

“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

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CHAPTER TWELVE

TRI-UNITY

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 1

יהוה אלהי ישראל

The Lord, God of Israel

Jew. We Jews believe in God, one God, one only.

All true Jews say: **שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד**: “**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.**” You will never get a Jew to believe in more Gods than one. Never.

Christian. We Christians believe in one God, and one only; and if the Jews think that we believe in more than one, they are mistaken.

Jew. But I have been told that the Christians believe in three Gods—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Christian. True, the Christians believe in Father, Son, and Spirit, but only in one God—a Trinity in Unity.

Jew. Where do the Christians get their doctrine of a Trinity from? They profess to believe our Tanach is inspired, but they will never find the Trinity taught there.

Christian. We so thoroughly believe your Old Testament Scriptures are inspired of God, that if we could not find the Trinity taught there we would not and dare not believe it ourselves. Would you believe the doctrine if found plainly taught in your Tanach?

Jew. Yes, certainly. Show it me there and I will believe.

Christian. We can get no true knowledge of God apart from what he is pleased to tell us. God has spoken in the Old Testament. That this is true Jews and Christians devoutly believe; so we

must neither of us indulge in our fancies, but must both submit to the Word of God, and in a childlike spirit ask, “**What saith the Scripture.**”

Jew. That, I admit, is quite fair and proper; we cannot find out God except by searching the Holy Scriptures—Let us begin.

Christian. You know, to begin with, that אֱלֹהִים *Elohim*, is in the plural; the same as *Cherubim*, and *Seraphim*, and that this *Elohim* says in Genesis 1:26, “**Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.**” And yet the passage does not say “And they said,” but “**And God (He) said, let Us make man,**” that is, it וַיֹּאמֶר is in the singular. So you see we have the singular and the plural both applied to God in the account of the creation of man.

Then again in Genesis 11:7, when, after the flood, the people set about building a city and a tower, הִכָּה נִרְדָּה “**the Lord said**” (said is again in the singular) . . . “**Let Us go down, and let Us confound**” נִרְדָּה וְנִבְלָה Here we find the singular and the plural mixed again, when the word for God is not *Elohim* but the Lord.

Jew. Well, this seems strange, but also true, whatever we make of it. But does this prove a Trinity? We think not. We Jews have always thought that the plural in these passages means nothing more than dignity or excellence. Do you mean to say these passages teach the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity?

Christian. They plainly teach a plurality in Unity. But as two make a plural, we own we cannot get a Trinity out of a simple plural; so we must go to other passages to find a Trinity.

Jew. Well, that seems fair. We Jews surely want nothing less and nothing more than what the Scriptures teach. God’s Word taken in its plain and obvious sense should settle everything between Jew and Christian. Give me one clear passage in proof of the Trinity, such as any poor uneducated man can understand.

Christian. Turn then at once to Isaiah 63:8-10 לָהֶם לְמוֹשִׁיעַ: וַיְהִי “**He (the Lord) was to them (Israel) a Saviour.**” This the Jew will admit at once—that the Lord was Israel’s Saviour. This the Christian as firmly believes. The Lord is the source of salvation for all sinners, Jews and Gentiles.

Now let us go on to the next clause in verse 9.

בְּכָל־צָרָתָם לֹא צָר וּמְלַאךְ פְּנֵי הוֹשִׁיעֵם — “**In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence (face) saved them.**” Now this מַלְאכְּ מִרְּוֹ—“**Angel of His presence**”, is an uncreated Angel, receiving throughout Old Testament Scripture the titles and honors which belong to the Lord alone, as in the history of Hagar, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon and Manoah, as also in the prophecies of Zechariah.

Just take one instance out of many. See Genesis 31:11, 13, מלאך האלהים—the **Angel of God**—said, Jacob, and Jacob said, “**Here am I.**” Then the Angel said, אנכי האל בית אל—“**I am the God of Bethel.**” Now the Jews themselves call this Angel “*Malach Adonai*”— **the Angel of the Lord.** But He is not only the Angel of the Lord, but the Lord Himself, for He says Himself, “**I am the God of Bethel,**” and surely that was none other than the Lord.

Now what do we learn so far? Why, plainly this, that the Lord is the source of salvation, but that salvation somehow or other flows through, or is ministered by, the Angel of the Lord’s presence, and Who says of Himself “**I am the God of Bethel.**” This is not man’s fancy but God’s plain Word. We have so far got two persons in the Godhead. Now let us see if we can find a third person, making a Trinity.

Just look carefully at verse 10 of this same 63rd chapter of Isaiah והמה מרו ועצבו את־רוח קדשו—“**But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit,**” the meaning of “**vexed**” is substantially the same as *grieved*.

Jew. Yes; we believe in the spirit of God, but only as an influence—not as a Person.

Christian. So do some professing Christians. We have nothing, however, to say as to what some Christians and some Jews believe, but we have to do with what the Old Testament teaches.

What is an influence? Light is an influence. Heat is an influence. We can quench light and we can quench heat; but we can neither vex nor grieve either light or heat. We can vex and grieve only a Person. So, then, as the Jews vexed and grieved the Holy Spirit, so that He turned to be their enemy, and Himself fought against them, the Holy Spirit is a Person and is God. Don’t you see, my friend, that if you deny the personality of the Holy Spirit you deny the personality of God Himself, for God is Spirit? And don’t you also see how Isaiah 48:16 beautifully and clearly confirms this? Look at it carefully and without prejudice:

ועתה אדני יהוה שלחני ורוחי:—“**The Lord God and His Spirit hath sent Me** (the Messiah).” Here you have the personality of the Spirit, and the doctrine of the Trinity confirmed.

Jew. Certainly, the Christians have more to say for themselves than I had ever dreamt of. I can’t deny my own Scriptures, and they certainly seem to teach a Trinity. How is it, then, that our people generally, but specially our Rabbis, don’t believe this doctrine?

Christian. They believed this doctrine in ancient times, to which ancient Jewish literature (including the Talmud) bears ample testimony. Even the letter ׁ shin, the initial letter of the word “*Shaddai*” (*Almighty*), was formerly taken by Jews to represent the manner of the Divine existence—three in one, a Trinity—with its three perpendicular strokes, and one horizontal uniting the three.

Then the blessing pronounced by the High Priest in the 6th chapter of Numbers is substantially the same as the New Testament benediction,

- First, “**the Lord bless thee, and keep thee,**” as the *Father* and source of all blessing;
- Then, “**the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.**” This answers to “**the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,**” for, while the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ;
- Then, the *Holy Spirit*’s blessing, “**the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.**” This answers to “peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Jew. But if our forefathers believed this doctrine, and our people now reject it, what has caused the change?

Christian. In the middle ages the old doctrine was rejected as coming from a corrupt and persecuting Christianity, and the great Moses Maimonides, who wrote the thirteen articles of the Jewish faith, gave an *absolute* sense to the unity of the Godhead which before had been understood in a *compound* sense—that is, a Trinity in Unity.

So now, when the Jew says, “*Shema Yisrael Adonai Elohenu Adonai echad;*” “**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,**” he thinks of *echad (one)* as an absolute, and not as a compound unity; whereas יְהוָה *yacheed*, represents an absolute, but *yacheed*, which occurs about twelve times in the Old Testament, is never once used to express the unity of God.

It is used three times:

- In the 22nd chapter of Genesis, respecting Isaac,
- In verses 2, 12, and 16, “**Thy son, thine only son.**”
- It is used also of Jephthah’s daughter, Judges 11:34, “**She was his only child.**”
- In Psalm 22:20, and 35:17, it is translated “**darling;**”
- In Psalm 25:16, by the word “**desolate;**”
- In Psalm 68:6, by the word “**solitary.**”
- In Proverbs 4:3 it is rendered “**only beloved,**” in the expression “**tender and only beloved;**”
- In Jeremiah 6:26, Amos 8:10, and Zechariah 12:10, it is translated “**only son,**” literally, an only one.

Now, it is very remarkable that this one Hebrew word, which expresses absolute unity, should not have been used even once to express the unity of the Godhead.

We fairly infer that the Godhead is a compound unity, and not an absolute.

Jew. What, then, are we to understand by the *Echad (one)*?

Christian. אֶחָד *Echad (one)*, is associated with the root *mm Yachad* (to unite), and represents a compound unity. It occurs in Old Testament Scripture several hundreds of times. It is used in Numbers 13:23, “**a branch with one cluster of grapes,**” many grapes in one cluster, a compound unity.

In Judges 20:1, 8, 11, we find that “**all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man;**” again, “**And all the people arose as one man;**” and again, “**All the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man.**” Surely these expressions represent a compound unity.

This meaning of *echad* is further confirmed by evening and morning being called יום אחד *yom echad* (*day one*), Genesis 1:5. Again, “**Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh,**” בשר אחד, Genesis 2:24. And again, the two sticks in Ezekiel 37:16-19 shall become עץ אחד *aitz echad* (*one stick*). See particularly verse 17, “**And join them one to another (literally to one) into one stick, and they shall become one in thy hand,**” והיו לאחדים בידך literally, they shall become *ones* (*a plural unity*) in thy hand. You see that אחדים *echadim* is *echad* in the plural, the same as Elohim, and both alike represent a compound unity—one a Dual in Unity, and the other a Trinity in Unity.

Now then, as *echad* plainly represents a compound, and not an absolute unity, the words, “**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,**” teach not only a compound unity in the Godhead, but also a Trinity in Unity; for the name of God is mentioned three times in the passage, as *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, and the *Lord*, and then the word *echad*, uniting the three in one; thus we have a Trinity in Unity.

Modern Rabbinism differs essentially from ancient Mosaism. Ancient Mosaism and New Testament Christianity are essentially the same religion. The true Jew is the Jewish believer in, and follower of, the Lord Jesus Christ.

~ end of chapter 12 ~

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