

**Why we are adopting an
“agree-to-disagree”
approach when it comes to the
Trinity and the Oneness doctrinal stances**

Godhead issues have been with us since the very early phases of Christianity.

The Apostles of Jesus, however, never propagated a Trinitarian doctrine. The Trinitarian doctrine was introduced from especially a Hellenistic approach to the Gospel and this was then, briefly, mainly coming from the Greekspeaking Jews and which naturally brings us to the Greek philosophies (Acts 6.1). Hellenists were Greekspeaking Jews who had adopted the Greek language and culture. There was a time when Hellenism impacted profoundly on the Jewish community in Palestine, i.e. since the days of Alexander the Great and his rapid conquests. Especially the stormy intertestamental era was marked with this type of impact, however, the Greek culture held sway for centuries, affecting many classical civilizations.

Intense debating on Godhead issues erupted within the broader “catholic” community -

This depiction mainly being applied to the bulk of general Christendom, i.e. in the early post-apostolic times and before the Mother Church had taken the lead, although Rome was respected for her leadership right from the beginning, however, after the chief apostles had left the scene.

We can detect signs of a specific, alternate leadership, i.e. to that of the Jerusalem apostles, falling very strongly in place since early (first-century) times. However, with this statement I am not implying that the apostles of Jesus were part and parcel of the leadership of the post-apostolic Church, later known as the “Catholic Church”. It should be acceptable to knowledgeable Christians that the one, unified post-apostolic Church had gradually emerged and indeed over a period of four to five centuries when broader dogmatic issues were, by then, to a large extent ironed out.

The Trinitarian doctrine was central to the worship of what we today know as the Mother Church (or “Catholicism”).

Since the days of Sabellius, Godhead issues became a salient issue among one and all who propagated Jesus (Yeshua) as Messiah, gradually gaining momentum and so that, by the time Nicaea (325) was convened, an immense confusion of opinions were in sway and to such an extent that it is said that, by the early fourth century, the questioning of doctrinal ideas were constantly on the lips of both ruler and slave alike¹.

¹ Egypt was of course a smelting-pot since the days of Hadrian and consisting of such diversity of religion that almost all the sects in existence in early post-apostolic times, were represented in this geographical area.

In fact, one and all were driven by questioning the person of Christ, the relation of Jesus to His Father, God the Father's image, His authority over that of the Son, even complete equality in the Godhead, etcetera. It was then indeed an issue of immense proportion and in the process many excommunications, also reinstatements, had frantically taken place among the leadership of the two mainline opposing parties which had clearly emerged by 325 (A.D.), namely those voicing their opinion in favour of a Trinitarian stance over against those who had maintained that the Son was subordinate unto the Father.

A huge contention (in actual fact a great war) was by the time unleashed within the "Body of Jesus" which indeed elicited the sins of contention, division, strife, hatred, bullying, mud-slinging, slander, even torturing those who were labelled the "losers". Chrysostom was one of those Trinitarian theologians who was of the opinion that torturing or getting rid of an "enemy" in one or other brutish way (and who were, ironically, also called "Christian") was laudable and even the great Trinitarian, Athanasius, was supposedly linked to unbiblical treatment of those who did not want to adhere to his own perspective, the Trinity. This in a nutshell as the early history reflecting the battles that had gone on within the "Christian" fold can be researched by those interested. Much is today available on the internet and especially encyclopaedias and other historical works.

The contention grew in proportion

The contention between the two basic opposing parties indeed went from bad to worse, something that eventually culminated in the very important Council of Nicaea (325) and when the case of the two opposing parties at the time were heard before the then Roman Caesar, Constantine the Great. Athanasius, a fluent speaker, won his case of course as we all should know by now, however, the Arians decided to stick to their guns and the mother-of-all-battles had therefore never come to an end.

It should, however, be clear to especially a sharp researcher that the winning party was from a certain line-of-thought and it is indeed not far-fetched any longer to link this type of winning edge to the Essene tradition that was, since the very beginning, well embedded within the Mother Church's fold. Denying this, should therefore be regarded just as good as denying that the statue of liberty is not of great significance to modern-day Americans.

The Trinity and the Hellenists

There was then a solid base of Trinitarian propagators deeply embedded within the fold of especially the Greek-speaking Jewry (see Acts 6.1) and with whom Paul of Tarsus had immediately, i.e. after his Damascus repentance, heavily contented. For those who cannot really grasp why the dynamos of the Christian faith, Paul of Tarsus, was so soon after his encounter with Jesus (Yeshua) on Damascus Road ready to fight for his Christian convictions, one can just imagine that he, as a Jew, and who was brought up in accordance with the strict Mosaic Law and especially its adherence to monotheism (Deut. 6.4), would never have been happy with even the slightest smack of a triune God, especially declared in "three persons"².

2 Should one, for instance, study the early Hellenist (Essene) thought-pattern on God and the Godhead, something that indeed does not correspond with the Trinity that was conveyed at Nicaea (325) one will have to admit that fables and lies had indeed impacted on the early apostolic faith. However, traces thereof and tangent points can indeed be detected, and especially with the Sacred Code in mind. Therefore an *objective* approach is always necessary when it comes to faith issues.

The aforementioned is, however, not spelled out for us in the Acts of Luke though, but what would have raised the bloodpressure of Paul than an attack on his received faith, just as he rightly later had defended himself and when he was standing trial before Festus (Acts 24)? Paul was indeed not in any way going to succumb to paganism, be it tinged with either Judaism or Christianity in whichever way. His calling “among the Gentiles” was clearly surrounded on all sides by apostasies, also constant adaptations of the faith of his fathers and for this very reason he was called to “testify of Jesus” full knowing the very battle he was embroiled in right from the start and of course this way keeping the apostolic faith he was sharing with the rest of the apostles of Jesus (who were all linked to Jerusalem from the word go) well on track.³

Paul was then not going to succumb in any way to a doctrine, and especially concerning his God, that in the slightest was smacking of pluralism and especially, on top of it, having had to accommodate a mother worship too. This apostle of Jesus was indeed not only educated by his master (Yeshua) himself (he admitted this in his *Letter to the Galatians*, chp 1 &2) but he was also thoroughly schooled in Judaism and those interested can indeed research the early Christian times and which also had its fair share of apostate (pagan Jewish) sectarian thought and especially its contention with mainline Judaism as well as the first-century apostolic faith.

Greek thought and the Greek philosophies : Its role in Trinity

Considering then that Greek thought and the Greek philosophies were deeply steeped in Greco-Roman thought, we can indeed confidently accept that these disciplines would also have impacted on Jewish thought in general and especially on the Christian fold at large and which clearly had consisted of a diversified flock, i.e. people (believers) coming from diverse backgrounds and having then joined the apostolic assemblies as such. This type of believer would, however, indeed have thoroughly been subjected to the apostles' teachings, however, it was not until Paul had joined the flock of God in Jerusalem that clear-cut doctrinal directions would not only have been raised but also dealt with.

Paul was indeed a defender of the faith and for this very reason the apostles were regarding him as some one endowed with the Spirit of special knowledge in the Word of God (one of the gifts or charismata of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 12). This special anointing is clear from *2 Pet. 3*. He was then not only beloved among the apostles of Jesus, i.e. regardless his almost fanatical stance on Truth, but He was then indeed a respectful apostolic teacher who was often denied by what we today know was indeed his Essene opposition (his main “enemies” always contending with him on his apostleship and his Jewishness), however, we can gather from the *Acts of the Apostles* and then from especially *Peter's Second Letter*, that Paul was definitely regarded as a “beloved brother” among his fellow-apostles and then clearly within the apostolic! Christian community.

So, all in all, we can accept that Paul's vehement clashes with the Greekspeaking Jews must have pertained, to a large extent, to early Godhead issues and if we consider Shimon Ben Yochai's stance on the Godhead (which is touched on by Ester Blomerus in her audio on the Trinity and the kabbalistic Shimon Ben Yochai on this website), we may just as well bring the puzzle together for Paul's letters – reflecting his apostolic, doctrinal perspectives – clearly do not correlate in any way with Shimon Ben Yochai's ideas on God and His revelation. Another Essene question would naturally also have been on the mother worship.

3 Sint Ignatius' profound division between the early Church and the post-apostolic church (the bishops) applies

Many Trinitarians do not understand the complexities of their own doctrine

Now, considering this particular issue, it is clear that many propagating their faith in Jesus the Christ, and who so glibly are confessing the Trinity, do not have an inkling of what the Trinitarian doctrine indeed is about. Many even go so far as to ask for explanation upon explanation, many even openly admitting that they do not understand it or has never been able to, many even going further, and to rather not think too deeply about what the Trinitarian doctrine entails.

Now why is this so? Some of course, the more learned, would immediately resort to “scholarly” explanations, however, always leaving uncertainty within the hearts of especially the bulk of Christendom who are either researching this issue for themselves, or then those, on the other hand, who are expected to just believe without thinking too much about what is proclaimed as “Trinitarian doctrine”.

We may then indeed ask ourselves: Why this weird approach to a salient gospel truth that was supposed to have been revealed and which was indeed, according to Paul, not left outside our reach any longer? It was then, surely, no longer a dark, unfathomable mystery but Christ had indeed brought illumination to riddles and questions that had been asked concerning His person and especially His pre-existence (Jn 17)! He, for this very reason, boldly states in his *First Letter to Timothy* (3.16) that the mystery of the Godhead was REVEALED to us, i.e. to us human beings who were desiring of God to uncover this secret contained in his Word, not so? Christ's existence with His Father was then not shrouded in secrecy anymore but it was “revealed” and “revelation” surely means that it was brought to full exposure/illumination and so that we could gain a truthful understanding of something we would not have understood had it not been revealed by God, not so?

Many discoveries concerning early church practices have come to our notice but the battle of contention still prevails

However, apart from all the discoveries having been made thusfar, namely of old fragments, codices that had been preserved for us, diverse manuscripts and some even pertaining to overwritings, much debating within the “Body of Jesus”, i.e. over all the centuries, also substantiated by in-depth research that was done on the Greco-Roman philosophical impact on the Godhead (especially pertaining to Greek thought), the heated debating on the Trinity, contention and strife, hateful speech and mud-slinging, even cruel cursings, are still going on up until today! And if we are indeed objective and honest, we will have to admit, no matter how much we sometimes want to rationalize this very issue, that virtually NO progress has been made in this field for the contention still goes on in all its full glory!

Why? Because the Trinitarian doctrine is steeped in Jewish mystical thought and Greek philosophical reasoning! And especially pertaining to the Logos, Stoa, Memra – grand words trying to teach us to understand the Son's revelation in the Old Testament, and clearly then rationalizing, in a philosophical way, the much debated appearances and representation of the “Angel of God” (*Angel of God's Presence* according to Isaiah). And if we are honest, resorting to plain language, this angelic manifestation in ancient Israel, had indeed become a bone of contention for the high-minded, philosophically inclined theologians up until this day.

They – those early contenders - wanted to keep the ancient trinitarian indivisibility in the Godhead untouchable and of course at all cost! They therefore had to, since the days of Justin Martyr (105-

150/165 A.D.), accommodate the “Logos”, the grand word and stance introduced via Philo of Alexandria (another Jewish philosopher who presumably had good connections with the Alexandrian Essene Jewry) and of course then studied by the Christian (Greek) philosopher, Justin Martyr, a learned teacher from Ephesus. It is said that even Rome had problems with Justin's new introduction to Catholicism, yet who had no option but to later accept it fully as “Scriptural” truth!

So what were the results of this type of unfolding of the Trinitarian doctrine, and on top of it so early in the history of Christendom? In fact, it is said that by 180 A.D. Egypt was fully into the so-called “Christian” Trinity – that Egypt had taken the lead on the Trinity via Tunisia (the so-called Latin influence on Catholicism and of course keeping in mind that Carthage, connected to this geographical area, was since ancient times deeply steeped in Phoenician thought and which of course again directly latched on to a pagan trinitarian perspective and especially a mother worship).

Who will be held responsible for the confusion that had descended on the “Body of Jesus”?

What do we see here manifested fully? The mysterious Trinitarian perspective in the Christian Godhead was indeed then imposed by those who themselves were steeped in paganism. Now who will be held responsible by God for the establishment of pagan ideas in the Godhead? Definitely not the ordinary man in the street, sincerely participating as an ordinary member of the “Body of Jesus” and therefore believing that God was indeed the “God of the Church”.

What indeed clearly emerges before our eyes is the following scenario: As the Church leadership had ruled, those who blindly were following them, naturally had to obey them. They would then have learned to dictate and to rule in accordance with the example set before them. And so it went on from generation to generation. They, the learners of the “fathers”, i.e. of their philosophical reasoning, had then also learned to keep the status quo in place and therefore they were contending in the very same way from one century to the other.

The majority of them, however, could not understand the learned Origen and Father Clement's initial philosophical reasoning – both clearly contaminated by pagan thought and especially influenced by Greek philosophy – yet they were faithfully sticking to their guns every time Godhead issues had come to a head. And for this very reason debating, bickering, fighting, contention and strife had gone on and on, growing in proportion up unto today and of course simultaneously keeping on expanding the basis of especially the Trinitarian doctrine. For this very reason the Oneness were not prepared to stay behind and therefore they too had eagerly gotten on the bandwagon since days gone by, intensifying the contention and keeping the “mother-of-all-battles” with strong conviction of their own “correctness” alive.

Therefore we are today sitting with such a vast number of teachers faithfully not only propagating the “infallible” Trinity or the “correct” Oneness on the other hand....

But keeping the strife, division, contention, hatred, mudslinging, etcetera, still in place. Nothing then has changed! Even physics are pulled in when it comes to the Trinity, and today of course those modern-day philosophers like Webb and Jaspers also adding their well defined philosophical stances and so that there are still in existence two basic divisions : Those who just believe without questioning, and then still a sizable portion hotly debating and question the “infallible” Trinity!

We are therefore made to believe that those who think too concretely (actually too Biblical!) are

“fundamentalists”, they are taking things as is, they cannot think outside the box, they cannot accept and think in an abstract way, therefore they cannot accept the philosophical Trinitarian doctrine! It is even said, based on this philosophical approach and clearly to keep old goalposts well in place, that God cannot have a definite Name. He must therefore indeed have an ineffable (not to be spoken) Name! And so the philosophical mind has dugged its pagan fangs deeply into so-called “Christian” tradition. Those who deny the Trinity are therefore to this day regarded as “cultic worshipers”, strange and weird outcasts who cannot understand fully, who are full of spite and arrogance, even being ready to contend with God's illustrious Plan for man, namely to subject him to the “infallible” Trinity and so that he can inherit the promised land!

There is a conglomerate of Godhead propagators on both sides of the fence

And within this greater conglomerate of “right” and “wrong” doctrine are trapped very special sincere people, believers in Jesus and his sacrificial blood who also lay claim to salvation, however, who are harshly being bullied to accept carte-blanche, on face-value, what the scholars who are painstakingly following in the path that was paved for them by “Catholic” scholars, and “Catholic” teachers of the Word, are prescribing. The scholars and teachers are then to be held responsible by God for James, Jesus' Jerusalem apostle who seemingly also had a hard time among “false brothers” - gathered from his NT epistle – that we must not be glib teachers of the Word (chp. 3) for those who are teaching will indeed be harshly judged in the Day of the Lord (when Jesus comes back to hand out His reward to the faithful – those who were wearing the pure white garment of right standing with God (=righteousness)).

God has therefore not demanded of us to preach either a Trinity or a Oneness doctrine

What Jesus (Yeshua) did command us through his apostle John was to believe in the Son of God! We are then instructed by God, as we indeed can gather from all the NT apostolic epistles, also the Gospels, is to believe in God the Father and in His Son, also not to quench the Holy Spirit (Paul). We were indeed, considering this again from all angles, never instructed in the New Testament (even in the Old Testament on which the New one is based) to believe in an “infallible” Trinitarian doctrine. For the “infallibility” of the Trinity can only be properly fastened in the Greek philosophies! Only via the Greek philosophies will man be able to explain the existence of God, His Son and always of course operating through the Holy Spirit.

The debate between the Trinitarians and the Oneness has never subsided

And this is why we are sometimes led by Trinitarian theologians to read a text in confirmation of the Trinity “because some text explaining it better or aligning it then with the preceding one, just seems to illuminate it better”. Should one, however, then go to some length making logical, objective comparisons and considering the whole and not only its parts, one will soon discover an anomaly in the relevant teaching. And therefore the debate on the Trinitarian doctrine, even relating to the Oneness, has never subsided. Because of man's often wrong interpretations of the Scripture – trying to match it with man-made doctrines of the past - the contention in the “Body of Jesus” is still immovably in place. The “rock of contention and strife” will then forever divide those who believe in Jesus Christ.

And for this reason, we are contending for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints (Jude v3).

The apostles brought a simplistic gospel believing in God, His Son and in the Power of the Holy Spirit. Period! It was therefore the post-apostolic “Fathers” who were from a certain pool of thought and who had also clearly severed ties with the apostles of Jesus, who brought in their own doctrines and this Paul in a very direct way, warned against, addressing the elders in Milete (Acts 20) to take heed to apostasies which would, in his prophetic word, have been propagated after he had left the scene. And for sure, this indeed had happened.

God's prophetic answer to the spirit of strife and division pertaining to Godhead issues

This brings me to Evangelist Arie R J Blomerus (1910-1997) who had a revelation from God I would like to close with. This man was very well acquainted with both the Trinity as well as the Oneness doctrines, having had been trained in both stances, (1) as a staunch Reformist in his younger days, also as an early Pentecostal, and, (2) as an avid Oneness propagator, however, later led by God after remarkable encounters with the risen Jesus, i.e. to reject both stances in order to accommodate the OT Angel of the Lord revelation in accordance with the Scriptures – see videos, etcetera on the web. This anointed of God was a prophet of God who, since he had met Christ as a young lad of 15 (August 1926) and when he was also mightily filled with God's Spirit hearing the voice of God like the prophets of old in his hearing - he had a very difficult gift to exercise among the Christians and which gift (of revelation of sin) had compelled him to oftentimes having had to beg God “to please remove it from me, rather choosing somebody else”, yet only to receive God's consolation that He would reward him in due season.

Now, he always had a very strong concern for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and especially the flock of God in general. He had a deep love for sinners and a strong conviction to bring people over to faith in Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour of the world. One day he went aside to ask the Lord's guidance on the contention and strife that were so deeply embedded among Christians and especially relating to Godhead perspectives. He prayed for a long time (his usual way of praying) going aside and so that he could hear God's voice speaking to him. The Lord thereupon addressed him, that is when he specifically asked the Lord what to do with the “Trinitarians” who were always contending with him and vice versa, however, he had often clashed with the Oneness too. “They do not understand it”, the Lord gently answered him.

God calls us to walk in peace!

In other words, this is how he later explained it to me, namely that the real existence of God cannot be explained by humans, regardless of all their efforts and studies. And this indeed goes for the Oneness propagators as well for therefore there are loopholes in both the Trinitarian and the Oneness explications. Note that God once again did not condemn them and therefore, in the light of what has so often been said about this tacky issue, dividing the Body so deeply to this day, let us do all in our power to, as the Apostle Paul rightly instructs us in his *Letter to the Hebrews*, do our utmost to live in peace with everybody! [The Essenes were, as it seems to me, always busy probing the existence of God, the origin of the world and penetrating with their own knowledge, like the Gnostics also were apt to doing, God's abode – see the Zohar and especially Ginsberg's two outstanding books on (1) the Essenes, and (2) the Kabbalah].

The way the Godhead is then declared by mere flesh-and-blood people, is because God and His awesome existence, also His ways to man, cannot be grasped properly and therefore we must do all in our power to bridge our doctrinal differences in the love of Jesus Christ! For centuries the contention had gone on and it will remain this way up until the return of Jesus.

This anointed of God was then bringing the Word, basing his revelation on the Word, believing that we must win souls in the love of Jesus, placing souls upon the Rock (Jesus) for this is our priority as disciples and followers of Jesus. We must therefore apply this rule-of-thumb, namely to “agree to disagree” in order to bring about peace among believers, this way restoring brotherly love (Heb. 13).

The apostle Paul indeed, apart from all his intense strife and contention with the Greek-speaking Jews, had clearly gone to the utmost of brotherly love and to always uplift those who were in need of true Christlike support. We perhaps have a glimpse of this type of Pauline, fatherly love, in his precious *Letter to the Hebrews*. However, some are of the opinion that it indeed pertains to the Essenes (Nazarenes) who had joined the apostles' assemblies, however, among whom have definitely also later again severed ties with them.

[Who were the Hebrews (see Acts 6.1)? Studying articles on the Essenes and the Nazarenes is always recommended for those who want to know more on this challenging subject, however, considering Paul's *Christian attitude* and not then so much giving thought to where his audience had come from, i.e. before they had joined the first-century apostolic fold, but rather, in writing his divinely inspired, apostolic, encyclical letter to the “Hebrews” - were they, at the time, already busy falling away from the apostolic fold and teachings? - having then indeed done all in his power to establish his target group immovably (!) on the Rock, Jesus the Christ (Yeshua HaMaschiach)].

Conclusion

So, let's work in the love of Jesus for the sake of Him who has tolerated so much for us and having done so in order to “save sinners” from eternal perdition (1 Tim. 1.15). The anointed of God I have mentioned in this article, was of the opinion that putting a sinner on the Rock, is the most important task God had placed on the shoulders of those who are working for the Lord. And this boils down to true Christian love (1 Cor. 13)! And of course tying in with Jesus' “new commandment” : “A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another *as I have loved you!*” For by this sign we will be known as His disciples!

The big question of course remains: Will the Trinitarians and the Oneness, or even those who are not upholding either of these doctrinal stances, ever be able to exchange their usual spirit of strife and contention for true Christian love that can tolerate all (Paul)?

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