

The Son of God

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From the first chapter of Genesis it is clear that God had a companion beside Him in creation. The statement, *“Let Us make man in Our image, and after Our likeness,”* is sufficient proof that this second Person, who was with God, shared in God’s deity – was like Him in essence, sharing the same qualities that are unique to divinity. This is the only logical conclusion possible since not only did this plurality of Persons share in creating man, but also were together the exemplar for the “image of God” in which man was created. Man was not created in the image of angels, as the next verse goes on to prove, *“in the image of God He created him.”* That is, man was created in the image of the Father. Yet, the plurality of persons who did the creating and who served as exemplars for this “image of God” must have been of the same essence, otherwise man would have been created in a blended image, of God plus whatever nature the second Person present possessed. The switch from the plural in verse 26 to the singular in verse 27 shows that ultimately it was God Himself who was the exemplar for this image. But since the second Person present also participated as exemplar, and since verse 27 shows that “God” Himself was the exemplar, it is a necessary inference that the second Person was of the same essence and nature as God. This is the only way to account for the singular statement in verse 27 that man was created in the image of God without contradicting the statement in verse 26. The singular *“He (God) created him”* shows that God was the ultimate source for the creation of man. But this does not in any way rule out God’s using this second divine Person who necessarily shared in God’s nature and essence (deity) as His assistant or agent. Thus, “God” in this passage always refers to the Father, as the one who spoke the words, “let Us make ...,” and “God” (the Father) was the exemplar for the “image of God.” Since the second Person was also deity, and was the agent through which God created man, both the plural and singular statements are true. The term “God” here does not refer to two or three Persons, but one Person. This one Person spoke to a second Person who shared in the deity.¹

John clarifies all this in the prologue to His Gospel. The one who was “with God” in the beginning was His helper, His agent, through whom all things were created, and without

¹ This passage is used as a proof text for Trinitarians, to show that God is a plurality of Persons. Yet, a careful look at the plural and singular pronouns does not confirm that the term “God” is itself inclusive of multiple Persons. Rather, “God” is a reference to the same concept in the Shema. There is indeed a second Person present. But He is not called “God” in this context. Yet He necessarily shares in the same nature as God (the Father) so that man could be created in the image of both, yet this remain the image of God Himself. This passage is also extremely problematic for Unitarians, since they have no adequate explanation for how a second Person could be involved in both the creation of man, and be the exemplar for the image of God. The usual explanation is that it refers to angels. But this runs smack up against the problem that man would then be created as a blended image of God and angels, since man was made according to “Our image.” Verse 27 will not allow this interpretation.

whom nothing was made that was made. He was called “Logos” (which means “word” or “message”), and John wrote that He was “deity.” That “Logos” was His proper name is made clear by the same Apostle in Revelation 19:13, referring to Jesus – “His name is called the Logos of God.” The name “Logos” also defined His role, since from the beginning His assignment has been to interact directly and personally with humanity on God’s behalf, God’s ultimate “Messenger.”

Contrary to popular belief, John did not coin the name “Logos” for the Son of God. Paul knew it decades earlier² as a proper name for the Son of God.

Hebrews 4:12-14 LGV

12 For God’s Logos is alive and effective, and sharper than any double-edged sword, penetrating until the distribution of both life and breath, of both joints and sinews, and is the Judge of inner sentiments and thoughts of the heart. 13 And nothing created is imperceptible in His sight, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of Him, the One unto whom we report. 14 Having then a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens – Jesus the Son of God – we should cling to the Profession.

The context proves that God’s “Logos” has “eyes” and sees everything, just as John elaborated upon in Rev. 5:6. Verse 14 identifies God’s Logos as Jesus, the Son of God.

John, in proving the deity of the preincarnate Son, quoted Jesus Himself as saying, “For I issued forth out of God” (ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον).³ This cannot refer to the incarnation, since humanity is not “begotten” by deity. It must refer to a point in time when the Son “issued forth out of God,” before which there was no “Son” as a distinct conscious Person from the Father. Psalm 2 describes this in the words of the Son Himself, “I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’”⁴ John used the clause, “only-begotten Son” to show Jesus’ unique relationship to the Father, having been literally “begotten” out of the Father, thus of the same essence and nature as the Father – deity. Consequently, the deity (divine nature) of the Son flows from the Father to His divine offspring, rather than the Son’s deity being independently His own. Just as Adam’s sons were “human” (of the nature of Adam via “begetting”) so also the “only-begotten Son of God” had to be of the same essence and nature as God Himself when He was “begotten” by the Father.

² John’s Gospel and letters were written decades after Paul’s death in AD 66. John took over the care of the assemblies of Asia Minor which were the product of Paul’s missionary journeys. John’s works were clearly intended to add a second witness to Paul’s testimony by an Apostle who was an eyewitness to what Jesus said and did.

³ John 8:42

⁴ Psalm 2:7

According to both Paul and Jesus Himself, the “begetting” of the Son of God marks the beginning of measured time, day one of creation week.

Col. 1:15- LGV

*15 He is the image of the God who is unseen, **first-begotten of all creation**, 16 because through Him everything was created, what is in the heavens and what is on the land, the seen and the unseen (including thrones, dominions, principalities, and authorities). Everything has been created through Him and for Him. 17 And **He is before everyone**,¹⁴ and everything has stood together in Him. 18 And He is the head of the Body (the assembly), **who is The Beginning**, 16 first-begotten out from among the dead, so that in everything He should become the prototype.*

Jesus confirmed that He was God’s first act in time.

Revelation 3:14 LGV

*14 “And to the messenger for the assembly in Laodicea write, ‘The Amen, The Faithful and True Witness, **The Beginning of the creation of God**, says this:*

Therefore the Son Himself was “the Beginning” of God’s acts, although He was not created, but rather “begotten,” being the “only-begotten Son” of the Father.⁵

As both John and Paul stated clearly, God created everything that exists through the agency of His Son, including the angels.⁶ Thus, the Son of God was truly “from the beginning.” He did not begin to exist in the incarnation.⁷

All face to face encounters with God (YHVH) were encounters with the Son (the agent of YHVH), never directly with the Father who is invisible and has never been seen by anyone.⁸ The Son, both as God’s “only-begotten” and God’s personal agent (the Messenger {Angel} of YHVH), had the right to use the divine name and to speak as YHVH in the first person.⁹

At the time of the incarnation, the Son willingly chose to “empty Himself” of His divine attributes,¹⁰ to “come down from heaven,”¹¹ becoming flesh through the incarnation,¹²

⁵ See also: Psalm 110:3 LXX; Prov. 8:22-26; Prov. 30:4

⁶ Prov. 8:22-31; John 1:1-2 cf. Rev. 19:13; John 1:10; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9 MT,TR; Col. 1:16-17; Col. 3:10; Heb. 1:2,8-10; Heb. 2:10.

⁷ Micah 5:2 see esp. the LXX

⁸ Dan. 3:25,28; John 1:18; John 6:46; John 8:56-59; Col. 1:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; 1 Tim. 6:16; Heb. 11:27; 1 John 4:12 cf. v. 20

⁹ Gen. 22:11-18; Ex. 2:1-22; Ex. 23:20-31; Ex. 32:34; Ex. 33:2; Num. 20:16; Isa. 9:6LXX; Isa. 63:9 {cf. Heb. 1:3 Gk. & 1 Cor. 10:4}; Mal. 3:1

¹⁰ Phil. 2:5-8

¹¹ John 3:13; John 6:38

¹² John 1:14

becoming fully human (ἄνθρωπος). The same “Son of God,” the “*Messenger of YHVH*” who appeared to Abraham and Moses, became “Son of Man” (fully human).¹³ As Man, Jesus had no super-powers (of divinity) inherent to His person,¹⁴ but was as human as you or I, having been made “*in all things like His brothers.*”¹⁵ His miracles and His supernatural knowledge were all from the Father’s working through Him, doing the miracles.¹⁶

As Man, the Son was “*tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin.*”¹⁷ Since we have the potential to sin, so also did He. However, Jesus was taught by His Father from infancy to “*refuse the evil and choose the good.*”¹⁸ He became the atoning sacrifice for us after He had “*learned obedience by the things which He suffered*” through His agonizing in the Garden of Gethsemane, and thus was “*perfected*” Man¹⁹ by subduing His human weaknesses and fears – “*He suppressed Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even death of a cross.*”²⁰

The Son remains fully human (glorified and immortal) at the Father’s right hand,²¹ being the tangible prototype of what all faithful men and women will be in the resurrection.²² At the appointed time, “the Son of Man” will come again in the flesh with power and glory to reign from Jerusalem on the Throne of David.²³ The Father will hand full sovereignty and dominion of the creation over to the Son.²⁴ He will reign over the nations in justice²⁵ for a thousand years.²⁶

After He has destroyed all opposition to God, at the end of the thousand years He will deliver the Kingdom – in perfect order and justice – to the Father. From that time on, the Son will again be subject to the Father who will reign supreme.²⁷

The Son of God, having become Son of Man, is the divine substitute for man’s failures, to fulfill all of God’s covenants. He is **the second Adam**, the Man who will fulfill the original purpose for mankind for which Adam failed – to take dominion over the whole earth, animals, fish, birds, etc..²⁸ The Son of God having become Son of Man is **the second Jacob**,

¹³ Isa. 9:6LXX; Mal. 3:1

¹⁴ John 5:19,30

¹⁵ Heb. 2:17

¹⁶ John 14:10; Acts 2:22; Acts 10:38

¹⁷ Heb. 4:15

¹⁸ Isa. 7:14-16a LXX

¹⁹ Heb. 5:7-9

²⁰ Phil 2:8 LGV

²¹ 1 John 4:2-3 Gk.

²² 1 Cor. 15:47-49; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2

²³ Acts 2:30; 2 John 1:7

²⁴ Dan. 7:13-14

²⁵ Isaiah 11

²⁶ Rev. 20:1-6

²⁷ 1 Cor. 15:28

²⁸ Gen. 1:26-28; Psalm 8:3-9; Heb. 2:5-10

the promised “Seed” of Abraham to inherit the Land that God promised to Abraham’s Seed, since Israel failed to keep His Law.²⁹ The Son of God having become Son of Man is **the second Solomon**, the son of David who will sit upon the Throne of David and reign because Solomon failed to keep God’s commandments. In each of these covenants, God’s grace is displayed by God’s providing His own substitute – His only-begotten Son – when man failed, just as He provided a substitute ram for Isaac.

Both Trinitarianism and Unitarianism minimize the sacrifice that God Himself made by offering up His “only-begotten Son” whom He loved just as Abraham loved Isaac. God tested Abraham, giving him just a glimpse of what God felt. *“For this is how God loved the world, inasmuch as He gave His Only-Begotten Son ...”*³⁰ – that is His Son whom He fathered from His own person.³¹ For Trinitarians, the Son was a co-equal divine Person from all eternity, not literally procreated from the Father’s own person. For Unitarians, the Son was a created being, not literally God’s only-begotten Son. Both of these views greatly diminish the Father’s own sacrifice. Likewise, both views diminish the Son’s sacrifice, which was two-fold according to Paul in Phil. 2:5-8. First, as Son of God, being “equal with God” in essence and deity, He contemplated His exalted place, but then willingly chose to “empty Himself” in order to “become in the likeness of men.” This itself was a sacrifice impossible for us to fathom.³² Then, having been found in fashion as man, He “humbled Himself” a second time in order to become “obedient unto death” on our behalf.

The true understanding of who God is and who His Son is:

- brings harmony to all of the Scriptures, eliminating a plethora of problems and contradictions of the other views.
- treats all of the Scriptures with the respect they deserve, and does not need to force any of them.
- exalts both the Father and the Son.
- fosters a greater love for God by understanding a much greater sacrifice on the part of both the Father and the Son to purchase our redemption. “We love Him because he first loved us.”
- defines true “monotheism” in contrast to the perversion of monotheism prominent in both Islam and rabbinic Judaism.

²⁹ Gal. 3:16

³⁰ John 3:16

³¹ Heb. 11:17

³² In Trinitarianism, the Son lost nothing in the incarnation, but only ADDED humanity to His divinity, hence no real sacrifice or permanent loss in becoming flesh. In Unitarianism, the Son was never deity, but just a man. He sacrificed nothing in this regard. Since in this passage (Phil. 2) Paul’s point was *“let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus,”* both of these erroneous views of Christ provide a bad example to follow (or at least not nearly the kind of self-sacrifice that the Son actually made). Thus in imitating the “mind of Christ” as Paul instructs, our own behavior is greatly affected by our theology.