

The Trinity and God the Father

*“For there are three that bear record in heaven,
the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these
three are one” (1 John 5:7).*

I. There Is Only One God

*“Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer,
the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and
beside me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6).*

Isaiah 44:8; Psalms 9:2; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6

A. One God composed of three parts or Persons

The trinity of the Godhead is sometimes a difficult concept. This is because each Person of the Godhead is dealt with specifically in the New Testament regarding His ministry and characteristics. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to see them as all parts of one individual God. But it is important to understand that there is only one God, and that all three parts are equally God. Each part of the Godhead is distinct, but not independent of the other two. They work together to form a unit.

*“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off
are made nigh by the blood of Christ. . . . For through him
we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father”
(Ephesians 2:13, 18).*

Matthew 28:19; John 1:1, 14

1. The Father is God

Ephesians 4:6; 1 Corinthians 8:6

2. The Son is God

John 5:17–18; 10:30; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8

3. The Holy Ghost is God

Acts 5:3–4

B. Each part of the trinity is defined in the Scriptures

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26–27).

In the creation account of Genesis 1, God is referenced in the singular form in every instance except when it speaks of the creation of man. In that passage God specifically and forcefully refers to Himself in the plural form three times, once for each part of the trinity as we shall see.

God specifically stated “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26). In the next verse, God returns to the singular form indicating that the plural and singular are both proper ways to refer to God. Furthermore, the text goes on to reemphasize that man was created in that image as a singular form (“in his own image”) and in the plural form (“in the image of God”).

In Genesis 2, the Bible gives more specific information on the creation of man in verse 7 where it states:

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust [physical body] of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life [the spirit]; and man became a living soul.”

As you can see, He formed him out of a physical material (dust) fit for the physical realm. He then breathed into man the breath of life. The Hebrew word from which breath is translated (*ruah*), is used consistently throughout the Old Testament to indicate both the Spirit of God and the spirit of man. In this passage we see that man’s spirit was not created, but rather given out of the Spirit of God. The combination of body and spirit then produced a soul. Thus we see that the image of God has a body **like** the Body of God, a soul **like** the Soul of God and a spirit that is **of** the Spirit of God.

1. God has a body best expressed in His Son
 - a. In the Old Testament as Melchizedek: *Hebrews 7:1–3; Genesis 14:18–20*
 - b. In the Old Testament as the Angel of the Lord: *Genesis 16:1–13; 18:1–33; 22:9–12; Exodus 3:1–6*
 - c. In the New Testament as Jesus Christ: *John 1:14*
2. God has a soul best expressed in the Father
Hebrews 10:38; Leviticus 26:11; Jeremiah 9:9; Zechariah 11:8; John 12:27
3. God has a spirit best expressed in the Holy Ghost

The Holy Ghost is almost universally (but incorrectly) referred to as the Holy Spirit. This is probably a result of the problem we have previously mentioned in which the Bible uses the term spirit for any part of the spiritual realm. You should understand, however, that the actual name for the third person of the Godhead is the Holy Ghost.

*Luke 4:1; John 7:39; 14:26; 1 Corinthians 12:3;
2 Timothy 1:14*

II. The Triune Nature of the Godhead

Although there is truly only one God, as we have seen He has three distinguishable Persons. The number three embodies the ultimate characteristics of the Godhead. It is found in His very nature and in the basic construction of the universe He created.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork” (Psalms 19:1).

A. The Godhead is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent

1. The Son best expresses God’s omniscience

*“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”
(Genesis 1:1).*

Omniscience is a term that means all-knowing. God has created everything that is and knows everything there is to know about everything in His creation.

*Genesis 1:7–2:25; John 1:1–3, 14; 16:29–31; 21:17;
Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16; 1 John 3:19–20;
Revelation 4:11*

2. The Father best expresses God's omnipotence

The term omnipotent means all-powerful. The Father has all power, but has temporarily given that to the Son. The Son has been given the responsibility to defeat all of God's enemies and when His mission is completed He will return that power back to the Father.

Matthew 6:13; 28:18; Revelation 19:6; 1 Corinthians 15:22-28; Ephesians 1:19-22

3. The Holy Ghost best expresses God's Omnipresence

Omnipresence means that God is everywhere. There is no place you can go where God is not there.

1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 139:7-8; 2 Timothy 1:14

B. Just as He has three parts, everything in God's whole creation has three components.

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

The components of the universe are space, matter, and time. These are each further broken down into three parts.

1. Space is composed of length, width, and height
2. Matter is composed of solids, liquids, and gases
3. Time is composed of past, present, and future

III. The Trinity in the Old Testament

The doctrine of the Trinity was not revealed until the time of Christ. However, as is often the case with New Testament doctrines, it can be found in the Old Testament once it is read in the light of the New Testament teachings. Armed with this New Testament derived knowledge, we can now look back and see the fullest meaning of several Old Testament passages.

A. The Jewish religion was strongly monotheistic

Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Kings 19:15; Isaiah 44:6, 8; Zechariah 14:9; Malachi 2:10

B. God occasionally referred to Himself in the plural form

Genesis 3:22; 11:5-8

C. Old Testament passages suggest the different roles of the Persons of the Trinity

1. The Father

Psalms 68:4–5; 89:26

2. The Son

Psalms 2:12; 22:1–31; 89:26–27; Isaiah 63:9

3. The Holy Ghost

Isaiah 6:3; 63:10

IV. God the Eternal Father

A. First person of the trinity

B. While all persons of the trinity are equally God, there is a distinct order to the Godhead

*Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 15:24–28;
John 14:16, 26; 16:7, 13–15*

C. Receiver of petitions. Proper prayer is made:

1. To the Father

Luke 11:1–2; Matthew 26:53; John 16:23

2. In the name of the Son.

Because the Lord Jesus died for us, the Father grants our requests made in His name. That is why you will often hear Christians start their prayer with something like “Dear heavenly Father” and end their prayer with something like “in Jesus’ name, amen.”

John 15:16; 16:23, 26–27

3. Through the Holy Ghost

*“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God”
(Romans 8:26–27).*

Jude 20; Luke 12:12

D. Granter of requests

This is why our petitions are brought to the Father.

Ephesians 1:17; Matthew 6:6; James 1:7

E. From everlasting to everlasting

These are very difficult concepts for the human mind to grapple with. We must take it on faith that God had no beginning and will have no ending. He has always existed.

*Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalms 41:13; 90:2;
Revelation 1:8; 22:13*

F. Male gender

Some recent Bible versions have attempted to render God in the neuter, or even in the female gender, but it simply won't fly. God has always, only, emphatically represented Himself as the male gender.

Jeremiah 31:9; Isaiah 54:5; Psalms 47:2, 7

V. God the Father of Israel

A. Known for the first 2430 years after creation primarily as

Almighty God or "I Am"

Exodus 3:14; 6:3; John 8:58–59

B. Known to Israel as Jehovah

Israel knew little or nothing of the second and third persons of the Godhead. They were only revealed after the coming of Jesus Christ. God chose to be known primarily as Jehovah from the time when He called Israel out of bondage in Egypt until the coming of the Son, Jesus Christ.

Exodus 6:3; Psalms 83:18

C. Figuratively referred to Himself as a Husband to Israel

Just as we saw in the last lesson that Jesus referred to Himself as the Bridegroom of the Church, God the Father portrayed Himself as the Husband to an adulterous nation.

Isaiah 50:1; 54:5; Jeremiah 3:8, 20; 31:31–32

VI. The Ministry of God the Father as Revealed in His Names

The part of God revealed to Israel in the Old Testament was primarily God the Father. He figuratively ‘married’ Israel and became her protector, provider, and so on. The Church, on the other hand, is primarily ministered to by God the Son. Just as the Father ‘married’ Israel, the Son is espoused to the Church. We are all part of the bride of Christ in a figurative sense. The Holy Ghost is the part of the Godhead that binds these two groups together, making us all equally the people of God for eternity. As primary minister to Israel, God the Father’s ministry is well expressed in His seven particular names as follows:

A. Jehovah=“He Is” or “I Am”

Because they considered it blasphemy to mispronounce the name of God, the Jewish scribes of the Old Testament purposely inserted another name wherever the name of God was indicated in the original text. The transliteration of that name in the English is Jehovah, the name we use for the Lord of glory, the great I Am. It indicates that He is the greatest force in existence for all eternity

Whenever you see a reference to GOD or the LORD using all capital letters in your King James Bible, that is an indication that the Hebrew text used the word Jehovah in that verse. It is by far the most frequently used name for God in the Old Testament. However, in some cases the translators saw fit to leave the word in it’s untranslated form so there are several references to God using this version of His Personal, Holy Name.

Exodus 6:3; Psalms 83:18; Isaiah 12:2; 26:4;

and as JAH in Psalms 68:4

B. Jehovah-Jireh=“the Lord will provide”

“And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen” (Genesis 22:14).

When God tested Abraham’s faith by asking him to sacrifice his beloved son, Isaac asked his father where the lamb for the burnt offering was. Abraham’s answer was “God will provide himself a lamb” (Gen. 22:8). Later, as Abraham lifted the knife to slay his son, the Lord called out to him and told him not to kill the boy because he had already passed the test of obedience by coming to this point. He then saw a ram stuck in a thicket which the Lord had provided to be offered in Isaac’s stead. This, of course, prefigured the offering of Jesus Christ on the cross in our stead as the “Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Here is another case where the New Testament sheds additional light on an Old Testament passage since God, in the person of Jesus Christ actually did provide Himself as a sacrificial Lamb.

C. Jehovah-Nissi=“the Lord, my banner”

“And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovahnissi” (Exodus 17:15).

When the nation of Israel was in the wilderness, en route to their Promised Land, the nation of the Amalekites attacked them without provocation. In this battle, Moses stood on the top of a hill and held the rod of God in the air. As long as he held the rod up, Israel prevailed in the battle. Whenever he let his arms down, however, the Amalekites prevailed. Moses had to get two helpers to hold his arms up all day until the Amalekites were finally routed. Because of this attack, God promised Israel that one day He would “utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Exo. 17:14). God showed the people that He was a great God to give their allegiance to. From that time on, they could have confidence that they could win every battle fought under the banner of Jehovah.

D. Jehovah-Rophi=“the Lord heals”

“And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee” (Exodus 15:26).

After Israel had finally escaped from Pharaoh and had safely crossed the Red Sea, Moses led them three days journey into the desert of Sinai. When they finally found water, it was not fit for drinking and made those who tried it sick. God then showed Moses a particular tree which he cut down and threw into the water. This, of course, made the water drinkable and the nation survived. God thus proved to the people that He would watch over them and heal them of their diseases.

At that time, God made a great offer to His Chosen nation. He told them that if they would obey Him, He would not allow any diseases to afflict them.

Exodus 23:25; Psalms 41:3–4; 103:3; 147:3

E. Jehovah-Shalom=“the Lord is peace”

“Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites” (Judges 6:24).

After Israel had gotten settled into their Promised Land, they began a cycle where they would turn away from God and therefore come into bondage to a neighboring nation. When the bondage became too wearisome they would call upon the Lord for help. He would then raise up a judge who would lead the people to victory over their oppressors. There would be a revival in the land which would last for a time and then they would come full circle by eventually falling away from God and ignoring His commandments and covenants again.

During one of these periods of oppression, God raised up a man named Gideon to whom He appeared as the Angel of the Lord. God told Gideon that he must lead the nation of Israel to victory over the Midianites. Upon realizing to whom he had just spoken, Gideon became frightened but the Lord spoke to him and said: “Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.” Gideon immediately built an altar and named it after the God that brought peace to him and would soon bring it to His people Israel—Jehovah-shalom.

F. Jehovah-Shammah=“the Lord is there”

*“It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there”
(Ezekiel 48:35).*

The last two names of Jehovah are actually prophetic in nature. Jehovah-shammah refers to the name ascribed to the future city called New Jerusalem. It will be the site of the throne of God and of the Lamb for all eternity. This city will descend from heaven and land on the new Earth that God will create after He has destroyed this present Earth by fire.

*Isaiah 60:19–20; Joel 3:21; John 14:2–3;
Revelation 21:3; 22:3*

G. Jehovah-Tsidkenu=“the Lord our righteousness”

“In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:6).

This is the name given to Jerusalem and to her King the Lord Jesus Christ during the millennium. At that time, Jesus will physically and personally reign over the whole Earth for 1000 years from Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 33:16; Isaiah 45:24