* [God, 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.

*Jesus as God*, p. 47n.

Furthermore, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary* notes that: “There is only one supreme and true God, and he is a Person.” This from Christians is in addition to the fact that Judaism today recognizes the Shema as referring to a unipersonal God and never to two or more persons.

#### THE ONE GOD IS THE FATHER

Of course, Trinitarians state that they only worship one God, but that He comprises three persons of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet this latter statement is in direct contradiction of Malachi’s statement that only the Father is the God:

❖ “Have we not all **one** (Heb. *echad*) **Father** (in the national sense)? Has not **one** (Heb. *echad*) **God** created us?” (*Mal. 2:10*).

Because the Hebrew word ‘*echad*’ is a numerical absolute the term “one Father” obviously refers to a singular person. Clearly the term “one God” is in the same sense as the term “one Father” and so also refers to a singular person. God is also the Father of Messiah in the personal sense in Psalm 89:26, 2 Samuel 7:14 and 1 Chronicles 17:14.

#### THERE IS NO DISCONTINUITY FROM OLD TO NEW TESTAMENT REGARDING THE IDENTITY OF GOD

Some Trinitarians propose that the ancient Jewish belief in a singular person as God was superseded with a further revelation as to how many make up God according to the New Testament i.e. that Jesus was then revealed as “God the Son.” However, this idea falls down when one examines the statements by the New Testament writers, which show that they never contradicted the Jewish understanding that Yahweh was the one person God of Israel and was the Father of the nation. For instance Paul says:

❖ “I confess to you [*Governor Felix*], that according to the way, which they call a sect, I worship **the God of our fathers...**” (*Acts 22:14*).

❖ “Or is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since **God is one**” (*Rom. 3:29*).

❖ “You believe that **God is one...**” (*James 2:19*).

❖ “...you receive glory from one another and do not seek glory from **the only God**” (*John 5:44*).

In confrontation with the Jewish leaders, Jesus did not contradict their recognition that only the Father was God:

❖ “We [*the Jews*] have **one Father - God**” (*John 8:41*).

Jesus further stated that the God of the Jews was his own Father:

❖ “It is my **Father** (*in the personal sense*) who glorifies me, of whom you [*the Jews*] say, He is our **God**” (*John 8:54*).

## JESUS WAS NOT A TRINITARIAN

### JESUS REPEATS THE SHEMA

One must ask: If Trinitarianism were true then surely Jesus would have known it was true and so believed and taught the Trinity. However, as a good Jew Jesus confirmed the ancient belief stated in the Shema that God, who is Yahweh in the Shema, is one person. This was revealed when:

❖ “...one of the scribes...asked [*Jesus*], ‘Which commandment is first and most important of all [in its nature]?’ Jesus answered, ‘**The first and principle one of all commands is:** Hear, O Israel, The Lord (***Yahweh*** from *Deut. 6:4*) our God is **one** (Gk *eis* indicating one person) Lord; and you shall love the Lord ...’” (*Mark 12:28, 29 Amplified Bible*).

❖ “And the scribe said to him, ‘You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that he is **one** (*eis*) and there is no other besides him’” (*Mark 12:32 ESV*).

*Both Jesus and this scribe are here affirming the Unitarian creed of Deuteronomy 6:4 i.e. that Yahweh is one person which also means that God is one person.*

## “GOD THE FATHER” IS NOT A ‘FIRST PERSON’ OF THE TRINITY

Because the Scriptures use the term “God *the* Father,” Trinitarians assume that Jesus must be *God the Son* and that there must be a *God the Holy Spirit*:

❖ “For on him [*the Son of Man*] **God the Father** has set his seal” (*John 6:27*).

### THERE IS NO ‘GOD THE SON’ OR ‘GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT’

However, because there is no mention of a *God the Son* or *God the Holy Spirit* anywhere in the Scriptures, the biblical phrase “**God the Father**” (occurs 15 times in the NT) gives no logical reason to assume that this phrase refers to a first person. In fact, there is no “**God the Father**” *in the Trinitarian sense* which would imply a second or third person according to the following comparisons:

### THE COMPLETE GOD = THE FATHER

- In John 8:42 Jesus says: “I came from God.”
- In John 16:28 Jesus says: “I came from the Father...”

❖ “I am ascending to **my Father** and **your Father**, to **my God** and **your God**” (*John 20:17*).

❖ “...you have **one Father**, who is in heaven” (*Matt. 23:9*).

*Here Jesus does not distinguish between “the Father” and “God.” This causes confusion in Trinitarianism: Is only the Father all of God or is the Father only part of God? Scripturally only the Father is all of God.* Furthermore, the phrase “**God the Father**,” as expressed in Galatians 1:3, Ephesians 6:23, 2 Timothy 1:2 and Titus 1:4, is used in these verses in similar contexts to the phrase “**God our Father**” in the following greetings and means the same with reference to the One God who is our Father.

### GOD AND JESUS ARE DISTINCT IN THE GREETINGS IN THE LETTERS

In the majority of the letters in the New Testament the various introductory salutations used make a total distinction between God and Jesus. The Father is shown to be God and Jesus is shown to be the Messiah. For example in Romans 1:7 Paul says: “Peace from **God our Father** and **the Lord Jesus Christ**.” *This phrase is also found in 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1,*

2; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:1:2 and Philemon 1:3. These all show that the Father only is God and that Jesus is a separate person to God.

Also the phrase “**God the Father**” contextually means the same as “**God and Father:**”

- ❖ “...according to the foreknowledge of **God the Father** ... Blessed be the **God and Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:2, 3).
- ❖ “...one **God and Father** of all, who is over all” (Eph. 4:6).
- ❖ “...before our **God and Father**” (1 Thess. 3:13).

#### THERE IS NO ‘GOD THE TRINITY’

In all the immediately above texts Jesus is not referring to a “God the Father” and a separate “God the Trinity.” For all the events recorded in the Scriptures there is no indication that some were performed by a Trinitarian version of “God the Father” in contrast to some being performed by other separate parts of God or the full Trinity. Examples are: the Genesis Creation, the Flood, and the parting of the Red Sea. Regarding the Genesis creation Genesis 1:2 says “the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” but we know it was God who was responsible for the whole creation (Isa. 44:24) by his word-spirit-power (Ps. 33:6, Job 33:4, and Jer. 10:12). So when God’s voice is heard at the time of Jesus’ baptism it is not the voice of only part of God—a Trinitarian God the Father; but rather it is the One only true God Himself who speaks and sends His spirit on the fully human Jesus. If the Spirit were almighty God and if Jesus were almighty God that would really make two further almighty Gods in addition to the true almighty God. This would no longer be the monotheism of the Bible. Again Trinitarian Murray Harris establishes that:

When *o theos* is used, we are to assume that the NT writers have the Father in mind unless the context makes this sense of *o theos* impossible. *Jesus as God*, p. 47.

Please see Study 7 to examine the two times that the context makes the word *theos* a reference to Jesus.

#### ARE THERE TWO GODS IN TRINITARIANISM?

When Trinitarians vacillate between the two different definitions of God i.e. sometimes **God is the Father** or at other times **God is the Trinity** they either cause *confusion* or are positing *ditheism*.

#### ONLY “THE FATHER” IS GOD

“THE FATHER” IS A QUALIFYING TERM FOR “ONE GOD”

- ❖ “Yet, for us there is **one God, the Father**, from whom are all things” (1 Cor. 8:6).

This grammatical construction is called “in apposition” so that the second noun describes the first noun e. g. “Gladstone, *the famous statesman*, was born in Liverpool.” So in 1 Corinthians 8:6 the noun “**Father**” is in apposition to the noun “**God.**” Therefore, *only* “**the Father**” is the “**one God.**”

- ❖ “I have come in my **Father**’s name ... **the only God**” (John 5:43, 44).

**John 17:1, 3:**

“**Father**...you (sing.), **the only true God** and *Jesus Christ* whom you have sent.”

**Galatians 3:20:**

“Now the mediator is not of one, but God **is one** (Gk *eis* = *one person*).”

The Amplified Bible reads: “Yet God is [only] one Person.”

## NOTES ON THE GREEK WORD FOR ONE

- ❖ “For there is one (Gk *eis*) God, also one (Gk *eis*) mediator of God and of men, the man (Gk *anthropos*) Christ Jesus” (1Tim. 2:5).

*Because the Greek word ‘eis’ is a numerical absolute, the term “one mediator” obviously refers to a singular person. Clearly the term “one God” is in the same sense as the term “one mediator” and so also refers to a singular person. Furthermore, the one mediator is called ‘anthropos’ and so is fully human in the same sense as all other humans.*

*EIS (masculine) = ONE PERSON. EN (neuter) = ONE THING.*

## WITH REFERENCE TO GOD, CHRIST AND SPIRIT

(All based on UBS Interlinear Brown and Comfort)

- ❖ “one (*person*) is good” (Matt. 19:17).
- ❖ “for one (*person*) is your Father” (Matt. 23:9).
- ❖ “for the teacher of you is one (*person*), the Christ” (Matt. 23:10).
- ❖ “who is able to forgive sins except the one (*person*) God?” (Mark 2:7).
- ❖ “no one is good except one (*person*) God” (Mark 10:18).
- ❖ “the Lord our God is one (*person*) Lord” (Mark 12:29).
- ❖ “there is one (*person*) and there is not another except him” (Mark 12:32).
- ❖ “they will become one flock with one (*person*) shepherd” (Luke 10:16).
- ❖ “since there is one (*person*) God” (Rom. 3:30).
- ❖ “you believe that one (*person*) is God” (James 2:19).
- ❖ “one (*person*) is lawgiver and judge” (James 4:12).
- ❖ “...and that there is no God except one (*person*)...yet to us there is one (*person*) God, the Father...and one (*person*) Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 8:4, 6).
- ❖ “...one (*person*) Lord, **one (thing)** faith...one (*person*) God and Father of all” (Eph. 4:5).
- ❖ “Because there is one (*person*) bread, we the many are **one (thing)** body for we all partake of the **one (thing)** bread” (1 Cor. 10:17).

*NOTE: In this last passage the first mention of ‘bread’ is metaphorical for the person – Jesus. The last mention is that of the literal bread.*

## CONCLUDING COMMENT

The Scriptures make it very plain that there is only one Almighty God and that He is one person. In OT times He made Himself known as Yahweh, and “Yahweh is one” according to the Shema. Furthermore, some 20,000 singular personal pronouns and verbs are used with reference to Him making it very plain that He is a single person.

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