

Spirit and Truth

Bible studies dedicated to helping the Bible student to know and worship God as He requires His followers to know and worship Him.

The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. John 4:23,24

Lesson 3

**JESUS:
THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN
SON OF GOD**

Many Christians would consider the issue of "who is Jesus Christ" to be so fundamental as to be without need of further discussion. Yet, just as many Christians have a perception of Him that is clouded by the dogmas of mainstream Christian tradition. If we really think about it, the description of Jesus, as given in the Bible, cannot be explained by the Trinity.

In essence, the Trinity states that there is one God made up of three persons, and that each of those persons is God in His own right, each one being co-equal (same rank and authority), co-eternal (of the same age and independent of the others) and co-existent (each containing the essence of life without reference to the others and existing independently of the others).

It is said to be a mystery, no doubt made so by a confusing array of contradictory definitions that are impossible to understand. For example, three equals one and one equals three. A full description of the Trinity would reveal many more inconsistencies. However, this would be impractical here as you will find if you consult any Evangelical, or Roman Catholic catechism. These official documents of the churches use an avalanche of words in an attempt to cover the irrational reasoning of those who wish to harmonise human tradition with the Scriptures.

The purpose of this series of lessons is to avoid the man made tradition and consult the Bible in respect to the make-up of the Godhead. We will see who God is and who Jesus is and how they relate to one another. As this subject is examined prayerfully, it should become clear that the Trinitarian understanding of God and the Bible have no compatibility. To illustrate, Jesus is the "Only-Begotten" Son of God and, as such, it would be *impossible* for Him to be a part of a trinity of gods. The Holy Spirit, also associated with the Godhead, will be discussed in later studies.

WHO IS JESUS?

1. Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And whom do you say that I am?

Matthew 16:13-16

Note: The disciples, on several occasions, confirmed their clear recognition that Jesus is the *Son of God* (John 6:67-69; Mat.14:33). Martha, a friend of Jesus, also believed Him to be the *Son of God* (John 11:25-27).

2. Many of the rulers in Israel were among Christ's most bitter enemies. How did many of them regard Jesus?

John 12:42,43

Note: "They believed on Him" -- That is, they knew He was the promised Messiah and as such, the Son of God. Yet they rejected Him!! We may be appalled at the thought that people can believe in the Messiah and yet reject Him and even work for His death. Is there a lesson in that for us?

We may be professing followers of Jesus Christ, believing in Him and the part He has in our salvation, but, how do we treat Him? Could we be guilty of the same rejection and do despite the blood of the covenant? Crucifying Him afresh for the delights of the world? Each of us needs to pray earnestly that our hearts will be truly converted.

3. God, the Father, makes a public declaration about Jesus – what is it?

Matthew 3:16,17

4. Whom does Jesus, Himself claim to be?

John 10:36

5. Just as the devils know that there is one God, they also know who Jesus is. When Jesus spoke to a demon, how did the demon address the Lord of the universe?

Mark 5:7

Matthew 8:29

6. Whom did the angel from heaven declare Jesus to be?

Luke 1:35

Note: In summary, those who believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God include: His heavenly Father, the heavenly angels, the fallen angels (Satan and the demons), Christ's disciples, His enemies and wicked men.

What does it mean to be the "Son of God"? Is it just an arbitrary title, a name given without regard for any qualifications for that title? Or is He a real son? And, if a real son, *when* did He become the Son of God? These are very important points and must be addressed in establishing the identity of Christ.

CHRIST, THE SON, BEFORE BETHLEHEM ?

When Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary, He was called the Son of God. Does this mean that Jesus was not the Son of God before His birth at Bethlehem? The Bible gives clear evidence that the concept, doctrine and accepted belief in the one God of Israel having a son were well established among the Jews of Old Testament times. In New Testament times His rejection as the Son of God, at His incarnation, had to be based on a rejection of His being the promised Messiah. If He were just a man, born of a woman, claiming to be the Son of God, He would not have been perceived to be a threat to the Jewish leaders of the day. The fact that they believed the real Son of God existed from before creation and this Man claimed to be that divine One is what they rejected.

Notice what one Bible commentator has to say on this point: *In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God. Said the angel to Mary, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." While the Son of a human being, He became the Son of God in a new sense. Thus He stood in our world--the Son of God, yet allied by birth to the human race.* {Seventh - day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p 1114, 5}

To be a son in a new sense, means He must have been a son in an old sense, a son prior to the human sonship.

7. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at the time of Daniel, displayed his knowledge of God when confronted by a miracle. What did he see?

Daniel 3:25

Note: The people of Israel, while in their Babylonian captivity (606-536 BC), told their captors of the God of heaven. In like manner, Daniel had told the king's court of the God he and his companions served (Dan.2:27,28; 3:17,18; 4:8). There need be little wonder that the king determined the fourth figure in the furnace to be the Son of God.

Later in a prophetic vision, Daniel saw One like unto the Son of man (Dan.7:13). The "Son of man" being a term frequently used by Jesus in reference to Himself. Just as "Son of God" indicated His deity, so "Son of man" gives recognition to deity in the form of humanity (Mat.1:21-23; Php.2:6,7).

8. What further acknowledgement did king Nebuchadnezzar make about the God of heaven?

Daniel 4:18-37, notice vv.32, 34 and 37

Note: The God whom Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged, is the God of Israel (compare v.37 with Deut.32:4). With the instruction given him

by Daniel, the king knew that the Godhead consisted of at least God, the Most High, and the Son of the Most High God.

9. In exclaiming the unsearchable power of God, how does the writer of Proverbs refer to the "Keepers of creation"?

Proverbs 30:4

Note: Here, Solomon states that the Creator had a Son. In the light of other Scriptural texts (e.g. John 1:1-3; Col.1:15-19; Heb.1:1,2) this would indicate that the Father did the creating through the person of His Son.

10. What does the prophet of God say concerning the existence of Jesus before Bethlehem?

Micah 5:2

Note: Speaking of the One to be born in Bethlehem, the promised Messiah, He had existed from everlasting.

At some time before His incarnation, Jesus was recognised as the Son of God with due honour conferred upon Him (Heb.1:5-10). It is therefore evident that Jesus is the *Son of God*, not by virtue of His birth to Mary in Bethlehem but, by His *pre-existent* Person as the real Son of God.

This is a strange concept for us mortals to understand. The Bible uses such terms as, *brought forth and came forth* from the Father. How can God have a son? Could this indicate His true relationship to the Father and therefore He is a real son, begotten from ages past?

WHAT IS A SON ?

The title "son" can embrace a number of possibilities. Yahweh refers to us as His sons and daughters, sons and daughters by creation, redemption and adoption. We will never be a son or daughter of God by birth. These are four applications of the term, but there is one more, a pseudo (pretending, deceiving) son.

In this section of our study we will examine what the Bible says about the nature of Christ's relationship to His heavenly Father. We will see which of the above descriptions of *son* apply to Jesus. Does God tell lies? Does He use deceit to convey a truth!? Consider that in order for God to send His only-begotten Son, He had to have a son to send.

11. When the Scriptures refer to the Son of God, what is some of the wording used to describe the relationship between the Father (Yahweh) and His Son?

John 1:14,18; 3:16

Note: "Begotten" is the past participle of "beget", which is, *to father a child*. The Greek word translated "only-begotten" is MONOGENES.

There is a difference of opinion over the correct meaning of this word. Some say it means: *unique, one of a kind, one only*. Others say it means: *only born* and thus "only begotten."

People opting for the "unique" interpretation seem to have difficulty accepting that Jesus is the real son of God. Below are the statements from Thayer's Greek Lexicon and the James Strong Greek Dictionary showing the meaning of the word.

Thayer's Greek Lexicon.

NT:3439 **monogenes** -- **single of its kind, only.**

- a) used of only sons or only daughters (viewed in relation to their parents)
- b) used of Christ, denotes the one and only son of God

Strong's Concordance

NT:3439 **monogenes** (mon-og-en-ace');

from NT:3441 and NT:1096 -- **only-born, i.e. sole:**

KJV usage -- only, only child, only begotten

As you can see, one reference seems to make the primary meaning "unique," by stating "single of its kind," while the other seems to place the emphasis on "only born."

It would appear that the word can have two meanings, such meaning being dependent on context. Following are four examples from Scripture which support that conclusion. The underlined portion is the translators rendering of monogenes into English.

Luke 7:12. *The only son of his mother.*

(could be either, only son or only child)

Luke 8:42. *He had one only daughter*

(could be either, only daughter or only child)

Luke 9:38. *for he is my only child*

(in reality an only born child, or only begotten child)

Heb.11:17. *offered up his only begotten son*

(Referring to Isaac. Isaac was not an only begotten son but was in a special class, he was unique. He was the child of promise, a category that Ishmael could not belong to in the literal sense. More will be said on this at Q.29)

Luke 9:38 shows monogenes to mean an only-begotten child, while Hebrews 11:17 uses the word as unique, or one of a kind. According to the Greek Dictionary and Lexicon cited above both applications of the word are appropriate. It follows that, in looking for the meaning of monogenes, we cannot lay a hard and fast rule to exclude either "one of a kind," or "only-begotten." Which of these two meanings is the true intent of the word must, in the absence of some other qualifying information, be derived from the wording of the sentence.

12. There are nine places in the NT where monogenes is used, we looked at four of them in Luke and Hebrews, the other five are used by the apostle John. Consult these references and state the way monogenes is used in the sentence and what it relates to.

- John 1:14
- John 1:18
- John 3:16
- John 3:18
- 1John 4:9

Note: "Only-begotten" (monogenes), in each case is relating to Jesus as the Son of God. Are we able to ascertain from the context which of the two applications of monogenes John intended to convey? No.

What we now need is more Biblical evidence that will reveal how John understood Christ, whom he knew personally, and how he interpreted the Scriptures that reveal Him. The whole of the Scriptures are in harmony, we cannot have John saying one thing and some other Bible writer contradicting him. If confliction between Bible passages is the way we see some Bible teaching the fault lies with our interpretation of the data. God is not confused (1Cor.14:33).

John uses another Greek word in reference to Jesus as the Son of God; that word is GENNAO, (Strong's 1080). Gennaο means: *to procreate. Literally, it is generally applied to the father, but by extension may be applied to the mother. It may also be used figuratively, in which case it means to regenerate, or convert.* Look at the next question...

13. What words are used in the following text to describe the "one converted to Christ," the "Father" and the "Son"?

- 1John 5:1,18

Note: The Greek word here for "born," "begat" and "begotten" is GENNAO, the same word three times. Obviously, the saints are not literal sons and daughters from the body of the Father-God, they are sons and daughters by creation, redemption and adoption (Job 1:6; 1John 3:1,2; 2Cor.6:18; Rom. 8:15,16). It is also equally obvious that *gennaο* does not apply figuratively to Jesus for He did not

have need of conversion or regeneration and the Bible uses terms that absolutely exclude Him from being a son by adoption. Could it be that *gennaō* may be applicable to Jesus in the literal sense, making Him the son of God in verity¹?

Did the translators get it right when they interpreted John's use of *monogenes* as only-begotten? If not, then James Strong is wrong, *gennaō* creates a confusion and Luke 9:38 is a contradiction. *Monogenes* may rightly be translated "unique," "only born" or "only begotten." In the case of Jesus, He most certainly is unique, there is no other like Him (Heb.1:4-6). But is He the real only-begotten son of God? Even if *monogenes* means "unique, only, sole, or only one of his kind" to the exclusion of "only begotten," when God the Father sent His only Son to die and be our Saviour, why do we refuse to accept the "Son" part of the formula in light of other Biblical evidence that states He is a son. Maybe Satan has a reason for destroying our understanding of this miraculous expression of the love of the great God and Father of all. In a later lesson we will study, in depth, Satan's work concerning this. But for now, let us continue our search for what God has to say about His Son. Is He a real son, or is it just a title? The Father will not leave us ignorant over who we are to worship (John 4:21-24; Acts 17:18-29; Jer. 9:24; Col. 2:2,3; Eph 1:17-19).

14. What is one method of Bible searching recommended by the Bible itself?

Isaiah 28:9,10

Note: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness (2Tim.3:16). Search the Scriptures (John 5:39). Taking portions of Scripture from across the Bible will give us a balanced and comprehensive view of a particular subject, or doctrine. So let us do that, and try to understand how the rest of the Bible may shed light on this vital subject.

JESUS, A REAL SON

At this point in our study, we are probably beginning to appreciate that Jesus Christ may well be the literal Son of God.

What else does the Bible have to say about the greatest event in the entire universe? It is certain that God the Father wants us to understand Him to our capacity and in line with what He has revealed (see lesson 1).

Nowhere does the Bible speak of a female God and Yahweh, Himself, is neuter gender (though He does identify with the male Mat.22:29,30; Luke 20:34-36). Note also that Jesus is the Creator of all things and therefore He, Himself, cannot be created (John 1:3; Col.1:15-17). Bringing forth Jesus had to be wrought by the Father alone and NOT as an act of creation¹.

15. Where did Jesus say he came from?

John 8:42; 16:27,28; 17:8

Note: Jesus said He came forth and proceeded out from the Father and the Father sent Him. This may be interpreted two ways:

- a) Jesus may not necessarily be the Son of God, but is simply stating that He left the presence of the Father, that is, a geographical relocation in order to fulfil Yahweh's instructions.
- b) Somehow, Jesus came forth from the Father's body, was brought forth for a purpose and, at the appointed time, left the presence of the Father to fulfil that purpose.

To consider the second option, one might think that Jesus had a beginning, as in birth, and therefore dismiss this thought as untenable. What we are about to see is that Jesus did, in fact, come from the Father's body. How this will rationalise with the Bible statement that He is from everlasting will also be discussed..

Proverbs 8 uses the term "Wisdom" in a metaphorical sense to represent Jesus. Let us firstly confirm that this is indeed the case, then we may determine what Proverbs 8 is telling us about Jesus...

16. Jesus has many names pursuant to the varied facets of His ministry. What is one such name relevant to our present study?

Luke 11:49

Compare 1Corinthians 1:24, 30

Note: The One speaking in the verse from Luke is called the "Wisdom of God." Mat.23:1,34 confirms that One speaking to be Jesus.

17. Someone may be accurately identified by a description as surely as they may be identified by name. Compare the descriptions given in the two verses below and identify the parallels between them.

Proverbs 8:12,14

Isaiah 11:1, 2

If *Wisdom* is used as a metaphor for *Jesus*, we may expect to see a correlation between the works of Wisdom, in Proverbs 8, and the works of Jesus as mentioned in other parts of the Bible. While further study of Proverbs 8 would yield additional parallels between the two names, the next six to seven questions reveal some striking similarities and should prove the point....

18. He who finds Jesus, that is, Wisdom, finds what?

1John 5:11,12

Proverbs 8:35

Note: He who has the Son has life.

19. By Whom did God the Father create all things?

Hebrews 1:2,10

Proverbs 8:26-30

Compare Psalm 136:5

20. God loves all people and sent His Son to die for them, but there is a group of people who receive special mention as recipients of His love. Who are they?

Psalm 146:8c

Proverbs 8:17

Note: Yahweh's people will be noted by their true love for Him. And God, Himself, loves His people as He loves His Son (John 17:23). For "Wisdom" to have the emotion of love, in this context, "Wisdom" must be a rational being.

21. When God sent His Son into the world, what did He admonish the people of the earth to do?

Acts 3:22,23

Compare John 8:47; 18:37 (last sentence)

Proverbs 8:33, 34

Note : Hearing *wisdom* and hearing the *Word made flesh* (John 1:14), amounts to the same thing. One of the greatest blessing our Father-God can bestow on us is, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus that we may understand with true wisdom (Eph.1:17-19; Luke 11:13).

22. For whom are we to watch?

Luke 12:35-44

Proverbs 8:34

Note: *Watching* daily at My gates, *waiting* at the post of My doors. Blessed are they, whom, when He comes, are found *watching, waiting* for their Lord, that when He comes and knocks, they may open to Him immediately (Mat.25:1-13)

23. The Bible talks of One who was God's delight and in whom He was well pleased. Who was this Person?

Matthew 12:14-21; 3:17; Isaiah 42:1-3

Proverbs 8:12,30

24. What description of Jesus Christ is given that would justify the use of "Wisdom" as a metaphor for Him?

Colossians 2:2,3,9

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We have seen that Proverbs 8 uses the metaphor of "wisdom" in its focus on Jesus; Now let us view the relevant portions of that chapter to see what it reveals about Him:

25. In question 15 we asked, "Where did Jesus say He came from?" Let us ask that question again, but this time look for the historical account.

Proverbs 8:24, 25

Note: Jesus came forth from the Father at a specific point in time with respect to creation.

26. When was Jesus brought forth?

Proverbs 8:22-27

Note: The LORD *possessed* Jesus, in the *beginning*, before His works of old². Jesus was brought forth before *anything* was created, or *anything* had a beginning, even before the earth was created (1Cor.2:7; 2Tim.1:9).

To surface read this passage and interpret it to mean *wisdom* only was brought forth, is to say that -- before creation, God brought forth wisdom and prior to that, God did not possess wisdom!??

"LORD" or "Lord" may be used in reference to either God the Father, or His Son; in this passage (Pro.8:22), LORD is a reference to Yahweh, the heavenly Father. Having two interchangeable terms may seem confusing, but when a distinction needs to be drawn the correct interpretation will lie in the context. An

explanation for the application of "LORD" and "Lord" was given in lesson 2.

27. What is meant by the term "brought forth"?

Isaiah 45:10;

Note: To be brought forth is to be born. This text from Isaiah and the aforementioned text in Proverbs 8:24,25, both have the same Hebrew word for "brought forth" --- CHUWL or CHIYL (Strong's 2342), meaning: *writhe in pain while giving birth, or while in fear; make to bring forth; make to calve; to fall grievously with pain.*

There are many other places in the Bible where "brought forth" is used in respect to child birth.

So Jesus is the literal son of the Great God of the universe. What a miracle! Is there anything too hard for God? (Jer. 32:17). With such a miracle at the forefront of Scripture, it is natural to inquire, "How did the Father beget His Son?" The Bible does not reveal such detail. However, the Father has given ample evidence that one being can emanate from another.

28. Apart from the Bible, what other lesson book has God invited us to examine for information about Himself?

Romans 1:19, 20

Job 12:7-10

Psalm 97:6

Note: All of God's works are done with sound reason. Hence, nature is filled with purpose and endless lessons to be learned³. The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork. Does Yahweh use nature to teach truths about Himself? Our texts suggest He does.

In these passages Yahweh states that the invisible things of Him from the foundation of the world (His Son) are seen (understood) by the things that are made. He even states that those who are

confused about the truth concerning Himself and the teachings of the "word" are without excuse if they ignore the lessons of nature.

To be a literal son is to be the product of the parent's body and the Bible teaches that the Son of God is exactly that. We can all think of a few examples in nature where this kind of miracle is well represented. Let's look at three of them...

a) *Child birth.* One being coming forth from another is about the limit of this illustration. Some have imagined there to be a female god, but this cannot be, as procreation is not a function of the heavenly realm (Mark 12:25) and Yahweh is neuter gender. Mary is the mother of Jesus, only in the sense that she was the one through whom the Son of God became man⁴, God's genetic link with humanity. Jesus was the Son of God from before creation (Pro.8:22-25; Micah.5:2; Heb.10:5-10; Gal.4:4). The truth of the matter is, Christ created Mary and later died to save her from her sin (John 1:3; Luke 1:46,47).

b) *The way God made Eve.* Genesis 2:21-23, God took a part of Adam from which He fashioned a woman. Adam recognised her to be of the same substance as himself and was *one* with her to the extent that they were one flesh (Gen.2:23,24), she was his second self⁵.

Does this reveal something of the relationship between Yahweh and His Son? Hebrews states that He is the *express image* of His Father's person (Heb.1:3); the Greek word from which "express image" was translated is CHARAKTER, (Strong's 5481), meaning, *an exact copy, or representation.* The Son of God is the perfect duplicate of His Father; hence, when God gave Jesus, it was like giving Himself (1Tim.3:16; John 1:18; 14:9; 2Tim.1:9).

In one sense it may be said, Eve was taken out of man, one person coming from another without the means of procreation. While this miracle demonstrates one person coming from another it was still a creative act. Remember, the Son of God was not a created Being, the Bible says He was begotten. However, there is a significant lesson for us in the creation of Eve and the unity she had with Adam.

There is a notable parallel between the human pair and the Godhead. For example, her coming forth *after* Adam and being given a position at his side. Her appointment as equal and at his side, a much loved help mate. They are a model of the Godhead, even to the point of having a dominion (Gen. 1:26-28), for the Bible does not state that any other created being has been given dominion over any part of the universe. Then they were given the power of procreation. As two, working together, they bring forth living people and nurture them as Christ would nurture us. Is this what Yahweh meant when He said ye are gods? (Psa.82:1-8; John.10:24-34. Having dominion, men also have the power of judgement over the affairs of the earth. The two texts, Psalm and John, describe how man has corrupted that judgement). There is little wonder that Satan has sought to destroy the family, where, in its God given setting, is a reflection of the working of the Creator and His Father (1Cor. 11:3).

c) *Cell division.* Cell division is the process of one cell dividing into two cells. It's what takes place at the beginning of conception. When the sperm meets the ovum the first cell of the new life is formed. That cell divides to form two cells and so the process continues until the new baby is fully formed.

Another example of cell division is with the amoeba, a microscopic, single cell creature that lives in water (protozoa). Its means of reproduction is totally asexual. It actually divides into two, forming two identical cells and thus a second amoeba.

Just as procreation and the creation of Eve have their respective lessons to teach us about the Creator, cell division, in the same context may also have a lesson to teach us.

We know that the bringing forth of the Son of God was not an act of creation, but a begetting. The Father was alone in the bringing forth of His Son and the Son was identical to the Father. The model of cell division, to a degree, illustrates these very characteristics.

If we are taking note of the things that are made to gain some understanding of the invisible things, those relatively simple representations are very limited in the scope of what they can reveal about the Creator. We cannot possibly presume to explain, or grasp such exalted, secret things that are the prerogative of the mighty God (Deut. 29:29). We may only view the illustration He has given, and confess we still do not know how the Son came forth from the Father!

We have looked at nature as we have been encouraged to do. With all that God has revealed in His creation about Himself, it would be unreasonable to expect that He has not placed something in nature to illustrate the greatest event of ALL, the bringing forth of the Son of God! How appropriate it would be for Yahweh, the Father-God to give that illustration right at the very beginning of a new life, that is, when the first cell divides.

29. Jesus is the Only-Begotten Son of God. There is another "only son" of significance mentioned in Scripture. Who is this most precious son?

Genesis 22:1,2,16

Note: This verse is significant because Isaac is NOT the *only* son of Abraham! Isaac was unique, though he was not the only son,

he was the only son of promise, the only son born of the wife who was ordained of God (Gen.17:15-21).

This use of the word "only," when the respective progeny was not the only son, raises the question in the minds of some that the "only Son of God," as applied to the pre-incarnate Christ, may not mean a literal "only son" (as He would be if *begotten* of the body of the Father), but rather, means "only one of a kind," unique. With this understanding, to accommodate the Bible assertion that Jesus is the Son of God, some Trinitarians explain it by saying, *He is one of a triune God playing the roll of a son of one of the other two gods*. This is not really a unique function, for there are two others who could have done the same job. The roll playing could have been acted out by any one of the three gods, which is not even as unique as the position of Isaac being the "only son" of Abraham, because Ishmael could not possibly have replaced Isaac.

From our earlier examination of the Greek word *monogenes* (pp. 7-10), it was noticed that this word may have either of two applications, "one of a kind," or literally "only born," or "only begotten" (Q.11,12,13). In view of the position of Isaac, some have assumed that the application of *monogenes*, in respect to Christ, must therefore be, that of "unique."

The Hebrew word from which "only" (as applied to: only son of Abraham) was translated in Genesis 22:1,2 is, YACHIYD (Strong's 3173), meaning: *sole, by implication beloved; lonely; the life, as not to be replaced; darling; desolate; only son; solitary*. From these various applications of *yachiyd* it is clear that any application of the word to designate an "only son" would be irrelevant, because Abraham had two sons! The single application of *yachiyd* that would be consistent with the facts would be that, Isaac was a *greatly beloved, irreplaceable son of promise*. With this use of *yachiyd*, of a truth, Isaac was Abraham's "only" son who would qualify. His other son, Ishmael, was not, nor ever could be, considered by God to be the son of promise (Gen.21:10-13).

Looking at the Isaac incident with a view to resolve the application of *monogenes*, *yachiyd*, with some variations (cited above), has similar semantics to *monogenes*. Both words can have a literal meaning of "only born," or they can mean "unique," depending on context.

To suggest that the "*Only-Begotten*" Son of God is primarily a reference to a Being that is not a real "only-begotten son" in the same way that Isaac was not a real "only-son" is to lose sight of the way the words are used. There is no question that *yachiyd* means "unique" in the way it is applied to Isaac. However because *monogenes*, in certain applications, may also mean unique, in no way justifies an assumption that in respect to Christ it means unique absolutely!!

Whether Jesus is the literal son of God or not cannot be determined from *monogenes* alone. The context of *monogenes* needs to be qualified by other clear Scriptural passages. Similarly, the intended application of *yachiyd* cannot be determined from that word in isolation. For example, we know it means *unique* in Genesis 22:2 because of Genesis 21:9-13.

Genesis 22:12 has another Hebrew word translated "only," in respect to Abraham's son. This word is YACHAD (Strong's 3162, from 3161), meaning: *united, joined, alike, together*. The context of this word places it just after God had confirmed Abraham's obedience and unswerving trust in his God. Considering that Abraham was an old man and his son, a youth, the younger man could have easily overpowered the elder and escaped his death. But he did not, and together, with his father, co-operated with God's instructions. God now acknowledges the faithfulness of Isaac, saying that both Isaac and Abraham were of the same mind — to obey and trust in Him.

IN THE BEGINNING

Earlier in this lesson we learned that Jesus has been the Son of God from everlasting. We have also seen that to be begotten meant the Son of God came forth from the body of the Father, clearly indicating that Jesus had a beginning. How then are we to understand this strange paradox?

30. How does the Bible express that point in time wherein the Son of God was bought forth?

Proverbs 8:22-25

Compare Micah 5:2

Note: Micah tells us that His "goings forth" have been of old from everlasting. Proverbs states that everlasting corresponds to the point in time before anything was created. The Bible has defined its own terms; in this context, *everlasting* refers to a point in "time" which is before anything was created. While this use of *everlasting* is not intended to convey the idea that we are looking at an absolute eternity past, how far back in time would be the beginning of creation? It would be an immeasurable and incomprehensible past; the beginning cannot be found by a finite mind. To us it is an everlasting, a never-ending past.

"Goings forth," Hebrew, HAUWM, (Strong's 4163), meaning: *a family descent; a draft house*. It is an interesting variation in the way this word may be applied. No one would question that Micah is not using the second definition, thus it is fair to understand the context of *hauwm* to be indicating that Jesus had a clear family connection with someone. "From everlasting" gives us the answer. It was Someone who was with Him before creation (John 1:1-3). Who could that Someone be? If it was not Yahweh, the heavenly Father, then who was it? And if that family connection was not as a son of the heavenly Father, then what was the family connection? The Bible only speaks of an *only-begotten Son of God*, a statement that positively answers both of those questions.

31. Jesus came forth from the Father. What other expression is used in Scripture to describe this unique and miraculous event?

Colossians 1:15-17

Note: Jesus was the "firstborn" of creation. This does not mean He was the first being/thing created, for all things were created by Him (v.16), He could not have made Himself! The message to be conveyed the verse is that, the Son of God was essential to the creation of all things. Essential, because without Him nothing would have been created!

Another expression of a similar vein is in verse 18, He was the *firstborn from the dead*. Again, not that He was the first to rise from the dead, for Moses was raised before Him, never again to die (Jude 9; Mat.17:1-5). Just as being *first born of creation* means He was essential to the creation of all things, in like manner, being *first born of the dead* means, His resurrection is essential to the raising of the righteous dead. In other words, He conquered death and sin that He may give life to the repentant sinner (1Cor.15:12-23; 1John 3:8).

Another indicator that Jesus had a beginning may be seen in a study on Melchisedec, but before we do that, we will need the light of God's word on some important precepts, precepts we shall bring out in the next three lessons.

32. Who is the "Word" and when was the "Word" with God?

John 1:1,2,3,14

Note: Before anything was created, in the beginning, Jesus came forth and was with God. Because He is the Son of God He has all the divine attributes of God and is worshipped as God.

CONCLUSION

Men, angels, the devils, Christ and the Most High God all declare that Jesus is the Only-Begotten Son of God. We have seen that Jesus is not a "make-believe" Son, but is, in reality, the Son of the body of Yahweh, the only true God (John 17:3). Because of that relationship to the Father, Christ possesses all of the divine attributes of God. He is not THE GOD, He is the Son of THE GOD and as a son, He is NOT a created Being.

The concept that God actually has a son renders the Trinity untenable, for the Trinity requires that all three beings be co-equal, co-eternal and co-existent. By definition of the Trinity (see page 2 of this lesson, and lesson 2), the so-called son in the Trinity, a god playing the part of the Son, cannot be a son of the body of one of the other two gods.

Our next two lessons will reveal the position of Jesus in the Godhead and how that the Supreme God of the universe has exalted His Son to a position equal with Himself. Part of our study will include an understanding of the relationship they share together and the purpose God had in bringing forth a duplicate of Himself.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16



Superscripts -- see Appendix A.

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