

LINEAGE, BIRTH, CHILDHOOD OF CHRIST

Abstract. This session deals with the lineage and birth and childhood of Christ. Topics dealt with include His intrinsic Deity and intrinsic humanity—including His virgin birth, year and day of His birth, His dual human lineages which uniquely unify the line of David, and His childhood and early manhood and secret training by the Holy Spirit. These topics are dealt with from the Hebrew Scriptures and Hebraica and Talmud. This session concludes with a discussion of the three great purposes of His coming.

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I. **Intrinsic Deity Of Christ**

A. Proclaimed In Trinity By Hebrew Scriptures And Talmud And Hebraica—See Appendix 1

1. Trinity generally (Gen. 1:1 (Hebrew text **by the Beginning One**), 26–27 (personal plural pronoun requires a true plural antecedent and not "Plural of Majesty"—a rule of Hebrew grammar taught over and over again in Job 40:16–24 by precedence and contraposition, namely, *a Plural of Majesty implies a singular personal pronoun*), Deut. 4:37 (Hebrew text: **He ... brought you out with His Persons, with His great power, out of Egypt**; 6:4 (Hebrew text: **Hear O Israel, Jehovah our Gods [is] composite-unioned Jehovah**), etc.
2. Second Person of the Godhead (e.g. Prov. 8:22–30, Is. 48:12–16 (context and word order of the Hebrew text: **I have not spoken in secret from the beginning, from the time it was I AM; and now Master-Jehovah has sent Me and His Spirit**))
3. Logos/Word/Icon of the Father (e.g. Gen. 3:8; 15:1–4, 18:1–, I Sam. 3:1,4,6,8,10, I Sam. 15:10, I Kings 6:11; 16:1/II Chron. 1:7, Is. 9:6; 40:5, Jer. 1:2,4,11,12,13, Ezek. 1:3; 6:1, Hag. 2:5 (Hebrew text: **the Word Who covenanted with you**))
4. Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9,10,22 cf. Prov. 8:18)
5. Jehovah Redeemer (Is. 44:6, Zech. 12:10–12)
6. Angel Jehovah (Gen. 16:7,9,11,13;18:1–; 21:17; 22:11–15; 32:24–32; 31:11–13; 48:16; Ex. 3:2–4; 23:20–23; 32:34/33:2/Num. 21:16, Num. 22:22–35, Josh. 6:13–15/6:2, Jud. 2:1–5; 6:11–24; 13:3–21, Is. 63:9, Zech. 3:1–6)
7. Angel of Covenant (Mal. 3:1–3)

B. Proclaimed By The Greek Scriptures

1. Second Person of the Godhead (Matt. 28:19–20, John 1:18; 17:1–, I Cor. 15:28, Heb. 1:6)
2. Logos/Word/Icon of the Father (John 1:1,14–18, Col. 1:15–18, Hebr. 4:12–13, I John 1:1, Rev. 19:9)
3. Ancient of Days (Rev. 1:13–15; 4:3; 5:1–7, cf. Dan. 7:9–22, Zech. 3:1–10, John 1:18; 5:37)

II. **Intrinsic Humanity And Virgin Birth Of Christ**

A. Proclaimed By Hebrew Scriptures And Talmud And Hebraica—See Appendix 2.

1. Virgin born (Is. 7:14 Hebrew text and context—Appendix 2)
2. Fully man (Gen. 3:15, II Sam. 7:13–16–29), Ps. 2; 45, Is. 66:7, Zech. 12:10–/13:6)

B. Proclaimed By Greek Scriptures

1. Virgin born (Matt. 1:18–25, Luke 1:26–38).
2. Fully man (Phil. 2:5–11, Heb. 2:6–18)
 - a. Legal and Adamic lineage through Mary (Luke 3:23–38, I Cor. 15:45–47), royal lineage through Joseph (Matt. 1:1–16)—see IV below.
 - b. Human condition
 - i. Experienced fatigue (Matt. 8:20,24)
 - ii. Experienced hunger (Matt. 4:2/Luke 4:2, Matt. 21:8/Mark 11:13)
 - iii. Experienced anger (Matt. 21:12–13/Mark:11:15–17/Luke 19:45–46)
 - iv. Experienced joy (Matt. 8:10–13; 15:28 (21–28), Luke 7:9)
 - v. Experienced sorrow (Matt. 26:37–38/Is. 53:3)
 - vi. Experienced compassion (Matt. 9:36; 14:13–14; 20:34, Mark 1:41; 5:19; 6:34)
 - vii. Experienced pain (Matt. 26:67;27:29–30/Is. 52:14, Matt. 27:35,39–44/Ps. 22)
 - viii. Experienced testing and obedience (Matt. 4/Luke 4, Heb. 4:15; 5:8)

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3. Perfect, without sin (Luke 1:35, Matt. 3:17/Luke 3:22, Matt. 17:5/Mark. 9:7/Luke 9:35, Rom. 8:3, Heb. 4:15). The sin nature is from father alone (not from mother): the sin nature is in the immaterial nature—spirit and soul—which is from the father alone.
 - a. Adam's sin nature, not Eve's, is inherited by the Body of Christ (Rom. 5:12–21).
 - b. Levi's immaterial nature resided solely within His great-grandfather Abraham, and not from his great-grandmother Sarah (Heb. 7:9–10).
 - c. Christ's human immaterial being was directly created by the Holy Spirit (so He was humanly "Son of God", Luke 1:35), so there could be no sin nature (so He was holy, Luke 1:35) and Mary's sin nature (Luke 1:47—she needs a Savior; Mark 3:21,31—Greek in Verse 21 is 'oi par' autou = **His family = His mother and brothers**) therefore plays no role.

III. Timing Of Birth Of Christ

- A. Day of Birth All of the following are independent and yet mutually corroborating: Christ was born on or around 29 September. See B below for determination of birth year.
 1. According to the Biblical Zodiac. The Sign of Virgo is expressly referred to in Is. 7:14 [see Appendix 2]; and in the ancient Zodiac, the first room of Virgo is the Child or Desired One [E.W. Bullinger, *Witness of the Stars*]. But this birth sign extends into late September. The Zodiac was originally intended as the prophetic "horoscope" of the Redeemer and Virgo is His birth sign. This He was born by late September.
 2. According to Feast of Tabernacles.
 - a. Prophetically, the Feast of Tabernacles is fulfilled at the conclusion of the Third Generation with the great harvest of Elect Israel from the grave and diaspóra and the installation of Israel's eternal earthly kingdom (beginning with its millennial phase), a kingdom which unendingly has the Shekhinah (Lev. 23:33–44, Ezek. 43:1–7, Rev. 21:1–5), the evidence of God's presence forever.
 - i. The name given to Christ in Is. 7:14, Immanuel, God with Israel.
 - ii. Christ is the prototype of the Third Generation (Is. 66:6–9)
 - b. John 1:14 describes the incarnation in two stages: *the Logos became flesh = conception*; and *the Logos tabernacled*—

[**eskhnwsen** (ἐσκήνωσεν) from **skhnōw** (σκηνώω)—John 1:14, Rev. 7:15; 12:12; 13:6; 21:3—and **skhnē** (σκηνή)—Matt. 17:4, Mark 9:5, Luke 9:33; 16:9, Acts 7:43,44; 15:16, Heb. 8:2,5; 9:1,2,3,6,8,11,21; 11:9; 13:10, Rev. 13:6; 15:5; 21:3—etc from this word group]

—among Israel = birth. The **skhnōw/skhnē** word group, in the context of God's dealings with Israel, both in LXX and the Greek N. T. has primary reference to the Feast of Tabernacles or its fulfillment.
 - c. This pinpoints His birth as being the first day of Tabernacles = 29 September (see Appendix 179 of [*Companion Bible*]). He would have been circumcised on the eighth day of Tabernacles, the Great Day of the Festival (Lev. 23, John 7:37).
 - d. Tabernacles was one of the three mandatory Feasts for attendance (Deut. 16:16, Three Great Festivals), which explains why there were no rooms available and why Augustus would take advantage of the Festival to register his subjects at this time—see (5) below.
 3. According to service of Zacharias (father of John the Baptist). Zacharias, of the eighth course (Abia = Abijah) of the priesthood (I Chron. 24:10, Luke 1:5), served in the Temple

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during the Three Great Festivals (Unleavened Bread, Weeks, Tabernacles) with the other courses and alone during these specific times peculiar to the eighth course: 6–12 December and 13–19 June [*Companion Bible*, Appendix 179]. If the annunciation of Gabriel took place during 13–19 June—and allowing for 20 June to be a sabbath and for Zacharias to travel to his home in the Judaeen hill country (Luke 1:23,39), then John was conceived around 24 June. Since Christ is six months younger than John (Luke 1:36), then *Christ was conceived around 25 December* (another proof that the so-called confessing church can't seem to get anything consistently right—see C(2) below) and born exactly on 29 September if the precise figure of 280 days of human gestation took place.

4. According to weather and shepherds. Shepherds were in the fields tending their flocks at the time of Christ's birth (Luke 2:8–18). This is simply impossible if the birth were on 25 December—in winter the flocks were brought out of the fields and corralled/housed. Thus a fall date is mandated.
 5. According to registration and weather. On the decree of Augustus Caesar, the governor Cyrenius (= Quirinius) of the province of Syria (of which Israel was a part, the Jews being called "circumcised Syrians" by the Romans)—Luke 2:1–7. The proposition that this registration took place in late December is opposed by several facts:
 - a. This would require Mary, nine months pregnant, to travel across precipitous terrain in deep winter to register with Joseph.
 - b. This would require the Romans, known for their efficiency, to impose such a registration during a time of year when most Jews would not travel and would not be in Jerusalem, whereas in late September the weather was accommodating for travel (ALL Jewish males would be in Jerusalem for Tabernacles anyway—Deut. 16:16) and the agricultural work of the year would be finished.
 - c. It is impossible that no rooms available for rent in late December when no one travels; but it is entirely reasonable that no rooms are available for rent during the Feast of Tabernacles for which there is mandatory attendance (Deut. 16:16).
 - d. Mary and Joseph stayed in an unheated stable. This does not make sense unless Mary and Joseph would be in the Jerusalem area at a mild time of year; which would be the case if they were there for the Feast of Tabernacles in late September.
 6. According to ancient custom. Michaelmass, on 29 September, was originally conceived in ancient times to celebrate the annunciation by the angels to the shepherds of the birth of Christ. Of course, this shows from ancient times the abandonment of Paul's gospel (II Tim. 1:15) on which we comment in C(2) below. That the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Church have both this festival AND Christmass on 25 December just shows that God does not allow the Anti-Body's rebellion to Paul's gospel to be internally self-consistent.
- B. Year Of Birth The following are independent and yet mutually confirming: Christ was born in late 5 B.C. if certain data from Josephus are to be believed. This section cannot be separated from Section A above.
1. According to Daniel.
 - a. After 69 sabbaticals, counting from the decree of Artaxerxes Astyages to rebuild Jerusalem, Christ is crucified. This is a period of 483 years (Dan. 9:24–26)
 - b. The decree to rebuild the city took place in the 20th year of Artaxerxes and assigned this task to Nehemiah (Neh. 2:1–5).
 - c. Based on Appendices 50, 57, 58, and especially 86 and the notes on I Kings 6:1 of the *Companion Bible* (CB), the Bullinger chronology presented there and the attendant

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- correlation of the ancient Persian kings is significantly more convincing to me than that presented in Unger [**Chronology**, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 197–204] and other authorities. The Bullinger chronology is essentially and independently confirmed, and slightly tweaked, by the extensive study of [P. Dennis, *The Clock of Weeks: the Seventy Sevens of Daniel*, 1997 TGF Conference]. Namely:
- i. The captivity begins around 496 B.C.E. and not in 604 to 606 B.C.E. Daniel lived to see the return and Daniel did not live the 150–180 years required of the standard chronology. This takes into the account the 93 + calendar years ignored by the standard chronologers (cf. Acts 13:20–21) but required by the records of the Hebrew Scriptures (I Kings 6:1—see the CB notes).
 - 1) It is disconcerting to see I Kings 6:1 completely ignored in the chronological treatment in E. R. Thiele's Ph.D. thesis at University of Chicago [E. R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, University of Chicago Press, first edition, Eerdmans, second edition] as summarized in the more recent compendium [E. R. Thiele, *A Chronology of the Hebrew Kings*, Zondervan].
 - 2) There seems no question that Thiele made lasting contributions in correlating the royal chronologies of the Judaeian and Samaritan kingdoms—a major unsolved problem answered by his thesis. But his second step of reconciling this combined Hebrew chronology with that of Mesopotamia using their astronomical records with the B.C.E. dates assigned by astronomers to solar and lunar eclipses is vulnerable and not as convincing as the Bullinger-Dennis studies cited *supra* (and it seems inconsistent with the sabbaticals of Daniel 9).
 - ii. Artaxerxes = Ahaseurus = Darius the Mede = Cambyses = Astyages = husband of Ester = father of Cyrus the Great came to power around 475–474 B.C.E.
 - d. Artaxerxes gave the decree to rebuild the city around 455–454 B.C.E. and 483 years later, namely around 29 C.E., Christ, already anointed with the baptism of John and the power of the Holy Spirit at 30 years of age (Matt. 3:13–17, Mark 1:9, Luke 3:21–23 cf. Num. 4:3,23,30,35,39,43,47) at the beginning of His earthly ministry, is presented as the Prince on "Palm Saturday", a day closely following the all-out verbal war between Christ and the rabbis (Matt. 23) which culminates in His death on Tuesday afternoon while the Passover lambs are being killed and prepared on the 14th of Nisan.
 - e. Christ was crucified around 29 C.E. in about His 33rd year. Thus He was born around 5–4 B.C.E., which correlates with a well-known, at-least-four year error in the Gregorian calendar (see [Unger, *loc. cit.*], [Conybeare & Howson, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, Appendix III, 832–838], etc). The next points are independent corroboration of this Daniel-based proof. The precise date is sharpened in (4) below using A above.
2. According to the first registration by Rome. From [Unger, *loc. cit.*], we have the following facts from Roman records:
 - a. There were two registrations of the inhabitants of the Syrian province by Cyrenius (= Quirinius), the first undertaken around 4 B.C.E. and the second in 6 C.E. The first registration concerned people and the second concerned their goods.
 - b. The first registration is specifically so designated by Luke 2:2 by the words **which first [prwth] took place when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.**

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- c. The second registration is referred to by Luke in Acts 5:37. We know this to be the second registration because it coincided with a revolt against the Romans by a certain Judas of Galilee, and Josephus says:
 - i. "Under his [Cyrenius'] administration it was that a certain Galileean, whose name was Judas, prevailed with his countrymen to revolt" [*War*, ii.8.1].
 - ii. "I mean that Judas who caused the people to revolt when Cyrenius came to take account of the *estates* of the Jews" [*Antiquities*, xx.5.2].
- 3. According to (Biblical) astrology/astronomical charts. The Magi came because they had seen Christ's Sign in the heavens (Matt. 2:1–13).
 - a. That **star** or **luminary (body)**, translating 'asthr (ἄσθηρ), in a personal sense is always associated with **sign** as in *Zodiac sign* cannot be doubted: this is the same Greek word used in LXX in Gen. 37:9. But which sign is Christ's sign? ALL OF THEM ARE HIS SIGNS AND EACH OF THEM IS ONLY HIS SIGN [E. W. Bullinger, *Witness of the Stars* (WS), Kregel Press / Zondervan Publishing; E. W. Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, Appendix 12, Zondervan Publishing], each relating to a specific aspect of His redemption of the nations and even the Nation (though not explicitly the Body which was a Mystery and is neither Jew nor Gentile). See Bullinger's treatment of Psalm 19 in WS.
 - b. But which is Christ's BIRTH sign? Why Virgo, of course, the sign of the Virgin Birth, the sign which ends with the Feast of Tabernacles. But see also (h) below.
 - c. Each sign incorporates three constellations, or each house incorporates three rooms.
 - d. Which constellation/room of Virgo is His birth constellation? The first room, called the DESIRED CHILD (**kumah**—the Desired One, cf. Hag. 2:7, Num. 24:17; **shes-nu**—the Desired Son) is His birth constellation.
 - e. This constellation is unusual in that it lacks any star of the first three magnitudes, making this a perfect constellation in which a new bright star was to appear.
 - f. The purpose of such a new star was to guide those of whom the sign spoke. Indeed, Num. 24:17 (Hebrew text) better states: **And a star shall come forth at Jacob**. So this star was to indicate location of the One whose birth sign it was.
 - g. An extraordinary supernova appeared in 5 B.C.E. according to Chinese astronomical records cited by [R. W. Faid, *A Scientific Approach to Biblical Mysteries*, p. 63]. Generally, the year of a date tends to be more accurate than the month or day; and the month of July claimed by the Chinese is clearly wrong insofar as our discussion in Section A shows. But 5 B.C.E. is consistent with our other lines of evidence; and the Chinese records are accurate concerning the year (1054 C.E.) of another supernova. The Chinese records claim the supernova was so bright that it could be seen in the day as well as in the night. Further, the Chinese claim that this star appeared in Capricorn (in the room of the Eagle) seems spurious since this sign is not a birth sign, but rather the sign concerning the death, burial, and resurrection of the Coming One [Bullinger, *Witness of the Stars*]; and see (h) next.
 - h. According to the Arab historian Abulfaragius [Bullinger, *Witness of the Stars*, p. 37], Zoroaster was a student of Daniel, presumably learning from Daniel the true Messianic purpose of the Zodiac, and that Zoroaster predicted the appearance of a new star would indicate the birth of Messiah. Further, the *Zend Avesta* [Bullinger, *loc.cit.*]—the Zoroastrian holy (prayer) book, declares that this star would appear in Virgo.

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- i. That the Messiah comes forth from Israel would show the longitude, while the nova would show the latitude. Thus the star would pinpoint the location of where Christ had been born, namely Bethlehem, and the very house into which they had moved subsequent to the birth.(Matt. 1:9). *Why then did the Magi go to Jerusalem to see Herod?* This is the sequence of events:

- i. Magi present themselves to Herod and the Sanhedrin and priesthood in Jerusalem (Matt. 2:1–8).
- ii. The star then indicates precisely where Christ is (Matt. 2:9–12).

The answer is that Gentiles cannot approach Christ apart from Israel: Is. 2:1–4, Amos 9:9–12, Zech. 8:23, Matt. 15:21–28, Mark 7:24–30, etc. Restated, it is not fit to take Israel's bread and give it (directly) to Gentile dogs, yet the righteous Gentile dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from Israel's table. This it was necessary for the Magi to go first to Jerusalem.

4. According to ancient Jewish and astronomical records concerning the death of Herod.
 - a. Christ was born during the time of Herod the Great (Matt. 2:1, Luke 1:5).
 - b. Josephus affirms that Herod the Great died in 4 B.C.E. (or 750 A.U.C.) in Jericho on 13 March during an eclipse of the moon the day before Passover [*Antiquities* xvii.xvii.6.4; *War* i.i.8].
 - c. This eclipse of the moon can purportedly be pinned down to the very day to corroborate Josephus' claims.
 - d. Christ was born before the death of Herod. The order of events is as follows (Matt. 2): birth of Christ, the appearance of the Magi, the slaying of infants, the death of Herod.
 - e. The trip of the Magi was almost precisely 100 miles. "East" does not mean China or Babylon (which is the "north country"), but "east" as the Jews of the day used the word, namely *east = Rekem = Midian = Petra* and to this the sages and Scriptures speak:

"From Rekem to the east, and Rekem is as the east" [Gittin, folios 2a, 4a, 6a, 7b]
"Rekem itself is reckoned as the east of the world" [Gloss of Nissim from Lightfoot, *A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica*, Volume 2 (Matthew, Mark), p. 36].

Rekem = Midian, for Rekem is a king of the Midianites (Num. 31:8, Josh. 13:21) and Josephus [*Antiquities*, IV.7.1] identifies Rekem with Petra (= Sela, II Kings 14:7), the capital of ancient Edom with its remains in modern-day Jordan (on the southeastern border with Israel) and the site of many religious groups. According to the map of modern Jordan in [Funk & Wagnalls, 1983, Volume 15, p. 104], Petra is 100 miles from Jerusalem. Thus Matthew, in the language of his day, is telling us the Magi traveled 100 miles to see Herod the Great in their quest for Messiah. This trip could not have taken much more than one month. The Magi themselves were members of an ancient priestly caste of Persia.

- f. Christ was not born long before the death of Herod. The Greek word for the children being slain is **paidas** () from **pais** (παῖς), an all purpose word for childhood, covering infancy to adulthood—this necessitates Luke's qualification of it by the phrase **from two years old and under**. But the terms used for Christ throughout Matt. 2, both before and after the death of Herod, are various inflections of **paidion** (παιδίον) meaning **newborn, infant**. The fact that **paidas** is used for children two years old and

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under and that the term used for Christ is **paidion** proves that He was during this whole chapter a newborn only a few months old.

- g. The Magi left on their journey as soon as they saw the star in His birth sign (see (3) above), i.e. as soon as He was born, and arrived no later than 2–3 months later, so that He was still a new born.
- h. Using Josephus date and the constraints of the word **paidion**, we can now say that

Christ was born in late 5 B.C.E. on 29 September (see A above)

- 5. Accounting error of the Gregorian calendar. When Dionysius Exiguus set up a new calendar using 1 C.E. as the year of Christ's birth, he made a five year error in regard to Augustus Caesar [R. W. Faid, *op. cit.*, p. 79]. Apparently the error is as follows: Augustus ruled as Octavian for the first five years of his reign and then began to reign as Augustus Caesar. This five year error would put the Birth of Christ at 5 B.C.E. (there is no year 0 in these calendars). This fits perfectly with other considerations above.

C. Timeline Of The First Months Of Christ's Earthly Life (using Sections A,B above)

- 1. Christ was born 29 September of 5 B.C.E. on the first day of Feast of Tabernacles in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2, cf. Num. 24:15–19). A bright star/nova appears in the constellation Desired One in the sign of the Virgin (Virgo).
- 2. Christ was circumcised 6 October of 5 B.C.E. on the eighth and last day of Feast of Tabernacles (Luke 2:21)
- 3. Mary's time of purification was completed 40 days after the birth of Christ on 7 November of 5 B.C.E. (Lev. 12:2, Luke 2:22).
- 4. Mary and Joseph and Christ are in the Temple to render the sacrifice Moses commanded of a poor family (Lev. 12:2, Luke 2:24) around 8 November of 5 B.C.E.
- 5. While in the Temple, Simon and Anna bless God and Christ specifically in regard to Israel's future kingdom hope in the Land.
- 6. Mary and Joseph and Christ return to their house in Bethlehem in time to receive the Magi around 9 November of 5 B.C.E. This cannot occur much later since the Magi have only 100 miles to travel from Petra and they left the night of His birth!! This implies there is a major ellipsis in Luke 2 between 2:39a and 2:39b; and this ellipsis is also supported by the vocabulary of the Greek text in Matthew's account (the *Companion Bible's* notes on Matt. 2: 22 (for **turned aside**) are in error.)
- 7. Assuming that the Magi leave around 10 November of 5 B.C.E., Joseph is then warned in a dream to take Mary and Christ to Egypt (Matt. 2:12–14). Egypt is a different province of the Roman empire and is a safe haven.
- 8. Assuming that they travel in haste (maybe 10 miles a day or more), they are safely in Egypt by around 24 November of 5 B.C.E. since the Egyptian border is a little less than 100 miles away. The gifts of the Magi may have provided income and sustenance over the next months (Lightfoot's suggestion). During this time Herod grows suspicious of the Magi.
- 9. Herod kills all the children of Bethlehem of 2 years and under (Matt. 2:16–18) in winter of 5–4 B.C.E.
- 10. Herod dies on 13 March of 4 B.C.E. on the night before Passover during an eclipse of the moon.

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11. After Herod's death, Joseph returns Mary and Christ to Israel to Nazareth (Matt. 2:13,19–23, Luke 2:39b), probably by April of 4 B.C.E.
 12. The whole timeline is about 6 months, which is consistent with Christ in the whole period being a **paidion** according to Luke, both before AND after Herod's death.
- D. Four Solstices And Equinoxes The conceptions and births of the miraculous conceptions and births of John the Baptist and Christ account for the four changes of seasons.
1. Conception of John the Baptist is at the summer solstice (24 June)
 2. Birth of Christ is at the fall equinox (29 September)
 3. Conception of Christ at the winter solstice (25 December)
 4. Birth of John at the spring equinox (28 March)
- E. Practice Of Christmass
1. Anti-historical: wrong time of year, wrong year (Christendom celebrated 2000 as the Year of the Lord!), etc.
 2. Anti-logical: it is a flagrant contradiction to celebrate the birth of Christ on 25 December and the annunciation of Michael to the shepherds on 29 September.
 3. Anti-Pauline: it is plain rebellion against the gospel and law Christ gave Paul since such law forbids any religious symbol, holyday, sabbath, ritual meal, etc—Gal. 4:8–11, Col. 2:8–23, in order, in context, in the Greek text. See also the 14 sessions of the Pauline Bootcamp at www.tgfonline.org. Those who openly defy this law are not justifying themselves by works before others and should examine themselves whether they are justified at all.

IV. Human Lineage Of Christ

- A. Legal Role Of Joseph. Joseph was the legal and adoptive father of Christ.
1. Joseph named Christ "Jesus" as instructed by the angel, both at His birth (Matt. 1:25) and at His circumcision (Luke 2:21).
 2. Joseph registered/redeemed Christ as his son after Mary's purification (Luke 2:22–24).
 3. Joseph is recognized as Christ's legal father in the geneology of Luke. The reading of Luke 3:23—**as was supposed**—is a mistranslation. The Greek **'enomizeto** from **nomizw** (*νομίζω*), part of the **nomos** (*νόμος*) word group (meaning **law**), has as its root meaning **to legitimize, reckon as legal** and in its usage generally means **customary, think, suppose**. It occurs 15 times, fourteen times in a non-legal context and once in a legal context. This legal context is Luke 3:23, in which it means **registered according to law, named according to law, recorded according to law**.
 - a. This is a legal context because it is a geneological issue and context.
 - b. Geneologies are extremely legal issues for Jews of this time. Line of descent was extremely important at any time, especially so after the return from Babylon. The geneologies were legal documents recorded on scrolls kept in both public and private repositories for the precise purpose of establishing lineages. Everything was recorded: even if one were a bastard with a known mother but uncertain father, for bastards were an officially recognized stock of the Sanhedrin. See [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 2 (Matthew, Mark), pp. 1–15 on Matt. 1:1–16].
 - c. Matthew and Luke (in Luke 3) are working from publicly available scrolls (even as Moses had documents to work from)—under the oversight of the Holy Spirit.

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- d. Christ was registered in these official scrolls as Joseph's son since geneology is a legal, documentarian issue. This meets the burden from the context to give a uniquely occurring meaning to **nomizw** in keeping with its root meaning.
 - e. The point of **nomizw** is NOT that "people generally assumed Christ to have Joseph as His biological father", BUT that in the geneological record, "Joseph was officially recorded as Christ's father"
 - f. This was not dishonest since the rabbis allowed for adoption and recognized sonship and fathership for one so adopted: see the citations of [Lightfoot, *loc. cit.*].
4. Joseph was apparently well-known and reputable among the sages. From [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), p. 53] is this citation of the rabbis:

"Abnimus Gardenius asked the Rabbins of blessed memory whence the earth was first created. They answer him, 'There is no one skilled in these matters, but go thou to *Joseph the builder.*' He went and found him standing among the rafters."

B. Royal Line Through Joseph (Matt. 1:1–17)

1. Joseph's line comes forward from Abraham as the progenitor of the Nation, with special emphasis on Christ as the Son of David.
2. Joseph's line goes through Solomon, the royal son of David (II Sam. 7:12–16, I Chron. 22:9; 28:5, I Kings 1).
3. Joseph's line, to which Christ is entitled by being legally his Son, is the line of Messianic entitlement and shows that Christ is the Messiah of Israel, Who stands before God on behalf of the Elect of Israel (Is. 52:13–53:12, Dan. 7:9–28).
4. This geneology is a series of three 14's. The numerical meaning is that of divine completeness from the triune Godhead.

C. Legal Line Through Mary (Luke 3:23–38)

1. The geneology of Luke 3:23–38 is in fact Mary's line.
 - a. While Matthew 1 is written from Joseph's point of view, Luke 1–2 are from Mary's point of view. Consistent with this, the geneology of Luke 3 should be from Mary's point of view, i.e. be Mary's.
 - b. The context begins with the declaration of Christ as the Beloved Son of God in Luke 3:22 and ends in Luke 3:38 with the phrase "**of God**".
 - c. The purpose of this geneology is to confirm His humanity as the Son of God (cf. Luke 1:35) by giving the males of His biological, human lineage.
 - d. As discussed above, Christ is first stated to have been registered as Joseph's son to make the point that Joseph is NOT of this male lineage
 - e. Lightfoot's citation of the Mosaic style of geneology from Gen. 36:2 remains unanswered by the gainsayers [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), pp. 54–55]
Gen. 36:2, cf. 24–25. ... **and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite. And these [are] the children of Zibeon: both Ajah and Anah—he [being the] Anah who found the hot springs in the desert as he tended the asses for Zibeon his father. And the children of Anah [are] these: Dishon, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah.**
 - i. If we take Verse 2 to mean a succession of daughters, thereby making Anah the daughter of Zibeon, then we contradict the data of Verse 24 that "Anah" repeatedly takes a male pronoun in the Hebrew text (even moreso than the AV indicates).

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- ii. Biblical geneologies are patrilineal. This is true in Gen. 36 and in Luke 3. In particular, Anah is listed as a link in the geneology stemming from Esau.
- iii. The unavoidable conclusion in context is that *Anah is male*.
- iv. We must now relearn how to read the language of Verse 2. The only resolution is as follows:

Aholibamah [is] the daughter of Anah [and therefore] the [grand]daughter of Zibeon the Hivite.

This means that "Aholibamah" is the subject of the entire sentence and the subject does not shift from "Aholibamah" to "Anah".

- f. Luke does not use the term **son** in Luke 3:23–38, except when he states that Christ is legally registered as Joseph's adopted son. The formula that Luke uses throughout is **of ____** indicating biological origin. Restated, Luke always uses the formula for biological origin—**of ____**—EXCEPT when stating Christ was registered as Joseph's (adopted) son.
- g. Note that Luke's Greek syntax has NO **which/who** or **was**, simply **of ____**. The standard translations are greatly confusing and are, it seems to me, arrogant to put **which** or **who** in regular type and not in italics, thereby implying that Luke gave these pronouns. This gives the false impression of a succession of grammatical subjects, which is in fact not the case and in fact what Luke did NOT write.
- h. The translators were also inconsistent in how they treated the participles of Verse 23, which we correct in the following comments.
- i. Applying our reading lesson from Gen. 36:2,24–25 to Luke 3:22–38, applying the normative hermeneutic and the Law of Precedence, the Greek text literally translated **"Thou art My Son the Beloved—in Thee I have delighted. And Jesus, beginning to be about 30 years of age and being registered as the son of Joseph, [was] of Heli, [was] of Matthat, ... , [was] of Adam, [was] of God.**

must be read in this way:

"Thou art My Son the Beloved—in Thee I have delighted. And Jesus, beginning to be about 30 years of age and being registered as the son of Joseph, [was] of Heli and of Matthat and ... and of Adam and of God.

The grammatical subject of this entire sentence is **Jesus** throughout in accordance with the geneological style of Moses. Lightfoot is correct.

- j. Summary: Luke's geneology is that of Mary for each of the following reasons:
 - i. It is a list of male forbears of Christ not including Joseph.
 - ii. It differs markedly from that of Matthew which is explicitly identified as the geneology of Joseph.
 - iii. The sages recognize Mary as the daughter of Heli, for they mock her as follows in the citations of [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), p. 55] and [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 1 (R. Laird Harris, Introduction, p. v)] from the Jerusalem Talmud [Hieros. Hagigah, folio 77a]:

"He [a certain person having a vision of the underworld] saw Mary the daughter of Heli in deep darkness." R. Lazar ben Josah said "she hung by the grandules of her breasts". R. Josah bar Haninah said "the great bar of hell's gate hung at her ear."

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2. Mary's line goes back to David through Nathan (Luke 3:31).
 - a. Nathan is consistently listed first among the two surviving sons of Bathsheba: II Sam. 5:14, I Chron. 3:5; 14:4. This implies that there is an ellipsis in II Sam. 12:24.
 - b. Thus there is a rival line legally in Nathan of whom was Mary and therefore Christ.
- D. Adamic Line Through Mary. Mary's line goes backward to Adam; but Christ's *humanity* goes back through Adam to God Himself. Thus He is the Logos Incarnate, and His humanity is directly from the Holy Spirit on the "paternal" side and ultimately from the Holy Spirit on the maternal side.
 1. This shows that Christ is the fulfillment of Gen. 3:15.
 2. This shows that Christ is the Last Adam of I Cor. 15:45–47.
 3. This shows that Christ is the Savior of the Nations, Who stands before God on behalf of the Righteous of the Nations as the Perfect Man (Is. 2:1–4; 49:6; 60, 61:4–6, Amos 9:9–12, Zech. 8:23, Luke 2:32).
- E. Unification Of David's House In Christ
 1. By being registered as Joseph's legal son, Christ is an heir of Solomon.
 2. By being the biological offspring of Mary, Christ is an heir of Nathan, Solomon's older brother.
 3. Thus in Christ are legally united these two lines, making Christ the unique and sole claimant to the Throne of David, on which David himself will sit as vice-regent for Christ (cf. Ezek. 37:24–25; cf. 45:22).
- F. Birth Family
 1. Psalm 69:8.

**I am become a stranger to my brothers
And a foreigner to my mother's children**

- a. Psalm 69:1–36 presents One Who is commissioned to a reproach on behalf of Elect Israel before God, Who is put to death, Who waits for deliverance from death being permanent (i.e. resurrection), and Whose death and resurrection result in Israel's eternal kingdom.
 - i. This psalm is not describing David.
 - ii. This psalm is describing Messiah.
 - iii. Many verses throughout are acknowledged to be specifically fulfilled in Christ.
 - iv. The entire psalm is about Christ and His enemies of the Second Generation.
- b. Verse 8 specifically mentions His mother (but not His father), His brothers, and His mother's children.
- c. The Hebrew term **brethren** stems from **ahgh**, the latter occurring about 621 times in the Hebrew O.T. The following are observed:
 - i. **Ahgh** with rare exception is used of a true blood brother or sibling, one who is at least a half-brother: cf. Gen. 4:2 (first mention); 37:4–.
 - ii. It is always the case, unless this passage is the exception, that **ahgh** in the context of family relations of the same generation (as opposed to members of the same nations or alliance or descendants of common ancestor, ...) always means a true blood brother or sibling. Since the context does not present overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the normative hermeneutic forces that meaning here as well.
- d. The parallelism with **mother's children** proves that **brethren** MUST be blood brothers or siblings.

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- e. Ps. 69:8 teaches that Messiah had brothers and that at time of His expiation, His brothers had no regard for Him.
 - f. This psalm denies completely the perpetual virginity of Mary.
2. Matt. 1:24–25.
- a. A celibate marriage, never consummated, expressly violates the Mosaic Law (e.g. Ex. 21:10–11). Since Joseph and Mary were righteous people who observed the Law (Matt. 1:19, Luke 1:27–29; 2:21–24), they would consummate their marriage as soon as it was possible to do that.
 - b. Joseph **absolutely-not knew her until the-point [when] she brought forth her firstborn son.**
 - i. **Until the-point** translates ‘ews ‘ou (‘έως ‘οὔ), ‘ews meaning **until, as far as, as long as** and ‘ou meaning **where.**
 - ii. ‘ews occurs in LXX hundreds of times (too many to count as of now), often (usually?) as a replacement for the Hebrew **ghd**, which means by usage **up to the point of, but not beyond.** That seems to be the common usage of ‘ews in LXX (e.g. Gen. 3:19, Job 14:12) as well.
 - iii. ‘ews occurs in Greek N.T. 147 times (that I counted), and the universal usage seems to be **up to the point of, but not beyond.** See Matt. 1:17; 2:9.
 - iv. ‘ews in the secular documents has meaning **up to the point of, but not beyond** when describing extent; e.g., **leave the tools with them UNTIL I send the money** [M&M, pp. 270–271].
 - v. We are FORCED to say that ‘ews ‘ou means **up to the point of, but not beyond** unless the context FORCES otherwise, which it does not, for see Matt. 1:17; 2:9.
 - vi. We are required to conclude from the normative hermeneutic (II Tim.2:15) that *Joseph knew Mary as soon as she had recovered from the birth of Christ.*
 - c. The above is confirmed by the fact that Mary is said here in Matt. 1:25 (in the most ancient readings, despite UBS Third Edition's poorly supported claim to the contrary) and in Luke 2:7 to have to brought for here **first-born (prwtotokos)** and not her **only-born (monogenhs)**. Since the latter word was available and so used, the former infers that in fact she had later children, but that Christ was her firstborn.
3. Christ is specifically stated to have **brothers, sisters** (Matt. 12:46,47; 13:53–58, Mark 3:31–35 (cf. 21—‘oi par’ ’autou = **His birth family**); 6:1–8, Luke 18:19–21, John 2:12; 7:1–9). We analyze the case for **brother** and leave the case of **sister** to the reader to ferret out.
- a. **Brother** translates **adelphos** (‘αδελφός).
 - b. **Adelphos** occurs some 940 times in LXX, and in every occurrence in which there is a Hebrew underlying text (such as in the canon)—save 13 occurrences—it is a 1-1 replacement for the Hebrew **ahgh** studied above. With these rare exceptions, it means **blood brother, male sibling.** This is the normative meaning which **MUST** be assigned unless the context compels otherwise; but it does not in the passages in question.
 - c. **Adelphos** occurs around 344 times in Greek N.T. and in EVERY CASE where family relationship of the same generation is being described, it means **blood brother, male sibling.** It must mean that in the above passages unless there is **COMPELLING** evidence to the contrary; but there is no such evidence.

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- d. **Adelphos** in the papyri is used of husbands (but the context so clearly indicates) and friends and co-religionists, but most of the latter citations are from the 2nd–4th century A.D. [M&M, pp. 8–9].
- e. Therefore Christ had actual blood brothers and blood sisters.
- f. Further points:
 - i. Family relationship is usually expressed in Greek N.T. by **suggenhs** (*συγγενής*): the concordance is Mark 6:4, Luke 1:36,58; 2:44; 14:12; 21:16, John 18:26, Acts 10:24, Rom. 9:3; 16:7,11,21. In fact, **adelphos** is explicitly distinguished from **suggenhs** in Luke 14:12; 21:16. Thus, if James, Jude, Simon, Joseph, and His sisters were really "cousins", then the inspired writers, in accordance with the normative hermeneutic (II Tim. 2:15), would have used **suggenhs**; but they did not, so they are not—thus another unanswerable proof that these were real siblings and that Mary was their common mother.
 - ii. It is definitely non-normative in Semitic, polygamous practice for adult children to "hang-out" with a wife or a woman not their own mother. If the Roman Catholic view be correct, then one may ask "Why don't James, Jude, Simon, Joseph hang out with their own mother?"
 - iii. There is no religious/spiritual reason for James, Jude, Simon, Joseph to accompany the mother of Christ—especially since they did not believe Christ and were in fact quite disrespectful of Him (John 7:1–9)—unless she were their mother as well.
4. Archeological evidence—see Appendix III. If this bone-box is genuine, then James was a real brother to Christ, for the inscription reinforces just about every point made above.

V. Childhood And Early Manhood Of Christ

A. Early Childhood: Importance Of Nazareth And Galilee

1. Joseph returns his family from Egypt to Nazareth in Galilee: Matt. 2:19–23, Luke 2:39 (ellipsis as noted in III.C above). Galilee is in the extreme north, north of Samaria.
2. Christ therefore to be known as a Nazarene (Matt. 2:23).
3. The root meaning of Nazareth and Nazarene is **separation** and is related to the Hebrew **netzer** used in Is. 11:1, a Messianic reference.
 - a. A Nazarene in the sense of one separated unto Jehovah vow is described in Num. 6:1–21, Judges 13:3–5. Such was Sampson, a type of Messiah. Christ was perfectly and sinlessly dedicated to Jehovah from His conception (Luke 1:35).
 - b. Nazareth and Galilee were held in disregard generally and especially despised by Second Generation rabbis.
 - i. John 1:45–46; 7:41–42,52, cf. Is. 9:1, Matt. 4:15.
 - ii. No great rabbis were in Nazareth and only four rabbis in all of Galilean history are ever acknowledged by the sages [Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Volume 1, p. 226, footnote 2] and correspondingly there were no academies in Nazareth. By comparison there were 44 rabbinical academies in Jerusalem alone at the time.

"There was a general contempt in Rabbinic circles for all that was Galilean" [Edersheim, *op. cit.*, I:225].

This is in keeping with my readings of the sages.

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- c. Christ's growing up in Nazareth separated Him not only unto God but away from His nation and its religious establishment. Having no great rabbi or academy to tutor Him during His formative years, He was tutored from the Scriptures directly—by copies available at home, in a local school of instruction, etc—by unction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit (Ps. 1; 119 (all of it, especially 97–104), Luke 2:40).
- d. Christ is contemptuously described by the sages and sometimes referred to as the Nazarene. Also, Second Generation believers are sometimes referred to as Nazarenes (cf. Acts 24:5) in contempt:

"May we produce no son or pupil who disgraces himself in public like the Nazarene." [Berakoth, folio 17b (Manuscript M)]

As for the Books of a house of Christians, may we save them from a fire or not?—Yes and No, and he [R. Abbahu] was uncertain about the matter. Rab would not enter a house of Christians, and certainly not a house of Nazarenes [Jewish Christians]. Samuel would not enter a house of Nazarenes, yet he would enter a house of Christians. Raba was asked: Why did you not attend at the house of Christians? A certain palm tree stands in the way, replied he, and it is difficult for me [to pass it]." [Shabbat, folio 116a].

"It was taught: On the eve of Passover Yeshu the Nazarene was hanged. For forty days before the execution took place, a herald went forth and cried, 'He is going forth to be stoned because he practiced sorcery and enticed Israel to apostasy. Anyone who can say anything in his favor, let him come forward and plead on his behalf.' But since nothing was brought forward in his favor, he was hanged on the eve of Passover!—Ulla retorted: Do you suppose he was one for whom a defense could be made? Was he not an enticer, concerning whom the Scripture says 'Neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him.' With Yeshu, however, it was different, for he was connected with the government [or royalty]." [Sanhedrin, folio 43a (Manuscript M)].

It should be noted for future reference that the above citation from Tractate Sanhedrin absolutely confirms the N.T.'s claim that the Jewish leadership instigated and arranged for the murder of Christ (even if the Romans did the actual nailing). The section immediately following the one just quoted has 5 of 12 apostles being brought before the Sanhedrin for execution (after the scribes and these 5 engage in the "dirty dozens" with the 5 coming off second best (of course) and then going to their deaths). The modern claim that the rabbinical leadership of Second Generation Israel, and Second Generation generally, are not responsible for the murder of Christ is a baldfaced lie—indeed the above citation indicates the Romans were a hindrance to their plans to execute Him.

- 4. Summary: Christ developed in Nazareth free of rabbinical traditions and therefore **grew strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him** (Luke 2:40). To the Jewish mind, the placement of His childhood in Nazareth in Luke 2:39 and His subsequent perfect development in Israel's scriptures in Luke 2:40 are intimately connected.
- 5. Comparison with patriarchal Joseph.
 - a. Joseph was isolated from his brothers (Gen. 37, 39–47):
 - i. He was the only son (at that time) with Rachel as his mother.

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- ii. He was the favored son.
 - iii. He was the only recorded son with prophetic gifts
 - iv. He was hated by his brothers for his claims of superior position which was promised him in prophetic dreams.
 - v. He was betrayed for 20 pieces of silver.
 - vi. He redeems his brothers and family from famine and Canaan.
 - b. Christ was isolated from His brothers and His nation (Ps. 69:8, Matt. 1:25; 12:46,47; 13:53–58, Mark 3:31–35 (cf. 21—‘**oi par**’ ‘**autou = His birth family**’); 6:1–8, Luke 18:19–21, John 2:12; 7:1–9—see IV.F above):
 - i. He was the only Son of His Father.
 - ii. He was the firstborn son of Mary and the legal firstborn son of Joseph.
 - iii. He was the only Son before His resurrection with the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - iv. He was disrespected of all His brothers until after His resurrection.
 - v. He was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.
 - vi. He redeems the Elect of His Nation from sin to an eternal earthly kingdom.
- B. Middle Childhood And Adolescence
1. Freedom from vocational training until age 12: Luke 2:40–42,51a. Compare with the sages:

"R. Issac stated: 'It was ordained at Usha that a man deal gently with his son until he is 12 years old, but from that time let him descend with him into his way of living' [Ketubot, folio 50a]."
 2. Special unction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit: Ps. 119:97–104, Luke 2:40–49, John 7:15.
 - a. Christ had a perfect human spirit dominating His perfect human soul and driving Him to learn the Scriptures with all His ability as soon as He was able.
 - b. The Holy Spirit was the perfect Teacher, teaching Him precisely in accord with what He could learn for a given age and stage of development.
 - c. Christ had this special instruction and unction in an environment—Nazareth—free of overt rabbinical influence (see A(3,4) above).
 - d. By age 12, He was a complete Master of the Scriptures for Himself.
 - e. The rabbis marvelled that He knew the Scriptures completely, yet had attended no rabbinical academy (John 7:15). Of course, He had this mastery of the Scriptures in part because He had attended no such academy.
 3. *Christ at age 12 respectfully insists on His right and place to sit as the True Doctor of the Law in the Great Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, to truly and purely sit in Moses' seat and perform the Father's business (Matt. 23:1–2, Luke 2:41–49).*
 - a. This event took in Spring of 8 or 9 C.E. depending on the reading of **twelve years old**.
 - i. Christ was 12 years old on 29 September of 8 B.C.—He was born 29 September of 5 B.C.E. If this is the Passover of His 12th year, then the Passover in question took place in Spring of 8 C.E.
 - ii. If this is the Passover after He is 12 years old, then this took place in His 13th year in Spring of 9 C.E.
 - b. Hillel the Elder—the famous Hillel that all modern rabbis do homage to—was the Nasi (president of the Sanhedrin) until 10 C.E. [Funk & Wagnalls, 1983, Volume 13, p. 104]. This means that Hillel chaired the Sanhedrin at the time of this particular Passover.

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- c. This Hillel is viewed as the founder of the "liberal" interpretation of Scripture. This relates to what follows.
- i. He apparently denied that there would be an actual Messiah or an actual national future in accord with the hope of the Prophets.
"R. Hillel said, 'There shall be no Messiah for Israel, because they have already enjoyed him in the days of Hezekiah.'" [Sanhedrin, folio 99a]. There is dispute whether this is the same Hillel; but there is no evidence it is not and it seems to me consistent with a liberal view of Scripture to have a Messiah-idea and the days of Hezekiah be the Messianic age-idea.
 - ii. Hillel taught that the first and great and foremost commandment of the Law was that one should love their neighbor as themselves. I have read this in the sages but cannot locate the reference at this time.
- d. The Great Sanhedrin met in an official chamber in the inner court of the Temple called the Hall of Hewn Stones. During Sabbaths and festival days, such as the eight days of Passover and Unleavened Bread for this Passover season, the Sanhedrin sat in an open court of the Temple in public session to answer questions.
"They all proceeded to the Hall of Hewn Stones, where they [the Great Sanhedrin] sat from the morning burnt offering until the evening burnt offering; on Sabbaths and festivals they sat within the *hel* [an open court within the fortification of the Temple] {Sanhedrin, folio 88b}.
This is where Christ would be during the festival days.
- e. The events of Luke 2:46–47 were a three day period AFTER the festival was finished (Luke 2:43), and hence after the conclusion of this open forum. Hence the events of the three days of Luke 2:46–47 were in the official Hall of Hewn Stones. So there was public discussion between Christ and the Sanhedrin followed by three days in closed session in chambers.
- f. **THREE DAYS ... HE SAT IN THE MIDST OF THE DOCTORS OF THE LAW** (Luke 2:46). Before the demise of the Temple, the doctors would sit while instructing and their disciples would stand while being instructed.
- i. The Scriptures say:
 - 1) The God of Israel, the Ancient of Days, sits: Numbers 24:10 + Dan. 7:9.
 - 2) Moses stood while receiving the Law from the Ancient of Days: Deut. 5:31.
 - 3) The congregation stood while learning the Law: Neh. 8:5–8.
 - ii. The sages say:
"R. Abbahu further said: 'How do we know that the master should not sit on a couch and teach his disciples while they sit on the ground? Because it says, But for thee [Moses], do thou stand here by me [Ancient of Days while He instructed Moses, Deut. 5:31].' Our rabbis taught: 'From the days of Moses to Rabban Gamaliel, the Torah was learnt only standing. When Rabban Gamaliel died ... they learnt the Torah sitting.'" [Megillah, folio 21a]. Note that this is Gamaliel the Younger of Jabneh, who lived to see the Temple destroyed. So the rule stated here applied from the giving of the Law to the destruction of the Temple.

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"R. Judah ordained R. Levi ben Susi for a doctor to the Simonians. They made him a great chair and placed him in it. Then propounded [they] questions to him." [citation in Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), p. 47]

"Someone stood and inquired, 'Is the evening prayer compulsory or optional?' ... Rabban Gamaliel remained sitting and expounding." [Berokot, folio 27b]

- g. Christ not only sat amongst the doctors of the Law, but he did so **BOTH HEARING THEM AND ASKING THEM QUESTIONS; AND ALL THAT HEARD HIM WERE ASTONISHED AT HIS UNDERSTANDING AND ANSWERS** (Luke 2:46–47). This phraseology of Luke is almost word-for-word a *job description for members of the Sanhedrin*. The sages say:

"In a city where are not two great wise men, one fit to teach and instruct in the whole law, the other who knows how to hear and ask and answer, they do not constitute a Sanhedrin, although there are a 1,000 Israelites there." [citation in Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), p. 48]

"Rab Judah said in Rab's name: 'a Sanhedrin must not be established in a city which does not contain [at least] two who can speak and one who understands them. In the city of Bethar there were three and in Jabneh there were four: R. Eliezer, R. Johsua, R. Akiba, and Simeon the Temanite, who discussed/judged before them sitting on the ground.'" [Sanhedrin, folio 17b].

The Soncino footnote explains: "Because he [Simeon] was as yet unqualified owing to his immaturity [youth], yet he was allowed to take part in the discussion." [Sanhedrin, p. 88, footnote (1)]. Even though a youth and therefore technically unqualified, Simeon nonetheless is accounted as part of the Sanhedrin of Jabneh because of his mastery of the Law and rabbinical traditions.

Lightfoot explains: "By him who hears they mean one skillful in the traditions, that can propound questions, and [yet] answer every question propounded. Such a one was Simeon the Temanite ...". [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), p. 48]

- h. The oral law (Mishnah) made specific allowance for "guest members" to sit with the Sanhedrin. For example:

"But if a disciple [of the accused] says, 'I have something to plead in his favor [the accused]', he is brought up and seated with them [Sanhedrin] and does not descend from there all the day; if there is substance in his statement, he is heard." [Sanhedrin, folio 40a].

- i. As incredible as we might regard the youthful Simeon the Temanite, and even more incredible the youngest ever Nasi (president of Sanhedrin), R. Eleazer ben Azariah of 16 years of age (!) [Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, Volume 3 (Luke, John), p. 48], then Christ of age 12 doing this must viewed as miraculous and a clear indication of His Messiahship—**never man spake as this man** (John 7:46), but also never Child spake as this Child!
- j. I am deeply indebted to Lightfoot for bringing this matter to my attention and I am flabbergasted at what the Scriptures are saying about Christ, given the rabbinical vocabulary Luke has used so exactly. Let us summarize the main points:

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- i. Christ spent His childhood in Nazareth, an agrarian setting far removed from the rabbis and their academies.
- ii. He was trained in His humanity by the Holy Spirit, constantly and perfectly in absolute accord with the Scriptures themselves and those rabbinical traditions consistent with the Scriptures, but not according to any tradition contrary to the Scriptures.
- iii. At every stage of His development, He was schooled by the Holy Spirit consistent with that stage of development.
- iv. By age 12, He was a master of Scriptures in every way and submitted to the Scriptures in every way, and He understood Who He was in relation to those Scriptures (Luke 2:49). When He recited the psalms, He knew which portions spoke specifically of Him and He sang these personally to the Father. He understood perfectly those Prophets speaking of His Deity (e.g. Ps. 45:1–10, Is. 9:6; 48:12–16 (Hebrew text)) and His humanity (e.g. Is. 7:14).
- v. He went to the Temple and rendered the ceremonial requirements with His mother and step-father and the Scriptures for the very feast that speaks of His death, burial, and resurrection (Passover + Unleavened Bread + Firstfruits—Firstfruits would occur somewhere in the 8 day period of Passover + Unleavened Bread).
- vi. He went to the Temple as a child entering adulthood, apparently present at the open discussions of the Sanhedrin during the festival week (**and having completed these days** (Luke 2:43)), at the conclusion of which they invite Him to sit with them in the great Hall of Hewn Stones of the Sanhedrin to ask questions and discuss matters more completely.
- vii. For **THREE DAYS** (Luke 2:46), He asks them questions, evaluates their answers, and gives the absolutely correct answers to His and their questions, free of rabbinical distortions, derived only from the Scriptures of which He was now the Perfect Master. His parents find Him in the Hall of the Hewn Stones sitting with the Sanhedrin.
- viii. My conjecture is that much of the discussion of those three days when He was 12 is essentially that which takes place later in His Messianic ministry; more precisely, discussions in later years in which He calls on them to return to the Scriptures took place when He was 12. At the same time, He could not and would not deny Who He was as the Logos and Messiah, confirming this by the sheer miracle of His having been tutored directly by the Spirit and the miracle of His answers and complete mastery of the Scriptures; while later confirmation of His being the Messiah awaited His anointing with John's baptism and charismatic empowerment when He was 30. Later, as a grown man, He is intolerable and worthy of death, particularly when His doctrine is confirmed by miracles of every sort in fulfillment of the Prophets. It is hard to imagine that statements and discussions like the following, or the equivalent, did NOT take place in those three days (John 5:21,23,37; 8:42,58; 10:30,38; 17:5, Matt. 22:35–46) before the Sanhedrin chaired by Hillel himself:

For as the Father raises up the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. ... That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son honors not the Father Who sent Him

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(cf. Ps. 45:1–10, Is. 48:12–16 (Hebrew text), etc.). ... **You are searching the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; but these are they which speak of Me.**

If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I proceeded forth and came out of God (Greek text). ... Truly, truly I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM.

I and My Father are One. ... The Father is in Me and I am in Him. (Cf. O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thyself, with the glory I had with Thee before the world was.)

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked, testing Him, and saying, "Master, what is the great commandment of the Law?" And Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy thinking and with all thy self and with all thy mind—this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

While the Pharisees [= Sanhedrin] were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, "What think ye of Messiah, Whose Son is He?" They say unto Him, "Of David." He said unto them, "How then does David in Spirit call Him Lord—'The Lord said unto my Lord "Sit Thou at My Right Hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." ' If David then call Him Lord, how is He His Son?" And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither dared any from that day forth ask Him any more.

- ix. It would seem remarkable that every scribe alive when He was 12 was dead when He was 33 and on trial before the Sanhedrin for His life and even more remarkable that their disciples would all be dead when He was 33. Gamaliel the Elder was alive and young when Christ was in their midst at 12; and Gamaliel chaired the Sanhedrin when Christ was on trial for His life. And it would seem remarkable that every scribe alive at His birth, when the Magi inquired of Herod and the Sanhedrin, would be dead when He sat in their midst when He was 12.
- 1) This means they KNEW that this Child before them at 12 was exactly the age of the One concerning which the Magi had inquired and the exactly the age of the One whom Daniel had prophesied in Dan. 9, for they could do the arithmetic which we have done in Section III above. They had to know that this One Who knew the Scriptures perfectly, unlike any they had ever seen and without rabbinical training, must be the One born 12 years before.
 - 2) This means they KNEW they could not answer Him when He was 12 and they could not answer Him when He was 30 and they could not answer His miracles when He was 30. They were relieved when He returned to Nazareth, and horrified when He reappeared 18 years later. Thus, at the tender age of 12, He had thrown down the gauntlet, challenged the leadership of the Second Generation, and claimed Deity and Messiahship.
- x. Truly, He was **about His Father's business** during these three miraculous days (Luke 2:49–50).

C. Early Manhood Prior To His Baptism

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1. He apprentices to His legal father Joseph and learns the latter's trade and is overall subject to His parents. See B(1) above.
 2. He takes His place as a Rabbi and Methurgemon and Reader in the synagogue in Nazareth: Luke 4:16–21.
 - a. **As His custom was, He ... stood up for to read.** There are several official roles in the meeting of a synagogue: the Methurgemon, the Reader, the Rabbi. Here Christ is the Reader (cf. **the reading one** of Rev. 1:3) and the Methurgemon, since He is to translate from the Hebrew text into the Aramaic vernacular.
 - b. **And He closed the book, and He gave it back to the minister [chazzan] and SAT down ... and He began to say unto them.** This shows that He is also the Darshan (preacher), a role usually filled by a rabbi who usually spoke in Hebrew, with an interpreter (Methurgemon) or Amora at his side to translate into the vernacular. But Christ preached to them in Aramaic without an interpreter. Thus He is Rabbi and Methurgemon at the same time.
 - c. This event takes place after His baptism and temptations, so He is in or past His 30th year. But the text says **as His custom was**. Thus He filled these roles in the synagogue prior to His 30th year.
 - d. Given His sitting amongs the doctors in the Sanhedrin at age 12, it seems reasonable to say that He began to serve in the synagogue not too long after, and certainly by early manhood.
 3. It would seem that His legal father Joseph is not alive by the time of His earthly ministry (there is no mention of Joseph whatever later) and thus Christ had assumed the firstborn's obligations to provide for His mother and siblings by the trade which He had learned from Joseph. In this way He honored His legal father and His mother.
- D. Model For Third Generation
1. Christ is typified by the Third Generation (Is. 66:7–9) as the manner of their birth—all these Jewish women conceive on the same day.
 2. Christ is typified by the Third Generation (I John 1:20–21) as to their unction of the Holy One. The Third Generation is conceived the day that Body of Christ is raptured, so they have no regenerate teachers on earth, but are taught by the angels as empowered by the Holy Spirit.

VI. Purposes Of Incarnation Of Christ

- A. Pre-Purpose: To Head Non-Ethnic Body Of Christ Under construction (cf. Pauline Bootcamp)
- B. Purpose: To Messiah Israel Under construction (cf. Pauline Bootcamp)
- C. Purpose: To Savior Nations Under construction (cf. Pauline Bootcamp)

Appendix 1: **Trinity In Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud, Other Hebraica** (attached)

Appendix 2: **Virgin Birth Of Christ: Word Studies And Sources** (attached)

Appendix 3: **Archaeological Evidence Of Jesus' Birth Family** (attached)

APPENDIX 1: **Trinity In Hebrew Scriptures, Talmud, Other Hebraica**

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I. Passages and/or Titles in the Law and Prophets teaching a plurality of Persons in the Godhead and identifying the number and roles of these Persons

A. **Elohim**—used throughout O. T. It is the tri-plural form of a word meaning "god, authority, etc". Several references make our point.

Gen. 1:1. **By the Beginning [One] created (singular) the Gods (plural) ...** The preposition **bet** is either locative "in" or instrumental "by", but "in" is not possible—it makes the verse tautologous since the creation is the beginning of time; so this is the instrumental case "by" [cf. Augustine, Confessions XIII.5 and Prov. 8:22-36, Rev 3:14].

Is "**Gods**" the "plural of majesty" only and not **God-Persons**?

1. No, because even the unitarian rabbis in Talmud conceded that **Elohim** indicates three persons—see II.G. below.
2. No, because Moses had at his disposal singular words which can only refer to Absolute Deity: Jehovah, Eloah, Adoni, El-Shaddai, etc. What was Moses' point in not using them?
3. No, because the grammar in several other passages forbids such a view, which passages we now consider.

Job 40:15-24. **Behold now Beasts (plural) which I made with thee ... his (singular personal pronoun) strength ... his (singular personal pronoun) force ... He (singular personal pronoun) is chief of the ways of God ...** [throughout the passage]. **Beasts** is the plural of majesty indicating the largest animal made on the sixth day of creation. This passage and others (cf. Gen.1:25;2:20;6:20;7:14 (**cattle** translates **beasts**)) establish:

Mere plurals of majesty cannot take plural pronouns—they must take singular pronouns. Plural nouns taking plural personal pronouns must refer to plural persons.

Gen. 1:26-7. **And the Gods (plural) said (singular), "Let us (plural) make (singular) man in our (plural) image (singular), after our (plural) likeness (singular) ... And the Gods (plural) created (singular) the man in His (singular) image (singular), in the image (singular) of the Gods (plural) created (singular) He (singular) him ...** Note: angels cannot create de novo; man is not made in the image of angels (but land animals are made in the images of various ranks of cherubim); Verse 27 expressly excludes the angels (made in **His image**); and **us/our** cannot refer to Adam and/or Eve, since we then have the sin of tautology. Therefore **make, image, likeness, etc** refer exclusively to Deity; and so the grammatical rules for the plural of majesty apply to say that God is truly tri-plural in Person since the tri-plural Elohim is the antecedent of tri-plural personal pronouns.

Gen. 3:22;11:7, Isaiah 6:8, etc. As above.

Conclusion for A. God is tri-plural as to Person; this is proved by the use of the tri-plural in conjunction with tri-plural personal pronouns, and two of these Persons are identified—the Beginning One Who is the Word (Who speaks in Gen. 1:3,26, etc), and the Spirit of God (Gen. 1:2). And God is singular in Being and Substance as proved by the singularity of **image, likeness, created, make**. The grammar of plural of majesty, the mere creaturehood of angels, and the ban against tautology completely refute the careless rebuttals of the unitarian rabbis [scrutinize Sanhedrin 244-6, Midrashim I. 59-60].

B. **HaShema**—Deut. 6:4. **Hear, O Israel: Jehovah (singular) our Gods (plural) [is] a unioned/composite Jehovah (singular)**. There are two Hebrew words for **one**: **achad**, used here and meaning a "collection or union of diverse objects, composite unity"; and **yachid**, meaning "absolute singularity" (**yachid** also meant originally "a collection or union ...", but by the time the Hebrew Scriptures were written its meaning had changed). We give a table below (4) with the Biblical references supporting our claims, first noting the following.

1. Moses had available a word indicating "absolute singularity" (**yachid**), but eschewed it in favor of the word which implies plurality within unity (**achad**). These respective meanings are always maintained for the 22 occurrences of **yachid** on one hand and the more than 300 occurrences of **achad** on the other. The grammatico-historical / normative hermeneutic leaves us no choice but to insist that **achad** means composite unity and **yachid** singularity.
2. This adds to, confirms the plural-of-majesty grammatical argument given above that **Elohim** indicates the Three Persons of the Godhead.

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3. This verse is an explicit statement of the Doctrine of the Trinity—it teaches the plurality of the Persons and Their unity as One Being. **Jehovah** indicates the unity of Substance and **Elohim** indicates tri-plurality of Persons. Thus **Jehovah Elohim**, or "LORD God" in the KJV, NAS, etc, is the Hebraic way of saying "Trinity".
4. This is the first fundamental tenet of the Mosaic faith. Moses is explicitly denying the unitarian, impersonal, Absolute Oneness and pantheism of certain world-views on one hand, and the chaotic polytheism of certain other world-views on the other. Furthermore, the Trinity is fundamental to:
 - a. creation, since the God Who creates must have a concept of "other" and understand being generous and unselfish, for creating is an act of unselfishness, and the Three Persons are selfless with respect to each other; and
 - b. law—it is appropriate that the Trinity be emphatically stated at the beginning of the giving of the Second Law, as Israel is about to enter the land and function as a society: community, community laws, love, mercy, justice, etc are all social issues implying a plurality of persons; and the God Who regulates them understands these issues perfectly since He is an eternally successful "community" of Persons in the Divine Essence [see Shedd, Dogmatic Theology I.244-5].

Achad: Representative Usage

Gen. 1:5; 2:24; 29:20; 32:8; 34:16,22; 41:5,25-6; 48:22, Ex. 12:46,49; 16:22; 24:3; 26:6,8,10,11,16-7,19,21,25, Num. 10:4; 13:23; 14:15, Josh. 3:13,16; 6:3,11,14, Jud. 6:16, etc

Yachid: Complete Concordance

Gen. 22:2,12,16, Judges 11:34, Ps. 22:20(21); 25:16; 35:17; 68:6(7), Prov. 4:3, Jer. 6:26, Amos 8:10, Zech. 12:10.

In most of Sections C – L below, the form of the argument is the same: the Person with the title under consideration is identified in a given passage as Deity, and yet that Person is distinguished in that passage from another Person also identified as Deity. This argument is obvious in most passages cited under each heading, so we simply list the passages and only occasionally comment.

C. **The Angel Jehovah / Angel of His Presence / Covenant Angel / Sent Jehovah.** Each passage which asserts the Deity of a Person called the **Angel of Jehovah** (or equivalent terminology) a`fortiori implies Personal Distinction within the Godhead: **Angel (Malak)** means **Sent One**; the genitive **of Jehovah** is the genitive of source indicating the One doing the sending; hence **Angel of Jehovah** indicates a person being sent—**Angel**—who is distinct from another person—**Jehovah**—who does the sending; and if the text in question identifies **Angel** as Deity, then the text implies One Person of Deity is sending Another Person of Deity. Not every occurrence of an angel or of the phrase "angel of Jehovah" is Deity or a reference to Deity, respectively; but the Scriptures frequently describe a Person as **Angel of Jehovah** (or the equivalent) Who in context is given the Divine Name or Divine Titles (recall Isa. 42:8;48:11), Who is worshipped, sacrificed to, described as doing that which only God can do (redeeming, saving, ...), etc, and such passages unanswerably imply the Doctrine of the Trinity. We now list many such passages.

Gen. 16:7-14;18:1-33;21:17-21;22:11-2;32:24-32;35:3,9-15;48:15-6.

Ex. 3:1-18/4:1-13;13:21/14:19;19:18-20/24:9-12;23:20-3.

Num. 22:22-35, Josh. 5:13-6:5, Jud. 2:1-5;6:11-24;13:3-23 (note in Jud. 13:18, **secret** should be translated **wonderful**, a Hebrew occurring 71 times, all of which refer to Deity, and occurs as a name only here and in Isa. 9:6(!)).

Isa. 48:12-17 (Verse 16 reads in the original **and now Adonai Jehovah has sent Me and His Spirit**),

Isa. 63:9-10 (all Three Persons explicitly mentioned).

Zech. 3:1-4 (cf. Isa. 61:10), Mal. 3:1.

Angel Jehovah is identified with the Man of Sorrows: Isa. 52:10;53:1-12 and note the Hebraism—"baring/revealing the arm" is the mark of the messenger (Angel) of Jehovah.

D. **The Word of Jehovah.** Implicitly, the **Jehovah Angel** is the One Who speaks for God and is His Personal Word. But to the passages of C above we add a few more that actually use the terminology **Word of Jehovah** (or the equivalent). The **Word (Memra) of Jehovah** in Targumim is taken up in II.A.

Gen. 3:8. The Voice of Jehovah = the Word of Jehovah.

I Sam. 3:1,3,6-8,10. The Word appeared to Samuel.

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E. **The Son of Jehovah.** These are explicit.

II Sam. 7:14. From the standpoint of the long-term, a Messianic prophecy.

Ps. 2:7-12. Verse 12 should read **Kiss the Son's feet ...** The parallelism between Verse 11 (Serve Jehovah) and Verse 12 (Kiss the Son's feet) identifies the two. Verse 12 ascribes attributes of Deity to the Son.

Prov. 30:4. Does the Spirit record facetious questions about nothing? If not, then the Son is a Person within the Divine Essence.

Isa. 9:6. The Son is expressly called **Eloah** (singular), the title of God used frequently in Scripture, and the **Everlasting Creator**, a title only useable of Deity.

F. **The King of God.** Ps. 45:2,6-7. The title God is used of two distinct Persons of Deity, One of Whom is the King.

G. **The Wisdom of Jehovah.** Prov. 8:12-36. In this passage, Wisdom is described as a person, and hence as a Person of Deity in a certain relationship with another Person of Deity. Time is part of Creation and therefore precisely co-extensive with Creation; hence that which happens before creation is timeless, and so has happened from eternity and continues to happens. With this in mind, we make a few comments.

Verse 22. **Before His works of old** implies the possession of one Person by the other Person is timeless—always has been and always will be.

Verse 23. **Set-up** is a mistranslation. The Hebrew verb is used almost universally in Scripture (and translated) as **POURED-OUT**. Since this is a timeless pouring out, He is saying **I am being poured-out from everlasting**. What plainer language is needed: Wisdom is the eternally begotten and generated Son of Jehovah.

Verse 24. **Brought forth** is literally **twisted-out** or **twirled-out**. Now **twisted-out** is here translated **travail** (of labor) in [J. Green, The Interlinear Bible] and is paralleled in the Hebrew text with **beget** in Isa. 45:10. This explicitly confirms the teaching above: **I am being born when there were no depths**. This in fact is confirming that the poured-out One is being birthed as the Ancient of Days in His manlike form in whose image man was created.

Verses 25-6. Same verb used in Verse 24, with same ramifications.

Verse 27. **Was** is not in the Hebrew text—there is no verb **to be** in Hebrew; the proper verb must be supplied from the context, which is the timelessness of eternity past leading to the appearance of the Ancient of Days. The idea is: **I was already there in eternity, i.e. I AM there.**

Verse 30. **With Him** is literally **at His Side**, i.e. as a full and equal Joint-Participant and Agent. **Brought-up** translates a Hebrew word different from that used in Verses 24-6: the word here means **parented / fostered**; so the **Brought-up One** is literally the **Parented One**, i.e. the **SON**.

There is no equal to this passage in the N. T. or even any systematic theology for the precise theological statement of the eternal begetting and generating of the Son by the Father, as well as His being shaped as the Ancient of Days Who sits visibly as the Icon of the Father.

H. **Immanuel.** The name means "God personally among us" which implies "God as one of us": see Isa. 7:14 in the extended prophetic context of 8:8;9:6.

I. **Branch of Jehovah.** Jer. 23:5-6; cf. Isa. 42:8;48:11; and note that the Branch is distinguished from Jehovah.

J. **Adonim.** Mal. 1:6. **Master** is plural: **Adonim** or **Lords**—**If I am Lords**; cf. Ps. 110:1. **Adon** means "personal master"; this strengthens the notion of Personal Plurality in the Godhead.

K. **The Spirit of Jehovah / The Holy Spirit.** Many passages use "Spirit of Jehovah" of an angel working as an invisible spirit. But many others refer to Deity in a personal way, and/or as distinct from other Persons of Deity. See the references of L below; to these are added Gen. 1:2;6:3, II Sam. 23:2-3, II Chron. 18:23, Neh. 9:20, Ps. 33:6;104:30;139:7-8, Isa. 40:13-4;63:10, Ezek. 37:9-14.

L. Other important passages.

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4. Passages specifying or implying the Three Persons.
Isa. 48:16 (see corrected translation given in C above).

Haggai 2:4-5. The particle **et** indicates either accusative or **with**. The context clearly favors **with the Word** for several reasons: the point is not the covenant but the presence of God among them; this is the sense of **et** at the end of Verse 4 (with you); this passage refers to and fits beautifully with Ex. 23:20-3. Hence Verses 4b-5 should be translated: **For I am with you, says Jehovah of hosts, with the Word [by] Whom I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, and My Spirit abides among you: fear not.** This is precisely the rendering in the Targum Onkelos of Num. 14:30—**you shall [not] come into the land in which I covenanted by My Word to cause you to dwell.**

Ex. 3:2,4;23:20;32:34 (God and the Angel of God bring Israel out of Egypt), Isa. 63:7-14 (The Spirit of God brought Israel out).

Num. 6:24-6, Isa. 6:3. Further proof that **Elohim** was to be understood as precisely Three.

5. Passages specifying or implying distinct Persons in the Godhead.

Gen. 19:24. Unavoidable distinction between Two Persons of Jehovah.

Isa. 41:21-3 In context Jehovah refers to Himself as **we** and **us**. Note the argument given in A above on the use of plural pronouns.

Isa. 44:6 **Jehovah Elohim the King of Israel and His redeemer Jehovah of Hosts.**

II. Rabbinical Citations. The most ancient scribes and rabbis taught the Trinity; these generally predate 200 C. E.. The less ancient rabbis, those generally associated with post-Christian compilation of Talmud (ending 400 C. E. for the Palestinian, 500 C. E. for Babylonian) and Midrashim (from 200 C.E. to 900 C. E.) are unitarian. The shift, in my opinion, is based on factors including the following: the abandonment of the normative hermeneutic or grammatico-historical method in interpreting Scripture in favor of the allegorical method governed by Oral Tradition, and the debates with the Church; i.e., the abandonment of Scriptura Sola coupled with the desire to defend the Pharasaic tradition.

A. **The Targumim**. These are the translations of the Hebrew Scriptures into Chaldee (or Aramaic or Syriac), and these, when compared with the Hebrew, give us crystal clear indication of what many ancient rabbis taught concerning the doctrine of the Trinity. Especially clear is their perception of the **Word of Jehovah**—called **The Memra of Jehovah**—as a distinctive Person of Deity Who personally articulates and manifests the Father to His People. They understood this Person to be the same as **Angel Jehovah**. The weight of historical evidence clearly places these works prior to the "Christian" era; this proves that ancient rabbis understood the Trinity on the basis of the Hebrew Scriptures, thus verifying what has been said above. See [J. W. Etheridge, The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan ben Uzziel ...; A. Edersheim, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Appendices II,IX]. Frequently in the following references, the Hebrew reading is converted to the Chaldee reading by replacing **Jehovah** by **Word of Jehovah**, and in such a way as to teach the personal Deity of the Word; and any passage teaching the Deity of the **Memra of Jehovah** teaches that the **Memra** is a Person of Deity distinct from the Person denominated **Jehovah**—the proof of this assertion is analogous to that given in the introduction in I.C above. Finally, **Memra** is the Chaldee equivalent of the Greek **Logos**.

1. Targum of Onkelos. In over 79 undisputed passages in the Pentateuch alone (!), **Memra of Jehovah** is used of Deity and hence a Person in the Godhead distinct from another Person called Jehovah. We give a few representative passages. These must be compared with the Hebrew text.

Gen. 3:8,10. And they heard the voice of the **Memra of Jehovah Elohim** walking in the garden ... The voice of **Thy Memra** heard I in the garden, and I was afraid.

Gen. 6:6-7. ... And it repented Jehovah in **His Memra** that He had made man upon the earth. And He said in **His Memra** that He would break their strength according to His pleasure. ...

Gen. 15:6. And he believed in the **Memra of Jehovah**, and He reckoned it to him unto justification.

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Gen. 17:2,7,10. And I will set a covenant between **My Memra** and thee, ... And I will establish My covenant between **My Memra** and thee, and thy sons ... This is My covenant which you shall keep between **My Memra** and you ... And you shall circumcise ... for the sign of the covenant between **My Memra** and you.

Gen. 28:20-1. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If the **Memra of Jehovah** will be my help, and will keep me in that way in which I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to wear, and bring me in peace to my father's house, the **Memra of Jehovah** shall be my God.

Gen. 31:49-50. ... The **Memra of Jehovah** will observe between me and thee, ... see the **Memra of Jehovah** is witness between me and thee.

Ex. 3:12. Because **My Memra** shall be thy helper ...

Lev. 20:23. ... and **My Memra** hath abhorred them.

Num. 14:9. Only be not rebellious against the **Memra of Jehovah**, ... and the **Memra of Jehovah** is our helper.

Deut 33:27. The habitation of Eloha is from eternity, and the world was made by **His Memra**; ...

2. Targum of Palestine / "Jonathan ben Uzziel". In over 212 undisputed passages in the Penteteuch alone (!), **Memra of Jehovah** is used of Deity and hence a Person in the Godhead distinct from another Person called Jehovah. We give a few representative passages. These must be compared with the Hebrew text.

Gen. 2:8. And a garden from the Eden of the just was planted by the **Memra of Jehovah Elohim** ...

Gen 4:26:5:2. That was the generation in whose days they began to err, and to make themselves idols, and surnamed their idols by the **Name of the Memra of Jehovah**. Male and female created He them, and blessed them in the **Name of His Memra**, ...

Gen. 22:16. And said, By **My Memra** have I sworn ...

Ex. 33:16-21. ... and by Thy speaking by the **Holy Spirit** to me and to Thy people. that we may be distinguished from all the peoples on the face of the earth? And Jehovah said to Mosheh, This thing will ... I also do ... And he said, Show now unto me Thy glory: but He said, Behold, I will make all the measure of My goodness pass before thee, and I will give utterance in the **Name of the Memra of Jehovah** before thee; and I will have compassion ... And He said, Thou canst not see the visage of My face; for no one can see Me and abide alive. And Jehovah said, Behold a place is prepared before Me, and thou shalt stand upon the rock. And it shall be that when the glory of My Shekhinah passeth before thee, I will put thee in the cavern of the rock, and will overshadow thee with **My Memra** until I have passed by.

Ex. 34:5. And Jehovah revealed Himself in the cloud of the glory of His Shekhinah, and Mosheh stood with Him there; and Mosheh called upon the **Name of the Memra of Jehovah**.

Lev. 1:1. ... and the **Memra of Jehovah** spake with him from the tabernacle of ordinance ...

Num. 23:20. Behold, from the mouth of the **Holy Memra** I have received this benediction.

Deut. 1:10. The **Memra of Jehovah our Elohim** hath multiplied you; and behold ...

3. Jerusalem Targum. In over 70 undisputed passages in the Penteteuch alone (!), **Memra of Jehovah** is used of Deity and hence a Person in the Godhead distinct from another Person called Jehovah. We give a few representative passages. These must be compared with the Hebrew text.

Gen. 1:27. And the **Memra of Jehovah** created man in His likeness, ...

Gen. 16:13. And Hagar gave thanks, and prayed in the **Name of the Memra of Jehovah** Who had been manifested to her, saying, Blessed be Thou, Eloha, the Living One of all Ages, Who has looked upon my affliction.

Ex. 3:14. And the **Memra of Jehovah** said to Mosheh, He Who spake to the world, Be, and it was; and Who will speak to it, Be, and it will be. And He said, Thus shalt thou speak to the sons of Israel **EHEYEH** [I will be] hath sent me unto you.

Comment. Many examples are common to the various Targumim. This proves that the doctrine of the Trinity was commonly believed amongst the Jews before the time of Christ. I cannot overemphasize the abundance of all the pertinent examples.

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B. **LXX**. This is the translation by the seventy-two rabbis in Alexandria of the Hebrew Scriptures and Apochrypha into Greek; this work was carried from approximately 250 B.C.E. to 100 B.C.E. Here the word for the Second Person used by these rabbis is **Logos** (just as in the N. T.).

Book of Wisdom 18:14-6. For while all things were in quiet silence, and that night [of the first Passover] was in the midst of her swift course, **Thine Almighty Logos** leaped from heaven out of Thy Royal Throne, as a fierce Man of War into a land of destruction, and brought Thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death, ...

C. **Philo Judaeus of Alexandria**. Born circa 25 B.C.E. and died circa 50 C.E., this Hellenistic Jewish rabbi took the concept of the Logos from Platonic philosophy, and refashioned it along the lines of the traditional Jewish understanding. Philo's concept of the **Logos** may be viewed then as another indication of the Trinitarian views of the most ancient rabbis. We give a sampling of descriptions from Philo. (See [J. W. Etheridge, op. cit., Volume I, 20-23] for full quotes; see also [H. A. Wolfson, Philo, Volume I, 200-94] for a thorough discussion, apparently written on the assumption that the most ancient Judaism was unitarian, which runs counter to Etheridge's views. After looking at many Philonic scholars who would disagree with Etheridge, it is my view their documentation is more easily explained by Etheridge's thesis—especially scrutinize [Wolfson, op. cit., 291, lines 8-25] which makes Philo very self-contradictory unless a Personal distinction within the Divine Essence be assumed (and this is only one of many incongruities I found).)

1. Philo describes the **Logos** in the following terms: "**the Eternal Logos of the Everlasting God is the strongest and steadfast support of the universe**", "**Image of God**", "**Creator**", man is "**His copied image**", "**His [God's] Angel**" who sits over the Cherubim, "**the Father begat Him [Logos]**", "**His [God's] First-Begotten Son**", "**Second God**", "**Advocate the Son**" for the high priest before the Father, "**holds and directs the universe**", "**Mediator**" Who "**should determine between the creature and Creator**", "**receives the charge of the sacred flock**", we should "**regard the Image of God, Who is His Angel, the Logos, as God Himself**" and "**pledge our faith by the Begotten [Logos] and ... invoke the Divine Logos to witness**", etc, etc, etc.
2. Philo, in his interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, views the **Logos** as the Person of Deity Who called to Adam in the garden, spoke to Hagar, wrestled with Jacob, and spoke to Moses in the bush; and he thereby identifies the **Logos** with **Jehovah**, **Angel Jehovah**, **Memra of Jehovah**, and the **Man**. We can further say that almost every distinctive phrase used of Christ in the N. T. is not historically original with the N. T., but can be found, usually lock-stock-and-barrel, in the writings of Philo. My readings of Philo and his scholars force me to agree with Etheridge: first, Philo's **Logos** is much more than the impersonal sum or totality of God's ideas; and second, Philo confirms that the most ancient Jewish community was Trinitarian and looked to the Second Person for salvation.

D. **New Testament** (as a historical document recording rabbinical teachings)

4. The New Testament never records the following kind of question or argument from the opponents of Christ: "there is no such thing as a 'Son of God', ipso facto you are not the Son of God". There are two possible explanations for this: first, Christ's opponents were Trinitarian, or at least included many Trinitarians, who simply denied that He was the Son; or second, the N. T. totally misrepresents His opponents. That the second possibility is implausible is seen from the following typical and positive statements by the priests and rabbis; so our argument is much more than an "argument from silence", even though it is a most remarkable silence.

Matt. 26:63. ... I adjure thee by the Living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

Mark 14:61. ... Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed [One]?

Luke 22:66-70. ... Art thou the Christ? ... Art thou then the Son of God?

5. Let me comment on the Mark passage. First, Mark was a disciple and secretary to Peter, being called a son of Peter (I Pet. 5:13). Second, the phrase **the Blessed One** is absolutely rabbinical—one constantly sees the following phraseology amongst the rabbis "the Holy One, Blessed be He". Third, it stretches the imagination to conceive of Peter dictating to Mark and accurately relating the terminology of the rabbis in all parts of the sentence—**the Christ, the Blessed One**—save the phrase **Son of**. Fourth, it cannot be maintained that the priests and rabbis are being sarcastic in the Matthew and Mark passages since it is (on the basis of the three reasons just given) their description of the Messiah as the incarnation of the Son of Jehovah—would they blaspheme just to "twit Christ's nose"? Fifth, the rabbis label Christ's answer as blasphemy—the Greek here does not mean profanity, but slander -and how could Christ's answer be slander against God if Messiah is a mere man?

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6. The conclusion seems unavoidable: the rabbis generally recognized the existence of the Second Person, called the Son of God or Son of the Blessed One; they recognized that Messiah would be the incarnation of the Second Person; and they most definitely did not acknowledge Jesus as that Messiah.
 7. The above argument and supporting examples can be multiplied many times over with respect to the Son, and it and they have its and their respective counterparts which show the Holy Spirit to have been recognized as the Third Person (e.g. where is rabbi Nicodemus' protest in John 3:1-8 to the Personhood of the Spirit, presented by Christ as the Personal Regenerator of the saints—there can be no protest since Ezek. 37:1-14 so teaches, as Christ implicitly reminds him in John 3:10, and why do the disciples not similarly protest in John 16:7,13, etc.)
- E. **Zohar**. These are the rabbinical creeds, whose compilation has been done by unitarians, who mock those they call "mystics"; the mystics were the leftover Biblicists and Trinitarian rabbis of a dying age. Consider the following terminology of these "mystics", followed by a few citations translated in [Etheridge, op. cit., Volume II, 6-7], written long before the Council of Nicea. Emphases are mine.
1. Terminology. **Ab, Ben, veRuach haKadosh**—Father, Son, and Spirit the Holy. **Shilosh / Talithutho**—Trinity.
 2. Exegesis of Scriptural texts.

Deut. 6:4. "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. By the first name in this sentence, Jehovah, is signified **God the Father**, the Head of all things. By the next words, our God, is signified **God the Son**, the fountain of all knowledge; and the by second Jehovah is signified **God the Holy Ghost**, proceeding of Them both. To all which is added the word One, to signify that these Three are **Indivisible**. **But this mystery shall not be revealed until the coming of Messiah.**" I do not agree with this exegesis of the text (see I.B above), but it is emphatically clear that they were Trinitarians, even expressing themselves in the very language later to be used at Nicea and later Councils.

Isa. 6:3. "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth. Isaiah, by repeating Holy three times, does as much as if he had said, **Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Spirit**; which **Three Holies do make One and Only Lord God of Sabaoth.**"

3. Doctrinal Statement of the Trinity. "Come and see the mystery. There are **Three Degrees** [in **Elohim**]; and each Degree is by Itself [**balchudi**]; nevertheless [**aph albag**] **All are One**; all united in unity, and this inseparable from that."
- F. **The Midrashim**. These were compiled generally long after the rabbinical desertion of Scriptura Sola. Nonetheless, a few glimpses of truth can be seen.

Gen. 1:1. "**In the Beginning God created, Beginning** referring to Torah, as in the verse, The Lord made me in the beginning of His way (Prov. 8:22)"—[Midrashim, Genesis I, 1]. By connecting **Beginning** with the Prov. 8 passage, we see the glimmer of the truth that **Wisdom** as a Person of Deity is the Beginning One by means of which God created; see I.A above.

Gen. 1:2. "**The Spirit of God hovered**: this alludes to the Spirit of Messiah"—[Midrashim, Genesis I, 17]. There is a dim glimmer of the truth that the Father through His Logos spirates out the Spirit.

Gen. 4:25. "**And she called his name Seth: For God hath appointed me another seed**, etc. R. Tankhuma said in the name of Samuel Kozith: that seed which would arise from another source, King Messiah"—[Midrashim, Genesis I, 196]. This is a faint echo of the virgin birth (concerning the proof of which from the Hebrew Scripture see our outline).

- G. **Talmud** (Gemara). The Talmuds were compiled by the unitarian descendents of the Pharisees. Nonetheless, there is the tacit admission, when the rabbis were not rebutting the "**min**" (heretics) concerning Gen. 1:26-7 (see I.A), that **elohim** indicates three persons. Emphases are mine.

Berakoth 24 (Folio 6a). "... And how do you know that if three are sitting as a court of judges the Divine Presence is with them? For it is said: In the midst of elohim He judges [Ps. 82:1]." This clearly shows that apart from debate against Christians, the unitarians understood **elohim** as indicating **three authorities**; hence their courts consisted of three judges. This is further confirmed by the next passage.

Yebamoth 307 (Folio 46b). "... R. Khiyya b. Abba stated in the name of R. Jokhanan: The initiation of a proselyte requires the presence of three men; for law has been written in this case."

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III. Concluding Comments

A. **Root cause of the rabbinical apostasy.**

1. The Root Symptom.

- a. The rabbis forsook the Scripture, as interpreted by the proper hermeneutic, as the sole inspired authority. The proper hermeneutic is "normative" in both senses of that word: it requires words, grammar, syntax, figures of speech, etc be assigned the normal or customary meaning in accordance with the language and customs of the original audience, unless the context, or the context of parallel passages, require otherwise; and the hermeneutic defined in the previous clause is to be the standard or norm. The normative hermeneutic, when applied faithfully, recovers the meaning which a thoughtful member of the original audience would assign a passage, which must be the meaning intended by the Holy Spirit—for He wrote the Scriptures to be understood by the original audience; from this standpoint this hermeneutic is seen to be what is commonly called the grammico-historical method. This hermeneutic lets the Scriptures say forth the Author's intended meaning unhindered.
- b. The rabbis substituted for the proper hermeneutic the hermeneutic of Oral Tradition: Written Torah could only be understood as interpreted by Oral Torah / Tradition, the latter being the province of the rabbis *vis-a-vis* the nation Israel. In this way the Scriptures were usurped by Oral Tradition, which means the Scriptures were usurped by the rabbis, who therefore needed to insure their own preservation within the nation as the keepers of the all-important Tradition. When modern writers say that modern Judaism is the religion of Talmud, they are correct; it has been millenia since Judaism was the religion of the Book. The only role left for the Book is to have the scrolls be objects of physical and cultural veneration, i.e., serve as idols.
- c. The rabbis claimed they were the continuation of the scribal and midrashic tradition inaugurated by Ezra and Nehemiah upon the return from captivity. If Neh. 8:1-12 be interpreted by the normative hermeneutic, then the rabbis' claim is seen as tragically false. As a scribe fluent in ancient Hebrew usage, Ezra read the law in the original Hebrew, translated it piece by piece into Chaldee, and caused the people to understand it as did the original audience; i.e., applying the normative hermeneutic to this passage yields the conclusion that this hermeneutic is exactly what Ezra was doing; he was not overlaying the text with centuries of orally transmitted Tradition and allegorical methods as the passage makes painfully clear. The following is a representative list of Scriptures setting aside Oral Tradition.

Neh. 8:1-12. Verse 8 especially makes the point that Ezra did a verse-by-verse translation with comments (midrash) aimed at making the audience have the original sense of the written text.

Ps. 119:97-104. David has more understanding than his rabbis because he meditates on and heeds the Scriptures for himself. If the Oral Torah be included in **testimonies**, then how can these testimonies be so superior to the very teachers that would be transmitting the Oral Torah; this would be the sin of tautology.

Ps. 138:2. Jehovah magnifies His Word even **above** His Name. In this case the KJV accurately renders the Hebrew text. Just where does one fit Oral Tradition into this ranking?

As seen above in the case of the doctrine of the Trinity, Oral Tradition was adhered to and the Scriptures forsaken; for nothing did Isaiah (Isa. 29:13) and Christ (Mark 7:6-13) take the scribes to task. The remarkable story in [Shabbath 139-40 (Folio 31a)] demonstrates that Hillel and Shammai refused to tutor proselytes in Written Torah unless it was done in light of Oral Torah—indeed Hillel originated the label "Oral Torah".

2. The root cause of the root symptom. Adamic depravity is the only Biblical answer; those whom God regenerates, seek to know Him honestly in His Word. See Ps. 14:1-4;53:1-4;51:10,16-7;1:1-3;119:1-176, etc.

B. **Applications to the Body of Christ.**

2. Hermeneutically.

- a. It is our prayer that this study promotes a right attitude and approach toward Holy Scripture amongst the members of the Body of Christ.
- b. More specifically, I hope the issues dealt with in this study drive home the following: the importance and necessity of understanding the Hebrew Scriptures as did their original audience; that the Hebrew Scriptures are understandable and clear in their own right; the necessity of understanding the Hebrew Scriptures before understanding the Greek Scriptures; more generally, the necessity of understanding older revelation before

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understanding newer, and the latter in light of the former when its clear that subject areas of the two overlap. For example, we must understand Daniel before Revelation, and the latter in light of the former. These comments are implications of the hermeneutic which says in effect that the original audience could and did understand, and we need that understanding.

2. Apostasy in the professing church. Paul prophesies great apostasy for the professing church during the latter times of the Body (I Tim. 4:1-4)—I believe these have been fulfilled—and even more so during the last days of the Body (II Tim. 3:1-10). The apostasy of the professing church during the last days will easily overshadow that of the rabbis and scribes, and it will have the same root: Paul's description of the last days follows his exhortation to Timothy to straightly plow the Scriptures (2:15)—to have a high view of Scriptures, especially Paul's gospel, and approach them as did Ezra by the proper hermeneutic—and so demonstrate himself to be a vessel of honor and not of dishonor. (Cf. the outline The Endtimes of the Body of Christ.)
3. Absolute necessity and exclusivity of Paul's gospel. This study confirms the view that Paul's gospel is true and that it alone describes God's dealings with His Elect today. More to the point, this study does this by its very existence. Please bear with me.
 - c. It is universally taught outside Pauline Scripture that Jews minister to Gentiles, including the ministry of the Word. This is not because Gentiles are not smart enough or spiritual enough to learn the Word for themselves, but because the faith wrought in them by the Spirit compels them to learn the Scripture in no other way, and the faith wrought in the Jews compels them to teach the Gentiles the Word. And, relating to previous remarks, the Jews will teach them the Word only and not any Oral Tradition (cf. with [Shabbath 139-40, (Folio 31a)] cited in A(1)(c) above). The following is a brief list of non-Pauline Scriptures to that effect.

Isa. 2:1-5. The nations are ministered to through Jerusalem.

Isa. 14:1-4. The righteous Gentiles are personal slaves of righteous Jews.

Isa. 60:1-61:6. Righteous Gentiles are slaves of righteous Jews, provide for Israel's sustenance at every level, and in return righteous Jews minister spiritually as priests and ministers to righteous Gentiles.

Amos 9:9-12. The righteous Jews own the righteous Gentiles.

Zech. 8:22-3. Righteous Gentiles must be taught by righteous Jews—the Gentiles will have it no other way.

Matt. 15:21-8. Christ explicitly confirms these prophets in the strongest possible language: Gentiles cannot and must not be blessed directly; they must and can only be blessed through their Jewish masters.

Acts 8:26-40. The righteous Gentile cannot understand the Scripture by himself; a righteous Jew must explain it to him.

Rev. 21:24. The saved Gentiles must come to Jerusalem forever and ever to be blessed.

- d. This study was prepared by a non-Jew without any personal assistance whatever from any Jewish Rav or tutor. If God deals with us today in accordance with non-Pauline Scriptures, then either those Scriptures are false or this study does not exist; but both possibilities are false, and by contraposition so is the prior assumption. The mere existence of this study, and of many other studies by many other non-Jews, can only be explained by Paul's epistles; e.g., in the language of the olive tree allegory, only today are the unnatural branches blessed directly from the Root which is Christ—see Rom. 11:11-29 (and also I Cor. 12:13, Gal. 6:15, Eph. 3:6:4:4, etc). Thus the physical existence of this study validates the very man (Paul) modern rabbis most love to hate. I urge true believers to cling to Christ as He is revealed in Paul's gospel as the glorified Head of the Body.

APPENDIX 2: Virgin Birth Of Christ: Word Studies And Sources

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0. Ground Rules. The Doctrine of Scripture includes the following areas.

- A. Inspiration of Scripture and Normative Hermeneutic
- B. Inerrancy of Scripture and Normative Hermeneutic
- C. The implanting of A, B at the new birth.

I. Meaning of "House of David" in Hebrew Text

A. Concordance of All Occurrences

II Chron. 8:11; 21:7, Neh. 12:37, Isaiah 7:2,13; 22:22, Jer. 21:12, Zech. 12:7,8,10,12; 13:1.

B. Analysis of Meanings

- 1. Temple: II Chron. 8:11, Neh. 12:37.
- 2. A specific king, specific member of Davidic line: Isaiah 7:2.

Claim. By synecdoche, the royal line is put for Ahaz.

Proof. "House of David" is antecedent of "his" twice, where "his" stands for "Ahaz".

3. Royal line of David, with slight emphasis on the future: II Chron. 21:7.

4. Prophetic, having primarily to do with Israel's future kingdom, so the meaning is similar to (3), but the emphasis is primarily prophetic: Isaiah 7:13, Jer. 21:12, Zech. 12:7,8,10,12; 13:1.

- a. Concerning Isaiah 7:13. Unlike Isaiah 7:2, "house of David" is antecedent of "you" plural throughout verses 13–14, and hence **cannot refer just to Ahaz**. It includes all Israel at some future time, but with emphasis on the royal line. Since a plural pronoun is used, this **cannot be the plural of majesty**.
- b. Concerning Jer. 21:12. Left to the reader.
- c. Concerning Zech. 12:7,8,10,12; 13:1. Cf. Zech. 13:6.

10. Meanings of both (1,4): Isaiah 22:22. This is a double prophecy having to do with the temple of Solomon, the temple of the future, and all that would be associated with the future Messianic temple and the Messianic line.

Comment. In each prophetic usage, the meaning includes the royal line and the nation (prophetically considered), and **not some specific individual only**. By the normative hermeneutic must this meaning be assumed in Isaiah 7:13 (even if not assumed *ab initio*), unless the context, or the context of some parallel passage, should forbid. But the grammar of the context actually reinforces this meaning ((4)(a)). Cf. the usage of "tabernacle of David" prophetically, e.g. in Amos 9:11 (see verses 8–11).

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II. Linguistic And Rabbinical Evidence Concerning Almh And Btlvh

A. Root Meaning (Etymology).

Almh

Stems from **alm**, to veil or conceal. Hence **almh** means a veiled female. But as we proved in the head-covering outline, veiling amongst the Hebrews was practiced **ONLY** during betrothal—by those **socially fit** for betrothal—and also in prostitution (which does not apply here). And betrothal was usually contracted as soon as the girl was of marriageable, i.e. adolescent, age (see Raphael Patai's book cited in the headcovering study). Hence the root meaning of **almh** is a **young virgin of marriageable age**. It was unthinkable in that society for **almh** to be a non-virgin.

Btlvh

Stems from **btl**, to separate or set apart. Hence **btlvh** means a separated female. The separation could be of various types, as expected from frequency of usage (B below) and documented in the analysis of usage (C below), as follows:

1. separated from men, hence a **virgin**;
2. separated unto one husband, hence a **nonvirgin**; and
3. separated unto fornication and prostitution, i.e. unto men without discrimination, hence a **non-virgin**.

Comment. From the standpoint of etymology, **almh** must be young, but **btlvh** could be aged. Unless usage should indicate otherwise, **almh** must be taken in the sense of young, marriageable, virgin. What evidence in Isaiah 7:14 would indicate otherwise?

B. Frequency Of Usage In Hebrew Canon

Almh

Almh occurs a total of **9 times**, broken down as follows:

1. **4 times** in the singular of persons;
2. **3 times** in the plural of persons;
3. **2 times** in the plural of musical instruments (so designated because they were played by the **almt**, a figure of metonymy).

Btlvh

Btlvh occurs a total of **60 times**, broken down as follows:

1. **50 times** in the singular of persons;
2. **10 times** in the plural as the tokens of virginity (in keeping with the sense of A(1) above).

Principle. Unless there is contravening evidence, the more frequently used word will tend to have the broader range of meaning and possibly wander further from its root meaning, while the less frequently used word will tend to have a narrower range of meaning and stay closer to its root meaning. This is a necessary consequence of the normative hermeneutic, since context has the power to mold or overrule previous usage; but if there are very few usages, and hence very few contexts, the root meaning can have little history of being shaped and overruled.

Conclusion. Unless there is clear evidence to the contrary in the usage examined in C below, we will view **almh** as the **more restricted** word, staying close to its root meaning, and **btlvh** as the **more flexible** word.

Question. What evidence in Isaiah 7:14 is there to the contrary?

C. Record of Usage. In what follows, we should recall that all agree that an **almh** is UNMARRIED.

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Almh

We give the complete concordance of **almh** in the Hebrew canon.

Gen. 24:16,43 Rebecca is a **virgin**. Note **almh** is not qualified in Verse 43 by any other word. But when **btvlh** is used of Rebecca in Verse 16, it is used in association with **almh** and the phrase "**had not known any man**". So **almh** qualifies **btvlh**!

Ex. 2:8 Miriam is a **virgin**. Does the context allow us to say that Moses' sister is a fornicator?

Ps. 68:25(26) **Almt** here used of the young female players of the instruments. Since all agree an **almh** is unmarried, then either these young girls are fornicators **OR** they are virgins. Why would the Spirit of God praise a bunch of fornicators? So the context forces **almh** to include the notion of **virgin**.

Ps. 46:title As in Ps. 68:25(26) above.

II Chron. 15:20 As in Ps. 68:25(26) above.

Prov. 30:19 Why would Solomon of 600 wives and 400 concubines marvel at the way of a man with a non-virgin? This being nonsense, the context forces **almh** to include the notion of **virgin**. But there is more. Somewhat parallel passages to this passage include Ex. 22:15(16) and Isaiah 62:5, in which **btvlh** is used. Hence those who champion **btvlh** as the restricted word are forced to concede our point in this proverb.

Song of Solomon 1:3; 6:8 Here **almt** denotes the young female attendants of the Shulamite, who is a type of Elect Israel. Why would she have a bunch of fornicators for her attendants? The context forces **almh** to include the meaning of **virgin**. But there is more. This passage is parallel to Ps. 45:14(15) in which **btvlm** is used. Hence those who champion **btvlh** as the restricted word are forced to concede our point in this psalm.

Isaiah 7:14 Passage in dispute; but context will in fact force **almh** in this passage to mean **young, technical virgin**.

Btvlh

It is neither practical nor necessary to give all 60 occurrences of **btvlh**. It is clear in the earlier books of the Hebrew canon that meaning A(1) is substantiated. However, in the later books of the canon, the meaning of **btvlh** as a separated female becomes A(3)—**whore**, confirming the principle stated above in B. And this later usage is most pertinent since Isaiah 7:14 is from a late book. Restated, the reason for Isaiah's choice of **almh** is best understood against the backdrop of contemporaneous usage of **btvlh** in which A(3)—**whore**—is the exclusive meaning! We list each late usage of **btvlh**.

Joel 1:8 Here **btvlh** denotes a married woman. Since the Law condemns platonic marriage (Gen. 2:24, Ex. 21:10–11, etc), **btvlh** CANNOT mean a virgin. This is a female separated unto the memory of her husband.

Isaiah 47:1 Taken in context, **btvlh** denotes the **WHORE BABYLON**, and so CANNOT mean a virgin. This separated female is separated unto fornication and many lovers.

Jer. 46:11 Taken in context, **btvlh** denotes the **WHORE EGYPT**, and so CANNOT mean a virgin. This separated female is separated unto fornication and many lovers.

Jer. 18:13 Taken in context, **btvlh** denotes the **WHORE ISRAEL**, and so CANNOT mean a virgin. This separated female is separated unto fornication and many lovers.

Lam. 2:13 Taken in context, **btvlh** denotes the **WHORE ISRAEL**, and so CANNOT mean a virgin. This separated female is separated unto fornication and many lovers.

Amos 5:2 Taken in context, **btvlh** denotes the **WHORE ISRAEL**, and so CANNOT mean a virgin. This separated female is separated unto fornication and many lovers.

Comment. Since **almh** in all its occurrences **outside** Isaiah 7:14 includes the notion of technical virginity, the

Comment. Our interpretation of the latter five passages is mandated by the following parallel passages

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normative hermeneutic **requires** us to so interpret **almh** in [Isaiah 7:14](#) unless the context **expressly forbids** or the context of some parallel passage **expressly forbids**. Where is there the slightest iota of such forbidding?

Comment. The article is present in [Isaiah 7:14](#), i.e. **halmh**, the virgin, a virgin well known to Isaiah and his listeners. Since this prophecy has a double fulfillment, both in Isaiah's day and Messianically (see III below), the one virgin was well known in Isaiah's day with respect to that fulfillment, and the other virgin was well known prophetically with respect to the Messianic fulfillment

describing the whoredoms and adulteries of these three nations: [II Chron. 21:13](#), [Ezek. 16:25–29; 23:20](#), [Hosea 4:12; 9:1](#). Point: when **btvlh** is used to label a nation guilty of whoredom and adultery, it **cannot** be said that it retains in such usage the notion of technical virginity.

Comment. If Isaiah had wanted to use a current word including the notion of technical virginity, HE COULD NOT HAVE USED **BTVLH**, BUT WOULD HAVE HAD TO USE **ALMH** (which he did!).

- D. Rabbinical Views In LXX. In [Isaiah 7:14](#), the word **almh** is translated by the Greek word [parthenos](#), which is agreed by scholars to be universally used as virgin in the technical sense. The LXX was completed around 200 B.C. by the Alexandrian rabbis. This documents explicitly the later meaning of **almh**—the occurrences of **almh** outside [Isaiah 7:14](#) are in earlier books—and complements nicely our analysis of the later, broader usage of **btvlh**.
- E. Some Rabbinical Views From Ancient Hebraica. The following citations are explainable **only if** the meaning of **almh** was understood as necessarily including the notion of technical virginity.
1. Citations from A. Edersheim [[Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah](#), Volume I, p. 178].

[Bereshit Rabba 23, Warsh edition, p. 45b](#): "Rabbi Tanchuma said, in the name of Rabbi Samuel: Eve had respect [had regard, looked forward] to that Seed which is to come from another place. And who is this? This is Messiah the King."

[Bereshit Rabba 51, Warsh edition, p. 95a](#): "This is that Seed which is coming from another place. And who is this? This is the King Messiah."

[Bereshit Rabba 8, Warsh edition, vol. iii, p. 21b](#): "The Spirit of God moved on the deep—that is, the Spirit of Messiah the King. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him."

2. Citations from J. Lightfoot [[A Commentary on the N. T. from Talmud and Hebraica](#), Volume 3, pp. 26–27].

[R. Simeon Ben Jochai](#) said: "That the Spirit, by the impulse of a might power, shall come forth of the womb, though shut up, that will become a mighty Prince, the King Messiah."

[Moses Hadarsan](#) said: "Truth shall spring out of the earth. R. Joden notes upon this place, that it is not said, 'Truth shall **be born**, but shall **spring out**'; because the generation and nativity of the Messiah is not to be as other creatures in the world, but shall be begot without carnal copulation; and therefore no one hath mentioned his father, as who must be hid from the knowledge of men till himself shall come and reveal him. Ye have said, saith the Lord, 'We are orphans, bereaved of our father'; such a one shall your Redeemer be, whom I shall give you."

3. Citation from J. Gresham Machen [[The Virgin Birth of Christ](#), 298–300]. Philo taught that great Jewish men (and so Messiah) had miraculous births—see the extended quotation of Philo in Machen.
4. Viewing Matthew's Gospel strictly as a historical record of a particular ancient Jewish viewpoint, [Matthew 1:23–24](#) indicates that Joseph, and hence Matthew, viewed the citation of [Isaiah 7:14](#) by the angel as sufficient reason why Joseph should not discreetly divorce Mary, which means that **almh** as applied to Mary proved her virginity and hence her innocence. It follows that apparently many Jews of the N. T. period understood **almh** as necessarily including the notion of technical virginity. So this Miriam was a virgin, even as was the Miriam of old.

Conclusion. All of A–E above concur and agree: **almh** must mean a **young, unmarried, marriageable virgin**; **btvlh** in its earlier usage generally denoted a **virgin**, but its later usage broadened the root idea of separation considerably to include the ideas of a **married woman** and a **prostitute**. Isaiah could not have chosen a more

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exacting word and less ambiguous word in his time than **almh** if his intention were to convey the idea of a young, unmarried virgin. The modern Jewish viewpoint—**almh** is the broad word and **btvlh** is the narrow word for technical virginity—is undocumentable and untenable. Even more evidence piles up in the III below in connection with the ancient designation of the sign Virgo. One conjectures that the ancient unsaved rabbis changed their views in order to more effectively combat Christianity, i.e. **they changed their views because of Christ Himself!** On other issues—e.g. the doctrine of the Trinity—one is led to the same conjecture. Incidentally, the rabbis rule in Sanhedrin 38b that if one is informed about such issues (in context, the issue is the Trinity as demonstrated from the O. T.), he is such a heretic that he is not to be debated with.

III. Exegesis Of Isaiah 7:14 In Context

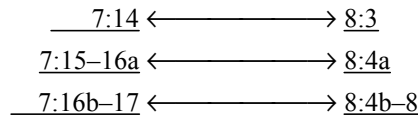
A. Evidence For A Double Audience

1. Double meaning of "House of David" Isaiah 7: e.g. used of Ahaz in verse 2, used of the Messianic line in verse 13.
2. Alternation of Ahaz and the royal house:

verses 10–11 thou = Ahaz (you singular)
verses 13–14 you all = House of David
verses 16–17 thou = Ahaz (you singular)

C. Meaning Of Each Sign For Each Prophecy. Recall our conclusions in Section II regarding the interpretation of **almh**. In this section we make use of this interpretation without comment or qualification. Further recall that the Hebrew text says **halmh**, **THE VIRGIN**, i.e. this well known virgin.

1. Meaning for Ahaz: the short term prophecy.
 - a. Threat from Syria and Samaria: Isaiah 7:1–9:21; in particular, read 7:1–9, 9:9–11,21.
 - b. Fulfillment of the sign: Isaiah 8:1–7. Note the following correspondences:



Note his mother called him Immanuel as a type of Him Who was to come; But Jehovah named, and consistently referred to him as Mahershalahashbaz because of the short term event in connection with which his birth was a sign.

- c. Continued reference to the historical events of 7:1–8 and 8 in 8,9, e.g. in 9:11,21.
- d. Meaning of the sign.
 - i. Birth of Isaiah's son was the guarantee of future deliverance.
 - ii. **The almh** is Isaiah's future wife, a prophetess, a well known, TECHNICAL VIRGIN of the day. The importance of the prophetess being a virgin, at the time the prophecy was given, is that the prophecy and the sign thereby have **maximal** time value: Ahaz was to look for her marriage, conception, bearing her firstborn, and his infancy —events leading one by one to the deliverance from Syria and Ephraim.
2. Meaning for the Messianic Line: the long term prophecy.
 - a. The interweaving of the two prophecies implies one is a type of the other. The sign for Ahaz (short term) is a type/foretaste of the sign for the House of David. So there must be a correspondence between them as to interpretation.
 - b. The sign for Ahaz meant deliverance, and so the sign for the House of David meant deliverance, i.e. **final deliverance**. And so the prophecy for the House of David concerns the **Deliverer**, i.e. **Messiah**. And it seems to be the issue of deliverance and salvation that Gabriel uses in linking the name of **JESUS** (or Joshua—Jehovah-is-Savior) and Isaiah 7:14 in Matt. 1:21–23.
 - c. The broad context of Isaiah 7:14 furnishes clear support for (b) apart from the support (b) receives receives from (a).
 - i. 7:14 She names the child Immanuel—**God with us**, or **God as One of us**.
 - ii. 8:8b The land of Israel is called "Thy land, O Immanuel. This phrase could never apply to Isaiah's son.

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Comment. The name Immanuel could only apply partially to Isaiah's son, for he was the type of the only One to Whom the name applies fully. Similarly, the name Joshua could only apply partially to the son of Nun, for he was a type of the only One to Whom the name applies fully.

iii. 9:6-7 This can be only Messianic. We note the following.

- 1) **Wonderful** in the Hebrew occurs here and Jud. 13:18 (where it is used of Angel Jehovah appearing to Manoah and his wife, even as He did to Abraham in Gen. 18, etc; see any study on the Angel of the Lord).
- 2) **Wonderful Counselor**, but Who can wonderously counsel God but God Himself—Isaiah 40:13? Wondrous counseling implies involvement in the articulation of the will of God into His decrees.
- 3) **The Mighty God**. Note that the Hebrew word used for God is used both of Jehovah and Messiah in Ps. 45:6,7.
- 4) **The Everlasting Father = The Eternal Creator**; cf. Micah 5:2. This needs no explanation.
- 5) **The Prince of Peace** includes the notion of **the Author of Peace**. But the only Author of true peace is Jehovah and Jehovah-Man (Messiah) as can be seen in Isaiah 26:12; 45:7; 55:19; Ezek. 34:25; 37:26; Micah 5:2-5; Zech. 12:10, etc.

Comment. 9:6-7 teaches Messiah is God-man. Note the reinforcement of the language of chapters 7 and 8 by 9:6-7: **Immanuel / God as one of us = For unto us ... God.**

- iv. 10:17,20 **The Holy One** is Messiah in Ps. 16:10. But the Holy One is that Jehovah in Isaiah 48:17 Who is sent forth by Jehovah in Isaiah 48:16; cf. 10:17.
- v. 11:1-16 This is surely Messianic. Note **Adonai** of verse 11 and **Jehovah** of verse 15 are the One spoken of as seated with Jehovah in the Third Heaven in Ps. 110:1,5-7.
- vi. 12:1-6. This usage of **the Holy One** is as in the discussion under 10:17,20.

Comment. Generally speaking, all of Israel's salvation-history is a shadow of, type of, summed up in, and fulfilled in the Messiah.

d. Fulfillment of the Sign of Isaiah 7:14 for the House of David.

- i. This must be the conception and birth of Messiah.
- ii. To be a sign to the House of David and hence the nation and future Messianic kingdom, it must be a miraculous birth, a miracle of such proportions that the birth of Isaac, who as Abraham's heir is a type and foreshadow of King Messiah as the Heir (Ps. 2:2-12), could only be a type or foreshadow of the birth of Messiah.
- iii. How could Messiah be the **Holy One** even if miraculously conceived of a fleshly union such as Isaac was, for **everyone** born of fleshly union is a **depraved sinner** (even Isaac) before God: David even as a fetus was depraved—Ps. 51:5; cf. Ps. 14:2-3; 53:2-3; Isaiah 53:5-6; 64:6, etc?
- iv. **The virgin = this virgin**, i.e. a well known virgin. In the case of Messiah, His birth had been prophesied since Gen. 3:15 as the **SEED OF THE WOMAN**. Now this is a most unusual way of referring to a firstborn heir: the heirs are always spoken of as the seed of their **fathers**, e.g. as in Gen. 17:7-9, for the inheritance was reckoned **patrilineally** from father to son. Hence the phrase **SEED OF THE WOMAN** refers to the **virgin** birth of Messiah since it excludes a human father. We conclude that the **woman of SEED OF THE WOMAN** is well known **prophetically** and well known and understood as a **virgin**, and so is the virgin being referred to in Isaiah 7:14. But there is more.
- v. The well known virgin is the virgin prophesied in the **Sign of Virgo** in the ancient and true Zodiac (see Ps. 19).
 - 1) This was the Zodiac endorsed and appropriated by the 12 tribes, in which Zodiac—**Zodiac** means **the Way**—the first sign in the ancient ordering (as determined by archaeology—was **Virgo**, assigned to Zebulun, and the last sign in the ancient ordering was **Leo**, assigned to Judah. Gen. 37:9 states that a **star** or **sign** was assigned to each tribe, Numbers 2:2 states that each tribe camped by a pole bearing its **sign (avt)**, and Numbers 2 suggests that the order in which the tribes arranged themselves was in the Zodiacal order of the signs.

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- 2) The ancient Jews and indeed all the ancients viewed the Zodiac as the **horoscope of the coming Redeemer**, and His **only**. In other words, each sign belongs ultimately and prophetically to the Messiah and to Him only. Since the ancient Zodiac began with **Virgo** and ended with **Leo**, all the ancients viewed the horoscope of the coming Redeemer as beginning with His **virgin birth** and ending with His final triumph as the **lion**, which for the ancient Jews was the **Lion of Judah**.
- 3) The Hebrew terminology for the Zodiac predates Moses, for God appointed and named the stars and signs (Gen. 1:14, Ps. 147:4), and the more important names were known to Abraham (Gen. 15:5), Jacob and his family (Gen. 37:9), and Moses and all Israel (Number 2:2; 24:17). And the ancient Hebrew name for **Virgo** is **BTVLH** (see E. W. Bullinger [The Witness of the Stars, p. 30]), which in Mosaic days was generally used as **virgin**, but whose usage was later considerably broadened by the time of Isaiah (as proved in II above). The Persian name for this sign indicates a pure virgin according to the eighth century Arabian astrologer Abumashar (Bullinger [op.cit., p. 34]).
- 4) Furthermore, the brightest star in Virgo, the alpha star, is named **tsmch**, meaning **BRANCH**, and all its occurrences in the Hebrew Scriptures—Isaiah 4:2, Jer. 23:5–6, Zech. 3:8; 6:12—refer exclusively to Messiah. This star name describes Virgo's child.
- 5) The first associated constellation of Virgo is the **small boy**, called **kmh** in Hebrew; and **kmh** apparently comes from the root **chmd**, from which we get **chmdh**, the precise form used in Haggai 2:7, which is a reference to Messiah. So the Hebrew name for the virgin's child means the **Desired One**. Another Hebrew name for the child is claimed by the Arabian astrologer Abumashar of the eighth century, namely **Ihesu**, which must be the same as Joshua or Jesus (Bullinger [op.cit., pp. 34–35]). The child is the child of the virgin, in some ancient Zodiacs being held in Virgo's lap. It is in this constellation that His birth star would appear a` la Balaam's prophecy (Num. 24:17).
- 6) The second associated constellation of Virgo is the **Centaur**, or the **Dual-Natured One**, called in the Hebrew **bzh**, the **Despised One**; **bzh** is the precise word used of Messiah in Isaiah 53:3. Another Hebrew name is anglicised as **Asmeath**, which apparently comes from the Hebrew **ashm**, meaning **Sin Offering**, the very word used in Isaiah 53:10 of Messiah. Thus the child of Virgo is the Dual-Natured One, the Redeemer Who is the Despised Sin Offering. (See Bullinger [op.cit., pp. 40–41].)
- 7) The third and last associated constellation of Virgo is the **Grim Reaper**, called in Greek **Bootes** or the **Coming One**, a name deriving from the Hebrew verb **bva**, meaning **to come**, the very verb used in Ps. 96:13 of Messiah coming in judgment. The imagery of the Zodiac picture is precisely what John refers to in Rev. 14:15–16. The second ranking star, the beta star, has the Hebrew name **nkr**, meaning the **Pierced One**, the very word used of Messiah in Zech. 12:10. Thus the child of Virgo is the One Who was pierced and will return to reap the grim harvest of divine judgment.

Comment. The Messianic fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 is the virgin birth of Messiah, an issue carefully, thoroughly, and precisely presented in both the Hebrew Scriptures prior to Isaiah 7:14 and in the Zodiac long known and understood by the Hebrew nation. There can be no doubt that Isaiah's original audience would have understood it this way, in which case this is precisely the meaning the Spirit of God intends it to have. This explains why the ancient rabbis understood this passage this way in the LXX and in some writings of Hebraica cited in Section II above.

3. Relationship between the short-term and long-term prophecies—further comments.
 - a. In Isaiah 7–12, the threat from Syria and Ephraim, and the imperfect deliverance by the king of Assyria—deliverance followed by slavery, lead the inspired prophet to prophesy the final and perfect deliverance and the Perfect Deliverer.
 - b. We can now explain why in Isaiah 7–12 the temporal deliverance for Ahaz decreases while the final deliverance and Messiah increase in emphasis.
 - c. This whole matter is intertwined with the issue of whether the Doctrines of the Trinity and the Deity of the Messiah are constructible from the Hebrew Scriptures, for which see many other studies. However, in passing, note Gen. 1:26; 2:18 (3:23); 19:24, Ps. 2:2–12; 45:1,6–7, Prov. 8:22–36; 30:4, Isaiah 48:16–17, etc.

C. Aftercomment. Those evangelicals who would charge that the above study is too technical and not sufficiently expressive of personal devotion to Christ, i.e. too much head and not enough heart, should reconsider a few Scriptures:

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1. In Ps. 138:2, David praises Jehovah because Jehovah magnifies His Word even above His Name. What could be more personal to Deity than the Ineffable Name? His Word! Therefore when we attempt to learn, explain, honor, and defend what the Scriptures say about Christ, we are thereby to show personal devotion to Christ in the very way in which God personally honors and upholds Himself.
2. In Matt. 5:18, Christ states that the Scriptures are accurate down to the smallest letter (yod) and even the smallest parts of the letters (tittles). It follows that attempting to determine the precise meaning of the words employed by the Holy Ghost has the approval of Christ Himself.
3. If some readers would have liked to see a public act or public manifestation of personal worship toward Christ actually embedded in the above text, then I ask them to read the command which Christ gave the saints of the future earthly kingdom in Matt. 6:1–6; 16–18 and consider that the analogous principle that applies to the Body of Christ is that personal expressions of worship toward God and Christ are really a private matter (Rom. 10:9 (6–13)) apart from symbols and ceremonially orchestrated worship (Gal. 4:8–11, Col. 2:8–23, in context, in order; and see Pauline Bootcamp sessions online at www.tgfonline.org).

APPENDIX 3: Archaeological Evidence Of Jesus' Birth Family

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The following is quoted from www.bib-arch.org, which in turn is extracted from the original paper [André Lemaire, **Burial box of James the brother of Jesus**, *Biblical Archaeology Review*, November-December 2002].

Evidence Of Jesus Written In Stone

Ossuary Of Jesus' Brother Backs Up Biblical Accounts

After nearly 2,000 years, historical evidence for the existence of Jesus has come to light literally written in stone. An inscription has been found on an ancient bone box, called an ossuary, that reads "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." This container provides the only New Testament-era mention of the central figure of Christianity and is the first-ever archaeological discovery to corroborate Biblical references to Jesus.

The Aramaic words etched on the box's side show a cursive form of writing used only from about 10 to 70 A.D., according to noted paleographer André Lemaire of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (popularly known as the Sorbonne University) in Paris, who verified the inscription's authenticity. The ossuary has been dated to approximately 63 A.D. Lemaire details his full investigation in the November/December 2002 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, the leading popular publication in its field.

Ancient inscriptions are typically found on royal monuments or on lavish tombs, commemorating rulers and other official figures. But Jesus, who was raised by a carpenter, was a man of the people, so finding documentation of his family is doubly unexpected.

In the first century A.D., Jews followed the custom of transferring the bones of their deceased from burial caves to ossuaries. The practice was largely abandoned after the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. No one knows for certain why the practice started or stopped, but it provides a rare period of self-documentation in which commoners as well as leaders left their names carved in stone.

The new find is also significant in that it corroborates the existence of Joseph, Jesus' father, and James, Jesus' brother and a leader of the early Christian church in Jerusalem. The family relationships contained on the new find helped experts ascertain that the inscription very likely refers to the Biblical James, brother of Jesus (see, for example, Matthew 13:55-56 and Galatians 1:18-19). Although all three names were common in ancient times, the statistical probability of their appearing in that combination is extremely slim. In addition, the mention of a brother is unusual--indicating that this Jesus must have been a well-known figure.

Laboratory tests performed by the Geological Survey of Israel confirm that the box's limestone comes from the Jerusalem area. The patina--a thin sheen or covering that forms on stone and other materials over time--has the cauliflower-type shape known to develop in a cave environment; more importantly, it shows no trace of modern elements.

The 20-inch-long box resides in a private collection in Israel. Like many ossuaries obtained on the antiquities market, it is empty. Its history prior to its current ownership is not known. The container is one of very few ancient artifacts mentioning New Testament figures. One such object is the ossuary of Caiaphas, the high priest who turned Jesus over to the Romans, according to the Biblical account. Caiaphas's tomb was uncovered in 1990. Also, some 40 years ago, archaeologists discovered an inscription on a monument that mentions Pontius Pilate.

"The James ossuary may be the most important find in the history of New Testament archaeology," says Hershel Shanks, editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review*. "It has implications not just for scholarship, but for the world's understanding of the Bible."

[See also David van Biema, **The brother of Jesus**, *Time* (4 November 2002), 70-73].