

Reclaiming Yeshua for Judaism

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By
James Scott Trimm

*In the Garden of Eden there is a hall that is called the "hall of the afflicted." Now it is into this hall that the Messiah goes and summons all the afflictions and pains and sufferings of Israel to come upon him. And so they all come upon him. And had he not eased the children of Israel of their sorrow, and taken their burden upon himself, there would be none who could endure the suffering of Israel in penalty of neglecting the Torah. Thus it is written: "Surely our diseases he did bear and our pains he carried." (Is. 53:5) As long as the children of Israel dwelt in the Holy Land, they averted all afflictions and sufferings from the world by the service of the sanctuary and by sacrifice. But now it is the Messiah who is averting them from the inhabitants of the world.
(Zohar; Ex. fol. 212a)*

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Chapter 1

Will the Real Yeshua Please Stand

Forget everything you have ever heard about “Jesus”. The majority of it is simply false. His name was not Jesus, he was not born on December 25th, he was not the founder of Christianity, he did not wear a toga, have blue eyes, a goatee beard or blond hair. The historical “Jesus of Nazareth” has been hijacked by Gentiles, paganized, helenized and stripped of his Torah Observant Judaism.

The real Yeshua was a Torah Observant Jew, he was born in the Fall (probably during the feast of Sukkot), he did not create a new religion and wore traditional Jewish clothing with tzitzit. He almost certainly had brown eyes, dark hair and a full beard, spoke Hebrew and Aramaic and staunchly opposed paganism.

The real Yeshua was a House of Hillel Pharisee. In fact Yeshua was plainly identified as being one of a group of Pharisees which had been sent from Jerusalem to question Yochanan the immerser. (Yochanan (John) 1:19-30)).

While most Christians teach that “Jesus” came to do away with the Law, Yeshua himself said quite the opposite:

17 Think not, that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

18 Truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one yud or one hook will pass away from the Torah, until they all be fulfilled.

19 And whoever shall abolish one of these least commandments, and shall teach the sons of men so: the same will be, called least, in the Kingdom of Heaven. And whoever shall keep one of these least commandments, and shall teach the sons of men so: the same will be, called greatest, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

(Matt. 5:17-19 HRV)

This is the only passage from the so-called “New Testament”¹ which is actually quoted, or more correctly paraphrased, in the Talmud. In the Talmud a certain Nazarene Judge is cited as having quoted the following phrase from a book called the סוּגְוּת הַטוֹב “The Good News”.

*I have not come to take away from the Torah of Moshe
and I have not come to add to the Torah of Moshe
(b.Shabbat 116)*

This passage refers to a Torah command which forbids adding to, or subtracting from, the Torah:

You shall not add to the word
which I command you,
neither shall you diminish a thing from it,
that you may keep the commandments
of YHWH your God which I command you.
(Deut 4:2)

Whatever thing I command you,
observe to do it: you shall not add thereto,
nor diminish from it.
(Deut. 12:32)

Yeshua is referring to a well known Midrash in which Solomon attempted to remove a yud from the Torah, but YHWH restored the yud and promised that Solomon and a thousand like him would pass away but that not one yud nor one tittle (hook) would pass from the Torah. The story appears three times in Midrash Rabbah, each time the story contains different key elements and so I have included all three versions below:

But Solomon arose and studied the reason of God's decree,
saying:
‘Why did God command, " He shall not multiply wives to
himself? Is it not " That his heart turn not away " ? Well, I will
multiply and still my heart will not turn away. Our Sages said:

¹ This is a misnomer, the books in question should be called the Ketuvim Netzarim “The Writings of the Nazarenes”.

At that time, the yod of the word yarbeh went up on high and prostrated itself before God and said: 'Master of the Universe! Hast thou not said that no letter shall ever be abolished from the Torah? Behold, Solomon has now arisen and abolished one. Who knows? Today he has abolished one letter, to-morrow he will abolish another until the whole Torah will be nullified?' God replied: 'Solomon and a thousand like him will pass away, but the smallest tittle will not be erased from thee.' Whence do we know that He did erase it from the Torah and put it back again?
(Midrash Rabbah Exodus VI:1)

From Solomon; through his attempt at uprooting one letter of the Torah, the accusation arose against him. And who presented the accusation against him? Said R. Joshua b. Levi: The letter yod of the word yarbeh. R. Simeon taught: The Book of Deuteronomy ascended and prostrated itself before the Holy One, blessed be He, saying to Him: 'Lord of the Universe, Solomon has uprooted me and made of me an invalid document,' since a document out of which two or three points are void is entirely void, and King Solomon sought to uproot the letter yod out of me: It is written, He should not multiply (lo yarbeh) horses to himself (Deut. 17:16) and he has multiplied horses to himself; it is written, Neither shall he multiply wives to himself (ib. 17) and he has multiplied wives to himself; it is written, Neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold (ib.) and he has multiplied silver and gold to himself.' The Holy One, blessed be He, answered: 'Go! Solomon will be eliminated and a hundred like him, but not even a single yod that is in thee shall ever be made void.'
(Midrash Rabbah Leviticus XIX:2)

BLACK AS A RAVEN. R. Alexander b. Hadrin and R. Alexander Karobal said: Were all the inhabitants of the world to come together and try to turn one wing of a raven white, they would not succeed. So if all came together and tried to remove a yod, the smallest letter of the Torah, they would not succeed. From what can you learn this? From the case of Solomon;

for because he sought to remove a yod from the Torah, an accuser rose against him. Who accused him?
R. Joshua b. Levi said: The yod in Yarbeh accused him.
R. Simeon b. Yohai said: The book of Deuteronomy went up and prostrated itself before the Almighty, and said before Him: 'Sovereign of the Universe, Thou hast written in the law that a testament of which part is cancelled is wholly cancelled. King Solomon seeks to remove a yod from the Torah., The Holy One, blessed be He, replied: 'Solomon and a hundred like him will pass away, but a yod in thee will never pass away.'
(Midrash Rabbah Song of Songs V:12)

One of the most significant parallels between Yeshua and Hillel is Their profound teaching of Love. Yeshua's teaching of love was a radical departure from the teachings at Qumran. Now Philo tells us that the Essenes had great "desire to promote brotherly love" (Philo; The Hypothetica 11:2) this brotherly love seems to have been only to fellow members of the Yachad (unity). This is reflected in the Damascus Document's use of Lev. 19:18. In the Torah Leviticus 19:18 reads:

You shall not avenge,
nor bear any grudge against the children of my people,
But you shall love your neighbor as yourself:
I am YHWH.

Now the Damascus Document interprets this passage as follows:

As for the passage that says, "Take no vengeance and bear no grudge against your kinfolk" (Lev. 19:18) any covenant member who brings against his fellow an accusation not sworn to before witnesses or who makes an accusation in the heat of anger or who tells it to his elders to bring his fellow into repute, the same is a vengeance-taker and a grudge-bearer....
(Damascus Document 9, 2)

Note that this Qumran interpretation of Lev. 19:19 would limit "neighbor" in Lev. 19:18 to "any covenant member" i.e. a member of the Yachad. In fact the Qumran sect taught:

...bear unremitting hatred towards all men of ill repute...
to leave it to them to pursue wealth and mercenary gain...
truckling to a depot.
(Man. Of Disc. IX, 21-26)

By contrast Hillel is quoted as saying:

Be disciples of Aaron,
loving peace and pursuing peace,
loving people and drawing them near to the Torah.
(m.Avot 1:12)

The Qumran attitude was one of hatred to the sinner. There was no concept of "drawing them near to the Torah" but rather to "leave it to them to [sin]... truckling to a depot." Yet Hillel took the opposite approach. Hillel's attitude was to "Love" the men of ill repute and draw them near to the Torah. This was also Yeshua's approach.

Yeshua taught:

You have heard that it was said
"You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy."
But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you,
do good to those who hate you,
and pray for those who spitefully use you persecute you
that you may be sons of your Father in heaven;
for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good,
and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.
For if you love those who love you, what reward have you?
Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
And if you greet your brethren only,
what do you do more than others?
Do not even the tax collectors do so?
(Mt. 5:43-47)

Yeshua here begins by quoting the Tanak "Love your neighbor" (Lev. 19:18) but then gives the Qumran corollary "hate your enemy." Yeshua differs with this "hate your enemy" teaching in agreement with the love philosophy of Hillel. Apparently the Qumran community

inferred from "Love your neighbor" (Lev. 19:18) that they should therefore bear unremitting hatred toward their enemies. To Yeshua (and presumably Hillel) the issue is the interpretation of "neighbor." In his Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:29-36) Yeshua argues that we cannot be sure who our "neighbor" is, so in order to make sure we do not violate Lev. 19:18 we should love everyone.

Another strong parallel between Hillel and Yeshua is that of the so called "Golden Rule." There is a story in the Talmud in which Hillel gives a summary of the Torah. The Talmud says:

...it happened that a certain heathen came before Shammai and said to him, "Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Torah while I stand on one foot."
Thereupon he repulsed him with the builders cubit which was in his hand. When he went before Hillel, he said to him "Do not to others what you would not have them do to you: that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof; go and learn it."
(b.Shab. 31a)

A similar incident occurs in the Gospels:

But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"
Yeshua said to him, " 'You shall love YHWH your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' "This is the first and great commandment. "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'
"On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."
(Mt. 22:34-40 = Mk. 12:28-31 = Lk. 10:25-37)

Here Yeshua is pressed to summarize the Torah and answers with the Sh'ma (Dt. 6:4-9) and the commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). This is remarkably similar to Hillel's answer to the same question. It is important to note that the Pharisees agreed that

Yeshua's answer was correct. Yeshua elsewhere gives a summary of the Torah which parallels Hillel's answer even closer:

Whatever you would that men should do to you,
do you even to them,
for this is the Torah and the Prophets.
(Mt. 7:12 = Lk. 6:31)

Within Rabbinic literature we have record of over 350 disputes between the School of Hillel and the School of Shammai. Generally Shammai gave the stricter interpretation, while Hillel's understandings were more relaxed. According to the Zohar (Ra'aya Meheimna 3:245a) The School of Shammai was based on GEVURAH ("severity") while the School of Hillel was based on CHESED ("grace"/"mercy"). This is very significant. In Mark's account of Yeshua's summary of the Torah (Mk. 12:28-33) A "scribe" comes to question Yeshua. In Matthew's account this "scribe" is identified as a Pharisee (Mt. 22:34-36). According to Mark's account this Pharisee not only agreed with Yeshua's summary of Torah and repeated it adding:

...and to love his neighbor as himself,
is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.
(Mt. 12:33b)

It is not unlikely from this context that the Pharisee was quoting a now-lost saying of Hillel here. In making this statement the Pharisee, who apparently was from the School of Hillel, was pointing to Hosea 6:6:

For I [YHWH] desire mercy (CHESED), and not sacrifice;
and the knowledge of ELOHIM more than burnt offerings.

This Pharisee seems to have identified "love your neighbor" of Lev. 19:18 with the CHESED of Hosea 6:6. Remember the relaxed halachic positions of the School of Hillel were based on CHESED, it is indeed likely that Hosea 6:6 served as a proof text for many of their halachic rulings, since this passage assigns a halachic weight to CHESED. We also find Yeshua using Hosea 6:6 in support of his relaxed halachic rulings regarding the Shabbat (Mt. 12:7 = Hosea 6:6) here Yeshua argues from Hosea 6:6 that CHESED is of greater weight than the

sacrifices. Since CHESED out weighs sacrifice, and sacrifice out weighs Shabbat, then CHESED out weighs Shabbat.

It seems that both Yeshua and Hillel emphasised love for all men, Taught the "golden rule" and had many of their halachic rulings rooted in CHESED ("mercy").

Despite the fact that Yeshua's teachings largely agreed with that of the Pharisaic School of Hillel, there were occasions where Yeshua's teachings agreed with the School of Shammai against the School of Hillel. An important example of this is the issue of divorce where (Mt. 5:31-32 & m.Gittin 9:10). There were also occasions when Yeshua's teachings agreed with that of the Essenes against that of the Pharisees. One example is on the issue of oaths (compare Mt. 5:33-37 & Damascus Document- Geniza A; Col. 15; Lines 1-3).

There are many important similarities between the teachings of Yeshua and those of the Essenes/Qumran community. Yeshua went out into the wilderness to be tempted (Mt. 4:1f). Yeshua's twelve talmidim (students) remind us of the council of twelve at Qumran (Manual of Discipline 1QS 8:1). Yeshua's twelve talmidim seemed to be headed by three (Kefa (Peter), James (Ya'akov) and Yochanan (John) and the twelve laymen of Qumran were headed by three priests (1QS 8:1).

In Matthew 10:9-11 Yeshua instructs his Talmidim as follows:

Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor lesser coin in your belts.
Pack not for the journey, either two coats, or sandals,
or a staff, for the laborer is worthy of his food.

And into whatever city or town you will enter, enquire who in it is honorable, and there abide until you go out from there.

Some light on this text may be acquired by examining a statement by Josephus concerning the first century Essene sect of Judaism:

...and if any of their sect come from other places, what they have lies open for them, just as if it were their own; and they go into such as they never knew before, as if they had been

ever so long acquainted with them. For which reason they carry nothing with them when they travel into remote parts, though still they take their weapons with them, for fear of thieves. Accordingly there is, in every city where they live, one appointed particularly to take care of strangers, and provide garments and other necessaries for them.
(Josephus; Wars 2:8:4)

Yeshua's talmidim had for the most part, come from an Essene background. It would appear that they were therefore able to travel within Essene circles from town to town without having to carry additional supplies. Also note that Yeshua and his Talmidim traveled armed (Lk. 22:38) (Doesn't sound much like the Christian "Jesus" does it?)..

In Matthew 21:23-27 a group of Pharisees challenge Yeshua as to where his s'mikhah, or authority comes from. Yeshua responds by asking them about where Yochanan's authority came from. Yeshua was not evading their question. Yeshua was raising this point because Yeshua's earthly authority (s'mikhah) came from Yochanan (Jn. 1:6-8, 15, 26-27, 29-37) and Yochanan's authority was from an Essenes rather than a Pharisaic source (see comments to Mt. 3:1). Thus Yeshua's s'mikhah traced back through Yochanan to the Essene line of s'mikhah. Yeshua was putting the Pharisees in the position of either acknowledging Essene Halachic authority or declaring it to be false. It would appear that the Pharisees were hesitant to question the s'mikhah of a sect that was known for being even stricter on observance than they were.

Many of Yeshua's halachic teachings parallel those of the Qumran community. Yeshua opposed the taking of oaths (Mt. 5:34) as did the Essenes (Josephus; Wars 2:8:6; Manual of Discipline 1QS 15:1-3).

One of the halachic principles which distinguished the Essenes from the Pharisees (whom the Essenes termed "Wall Builders") was a principle the Essenes called "Yesod HaB'riah" (The Foundation of Creation). The Pharisees were divided on the issue of divorce. The House of Shammai allowed divorce only in the case of an "unclean matter" while the House of Hillel allowed divorce even if the wife only spoiled a dish, and Akiva stretched this to allow a man to divorce

his wife because he found a prettier one (m.Gittin 9:10)

The Essenes said the Pharisees had fallen into a trap of Belial saying:

They are caught in...Fornication, by taking two wives in their lifetime although the Principle of Creation (Yesod HaBriah) is "male and female He Created them" (Gen. 1:27) and those who entered the ark "went into the ark two by two" (Gen. 7:9). Concerning the Leaders it is written "he shall not multiply wives to himself" (Dt. 17:17) (Damascus Document 4,20-5,2)

The Essenes were accusing the Pharisees of effectively practicing polygamy in allowing divorce so easily, and in doing so, violating the Yesod HaBriah.

No doubt Messiah is citing Yesod HaBriah (The Principle of Creation) when he has the following halachic debate with a group of Pharisees:

19:3 And the P'rushim approached him, and tempted him, saying, "Is it right for a man to put away his wife for every cause?"

19:4 And he answered and said to them:

"Have you not read that he who made man the beginning, 'made them male and female' (Gen. 1:27)

19:5 And said,

'Wherefore shall a man shall leave his father and his mother, and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh' (Gen. 2:24)

19:6 And now then, they are no more two but one flesh only. What therefore Elohim has joined together man cannot separate."

19:7 But they said,

"And why then did Moshe then command to give a bill of divorcement, and to put her away if she was not pleasing in his sight?" (Deut. 24:1, 3)

19:8 And he answered them and said,

"Because Moshe on account of the hardness of your hearts,

allowed you to put away your wives,
but from the beginning it was not so.
19:9 And I tell you,
every man that has put away, or shall put away his wife,
except it be for fornication, and takes another,
commits adultery. And whoever takes the divorced also
commits adultery.
(Mt. 19:3-9)

Matthew records a very interesting event involving Yeshua and the Temple Tax:

...they that received tribute came to Kefa (Peter) , and said,
Does not your master pay tribute? He said, Yes.
And when he came into the house Yeshua prevented him,
saying, what do you think, Simon? of whom do the kings of the
earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children, or of
strangers? Kefa (Peter) said to him, of strangers. Yeshua said to
him, Then the children are free. Notwithstanding, lest we
should offend them, go you to the sea, and cast a hook, and
take up the fish that first comes up; and when you have opened
his mouth, you shall find a piece of money: that take, and give
to them for me and you.
(Mt. 17:24-27)

Here Kefa indicates the Yeshua pays the Temple tax, but Yeshua indicates that neither himself, nor Kefa nor apparently any of his followers owe the Temple tax. Yeshua does not seem to argue that he does not owe such a tax because he is the Messiah, for he extends the same privilege to Kefa and apparently all of his followers. Is Yeshua teaching against Torah? The answer is no. The Torah does command that a Temple tax must be paid by every male 20 and older (Ex. 30:11-16) but is ambiguous as to how often it must be paid. The Pharisaic Halachah (and apparently the Sadducean Halachah) had the tax being paid annually during the month of Adar (m.Shek. 1:1, 3) However the Qumran community had a different Halachah. They taught:

...concerning the Ransom: the money of the valuation which a man gives as ransom for his life shall be half a shekel in accordance with the shekel of the sanctuary. He shall give it only once in his life.

(4Q159 Frag 1; Col. 2; lines 6-7)

Now if Yeshua held to this Essene Halachah then He would not believe that he or his followers owed the tax, if they had already paid it at least once in their lifetime. This would explain why Kefa said that Yeshua pays the tax, while Yeshua claims that he and his followers don't owe the tax.

Like the Qumran community Yeshua speaks allegorically of "Living Water" coming from a well. . In John chapter four "living water" is symbolically drawn from Jacob's well, and brings salvation and eternal life. In the Manual of Discipline "living water" is the teachings of the community and is symbolically drawn from the well of Num. 21:18 which is identified by the Scroll to be symbolic of the Law. Thus we may conclude that in Jn. 4 Yeshua draws upon a Midrash (allegorical interpretation) which existed in his time (Jn. 4:10 & Dam. Doc. VI, 4-5; VII, 9-VIII, 21).

The Essenes held the strictest rules of resting on the Sabbath than any of the Jews (Josephus; Wars 2:8:9) The Qumran community, with its stricter Halacha likely did not permit healing on the Shabbat at all. They did not allow carrying medicine on the Shabbat nor did they allow using a tool to save a life on the Shabbat (Dam. Document col. 10; lines 14-18). Now Yeshua's Halacha on the issue seems to have been less strict. There is conflict between Yeshua and Qumran on the plucking and rubbing of wheat in Mt. 12:1=Lk. 6:1=Mk. 2:23. The activity described is clearly permitted by the Torah in general, though not necessarily on the Shabbat (Duet. 23:26 (23:25 in non-Jewish editions)). This was forbidden by Qumran halacha which stated:

"A man may not go about in the field to do his desired activity on the Sabbath... A man may not eat anything on the Sabbath except food already prepared."

(Dam. Doc. Col. 10; lines 20-22).

Also Yeshua's teaching that it is permitted to rescue an animal from a pit. (Mt. 12:11 and Lk. 14:3-6) is in direct conflict with Qumran Halacha.(Dam. Doc. col. 10; lines 14-18).

Yeshua's followers had much in common with the Essenes. Both were called "The Way" (Acts 9:2 & 1QS 9,18) and "B'nai Or" (Sons of Light) (Lk. 16:8; Jn. 12:36; Eph. 5:8; 1Thes. 5:5; Man. Of Disc. 1,9; 2, 24; 1QM). Like the Essenes they shared all things in common (Acts 2:44-45; Josephus; Ant. 18:1:5; Wars 2:8:3).

Yeshua was a Torah Observant Jew, a House of Hillel Pharisee who emphasized CHESED (loving kindness, mercy, grace) and who also maintained certain of the teachings found among the Essenes of the Second Temple Era.

Chapter 2 Two Messiahs?

Who is the Messiah? This is a very important question in regards to Torah. The Torah says:

18 I will raise them up a prophet from among their brothers, like unto you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him.

(Deut. 18:18-19 HRV)

The Thirteenth Century Rabbinic commentator Ralbag (Rabbi Levi ben Gershon) writes concerning this passage:

A prophet from the midst of you.- In fact the Messiah is such a Prophet as it is stated in the Midrash [Tanhuma] on the verse "Behold my Servant shall prosper" [Is. 52:13]... Moses by the miracles which he wrought brought a single nation to worship Elohim, but the Messiah will draw all peoples to the worship of Elohim.

(Ralbag on Duet. 18:18)

The Midrash Tanhuma (cited above) says:

It is written, Behold, my servant shall deal wisely, He shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high (Isaiah 52:13). It means, He shall be more exalted than Abraham of whom it is written, 'I lift up my hand' (Genesis 14:22). He shall be more extolled than Moses of whom it is said, 'As a nursing father beareth the nursing child' (Numbers 11:12). 'And shall be very high'—that is, Messiah shall be higher than the ministering angels.

(Midrash Tanhuma Is. 52:13)

Maimonides, in a letter to a Yemenite community, denounces a man claiming to be the Messiah saying:

The Messiah will be a very great Prophet, greater than all the Prophets with the exception of Moses our teacher...His status will be higher than that of the Prophets and more honourable, Moses alone excepted. The Creator, blessed be He, will single him out with features wherewith He had not singled out Moses; for it is said with references to him, "And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears." (Isaiah 11:3)

The Dead Sea Scroll document 4Q175 also speaks of a Messianic Figure (clearly the Messiah) and applies Deut. 18:18-19 indicating that the Prophet "like Moses" was understood clearly as referring to the Messiah as far back as the Hasmoean period.

Now in Deut. 18:19 the Torah says of those who do not give heed to this Messiah "I [Elohim] will require it of him." The Targum Onkelos to this phrase is even stronger saying "My Word shall take vengeance upon him" and similarly the Greek Septuagint translator rendered the phrase "I shall take vengeance upon him.". Certainly the Torah not only foretells the coming of Messiah, it requires every Torah Observant Jew to accept and follow this Messiah as. Thus identifying this Messiah should be paramount to any Torah Observant Jew.

Our sages of old often spoke of two Messiahs: Messiah ben Yosef (sometimes called Messiah ben Ephraim) and Messiah ben David.

Messiah ben Yosef comes and suffers to redeem his brothers (like the patriarch Joseph).

Messiah ben David who comes and rules from David's throne forever.

The Rabbis have always recognized an apparant conflict between certain Messianic passages. For example:

R. Alexandri said: Rabbi Joshua opposed two verses:

Is is writted:

And behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven. (Dan. 7:13)

Whilst it is written:

[behold, your king comes to you...] lowely, and riding

upon an ass! (Zech. 9:9)
(b.San. 98a)

The "two Messiah" theory was one of several answers that the Rabbis found for these contradictions. It delegated the lowly, suffering servant passages to Messiah the son of Joseph (sometimes called Ephraim); and the Kingly passages to Messiah ben David.

The Zohar speaks of these two Messiahs as follows:

...the words "no shrub of the field was yet in the earth" refer to the first Messiah, and the words "no herb of the field had yet sprung up" refer to the second Messiah. Why had they not shot forth? Because Moses was not there to serve the Shekinah-Moses, of whom it is written, "and there was no man to till the ground". This is also hinted at in the verse "the sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet", "the sceptre" referring to the Messiah of the house of Judah, and "the staff" to the Messiah of the house of Joseph. "Until Shiloh cometh": this is Moses, the numerical value of the two names Shiloh and Moses being the same. It is also possible to refer the "herbs of the field" to the righteous or to the students of the Torah...
(Zohar 1:25b)

The Essenes of the Qumran community also believed in two Messiahs. As we read in the Manual of Discipline:

They shall govern themselves using the original precepts by which the men of the YAHAD began to be instructed, doing so until there come the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel.
(Manual of Discipline 1Qs Col. 9 lines 10-11)

The two Messiahs are also evident in 1QSa, 1Q28a where they are pictured at a future Messianic banquet table.

In the Midrash Messiah ben Ephraim is warned by Elohim of what awaits him:

Their sins will be upon you like a yoke of iron.
They will choke your spirit. Because of their sins,
Your tongue will cleave to the roof of your mouth.
Do you accept this? If not, I will remove the decree from you.

The Messiah replies: "Master of the worlds,
how long will this last?
Elohim replies: "Ephraim, my true Messiah,
ever since the six days
of creation you have taken this ordeal upon yourself.
At this moment, your pain is my pain"

Messiah replies: "Master of the worlds,
I accept this with gladness
in my soul, and joy in my heart, so that not a single one of the
House of Israel should perish.
Not only for those alive, but also
the dead. It is enough that the servant be like the Master.
(Midresh Pesqita Rabbah 36)

In the Talmud Rabbi Dosa (who lived around 250 CE) teaches
regarding Zech. 12:10:

What is the cause of the mourning [of Zech. 12:12]--...
It is well according to him who explains that
the cause is the slaying of Messiah the son of Joseph,
since that well agrees with the Scriptural verse:
And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced,
And they shall mourn for him as one mourns for his
only son. (Zech. 12:10)
(b.Sukkot 52a)

In fact the Targum Jonathan to Zechariah also identifies this one being
pierced in Zechariah 12:10 as the "Messiah ben Ephraim". Let us
examine this verse:

And I will pour upon the house of David,
and upon the inhabitants of Yerushalayim,
the spirit of grace and of supplication.

And they shall look unto Me, whom they pierced through,
and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son:
and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness
for his firstborn.
(Zech. 12:10 HRV)

A key passage should be carefully examined here in the Hebrew:

והביטו אלי את אשר דקרו

“And they shall look toward me whom they pierced.”

Although many attempts have been made to translate this passage in other ways, the Hebrew is obvious. The article אֵת points to the next term אֲשֶׁר דָּקְרוּ “whom they have pierced” as receiving the action of the verb וְהִבִּיטוּ “and they shall look” while the preposition אֵלַי must be understood “toward me” as the final י indicates the first person “me”.

Now let us look down to Zechariah 13:4-6:

4 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be brought to shame, every one through his vision, when he prophesies: neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive.
5 And he shall say, I am no prophet. I am a tiller of the ground, for a man purchased me from my youth.
6 And he shall say to him, What are these wounds in the midst of your hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.
(Zech. 13:4-6 HRV)

There are a number of passages which many past translations have translated poorly. The HRV seeks to correct such mistranslations which have often led to misunderstandings. The following are some examples from the HRV Tanak:

5 But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman;
for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.
6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds
in your hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which

I was wounded in the house of my friends.
(Zech. 13:5-6 KJV)

In the Hebrew both verse 5 and verse 6 open with exactly the same word/phrase "V'AMAR" meaning "And [he] shall say...". In verse 5 the KJV has "but he shall say" and in verse 6 the same phrase is translated "and one shall say". The result is to **WRONGLY** imply that the speaker has shifted at the beginning of verse 6. Thus if we were to use the format of a script we would read:

False Prophet: I am no prophet, I am an husbandman;
for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

Messianic Judge: What are these wounds in your hands?

False Prophet: Those with which I was wounded in the house
of my friends.

However the HRV correctly translates both phrases the same as follows:

5 And he shall say:

"I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground;
for a man purchased me from my youth."

6 And he shall say to him: "What are these wounds
in the midst of your hands? Then he shall answer:

"Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."
(Zech. 13:5-6 HRV)

Thus in the HRV the shift in speaker does not occur until verse 6b as follows:

False Prophet: I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground;
for a man purchased me from my youth."

What are these wounds in the midst of your hands?

Messianic Judge: Those with which I was wounded in the
house of my friends.

In the KJV the figure with the wounds in the midst of his hands is the false prophet while in the Hebrew it is the Messianic Judge. Thus in the HRV version the passage points back to Zech. 12:10 and the one who is "pierced" and forward to Zech 13:7 where a "shepherd" is smitten and his sheep scatter.

Now if we look up to Zechariah 13:1-3 we see a series of verses that clearly parallel Micah 5:8-14:

Zechariah 13:1-3

1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened, to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, for purification and for sprinkling.
2 And it shall come to pass in that day, says YHWH Tzva'ot, that ***I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land***, and they shall no more be remembered. And also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit, to pass out of the land.
3 And it shall come to pass that, when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begot him, shall say unto him, You shall not live, for you speak lies in the Name of YHWH: and his father and his mother that begot him, shall thrust him through when he prophesies.

Micah 5:8-14

8 (5:9) Let Your hand be lifted up above Your adversaries, and let all Your enemies be cut off.
9 (5:10) And it shall come to pass in that day, says YHWH, that I will cut off your horses out of the midst of you, and will destroy your chariots.
10 (5:11) And I will cut off the cities of your land, and will throw down all your strongholds,
11 (5:12) And I will cut off witchcrafts out of your hand, and you shall have no more soothsayers.
12 (5:13) ***And I will cut off your graven images and your pillars out of the midst of you***, and you shall no more worship the work of your hands.
13 (5:14) And I will pluck up your Asherim out of the midst of you, and I will destroy your enemies.
14 (5:15) And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the nations, because they hearkened not.

Both passages clearly speak of the coming of Messiah ben David to judge the earth and establish his Messianic Kingdom. Zechariah then goes on (as just shown) to identify this Messiah as having been wounded in the midst of his hands in the house of his friends (among his own people) followed by:

Awake O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is near unto Me, says YHWH Tzva'ot. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn My hand upon the little ones.
(Zech 13:7 HRV)

Certainly the “shepherd” is the Messiah. “Smite the shepherd” must refer to his being “wounded in the midst of [his] hands” (Zech. 13:6) when they “pierced” him (Zech. 12:10).

Now if we look to Micah 5 to tell us more about this Messianic figure, we read in the first verse:

But you, Beit-Lechem Ephrathah, which are little to be among the thousands of Y'hudah: out of you, shall one come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Yisra'el; whose goings forth are from of old--from ancient days.
(Micah 5:1 (5:2) HRV)

Lest we have any doubt that we have correctly identified this figure as speaking of the Messiah, we can see plainly that our forefathers understood this as well, as the Targum to this verse reads:

And you, O Bethlehem Ephrath,
you who were too small to be numbered
among the thousands of the house of Judah,
from you shall come forth before Me the Messiah,
to exercise dominion over Israel,
he whose name was mentioned from before,
from the days of creation.
(Targum Jonathan; Micah 5:1)

The fact that Messiah was to be born at Beit Lechem is also expressed in this story found in the Midrash Rabbah (as well as in the Jerusalem Talmud):

A man was plowing when one of his oxen lowed. An Arab passed by and asked, 'What are you?' He replied, 'I am a Jew.' The Arab said to him, 'Unharness your ox and untie your plow [as a sign of mourning].' 'Why?' 'Because the Temple of the Jews is destroyed.' The Jew asked, 'How do you know this?' 'From the lowing of your ox.' While they were talking the ox lowed again. The Arab said, 'Harness your ox and tie up your plow, because the deliverer of the Jews is born.' 'What is his name?' 'His name is Menachem [Comforter].' 'What is his father's name?' 'Chizkiyahu.' 'Where do they live?' He answered, 'In Birat-'Arba, in Beit-Lechem of Judea.' (Midrash Rabbah to Lamentations, Section 51 (on Lamentations 1:16)) (see also j.Ber. 5a)

So the Messiah is to be born in Beit Lechem (Bethlehem), killed by being pierced and wounded in his hands among his own people, his followers would then scatter and be disoriented by this event.

There is a Pharisaic tradition recorded in the Mishna tractate Sanhedrin which deals with which "apostate doctrines" were worthy of disfellowshipment. The Mishna passage in question reads:

All Israelites have a share in the world to come...
And these are the ones who have no part in the World to Come:
He who says, the resurrection of the dead is a teaching which is not derived from the Torah...
(m.San. 10:1)

The Talmud is made up the Mishna and the Gemara. In the Talmud a passage of Mishna is followed by commentary known as Gemara. In the Talmud the Gemara to m.Sanhedrin 10:1 begins at b.Sanhedrin 90a and runs through b.Sanhedrin 99a.

At around b.Sanhedrin 97a this section of Gemara transitions from a discussion of the doctrine of the resurrection (in 90a-96b) to a discussion on the timing of the coming of Messiah (in 97a-99a). This

is not just a random shift, but a logical transition.

The transition point of this Gemara reads as follows:

Rabbi Nahman said to Rabbi Isaac: “Have you heard when Bar Nafle will come?”

“Who is Bar Nafle?”, he asked.

“Messiah,” he answered,

“Do you call Messiah Bar Nafle?”

“Even so,” he rejoined, “As it is written: “In that day, I will raise up the tabernacle

of David ha-nofelet [that is fallen]. (Amos 9:11)”

(b.San 97a)

This Gemara defines “David” in this passage to refer to the Davidic Messiah and the “tabernacle” to refer to his physical body. Since the context of this Gemara is that of the resurrection, “raise up” in this context most certainly refers to “resurrection” This is very profound, because we have in this Gemara a reference to a “resurrection” of the physical body of Messiah being seen in Amos 9:11.

There is also evidence that this understanding of the “Tabernacle of David” in Amos 9:11-12 as being a reference to the Messiah existed by the first century. A document found among the Dead Sea Scrolls in cave 4 gives the following commentary in Amos 9:11:

“I shall raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen” (Amos 9:11). This passage describes the fallen Branch of David, whom He shall raise up to deliver Israel.

(Q174 III, 12-13)

This must be the reason that Ya’akov cites the verse in Acts 15:16 as having an application not only in the Millennial Kingdom, but in the very time period of the Acts 15 council. Ya’akov was well aware that the “Tabernacle of David” was a reference to the body of the Messiah, and that its being “raised up” was understood as a prophecy of a resurrection of the Messiah after he had “fallen” (died).

Thus it seems as though this same Messiah ben Yosef dies and is resurrected and comes a second time as Messiah ben David to purify

the land, judge the false prophets and establish his Messianic Kingdom.

The two Messiahs are actually two comings of one Messiah. Now you may recall that we demonstrated earlier that the Messiah would be a prophet “like Moses”. A tradition found in Midrash Rabbah may provide the answer:

Like Moses, Messiah will be revealed, then hidden,
then revealed again.
(Bamidbar Rabbah 11:2)

Just as Moses ascended to Mt. Sinai and returned to find his people had departed from the Torah, Messiah is killed and returns to purify the earth and rule from David’s throne forever.

Chapter 3 **The Time of Messiah's Coming**

Isaiah 29 ties the apostasy of Judah to a sealed book (29:10-12) but with the revealing of that sealed book comes an enlightenment and restoration (29:18).

Now it is very important to realize that according to Isaiah 29 our people (Judah) are in a state of general blindness/slumber until the sealed book is revealed (29:10-14, 18).

Now Isaiah does not tell us what the book is or when it is revealed.

However that information is given elsewhere in the Tanak. Daniel writes of his own book:

But you, O Daniel, shut up the words,
and seal the book to the time of the end...

...Go your way Daniel: for the words are closed up
and sealed till the time of the end.
(Dan. 12:4, 10)

So this "sealed book" would seem to be at least in part, the Book of Daniel and it seems to be come unsealed in the last days. Remember Daniel wrote after the days of Isaiah so Daniel knew about the sealed book of Is. 29:10-12, 18 when he wrote Dan. 12:4, 10.

So lets bring together Is. 29:10-14, 18 with Daniel 12:4, 10. What do we learn from these two sections of the Tanak taken together? We learn that our people Judah are in an apostasy until some information hidden in the Book of Daniel (and perhaps some other books) is revealed in the last days and the revealing of that information opens their eyes.

This means that mainline Judaism is in apostasy but in the last days there is a restoration of Judah when certain hidden (sealed) information in Daniel is revealed.

So what information is sealed in Daniel? The restoration of our people is usually tied to Messiah... could this hidden information in Daniel relate to the identity of Messiah?

Interesting the Talmud states:

The Targum of the Prophets was composed by Jonathon ben Uzziel under the guidance of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi... and a Bat Kol (voice from heaven) came forth and exclaimed, "Who is this that has revealed My secrets to mankind?"... He further sought to reveal by a Targum the inner meaning of the Ketuvim, but a bat kol went forth and said, "Enough!". What was the reason?-- Because the date of the Messiah is foretold in it.

(b.Megillah 3a)

Now the only prophetic book of the Ketuvim is Daniel and this is also a book of the Ketuvim for which no Targum was evr made. The following quote from Josephus also supports the theory that Daniel is the book in question:

We believe that Daniel conversed with God; for he did not only prophecy of future events, as did the other prophets, but also determined the time of their accomplishment.

(Josephus; Antiquities 10:11:7)

Now the Qumran community found just this information (the time of the Messiah) in the Book of Daniel:

The visitation is the Day of Salvation that He has decreed through Isaiah the prophet concerning all the captives, inasmuch as Scripture says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion "Your ELOHIM reigns"." (Isa. 52:7)
This scriptures interpretation : "the mountains" are the prophets, they who were sent to proclaim God's truth and to prophesy to all Israel. "The messengers" is the Anointed of the spirit, of whom Daniel spoke; "After the sixty-two weeks, a Messiah shall be cut off" (Dan. 9:26)

(From 11Q13)

So now we have learned that there is good reason to believe that the sealed information in the Book of Daniel which opens the eyes of Judah when it is revealed in the last days is the time of Messiah sealed up in Daniel 9:24-27.

Now lets recap:

Anyone can see from Is. 29 that the apostasy of Judah ends with the revealing of a sealed book.

Anyone can see from Daniel 12 that this sealed book is (at least in part) the Book of Daniel.

Anyone can see that the information sealed up in Daniel is (at least in part) the time of Messiah.

Anyone can see that this information is to be found in Daniel 9.

Now here is Daniel 9 unsealed:

In the first year of Daryavesh the son of Achashverosh, of the seed of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I Daniel meditated in the books, over the number of the years, whereof the word of YHWH came to Yirmeyah the prophet, that He would accomplish for the desolations of Yerushalayim seventy years.

(Dan. 9:1-2 HRV)

Daniel has been doing some Tanak study. He has been reading Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10. He has read about the 70 year exile.

The reason for a 70 year captivity had been that YHWH was punishing us for having forsaken the Torah. He punished us with the curses of Deut 28-29 and Lev. 26 as the Torah had warned us. The key issue here was that of the violation of the Sabbath of the Land (Ex. 21:2; 23:11; Lev. 25:2, 20; 26:2, 34; Deut. 15:1)

According to the Torah, if we as a people did not keep the Sabbath of the land every seven years we would be cursed (Lev. 26 esp. verse 34)

And I set my face unto the YHWH Elohim,
to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting,
and sackcloth, and ashes.

And I prayed unto YHWH my Elohim,
and made confession, and said: 'O YHWH,²
the great and awful El, who keep covenant
and mercy with them that love You and keep
Your commandments, we have sinned, and have
dealt iniquitously, and have done wickedly,
and have rebelled, and have turned aside from
Your commandments and from Your ordinances;
neither have we hearkened unto Your servants
the prophets, that spoke in Your name to our kings,
our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people
of the land. Unto You, O YHWH,³ belongs
righteousness, but unto us confusion of face,
as at this day; to the men of Y'hudah, and to
the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, and unto all
Yisra'el, that are near, and that are far off,
through all the countries whither You have
driven them, because they dealt treacherously
with You. O YHWH, to us belongs confusion
of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers,
because we have sinned against You. To YHWH
our Elohim belong compassions and forgivenesses;
for we have rebelled against Him; neither have
we hearkened to the voice of YHWH our Elohim,
to walk in His laws, which He set before us by
His servants the prophets.

Yes, all Yisra'el have transgressed Your Torah,
and have turned aside, so as not to hearken to

² Masoretic Text: "Adonai" This is one of 134 places where the MT reads "Adonai" but which the Masorah indicates that the text originally read "YHWH" and had been altered by the scribes in an attempt on their part to clarify the text.

³ Masoretic Text: "Adonai" This is one of 134 places where the MT reads "Adonai" but which the Masorah indicates that the text originally read "YHWH" and had been altered by the scribes in an attempt on their part to clarify the text.

Your voice; and so there has been poured out upon us the curse and the oath that is written in the Torah of Moshe the servant of Elohim; for we have sinned against Him. And He has confirmed His word, which He spoke against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil; so that under the whole heaven has not been done as has been done upon Yerushalayim.

As it is written in the Torah of Moshe, all this evil is come upon us; yet have we not entreated the favour of YHWH our Elohim, that we might turn from our iniquities, and have discernment in Your truth. And so YHWH has watched over the evil, and brought it upon us; for YHWH our Elohim is righteous in all His works which He has done, and we have not hearkened to His voice.

And now, O YHWH our Elohim, that have brought Your people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have gotten You renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

O YHWH, according to all Your righteousness, let Your anger and Your fury, I pray You, be turned away from Your city Yerushalayim, Your set-apart mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Yerushalayim and Your people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

Now therefore, O our Elohim, hearken unto the prayer of Your servant, and to his supplications, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that is desolate, for YHWH's sake. O my Elohim, incline Your ear, and hear; open Your eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city upon which Your name is called; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteousness, but because of Your great compassions.

O YHWH, hear, O YHWH, forgive, O YHWH, attend and do, defer not; for Your own sake, O my Elohim, because Your name is called upon Your city and Your people.'

(Dan. 9:3-19 HRV)

Daniel is very concerned. It has been 70 years and he wants to go home! He is a very old man by now. But he has worried because he knows his Torah. He knows that the Torah warns that if Israel still does not repent after the curse is enacted that Israel will have the punishment multiplied by seven (Lev. 26:18) Daniel is hoping that YHWH will not be enacting the next level punishment. For that would mean $70 * 7$ or another 490 years!

And while I was speaking, and praying,
and confessing my sin and the sin of my
people Yisra'el, and presenting my supplication
before YHWH my Elohim for the set-apart
mountain of my Elohim; yes, while I was
speaking in prayer, the man Gavri'el, whom
I had seen in the vision at the beginning,
being caused to fly swiftly, approached
close to me about the time of the evening
offering. And he made me to understand,
and talked with me, and said: 'O Daniel,
I am now come forth to make you skilful
of understanding. At the beginning of your
supplications a word went forth, and I am
come to declare it; for you are greatly beloved;
therefore look into the word, and understand
the vision. Seventy weeks are decreed upon
your people and upon your set-apart city, to
finish the transgression, and to make an end
of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity,
and to bring in everlasting righteousness,
and to seal vision and prophecy, and to anoint
the most Set-apart.
(Dan. 9:20-24 HRV)

Daniel learns that there will indeed be at least another 490 years of curses for Israel. The "weeks" here are not seven DAYS but seven YEARS. In fact the Hebrew word here actually just means "seven [somethings]"

Know therefore and discern, that from the

going forth of the word to restore and to build Yerushalayim unto Messiah, a prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, it shall be built again, with broad place and moat, but in troublous times.
(Dan. 9:25 HRV)

7 "weeks" here would be 49 years (a Jubilee cycle) plus threescore and two weeks ($3 \times 20 + 2 = 62$) is 69 "weeks" or 483 years.

But remember we are not counting years here but actual sabbath year cycles which are specific seven year blocks. In other words this is actually a count of how many Sabbath year cycle blocks fall between these two points.

Our starting point is "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" which is Ezra 7:11-16 and gives us a start date of 457 BCE. Between that date and the Messiah 69 sabbath year cycle blocks would fall.

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of a prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood; and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.
(Dan. 9:26)

Messiah is cut off after ther 62 "weeks" which follow the 7 weeks. This elaboration allows us to see that the division of these two blocks (the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks) was to show that after the 7 weeks "the street shall be built again, and the wall" but the Messiah would not come until after the 62 week block following that.

The Messiah would be "cut off" at that time. This is an idiom meaning that he would be executed. He would not be executed for himself, but for others.

Then the people of a prince destroy Jerusalem after that time.

And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he

shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease;
and upon the wing of detestable things shall be
that which causes appalment; and that until the
extermination wholly determined be poured
out upon that which causes appalment.
(Dan. 9:27 HRV)

Remember there were 490 years or 70 "weeks" but we have so far covered only 483 (or 69 "weeks").

This is because the big test of our trust in YHWH is the Sabbath of the land. This is where Israel SHOWS our trust in YHWH by trusting him to provide. The curse would not end until we reinstitute the sabbath of the land (2Chr. 36:21).

So YHWH in his infinite mercy would send the Messiah seven years BEFORE the 490 years would end to call us to repent and return to Torah in time to reinstitute the sabbath of the land BEFORE the 490 years are over.

The curse will not end until we as a people repent and show that by reinstating the sabbath of the land. When we do that we will finally kick off the last seven years of the curse we have lived with all of this time.

There is so much to learn from this chapter. Including the nature of the Kingdom offer and the layout of the last seven years. But most importantly is the time that the Messiah would come and be "cut off".

Now if our start point is 457 BCE and 69 "weeks" must fall between this point and the death of Messiah, then Messiah would have to be executed sometime in a window from 26 C.E. to 40 C.E. (depending on how the sabbath year cycles fall.

So if Yeshua was NOT the Messiah that would be "cut off, but not for himself" during that window... then who was?

Messaih would be executed in a window of time somewhere between 26 and 44 C.E.. And he would arrive in accordance to the completion of a series of sabbath-year-cycles and jubilee cycles. Now these cycles

indicate "the year of release". So lets look for more clues about this Messiah who is cut off at such a time.

Chapter 4 Of Whom Does the Prophet Speak?

In considering the issue of the identity of Messiah one passage we must consider is the “Suffering Servant” song of Isaiah 52:7-53:12:

7 How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messengers of good tidings—that announces peace, the harbinger of good tidings; that announces salvation; that says unto Tziyon, Your Elohim reigns!

8 Hark! Your watchmen! They lift up the voice. Together do they sing, for they shall see eye to eye, YHWH returning to Tziyon.

9 Break forth into joy; sing together, you waste places of Yerushalayim: for YHWH has comforted His people; He has redeemed Yerushalayim.

10 YHWH has made bare, His Set-Apart arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our Elohim.

11 Depart you! Depart you! Go you out from thence. Touch no unclean thing; go you out of the midst of her. Be you clean, you that bear the vessels of YHWH.

12 For you shall not go out in haste, neither shall you go by flight: for YHWH will go before you, and the Elohim of Yisra’el will be your rearward.

13 Behold, My servant shall prosper: he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.

14 According as many were appalled at him⁴, so marred was his visage unlike that of a man: and his form, unlike that of the sons of men.

15 So shall he sprinkle⁵ many nations: kings shall shut their mouths because of him, for that which had not been told them,

⁴ Following two Hebrew mss. from the Middle Ages; the Aramaic text of the Peshitta Tanak, the Aramaic of the Targum Jonathan and the Greek LXX. The Masoretic Text and the copies found at Qumran have “you”. However “at him” seems to fit the context better.

⁵ “sprinkle” Hebrew: יָזַח YEZEH the imperfect hiphil form of the verb יָזַח “to spurt or splatter”. Some translators have rendered this word as “startle” based largely

shall they see, and that which they had not heard, shall they perceive.

1 Who would have believed our report? And to whom has the arm of YHWH been revealed?

2 For he shot up right forth as a sapling, and as a root out of a dry ground. He had no form nor comeliness, that we should look upon him, nor beauty that we should delight in him.

3 He was despised, and forsaken of men--a man of pains, and acquainted with disease, and as one from whom men hide their face: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not.

4 Surely our diseases He did bear, and our pains He carried: whereas we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of Elohim, and afflicted.

5 But He was pierced because of our transgressions; He was crushed because of our iniquities: the chastisement of our welfare was upon Him, and with His stripes, we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned every one to his own way, and YHWH has made to light on Him, the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, though He humbled Himself, and opened not His mouth. As a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb: yes, He opened not His mouth.

8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away, and with His generation who did reason? For He was cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people⁶ to whom the stroke was due.

on the Greek LXX reading “wonder”, however even these translators translate the word “sprinkle” in all other passages (such as Lev. 5:9; 8:11; Num. 19:18-19). The Aramaic Peshitta translates this word into Aramaic with מְדַכֵּא MEDAKE “purify” taken from the Aramaic root מְדַךְ ”to season or sprinkle”. The Aramaic Targum Jonathan understands the word here to mean יְבַדַּר Y’BADAR “scatter”.

⁶ “my people” Hebrew: עַמִּי this is the reading of the Masoretic Text, Aramaic Peshitta Tanak, the Aramaic of Targum Jonathan and Greek LXX. One of the two major Hebrew copies of Yesha’yah found at Qumran has עַמִּו ”his people” (although this is not noted in the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible).

9 And He⁷ made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich,
His tomb: although He had done no violence, neither was any
deceit in His mouth.

10 Yet it pleased YHWH to crush Him. He has put Him to
suffering to see if His soul would offer itself, as a guilt
offering: that He might see His seed, prolong His days, and that
the purpose of YHWH might prosper by His hand.

11 From the travail of His soul, He shall see light⁸, and shall be
satisfied in His understanding. My Righteous servant shall
justify many, and their iniquities, He bears.

12 Therefore will I divide Him a portion among the great, and
He shall divide the spoil with the mighty, because He bared His
soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet
He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the
transgressors.

(Isaiah 52:7-53:12 HRV)

Now the Targum to this passage plainly identifies the “servant” as
being the Messiah:

Behold, My Servant the Messiah shall prosper;
he shall be exalted and great and very powerful....

It is the will of the Lord to purify and to acquit as innocent the
remnant of His people, to cleanse their souls of sin, so that they
may see the Kingdom of their Messiah, have many sons and
daughters, enjoy long life, and observe the Torah of the Lord,
prospering according to his will.

(Targum Jonathan on Is. 52:13; Is. 53:10)

And many other sources in the Rabbinic writings seem to make this
identification as well:

⁷ “he” following the Masoretic Text, the Aramaic Peshitta Tanak and the Aramaic
Targum Jonathan. A copy found at Qumran has “they” while the Greek LXX has “I”.

⁸ In the Hebrew of the Masoretic Text this verse has a serious grammatical problem.
The Hebrew of the Masoretic Text reads literally: “ From the travail of his soul he
shall see _____ shall be satisfied in his understanding.” There is very clearly a
missing word in the Hebrew resulting in two verbs in a row "shall see" and "shall be
satisfied". The missing word "light" DOES appear in the Septuagint and has also
now turned up in two Hebrew copies of Yesha'yah found at Qumran.

Rabbi Jose the Galilean says: Great is peace-for at the hour the King Messiah reveals himself unto Israel, he will begin in no other way than with "peace" as it is written: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of goodnews, that announces peace." (Is. 52:7)
(Perek HaShalom in some Talmud editions and Numbers Rabbah XI, 16-20)

Regarding the mission by which Messiah will present himself Isaiah states, "He grew like a tender plant and as a root Out of dry land" At him will kings shut their mouths, for what had not been told unto them shall they see, and what they never heard shall they understand." (Is. 52:15-53:2)
(Maimonides)

"man" in the passage [Is. 53:3] refers to the Messiah, the Son of David.
(Midrash Thanhumi, Rabbi Nahman)

The Rabanan say that that Messiah's name is the Suffering Scholar of Rabbi's House (or the Leper Scholar) for it is written, "Surely he has born our grief and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of Elohim and afflicted." (Is. 53:4)
(Babylonian Talmud; b.San. 98a)

The Messiah- what is his name? The House of Rabbi Judah the Holy One says: The Sick One "Surely he has born our sicknesses" (Is. 53:4)
(Babylonian Talmud; b.San. 98b)

Rabbi Joshua came upon the prophet Elijah as he was standing at the entrance of Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai's cave. He asked him: "When is the Messiah coming?" The other replied: "Go and ask him yourself." "Where shall I find him?" "Before the gates of Rome." "By what sign shall I know him?" "He is sitting among the poor people and covered with wounds." (see Is. 53:5)
(Babylonian Talmud; b.San. 98a)

The Holy One gave Messiah the opportunity to save souls but to be severely chastisedŠ Messiah accepted the chastisement of love "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted." And when Israel is sinful, the Messiah seeks mercy on them "By his stripes we were healed" and "He carried the sins of many" (Rabbi Moshe Hadershan; Midrash Rabbah; Bereshit Rabbah)

In the Garden of Eden there is a hall that is called the "hall of the afflicted." Now it is into this hall that the Messiah goes and summons all the afflictions and pains and sufferings of Israel to come upon him. And so they all come upon him. And had he not eased the children of Israel of their sorrow, and taken their burden upon himself, there would be none who could endure the suffering of Israel in penalty of neglecting the Torah. Thus it is written: "Surely our diseases he did bear and our pains he carried." (Is. 53:5) As long as the children of Israel dwelt in the Holy Land, they averted all afflictions and sufferings from the world by the service of the sanctuary and by sacrifice. But now it is the Messiah who is averting them from the inhabitants of the world.
(Zohar; Ex. fol. 212a)

Is. 52:7-53:12 is the fourth of four "servant songs" in Isaiah. These four servant songs are to be found in 42:1-9; 49:1-12; 50:4-11; 52:7-53:12). Now before we look at Is. 52:7-53:12 lets briefly look at the other three. Let us first look at Is. 42:1-9

Is. 42:1 says:

Behold my servant, whom I uphold;
my elect in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles.

This is a close parallel to another passage in Isaiah:

And the Spirit of YHWH shall rest upon him...

with righteousness shall he judge...
(Is. 11:2, 4)

Now EVERYONE agrees that Is. 11:1f speaks of the Messiah and it is clear that Is. 42:1 speaks of the same individual. Also Is, 61:1 is parallel.

Ok now lets look at Is. 49:1-12

It is the claim of some commentators that Isaiah 49:3 closes the case and clearly identifies the Servant as Israel. However in context that identification must be alegorical. In Is. 49:1-12 the servant is clearly NOT literally Israel because in verses 5 & 6 the servant brings Jacob (Israel) back to YHWH; raises up the tribes of Israel and restore the preserved of Israel. Clearly then the next two verses reveal that the servant is NOT Israel. So why does Is. 49:3 make that identification? Because their is an allegorical relationship Between Messiah and Israel. Both for example are the Son of Elohim. Both had miraculous births. Both were taken into Egypt to save them in their youth. Both were called out of Egypt. Rome tried to kill both of them. etc.

In verse 7 most translations state that a "nation" abhors the servant. However some translations state that the "nations" abhor the servant. This makes a big difference. If the word is singular "nation" then by context the "nation" would be Israel. Thus proving once again that the servant is not Israel because Israel cannot abhor Israel. However if the reading is "nations" then this fits with the interpretation that the servant is Israel and that in Is. 53 Israel is being opressed by the nations. This is pivitol. The word is in the Hebrew SINGULAR thus proving Once again that the servant is NOT Israel OK now lets look at Is. 52:7-53:12

The key questions are: Who is the speaker?; Who is the servant?; Who is "we"?; Who is "he"?; who is the speaker? Three answers have been proposed: Isaiah; YHWH and the Gentile Kings of the Earth.

Is the speaker YHWH? The speaker cannot be YHWH because the speaker has sins (53:6)

Second: Is the speaker The Gentile Kings of the Earth? The speaker cannot be the Gentile Kings for several reasons. To begin with the chiasmic structure in 52:7, 10; 53:1 reveals the speaker is the same as the individual on the mountains in 52:7 which NO ONE claims is the Gentile Kings.

Is. 52:7

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him
that brings goodnews,
that publishes peace;
that brings goodnews of good,
that publishes salvation,
that says to Zion: "Your God reigns!"

Is. 52:10

A. YHWH

B. has made bare **his holy arm**

C. in the eyes of all the nations

C. and all the ends of the earth

B. **shall see the salvation**

A. of our Elohim.

Is. 53:1

Who has believed our report?

And to whom is the **arm of YHWH** revealed?

Clearly the "arm of YHWH" in 53:1 is the "report" of 53:1

Clearly the "arm of YHWH" in 53:1 is "his holy arm" in 52:10

Clearly "see the salvation" of 52:10 is "bare his holy arm" of 52:10

Clearly the "publishes salvation" of 52:7 = "see the salvation" of 52:10

Therefore the "report" of 53:1f is being given by the figure on the mountains who is certainly NOT the Gentile Kings.

The text of 52:15 specifically tells us that the Gentile kings are silent they have nothing to say, they are NOT delivering a report. If it was

important that we think that the speaker was the Gentile kings of 2:15 then why would YHWH have the text tell us they are silent. in fact the Targum actually states that the kings "shall be silent because of him"

The speaker is Isaiah. In fact there is no reason not to believe that the speaker is Isaiah. Who then is the servant?

Is the servant Israel? The servant cannot be Israel because:

1. The servant is a voluntary sufferer (Is. 53:7, 12b)
2. The servant is contrasted with the speaker who counts himself with a group (Israel) saying "we" throughout. (Is. 53:6) If "we" is Israel and "we" is being contrasted with "he" then "he" the servant cannot be Israel.
3. The servant is an innocent sufferer (53:6, 9) but Israel has guilt. Israel suffers BECAUSE we have sinned (see Deut. 28-29 and Lev. 26)

We should add that 53:10 says "he shall see his seed" and some commentators have claimed that the word zera (seed) cannot be used allegorically. Infact the word zera (seed) is used allegorically in Jewish literatiure to refer to the scattered tribes. In fact the Targum on this passage understands "seed" allegorically and paraphrases it "the Kingdom of their Messiah". In fact then term seed is used allegorically in the very next chapter (Is. 54:1-3)

The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 52:7-53:12 must therefore refer to the Messiah.

Chapter 5 The Living Torah

The Torah has long been recognized in Judaism as a living entity through which YHWH created the Heavens and the Earth. As we read in the Midrash Rabbah:

The Torah declares: 'I was the working tool of the Holy One, blessed be He.' In human practice, when a mortal king builds a palace, he builds it not with his own skill but with the skill of an architect. The architect moreover does not build it out of his head, but employs plans and diagrams to know how to arrange the chambers and the wicket doors. Thus Elohim consulted the Torah and created the world, while the Torah declares, IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED (I,1), BEGINNING referring to the Torah, as in the verse, YHWH made me as the beginning of His way (Prov. VIII, 22).
(Genesis Rabbah 1:5)

Now we read in the Torah:

9 And YHWH your Elohim will make you over-abundant in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, and in the fruit of your cattle, and in the fruit of your land, for good; for YHWH will again rejoice over you for good, as He rejoiced over your fathers,

10 If you shall hearken to the voice of YHWH your Elohim, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Torah; if you turn unto HYWH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul.

11 For this commandment which I command you this day, it is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.

12 It is not in heaven, that you should say: 'Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?'

13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say: 'Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?'

14 But the word is very near unto you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it.

15 See, I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil,

16 In that I command you this day to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances; then you shall live and multiply, and YHWH your Elohim shall bless you in the land where you go in to possess it.

(Deut. 30:9-16 HRV)

Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah reflected upon this portion of the Torah when he wrote concerning wisdom:

29 Who has gone up into heaven, and taken her [wisdom] and brought her down from the clouds?

30 Who has gone over the sea, and found her, and will buy her for pure gold?

(Baruch 3:29-30)

Then a few lines later Baruch writes:

37 Afterward she appeared upon earth and lived among men.

4:1 She is the book of the commandments of Elohim, and the Torah that endures forever. All who hold fast will live, and those who forsake her fast will die.

(Baruch 3:37-4:1)

Thus Baruch taught that the Torah would appear on earth and dwell among men. This is just what the original followers of Yeshua believed of the Messiah "and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14).

Let us now look at a passage of the Ketuvim Netzarim which Christians have totally misunderstood, Romans 10:4. It appears in the most Christian translations to say that "Christ is the end of the law".

The Aramaic word used for "end" here is SAKA. Back in 1893 when James Murdock S.T.D. (A Christian) translated the Aramaic Peshitta into English for the first time, he translated this word as "aim". He noted the original Aramaic word in the margin and further defined it "end, scope, summary". This Aramaic word is used in the Rabbinic literature to mean "number" "sum" or "total". In the Babylonian Talmud this word is used as follows "...the SUM of pupils for a teacher in the primary class is twenty five" (b.Bat. 21a) The root verb for this Aramaic noun means "to calculate, count, sum up" or "to look out for, to hope for".

With this Aramaic word, Paul is saying, not that the Messiah is the TERMINATION of the Torah, but that Messiah is the aim, goal, scope, summary, number, total and sum of the Torah! Paul is saying that the Messiah *is* the Torah. Messiah is the *sum* of the Torah.

Rom 10:5 then continues with:

For Moses thus wrote of the righteousness that is by the Torah that 'he who does these will live by them.'
(Lev. 18:5)

Remember now, Paul has just said that the Messiah is the sum of the Torah, and now he is quoting the Torah to prove that "life" comes from the Torah.

Then in Rom. 10:6-8 Paul continues:

And of the righteousness that is by trust, he thus says: 'Do not say in your heart: who has ascended to heaven' (Deut. 30:12) and brought down the Messiah? 'And who has descended' to the depth of She'ol 'and brought up' (Deut. 13:13) the Messiah from among the dead? But what does it say? 'The answer is near to you, to your mouth and to your heart,' (Deut. 30:14) which is the word of trust that we proclaim"

Now Christian commentators have taken Paul to be contrasting "the righteousness that is by the Torah" (Rom. 10:5) with "the righteousness that is by faith" (Rom. 10:6) to prove that Messiah is the "end"/"termination" of the Law as stated in Rom. 10:4.

There are several problems with this interpretation.

To begin with, we have already shown that Paul's point in Rom. 10:4 is not that Messiah is the termination of the law, but that Messiah is the goal and sum of the Torah.

Secondly Rom. 10:5 and Rom 10:6f both quote passages from the Torah to prove their points.

Thirdly, these commentators totally mangle the point Paul is making in Rom. 10:6-8.

When Paul was teaching the Bereans in Acts 17, we are told that they checked "the Scriptures" to see if what Paul said could be found there, and Paul said they were more noble than others he had taught, for doing this. Now the only Scriptures they had at the time were those of the Tanak ("Old Testament") so Paul would look to the passages he cites from the Tanak to see that we are applying his words accurately as they are in the Tanak.

So let's be good Bereans and look at the portion of Torah Paul actually quotes in Rom. 10:6-8, see what it actually says in context, and see how Paul is using it. Paul is quoting from Deut. 30:12-14.

Now the first and most important point is that in Deut. 30:12-13 it is the Torah that we do not have to have brought down to us, but in Paul's citations in Rom. 10:6-7 it is the "Messiah" who does not have to be brought down to us. Paul is applying his logic that Messiah is the sum of the Torah from Rom. 10:4 (thus reaffirming that we are correct in our understanding of SAKA in Rom. 10:4).

In Baruch that which is brought down from heaven in Deut. 30:12-13 is personified Wisdom (compare 1Cor. 1:24) which is identified with an incarnation of the Torah itself having come down to earth to dwell with men.

Moreover, when Paul says "the answer is near to you, to your mouth, and to your heart, which is the word of trust that we proclaim" (Rom. 10:8) Deut. Says "But the WORD is very near unto you, in your mouth

and in your heart, that you may do it" (Deut. 30:14). So the "answer" and the "word of trust/faith" in Rom. 10:8 is the "word" in Deut. 30:14, but in Deut. 30:14 that "word" is CLEARLY the Torah! In other words Rom. 10:8 might be understood "the TORAH is near to you, to your mouth, and to your heart, which is the TORAH of trust/faith that we proclaim".

Fourth, we find that Deut. 30:15-16 parallel the meaning of Lev. 18:5 so that we can see that Paul is citing these two passages together, not because he is contrasting them, but because they teach the same thing!

Finally if we look back to Rom. 10:6 which is quoting Deut. 30:12 and we look closely at the phrase Paul quotes "who shall go up for us to heaven" in the original Hebrew of Deut. 30:12, and if we take the first letter of each word to form a new word (this is a technique known as "Notarikon") then we spell the Hebrew word MILAH (which can mean "word" or "circumcision") and if we take the last letter of each word we find the name YHWH, so hidden and imbedded in this Hebrew phrase is the phrase "Word of YHWH". Paul's point is that both the Messiah and the Torah are the "Word of YHWH".

Just as the Tanak identifies the Torah as the Way (Deut. 9:12; 11:22-28; 30:15-16) the Truth (Ps. 119:142, 151) the Life (Deut. 32:46-47) the Light (Prov. 6:23; Ps. 119:105; Is. 8:20; 51:4) and the Word (Is. 1:10; 2:3) the Ketuvim Netzarim identifies Yeshua as the Messiah as the Way, the Truth, the Life (Jn. 14:6) the Light (Jn. 8:12; 1:4-5, 9; 3:19; 9:5; 12:35-36, 46; 14:6) and the Word (Jn. 1:1-3; 14-18; Rev. 19:13). Because they understood the Messiah is the Torah itself incarnate. The Christianized, Paganized version of "Jesus" who "came to free you from the bondage of the law" is by contrast a false Messiah because he is not even close to the real Messiah who was the very Torah dwelling among us, Yeshua.

Chapter 6

The Adam Kadmon

The immanent Kabbalist Isaac Luria taught that only through the Messiah can a true understanding of the Kabbalah be achieved because Messiah is at the heart of the Kabbalah.

Now in the previous chapter we noted that both the Messiah and the Torah are known as the Word. This MEANT something in context of Second Temple Judaism. And they meant something very significant. The concept of the “Word” (Greek: LOGOS; Aramaic: MEMRA; Hebrew: DAVAR) already had a very special and unique meaning in the Second Temple Era. The LOGOS/MEMRA was a very important concept in the Second Temple Era, and if we are to understand what Yochanan (John) is saying, we must understand this concept.

Philo was an Alexandrian Jew who was born nearly 20 years before Yeshua and died around 20 years after his death. Philo was a “Hellenist Jew”. Not like the Hellenists of the Maccabean period who abandoned Torah for Paganism, but like Stephen (Acts 7) and the Hellenists in Acts 6. These Hellenists were Greek speaking Jews who remained Torah Observant (at least in their own understanding) while accepting Greek culture.

Josephus' comments about Philo are so brief that we can quote them here in full:

There was now a tumult arisen at Alexandria, between the Jewish inhabitants and the Greeks; and three ambassadors were chosen out of each party that were at variance, who came to Gaius. Now one of these ambassadors from the people of Alexandria was Apion, who uttered many blasphemies against the Jews; and, among other things that he said, he charged them with neglecting the honors that belonged to Caesar; for that while all who were subject to the Roman empire built altars and temples to Gaius, and in other regards universally received him as they received the gods, these Jews alone thought it a dishonorable thing for them to erect statues in honor of him, as well as to swear by his name. Many of these severe things were said by Apion, by which he hoped to

provoke Gaius to anger at the Jews, as he was likely to be. But Philo, the principal of the Jewish embassy, a man eminent on all accounts, brother to Alexander the alabarch, and one not unskillful in philosophy, was ready to betake himself to make his defense against those accusations; but Gaius prohibited him, and bid him begone; he was also in such a rage, that it openly appeared he was about to do them some very great mischief. So Philo being thus affronted, went out, and said to those Jews who were about him, that they should be of good courage, since Gaius's words indeed showed anger at them, but in reality had already set God against himself. (Antiquities of the Jews, xviii.8, 1)

Philo is very important to us because he writes much about the Second Temple Era Jewish concept of the “Word” (Greek: LOGOS). We should not seek to understand John 1:1-3, 15 1 and Jn. 19:13 in a vacuum. Remember, Philo lived and wrote at the same time as the “New Testament” events were taking place. However Philo was far away in Alexandria Egypt, and apparently unaware of the budding Nazarene movement which had not yet come to Alexandria.

In order to understand Philo’s concept of the Word, we must understand Philo’s concept of Elohim. Philo saw a conflict within Elohim. On the one hand, he saw Elohim as beyond man and far removed from the finiteness of this universe. He refers to this concept in Greek as TO ON (that which exists) and TO ONTOS ON “that which alone truly exists”. This concept of Elohim is conceived as virtually outside this universe with no real contact with it. This unknowable Elohim appeared from Ex. 20:21. In Rabbinic Judaism (i.e. Kabbalah) this unknowable Elohim is called in Hebrew EIN SOF (without end/border; The Infinite One).

For Philo the Word (Logos) was a sort of bridge between the unknowable remote Elohim and the universe. The Word was a manifestation of the unknowable Elohim in this universe, an intermediary or mediator between man and Elohim. One can immediately see that Philo’s Word parallels the SEFIROT.

Philo writes much about the concept of the “Word” (Greek: Logos)

...So that the Word (Logos) is, as it were, the charioteer of the powers, ...
(On Flight and Finding XIX 101)

This is very important, as we have a first century Jew revealing to us the mystery of the throne-chariot.

The Mishna tells us:

They do not expound upon...
Ma'aseh Bereshit before [more than] two, or Ma'aseh Merkavah before [more than] one unless he was a sage and understands of his own knowledge.
(m.Hagigah 2:1)

In the Mishnah the Ma'aseh Merkavah (account of the throne-chariot) was a secret. But Philo tells us all about the secret, he tells us that the charioteer is the Word (Logos). It is generally accepted that the mysteries of the Ma'aseh Merkavah (account of the chariot – i.e. Ezek. 1-2) and Ma'aseh Bereshit (account of creation) were the material that later came to be referred to as “Kabbalah”. Philo tells us that the big secret of the chariot is that the charioteer is the Word.

Philo says:

...Every man in regard of his intellect is connected with Logos (Word), being an impression of, or a fragment or emanation of that blessed nature...
(Philo; On Creation LI (146))

Philo gave a very detailed description to the Word (Logos). To Philo the Word was the creator:

As therefore the city, when previously shadowed out in the mind of architectural skill had no external place, but was stamped solely in the mind of the workman, so in the same manner neither can the world which existed in ideas have had any other local position except the Logos (Word) which made them...
(Philo; On Creation V (20))

Philo taught that the Word (Logos) was the shadow of Elohim and was the instrument of creation.

...But the shadow of God is his Logos (Word),
which he used like an instrument when he was
making the world.

(Philo; Allegorical Interpretation III XXXI (96))

Not only does Philo speak of this "Word" but the ancient Targums do so as well. The Targums were Aramaic paraphrases of the books of the Tanak. Throughout the Targums we read of this entity called the "Word" (Aramaic: MEMRA). On many occasions the Targums paraphrase YHWH with the phrase "Word of YHWH" and on some occasions the Word (MEMRA) is mentioned in the paraphrase where YHWH is not mentioned. The term is applied to YHWH in Targum Onkelos 179 times, the Jerusalem Targum 99 times and Targum Pseudo-Jonathan 321 times.

This "Word of YHWH" was, according to Targum Jonathan, the Creator:

And the Word [Memra] of YHWH created man in his likeness,
in the likeness of YHWH, YHWH created,
male and female created He them.

(Targ. Jonathan Gen. 1:27)

This idea is also put forward in the Jerusalem Targum:

And the Word [Memra] of YHWH said to Moses:
"I am He who said unto the world 'Be!' and it was:
and who in the future shall say to it 'Be!'
and it shall be." And He said: "Thus you shall say
to the children of Israel: 'I Am' has sent me to you."
(Jerusalem Targum Ex. 3:14)

The Fragmentary Targum of the Torah also expresses that the Word of YHWH was the Creator:

The first night, when the "Word of YHWH"

was revealed to the world in order to create it,
the world was desolate and void,
and darkness spread over the face of the abyss
and the "Word of the Lord" was bright and illuminating
and He called it the first night.
(Fragmentary Targum Ex. 12:42)

That the Word of YHWH was the Creator can also be seen in the Tanak itself:

By the Word (DAVAR) of YHWH were the heavens made,
and all the hosts of them by the Spirit of His mouth.
(Ps. 33:6)

Whenever the Targums come to passages where YHWH is anthropomorphised or seen, or where two or more YHWHs are indicated by the text, the Targums will substitute "The Word [Memra] of YHWH" for YHWH. For example in Gen. 19:24 the Tanak has:

And YHWH rained brimstone and fire
upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah,
from YHWH, from the heavens.

The Hebrew grammar here indicates that one YHWH rains fire from another YHWH. But Targum Jonathan substitutes "The Word of YHWH/the L-RD" for the first of the two YHWHs as follows:

And the Word of the YHWH caused to descend upon the
peoples of Sodom and Gommorah, brimstone and fire from the
YHWH in heaven.

In another example the Torah has:

Ex. 24:1a (YHWH is the speaker, see Ex. 20:1-2)
Now He [YHWH] said to Moses, "come up to YHWH..."

But Targum Jonathan paraphrases the speaker in Ex. 20:1 with the substitution "the Word [Memra] of YHWH" in place of "YHWH."

“And the Word of the Lord spoke all these glorious words...”

So it would seem that one of these entities called "YHWH" in these Torah passages was actually understood by the Targumists as being the "Word of YHWH."

Moreover Abraham prayed in the name of the Word of YHWH:

And Abraham worshipped and prayed
in the name of the Word [Memra] of YHWH,
and said, "You are YHWH who does see,
but You cannot be seen."
(Jerusalem Targum Gen. 22:14)

Note that here Abraham prays "in the name of the Word of YHWH" to the YHWH who "cannot be seen." Here two YHWH's are very apparent. Abraham is praying in the name of the Word of YHWH but is praying to the YHWH who cannot be seen. This idea is reinforced elsewhere as follows:

And Hagar praised and prayed in the name of the Word
[Memra] Of YHWH who had revealed Himself to her...
(Jerusalem Targum Gen. 16:3)

Of this very incident Philo writes:

But Hagar flees out of shame. And a proof of this is, that the angel, that is the WORD of God, met her, with the intent to recommend her what she ought to do, and to guide her in her return to her mistress's house. For he encouraged her, and said unto her: "The Lord has heard the cry of thy humiliation," which you uttered, not out of fear, nor yet out of hatred. For the one is the feeling of an ignoble soul, and the other of one which loves contention, but under the influence of that copy of temperance and modesty, shame.
(On Flight and Finding (5))

It was this Word of YHWH that Jacob also trusted in:

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If the Word [Memra] of YHWH will be my support, and will keep me in the way that I

go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Word [Memra]of YHWH be my Elohim.
(Targum Onkelos on Gen. 28:20-21)

It is worth noting that the Targum Onkelos to Deut. 18:18-19 says that YHWH's "Word" would take vengeance on those who did not follow the Torah requirement to hearken to the Messiah.

Philo's concept of the "Word" (Logos) is the "image of Elohim" which served as the pattern for the creation of man in Gen. 1:26-27. Philo writes:

...For God does not seem to have availed himself of any other animal existing in creation as his model in the formation of man; but to have been guided, as I have said before, by his own Word (Logos) alone...
(Philo; On Creation XLVIII (139))

But the divine Word (Logos) which is above these does not come into any visible appearance, inasmuch as it is not like to any of the things that come under the external senses, but is itself an image of God, the most ancient of all the objects of intellect in the whole world, and that which is placed in the closest proximity to the only truly existing God, without any partition or distance being interposed between them:
(On Flight and Finding XVIII (101))

Now, Bezaleel, being interpreted, means God in his shadow. But the shadow of God is his Word (Logos), which he used like an instrument when he was making the world. And this shadow, and, as it were, model, is the archetype of other things. For, as God is himself the model of that image which he has now called a shadow, so also that image is the model of other things, as he showed when he commenced giving the law to the Israelites, and said, "And God made man

according to the image of God." [Gen. 1:26] as the image was modeled according to God, and as man was modeled according to the image, which thus received the power and character of the model.

(Allegorical Interpretations III 96)

For if it was necessary to examine the mortal body of the priest that it ought not be imperfect through any misfortune, much more was it necessary to look into his immortal soul, which they say is fashioned in the form of the living God. Now the image of God is the Word (Logos), by which all the world was made. (The Special Laws I, 81)

What is the man who was created? And how is that man distinguished who was made after the image of God? (Gen. 2:7). This man was created as perceptible to the senses, and in the similitude of a Being appreciable only by the intellect; but he who in respect of his form is intellectual and incorporeal, is the similitude of the archetypal model as to appearance, and he is the form of the principal character; but this is the Word (Logos) of God, the first beginning of all things, the original species or the archetypal idea, the first measure of the universe.

(Q & A on Gen. I, 4)

Why is it that he speaks as if of some other god, saying that he made man after the image of God, and not that he made him after his own image? (Gen. 9:6). Very appropriately and without any falsehood was this oracular sentence uttered by God, for no mortal thing could have been formed on the similitude of the supreme Father of the universe, but only after the pattern of the second deity, who is the Word (Logos) of the supreme Being; since it is fitting that the rational soul of man should bear it the type of the divine Word (Logos); since in his first Word (Logos)

God is superior to the most rational possible nature. But he who is superior to the Word (Logos) holds his rank

in a better and most singular pre-eminence, and how could the creature possibly exhibit a likeness of him in himself? Nevertheless he also wished to intimate this fact, that God does rightly and correctly require vengeance, in order to the defense of virtuous and consistent men, because such bear in themselves a familiar acquaintance with his Word (Logos), of which the human mind is the similitude and form.
(Q & A on Gen. II 62)

This parallels what we read in the Targum:

And the Word (Memra) of YHWH
created man in his likeness,
in the likeness of YHWH, YHWH created,
male and female created He them.
(Targ. Jonathan Gen. 1:27)

We said before that Philo's Word (Logos) parallels the SEFIROT of the Kabbalah in Rabbinic Judaism. In Kabbalah the SEFIROT are said to be manifested in "Adam Kadmon". According to Genesis man was created in the "image of Elohim". This "image of Elohim" was a manifestation of the Godhead, which served as a model for Adam.

...the form (image) of G-d in which He created man is actually G-d's blueprint form for man. This "form" or "blueprint" consisted of G-d's first thought in creation, and hence the highest level of creation. This is referred to as "Adam Kadmon" (Primeval Man).
(Bahir; Aryeh Kaplan; p. 95
in Kaplans commentary to Bahir 7)

"Adam Kadmon" means "before Adam" and refers to the "image of Elohim" after which we were created. Gershom Scholem writes:

In His active manifestations, the Godhead appears as the dynamic unity of the Sefiroth, portrayed as the "tree of the Sefiroth," or the mystical human form ('Adam Kadmon), who is none other than the concealed shape of Godhead itself.

(On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead; Basic Concepts in the Kabbalah; p. 39)

However, the Sefiroth do not appear only in the shape of the tree. They also appear in the form of Primal Man ('Adam Kadmon), which corresponds to that of earthly man. (ibid p. 43)

Thus he is not just the Tree and the Sefirot, he is Adam Kadmon, the image of Elohim:

The Holy One, blessed be He, has a son, whose glory (tifret) shines from one end of the world to another. He is a great and mighty tree, whose head reaches heaven, and whose roots are set in the holy ground, and his name is "Mispar" and his place is in the uppermost heaven,... as it is written, "The heavens declare (me-SaPRim) the glory (tifret) of God" (Ps. 19:1). Were it not for this "Mispar" there would be neither hosts Nor offspring in any of the worlds. (Zohar 2:105a)

Adam Kadmon, however, was not just the image of Elohim. He was actually Elohim himself, as Gershom Scholem writes:

...God entered into the form of the Adam Kadmon... (Kabbalah by Gershom Scholem p. 116)

The Adam Kadmon was "the likeness like the appearance of a man" which Ezekiel saw upon the throne (Ezek. 1:26) in his Merkavah vision (vision of the divine throne-chariot).

Remember, Philo tells us:

...So that the Word (Logos) is, as it were,
the charioteer of the powers,...
(On Flight and Finding XIX 101)

In the Ketivim Netzarim the "Word" is the Messiah Yeshua, of whom we read:

...the Messiah, who is the likeness of
Elohim.
(2Cor. 4:4)

[his Son] who is the image of the invisible Elohim..
(Col. 1:15)

[the Son] who is the radiance of his glory,
and the image of his being...
(Heb. 1:3)

The identification of Messiah Yeshua with Adam Kadmon is also reflected in 1Cor. 15:45 where Yeshua is called "the last Adam".

In order to understand Philo's concept of the Word (Logos) it is important to understand Philo's concept of Elohim. Philo says:

"The primal existence is God, and second the God-Word"
(Allegorical Interpretation II, 86)

The Creator of the world sends out His powers
from an eternal and invisible place"
(Q&A on Genesis, II, 48)

Philo raises the question

"...regarding its Creator, asking of what sort this Being is so difficult to see, so difficult to conjecture. Is He a body or incorporeal or something exalted above these? Is He a single nature... Or a composite Being?...and seeing that this is a problem hard to pursue, hard to take in by thought, he prays that he may learn from God Himself what God is."
(Flight and Finding, 164)

Philo doesn't answer this question here, but he does answer these questions elsewhere. In On the Confusion of Tongues, 62, He calls God "incorporeal" and in a later section, he describes God as a "Triad" (Trinity). He refers to God as "...the Lord God of three natures..."(Philo; On the Change of Names II, 11). He also says:

...it is reasonable for one to be three and for three to be one, for they were one by a higher principle... ...in the place of one, He makes the appearance of a triad [trinity]... He cannot be seen in his oneness without something [else], the chief Powers that that exist immediately with him... the Creative, which is called "Elohim" and the Kingly, which is called "Lord"... he begins to see the sovereign, holy, and divine vision in such a way that a single appearance appears as a triad [trinity], and the triad [trinity] as a unity.

(Philo; Questions on Genesis, IV, 2)

According to Philo God appears as a Triad -- himself and his two Powers: Creative and Ruling. To the "purified soul," however, God appears as One.

... the Father of the universe, who in the sacred scripture is called by his proper name, 'I am that I am'; and the beings on each side are those most ancient powers which are always close to the living God, one of which is called his Creative Power, and the other his Royal Power. And the Creative Power is God, for it is by this that he made and arranged the universe; and the Royal Power is the Lord, for it is fitting that the Creator should lord it over and govern the creature. Therefore, the middle person of the three, being attended by each of his powers as by body-guard, presents to the mind, which is endowed with the faculty of sight, a vision at one time of one being, and at another time of three; ...

(Abr. 119-123).

The reconciliation of these two opposing "powers", the central power is the Word (Logos):

...the Divine Word (Logos)...fills all things and becomes a mediator and arbitrator for the two sides....from the Divine Word (Logos), as from a spring, there divide and break forth two powers. One is the creative through which the Artificer placed and ordered all things. This is named "God". And the royal, since through it the Creator rules over created things. This is called "Lord" And from these two powers have grown the others. For by the side of the creative power there grows

the propitious of which is named "beneficial" while (besides) the royal the legislative, of which is aptly named "punitive". And below these and beside them is the ark."
(Philo on Q&A on Exodus, II.68)

As we stated earlier Philo's "Word" (Logos) parallels Kabbalah's SEFIROT.

According to the Sefer Yetzirah there are ten sefirot:

Ten Sefirot of Nothingness ten and not nine ten and not eleven...
(Sefer Yetzirah 1:4)

The ten sefirot are arranged on a chart known as the "Tree of Life" under three columns known as the "three pillars of the Godhead".

As we read in the Bahir:

Why are they called Sephirot?
Because it is written (Psalm 19:2),
"The heavens declare (me-SaPRim) the glory of God."
And what are they?
They are three. Among them are three troops and three dominions.
(Bahir 125-126)

The Zohar describes the three pillars of the Godhead as follows:

Then Elohim said, "Let thee be light; and there was light. And Elohim saw that the light was good...
Why, it may be asked, was it necessary to repeat the word "light" in this verse? The answer is that the first "light" refers to the primordial light which is of the Right Hand, and it is destined for the "end of days"; while the second "light" refers to the Left Hand, which issues from the Right.

The next words, "And God saw the light that it was good" (Gen. 1:4), refer to the pillar which, standing midway between them, unites both sides, and therefore when the unity of the

three, right, left, and middle, was complete, "it was good", since there could be no completion until the third had appeared to remove the strife between Right and Left, as it is written, "And God separated between the light and between the darkness."...

This is the Middle Pillar: Ki Tov (that it was good) threw light above and below and on all other sides, in virtue of YHWH, the name which embraces all sides.
(Zohar 1:16b)

Philo Writes of the Word (Logos):

For there are, as it seems, two temples belonging to God; one being this world, in which the high priest is the divine word, his own firstborn son. The other is the rational soul, the priest of which is the real true man,
(On Dreams 215)

And if there be not as yet any one who is worthy to be called a son of God, nevertheless let him labour earnestly to be adorned according to his Firstborn Word, the eldest of his angels, as the great archangel of many names; for He is called, "the Authority", and "the Name of God", and "the Word", and "man according to God's image", and "He who sees Israel". . . For even if we are not yet suitable to be called the sons of God, still we may deserve to be called the children of his eternal image, of his most sacred Word; for the image of God is his most ancient word.
(On the Confusion of Tongues XXVIII:146-147)

Thus, indeed, being a shepherd is a good thing, so that it is justly attributed, not only to kings, and to wise men, and to souls who are perfectly purified, but also to God, the ruler of all things; and he who confirms this is not any ordinary person, but a prophet, whom it is good to believe, he namely who wrote the psalms; for he speaks thus, "The Lord is my shepherd, and he shall cause me to lack Nothing;" (Ps. 23:1.) and let every one in his turn say the same thing, for it is very becoming to every man who loves God to study such a song as

this, but above all this world should sing it. For God, like a shepherd and a king, governs (as if they were a flock of sheep) the earth, and the water, and the air, and the fire, and all the plants, and living creatures that are in them, whether mortal or divine; and he regulates the nature of the heaven, and the periodical revolutions of the sun and moon, and the variations and harmonious movements of the other stars, ruling them according to law and justice; appointing, as their immediate superintendent, his own right reason, his first-born son, who is to receive the charge of this sacred company, as the lieutenant of the great king; for it is said somewhere, "Behold, I am he! I will send my messenger before thy face, who shall keep thee in the Road."(Ex. 23:20.)
(On Husbandry 50-51)

According to the Zohar, the Middle Pillar of the Godhead is also known as the "Son of Yah":

Better is a neighbor that is near, than a brother far off.
This neighbor is the Middle Pillar in the godhead,
which is the Son of Yah.
(Zohar 2:115)

The Middle Pillar is also known as "Metatron":

The Middle Pillar [of the godhead] is Metatron,
Who has accomplished peace above,
According to the glorious state there.
(Zohar 3:227)

And in the Zohar we are also told that Metatron is "the firstborn" and the "ruler of all He has" and "committed to Him the government over all His hosts":

"And Abraham said to his oldest servant of his house..." (Gen. 24:2) Who is this of whom it said "his servant?" In what sense must this be understood? Who is this servant? R. Nehori answered:
"It is in no other sense to be understood than expressed in the word "His servant,"

His servant, the servant of Elohim, the chief to His service. And who is he? Metatron, as said. He is appointed to glorify the bodies which are in the grave. This is the meaning of the words "Abraham said to His servant" that is to the servant of Elohim. The servant is Metatron, the eldest of His [YHWH's] House, who is the firstborn of all creatures of Elohim, who is the ruler of all He has; because Elohim has committed to Him the government over all His hosts.
(Zohar 1:129b)

This recalls, not only what Philo has said about the "Word" (Logos) but also a statement by Paul in his letter to the Colossians:

Who is the image of Eloah, which is invisible, and the Firstborn of all creation. And by him was created everything that is in heaven and on earth, all that is seen and all that is not seen, whether thrones or sovereignties or principalities or authorities. Everything through him and by him was created. He was from before, and all and everything by him was established. And he is the head of the Assembly, because He is the head, And the Firstborn from among the dead, that he might be first in all.
(Col. 1:15-18)

Chapter 7

The True High Priest

Philo makes a very interesting comment concerning the Torah command of the cities of refuge (Num. 35:6-28; Josh. 20:1-9). The Torah says:

And the assembly shall deliver the manslayer, out of the hand of the avenger of blood, and the assembly shall restore him to his city of refuge, where he was fled. And he shall dwell therein until the death of the High Priest, who was anointed with the Set-Apart oil.
(Numbers 35:25)

Philo makes an interesting observation on this passage, he writes:

The fourth and last of the points which we proposed to discuss, is the appointing as a period for the return of the fugitives the death of the high priest, which, if taken in the literal sense, causes me great perplexity; for a very unequal punishment is imposed by this enactment on those who have done the very same things, since some will be in banishment for a longer time, and others for a shorter time; for some of the high priests live to a very old age, and others die very early, and some are appointed while young men, and others not until they are old. And again of those who are convicted of unintentional homicide, some have been banished at the beginning of the high priest's entrance into office, and some when the high priest has been at the very point of death. So that some are deprived of their country for a very long time, and others suffer the same infliction only for a day, if it chance to be so; after which they lift up their heads, and exult, and so return among those whose nearest relations have been slain by them. This difficult and scarcely explicable perplexity we may escape if we adopt the inner and allegorical explanation in accordance with natural philosophy. For we say that the high priest is not a man, but is the Word (Logos) of God, who has not only no

participation in intentional errors, but none even in those which are involuntary.

(On Flight 106-108)

Elsewhere he writes:

XXVI. (82) But Melchisedek shall bring forward wine instead of water, and shall give your souls to drink, and shall cheer them with unmixed wine, in order that they may be wholly occupied with a divine intoxication, more sober than sobriety itself. For the Word is a priest, having, as its inheritance the true God, and entertaining lofty and sublime and magnificent ideas about him, "for he is the priest of the most high God." {38} {Genesis 14:18.} Not that there is any other God who is not the most high; for God being one, is in the heaven above, and in the earth beneath, and there is no other besides Him." {39} {Deuteronomy 4:39.} But he sets in motion the notion of the Most High, from his conceiving of God not in a low and grovelling spirit, but in one of exceeding greatness, and exceeding sublimity, apart from any conceptions of matter. ("De Allegoriis Legum," iii. 26).

Philo thus concludes that the true High Priest is the Word (Logos). If we follow Philo's logic through, then through the death of the Word, these exiles are set free.

Philo's true "High Priest" (The Word) ties in well with a document found among the Dead Sea Scrolls known as The Melchizedek Document (11Q13). 11Q13 speaks of this Messiah as a figure called "Melchizedek." In this document Is. 61:2 is quoted with "Melchizedek" substituted for YHWH. Furthermore the terms EL and ELOHIM are in 11Q13 applied to the Melchizedek/Messiah figure.

11Q13 Col. 4-9 quotes Is. 61:1-2 but substitutes "the year of Melchizedek's favor" for "the year of YHWH's favor" thus identifying the Melchizedek figure with YHWH in this passage. 11Q13 goes on to say:

...as it is written about him [Melchizedek] in the Songs of David,

"ELOHIM has taken his place in the council of EL;
in the midst of the ELOHIM he holds judgment"
(Ps. 82:1) Scripture also says about him [Melchizedek],
"Over it take your seat in the highest heaven;
EL will judge the peoples" (Ps. 7:7-8)
(11Q13 Col. 10-11)

The text of 11Q13 goes on to apply the passage "Your ELOHIM reigns" (Is. 52:7) to Melchizedek finally concluding:

"Your ELOHIM" (Is. 52:7) is Melchizedek, who will deliver them from the power of Belial.
(11Q13 Col. 24-25)

The Melchizedek figure of 11Q13 would free the captives (Is. 61:1-2) and through the Day of Atonement will "atone for all the Sons of Light".

In Hebrews 4:14-7:28 Paul argues that Messiah Yeshua (The Word of Jn. 1:1-3, 14) is the true High Priest and true Melchizedek making atonement for us in the heavenly Temple by his blood.

Philo also describes the Word (Logos) not only as the "Son" of the "Father" but as a PARACLETE who is "perfect in all virtue" and procures "forgiveness of sins" as well as a "supply of unlimited blessings":

...the twelve stones arranged on the breast in four rows of three stones each, namely the logeum, being also an emblem of that reason (Logos, Word) which holds together and regulates the universe. For it was indispensable that the man who was consecrated to the Father of the world, should have as a paraclete, his son, the being most perfect in all virtue, to procure forgiveness of sins, and a supply of unlimited blessings;
(Life of Moses II, 133-134)

This Greek word (paraclete) is also a Hebrew and Aramaic word also appears in the Mishna:

He who does even a single religious duty
gets himself a good advocate (or comforter Hebrew: paraklita)
he who does even a single transgression
gets himself a prosecutor.
(m.Avot 4:11a)

And in the Talmud it is used to refer to the sin offering::

R. Simeon said: For what purpose does a sin-offering come? —
[You ask,] ‘for what purpose does a sin-offering come?’
Surely in order to make atonement! —
Rather, [the question is:]
Why does it come before the burnt-offering?
[Because it is] like an intercessor (paraklita) who enters
[to appease the King]: When the intercessor (paraklita)
has appeased [him], the gift follows.
(b.Zev. 7b)

The Jewish Dictionary states:

...The sin offering is like the paraclete (paraklita) before God,
it interceded for man and is followed by another...
a thank offering for the pardon obtained...
the two daily burnt offerings are called ‘the two paracletes’...
Jewish Dictionary pp. 514-515

Now Yochanan, who identifies the Messiah as the Word (logos) in Jn.
1:1-3, 14 and Rev. 19:13 also says of Messiah:

1 My sons, I write these [things] to you, that you do not sin:
and if someone should sin, we have an advocate (paraklita)
with the Father, Yeshua the Messiah, the just [One].
2 For He is the propitiation for our sins, and not on behalf of
ours only, but also on behalf of [the sins of] the whole world.
(1st Yochanan (John) 2:1)

With all of this in mind, it is no surprise that the Targums tell us that the Word (Aramaic: Memra) is the source of our salvation. Jacob called upon the Word for his salvation:

Our father Jacob said: "My soul does not wait for salvation such as that wrought by Gideon, the son of Joash, for that was but temporal; neither for a salvation like that of Samson, which was only transitory; but for that salvation which You have promised to come, through Your Word unto Your people, the children of Israel; for your salvation my soul hopes."
(Targum Jonathan Gen. 49:18)

That the Word of YHWH is the savior is expressed elsewhere in the Targums:

But Israel shall be saved by the Word of YHWH with an everlasting salvation... By the Word of YHWH shall all the seed of Israel be justified...
(Targum Jonathan Is. 45:17, 25)

But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and I will save them by the Word of YHWH, their Elohim.
(Targum Jonathan Hosea 1:7)

It was, according to Targum Onkelos, this Word of YHWH that Abraham trusted in, by which he was justified:

And Abraham trusted in the Word [Memra] of YHWH, and He counted it to him for righteousness.
(Targum Onkelos Gen. 15:6)

Likewise Paul quotes Gen. 15:6 in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6 to prove his point that we are justified by faith in the Messiah.

Now here is perhaps the most amazing thing, Philo believed "Word" (Logos) and the Messiah to be one and the same:

"The head of all things is the eternal Word (Logos) of the eternal God, under which, as if it were his feet or other limbs, is placed the whole world, over which He passes and firmly

stands. Now it is not because Messiah is Lord that He passes and sits over the whole world, for His seat with His Father and God but because for its perfect fullness the world is in need of the care and superintendence of the best ordered dispensation, and for its own complete piety, of the Divine Word (Logos), just as living creatures (need) a head, without which it is impossible to live."

(Q&A on Exodus, II, 117)

And with all of this in mind, we should not be surprised to read in the Zohar concerning Messiah:

"In the Garden of Eden there is a hall that is called the "hall of the afflicted." Now it is into this hall that the Messiah goes and summons all the afflictions and pains and sufferings of Israel to come upon him. And so they all come upon him. And had he not eased the children of Israel of their sorrows, and taken their burden upon himself, there would be none who could endure the suffering of Israel in the penalty of neglecting the Torah. Thus it is written: "Surely our diseases he did bear and our pains he carried." (Is. 53:5) As long as the children of Israel dwelt in the Holy Land, they averted all afflictions and sufferings from the world by the service of the sanctuary and by sacrifice. But now it is the Messiah who is averting them from the habitants of the world,"

(Zohar 2:212a)

Chapter 8

Nazarene Judasim

The first believers in Yeshua were a Jewish sect known as "Nazarenes" or in Hebrew "Netzarim" (Acts 24:5). The "church father" Jerome (4th Cent.) described these Nazarenes as those "...who accept Messiah in such a way that they do not cease to observe the old Law." (Jerome; On. Is. 8:14).

Elsewhere he writes:

Today there still exists among the Jews in all the synagogues of the East a heresy which is called that of the Minæans⁹, and which is still condemned by the Pharisees; [its followers] are ordinarily called 'Nazarenes'; they believe that Messiah, the son of God, was born of the Virgin Miriam, and they hold him to be the one who suffered under Pontius Pilate and ascended to heaven, and in whom we also believe." (Jerome; Letter 75 Jerome to Augustine)

The fourth century "church father" Epiphanius gives a more detailed description:

But these sectarians... did not call themselves Christians--but "Nazarenes," ... However they are simply complete Jews. They use not only the New Testament but the Old Testament as well, as the Jews do... They have no different ideas, but confess everything exactly as the Law proclaims it and in the Jewish fashion-- except for their belief in Messiah, if you please! For they acknowledge both the resurrection of the dead and the divine creation of all things, and declare that G-d is one, and that his son is Yeshua the Messiah. They are trained to a nicety in Hebrew. For among them the entire Law, the Prophets, and the... Writings... are read in Hebrew, as they surely are by the Jews. They are different from the Jews, and different from

⁹ "Minæans" apparently Latinized from Hebrew MINIM (singular is MIN) a word which in modern Hebrew means "apostates" but was originally an acronym for a Hebrew phrase meaning "Believers in Yeshua the Nazarene".

Christians, only in the following. They disagree with Jews because they have come to faith in Messiah; but since they are still fettered by the Law--circumcision, the Sabbath, and the rest-- they are not in accord with Christians.... they are nothing but Jews....

They have the Goodnews according to Matthew in its entirety in Hebrew. For it is clear that they still preserve this, in the Hebrew alphabet, as it was originally written."
(Epiphanius; Panarion 29)

Notice that these original Jewish followers of Yeshua were a sect of Judaism which "did not call themselves Christians".

No Nazarene in the Ketuvum Netzarim (the so-called "New Testament") ever refers to themselves as a "Christian". In fact Paul never calls himself a Christian, but frequently identifies himself as Jewish (Acts 21:39; 22:3) and even as a "Pharisee" (Acts 23:6). The word "Christian(s)" appears only three times in the so-called "New Testament" and always in a context of being used by non-believers to describe believers. In the Aramaic of Acts and 1Kefa (The only books to use the word "Christian(s)") the word always appears as a transliterated Greek word and not as the Aramaic word for "Christian" implying that Hellenists who spoke Greek were the ones calling them "Christians".

The Greek word Christes is closely related to the Greek word Chrestes which was the name of a false god and was a word indicating a pagan priest or prophet and was often a title for pagan gods. Although CHRISTI is used by Homer as applied to the rubbing with oil of the body after bathing (Il. 23, 186; also in Od., 4, 252) the word Christes meant a white-washer, but Chrestes was a common title for pagan gods. The persecutors probably were poking fun at believers in Messiah because if one adapts Greek CHRISTI (anoint) in the same way as the Hebrew word Mashiach is derived from the three letter root M-SH-CH (anoint), then the result is a word meaning "white washer" (i.e. one who covers things up and makes them look white/pure when they are not so on the inside). The Greek speakers probably got a good laugh out of this.

When Ben Yehuda was creating a modern Hebrew dictionary for the modern Hebrew language he chose the word NOTZERIM for "Christian". He apparently did this because he mistook statements in ancient Rabbinic literature referring to N-TZ-R-M as referring to "Christians" rather than to the original ancient sect of Judaism which were the original followers of Yeshua. There may also have been influence from Arabic, which, influenced by the Quran uses the word "Nossara" for "Christian". However it is well known that Ebionites played a major role in Muhammed's sixth century creation of Islam (Robert Eisenman has demonstrated this point) in fact someone used the Ebionite version of the Gospel according to the Hebrews as a source text for the apostate Islamic Gospel of Barnabas. So we should not be surprised that Muhammed knew of Yeshua followers in Saudi Arabia in the sixth century who were known in Arabic as "Nossara" and that this came to be the Arabic word for "Christian" through the influence of the Quran. In fact the true Hebrew word for "Christian" should be built upon the word Mashiach just as the Greek word is built upon the word "Christ". Likewise in Aramaic the word for "Christian" is "Mashikaye" not any form of N-TZ-R. So the Hebrew word "Notzerim" has **WRONGLY** come to be the modern Hebrew equivalent for "Christian", just as the Arabic word "Nossara" has **WRONGLY** come to be the modern Arabic word for "Christian". [edit] Now lets talk about NETZARIM

Anciently Hebrew was written without vowels. "Notzerim" could be written out with a vav or without one. Written with a vav the pronunciation must be "Notzerim" but without the vav it can also be read "Netzarim". Netzarim is the Hebrew word for "branches" (Notzer means "branch"). We are told that Messiah was from "Nazareth" to fulfill the prophecy that he would be called a "Netzeri" (Nazarene) (see Mat. 2:23). The reference here is to Isaiah 11:1 where Messiah is called "Netzer" ("branch"). In many passages, especially Romans 11 and John 15 we find Yeshua's followers (at that time merely a sect of Judaism) called "branches" or "Netzarim". So as not to create confusion with the modern Hebrew mis-use of the term "Notzarim" as the modern Hebrew word for "Christian" we as Nazarenes are careful to call ourselves in Hebrew "Netzarim" and never "Notzarim" which would wrongly identify Nazarenes in modern Hebrew as "Christians".

Now the word “Christianity” as the name of a religion never appears in the so-called “New Testament”. This term was coined by Ignatius of Antioch in the late first century to describe his new religion. This new religion was hellenized, paganized and anti-nomian.

In fact the so-called “New Testament” teaches that there is only one true faith (Eph. 4:5) which was once and for all delivered (Jude 1:3). But that faith would have to be Judaism not Christianity.

Paul said to the Ephesians on his last visit to them:

I know that after I am gone fierce wolves will enter in among you without mercy upon the flock.
And also from among you there will rise up men speaking perverse things, so that they might turn away the talmidim to follow after them.
(Acts 20:29-30)

Paul seems to indicate that after his death leaders would begin to rise up in his stead that would draw people to follow themselves and draw them away from Torah. Perhaps the some of the very men who had twisted Paul's teaching into anti-nomianism would one day become the leadership. In fact Paul died in 66 C.E. and the first overseer (Bishop) of Antioch to take office after his death was Ignatius in 98 C.E.. Ignatius fulfilled Paul's words precisely. Upon taking the office of Bishop over Antioch Ignatius sent out a series of epistles to other assemblies. His letters to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallianns, Romans, Philadelphians and Smyrnaeans as well as a personal letter to Polycarp overseer of Smyrnaea have survived to us.

In these letters Ignatius asserts the absolute authority of the office of "bishop" (his own office) over the assembly. Ignatius writes:

...being subject to your bishop...
...run together according to the will of God.
Jesus... is sent by the will of the Father;
As the bishops... are by the will of Jesus Christ.
(Eph. 1:9, 11)

...your bishop...I think you happy who are so joined to him,

as the church is to Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ is to the Father...

Let us take heed therefore, that we not set ourselves against the bishop, that we may be subject to God....

We ought to look upon the bishop, even as we would upon the Lord himself.

(Eph. 2:1-4)

...obey your bishop...

(Mag. 1:7)

Your bishop presiding in the place of God...

...be you united to your bishop...

(Mag. 2:5, 7)

...he... that does anything without the bishop...
is not pure in his conscience...

(Tral. 2:5)

...Do nothing without the bishop.

(Phil. 2:14)

See that you all follow your bishop,

As Jesus Christ, the Father...

(Smy. 3:1)

By exalting the power of the office of bishop (overseer) and demanding the absolute authority of the bishop over the assembly, Ignatius was actually making a power grab by thus taking absolute authority over the assembly at Antioch and encouraging other Gentile overseers to follow suite. In the past such disputes were resolved by the Nazarene Sanhedrin of the Nazarene assembly in Jerusalem (Acts 15).

Moreover Ignatius drew men away from Torah, not only at Antioch but at other Gentile assemblies to which he wrote:

Be not deceived with strange doctrines;
nor with old fables which are unprofitable.

For if we still continue to live according to the Jewish Law,

we do confess ourselves not to have received grace...

let us learn to live according to the rules of Christianity,
for whosoever is called by any other name
besides this, he is not of God....

It is absurd to name Jesus Christ, and to Judaize.
For the Christian religion did not embrace the Jewish.
But the Jewish the Christian...
(Mag. 3:1, 8, 11)

(This is the first time in History that Christianity is characterized as a new and different religion apart from Judaism).

But if any one shall preach the Jewish law unto you,
hearken not unto him...
(Phil. 2:6)

Now Paul's prophecy was being fulfilled. Gentile leaders were causing men to follow after themselves and drawing people away from Torah, and it was springing forth from the first Gentile assembly. The result was the birth of a new Gentile religion that had effectively rebelled against Torah based Judaism, a religion known as "Christianity".

Thus the Ancient Nazarene Historian and commentator Gish'fa (Hegesippus) (c. 180 CE) writes of the time immediately following the death of Shim'on, who succeeded Ya'akov HaTzadik (James the Just) as Nasi of the Nazarene Sanhedrin and who died in 98 CE:

Up to that period (98 CE) the Assembly had remained like a virgin pure and uncorrupted: for, if there were any persons who were disposed to tamper with the wholesome rule of the preaching of salvation, they still lurked in some dark place of concealment or other. But, when the sacred band of Emissaries had in various ways closed their lives, and that generation of men to whom it had been vouchsafed to listen to the Godlike Wisdom with their own ears had passed away, then did the confederacy of godless error take its rise through the treachery of false teachers, who, seeing that none of the apostles any longer survived, at length attempted with bare and uplifted

head to oppose the preaching of the truth by preaching "knowledge falsely so called."
(Hegesippus the Nazarene; c. 185 CE Eusebius; Eccl. Hist.3:32)

Gish'fa indicates the apostasy began the very same year that Ignatious became bishop of Antioch!

There has been a great deal of confusion over the years over what the "church" is. Some have taught that the Church is a new entity which replaces Israel. Others have taught that the Church is a new body which is totally independent of Israel. Still others have taught that the Church and Israel are two different but overlapping entities. With all of the misconceptions about the identity of the "Church" the time has come to set the story straight and reveal what the "Church" really is.

The English word "Church" comes originally from the Old English word KIRKE. The Old English word KIRKE was the word the Anglo-Saxons used to refer to their pagan places of worship. When they became Christianized the Anglo-Saxons continued to call their places of worship KIRKES and as the language evolved "Churches". You may have heard that the word "Church" originally referred to the people and later came to refer to the building. This is not true. The word "Church" originally referred to the building and later came to refer to the people. Moreover the word "church" is of pagan origin

Now if you look up the English word "Church" in Webster's dictionary you will find the following meanings:

1. a building set apart or consecrated for public worship, esp. one for Christian worship.
2. All Christians as a whole.
3. A denomination of Christians.

In short a "church" is either a building or a group of Christians.

Now wherever we see the English word "church" in an English Bible we would expect the underlying Greek word would be a Greek word

that also means "a group of Christians". Since the English uses such a technical theological term one would expect that the Greek has also used a technical theological term. But the reality is that the Greek word that appears wherever the English has "church" is not a technical theological term and DOES NOT mean "a group of Christians" at all. That's right, a technical theological term of pagan origin meaning "a group of Christians" has been inserted in your English Bible despite the fact that the corresponding Greek word is not a technical theological term and does not mean the same thing as the word "Church".

The Greek word that appears where our English Bible's have "church" is EKKLESIA. EKKLESIA is just the Greek word for "assembly". Although it comes from a root meaning "to call out" there is no special theological significance to this word. In fact this is the same Greek word which was used for "assembly" by the classical Pagan Greek writers. Inscriptions in ancient Greek auditoriums where pagan ritual dramas were performed by the Bacchus cult have the audience section inscribed with the sign "EKKLESIA". This same Greek word EKKLESIA is used throughout the Greek Septuagint translation of the Tanak as the word for "assembly". There are also many places where the Greek word EKKLESIA appears in the NT but which the KJV and other translators did NOT translate the word as "church". This same Greek word is even used in Acts 19:32-41 to describe an unruly mob, yet here the translators suddenly translate the word as "assembly" rather than "church".

There is therefore no such thing as the "church" because the Greek word translated "church" does not mean "church" at all but "assembly".

Now there are some who claim that the "Church" was a new entity born in Acts 2 at Shavuot of 32 C.E. . However if we examine the events of Acts 2 we find that at that event persons were "added to" the "church" (Acts 2:47) which means that the "church" had to have already existed at that time. If we turn to Acts 7:38 we see that it speaks of Moses as "he that was in the church in the wilderness". Certainly this "church" could not have been a new "New Testament" entity.

Now while the term "church" is a mistranslation for a word simply meaning "assembly", there is an entity which is commonly referred to as "The Assembly" in the New Testament. Let us examine the Scriptures and determine what the true identity of this "Assembly" is.

To begin with we must understand that this Assembly is also known as the "Body of Messiah" as we read:

"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."
(Col. 1:18 - KJV)

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head
over all things to the church,
Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
(Eph. 1:22-23 - KJV)

Now one may ask what "Assembly" is the allegorical Messiah? To find the answer to that question lets look at Matthew 2:14-15:

"When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:
And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord
by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. "
(Matthew 2:14-15 - KJV)

Now here Matthew is citing a prophecy in Hosea 11:1 and applying it to Messiah. Now let us go back and look at this prophecy in Hosea 11:1 in context:

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him,
and called my son out of Egypt."
(Hosea 11:1 - KJV)

Here Hosea is referring to Israel as the son who is called out of Egypt. This points us back to a passage in the Torah:

"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn:
And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go,
behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn."
(Ex. 4:22-23 - KJV)

From these two passages we learn that Israel is the firstborn son of Elohim who is called out of Egypt. However in Matthew it is Yeshua the Messiah who is called up out of Egypt and in Col. 1:18 Messiah is the "firstborn". Moreover Hebrews speaks of the "church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12:23 - KJV).

Thus Israel is allegorically equivalent to the Messiah. There are some very important reasons for this allegorical relationship:

- * Both are the "firstborn Son of Elohim".
- * Both made a major impact on the world.
- * Both were born through a biological miracle on their mother's womb.
- * Both were taken into Egypt to save their lives.
- * Both were called up out of Egypt.
- * Both were despised and rejected by men.
- * Rome attempted to destroy them both.
- * Both are resurrected.

Thus Israel is the allegorical "Body of Messiah". Moreover in the Tanak, Israel is commonly called "The Assembly of Israel" and wherever the phrase "The Assembly of Israel" appears in the Tanak the Greek LXX has "EKKLESIA of Israel".

The so-called "church" which is the "Body of Messiah" is in reality "the Assembly of Israel". Yeshua did not come to create a new religion, but to be Messiah of the old one. Wherever your English New Testament refers to a "church" (i.e. a group of Christians) the Greek has "EKKLESIA" a term which commonly refers to the "Assembly of Israel". The "Church" as most Christians have understood it never existed. All of the passage people have thought were talking about the "Church" were actually talking about the Assembly of Israel, not Christianity, but the Nazarene sect of Judaism.

The original Jewish followers of Yeshua were NOT "Messianic Jews". As Daniel Juster writes:

No form of Judaism or Christianity... has used the term "Messianic Judaism" as its appropriate designation.
(Jewish Roots; 1986 edition, p. viii)

The original followers of Yeshua were a sect of Judaism known as "Nazarenes" (as we read in Acts 24:5).

The term "Messianic Judaism" was invented in the late 60's and it is a human invention. David Stern writes in his Messianic Jewish Manifesto:

According to Scripture the word "Christian" does not denote Jewish believers in Yeshua at all. The New Testament calls them followers of "this way" (Acts 9:2, 22:4) and "Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5)... the New Testament does not call Jewish believers "Christians". According to New Testament usage the term "Christian" is reserved for Gentile believers in the Jewish Messiah Yeshua.

Acts 11:19-26 tells how in Antioch some Jewish believers... did not limit their proclamation of Yeshua as the Messiah to Jews, as had been the norm previously, but broke new ground... Many of these Gentiles came to believe... the other Gentiles in Antioch... coined the word *christianoi* (Christians),... Thus the term "Christian" was invented by Gentiles to describe Gentiles in a Gentile environment. The

New Testament tells us explicitly that “the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” [Acts 11:26]
(Messianic Jewish Manifesto; David Stern; p. 32)

Now it is important here to note that David Stern himself in his Jewish New Testament and Complete Jewish Bible, translates Acts 11:26 with:

...it was at Antioch that the talmidim for the first time were called “Messianic”.(Acts 11:26 JNT)

In his commentary to this passage in his Jewish New Testament Commentary Stern writes:

“Messianic,” or “Messianics,” Greek Christianoi, which could be rendered... as in other translations, “Christians.” ...the name “Christianoi” was applied to Gentile believers by Gentile nonbelievers. The name nonbelieving Jews gave to Jewish believers was “Natzaratim”... (“Nazarenes”),...

Again in Messianic Jewish Manifesto Stern writes:

“Messianic” comes from the Hebrew mashiach, which means “anointed.” “Christian” comes from Greek christos, which is the [Greek] New Testament’s translation of mashiach AND MEANS THE SAME THING. ...in the New Testament the term “Christian,” which appears only three times, apparently denotes being a Gentile believer in Yeshua, so that scripturally “Jewish Christian” is a contradiction in terms.
(Emphasis and brackets added)
(Messianic Jewish Manifesto; David Stern; p. 20)

Now we can see from David Stern’s own words above:

1. The terms “Christian” and “Messianic” are alternate translations of the Greek word “Christianoi” “and mean the same thing”.

2. The term “Christianoi” or “Christian” is used in the scriptures only to denote a GENTILE believer in Yeshua, so that scripturally the term “Jewish Christian” is “a contradiction in terms”.

Therefore we may conclude that:

- * The term “Messianic” is used in the scriptures only to denote a GENTILE believer in Yeshua, so that scripturally the term “Messianic Jew” is a contradiction in terms.
- * The logic is inescapable... the term “Messianic Judaism” is scripturally invalid, it is a human invention and a contradiction in terms.

So what were the original Jewish followers of Yeshua called if they were not Messianic Jews? Stern admits:

The New Testament calls them followers of “this way” (Acts 9:2, 22:4) and “Nazarenes” (Acts 24:5)
(Messianic Jewish Manifesto; David Stern; p. 32)

In fact if we quote Stern, but substitute the word “Messianic” for “Christians” (since Stern admits “they are the same”) we read:

According to Scripture the word “MESSIANIC” does not denote Jewish believers in Yeshua at all. The New Testament calls them followers of “this way” (Acts 9:2, 22:4) and “NAZARENES” (Acts 24:5)... the New Testament does not call Jewish believers “MESSIANIC”. According to New Testament usage the term “MESSIANIC” is reserved for Gentile believers in the Jewish Messiah Yeshua.

Chapter 9 Nazarene Judaism is True Chasidic Judaism

One of the ancient terms used for followers of YHWH in the Tanak is the term "Chasidim":

Sing praises to YHWH, you His Chasidim, and give thanks to His set-apart Name.
(Psalm 30:5(4))

Love YHWH, all you Chasidim! YHWH preserves the faithful, but abundantly requites him who acts haughtily.
(Psalm 31:24(23))

For YHWH loves justice; He will not forsake His Chasidim. The righteous shall be preserved forever, but the children of the wicked one shall be cut off.
(Ps. 37:28)

The word Chesed means "mercy" "kindness" "undue favor" "grace". The Chasidim were under the CHESED of Elohim, and sought to treat others with that same CHESED.

What became of the original Chasidim? According to the Mishna:

Moses received Torah at Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, the prophets handed it on to the men of the Great Assembly.
(m.Avot 1:1)

This was a body of 120 Elders and is said to have introduced a regular order of prayers including the Shemoneh Esreh (eighteen benedictions) which eventually evolved into the Siddur. The Great Assembly collected the sacred writings and determined which books were to be regarded as canonical.

We do not know much more about the Great Assembly. We do know that one of the last members of this counsel was "Simon the Righteous" (219-196 B.C.E.). The Mishna says:

Simeon the Righteous was of the remnants of the Great Assembly. He used to say, “On three things the world stands: On the Torah, On the Ministry, and on Chesidim (kindness, grace).”
(m.Avot 1:2)

Ben Sira calls him “the leader of his brothers and the pride of his people.” (Sira 50:1) and dedicates an entire chapter to his good reputation. Simon was the earliest post-biblical sage cited in the Mishna. Simon was succeeded as High Priest by his son Onias III of whom we read in 2nd Maccabees:

While the holy city was inhabited in unbroken peace and the laws were very well observed because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness.
(2nd Maccabees 3:1)

About this time Antiochus Epiphanies rose to power over Israel and at about this same time period the High Priesthood passed from Onias III to his brother Jason by way of corruption:

...Jason the brother of Onias obtained the high priesthood by corruption, promising the king at an interview three hundred and sixty talents of silver and from another source of revenue, eighty talents... he at once shifted his countrymen over to the Greek way of life... and introduced new customs contrary to the Torah.
(2nd Maccabees. 4:7-8, 10, 11)

Jason’s High Priesthood was illegitimate and not regarded as valid as we read in 2Maccabees:

...Jason, who was ungodly and no high priest...
(2nd Maccabees 4:13)

The corruption of the High Priesthood and the banishment of the true High Priest must have forced the disbandment of the Great Assembly.

At this time (175-140 BCE) many who wished to remain true to Torah escaped into the wilderness (1st Maccabees 1:62-64; 2:29) These refugees became known as the Chasidim (1st Maccabees 2:41; 7:12-14; 2nd Maccabees 14:6).

While we know little about these Chasidim, they were probably led by a certain Antigonus of Soko. The Mishnah says of him:

Antigonus of Soko received [Torah] from Simeon the Righteous. He used to say, "Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of wages, but be like servants who serve their master with no thought of a wage – and let the fear of Heaven be upon you."
(m.Avot 1:3)

This might be seen as the root teaching of Chasidism. The Chasidim were called "chasidim"

One of his talmidim was Yose ben Yozer:

Yose ben Yozer... received it from them. Yose ben Yozer used to say: Let your house be a gathering place for sages. And wallow in the dust of their feet. And drink in their words with gusto.
(m.Avot 1:4)

Ben Yozer was the last of the Chasidim:

When Rabbi Yose Qatnuta died, the Chasidim passed away. And why was he called "Qatnuta"? Because he was least of the Chasidim.
(m.Sotah 9:15)

Yose ben Yozer was said to be among the sixty Chasidim who, at the instigation of the high priest Alcimus, the son of his sister, were crucified by the Syrian general Bacchides (1st Maccabees 7:16) in 161 BCE.

The Midrash Rabba reports the following dialogue between Alcimus and Yose ben Yoezer while he was on the way to execution:

Alcimus: "See the profit and honors that have fallen to my lot in consequence of what I have done, while you, for your obstinacy, have the misfortune to die as a criminal."

Yose, quietly: "if such is the lot of those who anger Elohim, what shall be the lot of those who accomplish His will?"

Alcimus: "Is there any one who accomplished His will more than thou?"

Yose: "If this is the end of those who accomplish His will, what awaits those who anger Him?"

On this Alcimus was seized with remorse and committed suicide.

(Genesis Rabba 1:65)

Yose Ben Yozer also served as the first Nasi of the Beit Din which eventually became the Pharisaic Sanhedrin.

House of Hillel Pharisaic Judaism was the succession of the Chassedim and the main line of Judaism. From this point forward the only Pharisee Sanhedrin we know of was led, not by "pairs" but by Hillel's descendants.

Pharisees polarized into two schools of thought: The School of Shammai and the School of Hillel. The two schools held differing view on many halachic issues and argued throughout the first century. Eventually the School of Hillel prevailed in these arguments and serves as the foundation of modern Rabbinic Judaism. There are also many important connections between the School of Hillel and the ancient sect of the Nazarenes.

Within Rabbinic literature we have record of over 350 disputes between the School of Hillel and the School of Shammai. Generally Shammai gave the stricter interpretation, while Hillel's understandings were more relaxed. According to the Zohar (Ra'aya Meheimna 3:245a) The School of Shammai was based on GEVURAH ("severity") while the School of Hillel was based on CHESED ("grace"/"mercy").

A classic example of the conflict can be seen in one of the first passages of the Mishna, which records a conflict between the two houses over how to recite the Shema:

The House of Shammai says:

In the evening one should recline in order to recite the shema, and in the morning they should stand. As it is written “when you lie down and when you rise up.” (Deuteronomy 6:7)

But the House of Hillel says:

Everyone may recite the Shema in his own way, as it is written: “And you shall go by the way” (Deuteronomy 7:7)

(m.Berachot 1:3)

Note that the House of Shammai were concerned primarily with the outward expression, with whether one was standing or reclining, while the House of Hillel were less concerned with such outward expression and much more concerned with the way in which one recited the Shema, that they made it their own way, that they meant it and walked in it. Note the difference in emphasis of the two houses.

Hillel was more concerned with the inner man, while Shammai was more concerned with the outer man. Hillel was concerned with the Spirit of the Law, while Shammai was more concerned with the Letter of the Law.

This overriding concept of sincerity is also found in the Mishna in tractate Menachot:

“...all are the same, the one who offers much and the one who offers little, on condition that a man will direct his intention to Heaven”

(m.Menachot 13:11)

In chapter one we demonstrated that Yeshua’s teachings strongly paralleled those of Hillel.

Paul was also teaching a restoration of Chasidism when he writes:

Because all have sinned, and are found lacking of the glory of Eloah. And they are justified by favor (CHESED) freely, and by the salvation that is in Yeshua the Messiah...

(Romans 3:23-24)

And sin will not rule over you, for you are not, "Under the Law", but under favor [CHESED]. What then, should we sin because we are not "Under the Law", but under favor [CHESED]? Absolutely not!
(Romans 6:14)

When we were dead in our sins, He gave us Life with the Messiah: and by His favor [CHESED], He saved us...
(Ephesians 2:5)

Paul was professing the doctrine of Chasidism, that we do not observe the Torah as one trying to earn something (the "Under the Law" teaching) because we are under CHESED (grace, favor).

So if we do not observe Torah as one wishing to earn something, what is our motive? The Torah answers this question:

...you shall diligently keep all of these commandments which I command you, to do them, to love YHWH your Elohim, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave [DEVEKUT] unto him.
(Deuteronomy 11:22)

You shall walk after YHWH your Elohim, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and you shall serve him, and cleave [DEVEKUT] unto him.
(Deuteronomy 13:5 (13:4))

DEVEKUT means "communion" or "cleaving". We must observe Torah as one cleaving to YHWH. The Hebrew word for "cleaving" is DEVEKUT. When we observe Torah it should not be an empty act, but an act of DEVEKUT, of cleaving or communion to YHWH.

When we observe Torah, it must not be an empty act of observance, or one simply aimed at earning something (even "Salvation") but it must be an act of cleaving to YHWH. Torah observance with the right intent brings us more into attachment with YHWH.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

The Jesus Christ of Christianity is a false hellenized, paganized, anti-Torah perversion who came to create a new, anti-nomian religion. But was the real Yeshua (not this gentitized reconstruction) the actual Messiah of Judaism? The Torah requires us as Torah Observant Jews to hearken to the true Messiah, so if Yeshua is the the Messiah, this is something to which we must give heed.

The true Messiah would be born in the first Century at Bethlehem and be executed by being “pierced through” he would have wounds in the midst of his hands and he would, like Moses, be revealed, be hidden away and be revealed again. Yeshua was this Messiah.

The true Messiah would serve as heavenly High Priest, taking upon himself the the sins of the world and serving as our advocate with Elohim on the throne. Moreover he would be the incarnate Torah, the Son of Yah and the Middle Pillar of the Godhead.

Yeshua came not to create a new religion, but to restore true Chassidic Judaism by reuniting the Apocalyptic Essene Mysiticism (Kabbalah) with House of Hillel Pharsism.

For more information about Yeshua the Messiah, the restoration of the ancient sect of Nazarene Judaism and true Chasidic Judaism just contact the Worldwide Nazarene Assembly of Elohim:

Worldwide Nazarene Assembly of Elohim

(or just “Nazarene Judaism”)

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*You may also wish to join the free
Nazarene Internet Social Network:*

<http://www.nazarenespace.com>