

## Introduction:

God exists eternally as a Trinity. Three persons in one. This doctrine begins to be taught in the very first chapter of the Bible:

“And God said, Let **us** make man in our image, after our likeness: ...” (Genesis 1:26a).

“And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; **I** will make him an help meet for him.” (Genesis 2:18).

“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of **us**, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:” (Genesis 3:22).

It is impossible to separate the Father from the Son and the Holy Ghost, for they are one. Yet they are distinct in personalities, roles and realms. This doctrine, Paterology, is of the Father. We will try to isolate the Bible’s teachings about Him. The Trinity will be covered more in the doctrine of Theology.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” (I John 5:7).

## I. First Mention

The first time God is ever mentioned in the role of a Father is in 2 Samuel 7:14-15: “I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.”

This is part of a dialogue of the Prophet Nathan to King David about his son Solomon, who would be next on the throne. Notice the perfect balance of God as a father:

### A. He will chasten (v.14)

“Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.” (Deuteronomy 8:5).

“Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law;” (Psalm 94:2).

“My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.” (Proverbs 3:11-12).

“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.” (1 Corinthians 11:31-32).

“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Hebrews 12:5-11).

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.” (Revelation 3:19).

This example of God the Father is a pattern for earthly fathers (and mothers). We should also correct our children through chastisement. Parents should study Proverbs 13:24; 17:21,25; 19:13; 22:15; 23:13-14; 29:15; 29:17; 28:7

## B. He will show mercy (v.15)

The word mercy is found over 250 times in the Bible and almost always refers to the Father:

“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, **mercy**, and peace, from God our **Father** and Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Timothy 1:2).

“Grace be with you, **mercy**, and peace, from God the **Father**, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.” (2 John 1:3).

“Who is a **God** like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in **mercy**.” (Micah 7:18).

A good father will not only chasten his children, but also properly show much mercy. Mercy is “not getting what we deserve.”

“He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his **mercy** toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a **father** pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.” (Psalm 103:10-14).

When a father conducts his affairs by the wisdom of the Heavenly Father, his life will be full of mercy. “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, **full of mercy** and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” (James 3:17).

In the Old Testament the word “father” appears 644 times. Only 14 of those are a reference to God as a Father. In the New Testament the word “father” appears 326 times. Of those 256 refers to God as a Father. In the King James Version, each reference to God as our Father is printed with an upper case “F.”

We can conclude from these facts that Paterology is mostly a doctrine developed in the New Testament. This is probably because of salvation, an experience of being born-again into God’s family – actually becoming His children. This born-again experience was foreign to the saints of the Old Testament.

## II. Other References in the Old Testament

Of the 14 references in the Old Testament to God as a Father, three of them are of Nathan’s description of Solomon’s unique relationship to God as previously mentioned. Read 2 Samuel 7:14-15; I Chronicles 17:13 and I Chronicles 28:6.

Let us now make some other observations from the Old Testament.

## **A. God has a special Father's heart to the fatherless.**

"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation." (Psalm 68:5). (Note: The word "judge" means "to consider the cause of.")

Back in the Law He gave warning about this matter. "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. (Exodus 22:22).

Even the tithes are to be used to support the fatherless: "At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the **tithe** of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates: And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the **fatherless**, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest." (Deuteronomy 14:28-29).

We should also have a father's heart toward the fatherless. This is the purest form of religion. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27).

## **B. God, As a Father, Hears Our Cries**

"He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation." (Psalm 89:26).

## **C. God, as a Father, has a heart for His children and pities them.**

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him." (Psalm 103:13).

Note: The next mention of God as a Father in Old Testament succession is in Isaiah 9:6. This is a prophecy of Jesus Christ. It is also the only time in the Old Testament that an upper case "F" is used.

## **D. God is a Father to the nation of Israel**

The next 6 references to God as a Father are in His relationship to the nation of Israel. Only of Israel as a nation is this personal relationship mentioned. See Isaiah 63:16; 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4; Jeremiah 3:14; Jeremiah 31:9; and Malachi 1:6.

As you study these verses of God's unique relationship as Israel's Father, you will notice that they did not honor Him as such.

## **E. God is a Father to all mankind (last reference in Old Testament)**

"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Malachi 2:10).

This is a reference to God as the Father - Creator of all mankind. That we should treat all men of all nations as a brotherhood. Not that all are saved, but that all are God's creation.