

INTRODUCTION TO PART II: JESUS AND THE CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

Jesus of Nazareth was the Israelite Messiah, the Christ. Herein lies the fundamental distinction between all Judaisms versus the Christianities & Islams of the Common Era. Just as Judaism existentially was anti-Israelite, Judaism naturally became anti-Christ. Outlined in our Part One historical survey of Old Testament authorship, organized Judaism owes its adulterous origin to the *anti-Israelite political sponsorship of cumulatively repackaged and reinterpreted rival textual traditions*. As we noted, this non-Israelite origin and anti-Israelite aim was first codified as the “*enmity*” between the Serpent and the Woman – part of a boastful allegory composed by the Kenite Yahwist, the influential chief of a family of Rechabite scribes working for the Davidic royal administration of Judah. Further witnessed, the very name “*Judah*” was itself inserted into the biblical record by this same lying pen – a contrived patriarch representing an impostor tribe. “*Jews*,” thus we discovered, were never historically Israelites. Certain as Abel was allegorically portrayed murdered by their primordial hero Yahweh-Cain, it was only natural these Yahwistic Kenite & Edomite Jews of Judaism would murder and generationally reject Jesus, for Jesus was not one of their own. Jesus was not the Jewish Messiah as fantasized and foretold within the Judaized composite Law & Prophets, or so-called Hebrew Old Testament.

This is the beginning of understanding the foundational Christian Scriptures, or so-called Greek New Testament, along with the essence of the faith of Jesus Christ. “*JESUS IS THE MESSIAH*,” profess the many and various Christians & Moslems the world over... set apart by the day an ancient enmity spilled over one Jewish Passover Eve some 2000 years ago. With our research in tow, having distinguished the peoples and kingdoms of Syro-Israel from Kenite-Judah amid the four distinct Hebrew sources of E, J, P and D... we now face four distinct Gospel narratives, venturing not only to ask: “*WHICH MESSIAH?*” ...but, furthermore to discern: “*WHICH JESUS?*”

THE SECOND TEMPLE AND THE GOSPEL OF PAUL

Unfortunately, the New Testament is largely an ideological projection of the Old Testament, which has just been demonstrated to be adulterated through scribal synopsis of rival traditions. Fortunately, the different New Testament textual traditions concerning Jesus were not anciently amalgamated to the degree with which the Old Testament sources of JEP were. Understanding the four canonical Gospels is as easy as carefully studying each as it yet separately exists: namely, the accounts called *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke* and *John*. Nevertheless, an all-pervasive early gospel – that of *Paul* – first needs to be addressed. To provide the proper historical context, we must recapitulate somewhat, resuming the biblical story back from our Part One Introduction.

As the ancestors of the people who became known as Israel had anciently sojourned in Egypt, the late residents of the cities of Judah found themselves captive in 6th century BCE Babylon. These motley captives from Judah (comprising Syro-Israelites, Kenite-Judahites and other subtle Canaanite admixtures) soon all became known simply as “*Jews*” יהודי {*Yehudi*} by those nations around them, in particular Persia, which conquered Babylon. Certain of these Jews then worked the same propagandist scheme learned from their Kenite scribal predecessors a century earlier. Just as the name “*Josiah*” was textually inserted into the book of Kings, pseudo-prophetic references to “*Cyrus*” the Great (King of Persia) were appended directly onto the book of Isaiah in latter additions now known to scholars as *Deutero-Isaiah*:¹

Thus says Yahweh... “[It is] I who says of **Cyrus**, ‘[He is] My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.’ And he **declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built,’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’**” Thus says Yahweh to **Cyrus His anointed** {Heb. *Messiah*}... “I will give you the treasures of darkness...so that you may know that it is I, Yahweh, the God of Israel, who **calls you by your name**. ... For the sake of Israel My chosen, I have also **called you by your name**; I have given you a **title of honor** though you have not known Me. I am Yahweh...though you have not known Me;”²

Thus taking the form of another postdictive prophecy, this foreign king was brazenly identified as Yahweh’s post-Babylonian “*Messiah*” (lit. “Anointed One;” Gk. “Christ”), for it was revealed this Cyrus had sent out a Yahwistic proclamation in writing, reading in part:

“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘**Yahweh...has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem**, which is in Judah. Whoever...among all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem...and rebuild the **House of Yahweh**, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem. Every survivor...support him with silver and gold, with goods and cattle, together with a freewill offering for the house of God...’”³

Hence, the *Second Temple* of Jerusalem was built (replacing the one the Babylonians razed), and with it, a Persian-sponsored *Second Temple Judaism* was established. (In the course of time, the

¹ As previously outlined, the ancient Kenite scribe’s original “J” material was extended in the books of 1-2 Kings by later generations of royal administrative scribes, primarily during the reigns of kings Hezekiah, Manasseh and Josiah of Judah. Noteworthy is the Messianic hopeful Josiah, whose very name and deeds were textually inserted ex post facto into 1 Kings 13 as a pseudo-prophetic justification for his murderous acts against the northern cities of Israel.

Similarly appended onto the prophetic book of Isaiah (whose original contents in chapters 1-39 were written primarily during the reign of King Hezekiah), are additions composed by latter generations of Jews after the Babylonian Captivity of Judah. Once again within these post-Babylonian chapters 40-66, pseudo-prophetic references are made, now invoking the name of “Cyrus” (Heb. *Koresh*) the king of Persia who conquered Babylon, and identifying him as Yahweh’s Messiah.

While would-be Messianic figures arose and fell over the generations, this Kenite-Jewish method and pattern of scribes inserting layers of political and religious propaganda into their pre-existing scripture continued unabashed.

² Taken from Isaiah 44:24,28; 45:1-5

³ Taken from Ezra 1:2-4

Greeks would conquer the Persians; next, the Romans would conquer the Greeks.) In the centuries leading up to the Common Era (known as the “Inter-Testamental Period”), many Edomites (Gk. “Idumeans”) comingled once again with the returning and originally remaining residents of Judah (Gk. “Judaea”), ultimately adopting their reorganized Yahwist-Jewish religion. These Edomites too became known as “Jews” – an ever-muddled religio-political reference to the increasing non-Israelite population of Judaea & Idumaea.⁴ Meanwhile, a shrinking minority of racially conscious Syro-Israelites centered around an Aaronite Priestly dynasty was ultimately replaced with the cultural and political rise of the common Canaanite Jewish racial type. Respectively, these ever-adulterated and Judaized factions were represented by the (quasi-P) Sadducee and (quasi-J) Pharisee sects.⁵

By the 1st century BCE, major temple expansions were being made by Herod the Great, a murderous Edomite-Jew appointed King of Judaea (i.e. “*King of the Jews*”) by the Romans who

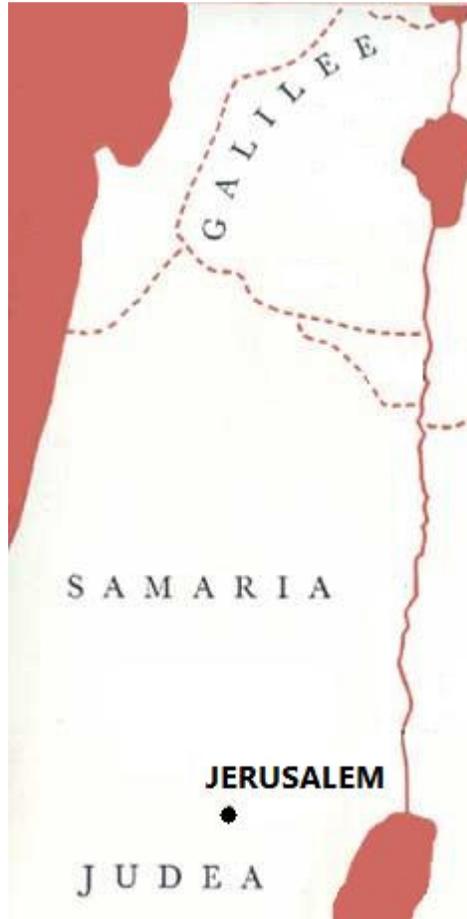
⁴ Just as the Judahite king Josiah would march on the cities of Israel, deathly enforcing his newly forged Deuteronomistic brand of Temple-centric Judaism during the vacuum between Assyrian and Babylonian power in Syro-Canaan... the transition from Greek to Roman control of Palestine (Galilee, Samaria, Judaea and Idumea) would afford John Hyrcanus – a king-priest of the Aaronite Hasmonian dynasty – to march south into Idumea, imposing Judaism and absorbing Edom into an increasingly adulterated Jewry of the expanding province of Judaea.

Ultimately, these Edomite-Jews would gain control via political alliance with Rome, culminating with a certain Idumean named Herod being appointed “King of Judaea” by the Roman Senate. Reminiscent of the slaughter of King Saul’s family after David’s rise to power, Herod would likewise ensure the deaths of numerous Hasmonians. Thus was extinguished the last remnant of Israelitish power in Judaea, as both the Priesthood and the judiciary council (Sanhedrin) were murderously infiltrated with Canaanites like never before.

Primary sources for the Hasmonian Dynasty include the 1st century BCE apocryphal books of *1-2 Maccabees*, and the first book of Josephus’s *The Wars of the Jews*. For details on the rise and fall of the Hasmonian Dynasty, consult Ambrey, Sydney, *Identity and Destiny: Gnosticism and the New World Order*, (Church of Jesus Christ Gnostic, 2015), pp. 81-86.

⁵ The Sadducees (Heb. צדוקים Tzeduqim) derived their name from Zadok the son of Aaron, the first High Priest to serve in the First Temple, according to the Aaronite Priestly source. The name denotes “just” or “to be righteous” and is indicative of the Sadducee sect’s representation of the Israelite ruling and upper classes in Judaea, namely the Aaronite Priestly hierarchy reestablished by Ezra and, particularly, the Hasmonian King-Priests and those loyal thereto. Contrariwise, the Pharisees (Aram. פְּרִישָׁיָא Perishayya’) derived their name from a root meaning “separatist” or “to be separated,” and this sect grew to be the more populist in representation of the majority Canaanite residents of greater Judaea. Being fewer in number and regarded as aristocratic, while the Sadducees ultimately proved more likely to tolerate Hellenization and to make Greek alliances in support of the Israelitish Hasmonian Dynasty... the Pharisees were more likely to count the common Canaanitish – particularly Idumean – Jewish populations among their ranks, in continued efforts to usurp ancient Northern tradition. Far removed from the original Elohist tradition, and reversing many of the more Elohist compromises of the Priestly pen, an extra-biblical, hyper-Yahwistic tradition was exclusively developed by the Pharisees and passed down orally as the *Mishna* (or “*Oral*”) *Torah*. While both the Sadducee and Pharisee sects formally organized in the 2nd century BCE, the former effectually went extinct with the destruction of Herod’s Temple in 70 CE, whereas these latter generationally cumulative oral traditions survived and were ultimately codified into the *Babylonian* (and, to a lesser extent, the *Palestinian* or *Jerusalem*) *Talmud*, a foundational text remaining as significant to modern *Pharisaic* or *Rabbinic Judaism*, as the Greek New Testament is to Judeo-Christianity.

then ruled over the whole Near Eastern region.⁶ These Edomite-Jews proved so influential in both Jewish and Christian circles that the Temple itself became popularly known as “Herod’s Temple,” and the majority of books in the New Testament would be written by or lately attributed to one particular Herodian Pharisee, namely *Saul* (i.e. “Saint Paul the Apostle”).⁷



Jesus of Nazareth lived in the Northern Israelite region of Galilee throughout the early part of the 1st century CE and died in Jerusalem around 30 CE. Thereafter, his original disciples were

⁶ Titus Flavius Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews*, Book 1, Chapter 14.

⁷ Of the New Testament’s 27 books, 14 are genuinely or traditionally attributed to Saul of Tarsus (alias, Paul): *Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews*. All these epistles, with the exception of the anonymous book of Hebrews, explicitly claim “Paul” as author.

To reference Paul’s Herodian (ergo Idumean/Edomite) background, the New Testament researcher might consider the canonically first and most celebrated of the genuine Pauline epistles, which in its closing statements reads: “**Greet Herodion, my kinsman.**” {Romans 16:11a}

For details on this subject, consult Eisenman, Robert, *Paul as Herodian*, (Journal of Higher Criticism 3/1 Spring, 1996). Also for further analysis by the same author, *James the Brother of Jesus: The Key to Unlocking the Secrets of Early Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (Penguin Books, 1997); *The New Testament Code: The Cup of the Lord, the Damascus Covenant, and the Blood of Christ*, (London: Watkins Publishing, 2006).

deathly persecuted by the Jews in and outside Galilee and Judaea, particularly by Paul, who admitted in the mid-1st century:

You have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my race, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.⁸

After which time Paul reversed his tactics, deciding instead to promulgate a version of Jesus among the nations abroad (i.e. “*the Gentiles*”) which he styled: “*my Gospel*.”⁹ Rather than addressing the *life and teaching of Jesus*, the focus of Paul’s Gospel was on the salvific significance of the *death and resurrection of Christ*... while relaxing the traditionally strict Jewish observance of the Law (i.e. the Judeo-Israelite Torah) and other Judaic customs he had adopted from the Pharisees.¹⁰ (This latter teaching – designed to increase conversion rates among non-Jews – is often labeled *antinomian* theology, and its antithesis is known as *legalistic* or *legalism*.) Pointedly, despite converting to “*God’s Son*,” Paul continued to bitterly oppose those original disciples whom he had persecuted, inciting his new Gentile audience to be wary of the teaching of these so-called “*Jews*” which he deemed: “*another gospel*” and “*another Jesus*.”¹¹ For example concerning the Apostles James, Peter and John, Paul wrote to the Galatians:

⁸ Galatians 1:13,14

⁹ Paul writes in Romans 2:16, “*According to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.*” Similarly in Romans 16:25-26a, “*Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and ... has been made known to all the nations.*” Likewise it is reiterated in the Deutero-Pauline 2 Timothy 2:8, “*Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel.*”

Of the many passages where Paul elaborates on his gospel message, particularly striking is his stated motivation for delivering it as such to the Gentiles (lit. “*nations*” whom he contrasts with “*my flesh*”):

*I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as **I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen** {lit. “*my flesh*”} **and save some of them.** {Romans 11:13-14}*

¹⁰ In Philippians 3:5b-6 Paul described himself: “*as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.*”

¹¹ Whereas Paul first overtly persecuted those who believed in Jesus, he then set out as a self-styled “*apostle of Gentiles*” in continued opposition to those who had claimed Jesus before him, distinguishing certain of their teaching as a “*different*,” “*distorted*” or “*contrary*” gospel:

*I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you in the grace of Christ, for a **different gospel**: which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should **preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you**, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is **preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received**, he is to be accursed! {Galatians 1:6-9}*

But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a **gospel contrary to what we have preached to you**, he is to be accursed! ... **I went up to Jerusalem and submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles**, but what they were makes no difference to me, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. But on the contrary, seeing that **I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, just as Peter [had been] of the circumcision**, James and {Peter} and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me the right hand of fellowship, so that we [might go] to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. But **when {Peter} came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face**, because he stood condemned. For prior to the coming of **certain men from James**, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he [began] to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.¹²

Note the public accusations and suspicions raised against Peter and James, branded as anti-Gentile and legalistic Jews to be accursed and condemned, with reputations of no import! Unlike these original disciples, Paul never knew Jesus. This explains why Paul didn't have much to write about Jesus's *life and teaching*. Curiously in fact, almost nothing in the lengthy epistles ascribed to Paul – genuine or otherwise – is revealed about an historical Jesus, except that he:

Here, Paul's emphatic condemnation of those preaching another gospel is especially significant considering he then draws this evangelical distinction in the next chapter: "*I had been entrusted with **the gospel of the uncircumcision, just as Peter [had been] of the circumcision**.*" Next, Paul goes on to inform his Galatian audience concerning Peter's suggestively anti-Gentile behavior: "*I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.*" Furthermore, Paul traces this "Jewish" and legalistic sentiment as having ultimately come "*from James.*" (Peter and James are both listed among the primary disciples – or the 12 "*apostles*" of Jesus's ministry – in all four canonical Gospels.)

Likewise, Paul warns the Corinthians about "*false apostles*" bearing "*another*" Jesus or a "*different*" spirit or gospel:

*I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity to Christ. For if the one who comes preaches **another Jesus** whom we have not preached, or you receive a **different spirit** which you have not received, or a **different gospel** which you have not accepted, you bear [this] beautifully. For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles {lit. "super-apostles"}. ... For **such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ... Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so.** {2 Corinthians 11:2-4,13-14,22-23}*

Note how Paul expressly identifies those whom he is opposed to as *Israelite servants of Christ* appearing as *apostles of Christ*. Such readings from the genuine Pauline epistles reveal Paul (an admitted persecutor of Jesus's disciples) did not want his new Gentile audience receiving any other message concerning Jesus – regardless if that preaching came from "*an angel from heaven...*" or "*super-apostles...*" or the original disciples whom he had persecuted!

Note also the extraordinary theological and historical confusion generated by Paul's contentions: Paul, a persecutor of the church, a Pharisee and a Jew, offers the Gentiles his late and alternative gospel as the only true gospel... all while characterizing those persecuted Galilean disciples who came before him as the Jews (e.g. Galatians 2:14) with a Judaizing and legalistic false gospel. In short, historically speaking, Paul was the Jew preaching "another gospel" and "another Jesus" – the so-called "*seed of David*," according to his gospel – theologically projecting his own Jewishness onto the now distorted memory and discipleship of Jesus, thus usurping and Judaizing early Christianity.

¹² Taken from Galatians 1:8; 2:1-12

1. was “*born of a seed of David according to the flesh*,”¹³
2. **instituted the Eucharist** on the night he was betrayed “...*in remembrance of Me*,”¹⁴
3. “*died for our sins according to the Scriptures*,”
 was “*buried*” and “*raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*,”
 and “*appeared to Cephas*” (Peter), then to “*the Twelve*” (Apostles),
 then to a group of “*more than five hundred brethren*,”
 then to “*Jacob*” (James), then to “*all the apostles*,”
 and lastly – per Paul – to Paul himself (“*me also*”).¹⁵

The epistles genuinely authored by Paul are the oldest documents (i.e. the first to be written) in the New Testament. The four canonical narratives offering any substantial biography of Jesus (i.e. the Gospels) were written decades later, beginning with one traditionally ascribed to “Saint Mark the Evangelist” around the destruction of Herod’s Temple in 70 CE.¹⁶ This **Gospel of**

¹³ Romans 1:3 (Compare 2 Timothy 2:8; see notes below on post-Pauline and Deutero-Pauline late tradition.) Just as Isaiah appeared to be first in the Old Testament to champion the usurpatious political claim: “Judah is Israel”... if genuine, Paul introduces the earliest New Testament stratum of the syncretic theological claim: “Jesus is the son of David,” predating the four Gospels, which all varyingly preserve earlier traditions to the contrary. See Chapter Six.

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. This passage from an otherwise rarely disputed genuine Pauline epistle, is nevertheless sometimes listed among proposed post-Pauline or even Marcionite interpolations (additions to the genuine Pauline epistles made by another hand in the late-1st and 2nd centuries CE). Suspiciously unique among all the Pauline literature, here Paul quotes an historical Jesus, prefaced with: “*For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you.*” {1 Corinthians 11:23a} This quotation depicting Jesus instituting the so-called Communion or Lord’s/Last Supper is literarily parallel to the triple tradition of the synoptic gospels, particularly Luke 22:19,20.

For research on other suspected post-Pauline interpolations (often based on internal rather than direct textual evidence), consult Walker, William, Jr., *Interpolations in the Pauline Letters (Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, 213)*, (Sheffield Academic Press, 2002); Dewey, Arthur J., et al., *The Authentic Letters of Paul: A New Reading of Paul’s Rhetoric and Meaning*, (Polebridge Press, 2010), p. xvi.

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. Also sometimes suspected a post-Pauline interpolation, the verbiage prefacing this list of death, resurrection and post-resurrection appearances: “*For I delivered to you among the first importance what I also received...*” {1 Corinthians 15:3} corresponds to the rabbinical terms for receiving and handing down of traditions. Thus, this passage may present itself as a pre-Pauline creed, despite Paul’s claims that his Gospel “*is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but [I received it] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.*” {Galatians 1:11b-12} The emphasis on Peter and lack of reference to Mary Magdalene and the other women is particularly parallel to the Lukan resurrection account.

The scant and suspect list of Pauline references to an *historical Jesus* appearing in 1 Corinthians is outlined and studied in White, L. Michael, *Scripting Jesus: The Gospels in Rewrite*, (HarperOne, 2010), pp. 108-114.

¹⁶ Amidst a Jewish rebellion against the Roman Empire in the province of Judaea, the city of Jerusalem was ultimately besieged and conquered by the Roman army in 70 CE. With the sacking of the city, Herod’s Temple was also destroyed signifying a pivotal moment in Jewish history. Without Yahweh’s house of exclusive worship and sacrifice, Second Temple Judaism collapsed, conveniently making room for the rise of both Judeo-Pauline Christianity in Rome and reorganized Pharisaic (i.e. Talmudic) Judaism in Babylon.

In the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus is depicted prophesying the destruction of the Temple buildings:

As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, behold how great stones and how great buildings!” And Jesus said to him, “Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another which will not be torn down.” {Mark 13:1-2; see also Matthew 24:1-2; Luke 21:5-6}

Mark presents Jesus as an Israelite from Galilee in the northernmost part of Israel, calling his disciples and beginning his ministry there also. Contrary to the meager Pauline portrait of an historical Jesus, Mark offers no genealogical record (or nativity) claiming Davidic ancestry. More pointedly, Jesus is depicted as questioning how the scribes say that Christ (i.e. *the Messiah*) is the son of David.¹⁷ Likewise, addressing the Pharisees (of whom Paul identified), Jesus says, “*Why does this generation seek for a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.*”¹⁸ Markan details on Jesus’s teachings are limited, and depictions of events in his life are unelaborated and theologically simplistic. Finally, this earliest and shortest Gospel originally offered no post-resurrection account of Jesus appearing to anyone (let alone, Paul); however, the text was lately appended to include one.¹⁹ In the following chapter, these and other peculiarities found in Mark will be shown to be reminiscent of the ancient **Elohist (“E”)** narrative tradition of Northern Israel.

JESUS BECOMES JEWISH AND THE RISE OF MARCION

At some point after the destruction of Herod’s Temple, still within the 1st century CE, gossellers of a decidedly more Judaic vision of Jesus began circulating a narrative of their own, this time ideologically paralleling the **Yahwist (“J”)** material, which has become known as the **Gospel of Matthew**. In this Judaized version, Jesus is the ultimate Davidic Messiah, a descendant of Josiah and all the other Kings of Judah. Sometimes styled the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the proto-Matthean text would be edited to eventually include a genealogy, entitled: *The Book of the Generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of Abraham, the Son of David*.²⁰ A nativity yet mysteriously identifies Jesus as the “*Emmanuel*” of Isaiah, force-fitting him into the House of David on an entirely novel pseudo-prophetic level. Furthermore, matriarchally emphasized within his pedigree are various Kenite and other Canaanite and Moabite admixtures, thoroughly portraying Jesus as ethnically Jewish. Finally, the Galilean Jesus (from the North) is now depicted as being born in the city of Bethlehem – in *Judea*.

While it is estimated Mark was written soon after the 70 CE destruction of the Temple (c. 70-80), both Matthew and Luke – dependent on Mark – were finished much later, with a proto-Matthean and proto-Lukan text likely both written in the late-1st century, revised and expanded into the early-to-mid-2nd century (c. 80-150). John, although not strictly dependent on Mark, was likely also written after Mark, revised and expanded into the 2nd century. By way of contrast, scholarly consensus dates the authorship of Paul’s genuine epistles throughout the 50’s CE.

¹⁷ Mark 12:35-37 (Compare Matthew 22:41-46; Luke 20:41-44.)

¹⁸ Mark 8:12 (Contrast Matthew 12:39; Luke 11:29.)

¹⁹ The passage of Mark 16:9-20 (which includes an account of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus) appears to be appended onto the original narrative by a latter hand (i.e. the “*Markan Appendix*”), based largely on Luke. Aside from stylistic peculiarities and other internal evidence, some of the oldest New Testament manuscripts do not contain these last 12 verses, and their absence has been reported by ancient authors. See Chapter Five.

²⁰ Matthew 1:1 (Suspected late insertions of Jesus’s genealogy and nativity are detailed in Chapter Six & Seven.)

Heavily dependent upon Mark (and either Q or proto-Luke) as source texts, Matthew elaborates, rearranges and rewrites numerous accounts of Jesus’s ministry. Now Jesus answers the scribes and Pharisees: “*An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it **but the sign of Jonah the prophet.***”²¹ Such Matthean expansions of the Markan narrative are common, including layers of more advanced theology addressing subjects such as: Canaanites, the patriarch Cain, the scribes’ teaching concerning Moses, and righteousness. For example, Matthew collects many of Jesus’s sayings and presents them in the lengthy “*Sermon on the Mount,*” portraying Jesus as issuing commandments reminiscent of Moses from Mount Sinai. More pointedly, herein Jesus legalistically upholds the composite tradition of the Mosaic Torah:

“**Do not think that I came to abolish the Law** or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ...unless **your righteousness surpasses [that] of the scribes and Pharisees,** you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”²²

These and other sayings of Jesus found in Matthew appear to *directly rival and respond to the Pharisee Paul’s preexisting antinomian doctrine,* ever-growing in popularity among the less Judaized believers – Paul’s largely non-Jewish “Gentile” candidates for conversion abroad. By way of contrast, consider such statements made by Paul to the Romans and Galatians:

“**Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes. ... **A man is not justified by the works of the Law** but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be **justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law;** ... If righteousness [comes] through the Law, then Christ died needlessly. ... The **Law has become our tutor [to lead us] to Christ,** so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, **we are no longer under a tutor.**”²³

Regarding not being under the tutelage of the Mosaic Law, such statements are diametrically opposed in Matthew, where Jesus is depicted as saying: “*The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; therefore all that they tell you, do and observe.*”²⁴ Likewise concerning Paul’s repeated emphasis on faith in Christ as the only means to justify, consider the opposing and responsive sentiment in both Matthew and the New Testament epistle traditionally ascribed to James:

PAUL (none just, and not by works)	MATTHEW & JAMES (many just, by works)
<i>[B]oth Jews and Greeks are all under sin;</i>	<i>[Matthean Jesus:] For truly I say to you that</i>

²¹ Matthew 12:39 (Compare Luke 11:29; contrast Mark 8:12.)

²² Matthew 5:17-18,20

²³ From Romans 10:4; Galatians 2:16,21; 3:24,25

²⁴ Matthew 23:2-3a

<i>as it is written, “There is none righteous, not even one...”</i>	<i>many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see...</i>
<i>We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. ... For if Abraham was justified by works...</i>	[James:] <i>Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? A man is justified by works and not by faith alone.²⁵</i>

Curiously, Paul’s teaching on justification in Romans and Galatians (using Abraham’s example) is specifically and directly rebutted with an opposite interpretation in James!²⁶ Also important to note here is that this Epistle of James bears some striking literary similarities to none other than the Gospel of Matthew (particularly, the Sermon on the Mount).²⁷ With careful study, an historical picture begins to come into focus in which it can be discerned that the community responsible for the Gospel of Matthew’s authorship resembles some of the very same believers whom Paul had originally persecuted and subsequently engaged in bitter public theological disputation to win over his Gentile audience. Numerous examples (from Jesus’s birth narrative to his resurrection account) will demonstrate that in Matthew exists an overtly Judaic version of Jesus characterized with an overtly pro-Torah ministry... by way of doctrinal literary response to Paul’s gospel of a risen Christ superseding traditionally legalistic and temple-centric Judaism.

²⁵ Romans 3:9b-10a (Compare Psalm 14:3 in MT & LXX.) || Matthew 13:17a
Romans 3:28; 4:2a || James 2:21,24

Note: the lengthy quotation that begins with, “*As it is written,*” in Romans 3:10-18 represents a series of Old Testament verses strung together grossly out of context from *Psalm 14:1-3* (compare *53:1-3*); *5:9*; *140:3*; *10:7*; *Isaiah 59:7,8*; *Psalm 36:1*. (For example: Psalm 14 is contrasting the godless with “*the righteous generation.*”) While it is common throughout the Pauline Epistles and much of the New Testament for Old Testament scripture to be miscontextualized and even misquoted from the Greek Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint version of Psalm 14 now features a lengthy interpolation at verse 3, coinciding with Paul’s quotation in Romans 3. Contrasting the Massoretic Text (MT) and Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) with how the Septuagint (LXX) verses were quoted and paraphrased in the New Testament yields much valuable historical information with respect to the transmission, textual and ideological corruption of the biblical text, and careful study is needed. Indeed, theological premises have been based on and defended with not only miscontextualization and misquotation... but also Greek mistranslation of the Hebrew Bible (e.g. *Isaiah 7:14* [Matthew 1:23]; *Isaiah 42:4* [Matthew 12:21]; *Genesis 15:6* [Romans 4:3,9; Galatians 3:6; James 2:23]; *Psalm 2:9* [Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15]).

²⁶ Just as Matthew directly responds to Pauline antinomianism, the late author of James 2 (in direct literary response to Paul’s argument concerning Abraham’s justification in Romans 4:9 and Galatians 3:6) reuses the same poorly translated verse (presumably from the Septuagint version of Genesis 15:6) to build the opposite argument. Despite obvious contention, these opposing letters would be collected into the official canon of scripture. Even the Protestant reformer Martin Luther – a great admirer of Paul – could not help but see the contradiction here, siding with Paul over James. Nevertheless, particularly among Protestants, the whole of the Bible is venerated as the inerrant Word of God. Navigating past the misquotation and doctrinal disputation, an even greater problem remains: neither Paul’s nor Matthew/James’s convictions concerning “the Law” are palatable, when faced with the reality that these traditions were at least partly contrived, compiled from rival sources, and expanded by generations of priests, as outlined in Chapter Four. For the Torah could neither be a convicting “*schoolmaster,*” nor effectually justify... nor could Jesus “*fulfill*” that which history reveals and Jeremiah previously exposed as “*the lying pen of the scribes.*”

²⁷ For research on this subject consult Brown, Raymond E., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, (Doubleday, 1997), pp. 734-736.

By the mid-2nd century, in the aftermath of the collapse of Second Temple Judaism, Paul's less burdensome version of Christ and Christian teaching rose to popular prominence across growing Messianic communities in the ancient world (notably excepting certain Jews of Asia Minor). With the "Jewish" gospels and epistles such as Matthew and James becoming little more than marginal, additional epistles would emerge pseudepigraphally attributed to Paul, advancing a theology less entrenched in Jewish traditions (albeit still subtly Judaic), and addressing contemporary concerns for the new churches being organized abroad. These second-generation canonical documents are often called the *Pseudo-* or *Deutero-Pauline Epistles*.²⁸ Alluding to the rivalry and controversy between these early Christian sects, one such late epistle depicts "Paul" remarking, "*You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me.*"²⁹

Nevertheless, it was in Asia where a particular devotee of Paul rose to unprecedented influence among the Christian churches, a bishop named *Marcion of Sinope*. Unwilling to compromise, Marcion maintained that Paul was the only legitimate interpreter and apostle of Christ's gospel. This hyper-Pauline teaching came with a notably anti-Judaic & anti-Yahwistic flavor – an ironic development, considering Paul was a life-long Jew who promoted the Jewish god.³⁰ Eventually

²⁸ In researching the person, ministerial influences and motivations of the historical Paul, care should be taken to prioritize those epistles which are accepted for various reasons to have actually been written by Paul. The generally "undisputed" or "genuine" Pauline Epistles are as follows (listed chronologically, based on supposed 1st century CE dates of authorship): *1 Thessalonians* (c. 50-52), *Galatians* (c. 53), *1 Corinthians* (c. 53-54), *2 Corinthians* (c. 55-56), *Philippians* (c. 55 or 57-59, 62), *Philemon* (c. 55 or 61-62), *Romans* (c. 56-57). Further care should be taken concerning likely late interpolations and other stylistic peculiarities in the genuine epistles. For example, *2 Corinthians* and *Philippians* exhibit structural signs of being composites of multiple letter fragments. Also, at least two letters to the Corinthians appear partly or altogether lost (i.e. *1 Corinthians* 5:9 & *2 Corinthians* 2:3,4; 7:8,12).

Those epistles often suspected to be late and pseudepigraphal (i.e. the "deutero-" or "pseudo-" Pauline epistles) are as follows (listed canonically): *Ephesians*, *Colossians*, *2 Thessalonians*, *1-2 Timothy*, *Titus*. While cases for the authenticity of *Colossians* and *2 Thessalonians* are occasionally made, the last three listed (known as Pastoral Epistles) are most often regarded as having been written by a latter hand. Despite all opening with the emphatic claim of being from "Paul," various stylistic and historical attributes render these six epistles as suspect, likely written in the late 1st and into the 2nd century. (The anonymous and non-Pauline Book of Hebrews was nevertheless traditionally ascribed to Paul.)

For example, the verbiage throughout *Colossians* 1-2 reads peculiarly "Gnostic," as several related concepts are opposed, using terminology that would be recognized by those familiar with what scholars now call "Gnosticism." As Marcionism and other pro- or non-Pauline Gnostic philosophies concerning Christ continued to spread, particularly into the 2nd century CE, the late author's concern comes into focus: "*As you have received Christ Jesus ... as you were instructed ... see to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy.*" {*Colossians* 2:6-8} (See note below on Marcion, who – along with his critics – is often a suggested originator of pseudo-Pauline epistles and post-Pauline interpolations.) Note likewise the explicitly anti-Gnostic conclusion of the first Pastoral Epistle:

*Guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly [and] empty chatter [and] **the opposing arguments of what is falsely called "knowledge"** {γνώσεως "Gnoseos"} — which some have professed and thus gone astray concerning the faith.* {*1 Timothy* 6:20-21}

²⁹ *2 Timothy* 1:15a

³⁰ Marcion's theological path of departure from Yahwistic Judaism is ironic. Essentially, Marcion taught that Jesus Christ was neither a Jew (nor an Israelite), and the God who sent him – "the Father" – was neither Yahweh (nor

Marcion would be excommunicated by bishops more sympathetic to Judaic traditions; however, by the end of his life in the 2nd century CE, Marcionite churches had spread across the known world. Furthermore, this first widely recognized “heretic” had collected and proposed the first canon of Christian Scripture (comprised exclusively of Pauline epistles and a single gospel narrative suspiciously reading like an earlier version of Luke).³¹ Marcion’s churches rivaled in power what would become the orthodox or mainstream version of Christianity, namely the Universal (Gr. “Catholic”) Church. It would require a third evangelist to turn the tide.

LUKE-ACTS AND THE JUDEO-PAULINE COMPROMISE

Controversy in Asia apparently began to brew early, during Paul’s active ministry in the 1st century CE. The opening remarks of Paul’s second canonical epistle to the Corinthians read:

Elohim). Therefore, while Marcion’s non-Judaized Jesus was neither of the Tribe of Judah nor the House of David, this is not due to any favoritism of the Joseph or otherwise North Israelite tradition. Rather, Marcion taught that the Son of God descended into the world with no earthly parentage at all – father or mother – and was thusly not the “Son of David.” Similarly, Marcion’s rejection of Yahweh was not due to any appeal to the older Elohist or Baal-Seth traditions. Rather, the Father was viewed as hitherto unrevealed and altogether superior to *the creator-god and law-giver-god of the Old Testament*. Further, the Father sent his Son to liberate the world from under the *presumed authority of Judaism*, based on this *adulterated Judeo-Israelite concept of God* – as outlined throughout Part One.

So, the biblical and traditional confluences of Judeo-Israel (Israel & Judah) and Yahweh-Elohim (Elohim & Yahweh) were rejected wholesale, as no differentiation was made in an attempt to salvage anything from the Old Testament. Thus, in his efforts to safeguard the memory of Jesus from any perceived Jewishness, Marcion blanketly discarded the various traditions of the Hebrew Bible as wholly and undesirably “Jewish.” (That Paul was a Pharisaic Jew, who copiously offered quotes and allusions from the Hebrew Bible to advance his Gospel and concept of Christ as the Son of God, is the even greater irony. Marcion represented but one of a great many flavors of Dualistic Gnostic “heresies,” many rejecting the creator-god with variously Cainite or Sethian interpretations of the Old Testament.)

³¹ By around 140 CE, Marcion produced a collection of Pauline Epistles, complete with an early version of the Gospel of Luke. This first Christian Bible in history would highly influence the direction of the Christian Church, inspiring a responsive, proto-orthodox canon of scripture (ultimately, the modern New Testament). The contents of Marcion’s canon are as follows: the “**Evangelikon**” (consisting of the *Gospel of the Lord*) and the “**Apostolikon**” (*Galatians, 1-2 Corinthians, Romans, 1-2 Thessalonians, Laodiceans, Colossians, Philipians, Philemon*).

The Epistle to the Laodiceans is either lost or (more likely) modern canonical Ephesians under a different name. (The words “*in Ephesus*” are absent from Ephesians 1:1 in early manuscripts, as it may have been a cyclical letter.) If this is the case, the only Pauline Epistles absent from Marcion’s canon are notably the late pseudo-Pauline Pastorals (1-2 Timothy, Titus). The contents of the Gospel of the Lord (now popularly, the *Gospel of Marcion*) can be largely reconstructed from a few ancient proto-orthodox sources hostile to Marcionism, including: Tertullian’s *Adversus Marcionem* (“Against Marcion”), Book IV; Ehiphianus’s *Panarion (Adversus Haereses)*, Section 42. Generally, the Gospel of the Lord coincides with Luke, but it is shorter, most notably missing most of Luke 1:1-4:15 (including the Nativity and Genealogy of Jesus), with scattered verses and lengthy passages attested to being absent throughout the remainder. While Marcion’s proto-orthodox opponents accused him of “mutilating” Luke (and to a lesser degree, the Pauline Epistles), Marcion held that it was the other way around. To this day, most scholars believe Marcion’s gospel was a redaction of Luke; nevertheless, it appears to be based on a proto-Lukan text which was expanded by the author of Acts. See Chapter Seven. For reference to the reconstructed text of Marcion’s Gospel, consult Roth, Dieter T., *The Text of Marcion’s Gospel*, (Brill, 2015); see also BeDuhn, Jason D., *The First New Testament: Marcion’s Scriptural Canon*, (Polebridge Press, 2013).

For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of **our affliction which came in Asia**, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; but we ourselves, we had the **sentence of death** within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from **so great a death**...³²

Comparing his troubles to a *sentence of death*, Paul leaves unsaid what befell him and his ministerial companions in Asia, seemingly already known to the Corinthians. Nevertheless, the book of Revelation (an apocalyptic text written by and for the *Jews of Asia*) sheds light on this very subject:

John to the **seven churches that are in Asia**: ... to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea. ... “To the angel of the **church in Ephesus** write: ... ‘I {Jesus} know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and **you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them [to be] false.**’”³³

Important to note: this section in Revelation goes on to depict the risen Jesus likewise addressing the churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia concerning, “*the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan*” and “*the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie.*” It was common for nationalist Jews of the time to regard Idumaean and especially Herodian Jews (like Paul) as being *false Jews*.³⁴ These concerns (coupled with the similar address to Ephesus regarding *false apostles*), give a powerful testament of anti-Pauline Judaic sentiment in Asia – a Messianic community traditionally identifying as the true Jews. Furthermore, among these “*seven churches of Asia*” listed in the Revelation, *Ephesus* is the only one which can claim New Testament record of Paul visiting! Indeed, there is a story of Paul being “*put to the test*” and “*found/sentenced*” by the Jews of Ephesus to be false.

So come to bear the stories of “Saint Luke the Evangelist,” traditionally believed to be Paul’s traveling companion. Like Matthew, the **Gospel of Luke** is a revision of the Markan narrative. Written in the second century CE during the rise of Marcionite churches in Asia and abroad, this narrative uniquely features an extended sequel known as the **Acts of the Apostles**. While the Gospel of Luke follows the general format of Mark and Matthew (in detailing the ministry and death of Jesus Christ), its complementary book of Acts continues the story *after the post-Resurrection appearances*, introducing pseudo-historical accounts of the “Early Church.”

³² 2 Corinthians 1:8-10a

³³ From Revelation 1:4,11; 2:1,2

³⁴ From Revelation 2:9 and 3:9. (According to the Revelation, of the seven churches of Asia, only Smyrna & Philadelphia found favor with Jesus Christ – the two who rejected such false Jews.) Note the full text of the latter: *Behold, I will cause [those] of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and [make them] know that I have loved you.* This being, in part, a veiled reference to those recognized as Edomites/Idumeans, alluding to Malachi 1:2b-3a: “***I have loved Jacob; but I have hated Esau.***” Alternatively, note Paul’s curious treatment of this subject in Romans 9:6-12.

Further reliant on the recently published works of Jewish historian Josephus to historically frame these revisionist versions of events previously described in Mark, Paul and either Q or a proto-Lukan text circulated by the Marcionites... the author of Luke-Acts paints caricatures of apostles like James and Peter into the backdrop while featuring the ministry of Paul. Here is the Lukan account of Paul's controversy with the Jews of Asia:

Paul...came to Ephesus, ... And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly **for three months, reasoning and persuading** [them] about the kingdom of God. But when **some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way** before the multitude, **he withdrew from them** and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.³⁵

As it happens, Acts contains a recurring theme of Paul reasoning with the Jews concerning his gospel, and subsequently (due to some disagreement on the Jews' part) Paul teaching the Gentiles (i.e. *Greeks*) in their stead.³⁶ The Pauline controversy between the teaching of "*Jews and Greeks*" (or, the so-called gospels of the "*circumcision and uncircumcision*"), is given an entirely new twist by Luke. As noted earlier, Paul wrote the Galatians in the 1st century CE concerning a trip he made to Jerusalem, in which he berated and condemned Peter and James the brother of Jesus – both Galilean disciples of Jesus – as anti-Gentilic and hyper-Judaic Jews. Now to summarize the 2nd century Lukan revision:

According to Acts, there was a disagreement and debate among the Judeans and believers in Jesus as to whether a man had to be circumcised "*according to the custom of Moses*" in order to be "*saved*." Paul and his ministerial companion were then summoned to go "*to Jerusalem to the Apostles and elders*" concerning the matter. Along the way, Paul's ministry made many Gentile converts in Phoenicia and Samaria, and (once in Jerusalem) some of the Pharisees who believed in Jesus insisted these converts be circumcised and directed to "*observe the Law of Moses*."³⁷

Peter...said to them, "Brethren, you know...that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. ...[God] made **no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith**. ...why do you...[place] upon the neck of the disciples **a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?** But **we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus**, in the same way as they also are."

James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me. ...**it is my judgment that we do not trouble the Gentiles**, but that we write to them that they abstain

⁽¹⁾ **from things contaminated by idols and**

⁽²⁾ **from fornication and**

³⁵ From Acts 19:1,8-10

³⁶ For example, see Acts 13:44-52; see Chapter Seven for a discussion on this subject, relating to Paul's ministry and the canonical gospels.

³⁷ See Acts 15:1-5

^{3} from what is strangled and
^{4} from blood.”³⁸

By way of contrast, while using Paul’s epistle to the Galatians as a source text, now Luke presents Peter as showing no partiality between Jews and Greeks,³⁹ placing words in Peter’s mouth paying homage to none other than the uniquely Pauline doctrine of the *gospel of grace* and *justification through faith in Jesus*. Likewise, Paul’s complaint of burdensome legalism originating from James is responded to: now abated by James’s compromise and judgment, issuing four obscure laws relating to the pre-Mosaic tradition outlined in the **Priestly (“P”)** source.⁴⁰ A new portrait emerges (supplementary to Paul’s bitter disputation) affirming the original disciples of Jesus as true “*pillars*” of the Early Church, particularly more friendly toward the Gentiles and Pauline Christianity – indeed, more like “*our beloved Paul!*”⁴¹ Similarly,

³⁸ From Acts 15:7-11,13,19-20

³⁹ Compare Acts 10:9-35; see Chapter Seven for a discussion on racial and dietary laws, relating to the P material.

⁴⁰ Compare Acts 15:19-29; 21:25; see Chapter Seven for a discussion on the Noahide laws, relating to the P material.

⁴¹ Further example, immediately after stating reputation “*makes no difference*” to him {Galatians 2:6}, Paul boasts:

*“I had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, just as **Peter [had been] of the circumcision** (for He who effectually worked for **Peter in his apostleship of the circumcision** effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), ... James and {Peter} and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, so that **we [might go] to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.**”* {Galatians 2:7-9}

Nevertheless, with foreknowledge of Paul’s epistle to the Galatians, Luke supplements by placing these alternative words into Peter’s mouth:

*“Brethren, you know that **from days of old** God made a choice among you, that **by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.**”* {Acts 15:7}

Similarly, while Paul complained about the legalism of “*false brethren secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out the liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage*” {Galatians 2:4} and, while at Antioch, about Peter’s anti-Gentile sentiments stemming from “*the coming of certain men from James*” {Galatians 2:12}, Luke again supplements by depicting James officially issuing written rules and sending men to the Gentiles:

*It is my judgment that **we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,** but that we write to them that they abstain from the pollutions of idols and from fornication and from what is strangled and from blood.* {Acts 15:19-20}

“The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.”

*“Since **we have heard that some from us to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words,** unsettling your souls, it seemed good to us, having met together, **to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,** men who have given over their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore we have sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to **lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials:** that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication; from which keeping yourselves free, you will do well. Farewell.”* {Acts 15:23b-29}

regarding the very customs and traditions he rejected and wrote against, Paul is now portrayed as particularly more Jewish.

For example, despite boasting his Greek companion was not “*compelled to be circumcised*” during their trip to Jerusalem, Paul is depicted in Acts circumcising the Greek Timothy “*because of the Jews who were in those parts.*”⁴² Likewise, while Paul wrote he was thankful to have only baptized a few, “*for Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel,*” in Acts he is depicted re-baptizing “*into the name of the Lord Jesus ... about twelve men*” at Ephesus who were formerly disciples of John the Baptist and whose baptism Paul deemed lacking in the Holy Spirit.⁴³ Again, when “*James and all the Elders*” in Jerusalem meet with Paul, they convince their “*brother*” Paul to take a seven-day ritual vow of purity in the Temple, in order to demonstrate to the Jews that, “*you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.*”⁴⁴ Subsequently, none other than the villainous “*Jews from Asia*” incite all of Jerusalem in a violent mob against Paul, dragging him out of the Temple. To their composure, Paul addresses them in “*the Hebrew dialect,*” assuring: “*I am a Jew, brought up in this city, educated according to the strictness of the ancestral law...*”⁴⁵ Still later: “*Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees...!*”⁴⁶

Thus, with textual familiarity and comparison, a wider frame comes into focus, demonstrating Luke’s motivations in pacifying both the growing hyper-Paulinism of the Marcionite churches and the stubborn anti-Paulinism of the Messianic synagogues. Narrowing the division between these antinomian and more overtly Judaic major forms of Christianity which had emerged in the second century CE, the pseudo-history of Acts features a Paul who is more traditionally Jewish and sketches the original disciples as more theologically Pauline.⁴⁷ Drawing numerous parallels with the compromises and peculiarities of the Priestly (“P”) source, the Lukan Gospel narrative likewise makes many related editorial changes and additions to its Markan source text... from its own unique nativity & genealogy of Jesus, to an alternative version of the post-resurrection appearances. Indeed, rather than matrilineally of Cain (J), Luke’s genealogy traces Jesus to Seth

Curiously, Paul’s original version of this encounter with James, Peter and John concludes simply, “[*They*] only [*asked*] us to remember the poor...” {Galatians 2:10a}

⁴² From Acts 16:3 (Contrast Galatians 2:3.)

⁴³ From Acts 19:1-7 (Contrast 1 Corinthians 1:14-17.)

⁴⁴ From Acts 21:17-26

⁴⁵ From Acts 22:3 (and context)

⁴⁶ From Acts 23:6

⁴⁷ For a detailed study on this subject consult Tyson, Joseph B., *Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle*, (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006).

the son of Adam (P), and – respective of the Pauline post-resurrection account – makes no mention of Mary Magdalene or the other women’s testimony.

MARY MAGDALENE: THE DISCIPLE JESUS LOVED

This sets the stage for the last of the canonical gospels, known as the *Fourth Gospel* or more commonly, the **Gospel of John**. Originally written with a heavy and overt emphasis on Mary Magdalene’s central roles at the Last Supper, Crucifixion and Resurrection, this gospel would later be edited to replace or supplement Mary’s name and presence with the epithet and personage of “*the Disciple Jesus Loved*.”⁴⁸ This anonymous attribution became traditionally identified as “Saint John the Evangelist” (writing from Ephesus), and those pertaining to this gospel’s authorship have become known among scholars as the *Johannine Community*. Yet with Mary Magdalene as the heroine of this community and her testimony as a central basis within its unique gospel narrative, persecution from competing Christian sects was certain. Consider such growing sentiments found in the Pauline literature, expanded into the 2nd century:

GENUINE WITH [[POST-PAULINE INTERPOLATION]] (1 Corinthians)	DEUTERO-PAULINE (1 Timothy)
<p>Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman. ... {A man} is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman, but woman from man; for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake. ... [[The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in church.]]⁴⁹</p>	<p>A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first formed, [and] then Eve. And [it was] not Adam [who] was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.⁵⁰</p>

With the prevailing Jewish and rising orthodox Christian views of women as second-class in the community, unpermitted to speak or teach, it is not surprising that the testimony of the women who witnessed the resurrected Jesus is completely absent in the Pauline and Lukan accounts. Likewise, facing such growing opposition towards women of authority, the Fourth Gospel’s

⁴⁸ For a detailed study on this subject consult Jusino, Ramon K., *Mary Magdalene: Author of the Fourth Gospel?* (Internet article, 1998).

⁴⁹ From 1 Corinthians 11:3,7-9; 14:34,35. (Note the chapter 11 allusion to the J account of creation.)

The chapter 14 passage is an oft-noted prime example of a post-Pauline interpolation, perhaps even being inspired by the similarly Deutero-Pauline 1 Timothy 2:11-14. While many suspected early textual insertions into otherwise genuine Pauline Epistles are necessarily based on internal evidence (e.g. earlier in 11:5 Paul gives rules for when women are “*praying or prophesying*”), multiple external textual evidences also witnesses against this passage. Consult Payne, Philip B., *Fuldensis, Sigla for Variants in Vaticanus, and 1 Cor 14:34-5 (New Testament Studies, Volume 41, Issue 2)*, (Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 240-250.

⁵⁰ 1 Timothy 2:11-14 (Note again the allusion to the J account of creation.)

accounts of Mary Magdalene were necessarily redacted via the rather ambiguous insertion of an anonymous (male) *disciple Jesus loved*.⁵¹ Other uniquely heterodox teachings and advanced theologies which set “John’s Gospel” apart from the synoptic narratives were similarly expressed using subtle rhetorical methods. A primary example of this is how Jesus’s nativity is addressed, subtly raising the delicate subjects of whether (or not) he was the son of Joseph, the son of David, and born in Bethlehem of Judea.

Likewise, this understated means of communicating unorthodox views amidst the rising universalized churches manifests in a most unusual resurrection account. Here, in contrast with Peter, it is Mary Magdalene who first witnesses the Risen Jesus – and the Disciple Jesus Loved who “believes.” Up until this point in Christian tradition, Peter’s prominence had been upheld in varying ways by Paul, Mark, Matthew and Luke-Acts.⁵² Nevertheless, two epistles lately written and attributed to Peter (i.e. “deutero-Petrine Epistles”) created yet another pseudo-historical layer of compromise – culminating in a depiction of Peter giving a full scriptural endorsement of Paul:

...**our beloved brother Paul**, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all [his] letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are **some things hard to understand**, which **the untaught and unstable distort**, as [they do] **also the rest of the Scriptures**, to their own destruction.⁵³

With both Matthew and Luke drawing their unique Gospel narratives from Mark, and with Luke having established the growing compromise between Paul (represented by the earliest New Testament writings) and a more overtly Judaized sect (represented primarily by Matthew)... the Gospel called John literarily and ideologically stood alone. Still, the Johannine text would suffer various revisions: from the addition of a prologue beginning chapter 1, to an appended ending of

⁵¹ While the identity of the *Disciple Jesus Loved* is carefully veiled in the Fourth Gospel, the “Gnostics” in their writings exhibited primary knowledge that this person (who had become known only as an anonymous male “*Disciple*”) was Mary Magdalene. Within the *Nag Hammadi Texts*, are found revealing references such as:

*Simon Peter said to him, “Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of life.” Jesus said, “I myself shall lead her in order to **make her male**, so that she too may become a living spirit **resembling you males**.”* {Gospel of Thomas, Logion 114}

*Peter said to Mary, “Sister we know that **the Savior loved you more than the rest of woman**.” ... Levi answered and said ... “**He loved her more than us**.”* {from the Gospel of Mary}

*There were three who always walked with the Lord: Mary, his mother, and her sister, and **Magdalene, the one who was called his companion**. ... And the companion of the [...] Mary Magdalene. [**...loved**] **her more than [all] the disciples**, [and used to] kiss her [often] on her [mouth]. The rest of [the disciples...]. They said to him “**Why do you love her more than all of us?**”* {from the Gospel of Philip, fragmentary}

⁵² Examples where Peter is distinguished in various authoritative ways include: Galatians 2:7,8; 1 Corinthians 15:5; Mark 16:7; Matthew 16:18,19; Acts 15:7. A discussion on this subject, also relating to the Fourth Gospel’s contrasting treatment of Peter and Mary Magdalene, is detailed in Chapter Five and Eight.

⁵³ 2 Peter 3:15b,16

its last chapter. Indeed, the final verses of the Fourth Gospel introduced more subtly unfavorable references to Peter, once again contrasting him with the Disciple Jesus Loved. Echoing the **Deuteronomist (“D”)**, this Gospel of “John” also bears the marks of its authorship having been falsely attributed – to this anonymously male Disciple! Just as Deuteronomy famously closes with a puzzling account of the death of Moses (its purported author), the final chapter of John concludes with puzzling controversy surrounding the death of “*that Disciple:*”

Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that **that disciple would not die**; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but [only], “If I want him to remain until I come, what [is that] to you?”⁵⁴

Facing hostile teachings of a rising orthodoxy (forged by revisionist narratives of “beloved brotherhood” among the early sects emerging out of the first century CE), and in the wake of three other distinct accounts, the custodians of the Fourth Gospel made a bold concluding claim:

This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.⁵⁵

In the shadow of so much rival tradition and pseudo-history, the Gospel of John uniquely claims to be an *eye-witness testimony* of the life, crucifixion and resurrection appearances of Jesus. Indeed, *is this testimony true? and will its subtle messages be enough to overcome the tangled historical and theological contrivances, echoing the contradictory literary traditions of ages passed?*

EMPEROR CONSTANTINE AND THE RISE OF JUDEO-CHRISTIANITY

With the emergence of orthodoxy in the 2nd through 4th centuries CE, it was Peter who would be traditionally remembered as the head of “the Church” and first *Bishop of Rome* (i.e. the first “Pope”). What became the organized Universal-Catholic Church (the *proto-orthodoxy*) began to claim an unbroken line of male authorities (priests), tracing themselves back to the original apostles (most notably, to Peter). This retroactive claim on authority became known as *apostolic succession*, and helped garner the growing perception of a unified Church from what were formerly distinct communities and rival sects. As for the *textual succession* of the separate gospel narratives reflecting the varying Messianic & Christological views of these people, much knowledge can be gleaned by way of comparison:

The original **Gospel of Mark**, traditionally considered to be Peter’s memoir,⁵⁶ is the oldest and first of the four canonical gospels, appearing around the collapse of Second Temple Judaism.

⁵⁴ John 21:23

⁵⁵ John 21:24

Written after Paul's genuine epistles (which were saturated with Christological theology while lacking in many historical references to Jesus), the Markan narrative would present a *Jesus of history without advanced theological details*. The sayings and teachings of Jesus are presented with simplicity or shrouded in the form of *parables*, while details like a divine/miraculous Nativity, Messianic Genealogy and post-Resurrection appearances are completely absent. The particular brevity of this narrative, coupled with its more original and basic historical concerns, call to remembrance the similar attributes and literary influence of the ancient North Israelite ("E") material, scattered throughout Genesis, Exodus and Numbers.

Alternatively, the **Gospel of Matthew**, due to its heavier emphasis on Jewish concerns, traditionally became thought to be penned in "Hebrew" and therefore called the *Gospel of the Hebrews*.⁵⁷ In actuality a Greek *expansive revision of the Gospel of Mark*, this narrative would ultimately include a Judaic Genealogy and fantastic Nativity, each focusing on Jesus's role as prophetic fulfilment of the *Judahite Messiah* (i.e. *David's successor*). With antinomian Christologies growing in popularity due to the early Christian persecutor Paul's ministerial influences and epistles circulating among the Gentiles, this gospel responds by further presenting Jesus as *teacher of righteousness* and the ideal fulfillment of the *Torah* (i.e. *Moses's successor*). Often mimicking the rhetorical concerns and linguistic style of another source scattered in Genesis, Exodus and Numbers (...continuing into Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings), the Jesus of Matthew is the Messianic projection of the ancient Kenite-Judahite ("J") scribal tradition in the Old Testament.

Contrariwise, the **Gospel of Luke** with its supplementary **Acts of the Apostles**, while friendly to Paul's ministry and teachings pertaining to the Gentiles, found it necessary to respond to the increasingly hyper-Pauline, anti-Jewish sentiment of the Marcionite churches in the 2nd century CE. Reminiscent of the Priestly ("P") author's attempt at reconciling and historically framing the combined "J" and "E" material scattered throughout Genesis, Exodus and Numbers (along with its supplementary book of Leviticus), the Lukan narrative's underlying motivation also appears to be one of building compromise. Likely familiar with both a proto-Lukan Gospel used by Marcion and more Judaic traditions lately associated with the original disciples of Jesus, Luke composed an *expanded, alternative revision of Mark*, complete with its own unique Nativity, Genealogy and Resurrection accounts... more positive to Paulinism... and more negatively

⁵⁶ Early traditional examples include: **Papias**: "Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately all that he remembered." **Irenaeus**: "Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, handed on his preaching to us in written form." **Justin Martyr**: "It is written in {Peter's} memoirs ... Boanerges, which means 'sons of thunder'..." (Note: the last reference only appears in Mark.)

⁵⁷ Early traditional examples include: **Papias**: "Matthew composed the words in the Hebrew dialect, and each translated as he was able." **Irenaeus**: "Matthew composed his gospel among the Hebrews in their own language." **Jerome**: who claimed to receive a Hebrew variation of the Gospel of Matthew, which certain Nazarenes and Ebionites (overtly Judaic Christians) claimed was the authentic Matthew (i.e. the *Gospel of the Hebrews*).

responsive to Marcionism. Further, using early versions of Paul's epistles, the book of Acts would promote a *pseudo-historical framework of the Early Church*, carefully mitigating anti-Judaic antinomian rhetoric... presenting Paul (championed and beloved by the Marcionites) as more culturally Jewish... and the Apostles (persecuted and opposed by Paul) as more theologically Pauline.

Finally, set apart from increased universalization and the rise of a dominant orthodox version of Judeo-Christian tradition, the fourth **Gospel of John** was finished. It contained a heavy emphasis on the testimony of Mary Magdalene (the heroine of its community), while contrasting her with the emerging figurehead of Peter. Subsequently, Mary's name would be replaced or coincided with an anonymous male epithet – lately identified as the author of the Gospel. Likewise, many other eloquently minimalist references were employed, *hinting at uniquely controversial teachings* borne out of the so-called Johannine Community – ideas which would become widely regarded as unorthodox and heretical. This pseudo-authorship, along with its independent literary composition, bears a striking semblance to Deuteronomy (“D”).

By the 4th century CE, with these and other documents circulating the known world and Christian factions in bitter dispute with one another concerning the person of Jesus, the nature of Christian theology, and which texts were authoritatively “Scripture,” Roman Emperor Constantine the Great convened the historic *Nicean Council*. With the goal of political and religious unification, bishops and other church leaders were summoned to Nicea to work out their differences. This great compromise resulted in an official *canon of scripture*, comprising these four gospels (and Acts), Marcion's collection of Paul's epistles (including the deutero-Pauline letters), a few token non-Pauline “General Epistles,”⁵⁸ and the apocalyptically cryptic book of Revelation.

In a stupendous historical parallel, just as King Josiah enforced the newly contrived laws of Deuteronomy, compelling the priests from all the various high places of Judah to perform their craft at the Temple in the capital Jerusalem... Emperor Constantine had compelled the Christian priests of the known world to gather and settle on an official set of church laws (i.e. “dogma”). Both sovereigns had the motivation of unifying their domain, and both politically authorized the prevailing religion of their day which had been forged from varying and parallel literary traditions. Though King Josiah marched north into Israel, desecrating its graves and religious sites and slaying the priests who would oppose him, neither he nor any of his Davidic successors would impose the new Judeo-Israelite order upon the People of the North. It was Emperor Constantine who fulfilled the Messianic fantasies of Judah in a way David never had, Josiah never could, and Cyrus the Great wouldn't have imagined. Hence, just as ancient Israel was

⁵⁸ So-called for not appearing to address any specific Christian community, the seven “General” (i.e. “Catholic”) Epistles are as follows: *James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude*. These token canonical representations of Peter, James and other original disciples are sometimes ironically branded the “Jewish Epistles,” in contrast with those of Paul.

adulterated into *Judeo-Israel*, primitive Christianity grew into the bastard world religion of *Judeo-Christianity*.

Judeo-Christianity, the *compromise built on a synopsis of different documented traditions*, would soon be enforced across the Roman Empire. Just as the Israelite priests were slain in Josiah's day, those who would oppose this orthodox version of Christianity were branded heretical and persecuted into extinction. The distorted memory of Jesus, buried under layers of religious syncretism, force-fit into the common Messianic aspirations of Judah, had finally become thrust upon the People of the North who were scattered across the known world. In the wake of Second Temple Judaism, the seat of religious authority strategically shifted from Jerusalem to the political epicenter of the world – Rome. Christendom was born as the Messianic hopefulness of the Jews was realized under a new name – Jesus the Christ, the son of David.

What follows is a brief literary survey of the four distinct biographies of Jesus found in the New Testament Bible, with special analysis given to the deserving peculiarities. Should the *historical Jesus* be found anywhere within these documents, they must be studied as they historically and theologically developed. The unique character of each gospel will be revealed not only as a product of its immediate historical context, but also as a Christological projection – an uncanny divine reflection – of its respective Old Testament textual tradition and ideological inspiration:

ELOHIST → MARK

JAHWIST → MATTHEW

PRIESTLY → LUKE-ACTS

DEUTERONOMIST → JOHN

Jesus, as it turns out, really is the key with which to unlock the hidden Mysteries of our biblical heritage: “*the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*” For between this four-fold controversy of both Old and New Testaments lies a spiritual quintessence – a *Knowingness* (Gr. *Gnosis*). Behind the contradiction and past the religious nonsense, the allegory, myth, pseudo-history and propaganda, the emendation, redaction and omission, and the usurpation of millennia... “*nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light.*”⁵⁹

⁵⁹ From John 14:6; Mark 4:22