

“Among the Greek-speaking Jews the Septuagint, as we call the older Greek version of the Old Testament, fell into disfavour....Many of the expressions in the Greek of the Septuagint might almost have been providentially framed with a view to Christian propaganda....As a result, the Septuagint, which had originally been produced by Jews for Jews, was entirely abandoned to the Christians. For Greek-speaking Jews a new Greek translation was commissioned, which should represent as closely as possible the text and interpretation of the Hebrew scriptures established by Akiba and his colleagues.”¹

F.F. Bruce, Ph.D.,

professor emeritus, University of Manchester

“One of the great works undertaken at Jabneh was a new Greek translation of the Scriptures by Aquilas of Pontus, a Roman aristocrat who converted first to Christianity and then to Judaism and became a pupil of Rabban Gamaliel, whom he accompanied on his travels. His translation was made under the supervision of the leading scholars of Jabneh, who greatly admired his work. It reflects the system of interpretation of the *tannaim* (and particularly of R. Akiva)....The earlier Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint....had been accepted as sacred by the Christian church....”²

Rabbi Samuel Safrai, Hebrew University

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THE MESSIAH CONSPIRACY CONTINUES IN THE *NEW* OLD TESTAMENT

The conspiracy rolls on with ingenious new innovations: the retranslation of the Greek version of the Old Testament; cleverly devised instructions which permitted copies of the New Testament to be burnt, and; the change of the name of Jesus. His Hebrew name was changed from *Yeshua* “salvation” to *Yeshu* “a curse,” demanding that His name and memory be wiped out; literally, *ymah shemo vezihro*, in Hebrew. This wrongful acronymic name is still uttered by the unlearned and misinformed in modern Israel.

Additionally, a stern but false contemporary denial of the existence of Jewish believers in Jesus in the early Christian era is propounded by Rabbis Kaplan and Lewis. We “disclaim” this claim through an archaeological discovery made in 1994 by the French archaeologist, Claudine Dauphine, in the mountains of the Golan Heights, presently still within the borders of Israel. We hope these beautiful, green, majestic mountains will not be handed back to the Arabs, Syrians and Palestinians by the radical liberals, especially since so much precious Israeli blood³ was shed to gain them! In essence, “Palestinians” are nomads from the surrounding Arab countries, who

¹F.F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame*, p. 266.

²H.H. Ben-Sasson and Shmuel Safrai, *A History of the Jewish People*, Part IV, p. 326.

³Originally Israel wanted to live in peace, but the Arabs just kept attacking them.

briefly roamed in, over and out of this area before Israel's refounding in 1948.

GREEK-SPEAKING JEWS SHORT-CHANGED FOR CENTURIES BY THE NEW FRAUDULENT TRANSLATION

Many people are totally unaware that in the second century a man named Aquila produced a deliberately fraudulent translation of the Old Testament in an effort to aid the rabbis in their attempt to split Jews and Messianic Jews.

Before we discuss this new translation, perhaps we should examine the character of the man who produced this new book. Aquila, who is mentioned in the Talmud,⁴ was born a pagan, yet wanted to be accepted by the Messianic Jewish community of his day. However, he was unable to forfeit the practice of astrology, which was strictly forbidden by the Old and New Testaments of the Bible (Deut. 18:10-12; Isa. 47:13; Acts 16:16-18).

Because Aquila was unable to wean himself from this demonic counterfeit prophetic craft, the believers in Jesus refused to fellowship with him. Philip Carrington, in his book, *The Early Christian Church*, notes: "This is all introductory to the story of Aquila....He was still a Gentile, but he was deeply impressed by the Christian teachers whom he found in Jerusalem and asked for baptism, which was granted. Unfortunately he failed to renounce his interest in astrology and calculated horoscopes every day. He was warned by the Christian teachers, but persisted in his error. Finally, he was excommunicated. Mortified by this treatment, he had himself enrolled as a Jewish proselyte and was circumcised. He devoted himself to the study of the Hebrew language, and produced his new translation of the Old Testament with the objective of giving a new rendering of those passages on which the Christians principally relied...."⁵

AQUILA THE ASTROLOGER—THE DEFECTOR TAKES HIS PLANS OF REVENGE AGAINST THE CHRISTIANS TO THE RABBIS

It is quite clear what Aquila's motives were; he was contemplating revenge on the Christian community for not accepting him, along with his deceptive and forbidden craft. Thus, he took his proposition to the rabbis, who were anxious to hear his plan to further widen the gap between Messianic Jew and Jew.

⁴Jerusalem Talmud, Megillah i 71-c.

⁵Philip Carrington, *The Early Christian Church*, Vol. 1, *The First Christian Century*, p. 439.

He wanted to produce a new translation of the Scriptures, primarily differing only in the Messianic prophecies. In effect, Aquila said, "I'll show you how to get rid of the problem of these repulsive Christians, right at the source of their proofs." His plan was to retranslate the Messianic prophecies which were fulfilled by Jesus. These prophecies were originally predicted thousands of years ago by the Hebrew prophets, in Hebrew, and were translated to Greek more than two hundred and fifty years before Christ.

The original translation of the Bible into Greek, known as the Septuagint, was carried out by seventy rabbis trying to reach out to those portions of Israeli Jewry and Jews in the Diaspora who could not read Hebrew. This Greek Bible was held in high esteem⁶ until the time of Aquila (120 AD), and in fact, was used to spread the Messianic message.

The Messianic Jews would show traditional Jews the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament, such as Isaiah 7:14, and explain the events which had transpired in Israel proving Jesus' fulfillment of prophecy. Many were becoming believers. Realizing this, Aquila considered these Scriptures dangerous. Thus, he set out to make his own translation, intending to create a barrier⁷ to Messianic understanding of the Scriptures. He deliberately changed the wording of the Messianic prophecies.

⁶Reverend M. Abrahams tells us: "...there is no doubt that a feeling of theological antagonism to the Septuagint had long prevailed among the Jews. This was certainly the case already in the second century when Aquila flourished. The Septuagint, it is true, was originally made by Jews for Jews, but it was adopted as the inspired Bible of the Church. It is freely quoted in the New Testament, and it contained certain renderings which became objectionable to Jewish sentiment because of the use made of them in sectarian [Messianic Jewish] controversies....In Philo's age, the Jews of Egypt regarded the Septuagint with a reverence, as Dr. Swete puts it, 'scarcely less than that which belonged to the original Hebrew.' We can hardly wonder that within a century of Philo's death the Jewish attitude towards the Septuagint had entirely changed. For that century was the one which saw the birth and early growth of the Christian Church which adopted the Septuagint as its very own, as its one and only Bible." Reverend M. Abrahams, B.A., *Aquila's Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible*. London: Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co. Ltd., 1919, pp. 2-3. [] mine.

⁷Scholar F.F. Bruce illustrates this when he says: "His [Aquila's] version...proved a barrier to Christian interpretations. Christians, for example, might quote the Septuagint form of Isaiah 7:14, 'See, a virgin (Gk. *parthenos*) will conceive and give birth to a son and call his name Immanuel' (as is done in Matthew 1:23), and press it upon their Jewish acquaintances as a clear prediction of the virginal conception of Jesus; but now the Greek-speaking Jew could retort that the Greek version which *he* recognized as authoritative made no mention of a virgin (Gk. *parthenos*) but simply of a young woman (Gk. *neanis*)." F.F. Bruce, *The Spreading Flame*, pp. 266-267.

AQUILA CONVENIENTLY REMOVES THE WORDS MESSIAH AND VIRGIN FROM THE JEWISH SEPTUAGINT BIBLE BECAUSE OF JESUS' FULFILLMENTS!

The Greek words *χριστός* “Christ/Messiah” and *παρθένος* “virgin” were removed by Aquila in a new fraudulent translation of the Greek Old Testament. He did this under the direction of Rabbi Akiva, one of, if not the most anti-Christian rabbi of his day!⁹

There can be no doubt why Aquila and Akiva chose to change these two key words with regard to Messiah. They did not want people to be reminded that Jesus fulfilled the prophecy according to a fixed timetable given by Daniel. Aquila removed the word Messiah. When the New Testament recorded the virgin birth of Jesus, Aquila and Akiva thought it convenient to change Isaiah’s word, which the Septuagint had previously translated quite a while before the birth of Jesus as *parthenos* “virgin,” to *neanis*, which only means “young woman.”

REVEREND ABRAHAMS POINTED OUT THAT AQUILA’S FAULTY TRANSLATION INFECTED THE JEWISH BIBLES IN AMERICA

Reverend M. Abrahams, in his book, *Aquila’s Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible*, elaborates on this when he tells us: “...we know from Justin Martyr that the Jews [Jewish leaders of Yavne] of the first half of the second century strongly objected to the Septuagint rendering of the passage. The Jews [certain rabbis of Yavne] maintained that the correct translation of ‘*almah*’ was not ‘*parthenos*’ but ‘*neanis*,’ not virgin but young woman....my point is that the very word ‘*neanis*’ is

the one chosen by Aquila, and this fact explains why, on the one hand, the Emperor Justinian—Christian as he was—preferred the Septuagint, while the Jews of his day were fonder of Aquila. It is interesting to

note that Aquila’s rendering of Isaiah vii.14...has been adopted in the new Jewish Version recently published in America....Epiphanius, in

⁹Johannes Weiss documents: “The fate of the Jerusalem church underwent a decided change under Hadrian (117-138). In the great uprising of the Jews under the Messiah-prophet Bar-Kokhba (132-135), Jerusalem fell into the hands of the rebels; and even during the Bar-Kokhba revolt the Christians had much to suffer at their hands...” Weiss’ footnote states: “And indeed in the recent Jewish war, Bar-Kokhba, the leader of the uprising of the Jews, condemned the Christians alone to be led away to dreadful torture if they would not deny Jesus was Christ and blaspheme him....’Kokhba, who was leader of the rebellion of the Jews, inflicted various penalties on many of the Christians, since they would not go out to battle with him against the Romans;’ Orosius, 7:13.” Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30-150*, Vol. II, pp. 722-723.

fact, asserts that the sole purpose of Aquila was precisely to introduce these variations. So, too, with Irenaeus. In his ‘Treatise against Heresies,’ written about the year 200, he devotes the whole of the twenty-first chapter of Book III. to...what he calls the misinterpretation of Isaiah vii.14, by Theodotion of Ephesus and Aquila of Pontus, both, as Irenaeus says, proselytes to Judaism. Against Aquila, Irenaeus quotes the Septuagint, and makes great play with the argument that the Septuagint, made in pre-Christian times by Jews, confirmed the Christian interpretation of the text in question.”¹⁰



After Aquila’s dirty deed was done, within a few centuries his translations became rather scarce. Mysteriously, there are only a few fragments of his deceptively fraudulent translations existing in the twentieth century. The fragment we have reproduced¹¹ is commonly known as fragment TS 20.50. As you can see, the Greek is written over the Hebrew.

**EVEN THE JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA CONFIRMS
THAT AQUILA HAD AN ANTI-CHRISTIAN BIAS**

The Jewish Encyclopedia tells us: “...the need of a Greek version for Jews disappeared when Greek ceased to be the *lingua franca* of Egypt and the Levant....fragmentary manuscripts of the

¹⁰Reverend M. Abrahams, B.A., *Aquila’s Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible*, p. 5. [] mine.

¹¹Courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

translation....were discovered in 1897, partly by F. C. Burkitt, among the mass of loose documents brought to Cambridge from the *geniza* of the Old Synagogue at Cairo through the enterprise of Dr. S. Schechter and Dr. C. Taylor, master of St. John's College, Cambridge."¹²

F. C. Conybeard published *The Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* in 1898. This work mentions Aquila's anti-Christian bias.¹³

Aquila altered Daniel's word *χριστός* (*Christos*, i.e. "Messiah"), found in the Bible in Daniel 9:26, to *ἡλειμμένος*, which only means "a responsible person." Daniel's Hebrew original was exactly and correctly translated in the Septuagint (from משיח "Messiah"), but in order to mislead as many Greek-speaking Jews as possible, the rabbis mistranslated Messiah to *ἡλειμμένος* (*elemenous*), a fraudulent translation.¹⁴

ABRAHAMS DOCUMENTS THAT AQUILA CUT THE WORDS MESSIAH AND JESUS OUT OF HIS GREEK TRANSLATION

Reverend M. Abrahams further notes: "There were phrases in the Septuagint which Jews came to dislike. Two instances of this must suffice. The first instance is general, the second particular. The general instance concerns the word *Christos*, which merely comes from a Greek verb meaning to anoint, and thus corresponds to the Hebrew verb משיח which has the same sense. The Greek word *Christos*, like the Hebrew equivalent משיח (Messiah), literally denotes 'anointed.' In the Septuagint the Hebrew משיח is quite correctly rendered *Christos*. Thus, in Daniel ix. 26, the word משיח is rendered *Christos*, where the Authorized English Version has 'the anointed

¹²*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 34.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴Joseph Reider, Ph.D., tells us in his thesis: "Special emphasis is laid on his rendering of משיח [Messiah] by ἡλειμμένος [responsible person] instead of χριστός [*Christos*] in passages like Dan. 9.26 and of בְּתוּלָה Isa. 7.14 by νεανίς [young woman] as against παρθένος [*parthenos*, "virgin"] of the Septuagint." In Reider's footnotes 83 and 84, he says: "Comp. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, II, 613, n.12. This is another of a's translations which Field characterizes by the word ἐτυμολογικς (*Prolegomena*, xxii), for he likewise renders מִשְׁחָ by ἀλειψέιν Lev. 8.10 *et al.*, and מִשְׁחָ by ἄλειμμα Lev. 21.12. On this crucial point in the controversy between Jews and Christians comp. Swete's *Introduction to the O.T. in Greek*, p. 30.—Aquila's rendering here must have been particularly distasteful to the Christian Church, since elsewhere (Gen. 24.43) the same word is translated by ἀπόκρυφος [to uncover], while νεανίς [young woman] is also used for בְּתוּלָה [virgin] Deut. 22.28." Joseph Reider, Ph.D., *Prolegomena to a Greek-Hebrew & Hebrew-Greek Index to Aquila*. Philadelphia: College of Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1916, pp. 59-60. [] mine. We thank our friend Roy Ioannides, an expert in Greek, for clarifying the meaning of ἡλειμμένος and ἀπόκρυφος; two very difficult and ancient Greek words.

one'....But, in the New Testament, *Christos*, or *Christ*, was used as a personal name for the Messiah. We can realise that Jews would dislike a translation in which the word *Christos* occurred at all. In Aquila's Version the word is altogether avoided. It is also significant that whereas the Septuagint mostly renders the Hebrew name Joshua by *Jesus*, Aquila carefully abstains from so doing; although, among Greek Jews, *Jesus* must have been a fairly common personal name."¹⁵

AQUILA'S LETHAL RESULT IS REALIZED—A DEATH BLOW TO THE SPREAD OF MESSIANIC BIBLICAL (GOSPEL) TRUTH ENSUES

Thus, after a considerable amount of time elapsed and Aquila's translation was in large circulation, the desired result began to take effect. Messianic Jews would attempt to tell Jews who were interested, about the Messiah's birth and other prophecies. The traditional Jews would look it up, and bang! It was not in their Bible—Aquila's "version" of the Bible that is!

This dealt a terrible blow to the understanding of Messianic biblical truths during that age and ages to come. It is clear Aquila wanted, out of spite and revenge,¹⁶ to make sure no one else became interested in the Messianic Christian faith, as he once had. So he did everything in his power to hinder the biblical movement of Messianic Jews by making a new biased translation of the Holy Scriptures. He maintained his "version" was more literal¹⁷ and accurate. He wrote his Greek directly over the original Hebrew, which few Diaspora Jews could even read with understanding. However, even today *The Jewish Encyclopedia* admits: "Aquila's renderings of the Hebrew tenses are often most inadequate."¹⁸ Whose word will you take regarding the true

¹⁵Reverend M. Abrahams, B.A., *Aquila's Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible*, p. 4.

¹⁶Rabbi Abrahams informs us: "...Epiphanius further records that Aquila was a relative of the Emperor Hadrian, and that having witnessed various miraculous healings by Christians, he joined that faith. Owing, however, to his determined resolve to practise magic, he was excommunicated by the Church, and, in **revenge**, attached himself to the Synagogue, devoting himself to the task of removing Christian evidences from the Bible." *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹⁷Regarding this new Greek translation of Aquila's, Jakob Jocz informs us: "...the main reason for the prohibition to use the LXX [Septuagint] is closely connected with the Jewish-Christian controversy. To provide a more reliable translation which would eliminate the LXX from general use was attempted by the Greek proselyte, Aquila (middle second century), a convert from Christianity to Judaism. His aim was to give a literal translation closely related to the masoretic text. But though upheld by the Synagogue, it was not a success. Joseph Reider describes it as something of a monstrosity, 'its Greek vocabulary and grammatical forms being often uncouth and barbaric'. Its significance lies in that it provided a separate Greek version authorized by the Synagogue, while 'the Septuagint became the official Bible of the Christian.'" Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, p. 50. [] mine.

¹⁸*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, p. 35.

translation of the Bible? A disgruntled pagan rejected by the Christians or seventy¹⁹ blood-born Jewish rabbis who were scholars?

**THEY SPREAD THIS FAKE TRANSLATION
THROUGHOUT THE GREEK-SPEAKING WORLD
TO PRECLUDE CHRISTOLOGICAL REFERENCES,
SO ADMIT SCHOLARLY JEWISH SOURCES**

In an article entitled “Aquila’s Translation of the Bible,” in the series *Jerusalem to Jabneh: The Period of the Mishnah and its Literature—Units 11,12*, it is documented that the rabbis of Yavne succeeded in spreading this faulty translation of the Old Testament, which Aquila had produced, throughout the entire Diaspora (to Jews everywhere in the Greek-speaking world of that time). You can see our point in the following documentation, which includes an impressive quote from G. Alon’s book, *A History of the Jews*: “We can find evidence of the Sages’ concern for the Hellenistic Diaspora in yet another area. They saw to it that the Torah was translated into Greek once again, the much earlier Septuagint version being considered inaccurate. This translation was made in the beginning of the reign of Hadrian (c. 120 C.E.), by the famous convert Aquila from Pontus, under the direction of R. Eliezer, R. Joshua ben Hanania and R. Akiva. What was the reason for this new translation? According to G. Allon, this translation was aimed at the Hellenistic-Roman Diaspora. ‘The Sages wanted to give them a Greek version that would accord with the Massoretic Bible as decided upon by the Sages at Jabneh. The Septuagint, by contrast, was quite far from the Palestinian Hebrew Bible. (It is also possible that **the Sages wanted to word the new Greek version in such a way as to preclude Christological references** which were based on the LXX.) The fragments and quotes from the Aquila version in our possession show that faithfulness to the Massoretic Bible outweighed considerations of Greek style and syntax. Sometimes the translation is based on ‘midrash exegesis’ which resulted in strange Greek forms. At any rate, **we have much evidence that the sages of Jabneh succeeded in making the Aquila version**

¹⁹The word Septuagint comes from seventy. Rabbi Abrahams also noted that Jews began to regain a limited interest in the Septuagint when he said: “It was not till the age of De Rossi, in the sixteenth century, that Jewish scholars again interested themselves in the Septuagint, and even then their motive was literary rather than religious.” Reverend M. Abrahams, B.A., *Aquila’s Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible*. As you can see, it was too late. This did not help the Greek-speaking Jews of the first six centuries to see the Messianic evidence that was kept from them. Most modern Jews do not know Greek except for scholars and those who live in Greece.

available to the entire Diaspora, though it did not supplant the LXX entirely.’²⁰

The article mentioned that Aquila “had” a close relationship with the Rabban Gamaliel of Jabneh, and we all know how much Gamaliel hated Jewish-Christians. He found the perfect henchman in the person of Aquila.

THE ONLY POSSIBLE CONCLUSION! A TRAITOR BETRAYS THE JEWS OUT OF THEIR PROPHESED MESSIAH

It is surprising to us that a person who created a fraudulent translation with the express purpose of deceiving the Greek-speaking populace could be “a favorite personage” of Jewish tradition and legend. As *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says of Aquila: “In Rabbinical Literature: ‘Aquila the Proselyte’ (עֲקִילָם הַגֵּר) and his work are familiar to the Talmudic-Midrashic literature. While ‘the Seventy’ and their production are almost completely ignored by rabbinical sources, Aquila is a **favorite personage** in Jewish tradition and legend. As historical, the following may be considered. ‘Aquila the Proselyte translated the Torah (that is, the whole of Scripture...) in the presence of R. Eliezer and R. Joshua, who praised him and said, in the words of Ps. xlv. 3 [A.V. 2], ‘Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee forever.’ This contains a play upon the Hebrew word ‘Yafyafita’ (Thou art fairer) and the common designation of Greek as ‘the language of Japhet’ (Yer. Meg. i. 71c).”²¹

Hopefully, now that we have exposed what this man has done to the Jewish people, the world, including the rabbinical community, will reconsider and think of Aquila as not “fairer than the children of men,” as past rabbis have claimed, but rather as a spiteful charlatan²²

²⁰ *Jerusalem to Jabneh: The Period of the Mishnah and its Literature—Units 11, 12.* Tel Aviv: Everyman’s University Publishing House, Open University of Israel, © 1981, p. 48, used by permission. Bold mine.

²¹ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. II, p. 36. Bold mine.

²² Remember what one rabbinical source says of proselytes (converts to Judaism) such as Aquila: “The rabbis taught: ‘The proselytes and those who play with children hold back the Messiah.’ This is understandable as far as the proselytes are concerned, for R. Helbo said: ‘The proselytes are as bad for Israel as a sore on the skin...’” (B. Nid. 13b). Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*, p. 59. The book of Romans 8:21-23 and 11:15, 26 of the New Testament indicates that when enough Jews believe in Jesus, the world will go from “death to life” and Jesus the Messiah will return. Until then, He is still being “held back.” Though we do not believe the writer of the commentary had Jesus in mind. His words are certainly an interesting parallel.

THE GREATEST BEST-SELLER OF ALL TIME WRITTEN BY THE PERSECUTED JEW

Even though the New Testament has become the greatest best-seller of all time, written by a group of highly persecuted, yet inspired Jews, the Talmud records the feelings of the leading rabbis of Yavne toward the books of the New Testament: "...the Books [New Testament books] of the Minim [believers in Jesus] may not be saved from a fire, but they must be burnt in their place, they and the Divine Names occurring in them. Now surely it means the blank portions of a Scroll of the Law? No: the blank spaces in the Books of Minim. Seeing that we [rabbis] may not save the Books of Minim themselves, need their blank spaces be stated?—This is its meaning: And the Books of Minim are like blank spaces.

It was stated in the text: The blank spaces and the Books of the Minim, we may not save them from a fire. R. Jose said: On weekdays one must cut out the Divine Names which they contain, hide them, and burn the rest. R. Tarfon said: May I bury my son if I would not burn them together with their Divine Names if they came to my hand. For even if one pursued me to slay me, or a snake pursued me to bite me, I would enter a heathen Temple [for refuge], but not the houses of these [people]....And just as we may not rescue them from a fire, so may we not rescue them from a collapse [of debris] or from water or from anything that may destroy them."²⁴ In the Talmud's footnote to this passage, it is said: "R. Meir called it (the Gospel) '*Awen Gilyon*, the falsehood of blank paper; R. Johanan called it '*Awon Gilyon*, the sin of etc."²⁵

DID RABBIS YOHANAN BEN ZAKKAI AND ME'IR DEGRADE THE NEW TESTAMENT?

Evangelion is Greek for "good news/Gospel" and was the main term used to describe the message of the New Testament. Modern English derives the words "evangelist" and "evangelical" from this term. However, the rabbis of Yavne said many ugly and distasteful things about the faith and its book, the New Testament itself, by changing the vowels in the word *evangelion*. F. F. Bruce confirms: "Some leading rabbis, like Yohanan ben Zakkai and Aqiba's pupil Me'ir, made derogatory puns on the word *evangelion*, altering the vowels to '*awen-gillayon* or '*awon-gillayon* ('iniquity of the margin')."²⁶

²⁴The *Babylonian Talmud*, Shabbath, 116a-b, pp. 570-571. First and third [] mine. Rabbi Finkel denies that these words refer to the Christian Gospel. However, as you have read, the monumental Jewish work known as the Soncino Talmud admits that it refers to the Gospel.

²⁵Ibid, p. 571.

²⁶F. F. Bruce, *New Testament History*, p. 378.

Remember, *evangelion* is the Greek word for “Gospel.” The words created by altering the vowels sound similar but are perversions, or in effect, Hebrew word curses which sound almost identical to the original term “Gospel,” *evangelion*.

Why was such disrespect and intolerance mounted against the Messianic faith by these rabbis? Could it have been that they felt jealous or threatened in their leadership and ability to rule and hold the Jews together as one people? Might their authority have been challenged and their egos damaged? In their pride, they became too narrow-minded to hear any testimony or prophecy regarding the exciting faith of their Messianic brothers in Jesus.

RABBI TARPON BURNS THE NEW TESTAMENT RATHER THAN CURSE HIMSELF

Foremost scholar, James Parkes, in his book, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, comments on this issue with added details: “...the rabbis show a knowledge of the New Testament and of the details of the life of Jesus. The gospels are known as ‘Aven-gillayon’ by Rabbis Meir of Jabne and Jochanan. The word is an offensive pun [in Hebrew] meaning ‘revelation of sin’ or ‘falsehood of blank paper’. There is a discussion reported as to what shall be done with ‘external books’....Rabbi Meir says that they are not to be saved from the fire, but to be burned at once, even with the names of God in them. Rabbi Jose says that on a week-day the name of God ought to be cut out and hidden away. Rabbi Tarphon invoked a curse on himself if he did not burn the books, names of God and all.”²⁷



The tomb of Rabbi Meir, on the Sea of Galilee in Tiberias, Israel.

²⁷James Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*, p. 109. [] mine.

THE “MAIN-STREAM” AGAINST THE JEWISH CHRISTIANS’ “FALSEHOOD OF THE SCROLL”

Scholar F. F. Bruce also adds interesting comments in his book, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*: “...the *minim* in question appear to be Jewish Christians...we are dealing with the controversies between Jewish Christians and the representatives of what was now main-stream Judaism in the period after A.D. 70, when Jewish Christians were excluded from the synagogue. Discussions sometimes arise about the status of ‘the books of the *minim*’....Derogatory puns on *evangelion*, the Greek word for ‘Gospel’, are ascribed to rabbis of the Tannaitic period: They called it ‘*awen-gillayon* or ‘*awon-gillayon*, which means something like ‘falsehood of the scroll’ or ‘perversion of the scroll’. Any claim that such works should be granted canonical recognition was decisively rejected. Some rabbis thought they might well be burnt; others suggested that the occurrences of the name of God which they contained should be cut out first.”²⁸

RABBIS’ VEHEMENCE AGAINST NEW TESTAMENT GOSPEL—EVIDENCE THAT OTHER RABBIS WERE BECOMING BELIEVERS

Bruce further elaborates on this little-known subject of the rabbis’ abuse and intolerance of the New Testament, in his book, *New Testament History*: “It is only after A.D. 70 that we can begin to talk about normative Judaism and of deviations from the norm; in the days of the Second Temple there was a much greater variety of Jewish religious life and practice, and no one form could claim to represent the standard by which others were to be judged.

When the rabbis of Jamnia discussed the recognition of canonical books and the rejection of others, one group to which they paid attention was ‘the books of the *minim*’. These contained the name of God, and yet their contents were unacceptable...it is unlikely that the idea of extending canonical recognition to the Christian books was seriously entertained: they were mentioned only to be condemned. ‘The *gilyonim* and the books of the *minim* are not sacred scripture’ [Talmud, Tosefta, *Yadaim* 2:13].^[29] Some leading rabbis, like Yohanan ben Zakkai and Aqiba’s pupil Me’ir, made derogatory puns

on the word *evangelion*, altering the vowels to ‘*awen-gillayon* or *awon-gillayon*’ (‘iniquity of the margin’). But ‘the vehemence with which the leading rabbis of the first generation of the second century

²⁸F.F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament*, p. 60.

²⁹[] contain Bruce’s footnote reference to the Talmud where this is documented.

express their hostility to the gospel and other books of the heretics, and to their conventicles, is the best evidence that they were growing in numbers and influence; some even among the teachers of the Law were suspected of leaning towards the new doctrine.”³⁰

RABBIS TARPON, AKIVA AND ISHMAEL ALL INSTRUCT—BURN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The widely respected Jewish scholar, G. Alon, quotes the Talmud and other sources as he tells us: “Blank writing surfaces (*gilyonim*) and books of the *Minim* are not to be rescued (on the Sabbath) but should be allowed to burn right where they are, along with their *azkarot* [the explicit names of God, יהוה]. Rabbi Jose of Galilee says: On a week-day, one should cut out the *azkarot* and bury them, then burn the rest. Said Rabbi Tarphon: May I lose my sons if I would not burn any such books that fell into my hands, *azkarot* and all! Indeed, if I were fleeing from a deadly pursuer, I had rather take refuge in a house of heathen worship than enter into the house [Messianic synagogue of the Nazarenes] of such as these. For the heathen do not know Him and (so) deny Him; but these do know Him, and (yet) deny Him....The same question is the subject of a disagreement between Rabbi Ishmael and Rabbi Akiba in Sifre on Numbers: Rabbi Ishmael says: The way to deal with books of the *Minim* is this: one cuts out the *azkarot* and burns the rest. Rabbi Akiba says: One burns the whole thing, because it was not written in holiness.”³¹

WHY DID RABBI AKIVA ABHOR THE CHRISTIANS AND THEIR NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS?

In our quest to discover the reason for Rabbi Akiva’s actions, we find a most plausible answer in an article by scholar Joshua Bloch, entitled, “Outside Books.” Bloch notes: “Rabbi Akiba and his circle became apprehensive. Seeing that the teachings contained in them were rapidly gaining followers and that the ranks of the Nazarenes were being swelled by the influx of many of the common people, Rabbi Akiba denounced those who indulged in the reading and study of ‘outside books’....The Nazarenes and their books became objectionable not so much because of their belief about the role of Jesus but because of their persistent attempt to exalt him to a position almost equal with that of God....they evidently became quite dangerous in the days of Rabbi Akiba....Rabbi Akiba and his circle regarded the teachings of the Christian books current in their day about the ‘divinity’ of Jesus of Nazareth, as a serious infringement of the belief

³⁰F.F. Bruce, *New Testament History*, pp. 386-387.

³¹G. Alon, *The Jews in Their Land in the Talmudic Age*, p. 291. [] mine.

in the Divine Unity....The close of the first century found the Jews and the Nazarenes going further and further apart....In maintaining that those who indulge in the reading of ‘outside books’ have no portion in the World to Come Rabbi Akiba made a significant contribution to the various measures then taken by authoritative Jewish leaders to bring about ‘the final separation of the Nazarenes from the rest of the Jews. Hitherto these ‘disciples of Jesus the Nazarene’ had been a conventicle within the synagogue, rather than a sect.’”³²

SOME RABBIS CALL THE ANCIENT MESSIANIC SYNAGOGUES “HOUSES OF DESTRUCTION”

The Talmud describes this house in question as a Messianic synagogue, so to speak. The words in the Talmud used for Messianic congregation are *Be Nitzraphi*, which is described as: “בֵּי נִצְרָפִי; a meeting place of the Nazarenes, Jewish Christians, where local matters were discussed and religious debates were held. (Levy).”³³

R. Travers Herford, an authority on Christianity in the Talmud, also mentioned that the Talmud called these ancient meeting places *Be Abidan*. He explains: “‘Be Nitzraphi’ is a synagogue or meeting-place of Christians, more particularly Jewish Christians or Nazarenes, Notzrim.”³⁴ Herford goes on to describe these houses as: “The meeting place of early Christians where religious controversies were held.”³⁵ He shows that the word, *Be*, in fact, is short for *Bait* (Hebrew for “house”), and *Abidan* is actually a word denoting destruction. Thus, the Yavnean rabbis who were protesting early Jewish faith in Jesus were calling their synagogues (Houses of Gathering) “Houses of Destruction.” To quote Herford: “Now what are the ‘Be Abidan’ and ‘Be Nitzraphi’? ‘Be’ is a shortened form of Beth, house....‘Abin’ is apparently connected with the root ‘abad’ (אָבַד), to destroy....Nitzraphi [the vocalization is uncertain] is almost certainly connected with the word Notzri, Nazarene, while the form suggests a niph’al from the root tzaraph (צָרַף), to unite....‘Be Nitzraphi’ denotes a meeting place of Jewish Christians; and I would explain the name as a hybrid, combining a reference to Notzrim, Nazarenes, with the notion of assembly (root, tzaraph).”³⁶

32Joshua Bloch, “Outside Books,” *Mordecai M. Kaplan, Jubilee Volume*, pp. 94-95, 97-99. This shows that the deity of Jesus was taught very early, not later as liberal scholars assert in an effort to discredit our fundamentals. This, however, was not a legitimate reason for the hatred vented by Rabbi Akiva against the Messianic Jews, if Jesus was deity as He claimed. Akiva was worried about the implications of belief in Jesus’ Messiahship and how it would affect Jewish survival outside of Israel.

33 *The Babylonian Talmud*, Shabbath, 116a, footnote 7, p. 570.

34R.Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud & Midrash*. New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc., © 1903, p. 170.

35 *The Babylonian Talmud*, Shabbath, 116a, footnote 5, p. 570.

36R.Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud & Midrash*, pp. 164, 170.

THE REAL MEANING OF SYNAGOGUE/CHURCH AND MESSIANIC SYNAGOGUE

The word church, meaning those “called out” to believe in Messiah Jesus, was only used to describe the people who believed, not the buildings in which they met. Synagogue (*bait conesset*) literally means “house of gathering.”

By this time, the Messianic Jews had been forced out of their home synagogues³⁷ by the biased, narrow-minded, propagandistic rulings of these self-appointed “rabbis” of Yavne, who managed to become the formulators of a new mainstream Judaism.

As you have read, the Birkat ha-Minim was their principal tool. Thus, the Messianic Jews were pressured to form their own Messianic synagogues similar to the ones being initiated now.³⁸ Jakob Jocz, a Jewish believer in Jesus and survivor of the Holocaust, wrote a standard work about Jesus as the Messiah from a Jewish point of view. His book is widely read in seminaries throughout the world. Regarding these Messianic synagogues of the second century, Jocz commented: “The formation of separate Synagogues seems to have been a feature of Jewish life in Jerusalem. Soon there was added a new Synagogue, that of the Nazarenes.”³⁹

The famous Jewish authority, Abba Eban, made reference to these synagogues of Jewish believers in Jesus being challenged by other synagogues in the second century, on a PBS special entitled, “Heritage, Civilization and the Jews,” which aired in 1984.⁴⁰

³⁷Professor Yehudah Liebes noted of Jewish and Jewish Christian synagogues: “Prof. Shlomo Pines has recently discovered evidence for such correct relations between Jews and Jewish Christians during the early years. In the following source relating the history of their sect, which originated among the Jewish Christians themselves, the situation following the death of Jesus is described as follows: After him, his disciples were with the Jews and the Children of Israel in the latter’s synagogues, and observed the prayers and the feasts of (the Jews) in the same place as the latter. (However) there was a disagreement between them and the Jews with regard to Christ.” Yehudah Liebes, “Who Makes the Horn of Jesus to Flourish,” *Immanuel*, pp. 56-58. Thus, we see that the Jews and Jewish Christians, in at least some cases, early on shared the same synagogues. This remarkable evidence uncovered by Professor Pines should silence those rabbis who are saying there were not many or any Jews who believed in Jesus at that time! Professor Liebes’ source was S. Pines, “The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source,” *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Science and Humanities*.

³⁸After a few hundred years, Messianic congregations were persecuted as heretical by the Catholic Church and forced underground. Today, Catholicism no longer dominates the world. Their persecution (stocks, burning, iron maidens) stopped after the Reformation, and Messianic synagogues and congregations have re-emerged in the twentieth century.

³⁹Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, p. 164.

⁴⁰This telecourse special was produced by WNET, New York.

ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNEARTH AN ANCIENT MESSIANIC SYNAGOGUE IN ISRAEL

Grant Jeffrey, in his book, *Messiah, War in the Middle East & The Road to Armageddon*, documents under his section “Jewish Christian Synagogues”: “Archaeologists in Jerusalem have discovered, in the basement of the site of the Upper Room, the remains of a first-century Judeo-Christian congregation that met in a synagogue. A fascinating article by Dr. Bargil Pixner in the *Mishkan Magazine* reveals startling archaeological evidence of the Church of the Apostles on Mount Zion (Jerusalem: Fall, 1990). He reports that when a mortar shell hit this site in the 1948 War of Independence, damage was done to the tomb of David. The Israeli archaeologist, Jacob Pinkerfield, studied the damage in 1951 and found evidence of an extremely old synagogue, with a niche to hold the ark of the Torah oriented in such a manner as to suggest Christian ownership. Further, he found some plaster in the original wall on which were written, in ancient Greek letters, the words that translated, ‘Conquer, Savior, mercy,’ and ‘O Jesus, that I may live, O lord of the autocrat [the all-powerful].’ ”⁴¹

We find it interesting that John Elson, in an article entitled, “The New Testament’s Unsolved Mysteries,” quoted “scholar,” R. T. France, who said: “...‘no 1st century inscription mentions him [Jesus] and no object or building has survived which has a specific link to him.’ ”⁴² France should have some fun reviewing the finds of 1951.

DESPITE THE EVIDENCE, SOME RABBIS ARE ATTEMPTING TO REWRITE HISTORY BY TELLING US THAT JEWISH CHRISTIANS NEVER REALLY EXISTED!

There are many rabbis today who obnoxiously and deceptively (perhaps ignorantly, in some cases) attempt to claim that Jewish Christians between the first and the fourth century **never** existed⁴³ in notable numbers. It is the rabbis’ apparent hope that this will scale down the present Jewish interest in Jesus as Messiah. For example,

⁴¹ Grant R. Jeffrey, *Messiah, War in the Middle East & The Road to Armageddon*, p. 264.

⁴² John Elson, “The New Testament’s Unsolved Mysteries,” *Time*, Dec. 18, 1995. [] mine.

⁴³ This attempt to rewrite history reminds me of a personal experience. A member of *Jews for Judaism* approached me at a Messiah Conference in 1991. He proceeded to tell me that Rachmiel Frydland never really believed in Jesus and because he was now dead, how could I know what he had believed? I told him I met Rachmiel several years before he died and that he had personally shared his testimony with me. I also said that attacking a dead man who could not defend himself was disgusting. He turned red with anger. This also reminds me of the neo-Nazis, who are cruelly trying to spread the propaganda that the Holocaust never happened. One of my friends, a Holocaust survivor, told me in despair, “In a few years when we (all Holocaust survivors—even the children who survived the Holocaust are now approaching seventy years of age) are all dead, the neo-Nazis are going to have a party, the likes of which few have seen.” Jewish believers in Jesus died for their beliefs. To say they never existed is incomprehensible, evil and wrong!

Rabbi Kaplan, in *The Real Messiah*, wrote: “Although all of Jesus’ disciples were Jews, they could not convince their fellow Jews of their teachings...Christianity was rejected by the Jews...the Jew stood firm...and walked his own way....If Christianity made any contribution at all, it was to the non-Jewish world.”⁴⁴

**RABBI LEWIS TOLD ME TO MY FACE, 2000-YEAR-OLD
JEWISH CHRISTIANS ARE A MISCONCEPTION—
NEW TESTAMENT PROPAGANDA**

More recently, in a 1983 question and answer session/meeting entitled, “Jewish Answers to Christian Questions,” conducted by Rabbi Shalom Lewis of the Atlanta Rabbinic Association, he asked a question concerning the existence and practices of Jews who believed in Jesus 2000 years ago. Lewis said: “A statement is directed at, you know, at the Jewish community by a Christian and that is, that it worked 2000 years ago where you had Jews accepting Jesus, so why can’t it work today? How do you answer that question?” Someone in the group answered, “They didn’t accept Jesus 2000 years ago either.” The rabbi replied falsely: “That is correct, that is a misconception. The apostle, who was the apostle who was most successful? Was it Peter or Paul?” I said, “Paul.” He answered, “Paul. Who was Paul going after?” I said, “Gentiles.” Again he asked, “Who was Peter going after?” I said, “Jews.” The rabbi said: “Who was successful? Paul, by your own admission, because the Jews realized that you can’t have Jesus and still be Jewish 2000 years ago and Judaism recognizes that today and the Jewish community instinctively recognizes that today as well...Peter eventually just threw his hands up in the air because he realized he wasn’t getting any place.”

My friend, Dan Levine, who introduced himself to Rabbi Lewis as “a Messianic Jew of the New Testament,” then commented: “I was also noticing, reading in Acts 21:20, that there were myriads, ten thousands of Jewish people in Jerusalem who believed in *Yeshua* and observed Torah [law].” Lewis answered sharply: “It’s propaganda. **Do you believe** everything that comes out of Russia? Of course not.”

By the way, when the rabbi said “by your own admission,” he never gave me a chance to answer. He cut me off⁴⁵ with his answer to

⁴⁴Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *et al*, *The Real Messiah*, pp. 16-17.

⁴⁵Eleven years later, in a similar seminar held in January and February of 1994, he calmly told the group (while I quietly sat in), “...I refuted step by step all the arguments that they had.” This was definitely an untruth. He said, “Every time they were caught in a corner, they kind of jumped out of it, not by logic or not by being very clever, but by being evasive;” when in fact, he was the one “jumping out of corners” by cutting us off and sharply answering his own questions to us and then moving quickly on to the next issue. If I had been allowed to finish my statement concerning the evangelism of Peter and Paul, I would have reminded the rabbi that Paul also shared the Gospel of Jesus with many Jews in the synagogues of his time. Paul lectured in the synagogues at: Salamis Acts 13:5; Iconium

my question, as he did my friend Dan. Though Peter had less success than Paul because the world contains many more non-Jews than Jews, Peter succeeded greatly, as Dan pointed out before he was rudely cut off by Rabbi Lewis' remark.⁴⁶

**THOUGH THE SCRIBES DECORATED⁴⁷ THE TOMBS OF
THE PROPHETS, MODERN RABBIS HAVE IGNORED
THOSE OF THE JEWISH BELIEVERS, BUT NOW (DUE TO A
RECENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY), THEY NO
LONGER CAN**

We now ask Rabbi Lewis, “**Do you believe** what’s *coming out of the Golan Heights* in archaeological discoveries in Israel eleven years after the fact?!” In another seminar held in January and February of 1994, Lewis reiterated his point that Jews of 2000 years ago never believed, emphasizing that Jews “disappear” within one generation after accepting Jesus. As we will see, Jewish believers existed for over three hundred years in the fourth century until they were completely shut out by the rabbis. This is substantiated by a popular Israeli magazine!

The tombstones of Jewish believers in Jesus have been discovered at the base of the Mount of Olives. They were identifiable from the Jewish symbols and Christian inscriptions in Greek and Hebrew and are now located in the Basilica of Dominus Flevit (Franciscan).⁴⁸ Recently, *Biblical Archaeological Review* featured an interesting article about the tombs of such believers. They existed, whether today’s rabbis want to admit it or not.

The ancient Israeli towns of Anea and Yetta were whole cities composed almost completely of Jewish believers in Jesus. The rabbis of that era called the town of Bainah “an engulfed town” because the majority of its population were Jewish Christians.⁴⁹

14:1; Lystra 8; Antioch 19; Thessalonica 17:1; Berea 10; Athens 17; Corinth 18:4; Ephesus 18-19; and Tyrannus 19:8-10. However, I doubt the rabbi would have cared.

⁴⁶Our quotes are from this author’s personal tape of these talks and meetings. Anyone wishing to verify authenticity may hear the tape upon request!

⁴⁷Jesus’ New Testament words to the Pharisees and religious leaders were: “ ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets, Consequently you bear witness against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets’ ” (Matt. 23:29-31 NASB).

⁴⁸The Jewish believer in Jesus, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, Ph.D., visits this site during his extensive five-week tours of Israel, usually taken only once every two years. For information, write Ariel Ministries, POB 3723, Tustin, CA, USA 92681-3723.

⁴⁹Arnold Fruchtenbaum documented this information in his class, “Messianic Jewish History,” at the July 1994 MJAA Messiah Conference. This tape #505 CF307 is available from CTI, Inc., 1704 Valencia NE, Albuquerque, NM, USA 87110. These towns are also mentioned in a rare but interesting book by Fr. Bellarmino Bagetti, O.F.M., *The Church from the Circumcision, History and Archaeology of the Judaeo-Christians*, a publication

More recently, an article entitled “Filling in the Blanks,” by Abraham Rabinovich reported: “French archaeologist Claudine Dauphine discovered that in addition to Jews and Christians, there were Jewish Christians on the Golan. In villages like Farj and Er-Ramthaniyeh, she found stones that were carved with symbols belonging to both religions, such as a *lulav* (palm branch), fish, or ship, and symbols associated specifically with Christian Jews, such as a cross superimposed on a ship’s mast.

In 66 C.E., after the death of James, Jesus’ brother, the Jewish Christian followers of James left Jerusalem for Pella in Transjordan. They subsequently moved northward, to the Bashan and eastern Golan. Two major groups were the Ebionites and the Nazarenes. Both clung to Jewish practices such as circumcision and Sabbath observance, but regarded Jesus as the Messiah....Dauphine believes she has found Ebionite remains from **as late as the fourth century** on the Golan. It is the first time, she says, that ancient carvings were found with Jewish and Christian symbols overlaid, not just beside each other—negating the possibility that they may have been carved at different times by different peoples.”⁵⁰

THE HEBREW COVER-UP OF THE APOCALYPTIC BOOKS

Humanity is posed with an interesting question. Why did the leaders of the very people who wrote the apocalyptic literature want to cover them up? We also ask why Jews have not had an apocalyptic end-time teaching within mainstream Judaism for the last nineteen centuries?

While there is ample teaching in the Bible for the Jews to look forward to the apocalyptic signs of the end (as witnessed by this book, the Baptist Church and Dallas Theological Seminary teachings on the Old Testament), there is no significant emphasis on these exciting hopes at all within Orthodox or Conservative Judaism throughout the

of the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1971, pp. 16-17.

⁵⁰Abraham Rabinovich, “Filling in the Blanks,” *ERETZ*, © May/June 1994, pp. 54-55, used by permission. Bold mine. This also disproves the hysterical fear of many modern rabbis who maintain that a Jew who believes in Jesus is absorbed into the Gentile culture within one generation, losing all Jewish identity. Clearly, Jewish believers’ graves have been found as late as the fourth century. They did not assimilate in “one generation.” They became dispersed after that time because the Catholics on one side and the *rabbis* on the other *forced them out*. Rabinovich writes in the same article: “By the fifth century, Jewish Christian groups disappeared, as hardening lines within both religions made it impossible to dwell in both camps.” Ibid. Let’s not let the rabbis destroy today’s Messianic Jewish identity, as they are attempting to do through groups like *Jews for Judaism* and polemical books, such as *The Real Messiah*. Rabinovich’s text cited above and in this footnote is annotated by the words: “The archaeological teams that set out to explore the Golan after the Six Day War weren’t expecting very much. They were in for a big surprise.” Ibid, p. 5. Bold mine.

world. The only small exception to this rule lies within a few hard to find works noted in some of the writings of obscure rabbis, which are mainly glossed over in the Diaspora.⁵¹

It is much easier to locate rabbis who are willing to discuss the subject of the soon-coming apocalypse, based on biblical writings, in Israel, as I have done! They even have a library which specializes in the subject called the Rav Cook Library of Jerusalem. However, every rabbi I questioned in the U.S. said, “We do not emphasize any such teaching,” or “We live for today. If the Messiah comes, He comes! We don’t dwell on it. The Lubavitchers⁵² may be fanatical about it but that’s outside of normative mainstream Judaism!” Thus we ask, “Could ignoring the Hebrew apocalyptic writings be an added component of the historical rabbinical conspiracy to keep the Jew from becoming interested in the Messiah, thus possibly discovering His true identity—Jesus?”

Robert H. Pfeiffer of Harvard and Boston Universities, in his book, *History of New Testament Times*, tells us: “Normative Judaism relinquished the utopian dreams of apocalyptic writings to the Christians, and retrenched itself increasingly within the citadel of the written and the oral law, thus separating itself more and more from the Gentiles. The final break between the Christian Church and the synagogue took place at this time when the Nazarenes—a Jewish-Christian group worshiping in the synagogues but teaching that Jesus was the Messiah—were forced to become a sect, equally repudiated by the Rabbis and by the Bishops. Henceforth the teachers of the Law—scribes and Pharisees, Tannaim, Amoraim, Geonim, rabbis—became the leaders of Israel.”⁵³

AFTER 70 AD, JEWISH LEADERS DECIDE TO DESTROY HEBREW APOCALYPTIC ORIGINALS

D. S. Russell, author of *The Method & Message of Jewish Apocalyptic*, informs us: “L. Ginzberg has pointed out that in the entire rabbinic literature of the first six centuries there is not a single quotation from the extant apocalyptic literature; because of this it has sometimes been too readily assumed that rabbinic Judaism would have nothing whatever to do with the teaching and ideals contained in these books. C. C. Torrey, for example, affirms that from AD 70 onwards, so great was the devotion of the Jewish leaders to the Law and the sacred Scriptures, the decision was taken to destroy as undesirable all

⁵¹Countries outside of Israel—this is another reason why you should give your Jewish friends a copy of this book.

⁵²An orthodox group of Hasidic Jews, which was headed by Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, numbering over one-half million, differing from most Jews in their emphatic expectation of the Messiah.

⁵³Robert H. Pfeiffer, *History of New Testament Times*, p. 45.

the Semitic originals of the ‘outside books’, including the apocalyptic writings, and so effect ‘the sudden and complete abandonment by the Jews of their popular literature’. Thus, this once-popular literature was discontinued and the ideas which it perpetuated were rejected as dangerous and heretical.”⁵⁴

Russell goes on to say: “...the very fanaticism of the apocalyptists would in itself be a warning to the rabbis of the dangers inherent in such teachings....Thus, they were a challenge both to rabbinic authority and to the safety of the State. Another, and perhaps decisive, factor in the decline of apocalyptic would be the rapid growth of Christianity and the adoption and adaptation by the Church of many Jewish apocalyptic writings whose messianic and eschatological teachings were eminently suitable for the purpose of Christian propaganda....With the return of more peaceful times the original Hebrew and Aramaic texts would be no longer in existence. Such books as survived would owe their survival to the fact that they had already been translated into other languages, and such apocalyptic ideas as persisted within rabbinic Judaism would be the result of oral transmission. This attempted solution is only a guess and cannot be proven; but it underlines the fact that, for whatever reason, the apocalyptic books were perpetuated not in the original Hebrew and Aramaic tongues but in Greek and in the many other languages of the Dispersion. By reason of the antipathy of many rabbis to them and because they were no longer available for study in their original texts, it was inevitable that they should at last fall out of use [among Jews].”⁵⁵

Several of these apocalyptic writings included commentaries on the Bible by ancient rabbis whose originals were written in Hebrew. There is an extensive list in the back of Raphael Patai’s book, *The Messiah Texts*, in his section, “Abbreviations and Annotated Biography.” W. Bousset, in his book, *Antichrist Legend, A Chapter in Christian and Jewish Folklore*, quotes from many translated apocalyptic writings.

⁵⁴D.S. Russell, *The Method & Message of Jewish Apocalyptic: 200 B.C. - A.D. 100*, p.30.

⁵⁵Ibid, p. 32. [] mine.

**SEMITIC FRAGMENTS OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL HAVE
BEEN REVEALED, BUT WILL THE ENTIRE HEBREW
GOSPEL BE EXCAVATED IN ISRAEL? PRAY!**

To conclude our comments regarding all of the attempts to destroy and cover up certain original apocalyptic writings dealing with predicted future events,⁵⁶ we would like to ask you a question. Could all the talk about the burning of the New Testament by rabbis such as Me'ir, Akiva, Jose and Tarphon, have been connected with the destruction of these writings? If the New Testament was hunted down and destroyed in its original Hebrew editions, could this be the reason why we have been unable (as of yet) to discover the original⁵⁷ Hebrew New Testament, which is the question of the century?

Fragments of an original document have been found and many wait for the original Hebrew New Testament to reappear from archaeological excavations in Israel. Such a find would impress a new openness to Jesus upon many Israeli rabbis' eyes (see our appendix 1, "It's All *Hebrew* to Me")! We urge all true believers to pray that we soon discover the "Hebrew New"!

⁵⁶D.S. Russell outlines most of what is included under the apocalyptic prophecies when he notes: "...The apocalyptic books...express belief in such things as the heavenly bliss of the righteous, the resurrection of the dead, the heavenly banquet, the coming judgment, the fires of Gehenna, the angelic destruction of Jerusalem and the coming of the New Jerusalem, the advent of the Messiah, the travails of the messianic age, wonders and portents heralding the last days and so forth." Ibid.

⁵⁷Pinchas Lapide, an unbiased Jewish scholar, wrote as recently as 1976 that: "It is certain, however, that all four Greek Gospels display distinct traces of an **original** Hebrew text in their vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and semantic patterns. Hence we cannot seriously question the existence of a 'Hebrew gospel'—no fewer than ten Fathers of the Church testify to it...Papias (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* III, 39, 1); Irenaeus (*ibid.*, V, 8, 2); Hegesippus (*ibid.*, IV, 22, 4); Jerome (*Contra Rufinum* VII, 77; *De vir. ill.* II; *In Matt.* 6, 11; *In Ezech.* 18, 7; *Adv. Pel.* III, 2 et al.); Origen (*In Matt.* XV, 14); Epiphanius (*Panarion* I, 29, 7 and 9); Theodoret of Cyprus (*Haer.* Fab. II, 1); Nicephorus Callistus (*Eccl. Hist.* III, 13); Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* II, IX, 45, 5); Pantaenus (Eusebius, *ibid.*, V, 10, 3)." Pinchas Lapide, *Israelis, Jews, and Jesus*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., © 1979, p. 3, used by permission.

A CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY—*YESHU* WHO?

You have probably heard many people ask, “What’s in a name?” You may have shrugged your shoulders and agreed, “You are right, nothing.” In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. A name can contain incredible blessings or horrendous incantations. In our case, we are dealing with the greatest name known in history, which was mutilated by the early rabbis through the removal of the last letter. In order to obscure its true meaning, they attempted to transform the greatest name into the worst curse.

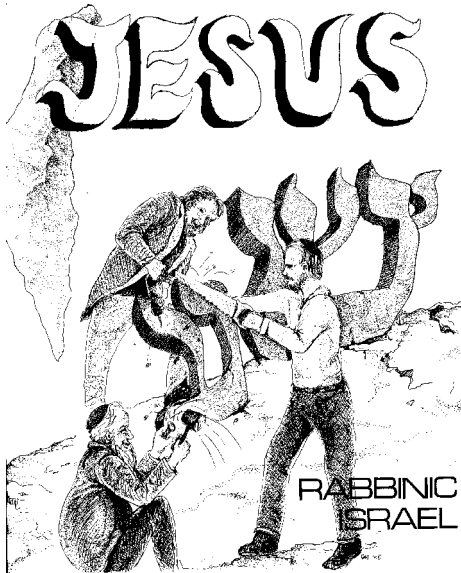
As previously noted, Jesus’ given name was *Yeshua* (“salvation”). The rabbis changed it to *Yeshu*, an anagram of *ymah shemo vezihro* (ישׁוּ יִמָּח שְׁמוֹ וְזִכְרוֹ) (*ymah shemo vezihro—Yeshu*). The only difference in the two words in Hebrew is the soft au pronounced at the end. This may sound strange to those unfamiliar with the Hebrew language. All Hebrew words stem from roots usually containing three letters. Each consonant has eleven vowel sounds. The words built from the roots are changed by adding prefixes and suffixes and changing the vowel sounds. A minor change can completely alter the meaning of a word. The words *neshek* and *nesheka* are an example. The word *nesheka*, with the soft a sound, means “kiss” in Hebrew. The word *neshek* without the soft a sound, means “weapon.”

By exploiting this linguistic device, the rabbis tried to change the blessing of our salvation into a curse, since the literal meaning of *ymah shemo vezihro* is “may his name and memory be blotted out.” In the Hebrew culture, this is the worst curse that can befall any man. Changing Jesus’ Hebrew name *Yeshua*/salvation to the curse *Yeshu*, is no doubt, one of the worst rabbinic crimes ever committed in human history! May they apologize.

REDISCOVERING THE HEBREW NAME OF JESUS AFTER TWO MILLENNIA OF SCANDAL

So, what's in a name? Today, we are rediscovering Jesus' true Hebrew name after twenty centuries of rabbinic cover-up—a name which, surprisingly, is still a secret to many in Israel! Quite a few modern Israelis are unaware of the true meaning of *Yeshu*. They do not know that this acronym, formulated by the rabbis in the early centuries after Jesus, really means “let His name and memory be blotted out.” They think it is the true name of Jesus. Thus the rabbis have deceived nearly all of Israel from the first century to the present day with this false acronym.

Some rabbis, ashamed of what earlier ones did with the first three letters of Jesus' name, try to deny the true meaning of these letters. For instance, the noted authority, Professor Joseph Klausner,⁵⁸ is one of those who denies this. However, the modern Hebrew dictionary used in Israel,⁵⁹ compiled by Abraham Even-Soshan, defines these three letters, *ude* י, *shin* ש, and *vav* ו, as standing for י (ימח) *ymah* (“it will be blotted out”) ש (שמו) *shemo* (“his name”) ו (וזכרו) *vezihro* (“and his memory”).



⁵⁸“Klausner explains that ישו is an abbreviated form for ישוע or יהושע. He categorically denies the allegation that ישו is a nickname for יהושע and made up of the initials: ימח שמו וזכרו. See Klausner, p. 229 and note. Cp. also Hugh J. Schonfield, *According to the Hebrews*, London, 1937, who thinks that ‘Jeshu’ is a north-Palestinian contraction of Jeshua, where the letter *ayin* was not sounded (p. 221).” Jakob Jocz, *The Jewish People and Jesus Christ*, p. 337.

⁵⁹*New Dictionary*. Jerusalem: Kiryat Sephen, © 1973, p. 512, used by permission.

Israel, like all other nations of the world, has the right to know the true name of Jesus, whether the religious like it or not! Especially since Jesus' name is the Hebrew name Joshua (*Yeshua* or *Yehoshua* in Hebrew). It is ironic that the nations of the earth generally know when and why Jesus came while it is forbidden for Israelis to look into it, according to the religious minority. Are we going to let the "Black Hats," two or three percent of the population, push Israel around? Many say no! Israel can make up its own mind after investigating these long hidden facts about the concealment of Jesus' Hebrew name.

DR. KAC'S CONFIRMATION OF THE ABBREVIATION

Additional evidence that this abbreviated name, *Yeshu*, was intended to be a curse has been documented by the Jewish scholar, Dr. Arthur Kac, who believes in Jesus. He tells us: "There was a time when the name of Jesus was never mentioned by Jews except in derision. One who wanted to refer to Him used circumlocution, such as *oto ish* ('this man') or *ish ploni* ('the unnamed one'). It became customary to alter His name by omitting one Hebrew letter. Thus the name *Yeshua* became *Yeshu*, which was meant to represent an anagram for a malediction.

According to a scurrilous parody of Jesus' life, a medieval tale fabricated to dishonor the mother of Jesus and to declare Him a bastard, His real name was Yehoshua, but when His origin became known it was altered to *Yeshu*...."⁶⁰ Dr. Kac's footnote to malediction reads: "'*Yeshu*' was supposed to stand for 'his name and memory be blotted out.'" ⁶¹

AN ISOLATED ISRAELI'S REDISCOVERY—PERSONAL TESTIMONY

I have had the opportunity to show many Israelis what this name really means. For quite a while, I carried a photocopy of the Hebrew dictionary documentation around in my briefcase. On many occasions when I would speak to them about *Yeshua* (Jesus) and point out the various prophecies, they would say, "Oh, you mean *Yeshu*." I would reply, "No, I mean *Yeshua*—His real name." This would confuse them, so I would pull the photocopy out of my briefcase for them to read. They would then say, "Oh no, that's a curse and a very wicked one at that" or something similar. Each time I used the documented proof of what the name *Yeshu* was intended to mean to inform my Israeli friends of what they had been falsely taught;⁶² they never again ever referred to Jesus as *Yeshu*, but rather *Yeshua*, which as we now

⁶⁰ Arthur W. Kac, *The Messiahship of Jesus*, p. 148.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁶² That *Yeshu* is Jesus' name instead of *Yeshua*.

know, in Hebrew means “salvation,” or more precisely “Jehova [God] saves.”

RESTORATION OF THE *INE* (“EYE”) LENDS INSIGHT TO BIBLE TEXT AND CONTEXT

Interestingly enough, the Hebrew letter *ine* ע, which the rabbis removed, is the symbol for “sight” in Hebrew. The Hebrew word for “eye” is *ine*. In Hebrew symbology, they are in a sense, deliberately blinding themselves to the true meaning of the word by removing the letter for sight. When we restore the last letter *ine* ע, the true meaning—*Yeshua*/Jesus, God’s Messiah *Savior*—returns and the falseness of the curse falls away.

The fact that Jesus was named יֵשׁוּעַ, *Yeshua* after Joshua (see Neh. 3:19 in the Hebrew Bible for the same spelling⁶³) is even more symbolic here. Matthew, the author of the first book of the New Testament, clearly illustrates the intention and meaning in the context of his words: “...thou shalt call his name *JESUS*: for he *shall save* his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21 KJV; italics mine). *The New Scofield Reference Bible* footnotes Jesus in this passage with the explanation, “Greek form of Hebrew, Johoshua meaning Jehovah is salvation.”⁶⁴

ISRAELIS REVERSE THE CURSE AND DENOUNCE RABBINIC DECEPTION

When Israelis are shown Messianic prophecies like Isaiah 53, Micah 5:2 and Zechariah 12:10, they realize that they cannot, in good conscience, refer to their Messiah in this way, suspecting that one day they may very well stand before Him. If Jesus is the Messiah, they do not want to continue using a curse to describe Him. After realizing what it means, they become more sympathetic with the life and person of Jesus and curiosity causes many to open their Bible and see who He really is. Once they see that He is the Messiah, as He claimed, they become disgusted with the rabbinical sages who deceived them into calling the Messiah by their curse of *Yeshu*.

⁶³This name was also spelled with the extra letter, *hay*, earlier in the Torah.

⁶⁴*The New Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 992.



**ISRAEL SEES THE LIGHT (OF JESUS)
IN ITS OWN MENORAH**

Jesus' real name, as it is spelled in the modern Hebrew translation of the New Testament, lights the menorah (Hebrew candlestick, see Exo. 25:31)⁶⁵ in Hebrew letters. This gives us another interesting insight into His true purpose, as found in His vibrant words recorded in the Gospel of John: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12 KJV).

This was foretold seven hundred years before His birth within the Jewish prophetic writings of Isaiah: "And now says the LORD, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the LORD, And My God is My strength), He says, 'It is

⁶⁵The menorah, or candlestick, Israel's national symbol, has seven branches. It should not be confused with the *hanukia* menorah, which is used on Hanukkah and has nine branches. Menorah means "lamp" in Hebrew.

too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a **light** of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.’ Thus says the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, *and* its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, ‘Kings shall see and arise, Princes shall also bow down; Because of the LORD who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.’ Thus says the Lord, ‘In a favorable time I have answered You, And in a day of salvation, I have helped You; And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people, To restore the land, to make *them* inherit the desolate heritages...’ ” (Isa. 49:5-8 NASB).

Thus, many Israelis, after realizing all that has been hidden from them (as we have documented in the last few pages), become indifferent to the rabbis and begin to study the Bible on their own, to find out what it really says about the truth and their Messiah.

A FEW ORTHODOX KNOW THE MEANING OF THE NAME CURSE BUT ARE UNMOVED

Anyone outside of Israel and rabbinical circles, who does not know Hebrew has probably never heard the word *Yeshu*. This name is virtually unknown, with the exception of a few English-speaking, American, Canadian and European Orthodox Jewish groups, which use this name in the Diaspora form of *Yesheka*.⁶⁶ It sounds worse than *Yeshu*, doesn't it? Most of them know its meaning. It is part of the anti-missionary and anti-Jews for Jesus campaign, which is drilled into the heads of orthodox students in yeshivas the world over. However, their numbers pale when compared to the whole of world Jewry. One rabbi told me that there are many more Jews for Jesus than there are Jews in all of the yeshivas⁶⁷ in the world.

⁶⁶This word, using the spelling *Yoshkeh*, was used in the New Jerusalem Times edition of *The Jewish Press*, April 16, 1987, in a front page article entitled, “Beware of Missionary Forge S’Dorim,” by Aryeh Julius. The article used this obscenity in the heading, “Jews for Yoshkeh Congregations.” It described Jews for Jesus who would be celebrating Passover and elaborating on Jesus’ fulfillment of this Jewish holiday. The article dealt with the announcement that spies of *Yad La Akim* (“the Hand to the Brothers,” an anti-missionary organization) would be sent to watch over believers’ Passover dinners at Baptist Village (Petah Tikva), Beit Hisda (Haifa), Assaf Congregation (Netanya), Beit Emmanuel Congregation (Yaffo), Hesed V’Emet Congregation (Eliat) and Netiv-ya (Jerusalem), as well as to the private homes of missionaries throughout Israel. They called their people “emissaries” and their mission “Operation Seder.” If this sounds as silly to you as it did to me, you can look it up in the library archives. For more details on Passover and this instance, see our *Vol. II*, chapter 6, “Disapproval of the Believers’ Passover in Israel.”

⁶⁷A yeshiva is an Orthodox Jewish study school where portions of the Old Testament and Jewish writings, such as the Talmud, are studied and chanted. In Hebrew, the word yeshiva means “you sit,” as they sit and study all day. I have an anti-missionary tape produced by a yeshiva in Israel. A rabbi teaching a course made the statement, “There are more Jews

JESUS' NAME IN HEBREW—WE ARE WINNING!

In the first century, the rabbis at Yavne changed Jesus' Hebrew name from *Yeshua* to *Yeshu* and nearly all rabbis today still use this despicable name, especially in Israel. It is worth noting that not only does the Hebrew edition of the New Testament call Jesus *Yeshua*, Rabbi Abarbanel, a famous Jewish sage who did not believe in Jesus, also called him *Yeshua* (ישוע). Rabbi Abarbanel wrote:

“...and there was the belief in *Yeshua* that the sons of Adom were renewing since the beginning of these Scriptures.”⁶⁸

The greatly respected sage, Rambam/Maimonides, of nearly 1000 years ago, referred to Jesus not by *Yeshu* but *Yeshua*. Risto Santala pointed this out in his latest book, *Paul: The Man and the Teacher, In the Light of Jewish Sources*, when he said: “It is worth remembering that the famous mediaeval scholar Maimonides wrote the name of Jesus in the form ‘Yeshua’ in his book *Hilkhot Melakhim*. So do Israeli Messianic Jews in order to avoid the secret abuse connected with the shorter form *Yeshu*: ‘May his name and memory be blotted out.’”⁷⁰

The Orthodox Jews in Israel who call Jesus *Yeshu*, may not be aware that two of their most respected sages called Jesus by His true name, *Yeshua*. If the Orthodox Jews were made aware of this fact, then quite possibly most of them would cease to persist in calling Him by the name *Yeshu*? So tell them! However, in spite of the orthodox religious zeal to strike the true name of Jesus from Israel, there is apparently a slow but growing awareness within Israeli culture that His true name is really *Yeshua*, and not *Yeshu*. We gather this from Pinchas Lapide's book, *Israelis, Jews, and Jesus*, where he documents that recently at least three Israeli textbooks have begun to use the name *Yeshua*.⁷¹

studying Christianity than there are Jews studying Judaism (Orthodox).” He called these people “Jews for Yesheka.” Anyone wishing to verify this may contact me at the POB on the back of this book.

⁶⁸ דון יצחק אברבנאל, מענייני השעיה, © 1948, p. תיב. (Don Itzhak Abarbanel, *Matters of Salvation*, © 1948, p. 412; originally published in the sixteenth century.)

⁶⁹ English translation of previous Hebrew quote.

⁷⁰ Risto Santala, *Paul: The Man and the Teacher, In the Light of Jewish Sources*. Jerusalem: Keren Ahvah Meshihit, © 1995, p. 23, used by permission.

⁷¹ Pinchas Lapide, *Israelis, Jews, and Jesus*, p. 39. Lapide is a Jewish scholar who, as far as we know, did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah.