

Presentation at the One God Conference

Commentary for October 1, 2007 — My Presentation in Article Form

As mentioned in the [October 2007 Newsletter](#) I was invited to speak at the One God Conference in Albany, NY in June 2007 as the opposition speaker. I greatly appreciated the opportunity.

This month's article is the written version of my lecture titled "Elohim and the Son of God." Reflecting on this topic at the conference, it is interesting that some of the matters at issue are the same as those addressed at the ecumenical Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. which dealt primarily with the nature and extent of Christ's divinity, or if you prefer, His deity.

Those who hold to the One God teachings generally believe the following¹:

- ***God as a trinity is false.*** I certainly agree with that!
- ***There is only one God, YHWH, the Father.*** True. I am in agreement with this, when "God" means YHWH, but not when "God" means Elohim.
- ***Elohim means YHWH when referring to deity.*** This is simplistic. The meaning of Elohim depends on the context in which it is used.
- ***Jesus was not Almighty God.*** Certainly not, but He has divinity as an Elohim, certainly in His glorified state. We communicate with God through Christ as mediator.
- ***Elohim is never used as a plural when designating YHWH.*** This understanding is inadequate and incomplete.
- ***Jesus as the logos did not exist before being born to Mary. He was a concept (a plan or a purpose of God). Jesus' preexistence in Scripture refers to God's divine purpose in Christ.*** This I disagree with strongly. Jesus did exist as the Son of God before His incarnation.
- ***God cannot die.*** In fact many Elohim have died in the past. Jesus Christ as an Elohim certainly died. He is the only one to be resurrected to spiritual life — so far.
- ***The phrase "Son of God" does not mean God.*** Inadequate and confusing. The problem is the use of the English term "God" which covers too wide a range of meaning.

My disagreements are in some cases partial and nuanced, and in some cases total. Basically I object to the inadequate understanding of the Hebrew term Elohim, the denial that Christ existed before being born to Mary, and the denial that Jesus had any divinity while on earth. One God adherents, however, do acknowledge that Jesus Christ was both the Son of Man and the Son of God (Matthew 26:63–64; Luke 22:69–70; John 1:49–51, 3:13–14, 18, 5:25–27).

In my lecture I presented my understanding of what the Bible states clearly on these matters. I did so by confronting and addressing the false ideas and presenting a true biblical model of these issues, as I understand it, without dwelling overmuch on their beliefs.

YHWH is the one and only true God, but there are many Elohim in biblical history. And you and I are destined to become an Elohim in every true sense. So too, there have been many Sons of God other than Christ. However, Christ was unique as the "only-begotten" Son of God. As the first creation of God, through Him all creation was made. He was and is the Son of God.

1. Certainly there is variety in their understandings and beliefs. Not all believe all of these tenets.

There is something I want to emphasize again: at the present moment, by virtue of your possessing God's Holy Spirit, you are now a child of God (1 John 3:1–2), yet you are without power. Not until your resurrection to glory will you become a full, actual, powerful child of God (an Elohim) whose body will be composed of spirit flesh and bone, part of God's Family. You will reign with Christ. At present, you are there legally but not actually. Christ is not equal to the Father yet He is God. How can this be? Review Dr. Martin's article "[How Did Jesus Become God](#)" and read this month's article.

One point we all agree on. God is **not** a trinity of beings related in some sort of three-in-one unity. This error is entirely unscriptural, illogical, un-explainable, yet it pervades most of Christianity today. This is the case whether one considers the Catholic and various Orthodox denominations, Lutheran and Calvinist denominations, or the Evangelical, Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Messianic Christian denominations and groups around the world. Most all require a belief in the trinity to be a member of their corporate church organizations.

Christ's Present Status

While correctly opposing the trinity doctrine, the One God adherents go another direction and deny that Jesus had any existence prior to His birth to Mary, and most have difficulty ascribing any sort of deity or divinity upon Him even in His post-resurrection and present glorified state, seated at the right hand of the Father distributing God's Holy Spirit to whom He will (Acts 2:32–33) as co-ruler of God's creation at this present moment.

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest [Greek verb root, *phaneroo*] in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

• **1 Timothy 3:16**

This word *phaneroo* occurs 49 times in the New Testament verb forms.² In each instance the word "manifest" and its English cognate translations from the Greek ALWAYS refer to things that have an existence prior to their being revealed. The revealing is usually sudden and obvious. Note two verses where this concept is clear with the verb *phaneroo* and the Greek adjective *phaneros*. In each case the thing made manifest or revealed existed in reality, hidden but now revealed:

"For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested [Greek verb root, *phaneroo*]; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad [Greek adjective root, *phaneros*]."

• **Mark 4:22**

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest [Greek adjective root, *phaneros*] in them; for God has shewed it [Greek verb root, *phaneroo*] unto them."

• **Romans 1:19**

Christ also was hidden but He existed before He was born to Mary. Absolutely this is the case. Enjoy this month's Newsletter and Article.

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2. Mark 4:22, 16:12, 14; John 1:31, 2:11, 3:21, 7:4, 9:3, 17:6, 21:1, 14; Romans 1:19, 3:21, 16:26; 1 Corinthians 4:5, 2 Corinthians 2:14, 3:3, 4:10f, 5:10f, 7:12, 11:6; Ephesians 5:13, Colossians 1:26, 3:4, 4:4; 1 Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 1:3; Hebrews 9:8, 26; 1 Peter 1:20, 5:4; 1 John 1:2, 2:19, 28, 3:2, 5, 8, 4:9; Revelation 3:18, 15:4.

The adjective form has the same sense of revealing something existing: Matthew 6:4, 6, 12:16; Mark 3:12, 4:22, 6:14; Luke 8:17; Acts 4:16, 7:13; Romans 1:19, 2:28; 1 Corinthians 3:13, 11:19, 14:25; Galatians 5:19; Philippians 1:13; 1 Timothy 4:15; 1 John 3:10.