

## Firstborn

The figurative meaning of πρωτότοκος in the messianic title πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως ‘firstborn of all creation’ (Col 1:15) may be interpreted as ‘existing before all creation’ (see 13.79) or ‘existing superior to all creation’ (see 87.47). Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 116.

5. The description of Christ as πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως in Col. 1:15 obviously finds in the ὅτι clause of v. 16 its more precise basis and explanation: Christ is the Mediator at creation to whom all creatures without exception owe their creation, → V, 894, 28 ff., 37 ff. Hence πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως does not simply denote the priority in time of the pre-existent Lord.<sup>44</sup> If the expression refers to the mediation of creation through Christ, it cannot be saying at the same time<sup>45</sup> that He was created as the first creature.<sup>46</sup> The decisive objection to this view, which sees in the πάση κτίσεως a partitive genitive, is that it would demand emphasis on the -τοκος, whereas with the exception of Lk. 2:7 (→ 876, 6 ff.), which refers to literal birth, the -τοκος is never emphasised in the NT in passages which speak of Christ, especially Col. 1:18 (→ 877, 15 ff.). A further point is that this view would bring -τοκος into tension with κτίσις (and κτίζεσθαι in 1:16), for creation and birth are different concepts and πρωτότοκος cannot be regarded as a simple synonym of πρωτόκτιστος.<sup>47</sup> The only remaining possibility<sup>48</sup> is to take πρωτότοκος hierarchically (→ line 7 f.). What is meant is the unique supremacy of Christ over all creatures as the Mediator of their creation. The succeeding statement in 1:17a: αὐτός ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων, emphasises the same supremacy,<sup>49</sup> while 1:17b draws the conclusion from 1:16.

If πρωτότοκος is selected in Col. 1:15 and then again in 1:18 to express this supremacy, this is because of the great importance which the term “firstborn” took on as a word for rank in the OT and then retained in later Judaism, → 873, 27 ff.; 875, 35 ff. It is true that this term denotes the relation to God, which is not in view in Col. 1:15, and this distinction is to be upheld in face of the intrinsically noteworthy observation that the relation to God is described just before in v. 13 by the phrase υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ and that υἱὸς ἀγαπήσεως and πρωτότοκος are related in Ps. Sol. 13:9, → 874, 3.50 On the other hand, if Col. 1:15 refers to the relation of Christ to all creatures as the Mediator of their creation, this finds no basis in the relevant OT and Jewish material. Though Jewish σοφία speculation is important in relation to the NT (→ IV, 136, 12 ff.), even Prv. 8:22: κύριος ἔκτισέν με (i.e., σοφία) ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ, cannot have had any direct influence, since there is no express thought of mediation in creation here.

Wilhelm Michaelis, “Πρῶτος, Πρῶτον, Πρωτοκαθεδρία, Πρωτοκλισία, Πρωτότοκος, Πρωτοτοκεῖα, Πρωτεύω,” ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 878–880

## Holy Spirit

For the Christians in the group. As I was studying the Holy Spirit and looking at the attributes of the Spirit, a thought came to me. I am interested in your take on it. Scripture tells us that God is a spirit. We also know that Jesus had a physical nature and therefore it was necessary for Scripture to speak about both God and Jesus. However, since God is a spirit, it was not necessary for

Scripture to speak about "God's Spirit or God's Holy Spirit" since any action of the Spirit could have simply described by saying that "God did" or "God said" or "God knew". Remember God is a spirit. So the fact that Scripture speaks specifically of the Spirit and of the Holy Spirit and does so in a manner that implies personality and the presence of the attributes of deity would be entirely unnecessary if it was only addressing a force or power that God had. In other words, the mere presence of Scripture speaking of the Holy Spirit is an argument against the idea that the Holy Spirit is only a force or power and simultaneously makes a good argument for the trinity. Thoughts?

## Inspiration

I try to keep track of the org's more current claims to inspiration (while avoiding the use of the word "inspired"). Here's one i just saw:

"The Bible promises: "He will guide the meek in what is right, and he will teach the meek ones his way." (Ps. 25:9) Jehovah provides that guidance in the Bible and in publications\* and through programs produced by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45-47) We must do our part by humbly acknowledging that we need help, by studying the material Jehovah supplies, and by submissively applying what we learn. "

<https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/2019282?q=%22Jehovah+provides+that+guidance+in+the+Bible%22&p=par>

WT articles and even the broadcast is supplied by Jehovah! 🙄 😏 But when we will be looking back on it in a few years or decades, it was all just the "mistakes" of "imperfect" men...riiiigggh.

## Jesus is God

Lee Attema Ivine Shimz In Acts 20:28 we see that θεοῦ shed his blood. This text has been widely debated because of its theological importance and because of 9 variant readings. Modern scholars support the reading of θεοῦ. "All the critical evidence is in favor of the words the "church of God" (τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ). This is now supported by nearly all modern textual critics, grammarians, commentators, and translators.<sup>97</sup> (A.T. Robertson, Word Studies, 3:353; Murray Harris, 136.)"

Robert A. Morey, The Trinity: Evidence and Issues (Iowa Falls, IA: World Pub., 1996).

28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. (NIV) ..... 28 προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν περιποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου. ....Barbara Aland et al., The Greek New Testament, 4th ed. (Federal Republic of Germany: United Bible Societies, 1993), Ac 20:28.

## One

**Trinity: Oneness in unity not in number: Yachid vs. Echad**

"Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one [Echad]!" Deuteronomy 6:4

yachid: numeric

יָחִיד

**Yachid vs. Echad:** The most important verse Jews memorized in the Bible was Deut 6:4: "Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one [Echad]!" There are a few words in Hebrew that the Holy Spirit could have used a word that has one exclusive meaning: the numeric, solitary oneness of God ("yachid" or "bad").

Instead the Holy Spirit chose to use the Hebrew word, "echad" which is used most often as a unified one, and sometimes as numeric oneness. For example, when God said in Genesis 2:24 "the two shall become one [echad] flesh" it is the same word for "one" that was used in Deut 6:4.

echad: unified

אֶחָד

This is most troubling for Jews and Anti-Trinitarians since the word yachid, the main Hebrew word for solitary oneness, is never used in reference to God.

### Introduction:

1. *Christians, being the excellent scholars of ancient Biblical Hebrew* openly admit that Echad is used many times in the Old Testament to mean one and one alone: "Two are better than one [Echad] because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one [Echad] will lift up his companion. But woe to the one [Echad] who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one [Echad] be warm alone? And if one [Echad] can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart." (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12)
  - a. The argument that not that ECHAD is Deut 6:4. The argument is that this word has two meanings: unified and singular one.
  - b. The argument is that the word YACHID, which always means one and ONE ALONE (not a unified one) is NEVER used of God ANYWHERE in the Old Testament.
  - c. The Hebrew word "HEN" means one and only one and is used of God: "'Now, O Lord our God, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone [HEN], Lord, are God.'" (Isaiah 37:20) But never in the Torah.
  - d. This fact indeed deeply troubles Jews today.
2. The debate over the implications of the various usage's of two Hebrew words [Yachid vs. Echad] translated "one" is as intriguing as it is complex.
  - a. The etymology of the Hebrew word yachid (one) is derived from echad in the same way that the English word "only" is derived from the word "one". That

yachid is from the same root family of words as echad is seen from the similarity of spelling. So "yachid" is to "only", what "echad" is to "one".

- b. About the only fact that all on both sides of the debate agree on, is that yachid indisputably means an absolute numeric one and is never used to describe God. Jews and Anti-Trinitarians would naturally expect such a word to be commonly used of God. Having said this, when we cross over to the Greek, in parallel passages that use "yachid", we find a correspondence with the Greek word "mono". We do find "mono" used of God in the New Testament describing his oneness. So while yachid is never used of God's oneness in the Old Testament, the corresponding word "mono" is used of God's oneness in the New Testament. But this is exactly what Trinitarians would expect to be the case because there are three persons in the one God.
  - c. Hebrew is a very simple language, but Greek is quite complex and specific. Some Trinitarians overemphasize the clear differences between "yachid and echad" in the Hebrew. Yes, "echad" is a unified one, but it is also used of a numeric one as well. Yes, "yachid" is never used in reference to God's oneness, but the word "bad" is used and it is synonymous with numeric oneness to yachid. When we cross over to the Greek, we find a similar blur in the words used of God that mean unified versus numeric oneness. If the Holy Spirit intended to convey Trinity hidden in the Old Testament in the words "yachid and echad", we would expect such a distinction to be even more pronounced in the Greek, since it is a more specific language than Hebrew. But we find exactly the same in the New Testament as we do in the old, namely a combination of words meaning unified versus numeric oneness being employed to describe God's oneness.
3. Having said all this, perhaps the Holy Spirit did want us to look back at the Old Testament and perceive the differences between "yachid and echad". Add to this plural pronouns like: "let US make man in OUR image" and Trinitarians have irrefutable evidence of the trinity in the Old Testament.
    - a. Trinitarians can be confident that the word "echad" used to describe God's oneness, is exactly what we would expect to find. Jews, anti-Trinitarians and Unitarians are nervous about the fact that the most direct and important statements in the Old Testament about God's oneness (Deut 6:4) use the unified one [echad] instead of a words that always mean numeric oneness like "yachid" and "bad".
    - b. There isn't a single Jew or anti-Trinitarian today who, given the chance, would not go back in time and tell Moses his choice of ECHAD instead of YACHID in Deut 6:4 will cause them grief in the future.
    - c. As we will see, Jews did change words and start using the word YACHID in reference to God after they rejected conversion to Christianity.
  4. Jesus quoted Deut 6:4 in Mk 12:29 and chose the "unified oneness" word "hen" which is the same word used by Jesus in Mt 19:5, "the two shall become one (hen) flesh".
    - a. It is significant that Jesus did not use "mono" in Mk 12:29. The word "hen" directly corresponds to "echad" which was used in Deut 6:4.

- b. Both texts used "unified oneness" words rather than absolute numeric oneness to the exclusion of all others.
- c. This is a very devastating pattern of using the unified one as opposed to the singular one in both the Old and New Testaments in Deut 6:4.



<b>ECHAD</b>	<b>UNIFIED ONE</b>	<b>HEN</b>
Gen 2:24	← two become one → Man + Woman	Matt 19:5
Deut 6:4	← God is one → Father + Son + Spirit	Mk 12:29
echad: unified 	<b>ONE</b>	hen: unified 



**A. Jews, after the rise of Christianity, were compelled to change the Hebrew word for "one" from echad to yachid:**

1. For any Jew to use "Yachid" to refer to the oneness of God is UNBIBLICAL because the Holy Spirit never willed that any scripture in the Bible uses the word YACHID in reference to God.
2. It is claimed by Jews who attack Christian theology that the use of the word ECHAD in Deut 6:4 causes them no problem since the word ECHAD is used in other places in the Old Testament to refer to a clearly single person. But this ignores the powerful argument made by Christians, namely that the word YACHID, which always means one and only one, is never used of God.
3. If the use of "echad" instead of "yachid" in Deut 6:4 gave no help to the early Christians in proving to the Jews that Yahweh of the Old Testament was the multi-personal God of the Christians (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) then Jews would not have felt compelled replace the word in their dogmas and statements of faith. If it is really that insignificant, then they would have told us the argument Christians were using to prove trinity is invalid to native Hebrews who know and speak the language.
4. A man named Moses Maimonides who lived in the 12th century AD, was Jewish Rabbi and philosopher who compiled a creed in Hebrew using the Aramaic alphabet with 13 articles. While he did use the word echad in Deut 6:4, in his 13 point creed, he uses the UNBIBLICAL word yachid instead of echad:  
 Hebrew using Aramaic alphabet:

לְבַד וְהוּא, פְּנִימִים בְּשׁוּם קְמוּהוּ יְחִידוּת וְאִין יְחִיד הוּא שְׁמו יִתְבָּרַךְ שֶׁהַבּוֹרָא, שְׁלֵמָה בְּאִמּוּנָה מְאֲמִין אָנִי הַיְיָ! הַיְיָ! הַיְיָ! הַיְיָ! אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְ

- a. Translation 1: "I believe with a perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be His name, is an absolute one [yachid]".
  - b. Translation 2: "I believe with perfect faith that the Creator, blessed be his name is one and there is no unity like his in any way. He alone is our G-d- He was, he is, and he will be."
5. Modern Jewish prayer books use the UNBIBLICAL word "yachid" to describe God.
- a. Remember, by UNBIBLICAL, we do not mean that Yachid is not used in the Bible.
  - b. By UNBIBLICAL we mean that YACHID is never used to describe God's oneness in the Torah or anywhere in the entire Old Testament.
6. Elohim vs. El
- a. Elohim is plural "gods". El is singular "god".
  - b. The God of the bible (YHWH) is referred to in the plural Elohim thousands of times.
  - c. "Actually, the fact that God is called 'elohim (translated as "God" when referring to the Lord and as either "god" or "gods" when referring to idols) is not unusual. In the Ancient Near East, it was common to refer to the deity in the compound plural, and when speaking of an owner or master, it was often the rule to speak of him in such terms. To give you just a few examples, Abraham's servant speaks of his master in the plural in Genesis 24 ('adonim, literally, "lords"), Joseph speaks of his master Potiphar in the plural in Genesis 39, and David the king is spoken of as "lords" in 1 Kings 1:11. In Exodus 21, to translate literally and incorrectly, the law speaks of a slave and his masters ('adonim, referring to just one master), in Isaiah 19:4, the prophet tells Israel that God will hand them over to a cruel lord (Hebrew, 'adonim qasheh, a plural noun with a singular adjective), and Isaiah 1:3 tells us that a donkey knows the feeding crib of its masters (ba'alim, referring to just one person; cf. the first half of the verse in which reference is made to an ox's owner—in the singular). These examples, which are really very common, show clearly that compound plurals were often used to speak of leaders, owners, masters, or kings. How much more then could similar expressions be used to speak of the Lord, the Master, the King, and the God." (Answering Jewish objections to Jesus: Theological objections, Michael L. Brow, A Jew who converted to Christianity, Vol. 2, p9, 2000 AD)
  - d. This correct observation does not change the fact that the Holy Spirit chose to use a plural word to refer to God in a polytheistic world of pagan gods instead of the singular "el".
7. It must be most troubling for Jews that their word of choice (yachid) to describe God's oneness is never actually used in the Bible. They should give up their 2000 year old rebellion against Christianity, be more truthful and not engage in a deliberate action of misrepresenting what the Bible says. Then they could use Bible words to describe the one true God and creep closer to becoming Christians!

## **B. Five different words for "one" in the Bible:**

Word	Definition/texts	usage
<b>Echad</b> OT	unified one: Gen. 2:24; Deut. 6:4 absolute numeric one: Ezekiel 33:24	Used of God's oneness
<b>Yachid</b> OT	Always absolute numeric one: Judges 11:34	<i>Never used of God's oneness</i>
<b>Bad</b> OT	Absolute numeric one: Isaiah 37:20	Used of God's oneness
<b>Hen</b> NT	Unified one: John 10:30; Matthew 19:5; Mk 12:29 absolute numeric one: Galatians 3:20	Used of God's oneness
<b>Monos</b> NT	absolute numeric one: Matthew 24:36; 1 Timothy 1:17	Used of God's oneness

**C. "Echad", denoting a unified one in the OT is translated only "hen" in the NT:**

Here are a number of Old Testament passages that are either directly quoted in the New Testament, or contain parallel thoughts.

Unified one	Echad Old Testament	Hen New Testament
Two shall become one flesh	Gen 2:24	Mt 19:5
God is one	Deut 6:4	Mk 12:29,32; Jn 10:30; 1 Cor 8:4; Eph 4:6
one people	Gen 11:6; 34:16, 22	John 11:52; Gal 3:28
one heart	2 Chron 30:12; Jer 32:39	Acts 4:32; Phil 1:27; 2:2
Two objects becoming one	sticks: Ezek. 37:17	flocks: Jn 10:16
assembly as one	Ezra. 2:64	Romans 12:5, 15:6; 1 Cor 12:5,12

**D. "Echad", denoting an absolute and numeric oneness in the OT is translated both "hen" and "monos" in the NT:**

Echad is used to designate a single individual or thing, numerical oneness. In these texts we consider Echad to be synonymous with yachid. Yet we find the parallel passages of thought in the New Testament are translated from two different Greek words: "hen" and "monos". Like "echad", "hen" is used in two different ways: unified

one and numeric one. "Monos", however, always means a numeric one. This means we do not find a consistent pattern between the Hebrew and Greek languages.

<b>Numerically one and only</b>	<b>Echad Old Testament</b>	<b>Hen &amp; Monos New Testament</b>
12 gates of Jerusalem	Ezekiel 48:31-34 [echad]	Revelation 21:21 [hen]
There is yet one prophet	1 Kings 22:8: Micaiah [echad]	Elijah: Romans 11:2 [monos]
One man alone	Ezekiel: 33:24: Abraham [echad]	2 Timothy 4:11 Luke [monos]
One of the angels	Michael: Daniel 10:13 [echad]	Revelation 17:1 Angel [hen]
Numbering individuals in sequence	Joshua 12:9-24 31 Canaanite kings [echad]	Mark 14:19 the disciples [hen]

#### **E. "Yachid": solitary one and only, numerically one**

1. "He said, "Take now your son, **your only [yachid] son**, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." " Genesis 22:2
2. "He said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, **your only [yachid] son**, from Me." " Genesis 22:12
3. "and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares Yahweh, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, **your only [yachid] son**, " Genesis 22:16
4. "Now she was Jephthah's **one and only [yachid] child**; besides her he had no son or daughter." Judges 11:34
5. "When I was a son to my father, Tender and the **only son [yachid]** in the sight of my mother, " Proverbs 4:3
6. "Mourn as for an **only son [yachid]**" Jeremiah 6:26
7. "And I will make it like *a time of mourning* for an **only son [yachid]**" Amos 8:10
8. "they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an **only son [yachid]**" Zechariah 12:10

#### **F. "Bad" corresponds to "Yachid" and "monos"**

1. "You are the God, You alone [bad], of all the kingdoms of the earth." 2 Kings 19:15
2. "You alone [bad] are Yahweh." Nehemiah 9:6
3. "You alone [bad], Yahweh, are God." Isaiah 37:20

#### **G. "Mono": solitary one and only, numerically one, directly corresponds to yachid in the New Testament:**

1. You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only [mono]. Matthew 4:10
2. ""But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone [mono]." Matthew 24:36
3. Who can forgive sins, but God alone [mono]?" Luke 5:21



4. "My judgment is true; for I am not alone [mono] in it, but I and the Father who sent Me." John 8:16
5. "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only [mono] true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." John 17:3
6. "to the only [mono] wise God, through Jesus Christ" Romans 16:27
7. "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only [mono] God" 1 Timothy 1:17
8. "who alone [mono] possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light" 1 Timothy 6:16
9. "deny our only [mono] Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. " Jude 4
10. to the only God [mono] our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord Jude 25

**H. "Monogenes" also corresponds to "yachid" only begotten:**

1. Jesus raised an only begotten [monogenes] son: Luke 7:12
2. Jesus raised an only begotten [monogenes] daughter: Luke 8:42
3. Jesus cast out a demon from an only begotten [monogenes] son: Luke 9:38
4. Isaac was the only begotten [monogenes] of Abraham: Hebrews 11:17
5. Jesus was the only begotten [monogenes] of God: John 1:14; 18; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9

	<b>Yachid Old Testament</b>	<b>Monogenes New Testament</b>
Isaac the only begotten	Genesis 22:2	Hebrews 11:17
Jesus the only begotten	Zechariah 12:10	John 1:14; 18; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9
Only begotten children of men	Judges 11:34	Luke 7:12; 8:42

**I. God is one: Echad, bad, hen, monos**

1. "Hear, O Israel! Yahweh is our God, Yahweh is one [echad]!" Deuteronomy 6:4
2. "You are the God, You alone [bad], of all the kingdoms of the earth." 2 Kings 19:15
3. "You alone [bad] are Yahweh." Nehemiah 9:6
4. "You alone [bad], Yahweh, are God." Isaiah 37:20
5. "And Yahweh will be king over all the earth; in that day Yahweh will be the only one [echad], and His name the only one [echad]." Zechariah 14:9
6. "the two shall become one [hen] flesh" Matthew 19:5
7. "you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only [monos] God?" John 5:44
8. "I and the Father are one [hen]." John 10:30
9. "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only [monos] true God" John 17:3
10. "since indeed God is one [hen]" Romans 3:30
11. "to the only [monos] wise God, Amen." Romans 16:27
12. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one [hen] in Christ Jesus. " Galatians 3:28
13. "there is no God but one [hen]" 1 Corinthians 8:4

14. "yet for us there is but one [hen] God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one [hen] Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him." 1 Corinthians 8:6
15. "Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one [hen]." Galatians 3:20
16. "There is one [hen] body and one [hen] Spirit, one [hen] hope, one [hen] Lord, one [hen] faith, one [hen] baptism, one [hen] God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all." Ephesians 4:4-6
17. "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only [monos] God" 1 Timothy 1:17
18. "which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only [monos] Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone [monos] possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him *be* honor and eternal dominion! Amen." 1 Timothy 6:16
19. "For there is one [hen] God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5
20. "You believe that God is one [hen]. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder." James 2:19
21. "For certain persons deny our only [monos] Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." Jude 4
22. "the only [monos] God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." Jude 25

### Conclusion:

1. When speaking of God's oneness, what we see is a mix of words, both in the Hebrew and the Greek. There does not appear to be a clear pattern of usage: In the Old Testament, "echad" is used both as a unified one and numeric oneness and "bad" is also used which means a numeric oneness. Similarly, in the New Testament, "hen" is used both as a unified one and numeric oneness and "monos" is also used which means a numeric oneness.
2. These facts delight Trinitarians and send Anti-Trinitarians and Unitarians alike scurrying for the shadows. While Trinitarians would expect both kinds of words to be used in reference to God, Anti-Trinitarian are left with their mouths hanging open in bewilderment. To make matters even worse, the word "monos" is not only used of God's oneness (John 5:44; 17:3), but also Jesus is said to be the "monos Master", "monos Lord" and "monos Sovereign" (1 Timothy 6:16; Jude 4). This proves that Jn 17:3 no more excludes Jesus from being "true God" than 1 Timothy 6:16 and Jude 4 exclude the Father from being Master, Lord and Sovereign. (The official interpretation of 1 Timothy 6:16 the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtower is that 1 Timothy 6:16 is speaking solely of Christ.) [Click here for a detailed look at this powerful argument in John 17:3.](#)
3. Anti-Trinitarians who reject the fact that "echad" means a unified one between individuals, should always remember that shortly after the rise of Christianity, the Jews replaced "echad" with "yachid" in Deut 6:4. Obviously these Jews who knew the Hebrew language 2000 years ago, saw something modern Unitarians do not.
4. So in the end it is a win-win for Trinitarians! It is most devastating to Jews and Anti-Trinitarians that Deut 6:4 uses "echad", the word for a unified one between individuals. The same word echad is used to say that God is one and that husband and wife are one.

This laid the ground work for the Trinity to be revealed in Christ and his apostles who could look back to the most important Jewish Bible verse and show them Jesus was there too! Instead of converting to Christianity, the Jews twisted the word of God and started telling lies about the resurrection of Jesus.

5. Zechariah prophesied that at the time of the Messiah all will know that God is one: "And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one [echad], and His name the only one [echad]." (Zechariah 14:9)
  - a. Again the unified word for one is used!
  - b. If ever there was a place YACHID would have been used, this would have been it, but no, the unified one was used.
6. Today Jews live under a veil of darkness unable to come to the truth:
  - a. "But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away." (2 Corinthians 3:14–16)

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## Trinity

Perhaps if I could share how I came to understand the nature of God it might be helpful. From reading I came to believe that there was one God. In Isaiah 43:10 that one God says that there is no God (לֹא) before him nor will there be any God after him. Reading we come to recognize that the Father is God (לֹא). In Malachi 2:10 we read, Do we not all have one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our ancestors by being unfaithful to one another? As we continue to read we also find that the Son is God. (θεός) John 1:1[If you do not like John 1:1 there are several other verses that we could look at but for the sake of brevity let's use this for now] Finally as we read the Holy Spirit is shown to be God. (θεός) Acts 5:3-4 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit ... You have not lied just to human beings but to God." In other places we see these three names used together such as in Mt. 28:19, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. So:

- 1.) There is only one true God
- 2.) The Father is identified as that true God
- 3.) The Son, Jesus, is identified as that true God
- 4.) The Holy Spirit is identified as that true God
- 5.) All three are individual persons.

We are helped when we recognize that the OT sees God not a unity (which was common in Greek philosophy and which misdirected both Arius and Sabellius.) but as a plurality. This is seen in Hebrew grammar and in the theophanies and appearances of Christ in the Old Testament. The word "one" chosen to refer to God is  $\text{אֶחָד}$ . It is a one but it allows a plurality. It is the word

you would use to speak of one nation that is made up of many people. It is not an indivisible one. If the Hebrew authors had wanted the indivisible one, they would have used yahid (יְחִיד). So in Deuteronomy 6:4 we read “Hear, O Israel: The LORD (יְהוָה) our God (אֱלֹהֵינוּ), the LORD is one (אֶחָד)”. Later when we look at marriage, we see two becoming one, it is a plurality. Genesis 2:24 says, “24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. (אֶחָד) All of this is reconciled in the theological construct known as the trinity. There is an analogy that has helped me think through this. I know all analogies break down but as far as this has been helpful to me, think about the human brain. It has rather clear functions. Those functions are varied and even necessary. The brain is seen as a totality by most, it is just brain (imagine God) but if we look more closely we see we have a left hemisphere (father) , a right hemisphere (son) and a cerebellum (Holy Spirit). They are ontologically equal. They are all brain. However functionally they are different and will always be different.

It would also seem important to note that the early church fathers (some of the earliest knew the apostles) who were familiar with the early church teachings speak about the divinity of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. So what we see in the NT was also very clear to the early church.