

# The Nature of The Spirit



his study is designed to examine the nature of the Holy Spirit from a number of different angles.

As most who study with us know, Creation 7th Day Adventism is non-Trinitarian faith, setting us apart from the mainstream Seventh-day Adventist Church, which “officially” became Trinitarian in doctrine sometime in the 1900s.

The facts of recorded history demonstrate beyond question that without exception the founding members of our movement were opposed to this paradigm, which many considered a dangerous, pagan invention. Over time, this stance weakened on a corporate level, and eventually the Church adopted the more accepted view of the Godhead.

Was this an error, or an example of increasing light shed on a divine mystery? What is the significance of this doctrine for us in this last generation?

In previous studies, we have looked at the Trinity doctrine from the perspective of the Bible, and the writings of the SDA pioneers.

The writings of the pioneers can leave no question in an objective reader’s mind about the original position of Adventists on the Trinity, and we have shown that neither the term, nor the concept of three co-equal, co-eternal divine Persons appears in the sacred text of the Bible. It would seem then that, traditions aside, Christianity – or at least individual Christians – should be able to revisit this matter and come to a different conclusion than has historically been attained by tradition. It would further seem that of all Christians, *Seventh-day Adventists* should have the least excuse for remaining in ignorance about this outdated, unscriptural and potentially harmful dogma.

The main point that seems to lay a stumbling-block before the more open-minded of SDA believers is the wording of Ellen G. White in a few places. It should be made very clear that Ellen White came out of a Trinitarian church, and was fully aware of the doctrine; yet she was in full support of the early, anti-Trinitarian writers. She wrote extensively on the subject of the Godhead, and emphasized that the personality of God was of primary importance to us as a people.

In our previous examinations we have seen that increasing light leads us from “glory unto glory,” going ever brighter as we progress. Despite this, some (in an effort to

defend the decisions of the later incarnations of the SDA Church) will claim that Mrs. White's insights into the divine world – rather than making the Trinity doctrine even more clear than it was to her in her previous church affiliations – left her “confused” and somehow unable to rebuke the supposed errors of every other writer who strongly opposed that particular view of the Godhead. This is hardly a reasonable conclusion, nor is it indicative of the way that increasing light actually works.

What we are going to do today is go back over some Scriptures in an effort to show even more clearly what Yahweh the Almighty says about His nature in the Bible, and also to reveal the reason why Ellen White felt comfortable using certain terms while a member of a non-Trinitarian movement that seem to lend support for the later adoption of the Trinity by the mainstream Church.

### Fundamentals: What is a “Spirit?”

In the traditional Trinity paradigm, the Godhead consists of a “Three-in-One” arrangement of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There are few who would dispute that there is a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit, but the doctrine does not end there. It further claims that these Three are *co-equal* (meaning they all have the same authority), *co-eternal* (meaning that all three have always existed), and share the commonly-accepted attributes of Divinity: *omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence*.

In previous studies we have seen that while the Father and Son are co-equal, the Holy Spirit is not given any authority at all, much less equal authority to the Father and son. Some examples are these: “And again, when [the Father] bringeth in the Firstbegotten into the world, He saith, ‘And let all the angels of God worship Him.’ And of the angels He saith, ‘Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers [servants] a flame of fire.’ But unto the Son He saith, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.’” (Heb 1:6-8)

The Son instructs us to worship the Father, and the Father instructs even the angels to worship the Son.

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in His fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell?” (Pro 30:4)

The “name” of an individual is His or her personality, very person-hood, and yet none are asked (and we are never told of) the name of the Holy Spirit. Thus, and again, while none would dispute that there are “three great worthies of Heaven,” to use a

quote from Ellen White, the Scriptures always, invariably, place a distinction between the Persons of the Father and Son with their Holy Spirit.

Another place, even more clearly put, is this one (for those who will say that the Spirit was “less known” or “less revealed” in the Old Testament than the new):

“These words spake Yahshua, and lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee, as thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Yahshua the Messiah, whom thou hast sent.’” (John 17:1-3)

Here again, we have the Father and Son giving glory one to another, and no mention of the Spirit. In fact, the Father and Son are specified as those who must be “known” in order to receive eternal life. It would be a heinous admission to leave out a third Person who must, or even may, be known toward attaining this end. The Holy Spirit is undoubtedly important to salvation; it is the means by which the Father and Son receive a testimony in the hearts of those being converted, and it is the very life of those who are won to Heaven’s light... but it is the Father and Son who are made “known” by the presence of the Spirit, for they are the Persons who can be made known.

The Father and Son set up thrones in the hearts (e.g., John 14:23) of those who are born-again – and there are precisely two thrones mentioned, indicating exactly where the authority of the Godhead is invested. In fact, in the Book of Revelation the highest place in Heaven is called, “the throne of God and of the Lamb,” (Rev 22:3) which definitively rules out the co-equal aspect of the Trinity, and already demonstrates its falsehood. The only way one could tack on a Trinity to this is to add, “the throne of God (who is both the Father and Spirit) and of the Lamb,” an act expressly forbidden in that very Book itself. (Rev 22:18)

We will return to that notion in a moment, but first, just to demonstrate that the Spirit is not co-eternal either, we have verses such as this one:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1)

Again, the Spirit is mysteriously missing and, at some point, those who are honest seekers-after the truth must begin to wonder why this is. Some have come up with truly novel ways to smooth these many verses over, such as saying, “Well, the Spirit is more behind-the-scenes than the Father and Son, which is why it is not mentioned

very much. In fact, it says the Spirit will NOT testify of itself, (John 16:13) explaining why the Spirit that inspired the Bible doesn't mention itself very much."

On the surface this almost approaches clever, until we realize that John 16:13 says "when" the Spirit is come "he [Gk: *ekeinos* – he, she or it] shall not speak of himself." Christ is not saying that the Spirit was never to testify of itself, but rather at the time of the Spirit's (future) appearance to the apostles it would testify of the Son at that point. There is no reason why a co-equal, co-eternal Person would be mentioned so rarely, never mentioned in conversation without a third-party agent (a prophet, an angel, or through a vision), never called "God," never prayed-to or worshipped, and referred to in the languages of the Bible by general pronouns not specifically reserved for individuals.

Furthermore, the co-equality of the Spirit is denied by the way the Spirit is mentioned when discussing its nature. We read that "the Spirit of truth, [is that] which proceedeth from the Father." (John 15:26) That word "proceedeth" is present, and continuous. The Son, on the other hand, "proceeded forth and came from God," (John 8:42) a completed action that renders the Father and Son *distinct from each other*, in direct opposition to the Spirit, that continues to "proceed forth" from the Father as an aspect of Himself.

A child may be said to have "proceeded forth" from the bodies of his or her parents, but the breath of those parents "proceed forth" from them continuously as long as they live.

Thus far, this has been a review of what the CSDA Church has already said about the Spirit. We may go even more fundamental, however, to emphasize these points from another angle, and we may ask ourselves a question that apparently hasn't occurred to anyone to ask before: "Why was the word 'Spirit' chosen to represent the third element of the Godhead?"

What does the word "Spirit" mean?

In the Bible, the word "spirit" indicates the intangible essence of life that exists within all living beings. If that living being does not have a corporeal (material) body, then the spirit is the entirety of that living being (e.g., the angels who are "ministering spirits").

Since the Father does not generally reveal Himself in any kind of physical form, we are told that "God is a Spirit." (John 4:24) In His divine form, we are told that "the Lord [a term used for the Son in this context] is that Spirit." (2Cor 3:17)

We see that the Father, who does not reveal a physical form, is Spirit; and the Son, who does reveal a physical form, is Spirit as well. Whether in flesh or not, it is the Spirit of God that binds the Father and Son together as One, even though they are distinct beings – One having “proceeded forth” from the Other in eternity. The Spirit is an aspect, an attribute, of both the Father and Son, and is separate from them only as It represents the unity between them.

In other words, even though the Spirit exists, it is not mentioned (ever) separate from the Father and Son, because it is an aspect of them both (for both ARE Spirit) yet not separate from them any more than a human’s spirit is separate from his or her “self.”

The term “Holy Spirit” was chosen to represent this concept *specifically* because of what the word “Spirit” always means: the living essence of a person that is not separate from that person himself or herself. By definition, then, by the very fact that there is a “Father, Son and Spirit,” not a “Father, Mother and Son,” or “Father, Son and Uncle,” ... by the very fact that the term “Holy Spirit” is used we find that there cannot be a Tri-nity, because this implies that all three are separate *from each other* while still being one. If the Father is a Spirit (and we know He is) and the Son is a Spirit (and we know He is), then there cannot be a Spirit shared by them both that is at the same time a distinct person. Why? Simply this, because the term “spirit” means: one’s “living essence.” It cannot be separate from that person while the person is alive. If my spirit were separate from me, I would be dead. (Ecc 12:7) This is what the very word means.

To re-iterate: The Spirit of the Father and Spirit of the Son proceed continually from them Both (John 20:22) because it is a non-separate part of them Both. That is what a “spirit” is; that is what the term is used to signify.

### The Personality of Yahweh

In studies past, we have made much of the Biblical concept that a personality requires a “name.” So important is the name to a person that if the name is not suitable based on past experiences and spiritual state, Yahweh will provide a replacement, or an additional name, in order to rectify the situation.

Abram was called Abraham.

Jacob was renamed Israel (although he was still called Jacob at times).

The Church, the Bride of Christ, has received a number of names down through the generations, retaining its previous name each time: Sons of God, Israel, Christian, Protestant, Seventh-day Adventist, Creation Seventh Day Adventist.

We have pointed out that while the Father and Son have names, these being Yahweh and Yahshua, the Holy Spirit is not named anywhere in the Bible. A few attempts have been made to provide a name, but none of these have proven suitable based on Scriptural principle. Some such suggestions have been:

- Shekinah – But this word means merely “Presence,” and is never used as a noun in the Word.
- Yahu – But this is simply another short form of Yah, and is not separate as Yahshua is from Yahweh.
- Any of the given titles: Comforter, Advocate, etc. – but the Father and Son have both titles AND a proper name. The Spirit will, of course, have titles that describe its function, but not a name that describes its personality.

This much we already know as a people. But there is another way you can know the personality of an individual beyond the presence of an accurate name. The Scripture tells us, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” (Mat 7:18-20)

Now, if everlasting life means to “know” the Father and the Son whom He has sent, it is imperative that we become aware of the “fruits” of the Father and Son... and then see if there are any “fruits” of the Spirit that may be known.

What are the fruits of the Father? What has the Father done? The Father is also called “the Father of spirits.” (Heb 12:9) It is the Father that conceived all things, both invisible and visible. It is from the Father that the Son (the Seed, or Fruit, of eternity) came forth “before” there was even such a thing as “time.” It is the Father that created and sustains the universe through His Son.

What are the fruits of the Son? The Son is the One through whom the Father has created all things, and through whom all things continue to exist. (Eph 3:9, Col 1:16) The Son is the Sacrifice on behalf of fallen humanity, (John 3:16) and the “Resurrection and the Life” of the redeemed. (John 11:25)

What are the fruits of the Spirit? Those reading this study might suppose the answer would be “none,” in order to draw the contrast between the Spirit and the Personages of the Godhead – yet the Spirit does, in fact, have fruits. Indeed, the Spirit has one great Fruit of which the “listed fruits” are merely aspects. We read of these here, and specifically named as such:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” (Gal 5:22, 23)

“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” (Eph 5:8-10)

Now, here is the question: Can any of us create the universe? Can any of us be the vessel of salvation to mankind? Can any of us devise and carry out the plan of salvation? No... none of us can do these things.

But can any of us love? Can any of us have joy, peace, patience, and all the other attributes listed in Galatians? Can we, by our actions, prove what is acceptable unto Yahweh? We certainly can.

We know the Godhead by the things that They do that demonstrate Their divinity, Their infinite glory and height over the creation. But we know the Spirit in a different way – by the actions that WE do, by the qualities of the divine character that WE display. We can certainly know the Spirit, but only through the agents of that Spirit – by the presence of the Spirit in the Father and Son (not separate from Them) and in the ministration of Their angels, and in the life and testimony of converted human beings. These are the “persons” through whom the Holy Spirit is made manifest, becoming their Life... but it can never be separate from them, or else it ceases to be “knowable.” In other words, there is no independent entity known as “the Holy Spirit” that manifests all these qualities... the Holy Spirit is, in fact, a holy “spirit” that exists in all living creatures, and all divine Beings, that are of the light. That is the only way it is known, or even CAN be known.

By their fruits you may know them.

### The Presence of Yahweh

There is a little-known fact of Scripture that wherever the presence of Yahweh is, Yahweh is truly there. That sounds redundant, but it is not. I may remember a place that I have visited in the past, and in my mind I may say “I am there,” but I am not truly there in reality.

Where Yahweh places His presence, wheresoever Yahweh calls to mind, there He is in truth. Specifically, wherever Yahweh places His “name,” there He truly is. Let us look at some examples of these to demonstrate the principle:

“Beware of [the Angel], and obey His voice [...] for my name is in Him.” (Exo 23:21)

From then on the Angel of The Lord, whom Seventh-day Adventists accept as a manifestation of the Son of God, is often simply called “Yahweh.” (Gen 16:7-13; Gen 22:15, 16; Zech 3:1, 2) Here is an important one, recording the siege of Jericho:

“And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, ‘Take up the Ark of the Covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of Yahweh.’ And he said unto the people, ‘Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of Yahweh. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns passed on before Yahweh, and blew with the trumpets; and the Ark of the Covenant of Yahweh followed them.” (Josh 6:6-8)

Notice the change; this object, the Ark of the Covenant, was a representation of the personality and presence of Yah Himself. The Scripture tells us that the presence of the Almighty was upon the mercy seat atop the Ark. In fact, it even more specifically informs us that “Yahweh of hosts, [...] *dwelleth* between the Cherubim.” (1Sam 4:4) The infinite and eternal God of all creation “*dwelleth*,” or lives, between two portions of a man-made object. Now, it must be remembered that “God is Spirit,” and we are not speaking about an exclusive, physical presence as if Yah, by being there, is ONLY there and nowhere else. But what is significant is that Yahweh Himself is identified as being at that point in space, to the degree that the priests bearing the seven trumpets could pass on “before” Yahweh Himself as identified with the Ark.

The presence of Yahweh is also in us, the believers, as it is written, “Yahshua answered and said unto him, ‘If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode [dwelling-place] with him.’” (John 14:23)

Does this mean we ought also to be called “Yahweh?” Some religious traditions appear to approach this belief, but there is a difference.

The Ark of the Covenant is a non-living object with no individuality or free will. The presence of Yahweh there does not subjugate any living will, and is therefore Yahweh entirely. The Son, in whom the Father also dwells, is called “the *fullness* of the Godhead bodily,” (Col 2:9) and is thus God Himself in human flesh.

We are not – individually – the fullness of the Godhead; we are never asked to relinquish the gift of free will and thus “become” Yahweh. Collectively, however, we are seen as an “help meet,” a “suitable companion” for the Divine Son of God, just as Eve was for Adam before the entrance of sin. The Son will always be the “head” of the Bride, (1Cor 11:3) but we, through the progress of redemption, are made



“partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2Pet 1:4)

Now, what does this have to do with the nature of the Holy Spirit? Understanding this principle, that wherever the presence or name of Yah is, there also is Yahweh Himself, allows us to understand some of the writings of Adventist authors without coming to the conclusion that there are any contradictions with those quotations that state so clearly that the Holy Spirit is not a separate, co-equal, co-eternal Person of the Godhead. We will look at a couple of these statements in the last section.

For now, it should be apparent that Yahweh represents Himself in various places by His Spirit; however, just because the Spirit of Yahweh represents Yahweh Himself, it is no more a sentient, individual being than is the Ark of the Covenant that also represented Yahweh, and was in fact called “Yahweh” in the Book of Joshua.

The Father was among the Israelites because His Ark was with them. The Father is among His people because His Spirit is among us. These (both) are agents and representations of Himself, but just as the Ark had no will to do anything unless it was moved by the priests, so the Spirit has no will to do anything without our will actuating the work of God within us, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” (Phil 2:13) God’s will, in conjunction with our will, accomplishes the work of divinity in the earth – we are not overtaken or subjugated by the Spirit of the Almighty, as if it were a spiritual person to “possess” us, (as demons, who are spiritual persons, are able to do – Mat 8:16) but we are instructed from the earliest Books of Scripture to “choose you this day whom ye will serve.” (Josh 24:15)

### The Qualities of Divinity

The words of Scripture, read with understanding, utterly destroy the Trinity paradigm in almost *every* element and aspect (with one exception that I will discuss in a moment). It is not merely a “flawed” doctrine; it is one that is utterly false. To re-state the traditional understanding of the Trinity, the Father and Son and Spirit are said to be co-equal (meaning they all have the same authority), co-eternal (meaning that all three have always existed), and share the commonly-accepted attributes of Divinity: omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence.

We have seen, and re-stated in this study, that the Spirit is not co-equal. It is sent, called, poured out and withdrawn by the Father and Son. The Father gives glory to the Son, and the Son gives glory to the Father, but neither give glory to the Spirit, nor is anyone ever instructed to worship the Spirit of God. This demonstrates the falsehood of the Trinity doctrine.

We have seen, and re-stated in this study, that the Spirit is not co-eternal. It “proceeds” forth continuously from the Father and Son – the First of whom breathed the Spirit into all humanity (Gen 2:7) and the Second of whom breathed spiritual life into the disciples (John 20:22). The Son “came forth” from the Father as a completed event in eternity, rendering Him a separate, individual entity, but no such eternal, independent state is associated with the Spirit of God. This demonstrates the falsehood of the Trinity doctrine.

Technically, the work of refuting this pagan falsehood is completed. In the interest of being thorough, however, let us examine the attributes of Divinity and see how well the Spirit demonstrates (or does not demonstrate) these qualities. It must be thoroughly understood by readers, however, that making these statements does not at all limit the power and authority of the Godhead Itself – it merely points out that the Holy Spirit was not *intended* to function as a power or authority independent of the Father and Son. What the Spirit *was* intended to do, it does perfectly, and in a way that utterly eclipses human understanding. But we are told what It does, and what It does not do.

We, the Children of Yah, have a responsibility to give a good and accurate testimony of our Father in Heaven, and therefore we examine the things the Scriptures tell us about Him, for “those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.” (Deu 29:29)

### **Omnipotence:**

Omnipotence means “able to do all things.” One who is omnipotent is all-powerful, and in fact this is the reason why we call Yahweh the “almighty,” or the “all-mighty.”

We are told that the Father is omnipotent. We read, “Ah, Adonai Yahweh! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is *nothing* too hard for thee; thou shewest loving kindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them. The Great, the Mighty God, Yahweh of hosts is His name.” (Jer 32:17, 18)

We are told that the Son is omnipotent, although this is something of a special case. Before He took on humanity, the Son was all-powerful. We read, “And when the Tempter came to Him, he said, ‘If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.’” (Mat 4:3) Satan, who knew Yahshua before His incarnation, was fully aware of the Son’s power, and attempted to taunt Him into using what He had voluntarily surrendered for our sake. As we saw in an early verse, it was through the pre-incarnate Son that “all things were created.” (Col 1:16)

During His stay with us, He had “humbled” Himself to be subject to our limitations. (Phil 2:8)

Upon the success of His mission and His resurrection, the Father returned to the Son the majesty that He surrendered, but some things were forever altered. The Son testifies, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;” (Mat 28:18) however, that word “power” actually means “authority.” The Son may be able to do all things – and further, even we “can do all things through Christ,” the Son, who shares with us His power. But this is now only possible because of Yahshua’s one-ness with the Father, and our one-ness with Him. The sacrifice on the cross was truly an infinite sacrifice, but it is nevertheless the case that in His natural, pre-incarnate state, the Son was “all mighty” unto Himself.

Is the Spirit omnipotent? We have seen that the fruits (or acts) of the Spirit are accomplished through us. Thus, while we can do “all things” through Christ, the Spirit is the agent of that process. We are never told that we can do “all things” through the Spirit; in fact, we are never told we can do *anything at all* through the Spirit except waiting for the fulfillment of our faith, (Gal 5:5) purifying our souls, (1Pet 1:22) and other strictly internal matters that all require our own choices and will... and directly affect only ourselves. The Spirit’s presence (by which we mean the abiding of the Father and Son – John 14:23) provides us the power to become Sons of God, and to do the will of God on the earth... but the Spirit works through US, who become the personal agents of the Godhead.

The Spirit (being sent, given, taken, etc.) is never once spoken as doing anything of its own volition, and is never identified as having any power at all separate from the Father and Son. The Father has power independent of the Son, and the Son had power independent of the Father, although He surrendered it – again, by His choice. He said, “I have power to lay [my life] down, and I have power to take it again.” (John 10:18)

The Spirit does nothing except what it is sent to do when it “proceeds” forth from the Father and Son, Personal Beings of the Godhead. Therefore, it certainly cannot be said to be “all powerful” in its own right, any more than WE (who can do whatever Yahweh instructs us to do) are all powerful unto ourselves. The Trinity concept also falls short on this point.

### **Omnipresence:**

The Father displays omnipresence, the ability to be all places at once. We read, “‘Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?’ saith Yahweh. ‘Do not I fill heaven and earth?’ saith Yahweh.” (Jer 23:24)

The Son also displays omnipresence after the resurrection, saying, “lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” (Mat 28:20) This was not an idle statement.

When speaking, interestingly enough, of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, being sent to us, He specifically says, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you.*” (John 14:16-18)

There are many interesting points raised in this statement. First, we see that the Spirit (as we mentioned above) can only be known through other personal agents. Yahshua did not say, “You know the Spirit, because He has appeared to you,” but rather “You know Him, for (Gk: *hoti* - because!) He dwells with you (that is, in my Person) and will dwell in you (that is, your persons).”

Second, although the Spirit is called “another Comforter” Yahshua appears to immediately speak contrary to this by saying, “I will come to you.” How can Christ be “another Comforter” if the Comforter is sent instead of Himself? Many Trinitarians have latched unto that question as a way to demonstrate that there must be a third “He” involved in the Godhead. But the answer is revealed in the passage itself. Christ, while being with His disciples, was never “in” them the way the Spirit was promised to be. We must remember that we accept the Son of God as being “fully God and fully Man.” The “Man Christ Jesus” (1Tim 2:5) was with humanity in physical form, and even now acts as our High Priest in the Tabernacle in Heaven. And yet, Yahshua is with us ALL here on the earth. How is this possible? Because He has sent us Himself as His Spirit, just as He promised.

How can we be sure this understanding of “another” as “another, and more intimate form” is accurate? Because we find that it is Yahshua, the Son, who is the Person who actually does the actions the Spirit performs among us.

The Spirit is the Comforter. Yahshua says, “. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” (John 14:16-18)

The Spirit is the Advocate. Yet, “we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:” (1John 2:1)

The Spirit is the Mediator. However, “there is one God, and *one* Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1Tim 2:5)

If the Spirit is the Comforter, Advocate and Mediator, but Christ is the Comforter, Advocate and ONE Mediator, then it is impossible to understand the phrase “another Comforter” as a separate Person as Trinitarians do. Christ has indeed come to us as His Spirit, and in that sense it is another comfort, and another Comforter, but it is Christ Himself, for “the Lord is that Spirit” (2Cor 3:17) and that is quite comforting.

This is the one aspect of the Trinity paradigm that may be said to be correct. The Spirit is omnipresent, in that it is all places at once. However, and this is a big “however,” it is only thus true because the Father and Son are omnipresent, and the Spirit is the agent of that presence. Thus, while the statement, “The Holy Spirit is omnipresent” is true, it does nothing to establish the Spirit as a separate, independent entity. In fact, every verse that speaks of the Holy Spirit as being with us, and in us, associates it directly with the Father and/or the Son. There are no exceptions to this in the Bible anywhere, therefore the phrase is of absolutely no help to Trinitarians.

We may concede, however, that one fifth (20%) of the Trinitarian paradigm is technically true: The Holy Spirit is, in fact, omnipresent. The other 80% (co-eternity, co-equality, omnipotence and, as we will see, omniscience) is false.

### **Omniscience:**

Omniscience is the ability to know all things and, as it is generally used, means the ability to know all things at once. In other words, one cannot “increase” in infinite knowledge and learn something new, because we would also know how to derive all potential future knowledge from all already-existing knowledge.

The Father displays omniscience. We read, “God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.” (1John 1:20)

The Son also, displayed omniscience before taking on Humanity. We read in that famous passage from the beginning of John’s Gospel that, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1) Even though the Father and Son are two separate Beings, they shared a unity of spirit and knowledge that allowed them to cooperate perfectly in the creation of all things – the Father acting through the Son. We are told that “before the world was,” the Father and Son shared a common “glory,” (John 17:5) and this word is not commonly well-defined in modern Christian thought. For many, the term “glory” simply means magnificence, light and honor. In reality the term in Greek is *doxa* from which we get the word “orthodox,” or “right teaching.” The primary meaning for the word used by John as glory is “opinion, judgment and view.” The Father and Son were of one opinion, judgment and view, even before the world was, demonstrating the omniscience of both.

Now as we have already seen, the Son limited Himself for our sakes by taking on humanity, and so, even though the disciples understood that the Son knew “all things” relating to orthodoxy, or the “right teachings” of Scripture, (John 16:30) it is not true that He was omniscient – knowing all things at all times. For one thing, being no longer spirit but also flesh, the thoughts of His mind were generated just as ours are: by a finite organ called the brain. It is quite true that He had leadings of the Holy Spirit from the Father, (Mat 4:1) and knew things about individuals He had only just met, (John 4:29) but all these things that He did during His earthly ministry, He did as a prophet could have done, (John 4:19) up to and including the raising of the dead. (Heb 11:35)

Yahshua spoke of the time of His return, saying something very significant. He said, “But of that day and hour [of the Second Advent] knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.” (Mat 24:36)

We may then combine that with the parallel reading from the second Gospel, which reads, “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.” (Mark 13:32)

Now we have “two witnesses,” and they strengthen each other in that the first says “my Father only,” and the second says, “neither the Son.”

Now, the omniscience that defines the Persons of the Godhead would demand that “God” know all things, and know all things at all times. Again, we understand that the Son did not maintain this knowledge in His human ministry by voluntarily humbling (literally “reducing”) Himself, receiving insight about the past, present and future only as a human could for the purpose of being our Example. Just as He did nothing that a regular human body could not do while strengthened with divine power, so He did nothing that a regular human mind could not do while inspired by the Holy Spirit.

But what about the Spirit?

The Father and Son are both to be omniscient in their natural state, the Son surrendering some aspects of His “doxa” to become like us. The Spirit, however, was not our sacrifice on the cross. That was never the function of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the Spirit of God, as a separate Being, did not come to earth in human form, and therefore had no cause to “reduce” itself, surrendering divine precognition and omniscience.

The fact – and it is a Biblically confirmed fact – that the Son did not know the day of His return, but the Father *only*, demonstrates beyond controversy that the Spirit is NOT equal in knowledge to the Father in His current glory, or to the Son in His pre-

incarnate level of divinity. In fact, far from just being left out of the statement, the Spirit is not even “considered” for the role of a knowing Being, as “not the angels of heaven” are mentioned as potential vessels of this knowledge instead of the Spirit.

While we can explain the Son’s lack of omniscience by virtue of His incarnate humanity, Trinitarians have no explanation for the Holy Spirit’s lack of knowledge on this matter. They do not even have the refuge of saying, “Well, ‘God’ includes both the Father and the Spirit in that verse,” because Yahshua did not use the term “God” at all. He said, “The Father *only*” knows, and “*neither* the Son.”

Were the Holy Spirit a person as are the Father or the Son (or even the spiritual personages of the angels who are mentioned), this would be an absurd omission during a *key* doctrinal discourse from Yahshua and recorded by more than one witness for a permanent Biblical record. It would be a mockery of the inspired record to make the claim, “Well, the Spirit just isn’t mentioned there,” because Yahshua’s statement positively eliminates the Spirit as even a possibility. Only the Father knows the time of the Second Advent, or at least knew it at that point in time (the Son may well know it at this late stage in judgment). This is as good as a Bible verse that outright tells us, “The Holy Spirit is not omniscient.” It is not, and without omniscience or omnipotence, the very idea of the Trinity falls short once again of Scriptural truth.

This is Biblical confirmation of the knowledge that we can draw from EGW’s statement in *The Great Controversy* that the Father and Son are the **ONLY** ones involved in the “Council of Peace” relating to the plan of Salvation.

### Conclusion: The State of Being

Many of the statements of Adventist writer Ellen White serve only to highlight what is already revealed in the Scriptures about the nature of the Holy Spirit.

She writes in one place that “Holy Spirit is the life of Christ,” [*This Day With God*, p. 257]

She tells us, “The work of the holy Spirit is immeasurably great. It is from this source that power and efficiency come to the worker for God; and the Holy Spirit is the comforter, as the personal presence of Christ to the soul.” [*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, November 29, 1892, paragraph 3]

Most significantly, “Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself, divested of the personality of humanity and independent thereof. He

would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit, as the Omnipresent.” [*Manuscript Releases Volume Fourteen*, page 23, paragraph 3]

Fortunately, there are commas in English, unlike Hebrew and Greek; and it should be noted that there is such a comma after the word “Himself.” The statement cannot, therefore, be construed to mean that “The Holy Spirit Himself [is] divested of the personality of humanity,” meaning that the Spirit is a spiritual Person that is not human. Some have attempted to explain the above quotation in that way. But no, the comma and context both reveal that the subject of both sentences is Christ, leading to the inevitable truth that the Holy Spirit “is *Christ* Himself, [but] divested [which means, “stripped of *what one once had*] of the personality of humanity...” The Holy Spirit cannot be “divested” of humanity, because the Holy Spirit was never human. That sentence is telling us precisely what the plainest readings of both Adventist writings and the Bible have always said, that “the Lord [Christ Yahshua] is that Spirit,” and that when the Comforter is come, Christ Himself comes unto us through His post-resurrection omnipresence.

This is a decidedly non-Trinitarian set of statements, but they are not the conceptual inventions of Ellen White. They are merely re-statements of the very same verses that we have been reading in this study all along.

What we have shown from Christ’s declaration that only the Father knew the time of the Son’s return while Yahshua was on earth, this is also indicated by a quotation from Ellen White. She writes, in the following pair of statements from among her most well-known works:

“Before the assembled inhabitants of heaven the King declared that none but Christ, the Only Begotten of God, could fully enter into His purposes, and to Him it was committed to execute the mighty counsels of His will.” [*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 36, paragraph 2]

“Christ the Word, the Only Begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,--one in nature, in character, and in purpose,--the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” [*The Great Controversy*, page 493, paragraph 1]

How plain this now is! In Heaven, before the incarnation, were the Father and Son, sharing identical glory, and encompassed in light. They shared a Spirit, but they were Two independent beings: the “King of Heaven,” and “the Only Begotten of God,” who was “the only being in all the universe” that could enter into the sacred counsels. This reveals exactly why, when the Son surrendered some of His glory and subjected Himself to human limitations, the Father was the only One (remaining) who knew all



these things. The writings may be Ellen White's, but the truths are God's on this matter, and revealed centuries ago in the divine Scriptures.

It must be stated that yes, some of Ellen White's statements appear at first to support the Trinitarian position. She writes of the "three great Worthies" of Heaven. [*Manuscript Releases Volume Seven*, Page 268] She writes of the "three living persons of the heavenly trio." [*Evangelism*, Page 615] Yet, none of these (rare) statements counteract the quotations listed above. Wherever the presence of Yahweh is, there Yahweh is in His fullness. Even a non-living Ark can be called the Person of "Yahweh" if His presence abides thereupon. (Josh 6:6-8) Thus, even though the Father is on His Throne, and the Son is in the Temple until the close of probation, the Godhead yet remains here on earth by the Spirit, a "person" in the sense (only) that it is the Person of Christ Yahshua independent of the humanity that He maintains. This is undoubtedly a "third" element of the Godhead, acting as an agent (and making it a "trio" of sorts) – but it is not, as we have demonstrated, co-equal, co-eternal, omniscient or omnipotent. Most importantly for this subject, it is not an *independent* entity.

That the term "persons" is used has been a trouble to some, for that word does (especially today) imply individuality and sentience. In the quotation above, we read that the Spirit is the "personal" presence of Christ to the soul. Does this mean that the Spirit is the presence of Christ to the soul of each person? That is certainly true, but that sentence is telling us something different: that it is *Christ, the Person* that is with us by the Holy Spirit. Christ, the omnipresent Person acting through the Spirit, is the same in nature as Christ the incarnate Person who is currently interceding on our behalf in Heaven. What is different, however, is that the Son continues to maintain the limitations of His humanity even while being with each believer personally... and this is what the mortal mind has difficulty grasping. This is why the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a "third" person of the Godhead... but the Scriptures and writings of Ellen White all confirm that this is not a separate person – as we would use the term today – from the Son. Rather, again, it is the Son Himself, but in a form separate from the humanity that He once maintained in the flesh. This is, admittedly, a fairly complex concept, (as are all that deal directly with the nature of the infinite God) but it is one that is borne out by the plainest of verses and quotations. The Lord [Gk: *kyrios* – the New Testament term for the Son in this context, who is referenced three verses earlier], after all, is that Spirit.

Naturally, there are things about the Godhead that we will be examining in eternity. Naturally, we will never be able to say what the Father, Son and Spirit *are* in fullness, except that we use the term "God" to identify this unknowable glory. What we can do, however, is to examine statements and claims made about Them, and discovering if they line up with the revealed Word of God.

We have examined the Trinity in great detail, in terms of the five specific claims of that doctrine. We have found that of co-equality, there is a Father and a Son, but not Spirit – although the Spirit is a shared aspect of the co-equal Father and Son. We have found that of co-eternity, there is a Father and a Son, but not a Spirit – although that Spirit proceeds forth from the co-eternal Father and Son. We have found that of omnipotence – there is a Father and Son, but not a Spirit – although that Spirit is shared with us, allowing us to do the works of omnipotence as directed by the Father and Son. We have found that of omniscience, there is a Father, and once a Son. The Son surrendered His omniscience for our sakes... but the Spirit that they share, assuming it could even “know” anything at all, does not know all things. The Trinity is, on virtually every point, shown not to line up with Scripture.

We have some statements from Adventist prophetess Ellen G. White. The vast majority of these statements lend obvious support to the matters we are studying that have already been revealed in Scripture. A few of her statements, like the words of any inspired person, inevitably cause confusion in some minds. There are some who believe evidence exists that a few of Mrs. White’s statements were somewhat altered since their original authorship, but this is a “hard sell” to many purists, and need not be relied-upon to make or defend any teachings. To be sure, even in her own day letters written from one Adventist minister to another reveals that there were things that they believed could have been made more plain. For us, for this last generation of saints that will know no standard of truth than the Word of God, all we need to is turn to the same Scriptures that inspired her to find the facts as laid out with unerring and infinite wisdom.

Upon the preponderance of all this evidence, the members of the Creation 7th Day Adventist Church believe that there can be only one conclusion that is in line with the Bible. While there are, indeed, many mysteries about the Godhead yet to be revealed, it is not the work of man to add new mysteries where none exist. The “mystery of the Trinity” has been shown to be incorrect in the majority of its aspects, unscriptural in its basis, and ultimately a flawed, human attempt to explain a flawless, divine unity of the Spirit of the Father and Son.



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