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## The Third Day

by Paul Sumner

IN 1 CORINTHIANS 15, Paul makes an astonishing statement about Yeshua: “He was buried and raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (v 4). What’s so strange is that there is no explicit prediction in the Hebrew Bible about the Messiah dying and rising on the third day.

Where did Paul get this idea? Did he have a Tanakh with different contents than the one we have? Did he make all this up out of his own imagination in order to deceive ignorant Jews and gentiles? He’s actually quoting from Yeshua himself, who said: “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day” (Luke 24:46). Which written authority did he mean?

If we look up the phrase “third day” in a Bible concordance and study the contexts of its usage, a pattern emerges that may explain why Yeshua and Paul could point to a Third Day prophecy. In the following passages, notice what occurs.

On the third day — the newly created earth brings forth vegetation, plants, and trees. Sprouting new life occurs from the ground. (Genesis 1:11-13)

On the third day — Abraham arrives at Mount Moriah where he intends to offer his son as a burnt offering to God, but he tells his companions, “We will worship and return.” (Genesis 22:4-5)

On the third day — Pharaoh’s cup bearer, who has been in prison on death-row, is granted clemency and released (Genesis 40:20-21)

On the third day — Joseph releases his brothers from prison in Egypt (Genesis 42:18)

On the third day — God descends upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all Israel and reveals his torah, their constitution of new life as a nation after their resurrection from Egypt (Exodus 19:11)

On the third day — Israelites are to purify themselves with water after being in contact with the dead (Numbers 19:12)

On the third day — after praying to God for release, King Hezekiah is healed of his fatal disease and enters the Temple to offer thanks (2 Kings 20:5)

On the third day — Esther puts on her royal robes and enters the palace of the Persian king in order to thwart a death-plot against her people, the Jews (Esther 5:1)

**All these passages mention emergence of new life from the earth or circumstances of “lifelessness” (prison, captivity, or illness), or testing situations when a life is put on the line but obedience wins unexpected reversal and brings deliverance (Abraham and Isaac, Esther). Thus the Third Day is a time of release from realms of death.**

**There is a Third Day passage that speaks more directly about the Messiah.**

In the Hebrew Scriptures, Israel is God's son (Exodus 4:22, Deuteronomy 14:1, Jeremiah 31:20). Speaking with the voice of God, the prophet Hosea says: "When Israel was a youth I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" (11:1). But all is not well. Hosea reminds the nation of their true identity in order to amplify the pathos of his heavy task: announce Israel's national death. The son of God must die. This will occur because of his unrelenting rebellion against God, his Father. In blood-freezing detail, God promises the ultimate in chastisement for his children:

I will be like a lion to Ephraim,  
 And like a young lion to the house of Judah.  
 I, even I, will tear to pieces and go away . . .  
 I will go away and return to my place  
 Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face.  
 (Hosea 13:7-8, 5:14-15)

Such a prophecy seems hopeless. What could be worse than death at the hands of one's parent? Fatal prophecies, however, often contain hope, for not even death at the terrible hands of his Father can utterly separate Israel from him. Hosea consoles:

Come, let us return to the Lord.  
 For he has torn us, but he will heal us;  
 He has wounded us, but he will bandage us.  
 He will revive us after two days;  
**He will raise us up on the third day**  
 That we may live before him . . . .  
 He will come to us like the rain,  
 Like the spring rain watering the [dead] earth.  
 (Hosea 6:1-3)

In a later passage, God explicitly promises them deliverance.

## The Three Anointings

IF YESHUA WAS THE MESSIAH, where is his kingdom?

In light of the last two millennia of history—in the shadow cast by Auschwitz—how can his followers assert that he was a king, much less that he *is* King Messiah?

These questions cannot be shrugged off with flippant Christian platitudes. They boil up from the depths of human agony and disappointed hope. Reality seems to belie the kingship of Yeshua, does it not? Over the centuries, countless believers in him have also

I will ransom them from the power of Sheol;  
 I will redeem them *from death*.  
 O Death, where are your thorns?  
 O Sheol, where is your sting? (Hosea 13:14)

After the death of his son, the Father will raise him from the grave, the place of separation, on the third day. And God's new life will be like spring rain.

In the ideology of the Tanakh, the Messiah dwells within the circle of the title "Israel" (Isaiah 44:1-2 with 49:5-7). He too is God's son. As a family member, he experiences their sorrow and death, though not for his own sins. He suffers the chastisement due everyone else (Isa 53:5-6), but it doesn't happen to him by accident: "The Lord was pleased to crush him" (Isa 53:10). And so severe is the crushing that he dies (Isa 53:8). But even if he perishes (like his people)—being torn and crushed by the lion-God—he also basks in the warmth of the other, ultimate promise of God: "He will raise [me] up on the third day... He will ransom [me] from death"—like his people.

In light of this, what can we say? The prophecy about the Messiah's death and resurrection on the third day is more subtle than we would expect. The spirit of prophecy breathes in ways we don't immediately comprehend. Prophecy is not mere pre-telling of events; it's often an act of weaving patterns deep into the fabric of the Scripture, only to one day appear in bold relief in special light. The prophetic strand about the third day is woven tightly into the biblical tapestry for a reason. It cannot be easily extrapolated without carefully, prayerfully attending to what God was doing with his son Israel. ♪

petitioned Heaven in times of faith-obscuring crisis. Where is his kingdom and its power?!

There are no simple answers. But I think there *are* answers in Scripture; ones that give handholds to those wanting to believe in God and the Messianic hope.

One of them may lie in the story of King David who lived a thousand years before Yeshua.

David the Other Choice

David—whose name means Loved—was God’s choice as king over Israel. But Saul of Benjamin, the charismatic, handsome prize, was Israel’s preference. God waited until the nation had tasted the bitters of their rash choice before he revealed to them his king. In fact, for years before Saul vacated the throne (by death), David was being prepared by God to take over. He was king already in God’s council, but he had to wait an indeterminate season to begin his reign over the nation. It is this pattern of David’s rise to power that sheds light on Yeshua’s kingship.

It all began while David was tending sheep in the hills around Beit Lehem. One day he received a summons to come home. The renowned prophet Samuel had arrived to choose a son of Jesse as successor to Saul. Having passed over David’s seven older brothers, Samuel waited till the teenage shepherd came in. Listening for God’s cue, he heard him say as David walked in: “*Zeh hu*—this is he” (1 Samuel 16:12).

Samuel quickly took a horn of oil and poured it over David, saturating him in front of everyone. From that day on, “the spirit of the Lord came mightily to David” (*ruach Adonai titzlach el David*) (1 Sam 16:13). This was David’s *first* anointing, making him God’s *mashiach* or messiah. (Note, this act was done at the direct command of God at the hand of his prophet.)

However—this is the key point—David did not immediately embark on a glorious reign as king. Saul became jealous and tried repeatedly to murder him. David suddenly became an enemy of the State: a hunted traitor, roaming the hills of Judah, living the life of a king in exile, not knowing how long.

During this wandering time—perhaps 13-14 years—David attracted several followers from towns and villages here and there. They saw in him a godly and worthy king, and willingly threw their destiny in with his, believing that loyalty to God’s anointed was worth any losses.

Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented, gathered to him; and he became *captain* [not king; Heb = *sar*] over them. (1 Samuel 22:2)

Some paid with their lives for following David. Eighty-five men, women and children were slaughtered by Saul’s troops in the village of Nov (1 Sam 22:9-19).

Eventually, Saul died. He suicided in battle on Gilboa, rather than be captured by gloating enemies. Though his nemesis was now dead and his flight over, David lamented Saul and his son Jonathan, who also died in the conflict (2 Sam 1).

Soon the tribal elders came to David in Hebron and anointed him king over the house of Judah (2 Sam 2:3-4). He was thirty years old at his *second* anointing. But still he was leader of only a portion of the nation. The northern tribes who had long wanted nothing to do with any king from Judah remained obstinate.

#### His Final Anointing

Seven and a half years later, the elders of *Israel* finally came to David, asking him to be their king. They had not forgotten God’s purpose for him: “The Lord said to you: ‘You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.’” They then anointed him as their king—his *third* time.

So we see a long progression in David’s rise to the throne. To God, he was already the nation’s shepherd king. Among his fellow Judeans and the northern tribes, he was not at first accepted. He had to wait many years before he could enter into his appointed assignment. During that time, he remained faithful to God and won the hearts of individuals who were willing to follow, though branded seditious outlaws from society. In the fullness of time, he finally received approval and adulation from the whole nation. Only at that point, could he step up and sit down on the Throne of the Kingdom as God’s earthly representative.

#### Yeshua’s First Two Anointings

Yeshua was *first* anointed at the hand of a prophet who, under God’s direct command, immersed him in a desert river, away from the power centers of government and religion. As he came up out of the river, Yeshua was immediately anointed with the *ruach Adonai*; an anointing which “remained” on him from then on (Matthew 3:13-17, John 1:33). This scene reverberates with David’s anointing by Samuel.

Similarly, Yeshua then entered the wilderness, not the throne-room of the palace in Jerusalem. He began gathering disciples here and there; people who believed companionship with him was worth any

consequent loss. He attracted poor, sick, demon-possessed, broken-hearted out-casts. He also won the hearts of a few Jewish leaders, and even turned some Roman officials and pagan peasants. But his entourage, as mixed and scattered as it was, was not yet a kingdom.

His first large public approval as *Mashiach* came 50 days after his resurrection on the opening day of *Shavu’ot*, the celebration of First Harvest. On that day, thousands of visiting Jews in Jerusalem heard his followers preaching and 3,000 of them believed.

Another 5,000 put their hopes in him shortly after. In a sense, Shavu'ot was his *second* anointing as king.

Like David, though, his kingship was not universally recognized even then. But he was not deterred. His apostles ("dispatched ones") continued broadcasting a standing invitation: "Repent therefore and return...that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send Yeshua the Messiah" [back to Jerusalem] (Acts 3:19-20). An air of expectancy and contingency existed for several years, while the invitation to join this latter-day David was sent abroad.

#### Since Then — the Waiting

Since those days, the situation has not really changed. Yeshua, by his spirit through his word and human disciples, has been recruiting individuals to accept him as king and join his scattered bands of followers here and there across the earth. In a sense, he has been a king in exile waiting his time. (I do not believe he ever occupied the gilded thrones erected for him by European Christendom; he was out in the deserts gathering the humble, being enthroned by them.)

But a king in exile still has authority to rule, and that's what Yeshua has done. He has been king over a willing minority on earth; a heterogeneous collection of distressed, discontented citizens who want something better than the kingdoms of this world. In fact, every nation on earth—including Israel—presently has people who acknowledge him as king. They daily enjoy the blessings of his reign: forgiveness, acceptance, encouragement, sometimes painful discipline, protection, companionship, and life purpose.

Obviously, this circumstance is not totally satisfactory, for sin and death seemingly tyrannize unabated. Our age is not the fullness of the Messianic

## He Sat Down

THE NEW TESTAMENT SAYS that when Yeshua was raised from the dead, he ascended into God's presence where he "sat down at the right hand of God" (Hebrews 1:3, 10:12, 12:1). The words "sat down" are open to misunderstanding.

Kingdom. It's a temporary, exilic—not idyllic—situation, fraught with continued human weakness and repeated betrayal of the Sovereign, even by his own people. Added to that, the historical, pandemic, human rebellion against God and Messiah continues at full speed, with apparent increase in momentum. And in the souls of the Exiled Messiah's people there is a deep longing and looking forward.

At the same time, there is a restfulness for the individual believer in Yeshua, because this frustrating wilderness trek actually lasts only a *few* years (less than a life-time). At death there is a meeting face to face. For the rest of humanity, God grants us the bitter regimes of the Sauls we choose for ourselves.

#### The Last Berakhah

But history isn't over. A Final Event is yet to come. There will be a *third* anointing of Yeshua. As with David, the *rest* of Israel will willingly gather round him one day. They too will tell him: "The Lord said to you: 'You will shepherd my people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.' Therefore, we gladly chant: '*Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord.*'"

On that day, the one whom God long ago anointed by a solitary river will finally be accepted and crowned and praised in full view. The last David will sit enthroned. And God will be honored with him for keeping his word.

At the name of Yeshua every knee will bow, in Heaven and on Earth and under the Earth, and every tongue [will] confess that Yeshua the Anointed is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

This may all sound like an abstract, unconvincing, religious ideal to an outsider, a non-follower. But Yeshua's exilic kingship is quite real and potent—to those who anoint him in their souls as Sovereign. 𐤀

On the surface, they may imply that Yeshua entered Heaven and sat down to rest after his struggle with sin and death to provide redemption for mankind. There, as some believe, he awaits the outworking of his labors, leading to the Consummation of the Age when he will get orders

from the Father to return to earth and set up his Messianic Kingdom.

Looking at the phrase in light of the Hebrew Scriptures makes this interpretation incorrect.

Several times in the Tanakh, God is depicted as sitting on a throne (e.g. 1 Kings 22:19, Isaiah 6:1). These references do not imply that God is resting, but actively involved in ruling the universe. In fact, the verb “to sit” (יָשָׁב *yashav*) is often merely a synonym for being “enthroned”—sitting as a king. The Ark of the Covenant, consisting of a wooden chest and the winged cherubim, symbolizes God’s mobile throne on earth.

The Lord sits [*yashav*] forever;  
He has set up His throne for judgment. (Psalm 9:8)

Give ear, O shepherd of Israel...  
You who are enthroned [*yashav*] on the cherubim  
(Ps 80:2, Eng = v 1)

The Lord, enthroned [*yashav*] on the cherubim,  
is king (Ps 99:1)

In Psalm 2, when the kings of the earth rise up in revolt against the Lord and his Messiah, God will put down their attempted coup d’etat—“He who sits [as King] in heaven laughs; the Lord mocks at them” (v 4). He has other plans: “I have installed my King on Zion, my holy mountain” (v 6). Thus when the Hebrew Scripture says God “sits,” it means he has sovereign lordship.

This is true of his anointed prince, enthroned beside him. In Psalm 110, God’s Lord is beckoned to sit [*yashav*] at his right hand; that is, to rule with him. We catch a glimpse of the two-king imagery in Solomon’s coronation as he “sat [*yashav*] on the throne of YHVH as king” (1 Chron 29:23). The royal House of David was supposed to administer the kingdom of God on earth; it was His throne, not theirs.

## The Glory and the Lamp

In the Scriptures, imagery conveys theology, pictures express spiritual truth.

\* At the beginning of Creation, the sun and moon were called “the two great lights.” The Sun was the “Great Light” and the Moon the “Little Light” (Gen

### Active and Waiting

When Yeshua is described as sitting on God’s throne, it does not imply he is resting (from the past) or waiting (for the future). Far from it. He is actively participating in the governance of human and supernatural beings, over which God gave him authority.

All authority has been given to me in Heaven and on Earth. (Matthew 28:18)

[God] raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the Heavens, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion. (Ephesians 1:20-21)

[Yeshua] is at the right hand of God, having gone into Heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to him. (1 Peter 3:22)

Yeshua is enthroned and aggressively, but quietly, extending his lordship—right now. He’s not waiting for some distant time (now already two millennia) to begin the job. He’s been in office since 33 AD. Yet his present rule as God’s delegated king does not contradict the NT prophecies that a day will come when he returns to earth to be crowned Lord of all by all (Acts 3:19-21, 2 Thess 1:7).

Some people assume that Present Kingship somehow undermines Future Kingship, or vice versa: that the “restoration of all things” at the Second Coming of the Messiah (Acts 3:21) minimizes what he is doing at this moment. It isn’t so. The King who now campaigns to win willing subjects to his lordship by persuasive love, will eventually wage an inexorable campaign to finally defeat the Regime of evil and death tyrannizing our race. That Yeshua is now sitting down is, in biblical thinking, an image of profound hope for today . . . and tomorrow. 卐

1:16). The two of them “ruled” (*mashal*) over day and night. They were also created to be “signs” (v 14).

\* No one can stare long at the sun without going blind. No one can stay long in the sun without being burned, ultimately to death. The light and power

—the glory—of the sun will kill us if we aren't protected.

The Lord God is a sun and a shield;  
The Lord gives grace and glory. (Psalm 84:11)

God is like the sun whose glory radiates nuclear energy; his “grace” is that he shields us from himself, from the fullness of his deadly presence. “Show me your glory,” Moses once requested God. God refused: “You cannot see my face, for no man can see me and live.” Face is the same word as presence in Hebrew. God's glory is his presence; his glory shines in his face. God acquiesced to a degree. He put Moses in the cleft of a rock, shielded him with his hand, and made his glory pass by. Moses saw only the backside, not the face, of God (Exod 33:18-23). God's glory needed veiling. Moses's own countenance was so radiant after being with God, the Hebrews veiled his face (Exod 34:33-35).

\* The moon is the veiled light of the sun. Its night face radiates the amount of sun-glory that we can gaze upon without fear of damage.

\* Joseph was a ba'al ha'chalamot, a master of dreams. One of his dreams depicted the sun, moon, and eleven stars coming to him and bowing down. These represented his father (sun), mother (moon), and brothers (stars) (Gen 37:9-10, 19). Daniel 12:3 states that the insightful and those who “lead the many to righteousness” will “shine brightly...like the stars forever and ever.”

\* According to Paul, Man “is the Image and Glory of God.” A Woman, his wife, “is the Glory of the Man.” Man should pray with head uncovered so that his glory is unveiled in the presence of the Creator. A woman, however, has long hair to veil or cover herself during prayer. Her glory is not her own. She is the veiled brightness of her husband (1 Cor 11:5-7, 14-15). He is like the Sun; she is like the Moon.

\* King David was God's Lamp on earth, “the Lamp of Israel” (2 Sam 21:17). He was a diminutive sun (a moon), the light of heaven people could gaze on. His sons, who ruled on Mount Zion, were to keep the light burning—“For David's sake the Lord his God gave him a Lamp in Jerusalem, to raise up a son after him and to establish Jerusalem” (1 Kings 15:3-4).

\* According to Paul, the Man is head over the Woman, Messiah is the head over Man, and “God is the head of Messiah” (1 Corinthians 11:3).

God (glory)

Messiah (veiled glory of God)

Man (glory)

Woman (veiled glory of Man)

\* The Mishkan (from shakhan, to dwell) was a tent made of animal hides and cloth, with a wooden frame or skeleton. From inside this humble, earthy dwelling, God met and spoke with Israel (Exodus 25). Inside it, he placed his Glory behind a veil. The Mishkan was the place where God and man came together; where atonement could be made, fellowship restored, and the Creator's earth-abiding Presence encountered in time and space. “The Word became flesh [skin and skeleton] and dwelt [Grk skenoo = Heb shakhan] among us, and we behind his Glory” [veiled so we would survive] (John 1:14).

\* As a son of David, Yeshua inherits the promises and responsibilities of his father's throne. As King and Son, he is the veiled Sun-Glory, the earthly Lamp of God.

\* As the “Last Man” (1 Corinthians 15:45), Yeshua is “the image of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15); he is “the radiance of his Glory” (Hebrews 1:3); in his face we behold “the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God” (2 Corinthians 4:6). Yeshua is the Moon: the visible face of the searing Sun-glory. His is the light and power of Heaven we are able to endure without fear.

\* Gazing into the future into the streets of New Jerusalem, a prophet said: “I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb, are its temple. And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the Glory of God has illumined it, and its Lamp is the Lamb” (Revelation 21:22-23).

\* Another Hebrew prophet centuries before Yeshua foresaw the future Day of the Lord, in which “the Sun will be turned into darkness, and the Moon into blood” (Joel 2:31).

\* Messiah died, just as Pesach lambs died in Egypt to protect their owners. He became the purchaser of exodus.

\* In Israel's calendar, the Sabbath (the Creation Memorial Day) is governed by the Sun, but the other

Festivals like Pesach (commemorating redemption, revelation and final restoration) are governed by the Moon. ♪

## Zionism and the Doctrine of the Trinity

WHEN THE FIRST LARGE waves of Jews fled Europe for Palestine in the late 19th century, they carried with them their experiences and world-views. Upon arrival, they embraced the *kibbutz* concept as the main instrument for reclaiming the Land. The collective farm was a socialist concept; the early *halutzim* (pioneers) were children of Marxism. Socialist ideology had given Jews an alternative vision and hope in the midst of anti-Semitic capitalist Europe and czarist Russia, under which they suffered. In the context of the severe demands of hostile Palestine, many of the principles of social equality and mutual, self-sacrificing cooperation for the good of the group made sense. It gave them unity and power to withstand tremendous opposition. (Materialistic individualism—the economic religion of the United States—could never have built a Zionist homeland.)

In time, however, the Zionist mechanism began to corrode. The naive Marxist concepts about human nature and social engineering revealed their inadequacies and their darker side. Socialism was just as infected with the same human components as were capitalism and monarchical totalitarianism. As Scripture informs us and as the generations continue to learn: people don't change their inner nature when they swap socio-politico-economic theories. And the State of Israel today is suffering under the remnants of the old, discredited views.

Messianic believers in Yeshua are much like the Jews who worked to reclaim the ancient homeland of Palestine. These spiritual (and often material) *halutzim* have chosen to loosen their ties with Western Christianity, in favor of re-exploring the Good Land that God gave to the patriarchs of Israel. They're exhausted from struggling with the unbiblical traditions, corruptions, and unyielding prejudices of the European and North American Church. If not physically, they have all internally sought to return to the Hebraic and Jewish world of Yeshua and the 1st century messianic faith as portrayed in the New Testament.

Like the Jews of Europe, however, Messianics bring with them understandings of God, the Scriptures, and faith that they adopted in the West. In many cases, these are a random mixture of Orthodox Rabbinic Judaism and Orthodox Christianity. This mix leads many in the Synagogue and Church communities to ridicule their authenticity and disclaim them: they are neither Jews nor Christians. But in a survival situation, when new life is being born and nurtured in a hostile environment, there is little time or energy to focus on inconsistencies in religious practice—much less deep theology. Someday, when the *Yishuv* (Settlement) is stable and raising up healthy children, attention can then be given to the other necessary issues of building a solid work of God.

The Doctrine of the Trinity is one of “those issues” that needs addressing.

Like Marxism, this theological system has immediate appeal because it seems to correctly depict the realities of God as seen in the New Testament and as lived out in the lives of contemporary believers. It prevents people from viewing Yeshua as merely a miracle-working rabbi, and it explains the living presence of God in our time. Simply put, the trinitarian perspective “works” on a daily basis. So it is not easily examined, much less abandoned, in favor of a better interpretation.

But it's time to stop and restudy this issue. Not because of the pressures from unitarian Rabbinic Judaism to reject it, in order to have peace with (and entrance into) the Jewish community. No. It is necessary, because of the overwhelming testimony of Scripture and because of the destructiveness of trinitarian theology to biblical authority.

Messianics have well learned that Christian views of Paul and the Law have been skewed out of line because of systemic, historical biases against the Old Testament and Judaism. And they've reclaimed “Rabbi” Paul, the believing *Jew*, and drunk of the good streams flowing in Torah, all because they have been joyfully

and discerningly reading the Word of God. It is the Word that is living and powerful—not the accumulated traditions of either Christianity or Judaism.

That is not to say the traditions have *nothing* of God's truth and wisdom and righteous teaching—it would be absurd to say so. But it is to say that the Scripture is the final arbiter of what is true, not our weighty traditions. Messianic believers have the *hutzpah* to declare to the Jewish community that Rabbis Akiva, Maimonides, Rashi, and Menahem Schneerson have all been wrong *about Yeshua of Nazareth*. But they do this, not because they are impertinent, arrogant, ill-informed Jewish children, but because they have confidence in the revelation of God in and through Yeshua.

One example of how Messianics have adopted Christian interpretative agendas is found in a *Jews For Jesus* tract entitled "Jewishness and the Trinity" (1978) written by Arnold Fruchtenbaum. In this apologetic for finding the Trinity in the Hebrew Scriptures, Dr. Fruchtenbaum cites a variety of passages, delving into Hebrew grammar and word studies. He also resorts to the Jewish occultic bible, the *Zohar*, to show that plurality in the Godhead is a Jewish idea.

But what is so clearly "non-Palestinian" about his tract is that the Lord and the apostles *never quote* the texts he does, nor do they exegete the same Hebrew words to argue their case for Yeshua's divinity. More, Fruchtenbaum does not mention one of the passages that Yeshua himself *repeatedly* quotes as Tanakh authentication of his identity (e.g. Ps 110:1, Dan 7:13-14).

This is not to say Fruchtenbaum deliberately ignores them out of duplicity. It suggests that his training in looking for evidence for this doctrine in the Hebrew Bible came from outside the NT itself. This is a common trait of Christian apologetics regarding the Trinity, in which later dogmatic agendas dictate the hunt for biblical proofs, while diverting attention away from the NT's own content and agendas. If NT teaching is indeed "adequate" for Messianic doctrine (2 Tim 3:16-17), then its prooftexts, emphases, or silence on a subject should always be the starting place. It's astonishing how often it is not.

Church history shows that the Doctrine of the Trinity came from outside Palestine. Biblically-grounded Jews did not come to this conclusion. And

numerous Catholic and Protestant theologians now openly say that the Doctrine is *nowhere* taught in the Old Testament. Many of them also admit—now that burning at the stake is not a great possibility for honestly discussing the Trinity—that the doctrine is not "clearly" taught *even in the New Testament*. Rather, it requires the philosophical expertise of post-NT Christians to arrive at this doctrine. For some this idea may not be a problem. For those who believe Scripture is the only and final authority for divine truth, it is a major problem.

Messianics might give pause to the fact that the very Tradition that gave them their trinitarian views of the Godhead actually undermines their endeavors to obtain Tanakh authorization for the doctrine, by announcing that Christian efforts in this regard are futile. "It's been a wild goose chase; the evidence isn't valid." Even the late Jakob Jocz, the scholarly messianic apologist, bemoaned the "exegetical acrobatics" that some Christians employ in their defense of the Trinity.

Then what *is* there? What does the Tanakh have to say about God, the Messiah, and the *Ruach Elohim*?

The answer is not going to be found by starting with an existing map then traveling through Old Testament Country looking for things it describes. Authentic exploration of the Country requires us to start within the Country itself, to discover *its* language and spiritual priorities—its native topography. In other words, it demands we map the Land anew for ourselves, without the foreign maps of cartographers who make prooftext sorties into the Jewish Bible to bolster dogma.

Palestine is a wild and dangerous place for systematic, intellectual Westerners used to the taming powers of scientific materialism and philosophy. Exploring Scripture can be frightening too for those of us nurtured in Western Christian tradition. But prayerful, careful restudy of the Word is our only hope for rebuilding a viable, biblically-sound Messianic Community—in Eretz Israel or wherever Messiah's people gather.

"Clear the way...remove the stones" (Isaiah 62:10). פ

**YASHAR's** doctrinal stance is summarized in Scriptures such as the following—1 Corinthians 8:6, 1 Peter 1:20-21, 1 John 1:4, Judah 25, Romans 16:27, John 17:3, John 3:16.



## Ani Hu

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, Yeshua frequently uses the expression “I am.” In Greek the wording is εγω ειμι, ego eimi. Because it is also used in the Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) version of Exodus 3 where God says: “I am,” many interpreters conclude that Yeshua was asserting his deity.

But there is more to the subject than this.

For example, at Exod 3:14 the full Septuagint text reads: Ego eimi ho On. The article ho is followed by the verbal noun On, the Greek present participle of the verb “to be.” Thus God says (in Greek): “I am the Being” or “I am the One who

Exists.” The words ego eimi here do not stand alone but are followed by a predicate. So by themselves they do not make a declaration of deity. The Hebrew here reads: ehyeh asher ehyeh (“I am-who-I am” or “I will be-what-I will be”).

In other Septuagint texts, however, ego eimi does have significance when a declaration about God’s uniqueness is made. The following table lists “I am” with and without predicates (the latter are marked by an \*).

Ego Eimi and Hebrew Equivalents

Text	English	Greek	Hebrew
Exod 3:6	I am the God (of your father)	*ego eimi ho theos	anokhi elohei avicha
Exod 3:14a	I am who I am	*ego eimi ho on	ehyeh asher ehyeh
Exod 3:14b	I am sent me	ho on (“the Being”)...	ehyeh shlachani
Deut 32:39	I, even I, am he	ego eimi	ani, ani hu
Isa 41:4	I am he	ego eimi	ani hu
Isa 43:10	I am he	ego eimi	ani hu
Isa 43:25	I, even I, am	ego eimi, ego eimi	anokhi, anokhi hu
Isa 46:4	I am he	ego eimi	ani hu
Isa 48:12	I am he, I am the first	*ego eimi protos	ani hu, ani rishon
Isa 51:12	I, even I, am he who comforts you	ego eimi, ego eimi *ho parakalon	anokhi anokhi hu menachemkhem
Isa 52:6	I am the one speaking	*ego eimi autos ho lalon	ani hu hamdaber

From this table, we see that the Greek ego eimi often reflects the Hebrew ani hu. This leads us down another track. אני הוּא, ani hu is two pronouns and literally means “I (am) He” (the helping verb “am” is not in the Hebrew). Anokhi is a fuller form of ani. Some lexicographers think ani hu means: “I am He who is, as opposed to unreal gods”; “I am (always) He, the same”; or “I am That One.” (Brown-Driver-Briggs, Hebrew & English

Lexicon, 216; Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament 3:344; Koehler-Baumgartner, Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, 227). Thus, when God declares to his people “I am He,” he is identifying himself as their only redeeming Presence (He and no other god) who always, in every age, comes to them as the same God.

In the NT the phrase ego eimi is not always theologically significant. It is used by people other

than Yeshua—Judas (Matt 26:22), Peter (Acts 10:21) and Paul (Acts 22:3). In the Synoptic Gospels, as in the Tanakh, it is found in moments of self-disclosure.

During the lake storm — “Take heart, *it is I* [ego eimi], do not be afraid.” (Matt 14:27 para)

False messiahs — “Many will come in my name saying, ‘*I am the Messiah!*’” (Matt 24:5) (Mark 13:6 & Luke 21:8 simply read: “...in my name saying, ‘*I am he.*’”)

The Trial — “Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?” And Yeshua said, ‘*I am he.*’” (Mark 14:61-62)

After Resurrection — “See my hands and my feet, *it is I myself* “ [ego eimi autos]. (Luke 24:39)

“I am” is most prominent in the Gospel of John, an account in which we find an on-going dialectic discussion: Who is Yeshua? The whole gospel forms, as it were, the documents in the case regarding his identity. (Someone observed that in John, “Jesus is in a lawsuit with the world.”) Several times the phrase ego eimi precedes predicates—“I am . . . the bread of life, living bread, light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way, the true vine”. Other passages carry more theological weight. In these, “I am” seems to have strong connections with the Hebrew sub-stratum ani hu.

## JOHN

- 4:26 — *I am he*, the one who is speaking to you  
 6:20 — *I am he*, do not be afraid  
 8:24 — you will die in your sins unless you believe that ***I am he***  
 8:28 — When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that *I am he*  
 8:58 — Before Abraham was, *I am he*  
 13:19 — I tell you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that *I am he*  
 18:4-5 — Whom do you seek? They answered him, Yeshua of Nazareth. Yeshua said to them, *I am he*. When he said to them, *I am he*, they drew back and fell to the ground.

Is Yeshua identifying himself with the God of ancient Israel who declared “Ani Hu—I am He?” Before giving an opinion, let us examine another

feature in the Gospel of John that relates to Yeshua’s use of this Hebraic expression.

## That One

We saw that one possible translation of ani hu is “I am That One.” This sense seems to underlie an episode in John 4 where Yeshua meets a Samaritan woman who has strong theological convictions about the Messiah (Taheb in Samaritan). She confidently informs this Jewish man standing before her: “When That One comes, He will declare all things to us” (v 25). In response, Yeshua informs her: “I am He [ego eimi], the One speaking to you” (v 26). In other words: the messianic figure whom she describes only at a distance as “That One” turns out to be the very man talking with her. “Woman, I am That One whom you expect.”

This passage contains a second literary thread in John’s writings. It is the Greek demonstrative pronoun ekeinos, used to signify someone being spoken of at a distance, whether physically or in thought (Blass, DeBrunner, Funk, Greek Grammar of the NT, rev. ed., §291). The word is not always significant and is usually translated “he.” But the pattern of usage across many verses suggests it is another flag word in John’s thematic pursuit of the issue: Who is Yeshua? Who is That One? <sup>1</sup> Throughout John, Yeshua is designated as “That One.”

## JOHN

- 1:18 — the Only One who is in the bosom of the Father, *That One* has explained him  
 2:21 — *That One* was speaking of the temple of his body  
 3:28 — I am not the Messiah, but I have been sent before *That One*  
 3:30 — *That One* must increase, but I must decrease  
 4:25 — I know that the Messiah is coming...when *That One* comes, he will declare all things to us  
 6:29 — This is the work of God that you believe in *That One* whom he has sent  
 5:11 — He who made me well was *That One* who said to me, ‘Take up your pallet and walk’  
 7:11 — The Jews therefore were seeking him at the Feast, and were saying, Where is *That One?*

9:37 — Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him,  
and  
He is *That One* who is talking with you”

19:21 — Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews’; but  
that  
*That One* said, I am King of the Jews

## 1 JOHN

2:6 — the one who says he abides in him ought to  
walk in the same manner as *That One* walked

3:3 — Every one who has this hope fixed on him  
purifies himself, just as *That One* is pure

3:5 — You know that *That One* appeared to take  
away sins

3:7 — The one who practices righteousness is  
righteous,  
just as *That One* is righteous

3:16 — We know love by this, that *That One* laid down  
His life for us

4:17 — As *That One* is, so also are we in this world

Coupled with the self-affirmative ego eimi (“I am He”), ekeinos bolsters John’s case evidence that Yeshua is the Prophet, the King, the Messiah whom Israel looked for at a distance. Now finally, they all could see him, if they would. He was standing in front of them: talking with them, healing their diseases, banishing evil spirits, counteracting pernicious doctrines. “I’m the one you expect. But are you expecting the right thing? Do you know what you’re looking for? How will you know That One when you see him? What witnesses will you use to decide?”

Does Yeshua mean us to understand that he is identified with YHVH, the God of ancient Israel? Yes and no.

He is not identical to YHVH his Father and God, as he tells us (John 5:44, 6:27).<sup>2</sup> But as God’s Messiah/Son he comes in the Name of YHVH (5:43, 17:6) and shares his spirit (3:34, 10:30). He never asserts that he, in himself, is the fullness of Deity—“I am not alone [in my work and teaching], because the Father is with me; you believe in God, believe also in me; this is the work of God that you believe in him whom he has sent” (John 16:32, 14:1, 6:29). For he “was with God” (Jn 1:1b).

Messiah is the dwelling place of God’s Presence; he is the Mishkan, the glory-filled bedouin tent

that moves with and among the peoples of earth who welcome him into their camp. ת

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The reader will also note that ekeinos (a masculine pronoun) is used with the neuter noun Spirit (pneuma).

John 14:26 —But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, *That One* will teach you all things

15:26—When the Paraclete comes...the Spirit of truth...  
*That One* will bear witness of me

16:8—And *That One*, when he comes, will convict the world of sin

16:13—But when he, the Spirit of Truth, comes,  
*That One* will guide you

16:14—*That One* shall glorify me

This violation of Greek grammar (mixing masculine and neuter genders) draws our attention to the identity of the Spirit. Does Yeshua intend us to think of the coming “Other Paraclete” as the Spirit/Presence of the one who said to them in person “I am That One”—in other words, as Yeshua himself?

## Parallel Uses of “when That One comes”

John 4:25 — “when That One [Jesus] comes” —  
οταν ελθη εκεινος

John 15:26 — “when the Helper comes...That One” —  
οταν ελθη (ο παρακλητος) εκεινος

John 16:13 — “when That One, the Spirit of truth, comes” — οταν δε ελθη εκεινος

<sup>2</sup> “In these affirmations of Jesus we find not identification of himself with God, but an expression of himself as ‘God’s eschatological revealer in whom God utters himself.’ The occurrences of [ego eimi] in sayings of Jesus indicate not an identification of himself with God but a solidarity or union with him...[they] summarize his role in revelation and salvation” (George R. Beasley-Murray, *John, Word Biblical Commentary Series*, Waco: 1987, p. 90).

In Jewish literature (Mishnah, Sukkah 4.5; Jerusalem Talmud, Sukkah 4.3, 54c), the expression “I am He” gave rise to a peculiar variation: “I and He”—אני וי, ani ve’hu—which was

treated as the Name of God, and interpreted as expressing the close association, almost identification, of God with his people. This Name was used at the Feast of Sukkot (Tabernacles) by the priests when they chanted the Hosanna from Psalm 118:25. But instead of chanting “O YHVH” they sang “I and He.” (Paraphrasing Beasley-Murray, John, p. 131, who cites C.H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* [Cambridge: CUP, 1953, pp. 93-96]).

For detailed discussions of the use of ego eimi, the reader might consult: Raymond E. Brown, *The*

*Gospel According to John* (Anchor Bible, Garden City: Doubleday, 1966) Vol 1, pp. 533-538; David Daube, *The NT and Rabbinic Judaism* (NY: Arno Press, 1973, orig. 1956) pp. 325-329; Tryggve Mettinger, *In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988) pp. 43-49; E. Stauffer, “Ego,” *Theological Dictionary of the NT*, 2:343-354; H. Ringgren, “אֱלֹהִים/Hu,” *Theological Dictionary of the OT*, 3:341-352.

## THE PLURALS OF GENESIS

Two phenomena exist in the Book of Genesis that warrant attention. The first is the use of the plural Hebrew noun for “God”—אלהים, Elohim. The second is the use of plural pronouns when Elohim speaks. Interpretations of these two features often do not include the full spectrum of internal evidence from the Tanakh.

κ) The Meaning of “Elohim”

■ “The use of the plural form with singular meaning is not unique to Israel. Similar forms occur in pre-Israelite Babylonian and Canaanite texts in which a worshiper wishes to exalt a particular god above others. This form has been called the ‘plural of majesty’ or the ‘intensive plural’ because it implies that all the fullness of deity is concentrated in the one god.” (R.J. Wyatt, “Names of God”; *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, rev. ed., 1982, Vol. 2, p. 505)

• “The fact that he is called ‘Elohim’ (God, in the plural) probably constitutes a claim that he is the totality of the manifestations of the deity.” (John Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3d ed., p. 159)

• “Even a single heathen god can be designated with the plural elohim (e.g. Judges 11:24, 1 Kings 11:5, 2 Kings 1:2). In Israel the plural is understood as the plural of fullness; God is the God who really, and in the fullest sense of the word, is God.” (J. Schneider, “God, Gods, Emmanuel”; *Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, Vol 2, p. 67)

• “The word Elohim is a plural, and probably a plural of that sort called the plural of majesty or eminence more accurately the plural of fulness or greatness. ...All Shemitic languages use the plural

as a means of heightening the idea of the singular...of this kind probably is the plural Elohim—a plural not numerical, but simply enhancive of the idea of might. Thus among the Israelites the might who was God was not an ordinary might, but one peculiar, lofty, unique...a plenitude of might.” (A.B. Davidson, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, 1904, pp. 40-41, 99, 100)

■ A related example of “plural of fullness” is found when the word Adon (“lord”) is used for individual great leaders. The plural form Adonim is applied to Abraham (Gen 24:51), Pharaoh (Gen 40:1), Joseph (Gen 42:30), Saul (1 Sam 26:16), Elijah (2 Kgs 2:3,5), Davidic/Messianic King (Ps 45:12).

Though the singular form Adon is used of God (Exod 23:17; Isa 1:24; Mic 4:13, etc.), the plural Adonim is also used. Here it is in the plural construct or genitive form (adonei):

Deut 10:17 — The Lord your God is God of gods, and *Lord of lords* [adonei ha’adonim]

Psalm 136:2-3 — Praise the God of gods, Praise the *Lord of lords* [adonei ha’adonim]

■ The plural elohim is also used for anyone who is a member of “the world of Elohim” (supernatural beings) or one who represents Elohim.

Moses (Exod 4:16, 7:1)

Judges of Israel (Exod 21:6, 22:8)

Messianic King (Ps 45:7; Isa 9:5 has singular E)

Angels	(Ps 8:6, 82:1, 97:7, 138:1)
Ghost	(1 Sam 28:13)
Demons	(Deut 32:17)
Foreign deities	(Gen 35:2, Exod 18:11)

In the NT, Yeshua and the apostles treat the word “God” (Grk theos, singular) as a referent to a single Deity, the Father of Yeshua. “I ascend to...my God” (John 20:17). “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his Servant Yeshua” (Acts 3:13). The NT does not attempt to prove his divinity based on the plurality of Elohim. Yeshua can be called “God” because he resides in closest proximity to, comes from, and thus best represents him (John 1:1, 18).

### 3) Plural Pronouns

The following passages depict Elohim as speaking.

Gen 1:26	Then God said, “Let <b>us</b> make man in <b>our</b> image, after <b>our</b> likeness”
Gen 3:22	Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of <b>us</b> ”
Gen 11:7	[And the Lord] said...“Come, let <b>us</b> go down”

How are these plural pronouns to be explained? To whom is God speaking? The immediate context does not answer, but a comparison of related texts allows us to propose a viable solution. Similar plurals occur in the Book of Isaiah.

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
“Whom shall I send, and who will go for **us**?” (Isa 6:8a)

Set forth your case, says the Lord;  
bring your proofs, says the King of Jacob.  
Let them bring them, and tell **us** what is to happen.  
Tell **us** the former things, what they are,  
that we may consider them,  
that **we** may know their outcome;  
or declare to **us** the things to come.  
Tell **us** what is to come hereafter,  
that **we** may know that you gods;  
do good or do harm,  
that **we** may be dismayed and terrified. (Isa 41:21-23)

The setting of these passages is the court of God in which decisions about the fate of humans are being decided. This temple throne-room, council-chamber, or royal hall of the great King is filled with divine beings who serve the Most High. Daniel estimates their number to be 100 million (7:10), i.e. innumerable .

On the surface, such images could be misconstrued that YHVH is the head deity over a pantheon of other elohim. But biblical writers are careful to portray the Divine Council so that no one misses just who is the Elohim.

I saw the Lord seated upon his throne, with all the  
*host of heaven* [tsevah hashamayim] standing in  
attendance  
to the right and to the left of him. (1 Kings  
22:19)

Your wonders, O Lord, are praised by the heavens,  
Your faithfulness, too, in the *assembly of holy  
beings* [qahal qedoshim].  
For who in the skies can equal the Lord,  
can compare with the Lord among the *divine beings*  
[benei elim]  
a God greatly dreaded in the *council of holy beings*  
[sod qedoshim],  
held in awe by all around Him? (Psalm 89:6-8)

The host of heaven prostrate themselves before You.  
(Nehemiah 9:6)

[At the creation] the morning stars sang together.  
And all the *divine beings* [benei elohim] shouted for  
joy.

(Job 38:7)

That God confers with various supernatural entities is unmistakable, though as Head of the court he makes the decisions. This Council imagery runs throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. So the most natural interpretation of the plural pronouns in Genesis (and Isaiah) is that God speaks to his attendants. A century ago the famous Hebraist Franz Delitzsch commented on Gen 1:26:

“It is in this *communicative sense* that נַעֲשֶׂה [‘Let us make’] is intended. Just as Jahveh comprises Himself with the true Israel, Isa.41:21ff., so does He with the seraphim, Isa. 6:8, and here, as also 3:22 and 11:7 with the heavenly spirits in general.... Elohim no more concedes thereby a share in the creation itself to the [sons of God] than He does in sending (Isa. 6:8); but He does give them an interest therein as to their knowledge and will. The communicative

speaker ever remains, in relation to those whom he thus comprises with Himself, the Higher. But He imparts to them and gives them an interest in the matter at hand."

(from *A New Commentary on Genesis*, Vol. 1, Trans. S. Taylor, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888, pp. 98-99.)

In the NT, the existence of God's council is presupposed, but the beings around his throne are never identified as theoi (gods). Rather, they are usually called "angels" (angeloi); that is, mere messengers. We also read about "authorities" (Eph 3:10, Col 1:16, 2:15), "dominions" (Eph 1:21, Col 1:16), the "family in heaven" (Eph 3:15), "glories" (2 Pet 2:10), "powers" (Rom 8:38, Eph 6:12-evil), "principalities" (Rom 8:38, Eph 6:12-evil),

"rulers" (Eph 3:10, 6:12-evil, Col 1:16, 2:15) and "thrones" (Col 1:16). God and Yeshua are not alone (Rev 5).

Though he is present in the Assembly among the heavenly beings, Yeshua is never classed as an "angel" (Hebrews Chap 1). He is above the angels, principalities and powers; they bow to him. But he is also not "the One who sits on the throne" named "God" and the "Lord Almighty" (Rev 7:10, 11:15-17, 12:10). Though God's title "Lord of lords" is shared by Yeshua (Rev 17:14, 19:16), the Son never wears the Father's unique title "God of gods." א

## The Holy Ghost Conspiracy

*"They...found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting down at the feet of Yeshua, clothed and in his right mind" (Luke 8:35).*

The Scripture says there is, in opposition to the holy Spirit of God, "an unclean Spirit" (Zech 13:2), a "Spirit of unfaithfulness" (Hosea 5:4) "who is now working" (Eph 2:2) across humanity to mislead, distract, seduce. The following quotations explain the steps it has taken to enter the Sanctuary and defile it.

### 1) The Spirit of God in the Tanakh/Old Testament

◆ "The Spirit of Yahweh is not a self-existent agent operating independently. ...The [ruach] is the power of God at work among humankind. It is his creating, animating, energizing force. The [ruach] can hardly be identified as one other than God himself." (Daniel Block, Protestant Professor of Old Testament)

◆ "Although this spirit [of Yahweh in the OT] is often described in personal terms, it seems quite clear that the sacred writers never conceived or presented this spirit as a distinct person. ...[T]he Old Testament writings about God neither express nor imply any idea of or belief in a plurality or trinity of persons within the one Godhead." (Edmund J. Fortman, Catholic Professor of Dogmatic Theology).

◆ "...there is nothing [in the OT] that compels us to regard the Spirit in a Trinitarian fashion. It is enough to give us cause for pause that devout and

learned Jews, making a very close study of the Old Testament with a reverent acceptance of what it says as the very Word of God, yet do not come to a belief in a Spirit in any way separate from the Father." (Leon Morris, Protestant NT scholar)

### 2) The Spirit in the New Testament

◆ "Evidence for the divinity of the Spirit is thinner and hazier than symmetrical fifth-century trinitarian statements suggest (cf. Athanasian Creed). The Spirit is called 'God' at most once (Acts 5:3). OT passages about Yahweh are not applied to the Spirit. No ontological statements of divinity appear, as they do with regard to Christ. And the Holy Spirit in the NT is never an object of worship or prayer." (C. Plantinga, Jr., Protestant Professor of Systematic Theology)

◆ "The teaching on the Holy Spirit developed very slowly in the faith of the Church from the indications of Scripture. Pneumatology always lagged behind Christology.... In Pauline theology, the word covers a wide field and it is impossible to define exactly what Spirit (pneuma) meant to Paul.... As regards the personal nature of the Spirit, Paul does not of course use the developed concepts of the later teaching of the Church and of systematic theology." (Michael Schmaus, Catholic Professor of Dogmatic Theology)

### 3) The Spirit in the Early Church

◆ The earliest creeds of the Christian Church do not call the Holy Spirit "God" nor do they require worship of the Spirit. This changed with the Nicean Creed adopted at Constantinople in 381

AD—"The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-giver...[who] with Father and Son is worshiped together and glorified together."

◆ "...explicit recognition of the divinity of the Spirit did not take place for some time; the evolution of the Church's theology was a slow process..." (Alan Richardson, Protestant Professor of Theology)

◆ "Early Christian writers, the Fathers, and theologians of the Church under the guidance of the teaching authority of the Church, gradually made more explicit that which was contained only implicitly in the original revelation. Thus the infallible Church, in the course of time, penetrated more deeply into and became more acutely conscious of what it possessed and, gradually, solemnly defined its faith." (M.J. Donnelly, Catholic Professor of Systematic Theology)

◆ "The operations of the Spirit...were not uncommon in the apostolic Church, but these provide no clear evidence of the recognition of the personal distinction of the Holy Spirit or of the tribute of a special devotion. By the mid-4th century Catholic doctrine regarding the Holy Spirit was explained fully and clearly, but for long this resulted in no widespread popular devotion. Among the elite, however, devotion to the Holy Spirit...existed from early times." (M.F. Laughlin, Catholic Professor of Philosophy)

#### 4) The Holy Ghost Conspiracy in English Bibles

As Christianity developed, theologians began to distinguish between the Spirit of the Lord and the Holy Spirit. The first was a term that described God himself in his invisible activity or communicating breath; the other designated the Third Person of the Trinity and co-member of the Godhead. To differentiate the two, English-speaking Christians devised separate vocabulary. For the SPIRIT as God himself, they consistently used "Spirit"; for the Third Person they used "(Holy) Ghost"—though the Greek for both words is identical.

This distinction first appears in English Bibles with the publication of John Wicliffe's (Wycliffe) translation in 1380-82. Every major English Bible after his followed this custom for over two centuries: William Tyndale (1534), Myles Coverdale (1535), the Great Bible (=Thomas Cranmer's, 1539), the Geneva Bible (1557), Rheims (a Catholic counter-Reformation work, 1582), and finally the Authorized or King James Version (1611). This linguistic distinction biased English Bibles to support a uniquely Christian

understanding of the Spirit as a Third Person. In the KJV, for example, we find the term "holy Spirit" used in the OT portion (Ps 51:11; Isa 63:10,11), but not "Holy Ghost." In the NT, we find "holy Spirit" only four times (Luke 11:13; Eph 1:13, 4:30; 1 Thess 4:8), in contexts where the Spirit is believed not to be the Third member of the Godhead. "Holy Ghost" is used some 90 times.

But because this Spirit/Ghost dichotomy has no basis in the original Hebrew or Greek, it was finally abandoned by the translators of the English Revised Version (1881). They boldly broke with English Christian tradition and stopped using the venerable but uninspired expression "Holy Ghost."

Modern versions have also dispensed with "Holy Ghost," but they retain another misleading tool of bias, an invention of printing technology: capitalization. Using this artificial means to emphasize specific words, translators can still distinguish between the "spirit of God" and the "Spirit of God" or "holy spirit" and "Holy Spirit." The practice apparently began with the Protestant Geneva Bible of 1557. Today, some versions never print the word SPIRIT with a capital "S" in the OT, only in the NT. This is to convey to readers a dogma-based opinion (not in the originals) that the Jews of old knew nothing about the Spirit as Third Person of the Trinity and could thus not write about it/Him in the fullest Christian sense.

#### EXCURSUS

These quotations and survey of Bible biases raise some piercing questions we cannot escape.

On the one hand, if it is true that God's Spirit in the Old Testament signifies only himself—his invisible power, presence, mind—and not a distinct personality second to him, then *what* catalyst or agent of change entered into the Godhead to produce and separate Another Person out of God, and *when* did this occur? Or *did* it occur?

On the other hand, if the Spirit in the OT is a Third Person and the ancient Hebrews knew this to be true, why haven't the Jewish people taught this all along rather than fight so hard against it?

Yet Christian authorities now freely admit that the Church's understanding about the Spirit *evolved*, that the OT prophets and even NT apostles (such as Paul), *had no grasp of the doctrine of the Third Person*. Only under the guiding presence of that Third Person has the Church been led to this conclusion.

On the other hand, if the Spirit with which God anointed his Son was indeed a Third member of the

Godhead, the response of Jesus to that person is rather odd. He doesn't talk to or pray to or seek counsel from the Spirit. When he refers to "us," he means his Father and himself, not three. And he teaches that "eternal life" is found in knowing his Father, "the only true God," and the one whom he sent: Jesus the Messiah (John 17:3). Who's missing?

Did Jesus completely miss the whole point of God's bestowal on him? Did he not understand he was now endowed with another Presence—his successor—the future "Lord and Life-giver" of the Church? Was Jesus *not* in full grasp of Christian doctrine?

Put another way: Was Jesus called the *Christ*, the Anointed, because God placed on him the Third Person—or because the Father gave him his own *power* to heal and resist sin, his holy *disposition* or *nature* and his word-producing, instructing *breath*—all definitions of *ruach* (spirit) in the OT?

Really, the ultimate question is: Has Christian theology completely missed the point and evolved a doctrine which floats on the mists of mistaken readings of Scripture?

#### 5) Devotion to the Holy Spirit in Modern Times

◆ As we saw above, M.F. Laughlin notes that "among the elite...devotion to the Holy Spirit...existed from early times." Their practices "resulted in no widespread popular devotion." That is, it was a phenomenon primarily of the inner circles of the Catholic Church.

◆ In the late 19th century, when Protestantism was in decline after the Civil War, American Catholics looked for ways to build and spread their faith. Several leaders campaigned for increased devotion to the Sacred Heart (of Christ). But some Catholics felt the word "heart" carried connotations of warm, tender affections or "interiority and spirituality." That was not a potent force in a modern society. They needed another compelling image.

Many then realized that the Third Person of the Trinity had been the "neglected" presence in Catholic teaching. And with that came a realization that the Holy Ghost was also at the heart of "the Church's infallibility," since it was the Spirit who regularly guided the Papacy. So to increase the Church's authority—as the only repository of divine truth—several men strove to revive ancient Catholic devotion to the Third Person. So convinced of the power of this movement was John Joseph Keane, Bishop of Richmond, Virginia, that he even predicted that devotion to the Spirit "would naturally be the

dominant devotion of the future church." He wrote this in 1883.

◆ Over the last three decades, Leon Joseph Suenens, Roman Catholic primate of Belgium, has been a major promoter of charismatic renewal within the Catholic Church. Some of his translated books include *Come, Holy Spirit* (1976), *Ecumenism and Charismatic Renewal* (1978) and *A Controversial Phenomenon: Resting in the Spirit* (1989). In his work *A New Pentecost?* (1975), Suenens writes: "The power of the Spirit is at work deep within the heart of the Church, breathing into it a fresh youthfulness. Everything points to the fact that we are living at a turning point in the history of the Church...." This turning point includes the regathering of Protestants back into the bosom of the Mother Church via the Holy Spirit Renewals. These renewals, incidentally, do not hinge on a person's theological base; one can remain devoted (or be converted) to Roman Catholic ideology and still "get the Spirit."

◆ Benny Hinn is a charismatic TV evangelist who heads the Orlando (Florida) Christian Center. He is a persuasive spokesman for the idea of "a turning point" in Church history. In 1990 he published a book aimed at wooing Christians into worshipping the Holy Spirit. A Greek Orthodox Armenian who was born and raised in Jaffa, Israel, Hinn was spiritually nurtured in a Catholic school. "I considered myself to be a Catholic...Catholicism was my prayer life."

Hinn's book *Good Morning, Holy Spirit* is an aggressive attempt at overcoming Christian resistance to worshipping the Third Person. Time and again, Hinn strokes his readers: "Does He deserve our praise and adoration? Christians have a major problem when it comes to the topic of worshipping the Spirit. It's a subject they would rather not discuss. ...[But] if He is all the things we've been discussing—equal with the Father and the Son, then He is to be worshiped." "Who is the Holy Spirit? He is the most beautiful, most precious, loveliest person on earth." "You need a friend here and now, and the person of the Trinity that is dwelling on earth is the Holy Spirit. He's the one you desperately need to know." [All emphasis is mine. PS]

For Hinn, the Spirit has taken Jesus's place. "I had found the simplicity of the Christian life—a personal relationship with the Holy Ghost" [not Christ]. "He's not a servant [as Jesus was]; He's in charge. He's the leader of the body of Christ [Christ isn't]." In fact, the Spirit is the actual father of Jesus: "Jesus Christ is a child of the Spirit." With this remark, Hinn rightly anticipates his reader's reaction: "Before you say,



'Now hold it there...I thought God the Father was the Father of Jesus.' Well, you're right, but you're also wrong." [In other words, Jesus was mistaken about his "real" father.] In Hinn's theology the Spirit has also taken over the chair of the Father.

Hinn masks his Holy Ghost Replacement Theology by appealing to a traditional mask used by many Christian leaders: the mystery of the Trinity. "Don't read me wrong! I am in no way saying that Christ was in a lesser position than the Spirit. Not at all. Jesus is not lower than the Holy Ghost, nor is the Holy Ghost lower than Jesus. There is absolute equality in the Trinity." With this, Hinn silences all questions. Since we cannot grasp the mysterious workings of the Three Persons, we must keep quiet.

Hinn's purpose is to maneuver the reader/seeker into adopting his agenda. "Often someone asks, 'Benny, who should I pray to?' My answer is, 'Please don't confuse the issue. You pray to the Father.' 'Well, then,' the seeker says, 'you told us we are to talk to the Spirit.' 'I have to tell them, 'There is an enormous difference between talking and praying. I've never yet prayed to the Holy Ghost.'"

But this word game is disingenuous, for a few pages later he writes: "Your daily prayer should be: 'Blessed Spirit of God, please help me today not to grieve you.... Holy Spirit, I'm sorry for the anguish I've caused you. But please, please, stay by my side.'" "It is imperative that you say: 'Holy Spirit, I'm asking you to assist me.'" "You simply say: 'Spirit of God, I surrender to you.'"

After all his efforts to aggrandize the neglected Holy Ghost, Hinn has the temerity to tell his readers: "The Holy Ghost will never promote Himself; He'll promote Jesus." But this is not a book about Jesus. And Hinn reminds us of that with the last sentence of the book: "When the sun comes up tomorrow, He will be longing to hear you say, 'Good morning, Holy Spirit.'"

◆ In his April 1994 "Messianic Vision" newsletter, Sid Roth, a Messianic Jewish evangelist, quotes a letter from a supporter of his ministry: "Praise the Lord that you [Sid] visited the congregation in Richmond. The power of the Lord was there. That was the first 3 hour service I had ever been through, and I didn't want it to end.... My friend for the first time got hit upside the head with the Holy Spirit at your service. He went back to his home group meeting and the Spirit jumped off of him onto everyone in the group. His pastor heard of great things there and went to visit. The Holy Spirit jumped onto him. ...I know you didn't cause all this to happen, but

you were used in a powerful way that night by the Holy Spirit." Through his ministry, Roth sells tapes (recorded by his church pastor) entitled "You Can Have the Anointing." Included are details on "transferring this new anointing."

◆ The so-called "Toronto Blessing" is a spreading phenomenon in several North American and British churches. It's being called "a fresh outpouring of the Holy Ghost." It's seen as a "new move of the Spirit" in which "sparks of a New Fire are erupting across North America." It is a "river of life that will change America," an outpouring that will usher in "the Last Days Revival." The distinguishing manifestation of the Blessing is hysterical laughter, howling, crowing and screeching like animals, crawling on the floor, and getting sudden, overpowering feelings of elation, joy, and (in some) sexual ecstasy. This "new anointing" purportedly began spontaneously at the Vineyard Fellowship chapel at the Toronto airport in early 1994.

In truth, it was ignited by a South African Pentecostal named Rodney Howard-Browne who heads the Signs and Wonders Evangelistic Association and calls himself a "Holy Ghost bartender" (he serves up the Spirit and people get drunk on it). Howard-Browne had met with leaders of the Vineyard network in the US, where he gave them a special anointing of Spirit. They in turn "took it" to Toronto in order to fulfill someone's earlier prophecy that God was about to do a Great Anointing in that city in one of their churches.

This outburst of supernatural emotions is also accompanied by the "standard" charismatic gifts, including tongues speaking, words of prophecy, visions in the Spirit, miraculous healings, and being slain by the Holy Ghost. The Blessing's promoters exhort Christians not to resist this "move of the Spirit," for He will not toe the line to our criticisms of His work, even if they are based on the Bible. He will do what He wants to do. We must simply accept His sovereign work.

◆ In fact, some agents of the New Revival openly warn Christians not to interfere. Charles and Frances Hunter, long-time marketeers of supernaturalism, write (in their *Holy Laughter*, 1994): "Once you begin to walk in the supernatural you really have to be ready for anything and everything and never question the way God does it!" Sid Roth tells his Messianic readers: "The lukewarm American Christian will not be able to stand when the anointing hits." And Mona Johnian (in her *Fresh Anointing*, 1994) issues a sober warning to all "skeptics, hesitators and procrastinators": "Any person or church that

wavered could be eliminated.” (What she means by being “eliminated” is not clear, but one gets visions of a “Holy Ghost Gestapo” sweeping through the churches to haul off the Unreceptive.)

#### Conclusion

What I see in this historical Holy Ghost panorama is a repeated pattern of promoting encounters with a supernatural power that is unshackled from Scripture, history, and the purposes of the biblical God. And from this I conclude that what we are witnessing is neither new nor biblical. For that reason, it bears the closest scrutiny.

— Observations on Spiritanity —

- It is centrally rooted in the Doctrine of the Trinity, but not in the Hebrew Bible nor even in the New Testament (as Christian theologians admit).
- It has long been an element in elitist Roman Catholic circles and is being revived by some leaders as a way to reassert the “teaching authority” of the Church and as an ecumenical force to bring Protestants back home—via the lordship of the Spirit.
- It has a strong presence in the Messianic Jewish movement, many of whose leaders came to faith in charismatic or pentecostal churches.
- It promotes undiscerning, wide-open abandon to a supernatural SPIRIT that invades, takes over, possesses the body—without the human will and against rational defense.
- It is transferred like cosmic electricity by specially anointed leaders who have priest-like authority in bestowing it on others during ceremonies resembling shamanistic channeling of divine powers.
- Its giving is not dependent on the recipient’s understanding of Scripture, trust in the Messiah, or personal repentance, nor on the character of its dispensers.
- Its agents mislead people about their intentions in pushing this anointing, and they profit enormously from the Holy Ghost Industry (Acts 8:18-24). But this is not new. When Jesus

stopped his miracles and taught self-crucifixion, the crowds left.

- It is anti-biblical because it rejects analysis and critique using Scripture.
- It exalts itself, not Jesus, by creating a new religion in which the Holy Ghost is Lord of all—even though Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”
- Consequently, Spiritanity is anti-Christian (and anti-Jewish) because it completely overthrows and redefines the focus of biblical faith in Jesus the Messiah sent by God (John 3:16).

This other SPIRIT is shipwrecking many disciples of Jesus by distracting them from God’s revealed purposes in Scripture and by drawing them like lambs into a world of Christian Occultism. It is my con-viction that we are in the midst of profound spiritual upheaval leading to unprecedented deception. And it is all being accomplished in the Name of Jesus Christ, of the Triune God, and Orthodox Christianity.

It takes only a small tweak of the rudder to eventually over many miles steer an enormous ship off course. ♪

#### Select References:

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A quote sheet about the Spirit in the Bible and early Christianity is available to readers who request it from YASHAR.

## Yashar in Scripture

“O Yashar, you make *yashar* the course of the righteous” (Isaiah 26:7)

“A faithful God, never false, true and *yashar* is He” (Deuteronomy 32:4)

“Is it not written in the Book of Yashar?” (Joshua 10:13)

“In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths *yashar*” (Proverbs 3:6)

“Light arises in the darkness for the *yesharim*” (Psalm 112:4)

## He Cried

(A Meditation on the Messiah)

The real Yeshua, the Yeshua of the New Testament, was a man of deep emotion and sensitivity. He did not stoically walk through human life unmoved, unapproachable, uncaring. He saw it all: the full spectrum of who we are and what we do as an alienated race.

At the death of a friend, when a grieving sister begged him to come see the tomb, Yeshua “was deeply moved in spirit and troubled—he cried.” Not with polite wet eyes and quiet murmur; he wailed. From the deepest wells of love and compassion, he poured out what was inside his soul. It wasn’t a helpless grief, for he knew God could raise his friend from the tomb—and did so. His grief was a mix of sadness and joy. Sadness for the pain people must endure now; joy for what they could have now and in the future.

This episode about the death of his friend Lazarus (John 11) is a microcosm of his feelings about Israel, his flesh and blood.

Just days before the end of his life, in a spontaneous spectacle where people were praising God for him and begging him to become King-Messiah, Yeshua looked past them and their waving palm branches and gazed down on golden Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. And he “cried over it.”

He knew what was about to happen. An unfathomable turning point in world history was about to occur. Jerusalem’s leaders were about to miss their “time of visitation” (Luke 19:44). He knew what the future held for Jerusalem, for the Jewish people, for the future gentile Church. He did let them make their own choice. Yet he didn’t callously flick them to the winds of fate; he wept over them. Then in compassion—to the children of that generation—he has ever since offered the hands of welcome.

Do you think he had no feelings about the Camps? Did his spirit not stir within him at the sight of that little girl in the red dress?

To the extent the Church does not do the same, it denies him and lies about what’s on his heart toward Israel.

☆ ☆ ☆

The face of Yeshua crying is never pictured by the Church. I don’t know why. Perhaps it’s out of reverence or some deep spiritual trembling about publicly displaying the divine Man with human emotions which might make him appear less than God.

I don’t know.

Or perhaps Christian artists—people of sensitive spirit—knew what the weeping face of Yeshua would do to us as human beings if we saw it: how it would open fountains of years of pain and sin; how it would break down our fears and hatred of God; how it would undo us and potentially remake us all in an instant.

Perhaps they know they cannot portray this face of God in his Son Yeshua because it depicts the very moment of *re-creation* when the human spirit meets the spirit of the redeeming God. And no artist could draw that moment of reconciliation and passage from death into life.

We are left then with a verbal picture—a *davar*. Our mind’s eye has the task of painting this picture for our soul, based only on words we hear or read.

*He cries.*

What do you see?

## Final Words

Paul Sumner, editor

This is the last issue of YASHAR. The paper began in 1986 with two purposes in mind.

The first was to stimulate deeper study, independent thought, and more original writing about the Hebrew roots of New Testament faith—especially among Messianic leaders. My vision has been that the Messianic movement is similar to reclaiming Palestine: that there comes a time to stop depending on foreign resources but to rebuild the country using native techniques on native soil. In a word, that involves reclaiming the New Testament from the vaulted cathedrals of Western Christian tradition.

Though I'm a gentile believer in Yeshua, I distinguish between "Christianity" and the NT, because they're not always synonymous. There are approximately 21,000 denominations and sects within Christianity, according to the *World Christian Encyclopaedia*. All of them can't represent the biblical faith, so returning to the Source is our only hope of recapturing original vision and direction.

I also differentiate between Rabbinic Judaism and the Tanakh (Old Testament) for similar reasons. Judaism is an evolving, organic tradition with many branches now quite alien to the Root.

My critical stance may seem arrogant. But it's part of my second purpose. That's to tear down the wall between Yeshua and the people of Israel, a wall maintained by both Judaism and Christianity. To bring it down requires challenging erroneous thinking on both sides.

So I've tried to dismantle the prejudice of Jewish people against Yeshua and the NT. Most Jews are ignorant of him by choice; they aren't interested. But they reject and fear what they don't know. (How can anyone *fear* Jesus?!) I cannot expunge Christian history and the pains Israel suffered in the name of Jesus. I can only try to separate him from much of what

the Church has taught and done; not by rewriting history, but by pointing to the true contents of the NT record, so that people will realize what *should* and *could* have happened, and might yet occur.

The other part of my campaign addresses the ignorance and mistrust too many Christians have for the OT, Judaism and Jews. Even though he was Jewish, Jesus is often transformed into a gentile. But by removing his Jewishness, the Church has exposed itself to two dangers. One is that Jesus becomes a gnostic ideal—a fleshless, theological abstraction, a universal deity, with no ties to earthly human history. The other is gospelless contempt for Jewish people. Both dangers are warned about in the NT (1 John 4:1-3, Romans 11:17-22).

During YASHAR's war against the Wall, I've tried to show how the New Testament is the best antidote for hatred of Jesus and Christianity on the one hand, and Jew-hate on the other. Of course, the Word of God does not magically stop Jews, Christians, or gentiles from being evil people or doing wicked deeds. But it contains the message and power for anyone who wants to stop.

This last issue of YASHAR marks a transition for me into other areas of teaching and writing. To readers who supported the paper financially and dialogued with me, I express my thanks. You've given me an education. Among other things, you've taught me civility and joy in the presence of other truth-searchers.

To Miryam, my wife, I extend public gratitude and commendation for her support that made this nine-year project possible.

History is not over. Human beings have been granted the freedom to choose the Way of God. And most assuredly our choices will in time see the light of day. As Joshua once exhorted Israel, God surely exhorts us all: *בחרו לכם היום* *bacharu lachem hayyom*: "Choose for yourselves—today."

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