

*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

*"The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you,
the hour and the end!"*

Eze. 7:6 (Moffat)

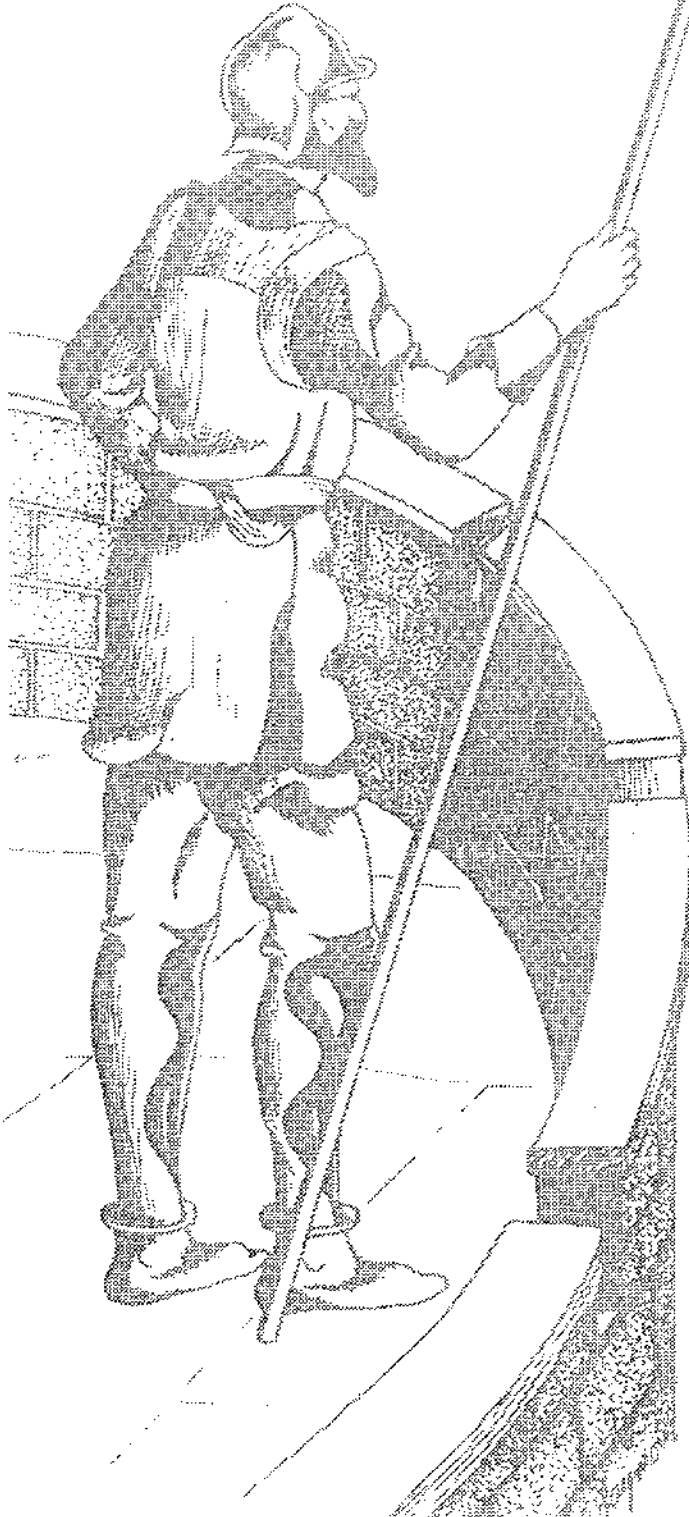
"THE HEAVENLY TRIO"

Editor's Preface

This issue will be the last to be devoted solely to the consideration of "things to learn" and "many, many things to unlearn." Over the past several months, we have received from friends and readers documents they have taken from the internet. These have contained information which reflects on the fulfillment of prophecy. This data needs to be considered.

In this issue, we approach carefully the subject of the Godhead in considering "things to learn" and "the many, many things" to unlearn. There are lines drawn in this doctrinal field. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever. . . ." (Deut. 29:29). We as humans too often try to penetrate the "secret things" with the result that we miss the designed relationship which God desires to have with us as made known in His full and final revelation in Jesus Christ, that of Father and Son (Heb. 1:2). We mar the simplicity of the things revealed because we seek to project the human back upon the Divine.

In the preparation of this article, I had to face some of my thinking which I have expressed in writing previously. I had to "unlearn" and start learning over again. This is discussed in a "postscript." The doctrine of God requires that one bring together all available knowledge as given in the Scriptures about God, and then, even then, draw conclusions hesitantly after much prayer and study. In this issue we have sought to bring together relevant Scriptures in regard to the Holy Spirit. We have by no means exhausted the study. We do hope that it will stimulate you to relate the prologue of the Gospel of John with the final two chapters of Revelation.



"We have many things to learn, and many, many things to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible."

"The Heavenly Trio"

This is a borrowed title. It does not convey the Triune concept of Rome, but rather a Tri-Theistic view of God. In any approach to a study of God, certain factors must be recognized:

- 1) We are on "holy" ground, and must tread softly recognizing our ignorance and limitations.
- 2) There are secret things which belong to God, and only the things which God has chosen to reveal to us are within our range to express a correct perception. (Deut. 29:29)
- 3) We are as Moses, to whom God clearly stated:

Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see Me and live. . . Behold, there is a place by Me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen. (Ex. 33:20-23)

When we are willing to recognize our finiteness, and accept the limitations set by God, simply evaluating the data provided by God in the Scriptures, we can come as close to the truth about God as is possible. It is the intent of this study, to move toward that objective, "learning" and "unlearning" as we go. But first --

Some Historical Theology

The monotheistic concept which marks the Jewish religion came to them through their understanding and interpretation of the Scriptures entrusted to them. There can be no question that if there is one thing which God hated above all other abominations it was the idolatry of the nations with their multiple deities. The Old Testament is replete with commands forbidding the worship of these heathen gods. Israel suffered the wrath of God when she compromised and apostatized from her worship of Yahweh. Indeed, God was and is "a jealous God" (Ex. 20:5).

To the followers of Jesus the Messiah, there was entrusted an additional canon of Scripture, which reveals a co-eternal God - the Word (Λογος), which came to be

flesh (John 1:1, 14). The rejection of Jesus was basically His claim to be the I AM of the burning bush (John 8:58). If accepted, it would recognize Two Gods. The conflict revealed in the book of Acts between the Jewish religion and the Gospel proclaimed by Paul was over the tenet that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel. See Acts 18:5. This Messiah, Paul declared to be a God (Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; Heb. 1:8). [Our word, "Christ" is the translation for the Hebrew word, "Messiah." See John 1:41] The whole issue of the controversy today over the Godhead, in summation, is how to relate what is revealed in the New Testament with the monotheism as perceived by Judaism from the Old Testament.

This is recognized by an Oxford professor, J. N. D. Kelly, in his fifth edition of *Early Christian Doctrines*. He wrote:

The doctrine of one God, the Father and creator, formed the background and indisputable premiss of the Church's faith. Inherited from Judaism, it was her bulwark against pagan polytheism, Gnostic emanationism and Marcionite dualism. The problem of theology was to integrate with it, intellectually, the fresh data of the specifically Christian revelation. Reduced to their simplest, these were the convictions that God had made Himself known in the Person of Jesus, the Messiah, raising Him from the dead and offering salvation to men through Him, and that He had poured out His Holy Spirit upon the Church. Even at the New Testament stage ideas about Christ's pre-existence and creative role were beginning to take shape, and a profound, if often obscure, awareness of the activity of the Spirit in the Church was emerging. No steps had been taken so far, however, to work all of these complex elements into a coherent whole. The Church had to wait for more than three hundred years for a final synthesis, for not until the council of Constantinople (381) was the formula of one God existing in three co-eternal Persons formally ratified. (pp. 87-88).

The Monotheism of Israel

Israel's monotheism is based on the Shema - "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut 6:4). There are two key words in this Shema which govern its interpretation. The first is *elohenu* - translated "our God;" and the second is *echad*, translated, "one." In *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* by Davidson, *elohenu* is noted as a "noun, masculine plural, with a pronominal suffix in the first person plural" (p. xxxviii). In translation, as in the Shema, it is translated as singular when applied to the God of the Hebrews, and plural when referencing the gods of the

nations. (See for example, Isa. 42:17 & Hosea 14:3) Is this then not giving the Scriptures a theological translation, rather than a linguistic translation? Theologically (Jewish theology) the Shema reads - "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord." Linguistically, it would read - "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Gods is one Jehovah."

The word, *echad*, is first used in Genesis 1:5. In literal translation the last part of this verse reads - "(It) was evening, (it) was morning, day one (*echad*)" Thus in its first use it describes duality in oneness. The second use with dual force is Genesis 2:24 - "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they two shall be one (*echad*) flesh." Further, Genesis 1:1 introduces God as *Elohim*, plural, who would suggest to an Equal, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (1:26). When Isaiah defines who *Elohim* is, he writes:

Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts I am the first and the last; and besides Me there is no Elohim. (44:6)

This designation - "the first and the last" - is carried forward to the final revelation in the Scriptures, and is applied to the One who sat upon the throne, "the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8) and to the Lamb "in the midst of the throne" (Rev. 5:6; 1:10-13; 22:13). Thus the monotheism of Israel as set forth in the Old Testament, would also be the "monotheism" of the new Israel as revealed in the book of Revelation; but it has been corrupted by the Triune concept of Romanism, and is being corrupted in the current anti-Trinitarianism blowing through the corridors of Adventism. The Shema of ancient Israel could be the declaration of faith of modern spiritual Israel if linguistically translated rather than by theological presuppositions.

The Elohim of the Old Testament

A comparison between the Old and New Testaments reveals the Elohim of the Old. Paul wrote to the Ephesians that it was "God, who created all things by Jesus Christ" (3:9). Hebrews reveals that He through whom God spoke in the flesh was He "by whom... He made the worlds" (1:2). The Genesis record clearly declares that in the beginning when the Elohim created, it was "the Spirit of God" who "brooded (Heb) upon the face of the waters" (1:2).

Peter tells us that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they

were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II, 1:21). This he writes was "the Spirit of Christ which was in them" testifying "beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (I 1:11). The angel Gabriel told Daniel that in revealing to him what was in "the scripture of truth" he was stating what was held only by him and "Michael your prince" (10:21). Later as Christ's angel ("His angel") he would speak to John on the isle of Patmos. (Rev. 1:1).

In the preface to the gospel of John, the Elohim is revealed by two designations, the Word (*Λογος*) and God (*Θεος*). It was the *Λογος* by whom "all things were made" (1:3). It was the *Λογος*, becoming flesh, through whom God spoke the fullness of "grace and truth" (1:14).

"Great is the Mystery"

Paul wrote: - "Without controversy great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16). Our word, "mystery" is a transliteration of the Greek word used in this text - *μυστηριον*. However, the use of the word in the New Testament does not carry the concept of incomprehension that is often associated with its use in English. Quoting J. A. Robinson, Moulton and Milligan, in their *Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament*, state that "in its New Testament sense a mystery is 'not a thing which *must* be kept secret. On the contrary it is a secret which God wills to make known and has charged His Apostles to declare to those who have ears to hear it'" (p. 420; emphasis Robertson's). While God wills that man should know that the Word was manifest in the flesh and made it a basic tenet of the Gospel (Rom. 1:1,3-4), there still remains aspects of that manifestation veiled in mystery as we use the word today.

In the gospel of Luke, and the Epistles of Paul are to be found the most definitive statements concerning the Incarnation in the New Testament. [One would wish that he could have heard the conversations which transpired between these two men, Dr. Luke and Paul, over this mystery as they walked the high-ways of the Roman Empire, and sailed together the waters of the Mediterranean] To the Philippians, Paul wrote that He "Who in the form of God being" (*ὅς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπαπξων*) "Himself He emptied" (*ἑαυτον εκενωσεν*) taking the slave form of man (2:6-7). Certain deductions are possible from this statement:

1) "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3). To accomplish this He had to di-

vest Himself of "the form of God." Thus the conclusion is inescapable: the Spirit form, whatever it is, is indestructible, for in that form He could not die.

2) The Word, Himself, effected the transition. Luke quotes Gabriel as saying to Mary, "the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee" (1:35). That manifestation of the power of God would effect the transition of the Identity who at the burning bush declared Himself the I AM (Ex. 3:14), and who in the temple courts could claim to be the same Identity (John 8:58).

3) A comparison between Luke 1:35 and John 1:14 clearly sustains a conclusion that the One that John called the Word (Λογος) is designated by Luke as "the Holy Spirit." Further, while not so marked in the KJV, the word, "thing" is a supplied word by the translators. The word "holy" (ἅγιον), an adjective, is in the neuter gender, and the noun supplied could be Spirit (πνευμα), also neuter, translating "that holy thing" as either "that Holy Spirit" or "that Holy One." In fact, when Jesus' encountered a demon possessed man, the "unclean devil" cried out, "I know thee who thou art: the Holy One of God" (Luke 4:34).

We could ask, what became of "the form of God" of which the I AM emptied Himself? There is no definitive statement in Scripture to answer this question. We stand before a mystery. The curtain is drawn. How One being in the "form of God" could become man, never to return to His original "form" again, and yet could declare, "I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:18), remains a mystery.

"I will pray the Father"

One of the last promises Jesus made before going to the Garden of Gethsemane was that *He* would pray the Father for a specific gift - "another Comforter" - ἄλλον παρακλητον (John 14:16). Whatever arguments can be advanced over ἄλλος (another), there can be no question that it is referring to One distinct from the One making the promise. Jesus called this "Comfort-er," the "Spirit of truth" (v. 17). Moments before, Jesus had declared Himself to be "the truth" (14:6). In his first Epistle, John would write, "Because the Spirit is the truth" - ὅτι το πνευμα εστιν η αληθεια (I John 5:6). Even as Jesus is "the Truth" likewise the Spirit is "the Truth." In the *Expositor's Greek Testament*, the author of the exegesis on I John comments on this verse: "Jesus called Himself, 'the Truth,' and the Spirit came in His room, His *alter ego*" (Vol. 5, p. 195). Thus the Word gave Himself entirely

for the redemption of man. He died in the form of fallen man; He requested His divine presence be sent to man. "I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you" (John 14:18 margin). BUT we stand before a mystery: how accomplished? The curtain is drawn.

Our understanding of the Holy Spirit must be gathered from the record of the New Testament. Those who deny that the Holy Spirit is now, since the Incarnation, a distinct Person of an "Heavenly Trio," consider that what the New Testament denotes as "the Holy Spirit" is either just the "power of God," or an "influence" from God through angelic ministry. It is our purpose in the rest of this article to list key texts of the New Testament, with as little comment as possible, and you can ask yourself the question on each text noted: "Does the assignment to the Holy Spirit of the status of an influence or a power meet the demands of the text exegetically?" We shall begin with the references in the Book of Acts inasmuch as on the Day of Pentecost, the promise of Jesus was answered - "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter."

"When the day of Pentecost was fully come," the assembled apostles and disciples of Jesus in "the upper room," heard "a sound from heaven as a rushing mighty wind" (Acts 2:2). Next they saw "cloven tongues like as of fire" which "sat upon each of them" (v. 3). The text then reads - "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (v. 4). Up to and including this experience, the revelation of the Holy Spirit was in symbolism. At the baptism of Jesus, all four Gospels record the fact that the Spirit "descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him" (Luke 3:22). These changes of divine symbolism for the Holy Spirit open vistas of contemplation for the seeker after truth, areas we have little explored.

The experience of Peter and John in Acts 4 is an interesting revelation of the Holy Spirit. These apostles were arraigned before the same body which condemned Jesus (vs. 5-6). The response Peter gave to their questioning was by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He was "filled with the Holy Spirit" (v. 8). The reaction of the Jewish Council when they "saw the boldness of Peter and John" dare not be overlooked. "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (v. 13). The filling of the Spirit was the impartation of the life and boldness of Jesus. We might ask, Did the incognito manifestation of the Spirit in surrendered men fulfil the words of Jesus, "He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine and shew it unto you" (John 16:14)? If so, a Spirit filled life reveals Jesus in either boldness and/or meekness.

Acts 5:3-4: *Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land. Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou has not lied unto men, but unto God.*

Observe first, there is recorded an "influence." Satan moved upon Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, to lie to the Holy Spirit. Is Satan only an "influence" or is he a fallen angelic spirit being, exercising a deceiving influence? Dare we interpret Satan as a being, exercising "influence," but then deny the influence of the Holy Spirit as not coming from a Being, but as being the influence itself? Further, the elevated position of the Holy Spirit in this experience - "not lied unto men, but unto God" - tells us two things: 1) Lying is done to persons ("men"); and 2) the Holy Spirit is on the level of the Person of God ("unto God").

Acts 8:26-39. The experience of Philip in making contact with the Ethiopian eunuch reveals a working relationship between the angels ("ministering spirits") and the Holy Spirit. It was "the angel of the Lord" which directed Philip to the desert road toward Gaza (v. 26). Once on the road, it was the Spirit who "said" to Philip, "Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (v. 29). It was the same Spirit who after the baptism of the eunuch "caught away Philip" (v. 39).

Acts 13:1-4: *Now there was in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers: . . . As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. . . . So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, departed unto Seleucia.*

In analyzing these verses, there are background experiences that need to be considered: 1) The revelation of Jesus to Paul on the road to Damascus, and 2) How Paul perceived his calling in the salutations to some of his Epistles. In so doing, it needs to be kept in mind that Luke was in the company of Paul when the book of Acts was being drafted. Luke is most careful to give specific designation as to who of Heavenly beings were acting and/or speaking. It was "Jesus" on the road to Damascus (9:5). It was "the angel of the Lord" who first directed Philip (8:26); the "Spirit" who took charge of all that followed in contact with the Ethiopian court official (8:29, 39). It was "the angel of the Lord" who released Peter from prison (12:7). It was "the Holy Spirit" who took charge of the direction the gospel was to spread in the Roman empire and the timing thereof (16:6-7).

The experience on the Damascus road was a direct intervention by Jesus Christ. He spoke directly to Paul and identified Himself - "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest" (9:5). In vision to Ananias, Jesus as Lord declared that Paul was "a chosen vessel" and He would reveal to Paul his future (9:15-16). Paul understood well his call to the apostolate. He introduced his letter to the Galatians writing that this call was "by Jesus Christ, and God the Father" (1:1). Yet he, in revealing his calling to Luke, was careful to relate the action of the Holy Spirit at Antioch.

In the general epistle to the Ephesians, while specifically stating, there is "one God," Paul also declares that there is "one Lord" and "one Spirit." Note:

There is . . . one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God the Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in you all. (Eph. 4:4-6).

We need to keep in mind that the very nature of God is "spirit." God exists in "spirit" as we exist in "flesh." John quotes Jesus as defining the essence of God as "spirit" - "Spirit (is) the God" (πνευμα ὁ θεός). He is not as the KJV implies - "a Spirit" - but rather is "spirit" (John 4:24). The incarnation impacted the Elohim. While prior to Bethlehem, the Elohim was "the Lord, the king of Israel," and "the Lord of hosts," (Isa. 44:6); at Bethlehem and following, there emerges the Spirit. Little do we realize what a great divide in time and eternity the Incarnation is. However, it is through that veiled mystery, "that is to say, His flesh" (Heb. 10:20), we have access once again to God. No longer associated at the Throne is the Word as He was, but the Word as He became, in a "glorious body" (Phil. 3:21), still bearing the marks of His humiliation. And when He comes again as King of kings and Lord of lords, though His vesture is "dipped in blood," He is still called "The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13).

The working relationships of Heaven as revealed in Acts and in Paul's Epistles, are symbolically represented in the book of Revelation. Because what is being disclosed is in symbolism, we must tread softly on that holy ground, lest we fail to understand the reality being represented in the symbolism. Through an open door, John beheld the Throne Room of Heaven (Rev. 4:1-2). One was on the throne veiled in dazzling light; before the throne were Seven Lamps or Torches of fire, which symbolized "the seven Spirits of God" (4:5). The next scene reveals the same throne - there is no change in the throne, nor in the One sitting on the throne. But a change has occurred.

No longer are seen the Torches of fire, but rather a Lamb "as it had been slain" possessing "seven horns and seven eyes" - *a part of the Lamb*, but no longer at the Throne having been "sent forth into all the earth" (5:6). These eyes and horns now symbolize the Seven Spirits of God as did the Seven Torches of fire. A change had occurred. While "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), when He came to be flesh, He was proclaimed by John who had come "to bear witness of the Light" (John 1:7-8), as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (1:29).

In our emphasis on the revelation of Jesus in the prologue to the Gospel of John, we have focused on Him as the Word of God; but there is equally, in the prologue, the revelation of Jesus as "the Light" He is "the true light. . . coming into the world" (v. 9, RSV) Coming from the very throne of God, there was "in Him life, and the life was the light of men" (v. 4).

While we have not given an exhaustive study of the New Testament texts regarding the Holy Spirit, we believe that the texts discussed do establish beyond reasonable doubt that the Elohim of the Old Testament can in the New Testament be best defined by the designation, "the Heavenly Trio." No understanding of God can be replete without the mystery of the Incarnation. While the "how" the Word was made flesh remains shrouded in mystery, the fact is a reality with *all* that resulted. By the coming of the Word in the flesh, death has been abolished in Him, and "life and immortality" has been brought "to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10) Over the new Israel of God, can be pronounced - "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (II Cor. 13:14).

The Triune Concept of Rome

Even with the linguistic translation of the Shema of Israel and the New Testament revelation of the interrelationship of Being between the Word made flesh and "another Comforter," the formula of "one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons" is extolled as truth. See, 1981 *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, page 32, article, "The Trinity." We truly have things to learn as well as things to unlearn.

In the current war on terrorism, the monotheistic belief of Muhammadism and the monotheism of Babylonian Christianity is being compared. In a recent issue of *Christianity Today*, (Feb. 4, 2002), the question was

asked - "Is the God of Muhammad the Father of Jesus?" In the answer given, Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School at Stamford University, wrote:

From all eternity, before there was a world, before there was anything else, God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, was - is - in a bond of love and unity and reciprocity and community that exceeds our ability to comprehend and describe. (p. 34)

Again in commenting on the Nicene Creed, he states:

The one we adore and worship and love in Jesus our Redeemer is of the same essence as the Father. We are not talking about two different gods. We're talking about the one God, but the one God who has forever known himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This says to us that the fundamental reality of God is relationship - its community. If we can ever grasp that, we'll understand what our fundamental differences are with Islam. (ibid.)

In the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Edition), the position of the Roman Church is summarized in the Athanasian Creed which reads:

Now this is the Catholic faith: We worship one God in the Trinity and the Trinity in unity, without either confusing the persons or dividing the substance; for the person of the Father is one, the Son's is another, the Holy Spirit's another; but the Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, their glory equal, their majesty coeternal. (par. 266)

In the explanation given in the Catechism, under "The dogma of the Holy Trinity," it is stated: 1) "The Trinity is One" (par. 253); and 2) "'God is one but not solitary.' ... They are distinct from one another in their relations of origin: 'It is the Father who generates, the Son who is begotten, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds.' The divine Unity is Triune" (par. 254).

In the *Handbook for Today's Catholic* carrying the official affirmation of the Church, it is declared:

The mystery of the Trinity is the central doctrine of Catholic Faith. Upon it are based all the other teachings of the Church. In the New Testament there is frequent mention of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. A careful study of these scriptural passages leads to one unmistakable conclusion: each of these Persons is presented as having qualities that can belong only to God. But if there is only one God, how can this be?

The Church studied this mystery with great care and, after four centuries, decided to state the doctrine in

this way: in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit - truly distinct one from another. Thus, in the words of the Athanasian Creed: "The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and yet there are not three gods but one God." (pp. 11-12)

With this, we face a major problem. If we believe that the Trinitarian doctrine - "there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons" - then in so doing, we are stating that the Roman Church is based on a foundation of truth. Further, since all of the other doctrines of Rome are based on this Trinity concept, why not return to Rome and follow all her theological reasonings? It is rather ludicrous to hear a Seventh-day Adventist take issue with Rome over her Sabbath to Sunday reasoning, and then shout their belief in her Trinitarian concept.

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"Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for [apostle's] advantage that He should leave them, go to His Father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself, divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. He would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent." (Letter 119, 1895)

Does the clause - "sent forth into *all* the earth" (Rev. 5:6) - suggest that mysterious attribute of God - omnipresence?

Postscript

In a previous issue of WWN, I quoted the inserted parenthesis of John 7:39 which reads: But this spake (Jesus) of the Spirit, which they which believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." The word, "given" is not in the text, but has been supplied by the translators. In commenting, I emphasized, the force of the verse with the word, "given" omitted. Was this justified? I think not. John, as does the Synoptic gospels, records the Spirit descending like a dove upon Jesus at His baptism (1:32-34). The translators can point to the statement of Jesus recorded by John where He stated, "I will pray the Father and He shall *give* you another Comforter" (John 14:16).

A question does remain. Why did John omit the word, "given," in John 7:39? Was there something he was seeking to set for by this insertion in explaining what Jesus meant when He said - "He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (ver. 38)? I don't know. Admittedly, the more we study, the more we have to learn, and very frequently, unlearn. This is especially true when one studies the revelation in the New Testament concerning the Holy Spirit.

Consider Hebrews 9:14: "*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, ...*" Is this verse saying that through the "Eternal Spirit" the Offering was without "spot", or that as the Spirit, He made the offering? The "sacrifice" began at Bethlehem.

Consider the "Letters to the Churches" in Revelation 2 & 3. The messages comes from the One, John saw standing "in the midst of the seven candlesticks" 1:13. (a different Greek word than is used in 4:5 for "the lamps of fire") Yet the messages close with the instruction - "*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*" (2:7,11, 17, etc.)

4. Consider the final chapters of Revelation: a) There God declares of Himself, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" (21:6) Likewise, the One whose "name is called The Word of God" so declares Himself (19:13; 22:12-13); b) Twice it is stated "the throne (not "thrones") of God and of the Lamb" (22:1, 3). Just Two of Them.

Only once is the Spirit noted and that with "the bride" (22:7). They speak as one - one voice. Does this reflect the concept that the Word "became one flesh with us in order that we might become one spirit with Him"? (DA, p. 388). Does this make the Incarnation with its mysterious impact on the Godhead, the key-stone of the arch of redemption?

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