

same is true in verse 17 where the LORD again speaks in the first person.

In the case of verse 16 an interesting problem appears. These can hardly be the prophet's own words, for he says: "From the beginning I have not spoken in secret. From the time it came to be I am there." Yet the final line of the verse says, "And now the Lord GOD has sent me, and his Spirit." Here the speaker says that the LORD has sent him. The prophet can hardly be the speaker, since he has just used terms that could apply only to the eternal God. Yet it appears very strange to think that the LORD is speaking, since the speaker declares that the Lord GOD has sent him.

For the answer to the problem, it is necessary to look ahead a few verses, to the beginning of chapter 49. In 49:1-5 the speaker is obviously the Servant of the LORD. This is quite evident in verses 1-4 and becomes unmistakable in verse 5, which reads in part: "And now says the LORD, who formed me from the womb to be his servant." It is therefore not at all unreasonable to consider the possibility that the Servant of the LORD is already speaking in 48:16. When He says, "From the beginning I have not spoken in secret," one may think of the theophanies of the Old Testament and of the many revelations that were given to various prophets. "From the time it came to be I was there" suggests His preexistence and His eternity. Yet the words, "the Lord GOD has sent me," definitely imply a distinction in the Godhead. He is the LORD, and yet the LORD sends Him. The Eternal One has been sent by the Lord GOD and His Spirit. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity finds perhaps its clearest Old Testament expression in this verse.

The words "and his Spirit" occupy an ambiguous position in the Hebrew sentence and can equally well be considered part of the subject or part of the object. God the Father has sent the Son and has sent the Spirit. God the Father and the Spirit have sent the Son. Some translations take the words "his Spirit" as part of the subject, some as part of the object. The Hebrew can be read either way; both are true.

In 48:14-16, the two great emphases of this section of Isaiah