

Course Title: DOCTRINE – Lesson 3 (The God of Two Testaments)

Goal of This Lesson: The purpose of this course is to present the beautiful truth of God in Christ and to have a working knowledge of the Oneness doctrine in order to lead others to this foundational truth.

Note: This lesson contains important principles, especially for those who really want to understand biblical doctrine. These lessons go hand-in-hand with prayer and revelation.

THE GOD OF TWO TESTAMENTS

The most distinctive and important statement of faith for the Jews is Deuteronomy 6:4. The Jews called this the *Shema*.

This teaching was so important to the devout Jew that one would always try to make this confession of faith just before death. In verses 5-9, God placed great importance on the teaching and the observance of this statement.

“Elohim is a Plural Word! Therefore it must indicate that God is a plurality of persons,” the trinitarians proclaim.

It is often pointed out that Elohim, a name used for God many times in the Scriptures, is plural. That is true. It is the plural of Eloah. The Hebrew language uses the plural to indicate number, but also to strengthen the idea of a word.

Reading Assignment: Genesis 39:20

In this verse, “Master” is plural in Hebrew and means “big boss” as opposed to the singular form “boss.” In I Samuel 16:16 “lord” is singular in Hebrew because it refers to a “lesser” lord...not to the Lord God. The Hebrew language has many terms which appear in the plural yet do not indicate number (e.g.: presence, countenance, peace, etc.).

G. A. Clark, writing on “Elohim” in Baker’s Dictionary of Theology, says:

“...The first word for God in the Old Testament is Elohim. It is also the most general and least specific in significance. Thus it would correspond to *theos* in Greek and to God or deity in English. Unlike Jehovah...Elohim can be used for pagan gods (Genesis 31:30; Exodus 12:12; even Moses is referred to as Elohim in Exodus 7:1).

“Since it is used so much and since it is a plural noun, some critics have seen in it an indication of an original polytheism. This theory is not well-founded because the singular for, Eloah, is poetic and rare. In prose, the plural has to be used, whether polytheistically

or monotheistically, because there is no other suitable word. Therefore, its use cannot prove an underlying polytheism in biblical religion”.

“On the other hand, some Christians have explained the plural as an anticipation of the Trinity. But again without a commonly-used singular, no one in Old Testament times could have developed trinitarian ideas from the word alone. The plural would suggest polytheism more readily than tri-nitarianism were it not for hints other than the word itself being used with a singular verb.

- “The plural form is better understood as indicating a plentitude of power...” (Baker’s Dictionary of Theology Pages 238-239).

The term Elohim is best understood as expressing the fullness of divine strength and wisdom, the sum of powers displayed by God, and encompassing all the divine attributes because it had to do with His divine person. (See next quote)

Peloubet and Smith’s Bible Dictionary: “The plural form of Elohim has given rise to much discussion. The fanciful idea that it referred to a trinity of persons in the Godhead hardly finds a supporter among the scholars, it is either what grammarians call the plural of majesty, or it denotes the fullness of divine strength, the sum of the power displayed by God.

Even today, an officer in the German army of higher rank is addressed in the plural by an officer of lesser rank, expressing respect.

Elohim is sometimes called a plural of intensity, because it is a uniplural noun...it can be singular or plural. How it is used with verbs governs its definition (like sheep or deer).

There are many other verses in the Old Testament that prove the doctrine of monotheism. The importance of this doctrine is expressed by God Himself as He began the Ten Commandments with, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). God spoke through the prophet Isaiah to emphatically declare the monotheistic belief that made the Jews unique from all the other nations:

Reading Assignments: Please Read the Following Passages

- Isaiah 44:6 “Thus saith the Lord...I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”
- Isaiah 43:10-12 “Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no Savior.”
- Isaiah 45:6 “There is none beside me. I am the Lord and there is none else.”

- Isaiah 45:21-22 “There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.”

THE DOCTRINE OF ONE GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Mystery of The Incarnation - God was manifested in the flesh as Jesus Christ. The “mystery of godliness” (I Timothy 3:16) is God manifesting Himself as man; the “mystery of iniquity” (II Thessalonians 2:3-7) is man making himself God.

There are four proofs of the absolute deity of Jesus Christ - It is not enough to say that there is one God. Many declare that they believe in one God, but then describe that one God as being three separate beings.

We must not only declare, as do the Scriptures, that there is but one God, we must declare the Identity of that one God (Acts 17:23-30; John 4:20-24).

In order to declare the identity of that one God, four proofs are offered to prove that Jesus is that God.

1. The first proof deals with the Incarnation of Jesus.
2. The second proof deals with His earthly ministry.
3. The third deals with His ascension.
4. The fourth focuses on the Second Coming.

First Proof of the Absolute Deity of Jesus Christ

Over seven hundred and fifty years before the birth of Jesus the prophet Isaiah prophesied that, “A virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call him name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

This prophecy was fulfilled in Matthew 1:23 when the heavenly messenger revealed the identity of the baby born of Mary in Bethlehem, “And they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.

Once again, referring to the prophecies of Isaiah for identification of this holy child called Jesus, we find the description; “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6).

It is necessary to understand that Jesus fulfilled this entire description or He did not fulfill any of it. In His humanity He was the child that was born and the Son that was given. In His divinity He was the Mighty God and the everlasting Father. He was not part man and part God, but He was all man and all God (II Corinthians 5:19).

Micah joins with the prophet Isaiah in exposing the deity of the one born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2 reveals that He is to be ruler in Israel and His going forth has been from everlasting. Only one could be everlasting and that is God.

- The New Testament continues the revelation of the deity of Jesus Christ. I Timothy 3:16 states, “God was manifest in the flesh....” Therefore, at the Incarnation, Deity became robed in flesh.

Isaiah foretold of a voice crying in the wilderness, preparing the way of the Lord, and making straight in the desert a highway for our God. Matthew says that this prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. In Matthew 3:1-3, Matthew reveals John the Baptist as the voice in the wilderness and Jesus as being the God that the highway was prepared for.

It is clear that the Jehovah that Isaiah knew so well in the Old Testament robed Himself in flesh and became the Jesus of the New Testament. Louis Berkhof, a Presbyterian Bible teacher and commentator, and also a professor of theology at Calvin Theological Seminary, makes this statement in Summary of Christian Doctrine: “The Great God of the Old Testament is the same Great God of the New Testament, and His name is Jesus (Psalm 147:5; Titus 2:13).”

Second Proof of the Absolute Deity of Jesus Christ

As the Gospel writers recorded the story of the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ and as the apostles wrote in their epistles, they gave us numerous scriptures attesting to the absolute deity of Jesus Christ.

Such an example is found in John 10:30 Jesus plainly stated that “I and my Father are one.” John also records the conversation between Philip and Jesus when Jesus revealed Himself as the Father in John 14:8-11 Jesus allowed Philip to know that to see Him was to see the Father. He seemed to be asking, “How long must I be with you before you recognize the fact that I am both the Father and the Son?”

Another proof of His absolute deity demonstrated by events in His earthly ministry is seen in John 8:58. Jesus stated to the Jews that, “Before Abraham was, I am.” As the great I Am, He is eternal. Hebrews 13:8 tells us, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.”

The events surrounding the “Temple cleansing” provide further proof of His deity during His earthly ministry. Matthew 21:4,5 tells us that Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 which foretold of this King coming unto them “having salvation and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”

The "Temple cleansing" itself directs our attention to Malachi 3:1: "And the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." It is interesting to note that A. A. Hodge (a Trinitarian) comments on this verse as without a doubt referring to the Messiah.

He indicated that, "The Hebrew term here translated Lord, is never applied to any other than the Supreme God. The Temple, which is sacred to the presence and worship of Jehovah, is called 'His' Temple.

- Now we understand why no one attempted to prevent Jesus from cleansing the temple. When He declared, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer..." He was exercising rightful authority for the Temple was actually His Temple."

Third Proof of the Absolute Deity of Jesus Christ

In the first chapter of Revelation, John is used by the Lord to reveal the glory of the risen Jesus after His ascension. In verse eight He is revealed to us as the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Verses 17 and 18 further proves His deity in relation to His ascension: "I am the first and the last; I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for ever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Later, in Revelation 21:6-7 we find the following: "I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end...He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ is not only the Son of Man, but the Almighty God and the Everlasting Father as well.

Fourth Proof of the Absolute Deity of Jesus Christ

There are several proofs pertaining to His return that are useful to prove His deity. In Zechariah 14:4, the prophet spoke of the return of the Lord: "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives...and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." Job adds to this by stating this about His Redeemer, "He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25). Both of these passages plainly declare that He who will stand upon the Mount of Olives in the last days in none other than Jehovah.

Luke, in Acts Chapter 1, reminds us that Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives and it will be Jesus that will be returning. Paul further clarifies this in I Timothy: "The glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (I Timothy 6:14-16). When the voice said in Revelation 22:20. "Surely I come quickly," John, the writer in Revelation replied, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

COMPARATIVE PROOFS OF THE ABSOLUTE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

The system of comparative proofs are very helpful in the study of the Oneness of the Godhead. This method of study shows that qualities and actions attributed to one manifestation are also attributed to the others. For example, three persons in the Godhead could be powerful, but only one can be Almighty. By showing that both the Father and the Son are said to be all-powerful, we are showing that they are one in the same.

The Shepherd - In the Old Testament, God revealed Himself as Jehovah-Roi (Jehovah my Shepherd). This identity is expressed in Psalm 23:1 and Isaiah 40:10,11. With this understanding of Jehovah as the Shepherd found in the Old Testament, we turn to the New Testament to establish our comparative proof.

In John 10:11 Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd." Hebrews 13:20 refers to Jesus as "that great shepherd of the sheep: I Peter 5:4 speaks of Jesus as the "chief shepherd." It is very clear that there can be only one "Chief Shepherd." Has the Jehovah of the Old Testament relinquished His position of Shepherd to Jesus in the New Testament?

Absolutely not! It is obvious that the flesh that tabernacled the Eternal Spirit was the Lamb of God, and the very one that David and Isaiah recognized as Jehovah-Roi (Jehovah, my Shepherd) dwelt in that earthly body. The conclusion of this comparative proof is clear.

- Jehovah, the Shepherd of Psalm 23, has revealed Himself in Jesus, the Shepherd of the New Testament.

The Rock - Several passages in the Old Testament refer to the God worshipped by the Jews as a rock. Psalms 18:2 states plainly, "The Lord is my Rock." Psalms 42:9, 62:2, 78:35, 89:26; and 94:22 repeat this identity of Jehovah. Deut. 32:4 declares, "He is the Rock...." Verses 15 and 31 of that same chapter make this same reference. I Samuel 2:2 says there is no rock like our God.

In Psalms 18:31 the questions are asked, "For who is God, save the Lord? And who is a rock, save our God?" Many other Old Testament passages continue this revelation of God.

- The New Testament sufficiently satisfies the comparative proof of this revelation. In I Corinthians 15:4, the Scripture states boldly, "and that Rock was Christ."

The King

In the Old Testament, Jehovah was King of His people, Israel. Psalm 10:16 reads, "The Lord is King forever and ever." In Isaiah 6:5, the prophet states, "For mine eyes have

seen the King....” Isaiah 33:22 refers to Him as “our Judge, our lawgiver, and our King.” Finally, Isaiah 44:6 calls Him the “king of Israel.” Jeremiah called Him “an everlasting King” in Jeremiah 10:10.

There are many other scriptures that refer to Jehovah as “king;” however, we will use one final Old Testament scripture in our comparative proof. The eternal God stated in Malachi 1:14: “I am the great King, saith the Lord of Hosts.” The New Testament answer to this comparative proof begins with John 1:49 where Nathaniel said of Jesus, “...thou art the king of Israel.” Further proof is found in John 12:12-15 where Jesus is praised on His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, “Blessed is the King of Israel.”

Even a Gentile ruler such as Pilate was used by God to declare that “This is Jesus the King of the Jews” (Matt. 27:37). Paul declares to Timothy in I Timothy 6:15 that Jesus is the “only potentate, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords.” Revelation 17:14 and 19:16 speak of Jesus as “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” Common sense dictates that a kingdom can only have one king.

- This comparative proof assures us that there are not two kings, but that there is only one and that His name is Jesus.

The Redeemer and Savior - The next comparative proof focuses on the attributes of Redeemer and Savior. In Psalms 19:14 the Psalmist refers to the Lord as his redeemer. In Isaiah 41:14 the prophet records the words of the Lord Himself: “...saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.” Then, again, the prophet declares, “As for our redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name, the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 47:4). In Isaiah 49:26 we read, “And all flesh shall know that I the Lord am the Savior and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob.” As if to emphasize this truth, this same statement is repeated in Isaiah 60:16. Isaiah further reveals the identity of the Redeemer in Isaiah 63:16: “Thou, O Lord, are our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting.”

These Old Testament scriptures join with many others to make it quite clear that Jehovah was the Redeemer of His people in the Old Testament. The New Testament leaves us without a shadow of doubt concerning the identity of the Redeemer and Savior. Matthew 1:21 plainly states, “And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.” Luke 1:68 says, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed His people.” How did He visit and redeem His people? Matthew 1:23 explains that Jesus was “God with us.”

The Creator - There is a vast amount of Old Testament attesting to the fact that God was the creator. Genesis 1:1 states, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Job recognized God as his creator in Job 33:4, “The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.”

Then in Psalms 33:6 the Psalmist introduces us to the Creator, “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” Isaiah 40:28 also recognizes God as “the Creator of the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 44:24 identifies God as both Creator and Redeemer, “Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he hath formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself.” Malachi 2:10 simply states, “Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?”

In the New Testament, John 1:10 reveals to us that Jesus, the one of whom he spoke, was the Creator, “He (Jesus) was in the world, and the world by made” by him....” Paul spoke of Jesus as the creator in Col. 1:16,17: “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven....” Everyone must agree that there could only be one that could create all things. Furthermore, if the Jehovah of the Old Testament “stretcheth forth the heavens alone” and “spreadeth abroad the earth by myself,” and the New Testament identifies Jesus Christ as the Creator, then the conclusion is that Jehovah of the Old Testament and Jesus Christ are one and the same.

The Logos of John 1:1- The first chapter of John clarifies the Incarnation even further. John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The original Greek text does not do damage to the Oneness message found in this scripture. It serves to strengthen it.

CONCLUSION

This lesson provides an inner view of the scriptures. Insight is the capacity to gain an accurate and deep intuitive understanding of a person or thing. This lesson is scriptural insight into “Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth”.

**Assignment
WORKSHEET****Student Name:** _____
Print Full First Name Middle Initial Print Full Last Name**Church Name:** _____ **Pastor:** _____**Date:** _____

Take your time to review each verse before you provide your answers.

1. The Hebrew language uses the plural to indicate number, but also to do what?

2. According to the lesson, the term Elohim is best understood as expressing what four things?

3. According to the lesson, what four proofs are offered to prove that Jesus is God?

4. According to the lesson, the New Testament continues what revelation of Jesus Christ as found in I Timothy 3:16?

5. According to the lesson, the system of comparative proofs are very helpful in the study of what?

6. According to the lesson, the New Testament satisfies the comparative proof that “that Rock was Christ. What is the verse that this lesson is referring to?

7. According to the lesson, the most distinctive and important statement of ____ a ____ h for the Jews is call the S ____ m ____.
8. According to the lesson, the importance of this doctrine is e ____ pr ____ ss ____ d by God Himself as He began the _____. Please select the best answer below:
 - A. ten commandments
 - B. ten lepers
 - C. ten virgins
 - D. ten talents
9. According to the lesson, the mystery of the incarnation is that God was manifested in the flesh. Which is the verse that declares this? _____.
10. According to the lesson, Jesus was not part man and part God, but He was ____ _ man and ____ _ God. What verse supports this? _____
11. Jehovah is the Shepherd of Psalm 23, and has revealed Himself in Jesus as Shepherd of the _____?
 - A. New Commandment
 - B. New Covenant
 - C. New Testament
 - D. New Commitment
12. According to the lesson, the comparative proof a ____ s ____ r ____ _ us that there are not two kings, but that there is ____ _ one and His name is Jesus.

Congratulations on completing this lesson. While some lessons may seem harder than others, you must always study to show yourself approved unto God, and reveal to others, what God has given you.
