

December 2010

Frank W. Nelte

UNITARIANISM: AN ANSWER TO SIR ANTHONY BUZZARD

A week ago Anthony Buzzard contacted me regarding my article about Psalm 110:1. Since then we have had half a dozen email exchanges dealing with the subject of Jesus Christ's existence before New Testament times. He holds the unitarian point of view and rejects that Jesus Christ existed during Old Testament times.

Anthony Buzzard's questions are aimed at discrediting those Scriptures that show that Jesus Christ was indeed the God in the Old Testament who dealt with Adam and with Abraham and with Moses and with all the prophets. He has challenged the proofs that I have provided for Jesus Christ's existence prior to the New Testament.

Now I realize that the chances are very slim that he will accept any additional proof that I may present. Will more and more evidence against his position help him to see the flaws in his position? I don't know. But other people are also exposed to such unitarian views about Jesus Christ.

Therefore instead of responding with another email to his latest message to me, I believe it is more profitable for me to present my response in the form of an article, which will allow anyone else to also evaluate the unitarian position for themselves. And while Anthony Buzzard may accept or not accept the evidence I will present in this article, you, the reader, can also evaluate that evidence for yourself.

In this article I will present the strongest evidence of all that Jesus Christ has indeed existed with God the Father for past eternity. The clearest evidence of all does not require any knowledge of Hebrew or Greek; it doesn't require any understanding of grammatical technicalities. All it requires is the ability to think clearly and logically.

So while I will be presenting some technicalities pertaining to the Hebrew language before we get to that strongest evidence of all, those technicalities do not in any way impact on that evidence. That evidence will stand on its own merits without any technicalities whatsoever.

SOME BACKGROUND TO THE UNITARIAN POSITION

There are many Scriptures that make quite clear that Jesus Christ existed with God the Father before New Testament times. So unitarians are forced to take a negative approach. They cannot approach the Scriptures from the perspective of proving what the Scriptures do say. No, they have to approach a whole host of Scriptures with the specific intention of wanting to prove what these Scriptures supposedly don't say! In that process they invariably make no attempt to explain what those Scriptures actually do mean. It is sufficient to their cause to try to show that these Scriptures supposedly don't mean what they plainly seem to be saying.

There are over 20 Scriptures that prove Jesus Christ's prior existence. But the key Scriptures amongst all of these are two, one in the Old Testament and the other in the New Testament. The two Scriptures unitarians are most bent on disproving are Psalm 110:1 and John 1:1.

It is not the purpose of this article to thoroughly examine these key Scriptures, other than to address specific points Anthony Buzzard raised in his emails.

I have explained Psalm 110:1 in great detail in my article "The Meaning of Psalm 110:1" which is available for downloading on my website. That article also includes many of the other Scriptures that speak about Jesus Christ's existence before New Testament times. Back in 1995 I also wrote an article about John 1:1, which was at that time being discredited by the Worldwide Church of God. That article is also available on my website.

Some time ago Anthony Buzzard wrote an article entitled "John 1:1: Caveat Lector", in which he attempted to show that Jesus Christ did not exist in Old Testament times. I found on the internet an excellent rebuttal of that specific article written by a trinitarian named Robert Hommel. Hommel's 13 page rebuttal article is titled "The Unscholarly Scholarship of Anthony Buzzard" with the subtitle "A Response to 'John 1:1: Caveat Lector'". I do NOT send out Hommel's article, but you can find it on the internet by searching on the title or on the author's name. I obviously reject all trinitarian views regarding God's nature, and in mentioning Hommel's article I am not in any way endorsing his religious ideas. As Hommel says in the penultimate sentence of his article:

And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, **that ye may keep your own tradition.** (Mark 7:9)

So, for example, if you do a search in your Bible software on the Strong's Number "0113", then you will find about 335 instances of the Hebrew word "adoni". And if you then do another search on the Strong's Number "0136", you will find another 434 instances for the word "Adonai". Unless you already understood the things I have discussed above, you would not have realized that there is really no distinction in the Hebrew text, as it was written, between these two words. It is all one and the same word. The masoretes created **a totally artificial division** by vowel pointing some instances for "adoni" and other instances for "Adonai". The unpointed Hebrew text does NOT differentiate whether this word "adon" refers to God or to a man.

So what do you think happened when these scribes did not understand that a specific instance of this word was actually a reference to THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT? What if they erroneously THOUGHT it was speaking about a man? What if they REFUSED to believe that it is a reference to God? What would they have done? Why, in that sort of situation they would obviously provide the vowel points for "adoni", in the same way that they callously changed the vowels for YHVH.

In any instance where the masoretes had to choose between applying the vowels that would identify God or the vowels that would identify a man, it was their own understanding which determined the vowels they would provide, rather than some "correct pronunciation" that had supposedly been handed down from the days of Ezra.

The most outstanding attribute of the priesthood in general in the days of Jesus Christ's ministry was that they were corrupt! Scriptures like Jeremiah 6:13 and Jeremiah 8:10 ("from the prophet even unto the priest EVERY ONE DEALS FALSELY") are just the tip of the iceberg! And **corrupt priests who "deal falsely"** are not the ones who faithfully pass on the truth of God.

If the masoretes THOUGHT the word referred to God, THEN they would provide the vowels for "Adonai", and if they THOUGHT it referred to a man, THEN they provided the vowels for "adoni". How they themselves understood a specific verse was always the deciding factor in the vowels they provided for the words in that verse.

Psalm 110:1 says: "The LORD said unto my Lord, sit you at my right hand ...".

Because the Jews assumed that there was only one God Being, therefore they **assumed** that "my Lord"

had to be a reference to a human being. And that is why they vowel pointed this text to read “YHVH said to adoni, sit you at ...”. But that was their mistake! **They should have pointed the text to read “YHVH said to ADONAI ...”.**

[COMMENT: In this last comment I am dealing with the reality that they HAVE created this artificial distinction, and so in this context today all references to God SHOULD BE vowel pointed to read “Adonai”. This is to avoid anyone, like Anthony Buzzard, trying to draw any unwarranted conclusions because a word is vowel pointed to read “adoni”. My above comment is not intended to endorse this artificial division into “adoni” and “Adonai”; it is simply an attempt to deal with the ipso facto situation we are faced with today.]

Jesus Christ quoted this specific verse, something both Matthew and Mark recorded. See Matthew 22:44 and Mark 12:36. Now THE CONTEXT of this quotation makes quite clear that Jesus Christ was saying:

“YOU PHARISEES DON’T UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS VERSE REALLY MEANS!”

That’s the point Jesus Christ was making! Christ was saying: you Pharisees don’t understand that this reference to “my Lord” in Psalm 110:1 is a reference to a God Being! Notice the context.

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. (Matthew 22:41-42)

The Pharisees gave **the wrong answer!** Jesus Christ’s response with “how then ...?” shows that Jesus was saying “you gave the wrong answer”. If their answer had been correct, then there would not have been a “how then ...?” response by Jesus Christ. The correct answer that the Pharisees should have given is as follows:

“What think you of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him. **The Son of GOD**”. That would have been the correct answer, but **that’s not the answer they gave.**

“The Christ” is first and foremost a God Being, i.e. the Messiah had to be “a Son of God”. That is the vitally important requirement for “the Christ”. Only after that comes the prophesied attribute that the Messiah would ALSO be “a son of David”. But **being “a son of David” is not what qualified Jesus Christ to become the Messiah.** It was His attribute of being “the Son of God” that qualified Jesus Christ to become the Messiah. So the Pharisees focused on the far less important secondary attribute for the Messiah, thereby giving a wrong answer. Now notice Jesus Christ’s reply.

He saith unto them, **How then doth David in spirit call him Lord** (Greek **kurios**), saying, The LORD (Greek **kurios**) said unto my Lord (Greek **kurios**), Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord (Greek **kurios**), how is he his son? (Matthew 22:43-45)

What we should notice here is that Jesus Christ was pointing out that the Pharisees had not really understood what Psalm 110:1 is speaking about, that it is speaking about a God Being who happened to be David’s “Lord”. Once you’ve focused on the Messiah having to be “a Son of God”, THEN you can focus on the Messiah also having to be a descendant of David.

So here is the point:

Since the Pharisees obviously did not understand Psalm 110:1 correctly, THEREFORE they also **OBVIOUSLY provided the wrong vowel points** to make it read “adoni”. You couldn’t possibly expect them to provide the vowel points for “Adonai”, since that is a possibility they vehemently denied, as do also the unitarians.

We should expect the Jews to have vowel pointed Psalm 110:1 incorrectly!

ANTHONY BUZZARD’S ASSERTION

So much for some background. Now here is what Anthony Buzzard wrote in one message to me (my emphasis in each case):

“**The LXX confirms the readings of adonai vs adoni** and also much Jewish literature long before the points were added.”

And in the next message he wrote:

“The NT translates ADONI, when it quotes ps 110:1. **Kurios mou is adoni and not adonai!**”

And in the next message he wrote:

You are trying to correct adoni to adonai, with no evidence of corruption and **with the NT translating as kurios mou**, ie correctly translating **adoni not adonai**.

You must now show that L'adonai "to the Lord," in the Hebrew can be rendered as to kurios mou. Otherwise your case will not work. At present you are saying that the MT is wrong in Ps. 110:1. You have not engaged the arguments that L'adonai is **never rendered in the LXX as "to kurio mou."** The NT reads the Massoretic text without correction and writes 'to kurio mou'.

Here is the line of reasoning Anthony Buzzard is trying to present in the above quoted statements:

1) “Kurios mou” (or “kurio mou”) is Greek for “my Lord”. (You might notice that the Greek also places the pronoun for “my” after the noun for “lord”.)

2) He assumes that the Greek phrase “kurios mou” (or “kurio mou”) is only the correct translation for the Hebrew “adoni”, and that this phrase is NOT the Greek translation for “Adonai”. He assumes that “Adonai” must be translated into Greek by an expression other than “kurios mou” (or “kurio mou”), though he makes no attempt to provide such a supposed “correct” Greek translation for “Adonai”.

3) This assertion Anthony Buzzard bases on the supposed usage of this expression “kurios mou” (or “kurio mou”) in the Greek language LXX.

4) He then asserts that the onus is on me to prove that “kurios mou” is also a correct translation for “Adonai”.

And that’s all there is to his defense of “adoni” for Psalm 110:1. We should note that he has repeatedly staked his claims on the assertion that “kurios mou” (or “kurio mou”) cannot mean “Adonai”. And if this all strikes you as “striving about words to no profit” (see 2 Timothy 2:14), then you are perfectly correct. But I need to reply to these claims in order show that it is indeed a striving about words to no avail.

IT TOOK ME LESS THAN 5 MINUTES TO EXPOSE HIS CLAIM AS A GROSS MISTAKE!

All I had to do is search the LXX for the expressions “kurios mou” and “kurio mou”, and then compare my search results with the Hebrew words used in each case.

Here are some examples of places where the LXX translates “Adonai” with “kurios mou”.

And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let **my Lord** (Hebrew “**Adonai**” and LXX “**ho kurios mou**”) I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance. (Exodus 34:9)

O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art **my Lord** (Hebrew “**Adonai**” and LXX “**kurios mou**”): my goodness extendeth not to thee; (Psalm 16:2 AV)

Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, my God and **my Lord** (Hebrew “**Adonai**” and LXX “**ho kurios mou**”). (Psalm 35:23)

Another interesting Scripture is Exodus 17:15.

The same day came to him the Sadducees, **which say that there is no resurrection**, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. (Matthew 22:23-24)

We all know this story. The Sadducees (i.e. the priestly sect, the ones I earlier said were corrupt) rejected the truth that there will be a resurrection. And so they came with this cock-and-bull story about seven men one after the other supposedly all marrying the same woman. Then they presented their punch-line.

Therefore **in the resurrection whose wife shall she be** of the seven? for they all had her. (Matthew 22:28)

As I said, we all know this story already. Jesus Christ gave them a two-part answer. The first part addressed the totally wrong ideas the Sadducees had about the resurrection. Here Jesus Christ presented facts, i.e. in the resurrection people will not marry.

And only then did Jesus Christ address the actual, albeit unspoken, question of the Sadducees. Their real question was: we don't believe there will be a resurrection; so HOW do you prove the existence of the resurrection to us?

So HOW did Jesus Christ actually answer the implied question? Now we come to the more excellent way!

Notice:

But **as touching the resurrection of the dead**, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, **I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?**

God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. (Matthew 22:31-32)

God's simple statement to Moses in Exodus 3:6 that "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" is ABSOLUTE AND IRREFUTABLE PROOF that there will be a resurrection! You don't need any other statement anywhere else in the Bible to understand that there will be a resurrection.

Other statements in the Bible can show us that there will in fact be THREE different resurrections, but THE CONCEPT of a resurrection for the righteous is already FULLY revealed by God's statement to Moses in Exodus 3:6. BUT you will **only** understand the truth of the resurrection from this statement in Exodus 3:6 **IF YOU CAN UNDERSTAND HOW GOD THINKS!**

What did Jesus Christ do here?

He referred to a Scripture that not only doesn't mention the resurrection directly; this Scripture doesn't even have anything at all to do with the resurrection, nothing at all. It is simply a statement in which God identified Himself to Moses. And IF Jesus Christ had not quoted this Scripture in the context of the resurrection, then NOBODY, including me, would ever dream of turning to Exodus 3:6 to prove that there will be a resurrection for the righteous. But I am learning, and hopefully you are too.

There are three parts to Christ's answer to the real but unasked question of the Sadducees. **FIRST Christ stated their real issue**, which was that they didn't believe in a resurrection. This first part was achieved with Christ's statement "as touching the resurrection of the dead". This approach by Jesus Christ is why in answering the "official" questions about Psalm 110:1 which Anthony Buzzard sent me, I start by openly acknowledging that the unspoken real issue is Jesus Christ's existence prior to the New Testament. We should never allow ourselves to be sidetracked by questions that disguise the real issue people have with something. We should always try to discern the underlying motives for questions, because it is those motives that need to be addressed.

SECOND, Christ then quoted a Scripture. In this case He quoted a verse that was as far removed from the subject of the resurrection as it possibly could be! That need not always be the case. The Scripture He quoted actually had nothing at all to do with the resurrection. This should tell us that **Christ did not quote this Scripture for what it literally says!** Christ quoted this Scripture for the, from God's point of view, **OBVIOUS underlying premise** inherent in the statement which God made to Moses. That obvious underlying premise is what Jesus Christ then focuses on in His next statement.

This approach to the Scriptures (i.e. focusing on underlying premises or principles) means it automatically eliminated any possibilities of "striving about words to no profit", thereby eliminating any possibilities of people being subverted by stupid arguments about grammatical details. It also automatically eliminated all the possibilities of getting enmeshed in "foolish and unlearned questions" which produce nothing but arguing and fighting (see 2 Timothy 2:23 and Titus 3:9). There is no way the Sadducees could have taken any exception to this Scripture because it is a clear and non-controversial statement, one that didn't seem immediately threatening to their position.

THIRD, Christ then presented A PRINCIPLE which had nothing to do with the Scripture He had quoted. The principle is that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living". That principle is true irrespective of which Scripture it is applied to. It is ALWAYS true that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. However, it is AN APPLICATION of this principle that is illustrated by Exodus 3:6.

THIS SHOWS US HOW GOD'S MIND WORKS! GOD WORKS WITH PRINCIPLES! AND THE DETAILS OF ANY ISSUE ARE ALWAYS ON A LOWER LEVEL THAN THE PRINCIPLES!

It is not that the details are somehow at odds with the principles, not at all. It is really that the principles encompass far more things than the specific details that may be immediately apparent to us. And many principles apply to things that don't impact on our conduct, as in this example regarding the proof for the resurrection.

The multitudes that followed Jesus Christ "were **ASTONISHED**" at this teaching (Matthew 22:33). They had NEVER heard any of the Pharisees try to reason from OBVIOUS PRINCIPLES! Christ's way of handling this question about the resurrection was on a **totally different level** from the way the people had ever heard the Scriptures explained! This way of reasoning was totally foreign to the way the Pharisees justified **all their teachings and ideas**.

The multitudes being astonished at this way of explaining the Scriptures shows that most people aren't really prepared for explaining the truth of God by appealing to the principles that must obviously, from God's perspective, underlie certain biblical statements. And if some people then attempt to deny the principles that have been presented, then the errors in such a denial are usually easier to spot than when the denials consist of arguments about grammatical details and translation details and suchlike technicalities.

Can we understand that Jesus Christ actually stated an unwritten principle? It doesn't need to be stated to be valid. Once this particular principle is stated, it is self-evident. Certainly, God is not the God of the dead! But we need to understand that NOT ALL THE PRINCIPLES ARE SPELLED OUT SOMEWHERE FOR US TO STUDY! God expects us to use our minds to try to understand how GOD thinks and reasons, to understand what principles guide God's thinking. We should never be afraid to act on a principle we have come to understand. As long as we are acting in integrity and sincerity, any wrong actions or conduct on our part are easy for God to deal with. We always need to boldly do what we understand to be right before God.

For example, we need to obey all of God's laws and commandments. But while our obedience must certainly include the letter of the law, it really needs rise above that by determining the principles which underlie God's laws and commandments. This is what we generally refer to as keeping God's laws "in the spirit" and in the intent for those laws. Looking for the principles goes beyond looking at the letter of the law. This approach of seeking to understand the principles involved in all of God's laws applies to every facet of our daily lives. And there are certainly also many principles that don't have a direct impact on our conduct; their impact is more on us understanding the greater context of God's plan and God's purposes.

I suspect that it was because David understood the principles that were involved in his particular circumstances, that David did not hesitate to eat "the hallowed bread" (see 1 Samuel 21:3-6), an action that Jesus Christ later approved of (see Matthew 12:3-4). I don't think that without David's precedent I would have been as bold as David in those circumstances, but then David also had a far better understanding of God's mind than I have. And we today have the benefit of learning from all the examples recorded for us in the Bible (see 1 Corinthians 10:11).

We also need to understand that people can have a good understanding of the principles that apply to our conduct before God without necessarily having a good understanding of the technical details relating to the Scriptures; and conversely, that people who have a great deal of knowledge about the details pertaining to the Scriptures don't necessarily have a good understanding of the principles that God expects us to apply to our everyday circumstances. In this regard people can indeed have the one without the other, because these two are not really related. It is, however, very easy for us to assume that people who have great technical understanding must also have a good understanding of **all the principles that apply to God's Word**. But that isn't necessarily always the case.

Now God deliberately did not spell out all the principles we are to learn to apply to His Word and to our daily conduct. As far as God's laws are concerned, they are all spelled out in the Bible, and everybody in God's Church has equal access to that information. But **the principles by which we are to live our lives** are subjectively perceived by each one of us. You perceive certain principles because of the way you live, and I don't necessarily perceive the same principles you perceive because I live differently from you. And the principles I perceive are due to the way I am living my life, and you don't perceive some of the things I perceive because you live your life differently from the way I live my life.

The principles of God's laws that we perceive or don't perceive are directly related to our character. People with different character will also have some different perceptions regarding what God expects from us, what has God's approval (e.g. David eating the hallowed bread) and what does not have God's approval. Now the goal for all of us is to draw as close as possible to the mindset of God Himself. That's the goal for all of us. As Paul wrote:

For who hath known **the mind of the Lord**, that he may instruct him? But **we have the mind of Christ**. (1 Corinthians 2:16)

The ultimate guideline for all principles is that whatever we do will be an expression of Matthew 22:37-40, that every principle we accept and implement in our lives is based on "love God above all else and love our neighbor as ourselves". If everything we do can always fit into the parameters provided by these verses, then we will never get into any "serious" trouble with God. We must learn to think like God.

Anyway, we need to recognize that THE PRINCIPLES we come to understand don't always have an immediately apparent relationship with THE SCRIPTURES to which we wish to apply those principles. A given situation and a principle are two completely different things; the principle is always on a higher level than any specific given situation. And the principle can and should be applied to many other situations in addition to the one situation that may be under consideration. We should also recognize that we can never fully understand any principles where we by personal inclination are somewhat opposed to those principles.

This specific incident regarding the Sadducees and the matter of the resurrection is only one specific example. Rather than getting embroiled in arguments about what the Scriptures say or don't say, how this particular Hebrew or Greek word "can ALSO be translated" or not, the implications of a specific grammatical tense for this or that verb, etc., we should as often as possible approach all questions from this "more excellent way", this way of **discerning the principles that underlie God's words and actions**.

So let's do that with this question about Jesus Christ's existence or supposed non-existence before the New Testament. Let's look at three Scriptures (and there are more) to which we can apply the appropriate principles that God Himself has in mind for these statements.

THE LORD OF THE SABBATH

Notice what Jesus Christ said in Matthew 12.

For **the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day**. (Matthew 12:8)

The principle that applies to this statement is very simple and should really be self-evident. That principle is:

THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN POSSIBLY BE “THE LORD OF THE SABBATH” IS THE INDIVIDUAL WHO CREATED THE SABBATH!

You cannot have the Sabbath come into existence in Genesis 2:2-3, but the individual who is “the Lord” of the Sabbath doesn’t supposedly come into existence until approximately 4000 years later. That picture is absurd!

Was somebody else “the Lord of the Sabbath” for the first 4000 years of the Sabbath’s existence? Did somebody else vacate that position, like a “seat-warmer”, when Jesus Christ came on the scene 4000 years later? What happened to the previous “Lord of the Sabbath”? If Jesus Christ is NOT the One who created the Sabbath, then WHY should He possibly be entitled to claim the designation “Lord of the Sabbath”? Did the Sabbath perhaps not have “a Lord” for the first 4000 years of its existence? Exactly what is it that qualifies Jesus Christ to be “Lord of the Sabbath”, if He is not the One who created it?

Forget about “it’s adoni, no it’s Adonai, etc.”. Forget about vowel points and rules of Hebrew grammar and Greek grammar, forget about arguing about John 1:1.

The principle involved here is on a higher level than arguing about “the correct way to translate this or that verse”. The principle is really so basic that anyone should be able to grasp it. To be “the Lord” of the Sabbath means that **Jesus Christ “OWNS” the Sabbath**, and “owning” the Sabbath implies that He also **CREATED** the Sabbath.

So when Jesus Christ said that He is the Lord of the Sabbath, then He was saying that He created the Sabbath. For anyone who wants to understand God’s mind, **no other conclusion is possible**.

That does not mean that unitarians will accept this proof. They won’t accept it, because if they did then they would cease to be unitarians! But the validity of the conclusion that Jesus Christ created the Sabbath does not depend on whether or not anyone accepts that conclusion. Non-acceptance can never invalidate this conclusion.

Can you see why this is a more excellent way to establish the truth about Jesus Christ’s existence before the New Testament? It doesn’t need a long explanation, does it?

SLAIN FROM THE FOUNDATION OF HUMAN SOCIETY

Now let’s look at Revelation chapter 13.

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb **slain from the foundation of the world**. (Revelation 13:8)

The Greek text here translated as “the foundation of the world” reads “kataboles kosmou”. The Greek word “kosmos” refers to “human society” rather than to this planet earth. And “katabole” literally means “a throwing down” rather than “foundation”. So this Greek expression literally means **“from the throwing down of human society”**.

Everybody understands that this verse is speaking about Jesus Christ. Once again we don’t need any deeper knowledge of Greek to understand this, and there are no grammatical gymnastics required to understand this. It is speaking about Jesus Christ giving His life as a sacrifice for ALL human beings, as spelled out by the expression “from the throwing down of human society”.

While God the Father and Jesus Christ certainly considered the possibility, or even the great likelihood

(?), that Adam and Eve would sin, even as Satan had sinned before them, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was only irrevocably fixed when Adam and Eve sinned, and not before; i.e. when human society was “thrown down”. (For the purposes of the principle we’ll apply to this Scripture it doesn’t change anything if you personally believe that Christ’s sacrifice for us was determined even before Adam and Eve sinned.)

By now you’re probably way ahead of me. For the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to be fixed at the time Adam sinned, let alone earlier, requires that Jesus Christ also already existed when Adam was created. Any other conclusion is again nothing short of absurd!

If Christ did not yet exist when Adam sinned, HOW COULD HE POSSIBLY BE CONSIDERED TO BE “SLAIN”? Could He be “slain” even before He supposedly came into existence? If Christ supposedly did not yet exist when Adam sinned, did God the Father somehow “know” that He could create another God Being 4000 years down the road, One who would WILLINGLY lay down His life for mankind, and could God then also absolutely guarantee the character this individual would have, even though He would not even exist for another 4000 years?

The Messiah had to live up to A FAR, FAR HIGHER STANDARD than any other human being has ever been required to live up to. If God could guarantee with absolute certainty that He could create someone with perfect flawless character, someone who would have “the express CHARACTER” of God the Father Himself (this is the correct meaning of Hebrews 1:3), then God would surely have created all other human beings with the same flawless character.

By the time Revelation 13:8 was written, Jesus Christ had already been crucified and resurrected. He had completed His mission to pay for our sins, and He had lived a sinless life. But at the time of Adam, God the Father already had a perfect knowledge of Jesus Christ’s character, because the Father and Jesus Christ had spent all past eternity (for lack of a better expression) together. And with that perfect past track record (living together in perfect harmony as two spirit beings) God the Father could predict how Jesus Christ would conduct Himself during His earthly life.

However, the principle is this:

The only way a perfect sinless life by Jesus Christ could possibly pay for the sins of OTHER PEOPLE, let alone ALL PEOPLE, is if Jesus Christ was the One who originally CREATED human beings. There is no other possibility.

Ezekiel states twice that a righteous person can only deliver his own life by his righteousness, but he can NEVER pay for the sins of other people.

Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, **they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness**, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 14:14)

Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; **they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness**. (Ezekiel 14:20)

The principle is quite clear: unless Jesus Christ was actually THE CREATOR of mankind, he could not possibly be “the Lamb slain from the throwing down of human society”; at best He could only save His own life by living a righteous life.

Are unitarians going to accept this conclusion? Of course not! Will they throw up arguments and

objections? Certainly! But the point is that if you cannot see the principle, that the only way Jesus Christ could have been “slain” from the time of Adam (let alone before then) is for Jesus Christ to also have been the Creator of Adam, then nobody can help you.

This is basic simple reasoning along the same lines as understanding that there certainly must be a resurrection from the dead because God identified Himself to Moses as “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”. That information all by itself, according to Jesus Christ, is all you need to know to understand that there must be a resurrection. And likewise, Revelation 13:8 all by itself proves that Jesus Christ assuredly is the God who created Adam and Eve. No other conclusion is possible.

No Hebrew, no Greek (the principle would still be clear even if I had not mentioned a couple of simple Greek words), no special grammar rules, no vowel points, no efforts to do away with any other undesirable scriptural statements ... just some simple, logical deductions from Revelation 13:8 and from Matthew 12:8.

Let's look at one more verse.

JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY AND FOREVER

You are familiar with Hebrews 13:8, right?

Jesus Christ the same **yesterday**, and to day, and for ever. (Hebrews 13:8)

The obvious principle here is that Paul was speaking about Jesus Christ being consistent THROUGH THREE DIFFERENT AGES! With “**yesterday**” Paul was referring to Christ **DURING OLD TESTAMENT TIMES** and before! With “**today**” Paul was referring to Christ's ministry and New Testament times. With “**forever**” Paul was referring to the millennium and beyond. That is the obvious meaning of this statement. Paul's use of “forever” shows that Paul is trying to cover every possible time in both the past and the future! Even as “forever” covers all of the future, so “yesterday” is intended to cover all of the past. That's really self-evident.

The principle underlying this Scripture is that Jesus Christ **OBVIOUSLY** existed during Old Testament times. The words “yesterday and today and forever” are the most effective way to state in a concise expression that this statement is intended to cover all past eternity, the present and all future eternity. That's the obvious intent of this statement. And it obviously requires Jesus Christ to also have existed for all past eternity.

People can argue with this implied principle, but for anyone wanting to understand how God views a statement like this, there is no other possibility than understanding that Jesus Christ obviously existed during Old Testament times.

These are three examples of applying the more excellent way to establish a truth. So the most powerful way to understand that Jesus Christ has always existed with God the Father is to understand the principles we can draw from the statements that Jesus Christ is “the Lord of the Sabbath” and that Jesus Christ “was slain from the throwing down of human society” and that Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday and today and forever”.

Frank W Nelte