

“Jerusalem Meets Rome and Finds Babylon: A Study in Church Purity”

Fall 2022-Spring 2023

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The Heresy of Arianism – Various Scriptures

I. History of Arianism

A. Arius was presbyter of Alexandria, 250 AD - 336AD,

B. He began teaching in 313 that the Son was created rather than being the co-equal eternal Son of God.

1. argued that Jesus was divine, but on a lower level than the Father.
2. Arius started with this premise: "One God, alone unbegotten, alone everlasting, alone unbegun, alone true, alone having immortality, alone wise, alone good, alone sovereign."
3. From this starting point, Arius ended up with the view that Christ was an intermediary distinct from the Father (or that there was a difference of substance (*homoiousia*), or essential being between the Father and the Son.).

C. This is considered the most serious heresy.

1. Arianism was the form of Christianity that the Goths adhered to, and it was popular in all the areas they conquered, including Italy, Spain, and Africa.
2. **Socianism**: A version of Arianism (from the Latin *socius*, meaning "companion"), simply says that Jesus was an extraordinary man. This heresy still lives on in two very different forms, the Unitarians and the Jehovah's Witnesses.
3. Arianism was perhaps the greatest threat to the Early Church out of all the schisms and heresies.
 - a. By some estimates, almost half of all Christians were Arians at its peak in the 4th century.
 - b. Although condemned by the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., it didn't die out completely until the 5th century.

D. In 325 A.D., Constantine, emperor of the Roman Empire ordered that the debate be settled once and for all.

1. Thus, The council of Nicea (in Bithynia).
2. The bishops who met there debated the nature of the person of Jesus Christ for over two months.
3. Arius lost the debate, and the view of Athanasius became the view of the church.
4. The doctrine of *homoiousios* was affirmed – that Christ was of one (or the same) substance with the Father.
5. Out of the Council came the Nicene Creed

a. one of the two Creeds recognized by almost all of Christianity today.

b. The original version (it was expanded in 381 A.D.) stated:

“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things both visible and invisible; and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Only begotten of the Father, that is to say, of the substance of the Father, God of God and Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things on earth; who, for us men and for our salvation, came down and was made flesh, was made man, suffered, and rose again on the third day, went up into the heavens, and is to come again to judge both the quick and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost.”

6. The Arian controversy lasted from the time of Constantine in 318 until 451 when the COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON finally put it to rest.

a. Arius and his followers were banished from the empire.

b. Although settled in theory, Constantine wavered on the issue (his sister was an Arian) and he permitted some of the bishops to return from exile in 328.

c. They immediately began a series of political maneuverings that led to the exile of Athanasius in 335, who was then bishop of Alexandria.

d. Arius was declared orthodox and was scheduled for reinstatement in the church when he died in 336.

e. The conflict continued for 150 years.

II. Biblical Truth

A. The Person of Christ

1. The OT

a. Messiah

i. Ps 2:2 The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,

- *mashiyach* - anointed; usually a consecrated person (as a king, priest, or saint); specifically, the Messiah:--anointed, Messiah.

- Observed in vs 2, Jehovah and messiah are two separate persons

ii. Da 9:25-26 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

b. A Descendant of David – 1 Chr 17:10-15

i. The Branch

- Isa 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
 - Jer 23:5 "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.
 - Jer 33:15 'In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.
 - Zec 3:8 'Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, You and your companions who sit before you, For they are a wondrous sign; For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.
 - Zec 6:12 "Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD;
- ii. His Person
- Isa 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.
 - *Immanuw'el* - with us (is) God; Immanuel, a type name of Isaiah's son:--Immanuel.
 - Isa 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

2. NT

a. The Word

- i. Jo 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - *logos* - something said (including the thought); a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive; (with the article in John) the Divine Expression (i.e. Christ):--account, cause, communication, doctrine, fame, intent, matter, mouth, preaching, question, reason, remove, say(-ing), shew, speech, talk, thing, utterance, word, work.
 - The Creator of all things – Ge 1:1; Jo 1:2-4
- ii. Jo 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

b. The seed of David

- i. Mt 1:20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David,

- do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.
- ii. Jo 7:42 "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"
- iii. Ro 1:3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,
- iv. 2Ti 2:8 Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,
- c. The Son of God
 - i. Lu 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.
 - ii. Jo 20:31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.
 - iii. Ro 1:4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.
- d. God in the Flesh – Jo 1:14
 - i. Col 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.
 - ii. Heb 1:3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

B. Why is it Important?

1. The Necessity of Christ Being Divine

a. The Need for Perfection

- i. Pictures by Sacrifices without Blemish – Ex 12:5
- ii. Man's lack of perfection
 - Pr 20:9 Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?
 - None Righteous – Ro 3:10-12; Ps 14:1-3

b. The Provision of Perfection

- i. 2Co 5:21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
- ii. 1Pe 2:22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";

c. The Wages of Sin – Ro 6:23

- i. Ga 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),
- ii. Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
- iii. Heb 9:26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
- iv. Heb 9:28 so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

d. God's Acceptance of Christ's Offering for Sin

- i. Ro 1:4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.
- ii. Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.
- iii. Heb 10:12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,
- iv. Heb 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

2. The Necessity of Understanding the Person of Christ for Salvation and Sanctification

- a. Ro 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.
- b. Ac 8:37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
- c. Jo 9:35-38 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.
- d. 1Jo 4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
- e. 1Jo 5:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
- f. 1Jo 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.