

Holiday greetings in Yeshua,

**"I and My Father are one."
 "Ani vecha'av echad anachnu."**

This proclamation was made by the Messiah Yeshua during the Feast of Dedication (*Hanukkah*) in Jerusalem, as He walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch (John 10:22-23,30). As our celebration of Hanukkah draws near (beginning on the evening of December 21, 2008 and continuing until December 28, 2008), we are re-dedicating ourselves to the One True God, who in His Oneness, is a complex unity. This doctrine of our Messianic faith is neither simple to understand nor simple to explain in a few pages. Therefore, we highly recommend the resources that we have selected for your further study and prayerful consideration.

When Yeshua said that He and God were one, He was answering the Judeans who were questioning Him concerning His Messiahship. We read in John 10:24, *"Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, 'How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ [Messiah], tell us plainly'."* Yeshua responded that He had told them, but they didn't believe His words nor the works that He did in His Father's name—because they were not the sheep that His Father had given Him. When Yeshua said that He was One with God, they took up stones to stone Him (John 10:31).

Yeshua was accused of blasphemy since He, being a Man, made Himself equal with God. Was He equal with God? Absolutely! **One** with God—the Divine Son of God, sanctified [consecrated] and sent into the world (John 10:36). Yeshua was God come in the flesh. He concluded His discourse with the words, *"...the Father is in Me, and I in Him"* (John 10:38).

Yeshua was saying here that He is one with the Father in counsel, will, nature, power, and essence. We believe that. Yeshua reinforces His Oneness with God the Father in John 14:9 when He says to Philip, *"...He who has seen Me has seen the Father..."* Continuing in verse 10, Yeshua says to Philip, *"Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works."*

The Father dwells in the Son. The Son dwells in the Father. They are an indivisible One!

One God, not three!

Believers in Yeshua are monotheists. We believe in one God. We are neither polytheists nor tritheists. Polytheists believe in many gods who act independently of each other, and are often at odds with each other, jealous, competitive, completely separate and disunified. Tritheists believe in three separate gods. We believe in one God, the God revealed in both the *Tanach* and the *Brit Hadasha*, who is so big, so majestic, so far superior to all other gods, that He is able to manifest plurality in nature within His great Oneness. There is perfect union within the Godhead, with God being Father, Son and Holy Spirit in one heart, mind and loving embrace. Too big to comprehend? Remember that our minds are finite. God is infinite.

There is a mystery involved in the Oneness of God. Even the *Zohar*, the mystical commentary on the Torah and the Prophets, composed in the 2nd century by Simeon ben Yohai and colleagues, found some evidence for plurality within the One God upon examining the sacred Tetragrammaton:

"Come and see the mystery of the Word YHVH: there are three steps, each existing by itself: nevertheless they are One, and so united that one cannot be separated from the other. The Ancient Holy One is revealed with three heads, which are united into one, and that head is three exalted. The Ancient One is described as being three: because the other lights emanating from him are included in the three. But how can three names be one? Are they really one because we call them one? How three can be one can only be known through the revelation of the Holy Spirit." *Zohar* Vol. 111, 288; Vol. 11, 43, Hebrew editions. To which we say, "Amen." Only the Ruach HaKodesh can reveal to a heart that Yeshua and His Father are One, and that this same Oneness includes the Spirit as well.

Rabbi Eliezer Hakkalir spoke of three distinct "Beings" (הויות) in one undivided Godhead through whom the world was created. He affirmed the belief of some ancient rabbis that God used the letter ה in the creation of the world since the three "Beings" are indicated in this letter, (NOTE the three sides), and since the letter ה stands for יהוה or Yehovah. (From **The Great Mystery**, offered this month)

We appreciate a comment by Dr. Jacob Gartenhaus concerning the triune manifestation of God in the Tanach: "The Hebrew Bible abounds with the idea of the three aspects of God: God the incomprehensible; God who appears to man in the image of man; and God who communicates with man by the Holy Spirit."

Father and Son as One in the Tanach

In the Hebrew Scriptures we see the Father speaking to the Son in Psalm 2:7 and the Son speaking to the Father in Zechariah 1:12. The prophet Isaiah writes about the Father, Son and *Ruach HaKodesh* as the composite unity of the Godhead in the following portions of Scripture: Isaiah 48:12-16, Isaiah 61:1, and Isaiah 63:7-14. Consider Isaiah 48:12-13;16 as evidence of One God with three distinct personalities in perfect unity: *"Listen to Me, O Jacob, and Israel, My called: I am He, I am the First, I am also the Last. Indeed My hand has stretched out the heavens; when I call to them, they stand up together... Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord God and His Spirit have sent Me."*

Who is speaking here? God wants us to hear since the passage opens with "Shema," the same word used in Deuteronomy 6:4, and repeated again in verse 16. We believe that the speaker is the Messiah or Yahweh the Messiah as John B. Metzger points out in his extensive study of the plural Oneness of God, **The Tri-unity of God is Jewish**. He is the servant of the Lord who comes into focus again in Isaiah 48. To quote Mr. Metzger: "Verse 16c gives three distinct personalities in the Godhead. The reference of 'Me' is distinct from the Lord God (*Adonai Elohim*) and is distinct from the Holy Spirit. Simply put, the Lord God (Father) sends Me (Son) and the Holy Spirit. It is not a coincidence that in the Gospel of John, over 40 times Yeshua refers to the fact that the Father sent Him, which collaborates with Isaiah 48:16 as well as Zechariah 2:6-11. In Isaiah 48:16 there is a very clear presentation of the tri-unity of God..."

A Complex Unity in the Beginning

Beginning in Genesis, God presents Himself as One God whose unity includes diversity. The first hints of plurality are found in the terms used to designate God. Both "*Elohim*" and "*Adonai*" are plural forms of existing singular nouns. *Elohim* is the plural of *Eloah*. *Adonai* is the plural *Adon*.

Genesis 1:1 reads in Hebrew: "*Beresheet bara Elohim et hashamayim v'et haaretz.*" "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" The word *Elohim* is the general Hebrew word for deity. The English word which is translated 'God' in the Hebrew Scriptures is *Elohim* in the majority of

cases. *Elohim* is often accompanied by *Yahweh* (יהוה) as in Genesis 2:4-5, Exodus 34:23 and Psalm 68:18-19. *Elohim* and *Yahweh* are combined together 930 times in the Hebrew Scriptures in one of the following translated forms: "LORD thy God," "LORD God," "LORD their God," and "LORD his God." God, through the writers of Scripture, chose to use the plural form of Himself. In fact, *Elohim* is used in the Hebrew text over 2600 times as a plural while *El* is used 258 times, *Elah* 95 times and *Eloah* 58 times.

While *elohim* literally means "gods" and is also used to refer to false pagan gods, (Exodus 20:2-3), when it refers to the monotheistic God of Israel (*Elohim*), the verbs associated with it are in the **singular**. This directly contradicts normal Hebrew grammatical construction. A plural noun with a singular verb is highly unusual. When *Elohim* refers to the One True God, the verbs associated with it are singular, as in Genesis 1:1 *Elohim* created (singular). When *elohim* refers to the false gods that surrounded the Israelites, the verbs are also plural. God is making a statement right at the beginning. He is *Elohim*—One Supreme Being yet somehow a plurality within that Oneness. "*Adonai*," translated as "Lord" in the Bible, is the plural of *adon* (lord). It is consistently used in the plural when applied to God, and, according to a Jewish dictionary, is often used as a parallel to *YHVH* or as a substitute for it. Again, God is revealing Himself in a plural manner. Yet, He is one God!

"Let Us make man in Our Image..."

When Neil began to read the Bible for the first time in his adult life in 1972 and came across Genesis 1:26, "*Then God said, 'Let **US** make man in Our image, according to **Our** likeness...' "*, he concluded that the gentiles had changed the Jewish Bible to suit their theology! He was shocked when upon purchasing a "Jewish Bible," and checking out the Hebrew, he realized that God had indeed used the plural personal pronoun "us" in Genesis 1:26. His quest for the answer to who "us" referred to eventually led to his acceptance of Yeshua as Lord, Messiah and Savior. Yeshua was in that "us."

The plural personal pronoun "us" of Genesis 1:26 is found seven times in the Hebrew Scriptures. We will mention three of them: Genesis 3:22, Genesis 11:7 and Isaiah 6:8:

*"Then the Lord God (Yahweh Elohim) said, 'Behold, the man has become like one (echad) of **US**, to know good and evil...' "* (Genesis 3:22).

*"Come, let **Us** go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech"* (Genesis 11:7).

*"Also I heard the voice of the Lord (Adonai) saying: 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for **US**?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me' "* (Isaiah 6:8).

When *Elohim* uses the personal plural pronoun "us," He is speaking to equal partners in the Godhead. One God created man in His image, decreed his expulsion from the Garden, confused his language and looked for someone to be His messenger.

In Genesis 1:26, Genesis 3:22, Genesis 11:7 and Isaiah 6:8, the major names of God are all used with the personal plural pronoun "us." Thus we see a combination of the singular "*Yahweh*" and the plural "*Elohim*" and "*Adonai*" emphasizing once more a complex unity.

The Shema: Adonai Echad

We, as Messianic Jews, embrace the "*Shema*" as the supreme confession of our monotheistic faith: "*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one!*" In Hebrew: "*Shema Yisrael Yahweh (Adonai) Eloheinu* (our Gods) *Yahweh (Adonai) echad*" (Deuteronomy 6:4). In verses five and following, God's people are exhorted to love and worship Him **alone**, with all their heart, soul and might. In traditional Jewish thinking, the *Shema*, as the cornerstone of Judaism, proclaims the unity

and oneness of a God who is pure spirit and can never become a man. Thus, the incarnation (the Word becoming flesh) is totally unacceptable and anathema to them. It is seen as "dividing God." As Messianic Jews, we have no problem reconciling a God who could put on flesh, any more than we have a problem with a God who could open the Red Sea, cause the walls of a city to fall down at the sound of a shofar, or create life in the womb of a virgin. We still believe that God is One.

We even believe that the *Shema* includes the idea of plurality in God's Oneness. The Hebrew word for "one" used in Deuteronomy 6:4 is "*echad*," which literally means a complex or compound unity, a united one. If the Lord had meant absolute oneness, He would have used the Hebrew word "*Yachid*" (pronounced ya-HEED).

The word *echad* is first used as a compound unity in Genesis 1:5 where evening and morning were the first (*echad*) day. In Genesis 2:24 the Lord says that a man and his wife become one (*echad*) flesh. The spies who returned from Canaan in Numbers 13:23 brought with them one cluster (*echad*) of grapes. Is God's use of "*echad*" in the most important confession of our faith intentional and revelatory? We think it is.

PLEASE NOTE : We are well aware that some Messianic Jews and Christians do not agree with this traditional view of God as a complex unity. We have prayed, researched and compared the opposing views, especially the one in which Yeshua is considered to be the Father as well as the Son, a Father who manifests Himself in many forms. We can not reconcile this when we read the Gospel of John, especially, where Yeshua speaks so much about His Father—that they are One—but in some way separate personalities. For example, we read in John 14:26: "*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*" God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. All One. All totally God—not one-third God. So, please, let us disagree in a spirit of Love. We ask you not to send us material with an opposing viewpoint. If we are in error, the *Ruach Hakodesh* will show us. Thanks!

May you and your loved ones walk in The Light this holiday season, *Neil & Janice*

Special offers: **The Tri-unity of God is Jewish** by John Metzger. A 300 page in-depth study. **Elohim** CD by various Messianic artists is sure to be a blessing!

The Great Mystery, or, How can Three be One? Explore as Rabbi Tzvi Nassi takes you into the Talmud, Zohar, and Targumim to explain the plurality of the Godhead.

The Mystery of the Godhead, teaching CD by Rabbi Rosenberg; Awesomely informative!

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FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22	SUN 2:30 PM
FL	Orlando/Cocoa	WTGL TV 45	SUN 1:30 PM
FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45	THU 11:30 AM
FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45	SUN 1:30 PM
FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61	SAT 10:30 PM
GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16	SUN 2:30 PM
IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40	SUN 1:30 PM
IL	Peoria	FAITH ALIVE CH 20	FRI 6:00 PM
MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25	SUN 1:30 PM
NJ/NY	NJ/New York	WMBC TV 63	SUN 4:00 PM
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WED 4:30 AM (GMT) & 6:30 AM (Jerusalem)

Insight Digital Cable: GTN

SUN 3:30 PM (EST) [Ch. 283]

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