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The Lost Gospel

by Shomeir ben Magen

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Chapter 1

What is the Lost Gospel?

This is not a book about some newly discovered lost manuscript written by one of the disciples of Jesus. This book is about the real message of a Jew called Jesus;[‡] a message that was lost with the creation of Christianity. It is a message that was lost when the messenger became more important than the message. As Adolf Harnack stated in his book, The History of Dogma; “In proclaiming Jesus to be the Christ men ceased thereby to proclaim the gospel.”

All of this obscuring of the message, however, was God’s plan from the beginning. It was necessary to obscure the message in order to delay the revelation of its true meaning, because it was a message that was meant for a generation that would not even be born until the latter part of the twentieth century of the Common Era. The New Testament is like a time capsule which was meant to be opened by a future generation. It is a message meant for the *generation of the redemption*.

Two Messages

There are actually two messages in the New Testament. We will begin by examining these two messages and resolving the apparent contradiction between them.

The New Testament makes no sense at all, in the light of Old Testament prophecy, unless it’s cultural and spiritual context

[‡] “Jesus” is an unfortunate transliteration from the Greek “Ἰησοῦς” which in turn is a transliteration from the Hebrew “יהושע” which is usually rendered as “Joshua”.

is restored. The intent, therefore, of this book is to restore that context and reveal to the reader, with crystal clarity, the real message of Jesus.

A message for our time

Charles Dickens' opening lines in the Tale of Two Cities could very well describe the time we are living in right now:

*It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair...*

Despite the apparent winter of despair in which we find ourselves, this is actually the spring of hope. The New Testament is more relevant to our time than to any previous time since it was written. To understand its relevance, however, you must put it back into its original context and strip away centuries of theological baggage.

The Gospel is a message specifically for our time. Now this may shock and even anger some of the “true believers” within the Christian faith, but *the message of the Gospel is not for everyone*: It is for one select group (which we shall see in a later chapter).

Caveat Lector

Caveat Lector means: “let the reader beware.” Warning: If you have a closed mind and do not want your beliefs challenged, stop reading right now. This book is not for you.

This book is bound to step on more than a few of toes because it challenges some longstanding Christian beliefs and teachings. I have no doubt that my iconoclastic treatise is going to be met with the strongest resistance from the blindly faithful. But for those who are searching for answers to those nagging questions that they have about the apparent contradictions in the New Testament this book will be a godsend.

Please feel free to contact me, at the email address below, if you have any questions or disagreements. I will be happy to make any clarifications or corrections that need to be made.

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Chapter 2

The First Message

The first message of the New Testament is introduced to us in the synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It is a very strange message if you remove it from its cultural and spiritual context.

In **Matthew 4:4** and in **Luke 4:4** Jesus quotes **Deuteronomy 8:3** when he says,

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

Notice that he says “every word” – not **just a few of the words** that proceed from God’s mouth, but **every word**. The implications of this verse are staggering. Did he really mean to say **EVERY** word?

Keep the commandments

In **Matthew 19:16-17** Jesus is asked what a person must do to gain eternal life:

*And behold, one came up to him, saying, “Rabbi, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?” And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good. **If you would enter life, keep the commandments.**”*

He told this person that in order to have eternal life, he must keep the commandments. He did NOT say “**confess my name;**”

nor did he prescribe any other Christian formula for salvation. He gave solid, practical advice: “**Keep the commandments.**”

Do not think...

In **Matthew 5:17-19** Jesus says,

*“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, **till heaven and earth pass away**, by no means will even one jot or one tittle pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever, therefore, breaks one of the least of the commandments, and teaches men to break them, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but **whoever does them and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**”*

Jesus clearly said “**Do not think that I have come to destroy the law...**” and yet this is precisely what many Christians do think. They believe that Jesus came to destroy the law. **ALL** of Jesus’ disciples were **Jews** (there was not one gentile among them) so they would have understood his words just any Jew would have. Not only did he teach strict adherence to the 613 commandments of the Torah (even “*the least of the commandments*”), in some cases he taught an almost extreme adherence to the commandments [See Matthew 5:20-48].

There is a Christian doctrine that goes something like this: **Jesus came to fulfill the law for us so that we would not have to keep the law.** This is utter nonsense! If this is the case why did he say, “*Whoever, therefore, **breaks one of the least of the commandments, and teaches men to break them will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.***” I am constantly baffled by some of the bizarre contradictions between the teachings of Jesus and Christian dogma.

There is a similar Christian doctrine that says: **It is impossible to keep the law**. This too is utter nonsense! God would never ask us to do something that could not be done. God, himself, says that it is not **beyond our reach** or too difficult for us to do in **Deuteronomy 30:9-14**:

*⁹ The Lord your God will make you abound in all the work of your hand, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your land for good. For the Lord will again rejoice over you for good as He rejoiced over your fathers, ¹⁰ if you obey the voice of the Lord your God, to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this Book of the Law, and if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ¹¹ “For this commandment which I command you today is **not hidden from you, nor is it far off**. ¹² It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹³ Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ ¹⁴ But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, **that you may do it**.*

There is another Christian doctrine that says that **nobody is perfect** and since no one **is** perfect or even **can be** perfect then we need someone else to be perfect for us. This, too, is nonsense. This doctrine completely contradicts what the Tanakh (Old Testament) teaches us. One of the commandments in the Torah is to be perfect (**Genesis 17:1, Deuteronomy 18:13**). God would not command us to be perfect if it was impossible to accomplish. The Bible says that Noah was perfect (**Genesis**

6:9). Job was also perfect (**Job 1:1**). But what, exactly, does it mean to be perfect.

Rabbi David Aaron describes the purpose of human life as a “process of dynamic perfection” in his book *The Secret Life of God*. While God is in a state of **static perfection** (i.e. He is perfect), He also participates in **dynamic perfection** (i.e. becoming perfect) through us. This is thoroughly explained in Rabbi Aaron’s book. This book is a “must read” for everyone because it explains why being imperfect in an imperfect world is so perfect for fulfilling our life’s mission.

This is, in fact, what the Bible means when it says, “Let us make man in our image.” The second party of the “us” is mankind. God does not perfect us, but rather, He assists us in becoming perfect. The process of dynamic perfection is a lifetime job, so no one need despair about his/her lack of perfection in this life unless he/she is already dead.

Till heaven and earth pass away

Look again at what Jesus says in **Matthew 5:18**. He says that his disciples were to **keep the commandments** until the entire universe ceased to exist. Now that’s a pretty long time. Think about it! His followers were to keep even the least of the commandments, and keep them until heaven and earth ceased to exist. That, of course, includes keeping the Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11), wearing tassels (Numbers 15:38-39) on the four corners of a particular garment, and letting the land rest by not planting any crops on the seventh year (Leviticus 25:4). It even includes the “family purity” laws which require a husband and wife to sleep in separate beds during and after the wife’s period of menstruation. (Leviticus 15:19-28).

Jesus said to keep even “the least of the commandments.”

(Any first year yeshiva student can tell you which of the 613 commandments is known as the least of them).¹ **But does this injunction to keep the commandments of God (even the least of them) apply to everyone?**

¹ The commandment which is known as the least is found in Deuteronomy 22:6-7

Chapter 3

The Second Message

The second message of the New Testament is found mostly in the writings of Paul. Throughout Paul's writings, he sometimes appears to be saying that some (if not all) of the commandments are no longer applicable, that we do not need to keep all of the commandments.

Contradiction

Paul's writings, however, appear to be filled with contradictions. He not only contradicts the very clear teachings of the Gospels, but he also appears to contradict himself in several places. On the one hand Paul says that "*the doers of the law shall be justified*" (**Romans 2:13**); and on the other hand he says "*by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified*" (**Romans 3:20**). He also says that those who practice the "*works of the law are under the curse*" (**Galatians 3:10**) but he also says that "*the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good*" (**Romans 7:12**). All of this contradiction was so confusing that even Peter commented on the confusing nature of Paul's writings (**2 Peter 3:15-16**).

Doing away with the law

In **Colossians 2:14** Paul seems to say that the law was nailed to the cross. In **Chapter 5** of **Galatians** Paul teaches against circumcision (also see **Galatians 2:3**). Paul definitely appears to be antinomian (opposed to the law).

Remember, in **Matthew 5**, that Jesus said the law would be in effect until heaven and earth passed away. There doesn't

seem to be any record of an event of that magnitude happening any time between Jesus saying those words and Paul writing to the Colossians.

Much to Paul's credit, however, he does teach against many of the things which are also condemned by the Law. In **Romans 1:27-28**, for instance, he condemns homosexuality. In verses **29** through **31**, he condemns an array of anti-social and immoral behaviors. Paul condemns a similar list of vices, including fornication and alcoholism in **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**. But Paul limits the scope of the commandments that he instructs his gentile followers about.

So how do we resolve the conflict between the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of Paul?

Chapter 4

Resolving the Conflict

As you can see from the previous two chapters there is a conflict between the **Torah-centered** teachings of Jesus and the **anti-Torah** teachings of Paul. Unlike Jesus' disciples, who were all **Jewish**, Paul's disciples were exclusively **gentiles**. I did not fully understand why there was this difference between the teachings of Jesus to the Jews and the teachings of Paul to the gentiles until a late night meeting in Jerusalem revealed everything.

A meeting in the park (a narrative)

It was already dark when we arrived at the Biblical Antiquities shop. The shopkeeper, Uri, was taking us to meet with a very important Rabbi. “*Surely,*” thought Uri, “*the Rav will be able to give a little guidance to these confused gentiles.*” Uri could not understand why the gentiles had changed. Gentiles had always come to Jerusalem during Sukkot, but ten years ago they only wanted to argue. Now they came asking questions, seeking answers, looking for guidance. It wasn't just an isolated few, either. Something was happening.

Uri called the Rav on his cell phone and spoke briefly to him in Hebrew, and soon the four of us were on our way. It had been a very hot and humid day but now it was pleasantly cool as Uri led us through the dark, narrow streets of one of the Chassidic neighborhoods of Jerusalem. I had accompanied Rick and Susan on

this nighttime rendezvous to meet with the Rav. After a while we came to a small park.

While we stood and waited for the Rav to arrive, I surveyed the area. The park was illuminated only by a distant street light whose dim rays filtered through the trees. There was a paved walk going right through the middle of this park, and in the middle, next to the walkway, was a single small bench. The Rav lived nearby and he had agreed to meet with us here.

We did not have to wait long. Soon we saw a shadowy figure silhouetted by that solitary, distant street light. He wore a hat and a long overcoat that gave him the appearance of a gangster from the roaring twenties. As he came closer, however, we were able to see his long grizzled beard and his sidelocks. The Rav sat down on the park bench and Rick sat down beside him. Susan sat down next to Rick while Uri and I stood across from them. In that moment, together in the darkness, we could not have known the illumination we would receive.

Rick began by asking the Rav, *“Where do we go to get answers on matters of halacha?”*

The Rav looked at him and he said, *“You are not Jewish, are you? Why do you seek my advice on halacha? You do not want to take this path, because if you do you will be obligated to keep the whole law. You should just be content to live by the seven Noahide laws.”*

Then Rick replied, “*But if Christians are beginning to move closer to the Torah...*”

“*Let’s not say ‘if,’*” interrupted the Rav, “*We know it is happening.*”

“*Yes,*” responded Rick, somewhat surprised by the Rav’s awareness of this trend within Christianity, “*but do you think this phenomenon could be the return of the lost ten tribes.*”

The Rav stroked his beard and said in his Yiddish accent, “*Maybe yes, maybe no. We shall just have to wait and see.*”

Later, in Rick’s room at the Mount Zion Hotel, we talked about our meeting in the park and what it had all meant. In that moment, when the Rav had tried to dissuade us from pursuing the Torah, Rick and I had both been struck with the same revelation. This Rabbi of Rabbi’s, this Rav, this Rebbe, had spoken to us nearly the same words that Paul had written to the Galatians almost two thousand years ago (Galatians 5:3). The final pieces of the puzzle were falling into place. It all made sense now.

Discouraging conversion

Even before the time of Jesus, Judaism had discouraged gentiles from converting. The sages and rabbis taught that while Jews were required to keep the 613 commandments of the Torah, gentiles only had to keep seven basic commandments to have a place in the *world to come*.

While Jesus taught his *Jewish disciples* to keep all of the commandments, Paul discouraged his *gentile disciples* from converting because they were not required to keep the whole law in order reap a reward in the *world to come*. It was a very Jewish thing of Paul to do.

The Book of Acts records the fact that the Jewish followers of Jesus were Torah observant, and that Paul was also Torah observant.

Act 21:18-25

¹⁸*And the next day Paul went with us to see James; and all the elders were present. ¹⁹After he greeted them, he related to them all the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. ²⁰When they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said to him,*

*“You see, brother, **how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are ALL zealous for the Torah.** ²¹They have been told that you teach all the Jews that live among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they should not circumcise their children, and that they should not walk after the customs. ²²So what should we do about this? The multitude must be united! They will certainly hear that you have come. ²³Therefore, do what we tell you: We have four men that are under a vow. ²⁴Take them, and purify yourself with them, and pay the cost of having their heads shaved, so that everyone will know that the rumors they heard about you were not true; but that you yourself are also careful to keep the Torah. ²⁵As for **the Gentiles who believe**, we have written our conclusion that they do not need to observe the whole Torah. They only need to keep themselves from things offered to*

idols, and from blood, and from the meat of animals which have been strangled, and from fornication.”

A Jewish view of Paul

In 1757 Rabbi Jacob Emden wrote this about Paul:

Many have said that Paul appears to contradict himself here. In the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 16), it is mentioned that Paul circumcised his disciple Timothy. And they found this very puzzling, for this act seems to contradict the later text which seems to indicate that he considered circumcision a temporary commandment until the Messiahs arrival; but this took place after the time of the Nazarene! Therefore you must realize--and accept the truth from him who speaks it-- that we see clearly here that the Nazarene and his Apostles did not wish to destroy the Torah from Israel, God forbid; for it is written so in Matthew (Mt. 5), the Nazarene having said, “Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the Torah. I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. I tell you this: So long as heaven and earth endure, not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the Torah until it is achieved. If any man therefore sets aside even the least of the Torahs demands, and teaches others to do the same, he will have the lowest place in the Kingdom of Heaven, whereas anyone who keeps the Torah, and teaches others so, will stand high in the Kingdom of Heaven.” This is also recorded in Luke (Lk. 16). It is therefore exceedingly clear that the Nazarene never dreamed of destroying the Torah.

We similarly find Paul, his disciple, in a letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5), accusing them of fornication,

and condemning one who had lived with his fathers wife. You may therefore understand that Paul does not contradict himself because of his circumcision of Timothy, for the latter was the son of a Jewish mother and a gentile father (Acts 16), and Paul was a scholar, an attendant of Rabban Gamaliel the Elder, well-versed in the laws of the Torah. He knew that the child of a Jewish mother is considered a full Jew, even if the father should be a gentile, as is written in the Talmud and Codes. He therefore acted entirely in accordance with the Halakha by circumcising Timothy. This would be in line with his position that all should remain within their own faith (1 Cor. 7). Timothy, born of a Jewish mother, had the law of a Jew, and had to be circumcised, just as he was enjoined to observe all commandments of the Torah (Paul's condemnation of the man who lived with his stepmother is similarly understandable, as such an act is also forbidden to Noahides), for all who are circumcised are bound by all the commandments. This provides a satisfactory reply to the question. [Translated by Rabbi Harvey Falk, from his book Jesus the Pharisee]

As we have seen: Even though Paul kept the Law and he insisted that Timothy keep the Law, he discouraged the Gentiles from keeping the Law (or converting to Judaism). The story does not end here however; there is a reason that the New Testament was assembled the way that it was. As we have seen, the letters of Paul were written **to** and for gentiles, but that is not all. They also helped to create a kind of smokescreen to keep the real message of the Gospels obscured until the time of the redemption.

Even Jesus intentionally tried to obscure the message by the use of parables which would not be understood outside of their cultural context. In **Matthew 13:10-13** it says:

¹⁰*And the disciples came and asked Him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?”* ¹¹*He answered them saying, “Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.* ¹²*For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.* ¹³*This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.*

Other factors contributed to the obscuring of the real message, which will be covered extensively in the appendices.

A message for you

If you are reading this book, the message of the Gospel was probably intended for you. The chances are great that you are not a *real* gentile at all. You are probably one of the **lost sheep of the House of Israel**.

Go to the lost sheep of the House of Israel

In **Matthew 10:5-7** Jesus gave his disciples specific instructions on who to take the message to, and who not to take the message to.

⁵*These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.* ⁶***But go rather to***

the lost sheep of the House of Israel. ⁷*And as you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”*

The very last thing the Jesus’ disciples asked him was, “Will you at this time **restore the kingdom to Israel.**” [Acts 1:6] What they understood his message to be was that the kingdom of Israel was going to be restored.

Two Paths

As we have seen, **the Gospels were written for the lost sheep of Israel** (the exiles of the lost ten tribes); but **Paul’s letters were written for the gentiles**. Paul was discouraging the gentiles from converting because their only requirement, before God, was to obey the seven Noahide laws. It was only Israel that was required to take on the full yoke of Torah. Paul had told the Romans that sin could not be imputed where there was no law. Therefore if the gentiles kept the seven Noahide laws, they were sinless because “*sin is the transgression of the Law*” [1John 3:4] and only the Noahide laws applied to the gentiles.

It was not until that moment in the park, meeting with the rabbi, that I fully understood what Paul had been trying to say. Just as the sages had taught, a gentile who kept the seven would reap a greater reward than an Israelite (even a “lost” Israelite) who did not keep the six hundred and thirteen.

Chapter 5

The Lost Sheep

In 1995, Rabbi Chaim Richman of the Temple Institute and current member of the Sanhedrin wrote these words concerning the lost ten tribes of Israel:

... for it is widely held that the ten “lost” tribes (collectively known as ‘Ephraim’, and ‘Israel’ as opposed to ‘Judah’) who were exiled prior to the destruction of the First Temple were not really lost at all, but assimilated amongst the nations to such an extent that they totally lost their identity as Jews. There is overwhelming evidence throughout the Scriptures which substantiates this beyond any doubt, and it is particularly clear throughout the book of Hosea (“Ephraim, he has mingled himself amongst the peoples...” - 5:8). One of the major themes of every prophet of Israel is the fact that eventually, G-d will help these people to regain their identity, cleanse themselves from the twin sins of pride and idolatry, and reconcile with Judah, thus effectively re-uniting Ezekiel’s “two sticks” and becoming one again with the Jewish people. “...and I will sift the House of Israel among all nations, as grain is sifted in a sieve, yet not the least grain shall fall upon the earth” - Amos 9:9.

Also, in an article entitled “Why Don’t We Rebuild the Holy Temple,” Mordechai Housman wrote:

And there are other types of concerns as well. The Torah does not even consider it a requirement on our part

to rebuild the Holy Temple until most or all the Children of Israel live in the land of Israel. And there is also the matter of the Return of the Ten Tribes to consider, which will be part of our Final Redemption.

But how did Israel become lost in the first place? To answer this question we must first go back to the dividing of the kingdom.

The divided kingdom

Because Solomon had built places of worship for false gods (after completing the Temple for the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob), God told him that the kingdom of Israel would be divided.

1 Kings 11:6-13

⁶Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not fully follow the LORD, as his father David had. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. ⁸And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. ⁹So the LORD became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the LORD God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the LORD had commanded. ¹¹Therefore the LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹²”Nevertheless I will not do it

in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³”However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.”

After the death of King Solomon, the Kingdom of Israel was split into two kingdoms known as the House of Judah in the south and the House of Israel in the north (1 Kings 12).

Jeroboam became king of the House of Israel and he immediately took steps to prevent the reunification of the two houses.

1 Kings 12:26-30

²⁶Jeroboam said in his heart, “Now the kingdom may return to the house of David: ²⁷”If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah.” ²⁸Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold, and said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!” ²⁹He set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. ³⁰Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

For the next two hundred and sixty nine years the two kingdoms existed side by side. During this period there were prophets who prophesied specifically to Israel and others who prophesied specifically to Judah and still others who prophesied to both

houses (or kingdoms). Details of this period can be found in the books of 1 & 2 Kings and 1 & 2 Chronicles.

In spite of countless warnings, the House of Israel turned from God and descended into idolatry. While the Jews placed the Hebrew letter “shin” (ש) on their doorposts, the idolatrous Israelites of the northern kingdom retained the “tav” as a religious symbol. The “shin” stands for Shaddai (Almighty) and it symbolizes the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The paleo-Hebrew “tav” (ת), on the other hand, resembles a cross and it stands for “Tammuz.” Tammuz was one of the chief deities of the northern kingdom which they borrowed from the Sumerians. Ironically, the “tav” was also used to represent a “sign” and sometimes it represented a “covenant.” Thus the “tav” could also be a “sign of the covenant.” God gave his commandments and specifically circumcision and the Sabbath as signs of His covenant with Israel but the northern kingdom rejected the commandments of God. Could it be that these covenant-breakers were marked with the “tav” as an alternative sign to identify them for a future redemption?

Because of their idolatry the northern kingdom, which was more than eighty percent of the combined houses of Israel, disappeared in the eighth century B.C.E. – never to be seen or heard from again. What happened to the rebellious House of Israel – how did they become lost?

Falling from grace

Because of their unfaithfulness, the House of Israel was taken captive by the Assyrians in 722 BCE; never to be seen again until the end of days when *the Holy One, blessed be He*, would

gather them again to Himself. The House of Israel was scattered into all the nations of the earth and lost its identity.

2 Kings 17:1-23

¹In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea the son of Elah became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned nine years. ²And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel who were before him.

³Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against him; and Hoshea became his vassal, and paid him tribute money. ⁴And the king of Assyria uncovered a conspiracy by Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year. Therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison. ⁵Now the king of Assyria went throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria and besieged it for three years. ⁶In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away to Assyria, and placed them in Halah and by the Habor, the River of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

⁷For so it was that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and they had feared other gods, ⁸and had walked in the statutes of the nations whom the LORD had cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made. ⁹Also the children of Israel secretly did against the LORD their God things that were not right, and they built for themselves high places in all their cities, from watchtower

to fortified city. ¹⁰They set up for themselves sacred pillars and wooden images on every high hill and under every green tree. ¹¹There they burned incense on all the high places, like the nations whom the LORD had carried away before them; and they did wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger, ¹²for they served idols, of which the LORD had said to them, “You shall not do this thing.” ¹³Yet the LORD testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.” ¹⁴Nevertheless they would not hear, but stiffened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not believe in the LORD their God. ¹⁵And they rejected His statutes and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His testimonies which He had testified against them; they followed idols, became idolaters, and went after the nations who were all around them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them that they should not do like them. ¹⁶So they left all the commandments of the LORD their God, made for themselves a molded image and two calves, made a wooden image and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. ¹⁷And they caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire, practiced witchcraft and soothsaying, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger. ¹⁸Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and removed them from His sight; there was none left but the tribe of Judah alone. ¹⁹Also Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

²⁰*And the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel, afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of plunderers, until He had cast them from His sight. ²¹For He tore Israel from the house of David, and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king. Then Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them commit a great sin. ²²For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they did not depart from them, ²³until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away from their own land to Assyria, as it is to this day.*

Hosea's Prophecy

The book of Hosea is a prophecy about the fate of the House of Israel. Hosea is instructed by God to marry a prostitute named Gomer. This was to show that God's own wife, Israel, had prostituted herself (i.e. turned from God and worshiped idols). Each of the three children born to Hosea and Gomer were given names that would reveal the fate of the House of Israel.

Hosea 1:1-11

¹*The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. ²When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea:*

*“Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry
And children of harlotry,
For the land has committed great harlotry*

By departing from the LORD.”

³*So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴Then the LORD said to him:*

*“Call his name **Jezeel**, [God will sow]
For in a little while I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezeel on the house of Jehu, and bring an end to the kingdom of the House of Israel.*

⁵*It shall come to pass in that day, that I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezeel.”*

⁶*And she conceived again and bore a daughter. Then God said to him:*

*“Call her name **Lo-Ruhamah**, [No Mercy]
For I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel,
*but I will utterly take them away.**

⁷**Yet I will have mercy on the house of Judah.**
*I will save them by the LORD their God,
And will not save them by bow,
Nor by sword or battle,
By horses or horsemen.”*

⁸*Now when she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son. ⁹Then God said:*

*“Call his name **Lo-Ammi**, [Not my people]
For you are not My people,
And I will not be your God.*

¹⁰*”Yet the number of the children of Israel*

*Shall become as the sand of the sea,
Which cannot be measured or numbered.
And it shall come to pass
In the place where it was said to them,
'You are not My people,'
There it shall be said to them,
'You are sons of the living God.'*
**¹¹ Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel
shall be gathered together,
And appoint for themselves one head;
And they shall come up out of the land,
For great will be the day of Jezreel!**

As we see in verse 6 of this passage, the House of Israel would be completely removed from the land. **Verse 7** tells us that the House of Judah would be saved because they continued to worship the true God.

This prophesy also tells us, in **verse 10**, that the “children of Israel” (referring specifically to the northern kingdom) would, one day, be redeemed and brought back into favor with God – so much so that they would be called “***b’nai El Chai***” (children of the Living God).

The Jews retained the knowledge of God but Israel lost it and thus the House of Israel was destroyed.

Hosea 4:6

*⁶My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also
reject you from serving in my priesthood. Because*

you have forgotten the Torah of your God, I will also forget your children.

The **House of Israel** fell from **grace** and lost their salvation while a remnant from the **House of Judah** retained their **salvation**.

The Prodigal Son

Jesus told a parable about the redemption of the House of Israel in Luke 15:11-32:

¹¹*Then He said: “A certain man had **two sons**.*
¹²*And the **younger of them** said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.’ So he divided to them his livelihood.* ¹³*And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.* ¹⁴*But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.* ¹⁵*Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.* ¹⁶*And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.*

¹⁷*”But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!’ ¹⁸I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.”‘*

²⁰*”And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed*

him. ²¹And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

²²"But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

²⁵"Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. ²⁷And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.'

²⁸"But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. ²⁹So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. ³⁰But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.'

³¹"And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. ³²It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for **your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.**'"

In this parable the older son represents the **House of Judah** (i.e. the Jews), and the younger son represents the **House of Israel** (i.e. non-Jews, mostly Christians). The father in this parable represents God.

The last words of this passage are very significant. In Judaism, when someone leaves the faith, the family will mourn for that person as if he/she had died. This is the significance of the phrase: “*your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.*”

[Note: “**teshuva**” is the Hebrew word for “repentance” but it really means to “**return**” to God.]

The prophet Zechariah says that in the last days the **ten lost tribes** are going to seek out the Jews and learn from them:

Zechariah 8:3

“Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp corner of a Jew’s garment, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”’“

Jesus, himself, said, “... **salvation is of the Jews.**” [John 4:22]

The prophets are all very clear about the last days. All who are to be saved must learn from the Jews. Jesus even acknowledged the authority of Judaism (especially the authority of the Sanhedrin) in Matthew 23:2-3.

[Note: Nearly all of the members of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish High Court) were Pharisees. Jesus acknowledged their authority. See Rabbi Harvey Falk’s book *Jesus the Pharisee.*]

Paul also acknowledges the spiritual authority of Judaism:

Romans 3:1-4a

What advantage does the Jew have? Or what value is there in being circumcised?

Much in every way: Mainly because the oral law was committed to the Jews.

So what if some did not believe? Does their lack of belief nullify the faith of God?

Absolutely not!

For an excellent explanation of the Oral Law listen to the mp3 audio files at:

<http://www.outreachjudaism.org/MP3/Oral%20Law%201.mp3>

and

<http://www.outreachjudaism.org/MP3/Oral%20Law%202.mp3>

Chapter 6

What was the message and who was it for?

Did Jesus come to “save” gentiles? NO! In fact, he gave specific instructions to NOT go to the gentiles. Did Jesus come to “save” Jews? NO! (Except for the “sinners,” which is *first century* terminology referring specifically to **Hellenized Jews**. The term “sinner” never referred to gentiles since the Jews typically refrained from judging the gentiles). Jesus said that he came “**only for the lost sheep of the House of Israel**” [Matthew 15:24] and he told his disciples to go only “**to the lost sheep of the House of Israel**” [Matthew 10:6].

In **Matthew 4:23** it says that “*Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the gospel (or good news) of the kingdom...*” Just what was this good news that he preached? He preached the good news of the kingdom of God.

Kingdom of God

Most Christians do not have a clue what the kingdom of God is. Romantic notions of some ethereal, metaphysical kingdom have totally blinded Christianity to the truth. If we substitute the word “nation” for the word “kingdom” then it becomes clear. The nation of God or God’s nation is what? It is none other than the nation of Israel – not the present day nation of Israel, but the future messianic kingdom of Israel.

Ezekiel tells us about this restoration of the kingdom of Israel when the House of Judah and the House of Israel will be reunited in the last days. **Ezekiel 37:15-23**:

¹⁵*Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying,*
¹⁶*”As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: ‘For **Judah** and for the children of Israel, his companions.’ Then take another stick and write on it, ‘For Joseph, the stick of **Ephraim**, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.’ ¹⁷Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.*

¹⁸*”And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, ‘Will you not show us what you mean by these?’-- ¹⁹say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of **Ephraim**, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of **Judah**, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.”’ ²⁰And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.*

²¹*”Then say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²²and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again. ²³They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have*

sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.

Notice that this kingdom is made up of the **House of Judah** and the **House of Israel** (also called Ephraim). There are no others in this kingdom.

The New Covenant

The prophecy about the “new covenant” is found in Jeremiah 31:31-34:

*³¹”Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the **House of Israel** and with the **House of Judah** – ³²not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. ³³But **this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”*

There are some very specific things that should be noted about the “new covenant” as revealed in Jeremiah:

1. The new covenant is going to be made with the **House of Israel** (i.e. the lost ten tribes) and with the **House of**

Judah (i.e. the Jews). It is not going to be made with anyone else, period.

2. **It is only the House of Israel** that is to have the Law of God written on their hearts. The House of Judah has been the faithful house and already has the Law of God written on their hearts.

Chapter 7

What is salvation?

Salvation, resurrection from the dead, and being born again are all very closely related, but not in the way that most Christians understand it. To really understand this we must look at a vision that was given to Ezekiel the prophet.

Ezekiel 37:1-14

¹ The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. ² Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. ³ And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

So I answered, “O Lord God, You know.”

⁴ Again He said to me, “Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! ⁵ Thus says the Lord God to these bones: “Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.”“

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸ Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them,

and the skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them.

⁹ *Also He said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.”’“¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.*

¹¹ *Then He said to me, “Son of man, these bones are the **whole House of Israel**. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’*

¹² *Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.”¹³ Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.*

¹⁴ ***I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live,** and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it,” says the Lord.’“*

Ezekiel sees a vision of a valley filled with dry, sun-bleached bones. In verse eleven, he is told that these bones are **the whole House of Israel**. But the House of Israel is not literally dead. They are spiritually dead. The bones in Ezekiel represent a spiritually dead House of Israel.

When the redemption comes it will be a great miracle; even more miraculous than a literal resurrection from the dead, because

God will change the hearts of all of that rebellious house which had rejected Him. It will be as if they had been reborn.

Just as we read earlier, Jesus also describes the House of Israel in the *parable of the prodigal son* as returning from death and from being lost.

The redemption is all about saving the “**lost sheep of the House of Israel**” and reuniting them with the House of Judah and bringing them back to the land promised to their fathers. The House of Israel may be more than one billion people (most are Christians). The salvation of this house will be when they finally understand the real message of Jesus and turn from the myths and idolatries Christianity. They need to return to the origins of the Christian faith as described by Rick Richardson in *Origins of Our Faith – The Hebrew Roots of Christianity*.

Most Christians believe that salvation has to do with the after-life; but this is not the case. Salvation will occur when Israel is re-gathered and returned to the Promised Land. This is often referred to in Judaism as the “third redemption” or the “final redemption.”

Salvation has nothing to do with gentiles, because they do not need to be saved. This statement usually drives Christians crazy because they have been programmed to look at salvation in a very pagan, non-Jewish way. The gentiles are only required to keep the seven Noahide laws. [For more information refer to HighCouncilofBneiNoah.org and NoahideNations.com].

The kingdom of Israel will be restored and it will become a light unto the nations (Isaiah 42:6; 49:6; 60:3) and the law shall go forth out of Zion (Isaiah 2:3). All the nations will

come to Jerusalem to keep the festival of Sukkot (Zechariah 14:16).

Peace on earth

The gentiles will actually experience their own kind of salvation **through** Israel. They will come to Jerusalem to learn during Sukkot and at other times. Having been totally defeated by God, the nations of the earth will no longer seek the total destruction of Israel. Isaiah says that they will “beat their swords in to plows and their spears into pruning hooks” (Isaiah 2:4). They will be blessed by God inasmuch as they bless Israel (Genesis 12:3). The world will have one thousand years of peace and prosperity.

But how will all of the millions (and billions) of Israel fit into the Promised Land?

Chapter 8

The Coming Great Exodus

Isa 11:11-16

*It shall come to pass in that day
That the Lord shall set His hand again the second time
To recover the remnant of His people who are left,
From Assyria and Egypt,
From Pathros and Cush,
From Elam and Shinar,
From Hamath and the islands of the sea.*

*He will set up a banner for the nations,
**And will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
And gather together the dispersed of Judah**
From the four corners of the earth.
Also the envy of Ephraim shall depart,
And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off;
Ephraim shall not envy Judah,
And Judah shall not harass Ephraim.
But they shall fly down upon the shoulder of the
Philistines toward the west;
Together they shall plunder the people of the East;
They shall lay their hand on Edom and Moab;
And the people of Ammon shall obey them.
The LORD will utterly dry up the tongue of the Sea of
Egypt;
With His mighty wind He will shake His fist over the
Euphrates,
And strike it in the seven streams,
And make men cross over dry-shod.
There will be a highway for the remnant of His people*

*Who will be left from Assyria,
As it was for Israel
In the day that he came up from the land of Egypt.*

Notice that the passage above distinguishes the House of Israel as being **outcasts**, but those of the House of Judah are only **dispersed**. The **outcasts** are far more distanced from God than the **dispersed**.

Jeremiah 16:14-15

*“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ **For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.***

Most of Bible prophecy is about one thing: the Redemption of Israel and all of Israel returning to the Promised Land. Everything else is insignificant by comparison.

Some may wonder how it is possible to fit the returning millions (possibly billions) of the combined houses of Israel and Judah into the Promised Land. The biblical boundaries of the Promised Land include all the land south and west of the Euphrates and east of the Nile, including all of the Arabian Peninsula.

Genesis 15:18

On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying: “To your descendants I have given this land,

from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—

Most of this land is desert, but **Isaiah 35:1-2** says that the desert shall “blossom as the rose”:

*¹ The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them,
And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;
² It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice,
Even with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
The excellence of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
The excellency of our God.*

Additionally, God had promised to enlarge Israel’s borders:

Exodus 34:24

For I will cast out the nations before you and enlarge your borders; neither will any man covet your land when you go up to appear before the Lord your God three times in the year.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

The good news of the Kingdom of God was lost through distortion of the real message. The key to understanding this message is to understand what Jesus meant when he said, “*I have been sent only to **the lost sheep of the HOUSE OF ISRAEL***” (Matthew 15:24).

Jesus (or more properly “Joshua ben Joseph”) did not come to save the world from sin. Rather, he came to show the **HOUSE OF ISRAEL** the way back to God through the observance of the commandments. But this message was lost with the development of Christian orthodoxy.

The unlikely combining of the *gospels* with the *epistles of Paul* into a *New Testament* has ensured that an unnatural tension would exist between the **two messages**. This has resulted in the revealing of the true nature of the gospel message in our time.

One message (the lost gospel) was for the **lost sheep of House of Israel** and the other message was for the gentiles. The message to the **HOUSE OF ISRAEL** is to return to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob through repentance and observance of the 613 commandments of the Torah. The message to the gentiles is to be righteous within the seven **Noahide principles**.

Suggested reading:

Origins of Our Faith – the Hebrew Roots of Christianity by Rick Richardson

The Secret Life of God by Rabbi David Aaron

Jesus the Pharisee by Rabbi Harvey Falk

The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture by Bart Ehrman

Joseph – the Israelite Destiny of America by Yair Davidi
Ephraim – The Gentile Children of Israel by Yair Davidi
Biblical Truth – The Lost Ten Tribes of Israel by Yair Davidi

Appendix 1

The Inerrancy of the New Testament?

Many factors contributed to the obscuring of the Gospel message. A major factor was the **doctrine of inerrancy**. This doctrine has discouraged people from finding the truth. Instead, a new art called *apologetics* was created to explain away the numerous mistakes in the text.

Between 90CE and 450CE the New Testament text was altered extensively. This is the only explanation for why the earliest manuscripts do not match the later ones. In fact, according to Bart D. Ehrman:

Although the proto-orthodox Christians of the second and third centuries began to ascribe canonical standing to the writings that later became the New Testament and simultaneously to urge the literal interpretation of their words, they regrettably did not preserve any of the autographs. To be sure, they may not have been able to do so. The autographs may well have perished before the second century. What do survive are copies made over the course of centuries, or more accurately, copies of the copies, some 5,366 of them in the Greek language alone, that date from the second century down to the sixteenth. Strikingly, with the exception of the smallest fragments, no two of these copies are exactly alike in all their particulars. No one knows how many differences, or variant readings, occur among the surviving witnesses, but they must number in the hundreds

of thousands. [The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture, pg 27]

Professor Ehrman cites over two hundred examples where the text was deliberately altered in order to support the view of the Christian orthodoxy. The evidence of these alterations is quite compelling. Ehrman reveals the evolution of the text by showing how the latter manuscripts differ from the earlier manuscripts. Many of these changes are quite revealing.

More compelling evidence

In his book, *The Inerrancy of the New Testament*, Dr. Robert Schiermeyer shows several glaring errors just in Acts 7:

1. Seventy five souls – Acts 7:14
Seventy souls – Gen. 46:27; Ex. 1:5; Deu. 10:22
2. Jacob was buried at Shechem – Acts 7:16
Jacob was buried at Machpelah – Gen. 50:13
[Machpelah is 50 miles from Shechem]
3. The tomb was purchased from Emmor – Acts 7:16
The tomb was purchased from Ephron – Gen. 23:17-18
4. Abraham left Haran when his father Terah was dead – Acts 7:4
Abraham left Haran when his father Terah was 145,
Terah died at age 205 – Gen. 11:26,32; Gen. 12:4
[Do the math].

Appendix 2

Messiah ben Joseph

What separates Christianity from Judaism more than anything else is not “who” Messiah is – but as Rick Richardson has shown in his book *Origins of Our Faith*, the one thing that separates Christianity from Judaism is “what” Messiah is. From all of the prophecies of the Tanakh (the Old Testament), Messiah is to be a mortal man, and not some demigod out of the pages of Greek mythology.

At no time has Judaism ever taught that the Messiah was to be divine. There are a number of “messianic” texts in the Tanakh and they all refer to flesh and blood, normal humans:

The Messiah (Hebrew: Moshiach) **can sin:**

Leviticus 4:3-5 *If the **Moshiach**, the Kohen sins and brings guilt upon the people, he shall offer a young bull, without blemish to Hashem for the sin which he has committed. And the **Moshiach**, the Kohen shall bring the bull to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before Hashem; he shall place his hand upon the head of the bull, and he shall slaughter the bull before Hashem. The **Moshiach**, the Kohen shall dip his forefinger into the blood; he shall sprinkle some of the blood seven times before Hashem toward the Curtain of the Holy.*

The Messiah of the LORD can be an evil king:

1 Samuel 24:4-6 *And the men of David said to him, Look! This is the day which the LORD told you about, Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him what ever seems good to you. Then David got up, and secretly cut off the wing of Saul's garment. But afterward, David's*

*conscience bothered him because he had cut off Saul's wing. And he said to his men, the LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the LORD's **Moshiach**, to stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the **Moshiach** of the LORD.*

[The LORD's Moshiach is also mentioned in: 1 Samuel 26:9, 11,16,23; 2 Samuel 1:14,16]

The Messiah can be a righteous king:

2 Samuel 19:21 Refers to David as “the LORD's Moshiach”

2 Samuel 23:1 *Now these are the last words of David. David the son of Jesse, the man who was elevated as the **Moshiach** of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel, said...*

God can be angry with the Messiah:

Psalms 89:38 *But You have cast off and abhorred, You have been angry with Your **Moshiach**.*

The Messiah can be a gentile king:

Isaiah 45:1 *Thus says the LORD to his **Moshiach** Koresh (Cyrus), whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him...*

What did the early followers of Jesus believe?

The early **JEWISH** followers of Jesus were condemned by “**THE CHURCH**” because they denied the divinity and the “virgin birth” of Jesus:

“They considered him [Jesus] to be a plain and common man, who was justified only because of his superior virtue, and who was the fruit of the intercourse between Joseph with Mary. In their opinion the observance of the law was altogether necessary, on the ground that they could not be saved by faith in Christ alone but by a corresponding life.” [Hist. Eccl. III, xxvii - Eusebius]

“Nevertheless, inasmuch as they refused to acknowledge that he pre-existed, being God, Word, and Wisdom, they turned aside into the impiety of the former, especially when they, like them, endeavored to observe strictly the bodily worship of the law.” [ibid]

Notice that Eusebius says that they “endeavored to observe strictly the bodily worship of the law.” Not only were they condemned for not believing in the divinity of Jesus, they were also condemned for observing the Torah.

Early Editions and Early Additions

The New Testament did not appear in its final form until the fifth century and many editorial changes were made to the text between the second and fifth centuries of the Common Era. The church, in fact, added whole chapters to the New Testament (particularly the first two chapters of Matthew and the first two chapters of Luke) **to establish the “virgin birth”**.

Many words in the New Testament text were altered, specifically, to establish that Jesus was the “son of God.” [See: *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture* by Bart Ehrman]

At the beginning of the third century “the Church” was almost entirely gentile. Even then, the vast majority did not believe in the divinity of Jesus as we can see in this article from the Eleventh Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica:

***SABELLIUS**, early Christian presbyter and theologian, was of Libyan origin, and came from the Pentapolis to Rome early in the 3rd century. To understand his*

*position a brief review of the Christian thought of the time is necessary. Even after the elimination of Gnosticism the church remained without any uniform Christology; the **Trinitarians and the Unitarians continued to confront each other, the latter at the beginning of the 3rd century still forming the LARGE MAJORITY.** These in turn split into two principal groups - the Adoptianists and the Modalists - the former **holding Christ to be the man chosen of God, on whom the Holy Spirit rested in a quite unique sense, and who after toil and suffering, through His oneness of will with God, became divine,** the latter maintaining Christ to be a manifestation of God Himself. Both groups had their scientific theologians who sought to vindicate their characteristic doctrines, the **Adoptianist divines holding by the Aristotelian philosophy, and the Modalists by that of the Stoics; while the Trinitarians (Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, Novatian), on the other hand, appealed to Plato.***

[Note: the 11th Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica is considered, by scholars, to be the last authoritative reference work on ancient history.]

Notice that the Unitarians (those who do not believe in the divinity of Jesus) “**still form[ed] the majority**” at the beginning of the third century.

Notice, also, that none of these Christologies were influenced by the Bible or Hebrew thought. They all emerged out of the influence of **Greek philosophy.** Jesus, himself, would have been appalled by this development.

Does it not seem strange that the **Jerusalem Church**, who rejected the divinity and the virgin birth, was condemned and

superseded by the **Roman Church**, which found its inspiration in pagan religions and Greek philosophy?

Christianity needs to return to the origins of the Christian faith as described in Rick Richardson's book, *Origins of Our Faith* and discard the myths and fables of the gentile church. It is only then, that the House of Israel (who are mostly Christian today) can be redeemed.

Appendix 3

The Virgin Birth Myth

The very earliest New Testament Canon was compiled by Marcion (circa 140CE). It was, in fact, Marcion who coined the name “New Testament.” The only gospel in this Canon was the Gospel of Luke. This was the earliest known copy of Luke’s gospel and it did not contain any account of Jesus’ birth or his genealogy. Long after the birth account was added to the text, critics would accuse Marcion of mutilating the text. This is a familiar accusation which was used to discredit many of the earliest manuscripts because they did not conform to church dogma.

Luke’s genealogy

A major problem with the later versions of the Gospel of Luke is the inclusion of a totally bogus genealogy. This genealogy says that Zerubbabel was the son of Shealtiel and that Shealtiel was the son of Neri. How can this be when 1 Chronicles 3:17 tells us that Shealtiel was the son of Jeconiah? The genealogy in Matthew does get this relationship correct. Luke’s genealogy says that Joseph’s father was Heli, but Matthew’s genealogy says that Joseph’s father was Jacob. Luke’s genealogy comes down through Nathan the son of David, but Matthew’s genealogy comes down through Solomon the son of David. Luke’s genealogy of Jesus is a clear attempt to tie him back to David and bypass the major problem which occurs in Matthew’s genealogy. However, Luke’s genealogy would disqualify Jesus from being the Messiah because the messianic line must come down through Solomon.

There are only two places in the entire New Testament where the virgin birth is mentioned. The other place is in the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew’s gospel was originally written in Hebrew

as attested to by **Papias** (Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 3.39.16), **Irenaeus** (*Adversus Haereses* 3.1.1), **Origen** (Eusebius, *H. E.*, 6.25.4), **Eusebius** (*H.E.*, 3.24.6), **Epiphanius** (*Panarion* 29.9.4), and **Jerome** (*Epist.*, 20.5). The Ebionites, who possessed the Hebrew version of Matthew, were accused by later critics of mutilating the text (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 30.13) because this original Hebrew version of Matthew's gospel did not contain a birth account or a genealogy.

Matthew's genealogy

There are problems with the genealogy in Matthew on several levels. First there is a conflict in the use of "magic numbers" and the actual number of generations. Matthew lists three groups of fourteen generations. In the second group of fourteen, three generations are missing between Joram and Uzziah (Ozias). The second group is therefore seventeen generations and not fourteen. The third group says fourteen generations but only lists thirteen generations.

The problems do not stop there. This genealogy says that Jesus is the descendent of Jeconiah. If this is the case then he is disqualified from being the Messiah because Jeconiah's line was cursed (Jeremiah 22:30).

In attempting to establish a messianic genealogy the church messed up by 1) not coordinating the two genealogies so they matched each other, and 2) not doing proper research on the correct messianic line.

Source of the virgin birth myth

It is obvious, based on the historical data, that both of the accounts of the virgin birth are late additions to the text. From the time of Ishtar, the virgin mother, every idolatrous religion has had demigods who were born of virgins. The temple prostitutes of Babylon were called virgins even though they were clearly not. The virgin birth myth was prevalent in Mithraism, Zoroastrianism, and other religions of the first

century. Christianity had to adopt this same myth in order to attract more followers. It was not until Christianity left its Jewish origins and adopted more of the customs of the religions around them that it really began to grow.