

# The Trinity Delusion

An exposé of the doctrine of the Trinity

## John 8:58

"Before Abraham was I am."

### The Trinitarian Claim

Trinitarians claim that Jesus was intentionally employing special language to identify himself as Yahweh, the God of Israel. They claim he was using God's divine name to identify himself as Yahweh, and as Yahweh, they claim Jesus was saying that he pre-existed as a self-conscious divine person (God the Son) before Abraham existed and for that reason the Jews clearly understood he was identifying himself as their God and wanted to stone him for blasphemy.

Trinitarians are actually attempting to make three different claims at once with respect to this verse:

1. Jesus was using the Greek version of the divine name (*ego eimi*) given to Moses at Exodus 3:14 and was therefore identifying himself as Yahweh their God.
2. Jesus was claiming to have existed as a self conscious living divine person/being before Abraham existed.
3. The Jews knew Jesus was identifying himself as their God and therefore wanted to stone Jesus for blasphemy.

### The Claim vs. The Facts

The facts tell us that Jesus is referring to what he initially stated: he is the light of the world. That Light existed long before Abraham.

### The Problems with the Claims

## 1. The Impossibility of the Trinitarian Interpretation

The Trinitarian interpretation directly contradicts Jesus' own words in at least four explicitly obvious ways:

(1) Jesus had just said that if he testified about himself, his testimony is not true (Jn 5:31; 8:17-18). But that is precisely what Trinitarians have Jesus doing at John 8:58 in direct contradiction to what he said.

(2) Jesus also had just said that if he glorified himself concerning who he is, his glory would mean absolutely nothing (8:54). But Trinitarians contradict Jesus again insisting that he did indeed glorify himself at John 8:58 and he did so in the highest way possible, and instead of meaning nothing as Jesus insisted, Trinitarians contradict him and insist it means everything.

Trinitarians talk about of both sides of their mouth concerning Jesus. On one hand, they will admit that Philippians 2:5-9 says that Jesus made himself nothing and humbled himself. On the other hand, they have Jesus glorifying himself as God Almighty.

(3) Trinitarians also say the Jews wanted to stone Jesus because they knew exactly what he was saying at John 8:58. But yet again, Trinitarians directly contradict Jesus who had just said these Jesus could not understand what he was saying because they were not of God and were children of the devil (8:43-47).

(4) Jesus warned his disciples not to tell anyone he was God's Anointed One (Matthew 16:20; Luke 9:20-21). But we are expected to believe that Jesus was going around Israel declaring himself to be Yahweh their God. It's a ridiculously absurd contradiction.

Jesus' own testimony in this selfsame dialogue decisively demonstrates to us that the Trinitarian

interpretation of John 8 is absolutely impossible since their interpretation violently contradicts what Jesus had just said. Trinitarians are effectively demonstrating that they do not hear Jesus anymore than the Jews did in this dialogue nor do they even care. They care far more about promoting their false doctrine than hearing Jesus.

## 2. *Ego Eimi*

Trinitarians say that when Jesus used the words *ego eimi*, the Jews knew he was using the divine name of their God. However, this claim is ridiculous for several reasons.

Trinitarians typically suggest that *ego eimi* was a Greek way of saying God's name "Yahweh." But this is preposterous on several levels. If that is the case then Jesus effectively said, "Before Abraham was, Yahweh." This is absurd nonsense. And are we also to believe Gabriel identified himself as Yahweh at Luke 1:19 when he said, "I am (*ego eimi*) Gabriel." At Luke 22:33, when Peter said to Jesus, "I am (*ego eimi*) prepared to go to prison with you and to death," shall we then say he used the words *ego eimi* to say to Jesus, "Yahweh is prepared to go to prison with you and to death?" By using *ego eimi* was Peter also claiming to be Yahweh? When John said, "I am (*ego eimi*) not the Christ," are we expected to believe it really means John the Baptist was saying that Yahweh is not the Christ? (John 1:20). When the centurion said, "I am (*ego eimi*) a man under authority (Matthew 8:9), are we to believe this really meant, "Yahweh is a man under authority" and the centurion was claiming to be Yahweh? When Jesus said one of his disciples would betray him and Judas literally said, "Not I am (*ego eimi*) Lord?" are we to believe this really meant Judas was claiming to be Yahweh and Yahweh was going to betray Jesus? (Matthew 26:25). Why aren't Trinitarians being consistent with the term *ego eimi* in many other passages? The implications of the Trinitarian claim are disturbingly ridiculous.

In the Greek Septuagint, the actual divine name revealed to Moses was not, "*ego eimi*" as Trinitarians are suggesting to everyone. God's divine name in this Greek translation was "*ego eimi ho ōn*" which means "I am the being" or "I am the existence" or "I am the existent one" or some similar idea. Also, English translations which read as, "I AM sent me to you" are not

translating "*ego eimi* sent me to you" from the Greek. The Greek actually reads "*ho ōn* sent me to you." (Exodus 3:14). In other words, it does not say, "*Ego eimi* sent me to you." This Trinitarian claim is precariously perched upon a farce that God's divine name in Greek is simply *ego eimi*. But it isn't.

It also seems that people manage to get two different questions confused right about here.

The words *ego eimi* are used many times in the New Testament by several people. These words were part of their common everyday vocabulary. The expression *ego eimi* was common to everyday language for Greeks just as the words "I am" are common to our everyday language in English. Nobody regarded *ego eimi* as two Greek words uniquely reserved as the divine name of their God. A blind man in the next chapter identifies himself by saying, "I am" (*ego eimi*). Trinitarians are essentially trying to turn a routine language expression into the divine name of God to disingenuously suit their doctrinal purposes.

Observe how these two men identify themselves by saying, "*ego eimi*."

And Asahel pursued Abner, and as he went, he turned neither to the right hand nor to the left from following Abner. Then Abner looked behind him and said, "Is that you, Asahel?" And he answered, "**I AM**" (i.e. "It is I."). 2 Samuel 2:19-20

Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, "Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?" Others were saying, "This is he," still others were saying, "No, but he is like him." He kept saying, "**I AM**" John 9:8-9

This Trinitarian claim is usually presented as if Jesus suddenly broke out the words *ego eimi* which no man ever used, in order to identify himself in a shock and awe manner which provoked the Jews to anger since they would automatically recognize *ego eimi* to be the divine name of their God. However, the contextual facts demonstrate this is absurd and just the opposite is true. During this very same dialogue with the Jews in John chapter 8, Jesus used the term *ego eimi* several times before he used it at verse 8:58

(8:12,16,18,23,24,28). And through those many utterances of *ego eimi* by Jesus during this selfsame dialogue, not one of these Jews at any time ever supposed Jesus was referring to their God. The use of the term *ego eimi* never even caused them to raise an eyebrow. The Jews had been asking Jesus who he claimed to be. In that context, Jesus had used the term *ego eimi* twice before in a very similar manner and they never even blinked. This fact alone clearly demonstrates that the Jews did not think the use of this term was a reference to the divine name of their God.

Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that **I am** (*ego eimi*), you will die in your sins.” Then the Jews said to him, “Who are you?” (8:24-25).

Jesus said, “When you lift up the son of man, then you will know that **I am** (*ego eimi*) and I do nothing from myself, but I speak these things as the Father taught me. And He who sent me is with me; He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.” As he spoke these things, many came to believe in him. (8:28-30).

Did these Jews think Jesus was using their God's divine name? No, it never even occurred to them.

### 3. Trini-Think Double-Speak

Additionally, it seems that few people notice the Trinitarian double-speak which is occurring. At one moment they claim used this language was used to declare to these Jews that he is their God. But when all the problems with their claim are pointed out, they change their claim. Now, they claim, this language is being used by Jesus to tell the Jews he existed before Abraham. At one moment these words have one purpose and the next moment they have another purpose. So which is it? What was Jesus' purpose of using the words *ego eimi*? To identify himself as God? Or to tell others he existed before Abraham? These two things are not even remotely similar. Trinitarians don't really seem to know since they can't make up their minds. It appears they are just throwing jello against the wall hoping that sooner or later one of their claims will stick.

#### 4. The "Jesus pre-existed therefore God" Claim

Trinitarians also claim that if Jesus existed as a person before Abraham that he must therefore be God since only God could possibly exist before Abraham and still be existing. However, they are quite mistaken. The folly of this argument is seen when it is realized that many angels existed before Abraham and they are still quite alive and well, including Satan and his angels, and it would seem we can be quite certain that their pre-existence would not mean any of them are God. The point here is not that Jesus is an angel; the point here is that this claim is obviously fallacious at the outset.

Another false premise Trinitarians expect people to accept is that if Jesus did somehow pre-exist before Abraham then this somehow amounts to the conclusion that he was a divine second person of the Trinity hanging out with God in heaven before creation, and after. The problem here is that JW's and Arians believe Jesus existed before Abraham without believing he is God. To suppose Jesus pre-existed does not amount to a pre-existent hypostases of a three-person-God. Pre-existence is not a license to resort to imaginations.

Furthermore, in the Jewish mindset, if something had been predestined by God at the foundation of the world, it was already a reality. For example, John says "the Lamb **had been** slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev 13:8). A dying Jewish son of David was a reality long before 30 A.D. When God predestines, the reality begins. But He fixes the times and seasons things will be manifested and fulfilled in the time and space of our creation. God is not a part of our creation and our time and space. He dwells in timelessness and is not subject to time. So although everything God has predestined to occur is already a reality, it doesn't mean we have seen it yet.

Jesus is the promised Messiah. God promised this Messiah even before Abraham was. When God makes a promise it is always fulfilled; it is a coming reality, a reality that is a reality even if it has not arrived here yet. And that is what Jesus was talking about. He is the promised Christ.

## 5. Blasphemy: The Alleged Jewish Motivation for Picking up Stones

Trinitarian apologists also have an unwarranted interpretation of John 8:59. They claim the Jews wanted to stone Jesus because he was claiming to be Yahweh and so under their Law they thought he deserved stoning. Many Trinitarians will even make the disingenuous claim that these Jews would not have attempted to stone Jesus unless he was claiming to be God by suggesting that the only way Jesus could have possibly blasphemed God by claiming to be God Himself. But that is completely untrue. The Bible shows us that one could blaspheme the name of God in many ways. Moreover, the Jews stoned Stephen to death and he was not claiming to be God.

But the situation for Trinitarians is even worse. They need everyone to accept the premise that the Jews would never have stoned Jesus unless he had broken the Mosaic Law as if to say these men were righteous law-keepers and would never have stoned Jesus unless they thought he had somehow transgressed the Law. Trinitarians suggest that if they attempted to stone him, it necessarily means that the Jews thought they had a lawful reason to do. But again, Trinitarians deny the plain facts and the testimony of Jesus to make this claim. Jesus testified to the contrary in this selfsame dialogue. These men were lawless hypocrites (Matthew 23:28), and Jesus here testified that they wanted to kill him (8:37,40) long before his John 8:58 statement. Jesus also tells us why they wanted to kill him, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (8:44). In the Gospels, Jesus identified these men not as law-keepers but as lawless hypocrites, thieves, liars, murderers, serpents, vipers, sons of Hell and sons of Satan. It should be quite clear that the Trinitarian suggestion that these men would never transgress the Mosaic Law is pitifully ridiculous in light of Jesus' testimony concerning their lawlessness. Trinitarians deny the words of Jesus who tells us in this selfsame dialogue WHY these men desired to kill him. They wanted to kill Jesus and stone him because they did the desires of their father: the devil (8:43-47). Even further, the Trinitarian claim says that the Jews wanted to stone Jesus because they clearly understood what

he was saying at John 8:58. However, this directly contradicts what Jesus had just said about them. He said they could not understand what he was saying because they were not of God but of the devil (8:43-47). That is the testimony of Jesus, the Son of God. And if we actually hear Jesus in John 8, it is the testimony of God the Father since Jesus' words were not his own but the Father's who sent him. Why then do Trinitarians not hear or believe God?

## **6. The Confusion of the Jews = Confusion of the Trinitarians**

Jesus had said that Abraham rejoiced to see his day. The Jews respond by changing what Jesus had said, "You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?" But Jesus didn't say he had seen Abraham. It was the other way around. He said Abraham rejoiced to see his day.

## **Analysis of the Evidence**

### **1. Two Required Witnesses**

At John 8:12-58, the entire dialogue between Jesus and the Jews concerns who he claimed to be and that two witnesses were required concerning this matter. Two witnesses were required under the Law and Jesus himself said that if he testified about himself, his testimony would not be true. He clarifies this matter by explaining he spoke the words of the Father. Hence, the Father Himself was the second witness testifying about Jesus. In the same way, Jesus said that if he glorified himself, his glory would mean nothing. Two witnesses are required and the two witnesses were Jesus and God the Father.

### **2. Jesus spoke the words of the Father**

Jesus said that he did not come to do his own will but to do only the will of the Father. For this reason, he tells us many times in the Gospel of John that he did not teach his own teaching or speak his own words. He only spoke what the Father gave him to say. He also said his words were not his own but the Father's who sent him. Once we understand that Jesus spoke the Father's



words, it is clear how the Father was the second witness concerning who Jesus was. Not only so, one we realize Jesus spoke the words of the Father, his words, "Before Abraham was I am" are words the Father was expressing to these Jews.

### 3. I am the light of the world

The dialogue between Jesus and the Jews began when Jesus declared, "**I am** the light of the world." God **the Father** is Light (1 John 1:5) and the Father abiding in Jesus did the works (1:10). Now let us remember that when Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," he spoke the words of the Father as he reminds the Jews in this discourse (8:26,28,47). Therefore, whoever receives the testimony of Jesus has certified that God is true (3:33; cf. 14:24). The Father was the True Light which was coming into the world and John the Baptist was testifying about that Light (1:6-9). In this way, Jesus declared the Father (1:18) in terms of all the things he said and all the things he did. The works that I do in my Father's name, these testify of me (10:25; cf. 5:36). The Father abiding in Jesus did the works (14:10-11).

Jesus declared the Father who is Light by doing his Father's will, saying what the Father gave him to say, doing what the Father gave him to do. The Father who is Light was explained/expressed through Jesus and for that reason Jesus could say, "I am the Light of the world," that is, he explained/expressed the Father who is that true Light which was coming into the world as John the Baptist witnessed about that Light. The Father existed before Abraham and his will for the work of the Messiah existed before Abraham. Now that will of the Father was being manifested, fulfilled.

### 4. The Light before Abraham

Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus' day. Jesus is the Lamb who had been slain before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8). God had predestined the Lamb to be slain on a cross. Jesus was the promised seed which God had promised to Abraham:

The Scripture, foreseeing that God  
would justify the nations by faith,  
**preached the Gospel beforehand to**

**Abraham**, saying, "All the nations will be blessed in you." Galatians 3:8.

By faith, Abraham was "looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Hebrews 11:9). In faith, Abraham believed in a better home, a heavenly home (11:16-21). Abraham's seed had been promised (3:16-18) and Jesus was the fulfillment of this promise. The man Jesus was a reality from the time God promised him to Abraham and that is true because it was God who made the promise. Indeed, this was a reality before Abraham came to be. He is the Lamb who had been slain from the foundation of the world.

The Jews had asked Jesus if he was greater than Abraham. In their eyes, no man could be greater than Abraham and none of them would say they were greater than Abraham. But before is greater and Jesus' answer was a Yes. He had been predestined from the foundation of the world and Abraham rejoiced to see his Day, the Light of God. He was greater than Abraham and then meant Jesus was greater than these Jewish leaders and that was something which made their blood boil.

## Conclusion

God the Father is Light and that Light existed long before Abraham. That flesh named Jesus declared the Father. The Father abiding in Jesus did the works and in this way that body of flesh was the Light of the world, the Light of the Father shining through a human being. Because the Father abiding in him did the works, and this body of flesh declared the Father to the world in terms of all the things Jesus was doing, this flesh was shining that Light of God the Father who is that Light. This flesh, Jesus, was that Light of the Father, that Light which existed long before Abraham.

I am **the Light** of the world.

Abraham was glad to see my **Day**; He saw it and was glad.

Before Abraham was, I am.

**Last Revision/Update:** May 31, 2018

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