



Who is Yeshua the Messiah?  
 Part 3: Elohim, the Godhead  
 Andrew J. Manuse, Pastor  
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{Title slide} Shabbat shalom, brothers and sisters. We're in part three of our series called, "Who is Yeshua the Messiah?," and last week we focused on the importance of trusting the witness of Scripture, which is the Word of God that will guide us through our lives into the Kingdom of God and also help us move forward through whatever Truth God wants us to learn together in this study. I also emphasized an important hermeneutic principle that we ought to employ when reading the Scriptures and coming to know our God. According to Yeshua's own words in Matthew 18:16, we understand that "by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every Word may be established." Said another way: When we're interpreting the Word of God and coming to know our God through the prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, every matter—every Truth—every principle—can only be confirmed on the testimony of two or three corroborating passages of the Bible, especially when understood in their full context. The Holy Spirit ought to testify to the unity of the Truth our studies bring to light, and there can be no contradiction in Scripture that otherwise disproves our understanding, for our God does not lie. With these principles in mind, we can move forward. I finished off last week's message with a teaser for this week, stating that God established His identity right from the very beginning—with three witnesses—so that we might understand His complex eternal unity all the way to the End. There's a term that Christians often use to refer to God's complex unity—the "Holy Trinity"—and I want to state right now that this is a term I stand by, even though it is not found written even once in the Bible. Let me repeat that so you don't miss it: the word "Trinity" is not found even once in all of the Bible, and this is important for you to know, especially considering the principles of Biblical interpretation that I just brought to the table. So how, you might ask, can we agree with a theological term that isn't mentioned even once in the Word of God? As I will show you today, and throughout the rest of this series, the witness of God's triune nature in Scripture is not just two or three, but too many to count. Anyone who wonders how the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit can be One God, and not three

gods, ought to pick up their Bible and just start reading. God describes His nature to us almost every chance He gets, and this is what I aim to show you in the testimony of today's message. He doesn't want us to miss it. He doesn't want us to misunderstand. So how do so many miss it? How do so many misunderstand?

{New slide} I think the answer is straightforward, and God explains it to us in Isaiah 28. Starting in verses 11-12, we read: "For with stammering lips and another tongue [God] will speak to this people, to whom He said, 'This is the rest with which You may cause the weary to rest,' and, 'This is the refreshing'; yet they would not hear. But the Word of the LORD was to them, 'Precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little," that they might go and fall backward, and be broken and snared and caught." — You might have heard this passage taught by Bible instructors in a positive light. — You might have heard people tell you we ought to study Scripture "precept upon precept, line upon line," and that is how we come to understand it, but let me tell you: This is not how we come to understand Scripture. As I've said to you in the past, citing 2nd Corinthians 3, the Apostle Paul explained that the veil keeping us from understanding Scripture is taken away when we come to know Yeshua; when His Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see the Spiritual reality of His Word, as Yeshua Himself explained on the Road to Emmaus in Luke 24. With a tongue not recognized by the blind and deaf, the risen Yeshua said: "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" Our LORD brought hard truth to those who were slow to hear, but in His Mercy and love for His people He also brought rest to the weary and refreshing to those who would be changed through Him, just as God said He would. He is the one who said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28), and He started with these men on the road to Emmaus. As we continue in Luke 24, we read: "Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Those who don't understand "the whole counsel of God" as one message about our One God—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—will indeed fall backward; they will be broken, they will be snared, and they will be caught. Without the rest and refreshing of faith in Yeshua as our LORD and our God, we cannot escape from sin, we cannot be healed, we cannot understand, and we cannot be freed from condemnation. So many study the Scripture intellectually, grabbing one passage here or one passage there to justify their own desires and their own sin. Others study the Scripture by the letter, creating "precept upon precept" to enforce as "heavy burdens that are hard to bear" against their fellow man. But both of these paths are the result of spiritual blindness—and they both lead to death. There is no rest in such unbelieving pursuit of worldly wisdom.

{New slide} We know from 2nd Corinthians 3:6 that “the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” And this is not to say that we should not study Scripture or pick up our Bibles to read what they say—in fact, it means exactly the opposite, but with an added notation, which is this: By the Spirit of the Living God we ought to understand Scripture as one message teaching us one Truth about One God, with whom there “is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1:17). God gives us every spiritual gift, even our faith in His identity, His Word, and His Promise, which is salvation for all who trust in Him. It is also by this spiritual gift—the Holy Spirit—that we come to understand how all the lines and precepts of Scripture come together. When Yeshua came into the World, He was of no reputation, He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but it was through His message—through His life, His sacrifice, and His triumph—that we can know our God. Paul wrote in 1st Corinthians 1:21-25, “For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Messiah crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Messiah the power of God and the wisdom of God.” Is the idea of a triune God complex? It sure is. But the Gospel message of Messiah Yeshua crucified is the power and wisdom of God to those of us who believe. The Jews and Greeks who do not believe may study and see foolishness in the Scriptures that speak about this Truth, or in their worldly approach to reading the Bible that clings to selfish desires, power, or wealth—they may even justify their path toward death. They may creep in, calling themselves faithful, but “deny the only LORD God and our LORD Messiah Yeshua” (Jude 1:4), and by their worldly wisdom they fall backward and become snared and caught in the bondage that leads to death. The One message of Scripture is that we worship One God—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—and it is through the testimony of this Truth and all that it involves that we can walk in the power of our Creator, always humble and repentant before Him and “rightly dividing [His] Word of Truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

{New slide} So those worldly scoffers who doubt the Truth of God; those who study “line upon line, and precept upon precept” without being able to see the whole counsel of God by the Holy Spirit of God; those who use the Scripture as a justification for their own purposes rather than as a mirror by which to hold themselves accountable—these “scornful men” and women will come to ruin if they do not repent and recognize Yeshua as “the Way, the Truth and the Life.” No one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6), which is to say through faith in His identity and obedience to

His commands, and these are explained throughout His Word. As Isaiah 28 continues, the LORD made this truth abundantly clear. Consider verses 14-16, where we read this: “Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scornful men, who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, because you have said, ‘We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we are in agreement. When the overflowing scourge passes through, it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves.’ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily....” This is to say, whoever believes in Yeshua, the precious cornerstone and foundation of God’s eternal Kingdom, will not flee when He returns. Those who trust in Yeshua as LORD and God will not panic no matter what comes upon them. The prophesy concludes with this: “For the LORD will rise up as at Mount Perazim, He will be angry as in the Valley of Gibeon—That He may do His work, His awesome work, And bring to pass His act, His unusual act. Now therefore, do not be mockers, Lest your bonds be made strong; For I have heard from the Lord GOD of hosts, a destruction determined even upon the whole earth.” In brief, Mount Perazim is the place where the newly anointed King David, a prophetic type for Yeshua, the Son of David, suddenly and completely defeated the Philistines, the enemies of God. The Valley of Gibeon is the place where King David first “struck down the Philistines,” and then went out from there destroying all of the wicked while establishing His kingdom. This prophesy is a testimony of two explaining that Yeshua’s resurrection will lead to the destruction of all the enemies of God on the Last Day, but it’s more than this. His “unusual act,” God coming in the flesh to live as a man and die on the cross, and “His awesome work,” His resurrection from the dead, would set up the very foundation of His eternal Kingdom. Only those who build their lives upon this foundation will live in the freedom that God desires for His people, while those who reject Him will remain in the bondage of Satan and will be defeated at the End when Yeshua returns, just as the Philistines were defeated by David. If you are seeing what I’m explaining to you in the text—good. As I noted, the whole of Scripture contains one message about our One God, who manifests Himself as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We will do well if we listen to Him. But we risk the judgment if we blind ourselves by compartmentalizing each line and precept of Scripture to justify ourselves.

{New slide} And it is with this introduction to today’s message that I want to return to the beginning, which is where we left off last week. To remind you, we read this in Genesis 1:1-3: “In the beginning Elohim (אֱלֹהִים) created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of Elohim was hovering over the face of the waters. Then Elohim said, 'Let

there be light'; and there was light." I explained how the "im (ים)" at the end of the word "Elohim (אֱלֹהִים)" in this passage makes "God," as rendered in the English, a plural noun. I explained how the verb "created," or bara "(בָּרָא)," in this verse, is a singular verb, meaning that the plural "Elohim" acted as a single entity in His creation of the heavens and the earth, but perhaps He also manifested His power in different ways. This "majestic plural," as the Rabbis call it, can be better understood as our triune God; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The invisible Father is eternally present in verses 1 and 2, while His Holy Spirit also acts as Elohim by hovering over the face of the waters in verses 1 and 2, preparing for action, and the Son of God comes forth from the heart of Elohim as the Word that speaks—"let there be light"—and that Word did not return to God void; light surely came forth from the heart of God. God explained Himself even more powerfully in Isaiah 48, which is a Messianic passage. Starting in verse 12, we read the LORD declare: "'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 laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together.'" There's so much here. It is the Right Hand of God, the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, the Aleph and the Tav, the A and the Z, Who created the heavens where all spiritual beings dwell as well as the earth, where all physical beings dwell. Together these realms came into being, just as God said in the first verse of His Word. We read about Who God is, what He has done, and what He has promised to do when we read from the very first verse in the first book of Genesis to the last verses of the last chapter of the last book of Revelation. He is the same God who will stand at the end, as John prophesied in Revelation 22. And recorded there, in verses 12-13 of that chapter, the Risen LORD Yeshua said this: "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give everyone according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last." The LORD who created all things also oversees His creation; He also redeemed a people for Himself and at the very end He will raise us up to be with Him forever. He said in Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

{New slide} To remind you, the writer of Hebrews explained these Truths in the very beginning of His letter, where we read: "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better

than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” (Hebrews 1:1–4). Who is it who is so much better than the angels other than the God Most High, who created all of the spiritual beings as well as all of us? It is by God’s righteous right hand, the visible Son, that He created all things through Him and for Him. God’s right hand is no separate god, but the active and visible will of God in the heavens and the earth Who we can experience in our lives. The Son is “one in being with the Father,” just as our own right hands are “one in being with us.” Our right hands are an extension of ourselves, and indeed, our right hands obey our will and do everything for which we send them. Our right hands are indeed the very same power by which we do all things in the world. This should not surprise you, for we were created in the image of God, a point I will get to in just a moment.

{New slide} Before we go there, I want to finish off the testimony of Isaiah 48:12-17, which extends beyond what I’ve showed you so far. I have the full passage on the screen for reference, but the underlined portion continues on from what we’ve read. The Alpha and the Omega, our Elohim, the One who created the Heavens and the Earth by His Right Hand, continues with these words: “All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear! Who among them has declared these things? The LORD loves Him; He shall do His pleasure on Babylon, And His arm shall be against the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; Yes, I have called Him, I have brought Him, and His way will prosper. ‘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. Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.” I have to ask you: Does the grammar here seem a bit odd—even unusual? It should, but it’s not accidental. Every Word of God is given for a specific purpose and it accomplishes everything God intends and does not return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11). In this prophesy, Isaiah has recorded a dialogue between the Father and the Son, and Elohim once again explains the beginning and the end, as well as everything in between. The LORD asked: “Who has declared these things?” But we have to respond: “Declared what?” He answers: That His Right Hand has laid out the foundation of the earth and stretched out the heavens. We know that the Right Hand of God has declared these things by doing them, and He did these things by first speaking them into existence through His Word. But the Word would not just come forth from the Mouth of God, but would also come in the flesh and dwell “among them”—among the people of Israel. The Father was describing none other than Yeshua, His Son, who was coming then and is now coming again, and this is why the next verse reads: “The LORD loves Him.” Yahweh loves Yeshua, He loves His Right Hand who created all things, and who will

also bring justice to the earth, to separate the righteous from the wicked, to set a people apart for Himself. He will “do His pleasure on Babylon,” which spiritually represents the world of sin and death. His arm will punish the Chaldeans, who were the people of Babylon. As Yeshua said in Revelation 22, He is bringing His “reward” with Him, He will “give [to] everyone according to his work.” He said in John 5:29 that the Son would reward “those who have done good” with “the resurrection of life” “and those who have done evil” with “the resurrection of condemnation.” God the Father has called God the Son for this purpose, and He said, “His way will prosper.” It’s not just that Yeshua would prosper in all that He accomplished in His death and resurrection on the Earth, but also everyone who follows His way will prosper, and these will inherit an eternal relationship with Him. Next, we read this: “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.” My mind is blown by these words. The whole Gospel message is here. Yeshua, who is One in being with the Father, was always One in being with the Father, He was there and He is there and He always will be there. Just as He said to the prophet Isaiah, Yeshua said during His ministry: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” He also said in John 12:26, “If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.” This is One message. Do you see it? Yeshua will reward those who come near to Him with eternal life in His Kingdom. Just to make sure you understand what God is showing us in this passage, consider how Isaiah concludes this section of his prophesy. We read: “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.’” In other words, Yahweh, our Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, our Elohim, He teaches us how to live and shows us the Way by which we should go. And we know that Yeshua is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one gets to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). It is the LORD God, our Father, and His Holy Spirit who sent the Son into the world, Who will lead His people home. He has shown us how to walk before the LORD forever. The complex, triune nature of God is on full display in this passage. And before we move on, I want you to see one more thing here that brings everything together. Notice how the LORD began the latter section of this passage that I have underlined; namely, “All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear!” I have these words highlighted up on the screen {see below}. Does this sound familiar? It should. We say the same thing every week at the start of each service, and the sh’ma is highly relevant to the nature of our God. Deuteronomy 6:4 reads, “Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is ONE.” And indeed, our God is One—He is “echad (אֶחָד),” as the Hebrew Word declares and we confess. We are NOT polytheists. We ARE

monotheists.  
We do not  
believe in three  
gods.” We  
believe in One  
God who  
eternally exists  
and reveals  
Himself as the  
Father, the  
Son, and the  
Holy Spirit.”

And the word  
“echad” certainly

means “one,” but it does not mean “one” in the sense of a mathematical singularity. Just as God declared in Deuteronomy 6:4, “Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is One,” the Word of God declared in Isaiah 48:12-17, “All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear! ... the LORD God and His Spirit Have sent Me.” The LORD our God is One, and His identity is established by a testimony of two or three, as all things must be.

“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 laid the foundation of the earth, And My right hand has stretched out the heavens; When I call to them, They stand up together. All of you, assemble yourselves, and hear! Who among them has declared these things? The LORD loves Him; He shall do His pleasure on Babylon, And His arm shall be against the Chaldeans. I, even I, have spoken; Yes, I have called Him, I have brought Him, and His way will prosper. ‘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. Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: ‘I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.’” (Isaiah 48:12–17)

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one [echad (אֶחָד)]!” (Deut. 6:4)

{New slide} And this is where we ought to return to Genesis and continue with the history of God’s creation, because the Scriptures do a better job explaining God’s nature than any theological explanations or terms could ever accomplish. In the beginning, on the sixth day, we read the following from Genesis 1:26-28: “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” There’s a lot to unpack here, but first I want to state plainly that what we’ve just read is a good translation from Hebrew to English, and there is no ambiguity in this. Every translation into English, even on Sefaria.org, the Jewish Orthodox website that incorporates the whole Tanakh in Hebrew and English, translates the beginning of this verse: “Let Us make man in Our image.” I don’t want to overdo the details here, but I do think it’s important to show you the mechanics of this, which I have put up on the screen {see below}. The Hebrew for



“Let us make” is “na’aseh (נַעֲשֶׂה).” This is a compound word, where the prefix “na (נִ)” modifies the verb “a’seh (עָשָׂה),” meaning “to make,” with a future-tense prefix that translates to

“we will.” As such, the Hebrew word “na’aseh (נַעֲשֶׂה)” literally translates to “We will make” in the plural, and the verb “make” here in this passage is written in the singular, just like in Genesis

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One [echad (אֶחָד)]!” (Deut. 6:4)

“Let us make נַעֲשֶׂה” <<< עָשָׂה נַ >>> (עָשָׂה = make) (נַ = We will (future tense prefix))

“in Our image נִבְרָאֵנוּ” <<< נִ בְּ צִלְמֵנוּ >>> (נִ = of us) (צִלְמֵנוּ = image) (בְּ = in)

“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” (Gen. 1:26–28)

1:1. If you recall from last week, in Genesis 1:1, the plural “Elohim (אֱלֹהִים)” acted in the singular to “create (bara—בָּרָא)” the heavens and the earth. And so, once more, here in Genesis 1, verse 26, Elohim said, in the singular, “We will make man—literally “A’dam (אָדָם).” What’s even more interesting is how the sentence continues with the same construction into the next section. By way of reminder, the initial clause reads, “Then Elohim said, ‘Let Us make man in our image,’” and the clause “in our image” is translated from “bi’tzal’may’nu (בִּיצְלֵמֵנוּ)” in Hebrew. The word “bi’tzal’may’nu (בִּיצְלֵמֵנוּ)” includes the prefix “bi (בְּ),” meaning “in,” the root word “tze’lem (צֶלֶם),” meaning “image,” and the suffix “nu (נוּ),” meaning “of us.” Remember that Hebrew words are read from right to left, and I’ve attempted to break these words down for you on the screen from the Hebrew to the English in a way you can understand {see above}. And so, when we consider this construction, the sentence literally translates to: “Then Elohim said, ‘We will make A’dam in the image of Us,” or “We will make Man in Our likeness.” The intrigue does not end with the initial clause. After Elohim gave Adam dominion over the fish, the birds, the animals, and all the creeping things of the earth, the narrator continued with this: “So Elohim created man in His own image; in the image of Elohim He created him; male and female He created them.” This second witness is all singular, except for the word “Elohim,” which is plural, as well as the “Man” that God created, which is not just A’dam, but also Eve or “Ha’vah (חַוָּה)” in the Hebrew, which means to come into being. God created Man in His image,

both “male and female,” and through this creation, new life came into being. More on this in a moment. If we were to dig into the Hebrew here, it would be clear that the translations “His own image” and “He created them” are accurate in the latter section. The “Us” and “Our” from earlier is now “His” and “He,” and this was no mistake. The LORD was explaining His complex nature to us here. The preponderance of the evidence in Scripture does not allow for any other interpretation than what we teach about the complex nature of God, no matter how anyone tries to explain God’s triune nature away. And believe me, many DO try. The Rabbis had to come up with something here to explain this passage away, because the wording is not ambiguous. If we have One God—and we do—then how is there an “Us” creating Adam, and how is God creating Adam in “Our image”? Was there a polytheistic history? Absolutely not! But what is going on here? The Rabbis explained that God was having a conversation with His heavenly angels about the creation He was about to set in motion, and then He later set it in motion on His own. They explained that the word “elohim” with a small “e” refers to these angels, because all spiritual beings in Scripture are referred to as “elohim” with a small “e.” It’s true, within the whole counsel of God, small “e” “elohim” can be used to refer to any of the spiritual beings, including our uncreated God as well as His created heavenly beings, but it is dishonest to interpret Genesis 1:26-28 in this way, and the reason is straightforward. First of all, the context does not support it. Secondly, and even more importantly, there is nowhere in Scripture, and I mean nowhere, where the Word explains that God used His angels to co-create Adam. Nowhere in Scripture does God say He created Adam in the image of angels. It is evident, especially considering the passages of Scripture that I already showed you earlier today and last week, that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the “Us” that created Adam in “Our” image. And because we have One God—our God is “echad”—we can also say that “He created Adam male and female.” He “blessed them”—the man and woman He had created—and ... said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”

{New slide} And so... —about that. Is our God some kind of androgynous being like the pagans worship? Is God both male and female? In a physical sense, absolutely not! Our God is not a man, He is Spirit. He is a heavenly being. He is Elohim with a capital “E.” But God certainly acted within the rules of His nature to create “A’dam” male and female in His image. Elohim has all the spiritual attributes that men and women possess when put together, and I certainly intend to explain these attributes in later messages. For our purposes today, I want to demonstrate the complex image of God, using the Word of God, and so I’m going to skip ahead to a second witness of God’s

creation of A'dam as male and female in Genesis 2. Here, the Word explains God's Creation of A'dam in a little more detail than He explained at first. In Genesis 2:21–24, we read: “And the LORD [Yahweh (יהוה)] God [Elohim (אֱלֹהִים)] caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: ‘This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Let's examine this more closely. Here we read that the LORD Yahweh (יהוה), our Elohim (אֱלֹהִים), was the actor of Creation, but we also know that God's Word, His “right arm,” and His “right hand” laid the foundation of the earth and stretched out the heavens, as Scripture testifies elsewhere. All of creation was made “through Him and for Him,” and it was also made in His image. Through Yeshua, we've read, God “created the worlds,” meaning both the heavens and the earth—not coincidentally, another testimony of two. In this second creation narrative, our triune God described how He made A'dam “male and female” in His image. He indeed took a “rib,” or “tza'la (צֶלַע)” in Hebrew, meaning an integral side or chamber, or a piece from the side of A'dam's human body. I don't want to dwell too much on the word “tza'la (צֶלַע),” but I do want to note that the “right arm” of a man is on his side, is it not? If the “right arm” of God created the worlds, then isn't it interesting that the right side of A'dam became a woman who bears children? More importantly, though, this woman that God took out of A'dam was “bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh.” She was literally taken out from within Him, and though she became a separate person that was outside of him, she also remained a part of Him. The narrator explained: “a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” They shall become “echad (אֶחָד),” that is. We can't look at this from a human perspective. Clearly, when you look at a man and his wife in the flesh, you can see that there are two people standing there, male and female. But in the spiritual realm, a man and his wife become one; they no longer function separately, but together. What one does affects the other, and what the other does affects the first. They also function better together in marriage when they have a unified will, both working to obtain the same objective, and in truth, this is the purpose of a Godly marriage. A man and His wife ought to work together to seek the LORD with all their heart, soul, mind and strength so that they can both become one with God on the Last Day. All this being said, the straightforward truth is this: If a man and woman are joined together to become “echad (אֶחָד),” and “man was created male and female in the image of Elohim,” and man and woman are also two persons in the flesh, then we can begin to

understand the complex unity of our God, who is One, but Who also manifests Himself as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Every matter is established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

{New slide} So if men and women, created in the image of God, are a testimony of two illustrating the Truth of God's nature, then where does the Word give us a testimony of three? Consider a passage just a little bit earlier from Genesis 2:7, where the Word describes Yahweh Elohim's creation of "A'dam," before He separated the man He created into male and female. This is a second illustration of how God created Man in His image, and so a study of this passage helps to give us a better understanding of God's nature and also confirms it. We read: "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." I want you to see how there are three components here that make up Man; namely, the dust of the ground, or the flesh; the breath of God, which is the Spirit; and the living being, or the soul, which is "nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ)" in Hebrew. The soul literally means "the life" of a living being. Unlike God, whose "nephesh" is eternal, the life of man is dependent on His relationship with God, who is the very essence of life itself. Yeshua said in John 5:26 that both the Father and the Son have life in themselves, but only those who trust in the Son will have life everlasting, and even in this the Godhead is confirmed. Nevertheless, we are not yet perfected in God, as Paul wrote in Romans 6:23, "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Messiah Yeshua our LORD." All of us must face death on account of sin, for as we read in Hebrews 9:27, "it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." Yet, we all have hope to rise again just as Yeshua did when we dedicate our life to Him, for He is our God, and He has the power to overcome sin and death within Him. We must trust in Yeshua as our LORD and our God if we are to have any hope that our soul will endure forever. As Yeshua said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Through this picture, we can understand the "nephesh" of God to be everlasting, in the Father, the Son and the Spirit, but the "nephesh" of man is dependent upon his or her relationship with Yeshua, for when man dies, the dust returns to the earth as it was and the spirit returns to God who gave it. We are the creature, He is the Creator. The "nephesh," or the "life" of man, is made up of the dust of the earth and the spirit that comes from heaven. In this sense, the eternal life of God also manifests in the realm of the earth as well as in the spiritual realm, and we can view the earthly manifestation of God as the visible Son who has repeatedly shown Himself to His creation, and we can experience the heavenly manifestation of God as the invisible Spirit who brings life to our flesh. Perhaps this why Yeshua said, according to John 4:24, "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him

must worship in spirit and truth,” and Paul wrote in 2nd Corinthians 3:17, “Now the LORD is Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is liberty.” He is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, for we who are made in His image are Breath, Flesh, and Soul.

{New slide} I want to give you a couple more examples of our makeup as living beings, because our identity as triune beings is made in the image of God. Solomon, using a series of three metaphors signifying death, exhorts us to remain faithful to God so that we have an opportunity for life everlasting with Him. In Ecclesiastes 12:6-7, we read: “Remember your Creator before the silver cord is loosed, Or the golden bowl is broken, Or the pitcher shattered at the fountain, Or the wheel broken at the well. Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it.” What happens to our soul when we die? We covered this during our Elementary Principles of Messiah Yeshua series; namely, our soul sleeps in the grave and awaits the resurrection of the dead, which will occur when Yeshua returns on the Last Day. Those who know the LORD and do the righteous works He taught us will inherit eternal life in His Kingdom, while those who deny Him or the works that He did will suffer eternal condemnation. Stephen, one of the first martyrs to die for His faith in Yeshua following the LORD’s resurrection, had hope in the eternal promises of God. We can see the nature of man and the promises of God in his story. After Stephen had given His testimony of faith to the Jewish leaders of his day, he was stoned to death for what they believed to be blasphemy, but Stephen was testifying about the Truth. Look at Acts 7:59-60, because this passage ties together all the points of today’s message and gives us a solid place to rest. We read: “And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “LORD Yeshua, receive my spirit.” Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “LORD, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.” You see, Stephen’s body died and his soul went to sleep in the grave, but his spirit, which is the breath of God, returned to Heaven. With this verse, we can identify the triune components of man, made in the image of God, while also identifying the unified nature of God at the same time. Do you see it? We read “Stephen was calling on God” in saying, “LORD Yeshua, receive my spirit.” And we read a moment ago in Ecclesiastes that our spirit “returns to God” when we die. These two passages provide a witness to the Truth of God’s Word. Stephen clearly confessed that his spirit was going to return to Yeshua, equating the two, and his soul also went to sleep in the earth, waiting for the resurrection at the Last Day. Stephen, a living soul, was made up of the dust of the earth and the breath of the heavens, which is a testimony of three. In this image, he reflects the triune nature of God. But the story gets even better when we examine it a little bit further. If we look back just a few verses, Luke, the writer of Acts, presented a dynamic understanding of God’s triune

nature using Stephen's death as a launchpad. In Acts 7:55–56, we read: “But [Stephen], being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Yeshua standing at the right hand of God, and said, ‘Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’” Do you see how the Spirit, the Father, and the Son are united here as One? What's more, as Stephen was being stoned, he cried out to God, saying “LORD Yeshua, receive my spirit.” While Scripture does not use the word “trinity,” and it doesn't lay out the doctrine of God's triune nature explicitly, Scripture absolutely testifies to God as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and we can see it here—and frankly, all over the place. In these examples, we can see how God's nature is understood in the image that He created, for man is one as husband and wife unites to create life, and man is also one as a life in the flesh on the earth who has been given the breath of God from above.

{New slide} Before we close today, I want to show you a few additional examples of the Godhead expressed in the plain writing of the Apostles and the Prophets, and even in Yeshua's own recorded Word. While God's nature is not explicitly defined as “Trinity,” He is certainly expressed that way. Let's start with the LORD's own Word that He left His disciples with before He ascended to the throne of grace. In Matthew 28:18-20, we read: “And Yeshua came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.” Why would we baptize in the name of the Son if He is not One with the Spirit and the Father? Why would we teach what He has commanded us if He is not the God who commanded it? Why would He say He will be with us always, if He is not the Spirit who dwells in us? He is, He was, and He will be, and another testimony from my favorite passage in John 14:15-18 proves this. There, the LORD Yeshua said: “If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.”

{New slide} We can look to the greetings of the Apostles in their epistles written to the early Messianic community for more Scriptural evidence of the triune understanding of God. Here's three: In 1st Peter 1, verses 1-2, we read the Apostle's introduction, as follows: “Peter, an apostle of Messiah Yeshua, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge

of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Messiah Yeshua: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.” And in 2nd Corinthians 13:14, the Apostle Paul concluded His letter with the following salutation, where we read: “The grace of the LORD Messiah Yeshua, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.” Among other examples, the Apostle John began his second epistle in verse 3 with the following greeting: “Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the LORD Yeshua the Messiah, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.” Finally, Paul exhorted followers who belong to the Body of Messiah Yeshua with the following Truth in Ephesians 4, verses 4-6, where we read: “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one LORD, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” The point of these passages is to describe the complex unity of the Godhead, our Elohim, who is One in being.

{New slide} Look how Paul used the manifestations of God interchangeably in Romans 8:9-11, where we read: “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he is not His. And if Messiah is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yeshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.” And in 1st Corinthians 12:4, Paul also wrote: “There are a diversity of gifts, but the same Spirit, There are differences in ministries, but the same LORD [Yeshua]. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.” This writing may seem confusing to you on the surface, but it’s not meant to be. With human understanding but inspired words, Paul was bringing the most accurate and complete representation of the Godhead that he could.

{New slide} Moses, in compiling the Book of Genesis for the Torah that He gave to humanity for our instruction, recorded a testimony from Jacob that reads very similarly to what we just read in the Apostolic writings. In Genesis 48, we read the blessing of Jacob for Joseph and his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh before he died. In the plain writing of this passage, Jacob made no distinction between the three manifestations of God that he encountered in his days, but used words that indicated He was describing one God who presented Himself in different ways. In the following text, the prefix “Ha” (הַ) means “the,” which identifies a singular deity. We read in Genesis 48:15-16: “And [Jacob] blessed Joseph, and said: ‘The God—“Ha Elohim (הָאֱלֹהִים)” —before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God—“Ha Elohim (הָאֱלֹהִים)” —, who has

fed me all my life long to this day, The Angel—“Ha Mal’akh (הַמַּלְאָךְ)” —who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth” (Genesis 48:15-16). The verb “bless” here is grammatically singular, meaning not that Jacob encountered two gods and an angel, but He encountered one God, who manifested in three ways. It means that the “Angel” is in fact a physical manifestation of God, who sounds a lot like the Son. Our Father is the ever-existent one, the presence of the Most High who leads us from His throne of His presence, and He sends His Spirit to provide us with everything we need to be successful in our walk with Him, and finally, He sends His Son to redeem us from evil, for only through the Son can we be saved from our sins and receive the promised blessings of God. We’re going to stop here for this week. I pray in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit for your protection, your redemption, and your strength to endure in the light of God’s Truth all the days of your life. Shabbat shalom!