

The Spiritual Rock

By Gerry Watts

" For I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all are baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of **the spiritual Rock** which followed. **Now the Rock was Christ.**"

(1 Corinthians 10:1-4 CV)

There are a number of differing viewpoints within Christendom on the subject of who Jesus Christ of Nazareth really is. Some believe He is absolutely God as well as the Son of God, while others would say He is only the Son of God; then among those who believe He is the Son of God, there are those who believe that He never existed before He was born as the Man Jesus, while others would say that He did pre-exist; while yet others would say that He is not Yahweh (or God), yet He did exist before as a spirit being known as the Angel of the Lord. Which of these is correct, if any?

I believe that the Scriptures are very clear as to who Christ really is for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. We will find that some of the elements of the above are true. Even nature, as well as Scripture, confirms the truth of the relationship that exists between God and His Son. The purpose of this article is to present this evidence from Scripture and nature in a brief, straightforward manner.

Unity, Duality or Trinity?

There are two main camps of doctrine in relation to how we view God and His Son. The most common, and believed to be the most orthodox, is the **Trinity** doctrine, while the other is the **Unitarian** belief. Simply put, the first emphasises the belief that God is revealed in three persons, while the other emphasises that there is only One God. Yet I firmly believe that the truth of the matter lies in between these two doctrines - it is more a **Duality** or Complementary relationship; the double witness of the number **Two**. The unity of God most definitely exists and this is due to the fact that there is only One God, the Father. It is also scripturally correct to refer to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as a testimony of three, but this in itself does not mean that God is a trinity. Let me explain this.

It is evident that there is only One God in the absolute sense, Who is the Supreme One, The Almighty. According to the Greek of John 4:24, **God is Spirit** and therefore has no form; He is invisible in the absolute sense. Hence no one has ever seen God for we cannot literally see Him (John 1:18). As Paul confirms, God gives life and breath to all living things; He is the Source of all creation and He pervades all things; **in Him** we all live and move and exist (Acts 17:24-31). All things are **out of God** (Romans 11:36). He is the Father, the One to Whom we are to direct our worship and our prayers as His children.

Now in the Trinity doctrine, it is believed that the Holy Spirit is a distinct person or entity from God the Father, but this is not actually the case. The truth is simple: **the Holy Spirit is God's Spirit**, or for further clarification, it is His Spirit operating in His creation in a specific way, particularly as it relates to humanity. It is not separate from the Father, and because of this the Holy Spirit can be rightly referred to as 'It' or 'He.' Now in relation to Jesus' birth, the Spirit of God caused the spirit of Christ to be incarnated in the womb of Mary so that He is the unique only begotten Son of God (Luke 1:34-35). The Holy Spirit, the Power of the Most High, **is the power of God the Father**, so that Jesus is the unique begotten Son of God; God is His Father in a special sense. So there isn't a Trinitarian Godhead at all! The work of the Holy Spirit is the work of God Himself, not of some other being or entity or person within some mysterious Godhead. But what about Christ?

Jesus Christ - Man or God?

It is true to say that a simple reading of the New Testament reveals that Christ Jesus is revealed as the Anointed Man (Messiah or Christ) Who is also the Son of God, the Messiah Who is the ultimate Prophet, Priest, King and Judge of Israel and the world, God's Chosen One, and He is to be worshipped as though He were God! He is Lord of all creation. Why is this? Is it because He is the Deity, God Himself, as the Trinity doctrine suggests? Let us look at the words of Paul and John.

Paul clearly says that Christ is the **Image of the invisible God** (Colossians 1:15; also 2 Corinthians 4:4). He is not the invisible God! He is the Image or Representation of His Father. Hebrews 1:3 also reveals that Christ is "the exact Representation of the being of God", or as the Concordant Version has it, "the Emblem of His assumption," that is, Christ is the visible Form or Image or Representation of God. This is why Jesus could say to His disciples, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." (John 14:8-9). The Son is the One Who unfolds the Father to us, hence He is the only begotten God, Who is in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18). But this is only in a relative sense, not in the absolute, for Christ serves Another - His God and Father, whereas God the Father doesn't serve anyone else. He is the Supreme Deity Who is greater than ALL.

In fact, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 reveals that when the Son hands over the perfected kingdom to His Father at the end of the ages, the Son Himself will become subject to God so that God will be All in All.

"...thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power.

For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death. **For He subjects ALL under His feet**. Now whenever He may be saying that ALL is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him (*God*) Who subjects ALL to Him (*Christ*). Now, whenever ALL may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects ALL to Him, **that God may be ALL IN ALL.**" (CV)

Paul also reveals this truth of Christ's unique position in Philippians 2:6-8, yet he tells us something more, much more:

"...Christ Jesus...Who, being inherently in the form of God, **deems it not pillaging to be equal with God**, nevertheless empties Himself, taking the form of a slave, coming to be in the likeness of humanity, and, being found in fashion as a human, He humbles Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (CV)

Paul is revealing to us here that **Christ Jesus as the Son of God was originally in the Form of God appearing as though He were equal to God!** Now if Christ were truly God then He wouldn't need to appear as the equal of God! In the eyes of both Christ and God, this equality is not seen as robbery or stealing or pillaging, because it is His God-given right to appear in the Form of God as the Firstborn Son of all creation! In this Form, He is also credited with creating all things as He was before all things, hence in a figurative sense, He is the Firstborn Son of God's creation (Colossians 1:15-17; John 1:3, 10). Through His resurrection from the dead, Christ is also the Firstborn from among the dead. Therefore, He is the Head of both the Old and the New Creation.

It was this Form that Moses saw.

"With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD." (Numbers 12:8 NIV)

"Mouth to mouth am I speaking with him, and manifestly, not in enigmas, so that he looks at a representation of Yahweh." (Numbers 12:8 CV)

The Hebrew word translated as *form* or *representation* in this verse is the same word translated as *likeness* or *form* in Exodus 20:4 in relation to graven images! There is only One Divine Image or Form or Likeness that should be worshipped - the Son of God. All else is idolatry. It is evident that although Moses spoke with Yahweh, mouth to mouth (or face to face), and he saw the Form of God, nevertheless, he never got to see the details of Yahweh's face due to the Glory cloud (see Exodus 33:11, 20-23). Yet we shall find out that others, like Abraham, did get to see His actual face when He appeared to them as the Messenger of Yahweh.

This truth was being revealed to the chief apostles, Peter, James and John when they were with Jesus on the high mountain (probably Mount Hermon) as He was transfigured before them (Matthew 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36; also 2 Peter 1:16-18). In a vision, Moses and Elijah appeared with the glorified Christ as they became surrounded by the Glory cloud. Both Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, had seen and heard Yahweh on the holy mountain of Sinai (aka Horeb), and here they were with Jesus the Son in His kingdom glory - the very same One Whom they had seen and spoke with on Sinai.

Yet Paul also goes on to tell us in Philippians 2:6-8 that the Creator of all, the Form Who appears equal to God, empties Himself of all His previous glory and position, and His spirit becomes housed in a human body, in which He learns obedience to His Father through what He suffered, offering up His life as though He were a common criminal, dying the accursed death of the cross as a Sacrifice for all. Where else is this kind of Love and Humility found? There is nothing in all the religions of the world that matches this awesome truth of God's Love revealed in Christ. Yet we are also told that God was in Christ when He died on that cross,

intimately sharing the pain, as Christ became the Ultimate Sin Offering for our sakes, even though He Himself was without sin (2 Corinthians 5:18-21).

Jesus confirmed His pre-existent state as the glorious Son of God in His touching prayer before His death.

"And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." (John 17:5 NIV)

This was, and is, His glory as the Son of God, Who is The Form of the Father. He is the same yesterday, today and forever (or for time indefinite); He is Yahweh (literally the 'will-being-was'), the I AM that I AM, the One Who was, and is, and is to come, the Almighty. He encompasses all time, past, present and future, for He is the Beginning and the End.

The Great Complement

Paul also reveals that Christ is the Complement or Fullness of God.

"...Christ, for in Him the entire complement of the Deity is dwelling bodily."

(Colossians 2:9 CV)

Here is the key to Christ's relationship with the Father: **He complements Him or fills that which is lacking!** That's right, without Christ, God could not perfectly reveal Himself to His creation, and He could not begin, let alone complete, His plan for humanity. Everything that God is, is revealed in and through Christ, for He is the entire complement of God, the Deity, dwelling in bodily form. Christ is not the Deity in the absolute sense! He is the Complement of the Deity! ALL the treasures of God's Wisdom and Knowledge are concealed in Christ (Colossians 2:3). He and the Father are one (John 10:29-30). And this is not just referring to His human role as Jesus the Messiah. This is Who He is as the Son of God, Who was before all things!

This truth is represented in two specific visions, where both Daniel and John saw the Messiah approach the One seated on a throne. Daniel saw 'one like a son of mankind' interacting with the 'Ancient of Days' (Daniel 7:13-14), and John saw the Lamb interacting with the One on the throne (Revelation 5). Both the 'Son of Mankind' and the 'Lamb' are representing Christ in His human role as the Anointed One, yet He is also the One Who represents the Father sitting on the throne! He is the One Who dwells in inaccessible light in the heavenlies, in the very Presence of the Majestic Glory in the heavenly Temple! He is at the right hand of the Father as God's Chief Executive of the whole universe, up above all power and authority! He is the very Complement of God!

The Word

John reveals that Christ Jesus is the Word (in Greek, Logos) Who was with (or was toward) God in the beginning, yet the Word was God! (John 1:1-3). This is as far back as we can go - before the beginning of time as we know it. Yet in the Beginning we have the Word, through which all things have been made. It is the audible voice of God. **So the Word of God is a person, a unique spiritual being**

Who is also God! It is the Son of God, the Complement of God, the Image of God. He is The Origin, The Beginning of all creation.

And humanity was created in the image of God! That is, man, in his original form, resembled the Son of God, Who, in turn, perfectly represents God! And it is the ultimate purpose of God to gradually restore humanity to this glory so that there will be numerous sons of God, who will be the image of the Father! The Firstfruits of this glorious destiny of mankind is the Body of Christ Ecclesia - the spiritual Image of the Father! As woman was taken from man, to become not one, but two individuals, who in turn, through marriage and sexual union, become one flesh again, so the Ecclesia was once chosen in Christ (in Unity) to later be born as individuals, who, as the Bride of Christ become one again with Him as His Wife, His Body (Ephesians 5:25-33; 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27).

Yet John also states that the Word became flesh and tabernacles among us (John 1:14). This is declaring the same truth as Paul, but whereas Paul focuses on the Image of God, John focuses on the Word of God. When we place both of them together, we see and hear God in Christ. **John is revealing the awesome truth here that Jesus is one and the same as the Word of Yahweh in the Hebrew Scriptures!** What a revelation! The very same One Who appeared in the Form of God and spoke as the Word of the Lord to the patriarchs and prophets in the Old Testament is the One Who became a human, in flesh and blood, and tabernacled among His people in the form of Jesus of Nazareth!

Many of the Jews knew that Jesus was claiming to be the God of the Hebrew Scriptures when He told them that Abraham had seen Him. They said to Him, "You're not even fifty years old and you've seen Abraham!" Jesus answered them, "Before Abraham was born, I AM!" Hearing this, they picked up stones to stone Him, but He slipped away (John 8:56-59). He was saying that He was the great I AM, Yahweh Elohim, Who existed well before Abraham was even born! And the Jews knew what He was saying which is why they wanted to stone Him for blasphemy. Yet Jesus is also revealing here that Abraham actually saw Him and spoke with Him!

This is how God spoke to His people in ancient times - through His Word. There are numerous instances where the Word of Yahweh came to various prophets, and this is not just talking about the Holy Spirit quietly talking to them. They didn't always see the Form of God, or the Messenger of Yahweh, but they clearly heard His voice as though He were standing right next to them, behind an invisible curtain. A foremost example is that of Samuel, who also saw Yahweh as well as just hearing Him.

"Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him...The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."...The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there **he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.**"

(1 Samuel 3:7, 10, 21 NIV)

This is the very same Word that John is talking about - Christ Jesus, the Son of God. This is the same Word that came to Elijah when he was in the cave at Sinai (1

Kings 19:8-13). The Word of Yahweh, Yahweh Himself, spoke to Elijah with a man's voice! Yahweh wasn't in the wind or in the earthquake or in the fire, although He had appeared this way on Sinai during the time of Moses, yet instead He speaks to Elijah with a gentle voice! This is the voice of the Word, the loving, merciful, compassionate, gracious Word of the Son - Jesus Himself.

The Messenger, the Rock

This truth of Christ's identity is further confirmed by Paul in the text that we started with,

" For I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all are baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of **the spiritual Rock** which followed. **Now the Rock was Christ.**"

(1 Corinthians 10:1-4 CV)

Paul is referring to the spiritual Messenger or Angel that accompanied the Israelites during their journey to the land of Canaan (Exodus 23:20-23). This Messenger of Yahweh (or Angel of the LORD) represents the Name and authority of God, and He dwelt in the glory cloud that led the Israelites by day and by night as a pillar of cloud and fire. Although Yahweh often spoke of this Angel in the third person (in the same way as Yahweh often spoke of Himself in the third person), it is very evident that this Angel *is* Yahweh Himself! It is true to say that there are other chief messengers (archangels) of God, such as Michael and Gabriel, and Michael especially is given the role of being at the head of the celestial armies of God, particularly in relation to Israel (Daniel 10:13, 12:1; Luke 1:19), but this Chief Messenger of Yahweh is unique, for He is more than just a spiritual Messenger, and He is above all the others - He really is The Chief!

Jacob testified of this when blessing Joseph's sons,

"May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my Shepherd all my life to this day, **the Angel** who has delivered me from all harm..."

(Genesis 48:15-16 NIV)

In the account of Moses and the burning bush, it says

"There **the angel of the LORD** (*Yahweh*) appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush...When the LORD (*Yahweh*) saw that he had gone over to look, **God** (*Elohim*) called to him from within the bush...'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The LORD (*Yahweh*) said, 'I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt'...**God** (*Elohim*) said to Moses...'**I AM** has sent me to you.' "

(Exodus 3:2, 4, 6-7, 14 NIV)

From these texts alone we can see that the Angel of the LORD (or Messenger of Yahweh) is one and the same as the LORD God (or Yahweh Elohim), the great I AM. He is the One Who was with Israel in the glory cloud.

"Then **the angel of God**, who had been travelling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. **The pillar of cloud** also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel...In the morning watch the LORD (Yahweh) looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion."

(Exodus 14:19-20, 24 NIV)

Paul states that the spiritual rock *followed* Israel. In this instance he is referring to the rock that was evidently carried by Israel which gave them spiritual water at certain times. During the wilderness wanderings the people were given spiritual (heavenly) food to eat, which they called Manna, and they were also given spiritual water to drink, which gushed miraculously from a rock which they carried with them.

"The LORD answered Moses, "Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel."

(Exodus 17:5-6 NIV)

"...at Kadesh (*not Horeb*)...the glory of the LORD appeared to them. The LORD said to Moses, "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so that they and their livestock can drink."...Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff and water gushed out..."

(Numbers 20:6-11 NIV)

In the first instance, Yahweh Himself stood in front of the rock while Moses struck it, after which, the water gushed out of the rock. Yet Moses disobeyed God the second time by striking the rock twice, instead of just speaking to it as he was told to do. This mistake prevented him from entering Canaan with the people. This rock became a symbol and type of Yahweh, Who is the true Rock that gives Life. And this same Rock was struck by the hands of men when He came as the Man Jesus, yet through His Sacrifice, all mankind will drink of the water of life freely.

"He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he."

(Deuteronomy 32:4 NIV)

"As for God, his way is blameless; the word of the LORD is flawless...For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the Rock except our God?"

(2 Samuel 22:31-32; also Psalm 18:30-31 NIV)

Paul clearly states that the Rock was Christ, and John reveals that Christ is the Word Who spoke to the prophets, Who also appeared to many of them as the Form or Image of God. He is also the Messenger of Yahweh, the Chief Messenger of the spiritual army of God. He is the unique Son of God who came to dwell in a temple built of flesh and blood. He is the Ultimate Glory and Presence of God. He can be rightly called the Everlasting Father, the Mighty or Almighty God (El Shaddai), the Prince of Peace, and the Wonderful Counselor (Isaiah 9:6-7). He is truly Immanuel - God with us. The whole book of Hebrews reveals this awesome truth.

He appeared and spoke with Adam and Eve, Cain, Enoch, Noah, Abraham (many times) and Sarah, Hagar, Isaac, Jacob/Israel, Moses (numerous times), Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and 70 Elders of Israel, Joshua, Balaam, Gideon, Manoah and his wife (Samson's parents), Samuel, Solomon, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and numerous other prophets (though some of the prophets only heard the invisible Word, but never saw Him). Then, as the resurrected, immortal Man, Christ Jesus, He later appeared to Peter and the other Apostles, as well as to a group of over 500 men, and to James (probably the Lord's brother), and especially to Paul (many times), and then to John in the vision of Revelation.

He truly is The Beginning and The End, The Origin and The Consummation. All is for Him and through Him, and He has the Name that is above every other name - Yahweh the Saviour.

The Witness of Nature

This truth of the Dual relationship between God the Father and Christ Jesus His Son is also confirmed by the witness of nature. Scripture states the spiritual principle that every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses (Matthew 18:16; Deuteronomy 19:15; also Revelation 11). Scripture is one witness, nature is the other witness.

Before we take a brief look at the witness of nature, it is worth pointing out that there are many examples of duality in the clear doctrines of Scripture. For example,

The Old Creation and the New Creation; the Old Heavens and Earth, and the New Heavens and Earth;

The First Adam and the Second Adam (Christ); The Old Humanity and the New Humanity; The Flesh and the Spirit; Death and Life;

The First Resurrection and the Second Resurrection; The Old Covenant (the first) and the New Covenant (the second); etc.

Humanity was made in the image and likeness of God. The human body is dominated by singular organs and parts (Unity) and pairs of organs or parts (Duality). This brings balance and completion, particularly to sight and sound. For an example of pairs,

Two eyes; Two ears; Two nostrils; Two arms; Two hands; Two breasts

Two legs; Two testicles; Two ovaries; Two feet; Two lungs; Two kidneys

Even the brain and the heart are divided into two main areas.

It is interesting to note that the digestive system is virtually all singular parts. This emphasises the unity of spiritual truth as food that is digested only One Way, though it then gets broken down into vitamins and minerals that are disseminated throughout the whole body. The whole body speaks of Unity and Union.

Then there is male and female where, through sexual intercourse, the two become one. Even the reproductive organs speak of unity and duality as the source of all life. Mankind as male and female speaks of Unity and Union - one into two into one.

The very foundation of all creation is the Hydrogen atom. The sun is primarily made up of hydrogen. The hydrogen molecule is actually two H atoms that are joined together. This is like two circles overlapping one another. This fitly illustrates the relationship between God and His Son.

Bonnie Gaunt illustrates it like this in her book, *Beginnings: the Sacred Design*,

"One circle becomes two by division. The second becomes the image of the first - the *EI* becoming the *Elohim*. This was the active principle in the creation of matter. If the hydrogen atom, with its one proton, represents *EI*, then the hydrogen molecule, which is the division of one into two, represents *Elohim*. It is the fusion of the two atoms of the hydrogen molecule that creates the massive amounts of heat and light which comes from the Sun. The fusion, or unity of the Father and Son become the one source of all creation. This principle of growth by division was the active principle in the creation of all matter...The overlapping circles of the hydrogen atom represent Unity in the midst of becoming dual - *EI* becoming *Elohim*." (PP 8-9)

The whole of our human experience involves Unity and Union of pairs of things, such as reflections or shadows, where the substance is reflected as an image or outline of itself; and there are numerous articles that bring balance, whether stereo speakers, curtains, door/gate posts, etc.

Then there are opposites. Human experience is full of opposites and extremes. You can't truly have one without the other. So even opposites have a dual nature within the unity of creation. For example,

Left and Right (or East and West); Up and Down (or North and South);

Height and Depth (High and Low); Small and Large; Hot and Cold;

Infra Red and Ultra Violet; Light and Darkness; Truth and Lies;

White and Black; Good and Bad; Loud and Quiet; Treble and Bass; Bitter and Sweet;

Life and Death; Positive and Negative; Order and Chaos; etc, etc.

Of course, creation is full of such examples, not only of the numbers One and Two, but also (and particularly) of the numbers Three, Six, Seven and Twelve. But

the ones that dominate the most in our everyday experience are One and Two - Unity and Duality; Unity and Union; Unity and Complementary. This evidence declares the truth that God, Who is One, has an Image - His Son.

For further study on the subject of the Trinity and related matters, see *The Sacred Golden Calf*.

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