



## Trinity

# THE NEW SHOFAR

It was the whole Trinity, which at the beginning of creation said, "Let us make man". It was the whole Trinity again, which at the beginning of the Gospel seemed to say, "Let us save man". J.C.Ryle

### *The Trinity is fundamental to our faith but what is it?*

It is Trinity Sunday but few preachers relish the opportunity to preach on this particular feast. What is there to be said apart from the mysterious facts of there being one God and three persons? Despite its dense theology, the Christian life is, at its most basic level, a life that participates in the Trinity itself.

As Christians, we have been invited into the very life of the Trinity itself. This is the gift given to us in the Incarnation. In Christ, we are part of God's "family".

Thus, the Christian life is entirely Trinitarian and cannot be truly understood in any other way. We have been drawn into the life of the Divine Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and it is from within that life we live and minister. That is our strength, our hope and what drives us forward in even the darkest of times. In becoming man, the Son of God shared in our humanity in a unique way. He was truly God and fully human. What that means is that we are intimately connected to Christ in His life, death, resurrection and ascension. In the incarnation, God has forever united humanity to Divinity. In Christ, a part of our humanity is forever enthroned at the Father's right hand. There can now be no separation between heaven and earth. Where Christ is, there too we have our home.

Through the incarnation we participate as humans in the Divine life, by the Spirit, through the humanity of Jesus Christ, our brother, great High Priest and Living Head.

**Because** He participated in our life as a human, it is as humans we participate in His life and His life is a life that is lived within the eternal relationship of the Triune God. Therefore, we are brought into the Trinitarian relationship. The prime purpose of the incarnation, through the love of God, is to lift us up into a life of communion, of participation in the very triune life of God. The Communion the Son has with the Father is a communion He shares with us.

It is for this reason the author of the Letter to the Hebrews writes...*For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our everlasting home in heaven.* We are destined,

by God's loving mercy, to live forever in His presence. And - We have a foretaste of that now, in the present life, through our union in Christ.

The point is that through our union with Christ Jesus, we are invited and brought inside the circle of Trinitarian love. We participate in the unique love relationship of the Son and the Father in the Spirit...**1 John 1:3:** *...That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, **that you also may have fellowship with us**; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

Notice the Trinitarian emphases of Jesus: *...The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, **for He dwells with you and will be in you*** (John 14:17). Here Jesus makes reference to the indwelling of the Spirit, which is how He unites us to participate in His relationship with the Father. *At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.*

### ***A mutual indwelling***

Jesus speaks here of ***the mutual indwelling of the Son and Father***. What is remarkable is that by the Spirit uniting us to Jesus, we are included in this relationship. It is not that we are absorbed into the Divine so that we become Divine, but rather that we are included in the Divine fellowship between the Father, Son and Spirit.

As our great High Priest, in His prayer in **John 17**, Jesus clearly describes eternal life in terms of Him bringing those whom the Father has given Him into their communion and fellowship. Notice these words in **John 17**: <sup>20</sup>*I am not praying for these alone but also for the future believers who will come to me because of the testimony of these.* <sup>21</sup>*My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind, just as you and I are, Father—that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me.*

***Jesus' will is that we are one with Him in the Father's embrace, through the Spirit***

This is precisely what we celebrate on Trinity Sunday – God's freely given invitation to live our humanity within His divinity. St Thomas Aquinas expressed it this way... *The only begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in His divinity, assumed our nature.* What a trade — He took what is ours so that He could give us what is His! Or, as another early Father of the Church put it...*He became what we are so that we might become what He is* (Irenaeus). The Trinity is a living reality, a dynamic power that flows through the very soul of humanity, opening up avenues and possibilities enabling us to be fully human and fully alive as God created us to be.