

Did God Create All Things “by Myself” and “All Alone?”

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Isaiah 44:24 is a favorite proof-text by Unitarians who deny the pre-human Son of God, His literal existence at the time of creation and His role in creation (as mentioned in John 1:1-3,10-12,14, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:15-18, Hebrews 1:2,8-12, Hebrews 2:10, and Revelation 3:14).

*Isaiah 44:24 (NASB) 24 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, “**I, the LORD, am the maker of all things**, Stretching out the heavens **by Myself**, And spreading out the earth **all alone***

When New Testament passages such as those mentioned above are brought forward which describe the existence and role the Son of God in the creation,¹ Biblical Unitarians counter with the above passage. This verse provides the foundation for their position (God was alone). Then they invent creative ways to explain away all of these New Testament passages.

However, the foundation of their entire premise from Isaiah 44:24 is based on a misunderstanding of that passage. It is clear from Scriptures such as Job 38:4-7 that the angels were created and were present as spectators when God “*laid the foundations of the earth.*” So it is clear that God was not alone in the sense that no other conscious beings were present with Him during the six days of creation. Unitarians even acknowledge this because their mechanism for explaining away Genesis 1:26 “*Let Us make man in Our image and after Our likeness,*” is that God was speaking to the angels.

The problem with the Unitarian explanation of Isaiah 44:24 is that it completely ignores the immediate context and the use of the same language by God elsewhere. This is the epitome of “proof-texting.” Ten consecutive chapters in Isaiah, chapters 40-49, are devoted to denouncing the demon-gods of the pagans and the foolishness of idol worship. Throughout these chapters, God repeatedly mocked the pagan gods which the pagans believed each controlled a certain aspect of nature. The constant theme in these chapters is that the pagan idols can do nothing. God constantly compared His power and His mighty works to the impotence of the pagan gods. The sarcasm is thick especially in chapter 44. In the following section, the work of the idol-maker craftsman is described as follows:

¹ John 1:1-2,10-12; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-20, Heb. 1:8-12; Heb. 2:10

Isaiah 44:14-20 (NKJV) 14 He cuts down cedars for himself, And takes the cypress and the oak; He secures it for himself among the trees of the forest. He plants a pine, and the rain nourishes it. 15 Then it shall be for a man to burn, For he will take some of it and warm himself; Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread; Indeed he makes a god and worships it; He makes it a carved image, and falls down to it. 16 He burns half of it in the fire; With this half he eats meat; He roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He even warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm, I have seen the fire." 17 And the rest of it he makes into a god, His carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, Prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!" 18 They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand. 19 And no one considers in his heart, Nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire, Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it; And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?" 20 He feeds on ashes; A deceived heart has turned him aside; And he cannot deliver his soul, Nor say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" 21 "Remember these, O Jacob, And Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me!

In contrast to these impotent gods, God says to Israel, *"Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, And He who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD, who makes all things, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself; Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness."* In these words God excluded the pagan gods as having anything whatsoever to do with the creation of all things or the deliverance of Israel. How then could they have any control over nature so that they ought to be feared, worshipped, or appeased by Israel?

The same language used by God in the above passage was also used of God's delivering Israel from Egypt.

*Deut. 32:9-12 (NKJV) 9 For the LORD'S portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance. 10 "He found him in a desert land And in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. 11 As an eagle stirs up its nest, Hovers over its young, Spreading out its wings, taking them up, Carrying them on its wings, 12 **So the LORD alone led him, And there was no foreign god with him.***

Here it is quite clear that *"the LORD alone"* means *"there was no foreign god with him."* Moses made it quite clear that there was another, God's Agent, who actually interacted with Israel and performed these things on God's behalf.

Exod. 23:20-23 (NKJV) 20 "Behold, I send [My]² Angel³ before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. 21 "Beware of Him and obey His voice; do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions; for My name is in Him. 22 "But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. 23 "For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.

This passage is critically important, showing that the "Messenger of the LORD" carried God's own name, so that the Messenger of the LORD is repeatedly called "God" and "Yahweh" (LORD) in the Torah. And what He does, God is said to have done. This is the epitome of "agency," and forms the basis of many New Testament statements that indicate that God created all things "through" His Son.

Now, consider the words of the Messenger of the LORD in the following passage and the things for which He takes credit.

Judges 2:1-4 (NKJV) 1 Then the Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: "I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land of which I swore to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you." 2 'And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this? 3 "Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall be thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" 4 So it was, when the Angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept.

This passage shows clearly the subordinate role of the Messenger of the LORD as leading Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land. He even identified Himself as the one who made the Abrahamic Covenant ("the land which I swore to your fathers"). He is the one who called from heaven to Abraham not to kill his son,⁴ and swore the oath of the Abrahamic Covenant.⁵ In the above passage the Messenger of the LORD also called the Mosaic covenant His own, "I will never break My covenant with you." The Messenger of the LORD, upon whom was God's own name, was God's Agent carrying out His will in establishing

² The LXX has "My Messenger"

³ The Hebrew word "malek" and Greek word "angelos" simply means "messenger," and is used of both heavenly and human messengers. It says nothing about what kind of being it is, only its role.

⁴ Gen. 22:11-12

⁵ vss. 15-18; Heb. 6:13-19

these covenants and bringing Israel to the Promised Land. Yet Moses wrote in Deut. 32:12, “the LORD alone led him” (Jacob/Israel).

This “Messenger of the LORD” was identified by Isaiah with a very interesting term.

*Isaiah 63:9 (NKJV) 9 In all their affliction He was afflicted, And **the Angel of His Presence** saved them; In His love and in His pity He redeemed them; And He bore them and carried them All the days of old.*

The Hebrew is literally translated “the Messenger of His **Face**.” The same Hebrew word means “presence” and “face.” Isaiah took this idea from the following passage:

*Exod. 33:14-16 (NKJV) 14 And He said, “**My Presence [Face] will go with you, and I will give you rest.**” 15 Then he [Moses] said to Him, “If **Your Presence [Face]** does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. 16 “For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except **You go with us?** So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth.”*

Isaiah understood this passage as a reference to the Messenger of the LORD going with Israel as God’s “Presence” or “Face.” As God’s Agent, upon whom was God’s own name, what the Messenger of the LORD did was said to be God’s doing. Having the Messenger of the LORD go with Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land was the same as God going with them.

It is abundantly clear then that since the statement in Deut. 32:12 that “the LORD alone led him” (from Egypt to the Promised Land) does not exclude the Messenger of the LORD, God’s statement in Isaiah 44:24, “Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself,” does not exclude the Messenger of the LORD (who was His only-begotten Son) from being present and active in the creation. In fact, Isaiah and Malachi identify this mysterious figure as the Messiah who was to come as a human.

*Isaiah 9:6-7 (LXX) 6 For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, whose government is upon his shoulder: and his name is called **the Messenger of great counsel**: for I will bring peace upon the princes, and health to him. 7 His government shall be great, and of his peace there is no end: it shall be upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to support it with judgment and with righteousness, from henceforth and forever. The seal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this.*

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV) 1 “Behold, I send My messenger [John the Baptist], And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His

temple, *Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight.* Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

Remember, the "Messenger of the LORD" claimed as His own both the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants in Judges 2:1-4. Steven, in his defense before the Sanhedrin, stated that the "Messenger of the LORD" who appeared to Moses in the burning bush also gave the Law on Mt. Sinai and that Israel would not obey Him,⁶ showing that Christians recognized that God used this Agent in that covenant also. The same Person, who "*though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor,*"⁷ having "*become flesh,*"⁸ "*becoming in the likeness of men,*"⁹ "*who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,*"¹⁰ and "*in all things He had to be made like His brethren,*"¹¹ then brought to Israel the "New Covenant"¹² in fulfillment of Jeremiah 31:31-34.¹³ Let's not forget that the same Person – Jesus – claimed to be both "*the Root and the Offspring of David*"¹⁴ in fulfillment of Isaiah 11:1,10, and to exist before Abraham.¹⁵ There is one Person whom God used as His Agent to make the Abrahamic Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant.

Using Isaiah 44:24 as a proof-text to counter all of the New Testament passages that refer to God creating all things through His Son is not sound exegesis of Scripture. The point of that text, as well as all of the "one God" statements in Isaiah 40-49, is simply this: None of the pagan gods were responsible for any aspect of the creation (therefore they had no control over nature), nor did they have anything to do with Israel's deliverance from Egypt. "One God," and "all alone," and "by Myself" simply means "*there was no foreign god with him.*"¹⁶ It does not exclude God using a subordinate Agent, the Messenger of the LORD, who was later revealed to be God's only-begotten Son in the New Testament, even being the one who led Israel through the wilderness.

1 Corinthians 10:1-11 (NKJV) 1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into

⁶ Acts 7:30-39

⁷ 2 Cor. 8:9

⁸ John 1:14

⁹ Phil. 2:6-7

¹⁰ Heb. 2:9

¹¹ Heb. 2:17

¹² Matt. 26:28

¹³ Heb. 8:6-13

¹⁴ Rev. 22:16

¹⁵ John 8:58

¹⁶ Deut. 32:12

Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. **For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.** 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 **nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted,** and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.