Shalom Rabbi,

My name is Avram Yehoshua and I was born in Brooklyn, NY on May 24th, 1951, with brit milah on the 8th day of my life. I'm from the Tribe of Levi through Gershon. I was bar Mitzva Orthodox at 13 years old and I read the haftarah for Bechukotai. It wasn't until I was 20 years old though, that I seriously began looking for God and Truth, and as the song says, "in all the wrong places." As many Jews did in the 70s I got into Transcendental Meditation and Zen Buddhism. I thought I had found "reality" until I met our Messiah in Oct 1975. All our good deeds cannot transform us to be able to live in the midst of His fiery presence for eternity. Because of that and Who I've found I'd like to share Five Simple Points with you concerning the Messiah of the Hebrew Bible:

Point One…The <u>New</u> Covenant

In Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Hebrew 31:30-34) God speaks of giving us Jews a New Covenant. This is extremely shocking for many of us to hear because immediately Jesus comes to mind. The shock effect is what God wants because it's meant to wake us up from our deep slumber.[1] Far too long we have accepted the old and worn-out cliché, "We Jews don't believe in Jesus." I understand why (because of all the persecution and murder of us at the hands of Christians), but God declares in Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Heb. 31:30-34) that He wants to give *us* a New Covenant:

> "'Behold! The days are coming,' says Adonai, 'when I will make a *New Covenant* with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah, *not according to the Covenant* that I made with their Fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My Covenant which they broke, even though I was a Husband to them,' says Adonai. 'But this is the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days,' says Adonai. 'I will put My Torah in their minds and write it upon their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, *'Know Adonai!,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,'* says Adonai. *'For I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more.'"*

If the covenant that God gave us at Sinai was enough and all we ever needed, why does God speak of a New Covenant?[2] If all we ever needed was the Priesthood of Aaron, why does God speak of Messiah having a different Priesthood? David writes in Psalm 110:1, 4:

> "Adonai said to *my* Lord, 'Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool'"…"Adonai has sworn and will not change His mind, 'You are a Priest[3] *forever* according to the order of Melchizedek.'" (Psalm 110:1, 4)

Who would King David speak of as *his* Lord other than Adonai? The Heavens were opened and David saw Adonai speaking to David's *Lord*—the Messiah. In verse four David hears Adonai say that the Messiah would be a High Priest like Melchizedek, because without "mother or father" (i.e. no written genealogy for Melchizedek), Melchizedek *symbolically* lives *forever*, unlike Aaron & Sons. A New Covenant

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1 "For Adonai has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep. He has shut the eyes of your Prophets and covered the heads of your Seers" (Is. 29:10).

2 Compare Jer. 32:40 where God speaks of giving Israel "an everlasting covenant." Also Isaiah 55:3; 61:8; Jer. 31:31-34; 32:37-44; 50:5; Ezk. 16:60; 37:26.

3 The term Priest here means High Priest. Aaron is (only) called a Priest many times, but we know he was the first High Priest of Israel (compare Ex. 28:3; 29:30; 31:10; 38:21; 40:30, etc).

and a New (High) Priest who actually lives forever?

Interestingly enough, Father Abraham gave a tithe of his spoils to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20), and as such, Aaron, who was so to speak 'in the loins' of Father Abraham at that time, gave a tithe to a greater Priesthood—one which symbolized the eternal Priesthood of Messiah.

"In Yeshua" (the Hebrew name for Jesus), our eternal High Priest, we enter into God's New Covenant and we experientially come to *know* God. If Yeshua is not our Messiah, where is the Messiah that the angel Gabriel spoke of to Daniel?

Point Two…<u>When</u> Would Messiah Come?

In Daniel 9:24-26 the angel Gabriel says to Daniel that the Temple being *rebuilt* and the Messiah coming to bring us eternal righteousness and to deal with (forgive) our sins (as God spoke of in Jer. 31:34 above). Messiah would be "cut off" (die), and another prince (the Roman general Titus) would destroy the Second Temple. When Daniel heard this from Gabriel, both Jerusalem and the First Temple lay in ruins, having been destroyed by the Babylonian king in 586 BCE, and so there was no Temple and no Jerusalem, and no one knew if there'd ever be another one, but Gabriel was right—there would be a Second Temple and Jerusalem would be re-inhabited, and both would be destroyed by "another prince."

Our Jewish Sages who lived *before* the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, realized in Nazir 32b that the Messiah *had to come during* the Second Temple period. They based this on Daniel 9:26. This is special, not only because *it's the only cite in the Tanach* that gives us the time *when* Messiah would come, but it also speaks of Jerusalem and the (Second) Temple being rebuilt, when at that time they didn't exist.

Daniel was in captivity, either still in Babylon or most likely in the capital city of King Cyrus (Dan. 6:28) who had defeated the Babylonians. Gabriel comes to Daniel and says:

> Daniel 9:24—"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy City, to finish the transgression, *to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity*, to *bring in everlasting righteousness*, to seal up vision and prophecy and to *anoint the Most Holy Place."*
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> Daniel 9:25—"So you are to know and discern, that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, *until Messiah the Prince*, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress."
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> Daniel 9:26—"Then after the sixty-two weeks *the Messiah will be cut off* and have nothing, and the people of *the prince who is to come* will destroy the *city and the Temple*. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war. Desolations are determined."

There are many interpretations of the 'weeks' in Daniel 9:24-26 that some Rabbis present to us 'to prove' that Gabriel's words don't point to the time that Jesus was in Israel 2,000 years ago, but the essence of what Gabriel said is very plain—*the Messiah had to come after the Second Temple was built and before it was destroyed*. The Second Temple was burnt and demolished by the Romans in 70 CE, more than 1,950 years ago. According to Gabriel the Messiah had to come *before* that. Laying aside the calculations on the time of the Messiah's appearance, as determined by the 'weeks' of Daniel 9:25, for anyone can finagle numbers, it's plain to see that,

1. Jerusalem and the Temple would be rebuilt (vv. 25-26), and that,

2. After the Temple was rebuilt the Messiah had to come and die for our sins (v. 24, 26) and,

3. After that, Jerusalem and the Second Temple would be destroyed (v. 26).

It's a simple prophecy to understand. The Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem and King Solomon's Temple happened in 586 BCE. The Temple of Ezra and Nehemiah would not begin to be built until 516 BCE, 70 years after Solomon's Temple had been destroyed (cf. Dan. 9:2; Jer. 25:11; 29:10). The Second Temple would be destroyed by the Romans in 70 CE. Gabriel said that within that time frame of more than 500 years[4] that the Second Temple would stand, Messiah would come and give His life for us that our sins would be forgiven (Dan. 9:26; cf. Isaiah 53:5).

Messiah Yeshua came and died in 30 CE, 40 years *before* the Temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed by Rome. If Yeshua isn't our Messiah, *where is the Messiah that Gabriel spoke of?* All Daniel's other words came true (the Temple and the city being rebuilt and destroyed). Are we to think that he missed it on this one?

Daniel 9:24-26 is why our ancient Jewish sages believed that Messiah had to come before the destruction of the Second Temple, but this biblical understanding and traditional teaching would change years after the destruction of the Second Temple.[5] After it many Rabbis were perplexed, not realizing the Messiah had come in Yeshua of Nazareth. Some Rabbis even have gone so far as to say that Daniel was wrong—can you imagine the *hutzpah* needed for that? Is it possible the Rabbis were wrong? The reason they even thought that was because Daniel 9:26 points to the Messiah coming, but they didn't accept Yeshua as our Messiah, especially with Christians not keeping Torah and vilifying us as "Christ killers!," and them saying that God had rejected us and had "chosen" them instead. Gentile *hutzpah and wickedness!*

Another rabbi, in trying to cover up the plain meaning of when Messiah would come, issued a bombastic curse upon any Jew who calculated the *time* when Messiah would come (according to Daniel 9:24-26), and said that it was past and that Messiah would never come. Rabbi Shmu'el ben Nachmani said, "in the name (of) Rabbi Yonatan: *"Let the bones of those be broken* who calculate the end because they say, 'The end has come, and the Messiah has not come, therefore He will not come at all.'"[6]

One great Sage, simply known as "Rav" (Rabbi Yehuda haNasi), whose greatest achievement was to compile the Mishnah[7] into written form about 220 CE, confirms the prophecy in Daniel to mean that Messiah had to come before the Second Temple was destroyed. He said, "all limits of time as regards the Messiah are past."[8] He realized that Messiah should have come *before* the Second Temple was destroyed, and he lived 150 years after that catastrophe. He didn't see what God had done in sending Yeshua to die for us in 30 CE to inaugurate the New Covenant. We are the smartest people in the world, but sometimes we can't see the Divine Forest for the Tree of Tradition that blocks it.

We Jews don't believe in Jesus because of three things:

1. In the name of Jesus Christ more of us Jews have been persecuted and murdered, officially by the

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4 Interestingly enough, the year of the First Temple's destruction in 586 BCE correlates to the number of years that the Second Temple stood (516 BCE to 70 CE equals 586 years), which was longer than the First Temple stood (1060-586 BCE equals 474 years).

5 For more on Daniel 9:24-26 see Has Messiah Come?

6 Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), p. 1,009.

Sanford R. Howard, *L'Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom* (Thorsby, AL: Sabbath House, Inc., 1999), p. 209. *Sanhedrin* 97b, vol. 2, p. 659, Soncino Press. Editorial footnote #6 says, 'i.e. Messiah's advent.'

7 Judah haNasi. The Mishnah consists of 63 tractates codifying Jewish law and is the basis of Talmud. The juridical traditions of the Mishnah go back to about 450 BCE. Yehuda haNasi means Judah the Prince. He was of King David's lineage, and hence the title of *prince*.

8 Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 1,009. Risto Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings* (Jerusalem: Keren Ahvah Meshihit, 1992), p. 101. *Sanhedrin* 98b, 97a; "These times were over long ago."

Church, than in all other names combined.

A. Christians hating Jews is not of Jesus, Peter, Paul, or even John, but of Satan (cf. 1st Chron. 21:1; Job 1:7-9ff., Zechariah 3:1-2). It reveals how perverse and evil the Church has been, for it was official Church doctrine that vilified, persecuted and murdered us Jews for centuries…in the Name of Jesus. Obviously, those Christians were not following Jesus who said to *love your enemy* (see the Gospel of Matthew 5:43-44) and so even if they considered us their enemies, which they did, they should have loved us and not murdered us. We must not blame Jesus for this. Those Christians, and there were many of them over the centuries, were vile Christians and they will be in Hell after Judgment Day. No one mocks the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and gets away with it; Jew or Christian.

2. The "Jesus of Christianity" is anti-Mosaic Law, but we Jews know that our Messiah will not destroy or invalidate Mosaic Law, but teach it at a deeper level.

A. Yeshua declared that He did *not* come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). Christianity interprets "fulfill" to mean that Jesus did away with Torah at the Cross ("He fulfilled it so Christians don't have to keep Shabat or Pesach, and they can eat pig and shrimp, etc.), but the primary meaning of *fulfill* in this context is that Yeshua, *just by His standing there that day* was *fulfilling* many prophecies from Tanach about *the prophesied Messiah* (e.g. Isaiah 53:1f). He was saying, "Here I am! Tanach speaks of a coming Messiah and here I am *fulfilling* those words that God has given to you!" He would go on to fulfill many other prophecies about the Messiah, like His dying for us so our sins could be forgiven (Isaiah 53; Psalm 22; Zech. 12:10; 13:1), and coming during the time of the Second Temple (Dan. 9:24-26), etc. His use of 'fulfill' has nothing to do with negating Torah. Christians are dead wrong about what "fulfill" means in Matthew 5:17 (and v. 18), to their own shame and humiliation, and they are so proud (thinking the Law has been done away with), and so ignorant (that the New Testament/Covenant does not do away with Torah) that they are hard and intransigent on this issue, to their own sinful ways (e.g. not keeping Shabat and Pesach for it is sin in God's eyes). Jesus Himself affirms this meaning of "fulfill," after His Resurrection, saying, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be *fulfilled* which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms *concerning Me*" (Luke 24:44 NKJV).

1) Speaking of the Resurrection of Messiah Yeshua, this point is incredibly significant. There are three sub-points to prove its validity, for if Yeshua died and rose from the grave, never to die again, this would prove that He is our long awaited Messiah.

a. When Yeshua was crucified His closest disciples called Apostles were terrified, thinking they'd be next. When they saw Him alive, back from the dead, glorified, they became bold as lions and began proclaiming that in His Name was eternal life (cf. Acts 2–4).

b. Saul/Paul was a great enemy of Yeshua. He persecuted the early Jewish Christians, but one day He actually met the risen Yeshua. This enemy of Yeshua then became the greatest advocate for Him. He told Jews and Gentiles all over the Roman Empire that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel (cf. the Book of Acts 16–28 and the Letter to the Romans).

c. More than 500 Jews saw Yeshua alive from the dead (1st Cor. 15:1-6f.), proving that Yeshua is our Messiah. King David wrote: "For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One (the Messiah) to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10). Messiah Yeshua was raised from the dead within three days, and so His body didn't decay or see corruption.

d. The Resurrection is an historical fact. Yeshua is the Messiah of Israel.

B. Yeshua also presented Torah on a deeper level, amplifying it and penetrating it to its core. He said,

1) "You have heard that it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy,' but I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you." (Matthew 5:43-44)

2) Of course no one can do this because it's impossible to *love* an enemy, but because of Yeshua's sacrificial death, His divine blood not only forgives us of our sins and cleanses us of them—it transforms us into a new human being, Ezekiel 36:24-27 states that God will cleanse us, and give us a *new* heart; cf. 2nd Cor. 5:17. We are also given the Holy Spirit to lead and teach us Who our God is and cause us to walk in His Ways, one of which is the forgiveness of our enemies. God says,

a. "For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will *sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean.* I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. *I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit within you.* I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. *I will put My Spirit within you and I will cause you to walk in My statutes*, and you will keep My judgments and do them." (Ezekiel 36:24-27)

b. It is our God who empowers us to be able to forgive even our worst enemy.

3. One thing Christianity did get right is that Jesus is God the Son. As big as this problem is for us Jews who know the Shema, Yeshua is deity, distinct and separate from God the Father and yet *one* with Him, as a man and his wife are one (Gen. 2:24), yet separate beings.[9]

A. The Hebrew word for *one* in the Shema (Dt. 6:4) is אֶחָד (*eh'had*), which can mean 'many in unity,' as *one* vine with many grapes, or *one family* with many members.

B. How can God have a Son? The Prophet Micah speaks of Messiah as deity.

Returning to Gabriel, Radak (one of Judaism's greatest rabbis, Rabbi David Kimchi; 1160-1235), of whom it was said, "without him we will not find *the correct way to interpret the Scriptures*,"[10] thought that the Second Temple, which was so much less magnificent than the First Temple of King Solomon, would actually be *greater* in glory, as the Prophet Haggai 2:1-9[11] speaks of, *because Messiah would walk in it.* Kimchi realized that because of what the Prophet Malachi says. He also taught that *the Lord and the Messenger of the Covenant* were the same Person—King Messiah:[12]

> Malachi 3:1—"The Lord, whom you are seeking, will suddenly come to His Temple! The Messenger ("Angel")[13] of the Covenant whom you desire!"

It's easy to see how the two are the same Person because the second sentence is just reiterating the first in

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[9] "Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become *one* flesh" (Genesis 2:24). See Yeshua—God the Son, for how Yeshua, from the Hebraic perspective, is *one* with His Father, and also, Messiah's Deity and Micah 5:2 and Yeshua—His Deity and Sonship.

[10] Risto Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 40.

[11] "'The glory of this latter Temple s*hall be greater than the former*,' says Adonai of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says Adonai of hosts" (Haggai 2:9).

[12] Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 102.

[13] Traditionally written in English as "The Angel of the Lord," see The Angel of the Lord to realize that this "Angel" was not an angel at all, but none other then Yeshua. The Hebrew has מַלְאַךְ (*mal'ach*), which is literally a messenger, not an angel. Now most messengers from Heaven, like Gabriel, are angels, but this particular messenger is God the Son, and so the phrase should read in English, the *Messenger* of the Lord (Messenger with a capital M, for there is only one and He is deity).

a different way. In other words, Who the Person is in the first sentence. Aben Ezra (1089-1167) agreed and said, "'The Lord' is both the Divine Majesty *and* the Messenger of the Covenant, for the sentence is doubled,"[14] meaning that what the first phrase states ("the Lord"), is re-said another way in the second phrase ("the Messenger of the Covenant"). This is King David's Lord (Ps. 110:1), who is God the Son.

Kimchi said, "'The Lord' is King Messiah—He is also the Messenger of the Covenant."[15] How can the Messiah and the Lord God of Israel both be deity? The deity of our Messiah was first revealed in Torah as the Light of Day One,[16] the very Word of God (Gen. 1:3), and Micah literally speaks of it. (More on that in Point Four with Micah.)

Jeremiah 23:6 states, "Adonai (is) our righteousness." Talmud assigns this to Messiah: "What is the name of King Messiah? R. Abba, son of Kahana said, 'Adonai,' for it is written, 'This is His name whereby He shall be called, 'Adonai (is) our righteousness.'"[17] It's the same name of "Lord" for two different persons, for two different persons, as King David implied (Ps. 110:1).

Alfred Edersheim (1834-1893) was a Viennese Jew thoroughly versed in Talmud (Midrash) Yalkut[18] and other Jewish literature. He became a distinguished Jewish Christian, *having been convinced from Tanach and Talmud* that Jesus was *the Jewish Messiah*. He speaks of Dan. 9:24 saying: "In Nazir 32b it is noted as that referred to the time when the second Temple was to be destroyed."[19] This affirms Daniel 9:26 that speaks of the Messiah coming before the destruction of the Second Temple.

If the First Temple was destroyed because of the gross sin of idolatry, and the Jewish nation and our people destroyed and held captive in Babylon for 70 years, what could possibly be the sin of Israel that she was dispersed to the four corners of the Earth, being persecuted and without a nation for more than 1,800 years? (From 135 CE to 1948.) Could it be because we, our leaders, rejected our Messiah? This rejection is exactly what Isaiah spoke of:

> Isaiah 53:2-5—"For He (Messiah) shall grow up before Him (God) as a tender plant and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness, and when we see Him there is no beauty *that we should desire Him*. *He is despised and rejected by men* (Israel), a Man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief, and *we hid*, as it were, our faces from Him (Messiah). He was *despised*, and *we did not esteem Him*. *Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows*, yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted, but He was *wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace (with God) was upon Him and by His stripes we are healed."*

This is Isaiah speaking about our Messiah, hundreds of years before He came and died for us as a sacrifice for our sins and to give us eternal life. It's not a Christian tract—it's God's Truth (cf. Psalm 22:1f.; Is. 50:6; Micah 5:1; Zechariah 12:10; 13:1).

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[14] F. Kenton Beshore, *The Messiah of the Targums, Talmuds and Rabbinical Writers* (1971), p. 11.

[15] Ibid.

[16] See Yeshua—God the Son, Messiah's Deity and Micah 5:2 and Yeshua—His Deity and Sonship. Also, see Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 36. Midrash that say the Light of Day One is the "Light of Messiah" is Pesikhta Rabbati 62:1 and Yalkut Shimoni.

[17] Midrash on Lamentations 1:16 and the Midrash on Ezk. 48:35. See Daniel Botkin.

[18] Rachmiel Frydland, Author, Elliot Klayman, Editor, *What the Rabbis Know About the Messiah* (Cincinnati, OH: Messianic Publishing Company, 1993), pp. 94-96. Talmud is a 'collection of Jewish law and tradition that was compiled over a number of centuries and completed in the 5th century' CE. Midrash are 'exegetical commentaries on the law and aggadic collections of writings.' *Midrash Yalkut* is a 'medieval anthology.'

[19] Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 1,004. See *Bemidbar Rabbah* 11, also Yalkut, vol. 2, p. 79d, lines 16 etc. from the bottom. (A typo occurs on p. 1,004 concerning Dan. 11:24; it lists it as Dan 1:24.)

Point Three…The Messiah as Sacrifice for our Sins

The passage of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is taken by many of our ancient Sages as referring to Messiah,[20] even though they realized that it spoke *of him taking our sins upon himself as a guilt sacrifice*.[21] Its opening verse (52:13) speaks only of the "*Servant* of Adonai," but this Servant is specifically translated as 'the Messiah' in the Aramaic Targum Yonatan:[22] "Behold, My Servant, the Anointed One (i.e. the Messiah) shall prosper."[23] In Yalkut, "the best known and most comprehensive midrashic anthology covering the whole Bible,"[24] it states that this Servant Messiah would be *greater* than Father Abraham, *higher* than Moses and *more glorious* than even the ministering angels around God.[25] Who is *greater* than the greatest godly men of Israel and *even greater than the sinless and obedient angels of God?* There isn't any created creature *between* God and the angels in terms of stature and nature. Therefore, Messiah also has to be deity in *nature*, just like God, and Yeshua is. They are both deity, for Messiah *proceeded forth* from God as God's living Word and His Light.[26] Three Persons, *one God Family*, along with *Ruach HaKodesh*.[27] Shema Israel!

The messianic term "the Leprous Messiah," Sanhedrin 98b, is entirely based on Isaiah 53.[28] It speaks of

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[20] Sanhedrin 98b and Midrash Rabbah Lamentations 3:9-50, 59. Rashi, Radak and Ibn Ezra saw Isaiah 53 as speaking of the Suffering *Messiah*, the Messiah the Son of Joseph, as does Sukkah 52b. The Zohar speaks of Isaiah 53 as referring to the Messiah, saying, "He was pierced for our transgressions" (Is. 53:5), and bore our "sicknesses" (Zohar, Amsterdam Ed., Shemoth, p. 98).

For Isaiah 52:13—Messiah's exaltation: *Midrash Tanhuma* and *Yalkut Shimon*i 2, parasha 338.

Is. 52:14—The Targum speaks of it as the "Kingdom of Messiah."

Is. 52:15—The Targum speaks of Messiah "sprinkling many nations" (Is. 52:15) as "this is how the Messiah will act wisely."

Is. 53:2, 5—Targum: "The Righteous One shall grow up before him…He will build the Temple."

Is. 55:3—Midrash on Samuel (Ruth 2:14), "higher and greater than Abraham, Moses and the angels."

Is. 55:4—The Hebrew word נָגוּעַ *nagua* (to strike, afflict) becomes one of Messiah's names: the Leprous Messiah (Sanhedrin 98b) because He would take our sins upon Himself (vv. 5, 6, 8, etc.).

Is. 53:5—Midrash Ruth Rabbah, parasha 5 speaks of dipping bread in vinegar as picturing the suffering of Messiah in Is. 53:5: "He was wounded for our transgressions." The *Machzor Rabbah for the Great Day of Atonement* (Eshkol ed., p. 330) states of Messiah that He was "wounded for our transgressions" (Is. 53:5) and there is "forgiveness for our sins."

Is. 53:10—Targum refers to this verse as "the Kingdom of the Messiah."

[21] Isaiah 53:4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12.

[22] Frydland, *What the Rabbis Know About the Messiah*, p. 96. Targum Yonatan is an Aramaic translation of the Prophets.

[23] Ibid., p. 97. The Hebrew word for Messiah is מָשִׁיחַ mah'she'ach and literally means 'anointed' or 'anointed one.'

[24] Yalkut Shimoni.

[25] Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 997. The Messiah shall be 'higher than Abraham, to whom applies Gen. 14:22; higher than Moses, of whom Num. 11:12 is predicated; higher than the ministering angels, of whom Ezek. 1:18 is said.' *Yalkut* goes on to say, quoting from Is. 53:5, that the Messiah would be "wounded for *our transgressions* and bruised for *our iniquities."*

[26] Gen. 1:3; Ps. 2:7; 89:26-37. John 1:14, 18; 3:16; 16:27-28 (30) and 17:8 have Yeshua saying that He 'came forth' from the Father; cf. Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; 1st Jn. 4:9. John 8:42 has the identical concept that Yeshua 'proceeded forth' from the Father. In John 7:29 Yeshua says, 'But I know Him, for *I am from Him*, and He sent Me.'

[27] See John 15:26 for the Holy Spirit also proceeding forth from the Father, and Three Persons—One God?

[28] Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 997.

the Messiah being stricken by God or afflicted with disease (our sins). The term used, 'to smite or strike' (53:4) is similar to the word used for leprosy and that's why our Sages named Him 'the Leprous Messiah' because all our sins would be placed upon Him (Is. 53:5), just as the sins of all Israel were placed upon the goat of Yom Kipor. Leprosy is symbolic of sin, and just as leprosy eats away at the flesh, so sin eats away at our soul. Yeshua has borne all our sins; He has died in our place as a substitute for us, just as the goat, so we don't have to bear them before God on Judgment Day. It is *God's Way* of atoning for our sins, because we can no more cease from being sinful than a leopard can change its spots. As God says through Jeremiah:

> "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil." (Jeremiah 13:23)

That's our human condition, no matter how hard we try to emulate God and be holy we always fail because sin isn't something that we can put on or take off like clothes. Sin is part of our nature. That's why it's *not* according to our righteous deeds, which God says is like filthy menstrual rags (Isaiah 64:6), but because of God's gracious and sacrificial gift to us—the giving of His Son as our sin, guilt and nature transforming sacrifice. How can we stand in the Presence of One who is eternal Fire?[29] Only by being like Him, and that's why we need the blood of Yeshua. Only His divine blood cleanses and transforms us into His (Messiah's) Image. That's how we can spend eternity with Them.

According to a Midrash on Isaiah 53:5, the Messiah suffers for us[30] and is a substitute for us. The ancient animal sacrifices of Moses were substitutionary sacrifices (Lev. 1–6); the animal taking the place of the (sinful) Hebrew bringing it and so Yeshua with us. He has taken our place—He has taken our just punishment for our sins—death, and by faith in Him we will not know eternal Death.

A Midrash on Canticles speaks of Messiah making "expiation for the sins of Israel" and that this,

> "expiation bears reference to the *transgressions and evil deeds of the Sons of Abraham, for which God provides this Man as the Atonement*."[31]

The idea of Messiah being an atoning sacrifice for Israel isn't as foreign as we might think. We also see the picture of this in Father Abraham binding his miracle son Isaac (Gen. 22:1-19),[32] as a lamb-ram appears after the Messenger (poorly translated into English as the 'Angel') of the Lord (who is Yeshua) halts the sacrifice, and Avraham sacrifices the ram instead of Isaac: one life for another. One father offering up, or willing to offer up, his uniquely begotten son, which is a picture of God the Father offering up His uniquely begotten Son for us. Truly, glory to God in the Highest!

The Prophet Isaiah literally says that our Messiah would be *a sacrifice for us:*

> Isaiah 53:5—"But He was pierced-through *for our transgressions*. He was crushed *for*

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[29] Ex. 3:2; 13:21-22; 14:24; 19:18; 24:17; 40:38; Lev. 9:24; 10:1-2; Num. 9:14, 16; 11:1-3; 14:14; 16:35; 26:10, 61; Dt. 1:33; 4:11-12, 15, 24, 33; 5:5, 22-26; 9:3, 10, 15; 10:4; 18:16.

[30] Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 997. *Midrash* on Samuel (ed. Lemberg, p. 45a, last line): "all sufferings are divided into three parts," *one which Messiah bore*, and Ruth 2:14 (p. 985) is connected to it. The word 'eat' is seen speaking of the days of Messiah and the world to come. The whole passage is mystically applied to Messiah. "Come hither" means to draw near to the Messiah's Kingdom and to take the bread of royalty, and to dip it in vinegar speaks of the "sufferings, as it is written in Is. 53:5;" *Midrash Rabbah Ruth* 5 (ed. Warsh. p. 43 a/b).

[31] Ibid, p. 109, note 39. Midrash on *Canticles* (ed. Warshau, p. 11a/b) by Rabbi Berachaya.

[32] See Human Sacrifice and Yeshua. Isaac is a picture of Messiah Yeshua in that Sarah, at 89 years old, was far past the age of conceiving, and yet she bore Isaac at 90 years old, according to the Word of Adonai (Yeshua) when He and two angels came to visit Father Abraham (Gen. 18:1, 10; 21:1-3, 5; 17:17). In this truly miraculous birth we see a picture of Yeshua being conceived in the womb of a virgin, another miraculous event (see The Virgin Conception of Messiah and Isaiah 7:14).

our iniquities. The chastening for our peace (with God) fell upon Him, and by His scourging (stripes due to Roman lashes) we are healed."

Isaiah 53:10a—"But Adonai was pleased *to crush Him*, putting Him to grief, if He would render Himself as *a guilt offering*."

Isaiah 53:12b—"He poured Himself out to death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, yet He Himself *bore the sin of many*." (Isaiah 53:12b)

Messiah Yeshua took our place; our punishment, so we wouldn't be found guilty on Judgment Day and so we can be transformed into Messiah's very Image—the glorified God-Man. Can you begin to see what your God has done for you? Can you see His tremendous love for you?

Does our God have a Son? Psalm 2:7 and Proverbs 30:4 tell us He does.[33] Shocking? Certainly!, but it's God's Truth none the less.

Point Four…Messiah's Deity

Micah 5:2 (Hebrew Bible 5:1) was regarded by our ancient and medieval Sages as having to do with the Messiah and His deity. Micah declares that our Messiah was alive *before* the Universe was created. *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text* states:

> "But thou, Beth-Lehem Ephrathat, Which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, Out of thee shall one come forth unto Me that is to be *ruler* in Israel; *Whose goings forth are from of old, from ancient days*."[34]

"וְאַתָּה בֵּית־לֶחֶם אֶפְרָתָה צָעִיר לִהְיוֹת בְּאַלְפֵי יְהוּדָה מִמְּךָ לִי יֵצֵא לִהְיוֹת מוֹשֵׁל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל וּמוֹצָאֹתָיו מִקֶּדֶם מִימֵי עוֹלָם:"
(Micah 5:1 BHS-W4)

The last phrase of the text actually reads, "and whose goings forth are *from the East (or sunrise* מִקֶּדֶם*), from the days of eternity"* (מִימֵי עוֹלָם). The first part, "from the East," means before the sun rose meaning before Creation.[35] The second part, "from the days of eternity," confirms the first part, that the Ruler of Israel (the Messiah) existed before Creation, in eternity (with God). Isaiah saw Messiah's deity too (cf. Is. 9:6, "the mighty God, the Prince of Peace"). The Messiah, the Son of David (2nd Samuel 7:12-16), was to be born in Bethlehem, the same city where King David was born. Yeshua was born in Bethlehem and

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[33] See Yeshua—God the Son for how our God is 'one' and has a Son. It's straight from Torah.

"I will declare the decree! Adonai has said to Me, 'You are My Son! *Today* I have begotten You." (Psalm 2:7; *Today* speaks of Day One of Creation Week, where God's Word and His Light proceeded forth from Him.)

"Who has ascended into Heaven or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the Earth? What is His name, and *what is the name of His son*, if you know?" (Proverbs 30:4)

[34] *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, thirteenth printing, 1982), pp. 1478-1479.

[35] Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 115. *Yinnon* is one of many 'names' for Messiah. The term *yinnon* is found in Ps. 72:17: "May His name endure forever. May His dynasty (*yinnon*) last as long as the sun (i.e. forever). Men shall be blessed in Him and all nations shall call Him blessed." Literally the phrase is, "*before the sun*, *Yinnon*," or "before the sun His kingdom" or dynasty. *Yinnon* then becomes a messianic title. It means, to sprout and flourish, have offspring and is one of a number of Hebrew words relating 'to shoots and sprouting' that combine to form another messianic title, "the Branch." See Zechariah 6:12-13 and also *The Branch* for other terms associated with "the Branch" as a name for the Messiah and how Yeshua, coming from Nazareth, where He grew up, would be known as Yeshua the Nazarene or Yeshua the Branch, for Natzrat (Nazareth) means branch (cf. Mt. 2:23).

grew up in Nazareth (cf. Matthew 1:18; 2:1, 3-6, 23). Hence the designation, Jesus of Nazareth.

In Micah we see again two phrases that say and complement one another, saying the same thing in a different way—our Messiah existed before Creation. The only thing existing *before* Creation was God. This reveals the deity of Messiah (the coming Ruler).[36] Here we have a Being other than God (the Father), who is also deity—God's Son.

The term "God" is a generic word for deity and the Three of Them are there before Creation: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Note that it speaks of the Spirit of God hovering over the Waters before anything is created; God (the Father) speaks and Light, the living Word of God, the Messiah, comes forth; *begotten* like Cain and Abel; not created as Adam and Eve. The Three are *one*—the "God-Family."[37] *This* is the *Image* of God that Man (Adam and Eve, and their children; Gen. 1:26-27; 5:2) was created in.

Micah 5:2's Ruler is recognized by a number of Jewish authorities as speaking of the Messiah. Alfred Edersheim wrote,

> 'The well known passage, Micah 5:2, is admittedly Messianic. So in the Targum, in the Pirqe de R. Eliez. c. 3, and by later Rabbis.'[38]

Rashi[39] also saw the passage as speaking of Messiah's *deity.* Risto Santala writes:

> "Rashi refers to Psalm 72 in his exposition on Micah 5:2, which says of the Ruler of Israel who will be born in Bethlehem, that his 'origins are from old, from ancient times.' According to Rashi he is, 'the Messiah, the Son of David, as Ps. 118 says, he is the '*Stone* which the Builders rejected' and his origins are from ancient times.'"[40]

Rashi connected Micah's Ruler, "Whose goings forth are from before the sun, from the days of eternity," with Ps. 118. The term, from the East, implies before the sun was created, and so even though in English Rashi is stating "from ancient times," these ancient times were, in Hebrew, literally "from the days of eternity" (מִימֵי עוֹלָם), which complements the first phrase. Rashi believed that the Messiah existed before Creation and so did Radak. Radak realized Messiah's deity and *specifically* commented on it from the passage in Micah 5:2, writing:

> "It will be said in the Messianic age that his 'origins are from old, from ancient times …from Bethlehem,' means that he will be of the House of David, because there is a long period of time between David and the Messiah-King; and *he is El (God)*, which is how he is 'from old, from ancient times.'"[41]

Radak seems to be saying that God will be/become the Messiah, deity in the flesh, but he didn't realize what God had done in sending His Son Yeshua to be the Messiah of Israel. Although Rashi and Radak lived a thousand years after Messiah Yeshua, and *neither* of them believed in Yeshua, what they said about Messiah's deity takes on tremendous significance. Two of the greatest Jewish authorities deemed our Messiah to be deity because of what Micah 5:2 says about the Ruler of Israel, the Messiah.

The *Corner Stone* of Psalm 118 that Rashi spoke of is seen in the midst of a *salvation* Psalm, and here we find Scripture declaring that our leaders would reject our Messiah:

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[36] For more on this see Messiah's Deity and Micah 5:2.

[37] For how both the Son and the Spirit are deity, and *one* God Family, see Yeshua—God the Son and Three Persons—One God?

[38] Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 1,005.

[39] *Rashi* is an acronym for Rabbi Shlomo ben Itzhak. He lived from 1040-1105 AD.

[40] Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 115

[41] Ibid. In note 6 Santala writes, "The interpretations of both Rashi and Radaq' (Radak) 'can be found in the *Mikraoth Gedoloth* commentary."

> Psalm 118:19-24—"Open to me the *Gates* of Righteousness. I shall enter through them. I shall give thanks to Adonai. *This is the Gate of Adonai*.[42] The righteous will enter through it" (Him; the Messiah).[43] "I shall give thanks to You for You have answered me and You have become my salvation! *The Stone which the Builders rejected has become the chief Corner Stone*. This is Adonai's doing! It is marvelous in our eyes! *This* is the *day* which Adonai has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!" (Him! The Messiah)
>
> "Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely Adonai is in this place, and I didn't know it!' And he was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other than the House of God, and this is the *Gate of Heaven!'"* (Genesis 28:16-17)
>
> "Then Yeshua said to them again, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the Gate of the Sheepfold…I am the Gate. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.'" (John 10:7, 9)

The *Day* that the Psalmist speaks of is the day when Messiah was crucified (sacrificed) for our sins. God's Passover Lamb, the Messiah, dies (Is. 53:7) to set us free from sin (Is. 53:5; Dan. 9:24), and then salvation is opened for both the Jew and the Gentile who truly believe in Yeshua. *He* is the *Gate* of/to Adonai. When we enter into Yeshua we enter into God's presence. Messiah Yeshua was the *Stone* rejected by the Builders (of Israel; i.e. the Rabbis). Let's not reject Him any longer.

Point Five…A <u>Living</u> Witness

The last of the Five Simple Points is my own story. In October 1975 I was persuaded, through a book, that Yeshua was our Messiah. In the middle of the book I realized that everything I had always wanted, but could never put my Jewish finger on, was found in Messiah Yeshua. I asked Yeshua to forgive me of my sins and to come into my heart, and to my utter amazement He did! The Holy Spirit came upon me, bringing the Father and the Son to dwell within me, and I felt Shalom from the Heavens for the first time in my life. I realized that the "peace" I had been experiencing with Transcendental Meditation and Zen Buddhism was counterfeit and I would soon renounce them. Counterfeits are meant to keep us from The Real Thing, and I had found The Real Thing—the Messiah of Israel.

I have walked with Yeshua since 1975, and yes, I'm still a Jew and I walk in Torah *because* of Messiah Yeshua. I didn't keep Torah before I came to Yeshua, but He led me into walking out my faith in Him through all of Torah that applies to me.

That initial experience in 1975 wasn't the last one. The Holy Spirit manifested within and through me to others many times since then to confirm and reconfirm that Yeshua truly is the Messiah of Israel, and that He loves me with an eternal love—a love deep enough to die for me and divine enough to give me eternal life. That's why I can say to you without any reservation that I don't just *believe* that Yeshua is our Messiah—I *know* that Yeshua is our Messiah, and He loves you with the exact same love that He has for me, which is a reflection of God the Father's love for you too.

Just as any child needs to be held and loved by his father, so we too need to be held and loved by our Father. Not just 'one time' in the distant past at the First Pesach and Sinai, but every day of our lives. Isn't that what God meant when He said in Jeremiah 31:34 that *we shall all know Him*, from the least of us to the greatest of us?

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[42] This 'Gate of Adonai' speaks of both the time when Jacob saw God (i.e. Yeshua) and said that the place was nothing less than the 'House of God' (Bethel), and Yeshua speaking of Himself being the Gate of the Sheepfold (John 10:12; some translations have 'door' but sheepfolds don't have doors—they have gates).

[43] Both here and in v. 24, the word 'it' can also be translated as 'Him,' pertaining to the Messiah.

This is exactly what our Prophets, Joel and Ezekiel, spoke of. God would pour out His Spirit upon us and give us a new heart.[44] *This only happens in the name of Messiah Yeshua*. This is how we truly get to know our God—through God the Son. There is no one more Jewish than our Messiah, even if Christianity has stripped Him of Torah. Christians are deceived in this area and believe that Jesus did away with the Law, but that's a deception from Satan which is meant to keep us away from our own Messiah, because a Jewish Messiah who has done away with Torah is no Messiah at all. Christianity is categorically wrong about Torah and of course, about persecuting and despising us, but they are right about Yeshua being our Messiah—God the Son from eternity past, just as our Prophets say.

Being Jewish means more than just saying, "We Jews don't believe in Jesus; walking in Torah, eating bagels and cream cheese, doing good deeds for humanity and supporting Israel against the onslaught of anti-Semitism, Arab terrorism, Christian contempt, and Western media propaganda against Israel. Being Jewish means that our hearts yearn to *know* the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and His Ways of living our lives. The Tanach points directly to Yeshua of Nazareth being our Messiah.[45] This is what Isaiah, Jeremiah, King David, Daniel and Micah have said to you today. Ask the God of of Israel if Yeshua is your Messiah. He will tell you.

If you are persuaded about Yeshua being your Messiah, ask Yeshua to forgive you of your sins and to come into your heart and fill you with the Holy Spirit. Then *you* will *know* the Truth—you will know our God and have been Born Again or Born from Above (John 3:3, 5) and have the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son dwelling within you.

I bear witness to you this day through these *Five Simple Points* that reveal that Yeshua is our Messiah who has come to love you and give you forgiveness of all your sins and eternal life. Why walk in Darkness thinking it's Light? Believe me when I say that I have found the True Light and *God's* answer to our sins and eternal destiny:

> "Come!," says your God, "Let us reason together! Though your sins are bright red, they will become white as snow!" (Isaiah 1:18).

Do you have any questions or concerns? Email me and we'll talk.[46] My email is AvramYeh@Gmail.com

If the understanding above, about Yeshua of Nazareth be true, you must not ignore it. If an ancient Gentile could say, 'Socrates I love, and Plato I love, but I love truth more,' surely we Jews cannot say any less

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[44] Joel 2:28-29 (3:1-2 Hebrew); Ezk. 36:24-27.

[45] For more on what our Tanach says about Messiah and how it all points to Yeshua of Nazareth, see:
Lion Hands
Recognize This Man?
The Angel of the Lord
The Branch
The Gentile Knew?
The Ultimate Test—For God!
The Ultimate Question
A Three Day Old Bagel
Fresh Bagels Anyone?
Disfigured Beyond Man
What Would Tevyeh Think?
The Day After

[46] We Jews might say, "How can a man offer himself up to God as a sacrifice for us?" This is a reasonable question, and the answer is found in Scripture. See Human Sacrifice and Yeshua.

to our God. Please pray and ask the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; “Is Yeshua our Messiah? If so, please confirm this.”

Blessings from Above,
In the holy Name of Messiah Yeshua,

Avram Yehoshua
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[47] This Letter was last revised on Tuesday, April 7, 2026