

Christianity Clarified Volume 04

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[0 : 00] What is Christianity really all about? Here, in an ongoing effort to try and dispel some of the confusion, is Marv Wiseman, with another session of Christianity Clarified.

Without equivocation or fear of contradiction, we can say the study upon which we now enter is the most sublime and important of any and all topics to which human beings can apply themselves.

This study commences and concerns the character and nature of God Almighty. It's called theology, which simply means the study of God. The only possible and logical rejection of this premise is in the event that no such being as God exists, in which case pursuing any investigation would be foolish and futile.

But if once one grants the premise that indeed such an one as the infinite deity does exist, it would then be folly to elevate any other topic above consideration of this God.

For if there is a God, there is no nobler, no higher, nor more important undertaking that can be engaged than to know Him, what He is about, His person and character, His plan and purpose, and how it all relates to us as His creatures, made in His image and likeness.

[1 : 23] How can there be any contemplation to compare with that of contemplating and investigating the self-existing God, who has created all things according to the pleasure of His good will?

No scientific, technological endeavor, no literary or artistic pursuit can compare with the importance and the sublimity of the knowledge of this self-revealing God.

This we propose to do on the upcoming segments of Christianity Clarified. What's more, we intend to do it in brief snatches of three minutes each, brief enough to present only the basic premise of each subject, yet long enough we trust to stimulate the listener to serious thinking and conclusions of his own.

Hear a little, dare a little, line upon line, precept upon precept, is the way Isaiah expressed it in his 28th chapter. Topics touched upon will include, but are not limited to, the Trinitarian necessity of the Godhead, His omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, including His eternity and timelessness, His immutability, sovereignty, holiness, righteousness, His justice, love, grace, mercy, and long-suffering.

An examination of the principal names of deity and their respective emphases will be woven throughout the aforementioned subjects, including God or Elohim, El Shaddai, El Elyon, Yahweh, Jehovah or Lord, Adonai.

[2 : 54] And again, each will be treated by large definition in brief three-minute segments. While there is no doubt a more thorough and extensive treatment of each would be more profitable, time does not afford that luxury.

Our objective is to get the greatest amount of important biblical truth to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible. Hence, the three-minute format of Christianity Clarified.

All who engage these studies with us will not come close to knowing all of God we want to know. But we may assure you a level of knowledge and appreciation of God that is lost on 98% of those who are Christians.

God is eminently worthy of our knowing Him in this way. Perhaps no doctrine of the Christian faith provides such a formidable sticking point preventing people from embracing Christianity as what we engage in this present study.

That subject is the Trinitarian nature of the God of the Bible. It is, in fact, such an impediment to people, appearing so contrary to logic and reason, one wonders if it had not been better had the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Bible, simply withheld the very notion of the Trinity.

[4 : 12] So why didn't He? I speak as a fool. Who am I or any other mere mortal to second-guess the originator and inspirer of God's Word?

The fact remains the Bible unmistakably sets forth the concept of the triunity of God in both the Old and New Testaments, and He does it with such frequency there is no way it can be missed or dismissed.

We submit the Trinitarian nature of God is incorporated into the sacred record because it accurately reflects the character and nature of God. The Trinity is the truth of the matter about who and what God is.

Please understand, the claim is not made that the Trinitarian nature of God is perfectly logical to us. Most would say it is not. But in saying that, we must not assume that human logic is all the logic there is.

Will we allow God to possess a logic of His own? May not the God of heaven own a level of logic and reason that greatly transcends that of mere mortals?

[5 : 21] While it is true God has graciously and frequently accommodated us by things He has revealed, putting them on a level we can comprehend and appreciate. But has He done that with all He has revealed?

Decidedly not. The hymn writer has penned, God works in mysterious ways, and He does. But we suggest for your consideration, that mystery also applies to precisely who and what God is, not only what He does.

Since that which separates the Creator from the creature is a gap so enormous it cannot be measured, it seems only likely that there are aspects to God's being that are simply beyond and above our grasp.

Should it really be worrisome to us to realize there are areas about the deity that we simply cannot comprehend? Rather, ought we not expect this to be the case when considering the constitution of the eternal, infinite God, creator and sustainer of all that is?

Philosophically and logically, even with our limited human knowledge, it appears only rational that there is of necessity a great gulf fixed between man's logic and God's logic.

[6 : 36] We do the math, and the whole idea of a trinity subsisting in one God does not want to compute. May there not be a computation that transcends the human?

Indeed there is. And one of its reflections is the trinity. A deity who possesses no unknown qualities or characteristics could hardly be deserving of our allegiance, worship, or obedience.

Our inability to fathom the constitution of the God of the Bible should not surprise us. That inability may well begin with the trinity. We are considering a doctrine described as a major obstacle that prevents many from embracing the Christian faith.

It is that of the triune nature of God. We began this consideration by acknowledging the Trinitarian concept to transcend our limited logic.

We believe there are many aspects of God that transcend our ability to comprehend them. Yet it is not our ability to comprehend the revelation of the nature of God that makes it true.

[7 : 49] What makes it true is what God has revealed about himself. To what degree we do or do not comprehend what he has revealed has nothing to do with its truthfulness.

If God has said it, it is true. And God has said it. Rather than object by declaring, But God must say it so I can fully understand it and place my approval upon it, or I refuse to believe it.

A more respectful response would be that of the psalmist. David contemplated God's nature and works in his 139th, and then exclaimed with a proper humility, Such knowledge is too wonderful for me.

It is high. I cannot attain unto it. We might say, It's way over my head. And it is. The triune nature of God is explained in various ways.

But perhaps the simplest is to say, There is but one God in essence, Who subsists in three distinct persons, Each co-equal and co-eternal.

[8 : 59] One God, Yet three persons? How can that be? I don't know. But I do believe I am one person, Who subsists in three components, Body, Spirit, And soul.

I am confident God's existence as one, And subsistence of being three distinct persons, Is not a problem to him. There are many differences separating deity from humanity, And it is likely that the character and nature of God is the greatest among them.

Critics may object in saying, You Christians insist on the Trinity. Yet, Is there any place in the entire Bible where the word Trinity is found?

No, No, There is not. Admittedly, The word Trinity is a word coined by man, Not God. Yet, The concept of the Trinity is a truth revealed by God, Not devised by man.

The word Trinity is an English compound word that joins two words into one. The first part, Tri, Means three, As in triad or triple.

[10 : 09] In unity, The U is dropped, And the words, Tri plus unity, Are morphed into, Trinity. It is man's term, But the concept, Which it describes, Is clearly God's, Not man's.

Are there other man-made words, But whose concept represents God's idea? Yes, The word, Bible, Is not found in the Bible.

It too is a man-coined word. But the concept of Bible is clearly God's, Not man's. We are engaged in a brief consideration of the Trinity.

Some outside the Christian faith reject it because they consider the triune nature of God illogical or even heretical. We respond by saying the infinite eternal God functions on a level of logic that transcends the level of the human.

Perhaps the composition of God's very being is chiefest among the differences that separate the Creator from His creatures. And it is also true, We admit it, That there is no clear passage of Scripture that expresses God as one, Yet subsisting in three persons.

[11 : 31] However, There are numerous passages that declare the oneness of God, And many that also declare the deity of the Spirit of God, As well as the deity of the Son of God.

These cannot be ignored. In putting the several references together with the claims each make as to God's oneness, Plus the Father being God, The Son being God, And the Spirit being God, What possible conclusion could be reached other than that of the Trinity?

One God, Subsisting in three distinct persons. We who embrace the Trinitarian concept of God's being, Do not do so because it seems perfectly logical to us, But because the revelation God has given leaves no other choice.

I can assure you of this, The Trinity is not a concept contrived by humans. Humans never would have thought of it, And if they had, They would not have dared to put it forth, Because of its seeming impossibility.

Mere humans would have contrived something much easier to accept and propagate than the Trinity. But there it is, An object of reality rooted in divine revelation.

[12 : 44] This is why historic Christianity has always embraced the Trinitarian concept of God. It is what God has clearly and consistently revealed about himself.

One God, Subsisting in three equal persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And these three persons are not to be confused, But are distinct.

The Son is not the Father, And the Father is not the Spirit, The Spirit is not the Son. Each has a distinct personhood, While yet comprising the one God.

And no, Each is not one third God, With the three comprising the whole. Each is fully God in his own right. Each is co-equal and co-eternal with the others.

Surely, Surely, If this be so, If this is an apt description of the Trinity, It must stand completely alone in all the universe. But then that, God's constitution being all by itself in the universe, Is that not what we should expect of the Creator?

[13 : 52] Each of us mortals possesses a body, A spirit, And a soul. We are comprised of three components. Yet, There is a oneness about the being of each of us, That no one disputes.

However, Truth be told, We don't come close to understanding the very makeup of ourselves, And yet, Some feel fully qualified to say what God can and cannot be.

Unbridled arrogance, To be sure. Genesis 1-1 opens with the familiar statement, In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Seems clear enough, Doesn't it? At least in English. But the Old Testament's original language was Hebrew. The English says, G-O-D, Singular, Created the heavens and the earth.

But the Hebrew says, Elohim, E-L-O-H-I-M, Created the heavens and the earth. The peculiar thing about Elohim is its plurality, Not singularity.

[15 : 00] What? Are you sure? Yes, I'm quite sure. Hebrew and Christian scholars are sure also. Why then isn't it translated, In the beginning, Gods created the heavens and the earth.

You would have to ask the Hebrew translators and linguists. One might suspect they could not bring themselves to do so. Nor could they take the liberty of ignoring the plural form.

It seems they compromised by retaining the plural form Elohim in the Hebrew, But translated it as if it were a singular in the English. I do not know this is the case, But it's my suspicion.

Knowing the Hebrews and their commitment to the Shema, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord. It's like a motto saying of Judaism that clearly insists upon the oneness of God.

Yet, They would not dare take the liberty of tampering with the text by changing Elohim, Which is clearly plural and actually means gods, To Eloah, Which is singular in Hebrew and means God.

[16 : 09] Some justify the presence of the plural by calling it pluralis magistatus, Or the plural of majesty, Or an editorial plurality, Such as a king might mean when he speaks and uses the plural we, Instead of the singular I.

Yet he means to refer to himself, Plus all the subjects over which he rules. In his saying, For instance, We shall fight and we shall defeat the enemy.

He clearly means the corporate body of his nation, Not that he is somehow a mysterious plural being in himself. This is perhaps the most common interpretation offered by Hebrew scholars, Who can in no wise abide the notion of a plurality of persons constituting the God of heaven.

Yet the text says what the text says. Had the Holy Spirit wanted the singular Eloah used, He would have used it. He didn't.

He used Elohim, Clearly the plural form in Hebrew. Trinitarians are persuaded this, Plus numerous other sightings, Clearly set forth, Albeit mysteriously, The plurality of persons in the one true God.

[17 : 24] It is an amazing thing, And its occurrence, In the very first verse of the Bible, Simply intensifies that amazement. No, You won't see the plural in your English Bible, But it's there in Hebrew.

And, Moses put it there, Because God told him, Elohim Was the word to use. For Christianity Clarified, This is Marv Wiseman, In Springfield, Ohio.

We need not venture far from Genesis 1-1, Where the plural form for God is used in the original Hebrew, Until we encounter other mysterious uses of the plural.

The word Elohim is God's, Plural, Yet it is translated in English, God, Singular. Trinitarians are persuaded, This very first verse of the Bible indicates a plurality of persons in the deity.

It could be more easily dismissed if it were not for multiple other expressions. In Genesis 1-26, We encounter, Let us make man in our image, According to our likeness.

[18 : 41] Some have tried to insert angels here, Thinking they aided God in the creation of man, But such is utterly without warrant. Nowhere in scripture are angels, Themselves created beings, Endowed with any creative ability.

In addition to the plural us being used, The plural Elohim is again employed in the same verse. Elohim, Plural, Said, Let us, Another plural, Make man in our, Another plural, Image.

It appears the plurality of persons in the Godhead is simply inescapable. And how many times is the Hebrew plural Elohim used when the word God appears?

Two thousand five hundred seventy times to be precise. That ought to tell us something. And in the use of Elohim, the plural for God, It is accompanied with a singular form of verbs and adjectives, Such as, In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth.

God is plural, That is Elohim. But created, Is singular. Dozens of other instances are the same. There are places where the singular pronoun is used with the plural Elohim, As in, I am Elohim, And there is no Elohim beside me.

[19 : 58] Deuteronomy 32, 39, Isaiah 45, Verses 5 and 22. We already referenced Genesis 1, 26, And let us make man in our image.

And following in 3, 22, It speaks of man as becoming one of us. Remember the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11? God says, Let us go down and confound their language.

In Genesis 35, Jacob builds an altar at Bethel and calls it El Bethel, The God of the house of God, Because there the Elohim revealed themselves to him.

Did you get that? What shall we say to these and innumerable other instances? Only carelessness or ignorance can simply dismiss them as having no significance.

Of course, those with no understanding or appreciation of the Bible and its divine origin have no grasp of what the inspiration of the scriptures entail. But for Christians who do, we must accord these references to a plurality of persons in the Godhead with great seriousness, while also maintaining the concept of their being but one God.

[21 : 12] Most of the examples considered are in the very first book of the Bible, and the first one is in the very first verse. It strongly suggests God is revealing something very special and important at the very outset.

For Christianity Clarified, this is Marv Wiseman. No subject is surrounded with such profound mystery, and yet so often referred to, directly and indirectly in all of scripture, than that of the Trinitarian nature of the one true God.

The Nicene Creed expresses it thusly, dating from the 4th century. Quote, We believe in one God, Father Almighty, Maker of all things, seen and unseen, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is, from the essence of the Father, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, and in the Holy Ghost.

Those that say there was a time when he was not, and that he was not before he was begotten, and that he is made of things that are not, or say that he is a different hypostasis, or essence from the Father, or that the Son of God is created, nourished, and capable of being changed, the Catholic Church anathematizes.

That's pretty strong language, offered many centuries ago, but it is thoroughly in keeping with the only conclusion one can reach after a careful consideration of the Old and New Testaments.

[22 : 57] Whether one subscribes to other doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church or not, this expression of the nature and character of God is all that Scripture will allow and what Scripture requires.

Regarding the Trinity, Dr. Louis Sperry Chafer, in his massive work of systematic theology, wrote, The Jew resists this doctrine, since to acknowledge the Trinity and the Godhead is on his part to acknowledge the deity of the one whom he identifies as Jesus of Nazareth.

The Unitarian resists this doctrine, since otherwise he must acknowledge the need and way of redemption through Christ. The Muslim rejects this doctrine, since to acknowledge it is to ignore the warning of the Koran, and to his mind, depart from the foundation of his faith, namely, there is one God.

The Christian missionary to Islam faces this resistance, as does the missionary to the Jew, and the inexplicable mystery, which the triune mode of existence presents, is an added problem in his work.

Dr. Chafer then goes on to quote W.A. Rice, who stated, quote, Nothing would be easier than to win proselytes among Hindus and Muslims if only the doctrine of the Trinity were given up.

[24 : 20] End quote. One would tend to agree with that assessment. However, the doctrine of the triune God is not subject to negotiation and certainly not to abandonment, nor is any other doctrine set forth in the writings of Holy Scripture.

The very idea of excluding or even downplaying any doctrine God has seen fit to set forth in his word is cowardly at best and treasonous at worst.

Scripture speaks of its truths appearing to some as offensive, and they are. God's truth often is offensive to those who are not aligned with it.

When once man is in compliance with God's truth, what was once offensive becomes exceedingly precious. There are numerous popular but utterly erroneous ideas about the Trinity throughout the world.

A common misunderstanding is called modalism. Modalists believe the Trinity is explained by seeing God, who is one, fulfill different roles at different times.

[25 : 29] Sometimes God functions as a father, sometimes as a son, and sometimes as the Holy Spirit. Yet while fulfilling one role as one of the persons of the Trinity, the other two do not exist.

Not until the father takes off his father's hat and puts on the hat of the son or the spirit, in which case the other two do not exist. There is no simultaneous existence of all three, only one at a time.

This is simplistic. It is also very wrong and does not nearly fulfill the demands of the Trinity in the Bible. Too many times multiple roles in the Trinity are manifested simultaneously as in the case of the baptism of Jesus by John.

The son was in the baptismal water when the voice of the father was heard from heaven as the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon Jesus in the form of a dove.

In the temptation, the spirit led the son into the wilderness where he communed with his father. Other attempts are made to simplify the complexity of the Trinity, but they too are woefully inadequate.

[26 : 38] Analogies like the common egg with the shell representing the father, the white the spirit, and the yoke the son provide a meager attempt at clarity.

So also, the analogy of water is liquid steam and ice, yet all constituting water. Such attempts are no doubt well-intentioned, but not really satisfactory.

Our problem seems to be our insistence on having a God we can understand to the degree that satisfies our curiosity. But God is not concerned about satisfying our curiosity.

He is concerned with our embracing him as he is revealed. With all the mystery, complexity, and otherness he possesses, can we allow the God of Scripture to be what he will and as he will without insisting on reducing him to something of our liking and comprehension?

In truth, we ought to acknowledge the Trinity as it is reflected in so many Old and New Testament passages, even though in none of the passages is it ever actually explained.

[27 : 49] It's revealed, it's stated, but never explained. Our most valid reason for affirming the Trinity, though we are not given any detailed explanation of it, is because of all the issues upon which we are given detailed explanation.

The book all hangs together as a whole. We can accept things in the Bible we do not understand because of the things in the Bible we do understand.

In actuality, is it not reasonable that the infinite, eternal creator and sustainer of all that is has some unapproachable mystery, utter mystery, about him?

Would he not be too much like us if he did not? For Christianity Clarified, this is Marv Wiseman. In discussing erroneous ideas that many non-Christians have about the Trinity, some of the most bizarre and far-fetched ideas one could imagine are floating out there around the world.

One of the extreme examples to be cited in connection with this involved a conversation that took place between a devout Muslim and an equally devout Christian.

[29 : 08] The Christian was relating the gospel of Christ to the Muslim and explained that Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of God who became man's Savior through his substitutionary death on the cross.

The Muslim found it simply incredulous that God could have a son and rejected the whole concept out of hand. He went on to say that Christians who insist on the Trinity and Christ being the Son of God reflect a position of great shame which Muslims cannot abide.

He explained the shame was in God having had sexual relations with the Virgin Mary which produced Jesus. This gross distortion is what they believe would be required in order for Jesus to be God's Son.

This idea, of course, Christians would themselves find to be abhorrent as well. Muslims find the whole notion of God having a Son under any circumstances to be completely unthinkable.

They are persuaded that the very nature of God's oneness precludes the possibility of his having a Son no matter how he was produced. But there's the rub.

[30 : 26] Scripture makes it clear that Jesus Christ was not produced as God's Son. He had from eternity been God's Son.

In his humanity he was produced by Mary from a divinely implanted egg of God-created humanity, not of Joseph and not of sexual relations with any male, man, or God.

Isaiah 9 says messianically of Jesus 700 years before his birth, unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.

The text is clear. The Son was not born because he is deity and he always was. Before Abraham was, Jesus said, I am in John 8.

It was only in Christ's humanity that he was born of the virgin. This distinction is very important. The Son was given, not born.

[31 : 30] It was the child Jesus in his humanness that was born. This all belongs to the hypostatic union, the God-man taking human flesh upon him, a theanthropic occasion.

John tells us in chapter 1 that the word, the Logos, became flesh and dwelt among us. That word constituted the very essence of communication from God to man in the person of Jesus, God's eternal Son.

Jesus as the Son of God, the Scriptures attest to the Trinity and the part that Jesus Christ has in it. For the careful student of Scripture, it is abundantly obvious.

We have undertaken a very brief consideration of the Trinity. The triune nature of the Godhead, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

It should be noted and included that there is no rank in the Trinity. While it's true that there appears to be such, especially when we refer to them as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it looks on the surface as if the Father is in command, the Son second in command, and the Spirit third in command.

[32 : 52] This cannot be due to the eternity of each. Any eternal being must of necessity possess all the qualities of infinity.

Thus, none could be more infinite than another, or less so. The infinity and eternality of each requires an equality among the three.

Again, there is no rank or hierarchy in the Trinity, but each member is co-equal and co-eternal. Neither is there a tinge of competition among them.

When we speak of the three, we must of necessity place one first, and doing so establish his rank at least in the minds of many, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

But some would object, Do not? We have Jesus as sent by the Father, and who came to do the Father's will. Did he not make himself subservient to the Father, and state it as much multiple times?

[33 : 55] Yes, he surely did. And did Jesus also not say he would send the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, at least making it appear that the Spirit would come under orders of Jesus?

Yes. Then, how can we say there is no ranking in the Godhead, only perfect equality? It's because we must distinguish the role or responsibility assumed by each member of the Trinity from the character and nature of his being.

Within the Trinity, there was perfect agreement as to assignments undertaken and who would administer what. By mutual agreement of the three, redemption's plan was devised.

It was agreed that the Father would assume the role fathers do as the provider. What the Father would provide was the Son. The Son, ever obedient and willing to be provided, was incarnated as a human being in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit.

All were instrumental in carrying out the great drama of redemption. And not only redemption, but every other endeavor they would undertake in perfect harmony and cooperation.

- [35 : 10] The eternality of the three persons subsisting in one God requires an equality among them. Again, it should be noted that the reality we are describing is in every way utterly unique.

Nothing of the kind by example or analogy exists anywhere among humans and never has. Co-equal? Co-eternal?

Each member of the Godhead as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For Christianity Clarified, this is Marv Wiseman in Springfield, Ohio.

The names of the deity as they appear in Scripture beginning with Genesis are as follows. The first is God. Appearing in the very first verse of the Bible, Genesis 1-1, the familiar, In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

The word God in our English version is different in Hebrew, which was the actual language of the original Genesis document that was penned by Moses. That word is Elohim, E-L-O-H-I-M.

- [36 : 30] Elohim is not a name familiar to most English-speaking people, but it is very familiar to those of the Jewish religion, particularly among Jews who practice their faith.

Curiously, the word Elohim is clearly in the plural, and the literal translation of Elohim is God's, plural. This is precisely the meaning.

Yet, it is translated as if it were singular. However, the Hebrew word for God in the singular is clearly not Elohim, but Eloah.

Even more curious is the fact that Elohim in the plural is found 2,570 times in the Bible. Traditionally, Christians attribute the plural usage of Elohim, or gods, to be compelling evidence that there is a plurality of persons in the one true God.

While three persons subsisting in one God appears mysterious and confusing, Scripture uses the term repeatedly, and often connects the plural Elohim with singular verbs or adjectives.

- [37 : 43] We have already briefly discussed the Christian concept of the Trinity on previous sessions of Christianity Clarified. The second designation of the deity also appears in Genesis 2,4 when the English word Lord appears and is connected with God.

The verse reads, These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

Both Lord and God are used together and would appear as such many more times in the Bible. The word in English is L-O-R-D all capital letters in English.

The third name for deity after Elohim and Lord with each letter capitalized is the word Lord spelled the very same way except only the first letter L is capitalized with the following letters O-R-D being in the lower case form.

And while both are spelled and pronounced Lord in English they are not the same especially in the original Hebrew. In addition and lastly scripture refers to the deity as El Shaddai deserving of its own explanation later.

- [39 : 07] Each of the aforementioned names all designate the one true deity creator of heaven and earth and each speaks of his person in a distinctly different way.

A brief examination of each will be considered on subsequent sessions of Christianity Clarified. Attention has been given to the designation of the deity using the name God G-O-D and strikingly we have noted that God is in the plural form as found in the original Hebrew in which the Old Testament was written.

And it isn't merely such in Genesis 1-1 where God created the heavens and the earth but its same plural form is found another 31 times in Genesis chapter 1 alone.

So what does this name God actually mean? As best we can determine God or Elohim the E-L of Elohim refers to the ancient concept of power and strength.

The L speaks of unreserved energy might and strength. It is strength of the sort that would be required to accomplish what is said that Elohim or God did in fact accomplish.

[40 : 27] Creation the creation of the heavens and the earth. We mere mortals cannot begin to fathom the raw energy required to bring all the heavens and the earth into existence and to do so by merely speaking the creative word.

Call them if you will the let there be of Genesis 1 linked with the and God said of Genesis 1. Simply astounding all of these creative acts performed by the spoken word of the Elohim surpasses any source of energy or strength we can begin to imagine.

this energy this strength this unbridled power is all reflected in the name God. Additionally it also appears at least in the main that this is a more impersonal designation of the deity.

God Elohim is not as relational to his creation as he will later become through the use of another name for the deity. And again we are not suggesting that this distinction between his relational aspects is fixed or is always rigidly manifested in this way but in the main it appears to be so.

So then can we go so far as to say that God is a less personal designation for the deity? I think so but not rigidly so. The deity as Elohim does have and does sustain relational qualities with his creatures.

[42 : 00] Yet this relational aspect of God seems to be decidedly less than the most frequent usage for the name of the deity and that is the name Lord with each of the four letters in the uppercase capitalization.

Perhaps for purposes of general understanding we can think of God as describing the what of the deity and as we shall see later Lord to describe the who of the deity.

As for myself man is what I am but Marv Wiseman is who I am. Man perhaps corresponds to the what of deity with the name God while Lord corresponds to the who of the deity referring to his personal name.

God is generic if you will while Lord is particular and specific. For Christianity Clarified this is Marv Wiseman.

The manner and frequency with which the names of deity are built into the actual names of people highlights their importance. One can easily see the desire as a human to incorporate the name of your deity into one's own name and this is done all throughout scripture both Old and New Testaments.

[43 : 25] It was the human's way of honoring God by incorporating his name into the names of their children. For the Hebrews the most cherished name you could give to your newborn son or daughter would be a name that would remind others of the God of heaven every time their child's name would be spoken.

Hundreds of examples abound in both Testaments. Many Hebrew names contain L E-L at the end of their name or sometimes at the beginning.

The E-L part of their name refers to the L in Elohim which means God. The name of Abraham's son born of Hagar the Egyptian was Ishmael.

It literally means whom God hears. The E-L ending reveals God. The name Israel today refers to a nation but originally it referred to Jacob the son of Isaac and Rebekah and Jacob's name was changed to Israel following the wrestling he experienced with the angel at the brook Jabbok.

Israel means he who strives with God. The L ending of Israel refers of course to the L in Elohim.

[44 : 40] Bethel in Hebrew means house of God. Again the E-L ending is obvious. Likewise the prophet Daniel invokes the E-L of the name of God and Daniel means God's judge.

Eli was the name of the priest who supervised young Samuel whose name meant heard of God. And the name Eli in Hebrew literally means my God.

Most are well familiar with the words that Christ uttered from the cross when he cried out Eli Eli lama sabachthani which being interpreted means my God my God why have you forsaken me?

Elijah a prominent prophet of the Old Testament has both the name of God and the name of Jehovah compounded into one for his personal name Elijah E L refers to the Elohim and the J A H ending refers to Jehovah Elijah literally means the Lord is God and every time someone used the name Elijah that's what they were saying the Lord is God close to that is Elijah's successor Elisha which means to whom God is salvation so you can see how the ancient Hebrews quite literally built theological concepts of their God into the very names of their children the feminine names Elizabeth has the E L at the beginning and means to whom God is the oath Emmanuel means God with us Michael who is like unto

God Gabriel means man of God for Christianity Clarified this is Marv Wiseman in Springfield Ohio we are briefly examining each of the names used in reference to the creator throughout the Bible it seems logical to consider them in the order of their occurrence our next designation for the deity is Lord the English versions capitalize each letter of the name Lord but the name translated Lord in our English Bibles is very different in the Hebrew language as was penned by Moses whom God inspired to give us the first five books of the Bible Moses wrote Y H V H what is that that's the tetragrammaton tetra meaning for and grammaton meaning letters or the designation for the deity that

[47 : 29] Moses wrote was Y H V H how would you pronounce that the problem is there are no vowels in the Hebrew language only consonants so when you translate Hebrew words that have no vowels into English that depends on the generous use of vowels immediate difficulties with pronunciation arise to be able to pronounce it English grammarians took the liberty of inserting vowels between the consonants on an A or an E between Y and H and H and V and V and H and they arrived at Yahweh or another variation of Yehovah the Y is used because in Hebrew there is no letter J so the English translates the Y into J and arrives at Jehovah the same is done with other Hebrew names such as Yeshua with a

Y we English translate the Y with a J and it becomes Yeshua J Yeshua or Joshua Joshua and Jesus are the same in Hebrew this particular designation YHWH rendered Lord in the English is the most frequently used name for the deity in all of the Bible and it is found 6823 times we variously render the YHWH as Jehovah or using the Y instead of J it becomes Yahweh after inserting English vowels A and E Yahweh or Jehovah but how exactly is that pronounced we don't know and we don't know for a very intriguing reason that being that the Jews don't know how to pronounce it do I mean to say that the

Jews don't know how to pronounce the name of their deity that's right how can that be centuries ago the Jewish people imposed upon themselves a prohibition against speaking aloud the name of their deity they believe that in never uttering that name they would safeguard themselves from ever using the name in vain which they were strictly warned against so if you never utter the name you can't possibly use it in vain and you would thus avoid the danger of doing so along with its punishment so what does the name Yahweh or Lord or Jehovah actually mean please join us in the upcoming sessions of Christianity clarified 6,823 times that's how often the name Lord is used in the Bible as it refers to the deity the usage of Lord far surpasses the use of all other names that address the Almighty and the first time we encounter an actual explanation of the name is when the creator speaks with

Moses in Exodus chapter 3 you may recall it is in connection with his having called Moses to go to Pharaoh and demand the release of the enslaved Israelites Moses after initially declining the assignment becomes intrigued after all and in requesting further orders Moses said when I tell them the God of my fathers has sent me to tell you let my people go the Egyptians are going to say who's he what's the name of the God of your fathers I won't know what to tell them and God said to Moses I am who I am and he said thus shall you say to the children of Israel I am hath sent me to you the English renders the tetragrammaton or the four letters as I am well what kind of a name is that I am that's your name I am how utterly strange well seemingly so but in reality not strange at all but very logical because the tetragrammaton yhwh in

Hebrew is derived from the verb haya which means to be to be is the idea of perpetual being the idea of being ad infinitum or being without ever not being most translations simply render it I am and note there is no hint of I was or I will be both of which denote limitation but I am an ever perpetual amness the deity said to Moses I am that I am that's who I am linguists see this as meaning I am the one who exists because of myself or I am the self existent one you can readily see can you not that this is but one kind of being because all of life every living creature of whatever status exists because another existed before him and was thus responsible for his existence but not so with the

[52 : 55] I am this one the I am is because he is this was all new to Moses this I am is now telling Moses to go to the Egyptians and tell them that a god utterly unlike their gods has sent you their gods and the Egyptians had many all derived their being from the gods previous to them Egyptians had gods of satanic origin or derived from their imagination cohabiting and producing a new generation of gods but this god the god of the Hebrews was god whose existence was connected with his own being of the eternally self existent one the I am tell them Moses that's who sent you I am that I am the distinction between the names of deity expressed as god and lord is important you may be sure the holy spirit who inspired all of scripture did not allow the names for deity to be used haphazardly or capriciously where the word lord was needed lord was used and where the word god was needed god was used whether or not it is recognized by us the right term was always used in the right place this is what divine inspiration requires and without divine inspiration the bible possesses no true authority the distinction between uses of god and lord centers around the emphasis that each makes god we have suggested speaks primarily of power or strength such as that needed to call forth all of creation merely by speaking it and willing it to be so god emphasizes the general or generic aspect of the being of the deity god is what the almighty is whereas lord is the personal designation of the deity lord is god's personal name for a human man is what i am but what i is very generic or impersonal however when you add marv wiseman to what i am it becomes personal man is what i am marv is who i am god is what the deity is lord or jehovah is his name it is who he is does god have a name a personal name certainly his name is lord in english or jehovah or yahweh in hebrew of all the names for deity in the bible this name lord is used more than any other 6823 times to be exact and this should not surprise us because god is a very personal relational being his very name and the frequency with which the bible uses it should confirm that he tells us by the name he goes by that he is relational with those whom he created in his own image and likeness this means the availability of the deity for relating to man is advertised in the very use of his name our

English word l-o-r-d all in capital letters is jehovah in the original Hebrew in addition to the name lord or jehovah being God's personal name it is also a term that elevates this one this lord above all other beings lord means one above whom and beyond whom there is no other utter unrivaled supremacy is set forth conveyed in the very name of the one who possesses it it's also reflected in the idea that connects with the fact of his self existence how could he not be above and beyond all others if he is the one who exists because of himself is Isaiah states it thusly in chapter 45 i am the lord and there is no other besides me there is no god this concept is repeated frequently particularly in the old testament god is what the deity is lord is his name having noted the fascinating connection between the name of god elohim and how it is inserted into the many names the hebrews gave their children we now engage the same kind of usage with the name jehovah the a h ending of jehovah is utilized in much the same way as el the name for god we noted the name elijah actually incorporates both elohim and jehovah the el references god and the j ah references jehovah the name of the prophet joel also reflects both names of deity joel is like elijah in reverse instead of god is the lord as the meaning of elijah joel is the lord is god same thing but reversed order nearly all biblical names with an a h or i a h ending incorporate the name of jehovah as part of the name in the same way they invoke the el meaning god isaiah with the a h ending means salvation of jehovah jeremiah means whom god has appointed obadiah means worshipper of jehovah zechariah means whom god remembers zephaniah means whom jehovah hid joseiah whom jehovah heals hezekiah means the might of jehovah the foregoing names plus so many more we haven't time to consider simply indicate how important and significant were the names the jews gave to their offspring invoking the name of their deity whether by his generic term god or his personal name jehovah into the very names they gave their children gives evidence to how serious they were about the creator words mean things and the ancient jews understood that names were not dispensed lightly but seriously with the forethought in fact the name by which one was called was deemed of such importance that there were times when names required changing when someone underwent a significant life changing experience a new name derived from that experience was deemed necessary the

Jews were concerned that a person's name truthfully reflected the sum total of his being truth and accuracy were the issues and more of the name change was the irrevocable promise of an heir Abraham was not the exalted father of nations when God named him that but he most assuredly would become that and to this day

Abraham is very much the exalted father of nations Apart from the goal of Christianity Clarified being expressed in its very name, there are other goals about this project we would like to explain.

The motivation for creating Christianity Clarified arose from the sudden homegoing of my beloved wife Barbara, to whom I was privileged to be married for nearly 50 years.

[61 : 21] From the beginning of our married life, Barbara had been very keen on the authority and value of the Bible. With her passing, her convictions, plus my like-minded convictions, provided the impetus for launching the project of Christianity Clarified.

We want to make these vital truths available to all believers everywhere. Christianity Clarified is a basic yet comprehensive and extensive treatment of biblical truths in straightforward terms that all can understand.

It covers each aspect of Christianity and clarifies it to the best of our ability, undergirded by our personal study of the Scriptures for the past 50 years. The logical place to begin such an undertaking would be the Scriptures themselves, since everything we would be teaching would be inseparably linked to the authority of the Word of God.

Consequently, the first 60 segments of Christianity Clarified treated the several features of God's Word, all of which pointed to its divine authority and reliability.

These brief segments of only three to four minutes each consisted of brevity that was intended to accommodate the often busy and harried lifestyle of so many in our current culture.

[62 : 36] We believe this approach to be unique. The imparting of vital biblical theological content in easily understood, painless, three-minute snatches of time.

If we can succeed, two major obstacles are removed for people who do not seriously engage spiritual issues. And one obstacle is, I can't understand the Bible.

It's too deep for me. Well, you can understand Christianity Clarified. And obstacle two, I just don't have time. Well, the brevity of Christianity Clarified will be most appreciated on this count.

As smooth a sailing as anyone could imagine, for the taking in and understanding of biblical Christianity is literally at your fingertips. Although the content is copyrighted, permission is granted to duplicate the material at will.

Our objective is to get as much content to as many as possible in as short a time as possible. When we say free, we mean free. You will not be placed on a mailing list, and you will not receive letters appealing for funds.

[63 : 43] We are able to offer these free CDs due to the generosity of many who contributed to the Barbara Wiseman Memorial Fund. Christianity Clarified was launched because of her love for the Word of God and God's people.

We are confident that this undertaking would have met her enthusiastic approval. Your obtaining these free CDs, should you regard them as helpful, will help enable the objective of Christianity Clarified to be realized.

Please listen carefully for the address to which you may write and obtain your free CD of the current 20 three-minute segments of Christianity Clarified.

For Christianity Clarified in Springfield, Ohio, this is Marv Wiseman thanking you for being a part of our audience. In our ongoing consideration of the names of Deity, we need to include two of importance but seldom used.

Both names begin by the first two letters of Elohim, namely the E-L. In order of their appearance in Scripture, they are El Elyon and El Shaddai. The first, El Elyon, is found in Genesis 14.18.

- [64 : 58] It centers around Abraham's encounter with the mysterious personage of Melchizedek. He is called the priest of God Most High or the Most High God. The Hebrew is El Elyon.

Speculation abounds as to the true identity of Melchizedek, from his actually being a pre-incarnate manifestation of Christ, what we would call a Christophany, to possibly being another specially chosen vessel that God is using in the life of Abraham.

So while the jury may still be out regarding the actual identity of Melchizedek, two things are certain. He was a priest, and it was of the Most High God that Melchizedek served as a priest.

The designation El is the Hebrew word for God. It speaks of unlimited power or strength. It is the first part of the name Elohim. Elohim, of course, is plural for God.

God. Singular for God in Hebrew is Eloah, E-L-O-A-H. But E-L constitutes a prefix designating the deity, and that which follows, Elyon, further describes a key feature of the deity.

- [66 : 06] In this case, the El, or the God, is that which is the Most High God, with none other superior to him. One cannot go higher than that which is Most High.

Abraham, as exalted by God as he was, nevertheless recognized the station of this Melchizedek, and honored his position by rendering him one-tenth of the spoils that he had taken from Chedorloamer and his allied kings.

El Elyon, the Most High God. The next designation in the names of the deity is El Shaddai. The prefix El once again speaks of might and strength.

But what does Shaddai mean? A popular Christian hymn has been written called El Shaddai. An English equivalent is rendered God the Almighty. Shaddai in Hebrew is found 48 times in the Old Testament.

In half of those appearances, the word from which it is derived is the word for breast. Throughout Scripture, the mother's breast is portrayed as that which sustains and nourishes life.

- [67 : 12] Genesis 49 records Jacob prophesying the future of his sons who surrounded him upon his deathbed. Of his son Joseph, Jacob said, By the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lie beneath, blessings of the breast and of the womb.

El Shaddai is the Almighty One who nourishes and sustains Abraham's seed as a mother does her offspring. It is a beautiful picture of the plentitude and provision of El Shaddai.

El Shaddai, the all-nourishing, sustaining one. For Christianity Clarified, this is Marv Wiseman in Springfield, Ohio. The last in the list of names that designates the deity is the name Adonai, A-D-O-N-A-I.

It's different from other names assigned to the deity because Adonai is also often used of men as well as the deity. While the name Jehovah is spelled in most English Bibles in all capital letters, Adonai is also translated in our English Bibles, Lord, but only the first letter L is capitalized with the O-R-D being in lowercase letters.

In most cases, this is the only way to distinguish Lord from Lord in the English. Used as one of the names for the deity, Adonai is found about 300 times in the Old Testament.

- [68 : 50] A good Bible concordance will readily identify which is which. And Adonai is, like Elohim, nearly always found in the plural, once again giving support to a plurality of persons.

The precise expression would be, My Lords. Even more curious and compelling is that Adonai is also used in reference to men about 215 times.

It's rendered in the English as Master, Sir, or Lord. But every time it's applied to humans, it is always singular. In its reference to deity, it is invariably plural.

A striking usage is in the enigmatic statement found in Psalm 110. Jesus Christ quoted this to the complete befuddlement of the religious establishment in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 22.

The Lord says to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make thy enemies a footstool for thy feet. What kind of double talk is that?

[69 : 52] My Lord said to my Lord. It's not double talk at all. It's perfectly logical. Look at the English text of Psalm 110. The first word Lord is all caps, Jehovah.

The second Lord has only the L in Lord in caps. This translation difference tells us the first Lord is Jehovah, and the second Lord with the capital L and lowercase letters is Adonai.

This is prophetically messianic. David the king is relating conversation between plural members of the deity. The father is speaking to the son. Additionally, the son, Jesus Christ, is depicted as being the son of David, and biologically, he was.

But Jesus Christ is also David's Lord. What a beautiful and compelling indication once again of the unmistakable plurality of persons in the Godhead.

Because the ancient Hebrews stood in great fear of using Jehovah's name or Yahweh in vain, they forbade its usage altogether. Only then could they be certain they could not use the name in vain.

[71 : 04] Just don't use it at all. Consequently, precisely how the name of Jehovah or Yahweh is pronounced is lost. Neither Jehovah nor Yahweh, as I am using it now, may be correct.

We simply don't know. But this necessitated having a substitute name for the deity. And what might that be? Adonai. To this day, Adonai is the name most used by Jews when invoking the deity.

You've just heard another session of Christianity Clarified with Marv Wiseman. The next compact disc of Christianity Clarified, entitled Further Engaging the Deity, is scheduled for soon release and will be disc number five.

Consideration will be given to the spirit nature of God, to his omnipotence or possession of all power, what that does and does not mean, God's omniscience or his possession of all possible knowledge, in addition to omnipresence.

How is it that God can be everywhere at one and the same time? His self-existence and self-sufficiency are necessary and fascinating concepts true of the deity.

[72 : 33] Also defined and briefly explored are God's eternity, immutability, faithfulness, his mercy, holiness, and love. The upcoming disc number five of Christianity Clarified provides an ongoing opportunity for recipients to increase one's knowledge and appreciation of God and his word in brief, painless, three-minute snatches of time.

We would be honored for you to join us. Thank you for part of the day. We would encourage you to join us but stay in us. worshipping. Now I'm excited to join you in the next one.

The next two grandma is going to ask you. What a long life you loved us. Now we have to keep the honest of time. We are going to seem to be in that spirit of God and this gentry we are going to be in this spirit of God, to be in the Tat say this saranda, and that he is gonna help you. So let us pray if we pray for you to immer mend his hand to kneel until he is gonna die character on the Morta.

You have to Too Amber ■ide, who has to come out of this spirit of God, but what a great word I think we're about including cortisol.