

ANCIENT LOVE

A Pre-Creation Picture of God

Thesis—Before all of creation, for eternal ages past, God existed as a triune fellowship of other-centered love. The God whom Scripture calls “the Ancient of Days” is a God of ancient love. To the question, “What was God doing before humans and angels existed?” Scripture answers, “God is love.” Love is the fundamental essence of the divine identity. But in order for love to exist there must be more than one person, for the Bible defines love as living for others rather than for self. Hence, God, apart from and before creation, always existed as a plurality of personhood—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—living in a circle of self-giving, relational love. As God ventured into the work of creation, it was for the specific purpose of making others who could receive and reflect His love. When the Bible says, “God created man in His own image,” it means mankind was made in the character-likeness of God, with the mental and emotional capacity to live for other in a spirit of self-giving love. The Fall of mankind was essentially a decision to live for the self above all others, thus breaking up humanity’s unity with God and with one another. The ultimate goal of the plan of salvation is to bring us back into other-centered love relationship with God and with our fellow human beings.

Genesis 1:1—In the beginning God (Elohim)...

Daniel 7:9—...the Ancient of Days...

Colossians 1:16-17—¹⁶By Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

1 John 4:8—God is love.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5—Love...does not seek its own [is not self-seeking (NIV)].

1 John 3:16—By this we know (the meaning of) love, because He laid down His life for us.

Philippians 2:6-7, NIV—Who, being in very nature God...made Himself nothing.

1 John 5:7—For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.

NOTE: “God” in Genesis 1:1 is *Elohim* in Hebrew, which is a proper name in the plural form, thus indicating that the Creator God whom scripture introduces to us is a plurality of being within the divine personage apart from created beings.

NOTE: Love=Other-centeredness, and, if necessary, self-sacrifice.

NOTE: Not 1+1+1=3, but 1x1x1=1.

Deuteronomy 6:4—Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one!

Zechariah 13:7—“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd (Christ), against the Man who is My Companion,” Says the LORD of hosts (the Father).

“...the Man who is *close to Me*” (NIV).

“...the Man who is *My Friend*” (NCV).

Proverbs 8:30—I (Christ) was beside Him (the Father) as a master craftsman; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.

I was at His side each day, His darling and delight, playing in His presence continually (NEB).

...always enjoying His company (TM).

John 17:24—Father... You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

Genesis 1:26-27—²⁶Then God (Elohim) said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness”... ²⁷So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 2:18—Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”

Genesis 2:24—For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

John 10:30—I and My Father are one.

John 17:20-26—²⁰I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us... ²²just as We are one; ²³I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. ²⁴Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. ²⁶And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it*, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

NOTE: Literal translation—“Hear, O Israel! Yahweh, our Elohim, Yahweh is one.” Or, the One is more than one and yet is One. There are two Hebrew words for “one,” *Yacheed* and *Echad*. The first indicates singular unity, as in *one and only*. The second indicates compound unity, as in *the oneness of two or more*. *Echad* is the word used in this text, which make sense because it is preceded by the plural name of God, *Elohim*. The meaning is, *Elohim*—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—are one. God is a plurality of Persons who are one in nature.

NOTE: John 1:1—“In the beginning...God...with God.” Jesus is God, but not all there is of God. The Father is God, but not all there is of God. The Holy Spirit is God, but not all there is of God.

NOTE: When *Elohim*, the one plural divine being, created humanity in His image, He created a “them,” not a single self but a unity of two as one in love.

“Behold Your God”—Isaiah 40:9