

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **The Message of this Book**

This book is about Jesus - Jesus as a man of the flesh. It is also about a married Jesus, a Jesus who loved women and was not afraid to touch them.

This is a taboo topic in the world of the Church. Even though the Church in its Creeds proclaims a truly human Savior, our Lord's humanity still remains an embarrassment for Christians to contemplate. They are willing to admit that Jesus grew tired and slept. They are willing to admit that when He hungered, he ate. But when it comes to other bodily functions, like defecating, they grow intensely nervous. The thought of the Son of God squatting behind a bush to relieve Himself does not seem very holy to the sanctimonious mind. Imagine

the disgust at the suggestion that Jesus might have fondled a woman's breast!

Even though the Scriptures plainly state that our Lord bore the "infirmities of the flesh" and was "tempted in like manner as we are," yet Christians are horrified at the thought of a sexual Jesus.

The quick retort, of course, is that Jesus did not sin in these temptations. Yes, the pious mind will affirm a sinless Messiah. But what does a sinless Messiah mean? Does it mean perfection? What kind of perfection? Does it mean that Jesus dropped no crumbs when He ate His food? Does it mean He did not lose consciousness when He slept? Does it mean He had no erotic dreams or nocturnal emissions?

The Creeds of the Church affirm that Jesus Christ had two natures: one human and one Divine. The natures existed with each other side by side "without mingling and without confusion." What this means is that Jesus did not cheat. Unlike the gods of pagan mythologies, He did not allow His Divine nature to communicate its powers to His human nature. Even though He had the power to raise the dead, He did not have the power to prevent Himself from catching a cold. He had the power to calm the stormy seas, but He did not have the power to avoid smacking His thumb with a hammer. He had the power to cast out

demons, but did not have the power to prevent an erection.

Have I lost you already? The largest hurdle to overcome when considering this proposition is not the bare facts. It's the denial of our humanity that plagues Christianity. If you cannot get through this Introduction calmly and with determined interest, you are not ready for this subject. You have problems: emotional problems rooted in a Christianity twisted by a hatred of the way God has made us.

For the rest of you, consider the beautiful implications of what I have just said above. **Our Savior experienced our humanity.** He was "touched by our infirmities," bore them with dignity, and sanctified them.

This was the claim of one leader of early Christianity: Irenaeus. He was a bishop who lived among the Celts of Gaul during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century. He taught what theologians call the "doctrine of recapitulation." We will visit it again later in this book. But basically, what it taught was the idea that mankind needed a Savior for the totality of its humanity. Irenaeus debated against the Gnostics who were members of various heretical Christian groups during this time. The Gnostics taught that

Jesus saved mankind, not *in* its humanity, but *from* its humanity: that the union with the Divine was metaphysical and not ethical, as the Christians taught it. One group of Gnostics was called the Docetists. The Docetists taught that Jesus was not really human. He just pretended to be human. They felt that had He really been human, His flesh would have disqualified Him from being the Savior of the world. Leaders like Irenaeus resisted this claim and insisted that Jesus was truly flesh and blood. They taught that all of the experiences of humanity were His experiences also. The Doctrine of Recapitulation affirmed that Jesus entered into every stage of human experience - from cradle to grave - and sanctified them. Thus, to the Christian, the experience of our mortal existence becomes one great sacrament; for we are following in the footsteps of our Lord.

If Jesus entered every stage of human experience, then what about sex and marriage? Irenaeus didn't say anything, or at least, we have no record that he did. It is possible that these sorts of things were edited out by later copyists who were hostile to the idea of a phallic Christ. I don't know. But the demands of logic require that when Irenaeus said "every stage of life" he meant to include that period which is so basic to our existence: the period of

fertility and mating. The Gospel record tells us that Jesus was about 33 years old when He was crucified, at the time when most men have reached the peak of their virility. The average Jewish male was married between the ages of 16 and 20. It is difficult to imagine Jesus avoiding marriage, especially if He came to redeem it.

And that is a part of the message of this book. I do not stop with the proposition of a married Messiah. I ask the questions of what it means and how might it change our paradigm of what marriage is supposed to be. Hence, I introduce the term *hierogamy* (hi-raw-gamee). Coined from the Greek *hieros* (sacred) and *gamos* (marriage), I go beyond the classical view of the Church that marriage is a sacrament. Indeed, it is. But what kind of sacrament? Scholars use the term "hieros gamos" to refer to the ancient pagan practice of mating temple priestesses with sacrificial kings who make atonement for the land. A part of the old fertility religions, hierogamy was a ritual union of the masculine and feminine principles which was designed to maintain balance in the cosmos and times of plenty on the earth. Is this the kind of hierogamy we see in the Bible? **Some current scholars think so. I don't think so.**

Modern scholarship does not take into account that these fertility cults were often degraded and

superstitious forms of the old paganism of the Biblical patriarchs. While the faith of Enoch, Noah and Abraham was rooted in natural revelation, many of their ancient contemporaries engaged in religious rites without knowing their true meaning or why they came into existence. Modern scholars are also compromised by a Gnosticism which has propagated many of these ancient beliefs and customs within a Christian garb, but not a truly Christian paradigm. They do not understand the mysteries of the Church. You will be introduced to those mysteries in this book.

However garbled the Biblical record might appear to be to such scholars, there is one thread which admittedly ties it all together: the doctrine of the covenant. **There is a unity of the Covenant in the Biblical record.** Hierogamy cannot be understood without first understanding the Covenant. Once that doctrine is understood, a spiritual awakening occurs. It becomes immediately obvious why Jesus *had* to be married to be the true Messiah. Suddenly, the Scriptures come alive with new meaning and the sometimes cryptic messages of the Patristic writings become apparent.

That is your privilege in reading this book.

## Preview of Chapters

Let me offer some explanation of the chapters in this book.

The first four chapters deal with the question of whether Jesus was married or not. The first three chapters focus on what others have said. I do not profess the reviews to be complete or exhaustive. But I think they are *representative* of what is available on the market right now.

The fourth chapter offers my contribution to the discussion. In that chapter, I deal with theological questions arising from the Biblical text, the Creeds, and cryptic messages of some of the early Church Fathers. It argues the case that Christianity denies its own rhetoric in failing to affirm the phallic Christ.

With the fifth chapter, "Hierogamy: A Primer", I condense the final chapters of the "big book" to give the reader a sense for the meaning of a married Messiah to Christianity as a religion and its future influence on the culture.

Don't ignore the Appendix on the Bridegroom. It provides some commentary on an otherwise obscure saying of Jesus and offers a fresh perspective on the relevance of hierogamy to the larger vision of Bible prophecy.

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***The Spirit and the Bride say, Come!***

**- Revelation 22:17**



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **THE MARRIED JESUS IN POPULAR LITERATURE**

#### **The Motives of Friend and Foe**

As with any proposition, the motives and biases of its proponents must be examined along with its message. This author does not pretend to have no biases of his own, but the honest seeker of truth will recognize his biases, admit them in the proposition and will compensate for them.

There is a growing body of literature in support of the proposition of a married Jesus. Some of it is literary fiction, some of it is speculative history, and some of it is spiritual mysticism. Some of the literature is written by well-educated individuals; some of it is not. The authors undoubtedly differ in their motives. Perhaps some are purely mercenary in

their motivation: they are out to make a buck. But for most of them, there is an underlying sense of adventure in discovering a "secret" which serves their iconoclasm. A few of them have caught a wonderful vision for the world.

What they all have in common is their audience: a growing segment of the population that is discontented with the Christianity as propounded by classical theologians. For that audience, there is first a fascination and then a personal identification with a sexual Jesus. This motivation deserves closer examination and an explanation.

Unlike any other time of human history, we live in a time of plenty. People are usually well-fed and well-clothed. Even our poor people are rich in amenities compared to our ancestors of just a hundred years ago.

Yet, in spite of that, people in our culture are not happy. They are unhappy with their jobs, with their spouses, where they live, and so on. People move a lot. They break-up a lot. What is going on here?

I don't think our unhappiness comes from a "spoiled brat" mentality, although some social commentators think so. I think it grows from the fact that human nature is first a spiritual nature before

being a physical one. Having enough isn't really enough. As our Lord said, "Man shall not live by bread alone." There is a spiritual side to our existence.

For example, while an animal eats when it is hungry, it does not understand or relate to the idea of feasting: the joy associated with the process of preparing food and eating it with others. Humankind thinks about the *meaning* of all of our bodily needs and functions. It thinks about why they were made. It wants to connect with the Being that made them. That's why we have sacraments. Sacraments help us connect with the Creator who made water (baptism), food (Eucharist), and - dare I say it - sex (?).

Is it possible that we find here the reason why the idea of a married Jesus so captivates our generation? We are trying to re-sacramentalize sex and the idea of a Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus just isn't enough.

Human beings need symbols that inspire them, Divine symbols. When it comes to romance, marriage and sex, where do we find them in Christianity? Where do we find the symbols to lift our souls and help us to stay the course? There are none. There are plenty of human symbols (e.g. Abraham and Sarah,

Ruth and Boaz, Solomon and the Shulamite), but there are no Divine symbols.

The wagging fingers point to Christ and the Church. Somehow, we are supposed to believe this Pauline metaphor sets the standard for emulation. How inspiring can a fictional entity called "the Church" be for anyone? Who or what is "the Church"? The Church is not a person; it is a collective body of people - male and female. It's like a club. You cannot have romance, marriage and sex with a club. It is nothing anyone can relate to, certainly not when you are alone on a cold, rainy night.<sup>1</sup>

Many people want a Jesus who loved a woman. That is why you have the rock musical "Jesus Christ Superstar." That is why novels like *The Da Vinci Code* become *New York Times* Best Sellers.

That is also why certain reactionary elements in the Church were abhorred with Nikos Kazantzakis' *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Many have forgotten the public outcry against the movie version of that novel. There was picketing, boycotting, and even bombings against the cinemas which showed the film. Not having seen the movie, this author too condemned it.

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<sup>1</sup>According to Christian dogma, we stand before God on Judgment Day as individuals and families, not as church groups. There is no sentient being called "the Church." It is a metaphor and nothing more.

After seeing it, I felt betrayed by the leadership of the Church. They had misrepresented the movie and its message in a shameful display of bigotry. Since the readers of this book may have been influenced by that bigotry, a brief review of the film might be in good order.

### **The Last Temptation of Christ**

The movie begins as a typical R-rated movie, with Mary Magdalene, as a prostitute, servicing a long line of Bedouin customers. Jesus is at the end of the line, but unlike the false representations made by some of the movie's detractors, He does not have sexual relations with her. Instead He apologizes to her for not fulfilling the vows of their betrothal. In this way, we are told that Mary and Jesus were engaged to be married and because of His dereliction in fulfilling His promise, she became a harlot to spite Him.

The story continues in presenting Jesus as a member of the Essene tradition and "discovering" His mission. It does not follow the Gospel accounts, and that is a reasonable point of contention for Christians. However, in presenting a truly human Jesus the movie is more accurate than many of our Gospel films which present Him with a plastic humanity.

The movie ends with Jesus on the Cross facing the Last Temptation. The Last Temptation was not sex, as some have charged. The Last Temptation was the desire to give up His messianic mission to live a normal life. He falls into a swoon and dreams of marriage and fatherhood - first, to Mary Magdalene, who tragically dies, and then to Mary and Martha of Bethany. He resists the temptation, awakens, and finishes the Crucifixion.

And that's it. Other than the discomfort of His suggested bigamy (which was not uncommon for the Jews of that time), we are left to ponder why traditional Christians are so offended with the movie and why the idea of a married Jesus arouses such anger? I think it is this: in Christian theology Jesus is supposed to be married to the Church. If Jesus were married to someone else prior to the Church, then there would be a Bride with precedence *over* the Church and, thus, the Church could be looked upon as a rival, even false, bride. Do we not find the truth of this in the audience of the new literature? The people who are most interested in a married Jesus are people who are disenchanted with the Church. They are turning away from Churchianity and are searching for a more authentic faith. The new literature strikes a dagger into the heart of Christian dogma; *for it declares that the Church is not the*

*Bride of Christ.* **The Bride speaks for her husband.** If the Church is not the Bride, then the Church has no authority to speak for Christ. It does not have the "keys of the kingdom" and thus, all of its claims and pretensions come crashing down.

Few see these implications, even few of its authors. Perhaps the leadership in the Vatican does. If they don't, they will soon. Regardless, whether there is a conscious understanding of these implications, it does not matter. Like the rising tide, the message of a married Jesus is raising all ships.

We have been here before. We are revisiting the phenomenon of the Grail legends from the late Middle Ages.

## **Grail Theology<sup>2</sup>**

The legends of the Holy Grail center around medieval heroes on a quest to recover the lost relic of the Cup of the Last Supper. Believing that its recovery will bring a supernatural healing to a stricken land, the Grail heroes hazard their lives and overcome sundry foes preventing them from success in their quest. Their adventures make for interesting

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<sup>2</sup>The following material on the Holy Grail comes from this author's publication, *The Cambrian Peshier*, available on the Internet at: [www.grailchurch.org](http://www.grailchurch.org).

reading, and the reader is often tempted to become so engrossed in the story that one loses sight of their goal. But there are guardians along the way, usually feminine, who encourage the Grail heroes and keep them focused on their mission.

In the eyes of the Medieval Church, the idea of a Holy Grail seemed ludicrous. Eventually, the Medieval world became an age of holy relics and supernatural powers derived therefrom, but only after the Church understood the profits that could be made from exploiting such superstitions. At the first, however, the relics and their legends competed with the Church's claims about itself.

Why would any one want to find the Holy Grail, the Cup of the First Communion? Did not every worshipper have access to the Holy Grail in the blessed Cup of the Mass? At every Mass, the believer – or the priest in his stead - supposedly had the opportunity to partake of the very blood and body of his Lord. Why should he feel a need to find this "Holy Grail"?

The Grail romances were a cleverly devised attack on the validity of the Catholic Eucharist. Christendom centered its life and worship around the altar at the time, not the Scriptures. And at the center of the altar were the Host and the Cup where the



Atonement was recapitulated, somewhere, at every hour of every day. It was founded upon the belief that the priest had the power to transform ordinary bread and wine into the very blood and body of Jesus Christ. The Grail romances implicitly denied that belief.

To attack the Catholic Eucharist was to attack its apostolic succession. The idea that Christian civilization had exhausted itself and needed to return to its roots suggested the failure of that succession. The Grail romances, thus, became the literary wedge which pried away the death-grip which the established Church had upon the medieval mind. It suggested that a new Church could be founded upon the archaeological recovery of the original "Cup of the Covenant."

During the late medieval period, circulation of the Grail stories reached its peak in Europe. It was followed by the Renaissance and then the Protestant Reformation. Renaissance thinkers found their Holy Grail in Science, hence alchemy. The Reformers, on the other hand, found it in the Scriptures. That is why Protestant churches have preachers and not priests. The Holy Communion was demoted to a mere symbol, and the Bible, translated into the common language, was promoted as the cornucopia of life.

## **In the Original Manuscripts**

Most Protestant denominations have historically taught that the Bible - the Canon of Sacred Scripture - is the inspired Word of God. Most have at some time taught that the Word of God is infallible, the only source of Divine and inerrant truth on Earth. In recent years most denominations have backed away from that dogma, finding their new position somewhere in the fuzzy notion that the Bible "contains the Word of God," but that not every word is divinely inspired (which words are inspired and which ones are not becomes anyone's guess).

Conservative denominations still hold to the doctrine of inerrancy, but their leaders have hedged the point in a different way. You will hear them claim Biblical inerrancy, but only in the *original* manuscripts. They will no longer claim that any translation or version of the Bible is infallible.

It may not at first seem obvious, but if you stop to consider, the Protestant world is in the same position that the Medieval Church was in when the Grail stories first took the Continent by storm. The priesthood of the Catholic Church was admitted to be

corrupted. Like the proverbial corruption of the carbon copy of a carbon copy of a carbon copy, apostolic succession had become diminished and powerless in the eyes of thinking Christians. There was an intense desire to return to the "original" sources to revive the faith. This spiritual yearning led to experiments with heretical rituals, mysticism, the Crusades, and the quest for relics.

In modern Protestantism, the quest has been turned in a different direction: the search for older and better manuscripts of the Scriptures. The hope is ever out there that someday the archaeologist's spade will turn up the originals - but until then, let it not be forgotten, ***the Protestant churches do not have the very, inspired, and inerrant Word of God.*** By their own admission, since they cannot produce the Bible in its original manuscripts, they have corrupted copies of the Word of God, not the very Word of God itself. And by so doing, they have denied to themselves a basis of authority to speak prophetically to any issue.

It is not enough to claim to have the "*virtual* Word of God." What does that mean? Anyone who knows the difference between "virtual" sex and real sex should be able to figure-out that the Protestant claim to "virtual" inerrancy is the same delusion as the Catholic claim to apostolic succession. Just like the

Grail threat to the Catholic Church to produce a priesthood which possessed the "original" Cup and Blood of Christ, how are we to know that the discovery of an older manuscript will not differ from our current texts enough to change Protestant doctrine? The turmoil surrounding the Dead Sea Scrolls is only a sign of things to come.<sup>3</sup>

### **The Alternative Priesthood**

The Grail romances claim that there exists in the world an alternative priesthood based upon a sacred lineage. The "Fisher King" or the "Grail King," as it is in some versions, is depicted as a royal personage, yet a king to be distinguished from the current ruler of the realm. The romances are generally set in the time of King Arthur. He is the ruler of the realm; yet the Fisher King is also a ruler in distinction from Arthur. In some sense, Arthur's authority is dependent upon the Fisher King; for it is the Fisher King who is in possession of the Holy Grail.

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<sup>3</sup>Traditional scholars tell us that the Scrolls have not affected in any material way our current translations. They are whistling past a graveyard. It took the Professor and Semitic scholar, Robert Eisenman, joined by the editorial staff of *Biblical Archaeology*, to put the translator's committee to public shame for its forty-year cover-up. The Scrolls were finally released in 1991.

The Grail castle is an ethereal, mysterious place, which can disappear from ordinary human vision. In this we find the Celtic belief of parallel worlds or dimensions which are connected with each other in some fundamental way: either through ritual unification or angelic-type emissaries. Thus, we might find that the Grail Castle can be interpreted as a spiritual counter-part of Camelot and the Fisher King of Arthur.

The Fisher King is wounded in the private parts. He cannot be healed by the Church's Eucharist. The Eucharist sustains him, but it does not heal him. He cannot be healed until someone else who shares his lineage is worthy to become his successor and possess the Holy Grail.<sup>4</sup>

In this we can sense Arthur's dilemma. His was a crisis of succession. But it was more than a crisis of kingship. It was a crisis of federal headship. In the Grail romances the ancient view of the king as priest and sacrifice still lingers. This priesthood is one patterned after the Melchisedecal priesthood of the Davidic Covenant which was confirmed in Jesus Christ. Melchisedec was a father to his people and became a father to Abraham (Genesis 14; Psalm

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<sup>4</sup> **The vital importance of the king's eunuch condition will become clear in Chapter Four. It is remedied, according to Grail theology, through the special rite of footwashing.**

110:4; Hebrews 7). This spiritual connection is why in the Grail stories the realm is afflicted with its king and why the land is turning into a haunt of ruin, unless the king can find a worthy successor. The weal of the realm depends upon the integrity of its king-priest.

In Grail theology the priest of the established Church can never be a federal head of the people, because he is not organically connected to the people. Nor does he share in a sacred lineage, a lineage which organically connects him to the Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7). He claims an apostolic succession, which is valid in terms of service, but not headship. He cannot represent the people because he is not one with the people.

### **Holy Blood, Holy Grail<sup>5</sup>**

What the old Grail literature does not unequivocally state is that there was another Bride of Christ other than the Church. The message is avoided except in strong metaphor. It refers to a sacred lineage but avoids connecting it directly to Jesus. It makes Joseph of Arimathea its source, who was ostensibly a kinsman of the Virgin Mary.

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<sup>5</sup> The material in this section is drawn from the author's work, *Biblical Midwifery*. See Bibliography.

That is what is different about the Grail literature of today from the literature of the medieval period: the origin of the sacred lineage is openly stated to be Jesus Himself.

Credit must go to three British authors - Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln - who co-authored a book in 1983 entitled *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. It astonished the world and became a bestseller. In 1986 they published a sequel, *The Messianic Legacy*.

In these two books the authors set out to revise the accepted history of Christian origins. Central to their thesis is the allegation that Jesus Christ was part of an international conspiracy of Davidic Jews attempting to restore the Throne of David in Jerusalem. He was the heir-apparent. When their plot failed, he was killed (or simply disappeared) and a new religion was concocted around his legend, which eventually became Christianity. He was married to Mary Magdalene who bore him children to continue the dynasty. The failed revolt caused her to flee with the children to the Jewish communities of southern Gaul (France). A few centuries later, the authors allege, a descendant married into Frankish royalty, which became the Merovingian dynasty. The authors claim that the history of Europe is the story of the families of nobility descended from these

Merovingians (e.g. the Hapsburgs), their rule over the Holy Roman Empire, their meddling in world affairs, and their quest for political supremacy.

Today, they are said to be working through a secret society known as the Priory of Sion, which was founded by one of their own, a knight who made himself King of Jerusalem during the Crusades. The Knights Templar, Rosicrucians, and other secret societies are supposed to be a part of this historic effort toward world government.

They find proof for their assertion of a Jesus origin of this lineage in the legends of the Holy Grail:

*In many of the earlier manuscripts the Grail is called the Sangraal; and even in the later version by Malory it is called the Sangreal. It is likely that some such form - Sangraal or Sangreal - was in fact the original one. It is also likely that that one word was subsequently broken in the wrong place. In other words, "San graal" or "San greal" may not have been intended to divide into San Graal" or "San Greal" but into "Sang Raal" or "Sang Real". Or to employ the modern spelling, Sang Royal: Royal blood.<sup>6</sup>*

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<sup>6</sup>*Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, p. 306



They refer, of course, to the royal bloodline of Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>

Many Grail scholars dismiss this assertion. But the storylines of the Grail legends themselves speak of a sacred lineage. So whether "San Greal" ought to be "Sang Real" need not stand alone, considering that the larger message of the Grail romances supports the idea of a mysterious and holy bloodline. The burden of proof lies with those who do not believe that such a lineage could have been founded by Jesus Christ. Within the Christian context, who else would have had sufficient legitimacy?

### **The Pagan Christ**

A burgeoning class of feminist writers has seized upon the idea of a married Jesus to revive the image of Mary Magdalene, His assumed lover, as a feminist figure. As in the Gnostic Gospels, she is juxtaposed with Peter who is never short of chauvinistic contempt for her, and in their rivalry, we see the origin of the two branches of Christianity: the Church, with Peter as its head, and the Bride, with Mary Magdalene as the Daughter of Zion. From this dichotomy, these feminist writers assert that

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<sup>7</sup>Referred to by ancient historians with the Greek term, "Desposyni."

Christianity was hijacked by a misogynist leadership in the Church which displaced the purer faith of Mary, the Johannine Community and the esoteric church.

These writers find much affinity with pagan myths. In her novel, *The Moon Under Her Feet*, Clysta Kinstler presents Mary Magdalene as a High Priestess in the religion of Isis. But her fiction is an attempt at "what if" kind of historical revisionism. Maintaining that the old fertility cults of the Canaanites never lost their hold on the people of Israel, the story is set in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus with the Temple of Yahweh doubling as a temple for goddess religion.

This was not without precedent in Israelite history. Kinstler provides this reference in her Notes:

*Dr. Raphael Patai, in his carefully documented works "Man and Temple" and "The Hebrew Goddess", shows that out of the 360 years that Solomon's temple-complex lasted at Jerusalem, the matriarchal Canaanite goddess Ashera, who represented the old farming population of Israel, had been worshipped there for 240 as Jehovah's bride and sister with her wooden image publicly displayed. The tribe of Ahser had originally been named in her honor. Dr. Patai points out that*

*when Elijah slaughtered the 400 priests on Mount Carmel he left the priests of Ashera unmolested; Baal was then Jehovah's rival male deity and therefore like Molech, Milcom, Chemosh (1 Kings 11:7) and all other male gods, had to be suppressed.<sup>8</sup>*

It is likely that the "Hieros Gamos" - sacred marriage - was known to the Israelites, since it was so popular in the nations surrounding Israel. Kinstler quotes the eminent Sumerologist, S. N. Kramer, to describe it as it was in ancient Sumer:

*The most significant rite of the New Year was the Hieros Gamos, or holy marriage between the king, who represented the god Dumuzi, and one of the priestesses, who represented the goddess Inanna . . . The idea arose that the king of Sumer, no matter who he was or from what city he originated, must become the husband of the life-giving goddess of love, that is, Inanna of Erech . . . The kings of Sumer are known as the "beloved husbands" of Inanna throughout the Sumerian documents from the time of Enmerkar (about 2600 B.C.) down to the post-Sumerian*

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<sup>8</sup>Clysta Kinstler: *The Moon Under Her Feet*, (HarperCollins, 1989) p. 308

*days, since they seem to have been mystically identified with Dumuzi.*<sup>9</sup>

Curiously, Israel's New Year began at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles - the harvest festival - when they were encouraged to rejoice with strong drink (Deuteronomy 14:26). It is likely that the festivities included dancing and lovemaking, as well.

It must be remembered that Abram of Ur lived in this culture and Moses was well-versed in "all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). Significant portions of the Song of Solomon appear to be drawn directly from the "Hymns of Invocation" sung by priests and priestesses in the temples of Isis. Harold Bayley identifies thirteen parallels in *The Lost Language of Symbolism* where these are found (I am interjecting with the Authorized Version):

*Song of Solomon 1:3*, "Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee . . ."

*Invocation of Osiris*, "Hail thou, sweet scented one! There is unguent for the hair at thy coming. . ."

*Song 4:10*, "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse!"

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 306

*Invocation*, "Come to the one who loveth thee. . .  
Come to thy sister, come to thy spouse."

*Song 4:11*, "The smell of thy garments is like the  
smell of Lebanon."

*Invocation*, "The odor of thy limbs is like the  
smell of Punt."<sup>10</sup>

One must remember that brother-sister incest is forbidden in the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 18:9). This form of incest was endorsed in Egypt and even required of the Pharaohs. Considering that Solomon's principal wife was the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 3:1), an Egyptian source of the Song of Songs seems probable.

In Egyptian mythology, we have Isis, the goddess of fertility, who is the sister-bride of Osiris the Shepherd (who is later killed and dismembered) and gives birth to a son, Horus. The rite of circumcision is thought by some to be a symbolic memorial of his emasculation. In some variations of the myth, the son of the goddess becomes king by an anointing from the goddess and consummated in an incestuous union which is, in turn, followed by a sacrificial death of the king. He is killed to atone for the land and restore the annual cycle of fertility. This king is

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<sup>10</sup>*The Lost Language of Symbolism*, vol. 1, p. 169-170

resurrected (or reincarnated) to repeat the cycle again.

The similarities with the Christian story are painfully obvious. In fact the Catholic exaltation of the Virgin Mary and the celebration of Christ's birth on December 25th, the birthday of Horus, was long a complaint of some Protestant Reformers as a compromise with Isiac religion. Indeed in the larger context, Christianity's sacrificial death and resurrection of a god-king is a theme which finds more syncretistic affinity with the ancient fertility cults than with Judaism. In it we have the voluntary death, the descent into hell (netherworld), the weeping goddess at the tomb, and the eating of the sacrifice in a cannibalistic Eucharist to obtain eternal life.<sup>11</sup> Even the rite of baptism was practiced by the Isis religion (the Nile River was considered sacred) before it was introduced to the Jews by John the Baptist.

In Kinstler's tale Jesus dies as a pagan human sacrifice to save the nation from Roman anger and Mary flees to live anonymously in Gaul.

While we cannot simply dismiss these pagan roots of Christianity, the question which might be properly

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<sup>11</sup>Compare with Christ's strange invitation to His disciples in John 6:32-71.

offered is "What kind of paganism are we talking about?" Are we talking about the pre-revelation, natural religion of the Biblical patriarchs who worshipped the true God and followed customs commended by that true God in their conscience? Or are we talking about the degenerate paganism roundly condemned by Paul in Romans 1 - who turned themselves over to idolatry and death? Is true Christianity a mere continuation of Canaanite religion as these feminist interpreters enthusiastically claim? Or is it a special revelation correcting the false turn that mankind has made in its understanding of the Deity?

We shall explore these questions in the next chapter.

\* \* \*

**Jehovah-Jirah!**

("The Lord will provide")





## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE MARRIED JESUS AMONG THE HERETICS**

#### **The Question of Sources**

The question of a married Jesus is not new to our time. Traces of discussion can be found in the earliest writings of the Church and even in the text of the Bible itself. We find comments made by Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, both Christian leaders from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century who denied His sexuality. And then on the other hand, in the Jewish Talmud we find references (usually derogatory) affirming His sexuality. In the Scriptures, the Jews imply that He was a fornicator based upon His casual and frequent association with women (Luke 7:35; John 8:41). The Early Church, which glorified virginity, naturally bristled at such accusations.

The idea that Jesus was married has never been formally declared a heresy, nor has it ever been treated like a heresy until the times when priests were banned from marriage. Thus, it can be argued that the treatment of this question by the historic Church has generally followed its views of sex and marriage, which has changed over the course of time. The interpretation of the life of Jesus conformed itself to the necessities of Church dogma and the interests of the state - specifically Roman - rather than to provide an objective account of Christ as a historical figure. This assertion will be further supported as we proceed through the records.

During the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, the supremacy of the Jerusalem Church as the Mother Church of Christianity was overthrown. This event occurred largely as a result of the Bar Kochba rebellion, a revolt which ended in the final destruction of the Jewish nation. Jerusalem became a banned site, on pain of death, for any Jew who attempted to enter.

During the confusion which followed this catastrophe, there emerged different sects of Christianity. Among the Gentiles, there were the traditional Pauline Christians who attempted to distance themselves from their Jewish roots in order to avoid antagonizing the Romans. These Christians

relied upon a continuity of *apostolic succession* for authenticity: the idea that the leadership of the various churches was to perpetuate spiritual authority by ordaining successors whose predecessors were in contact and commended by the various apostolic missionaries which founded their churches during the 1st Century.

Then, there were the various "heresies" of many stripes and persuasions which were lumped together under the label of "Gnostic" (*gnosis*, Greek for knowledge): the belief in a continuing revelation, either through mystical experiences or through the discovery of secret doctrines contained in the writings and teachings of the Apostles. The Gnostics attracted certain brilliant and gifted individuals who saw, quite clearly, the shortcomings of the traditional church. Some of them were once prominent men in the Church, such as Valentinus (who almost became the bishop of Rome) and Marcion (the son of a prominent bishop). The Pauline churches were still in a state of infancy and their theology was deficient for lack of resources and historical continuity with the fathers of Israel. Without that continuity, such men like Valentinus and Marcion quickly grew impatient and then disillusioned with the sometimes illogical and intractable, traditional leaders.

As for the Jerusalem Church and the Jewish churches of Palestine - which, until the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, constituted never less than half of the Christian population of the world - they were either killed, carted-away as slaves or fled the Roman Empire. In the East, they influenced the Parthian world which would later bear fruit in the Armenian Church and the so-called "Nestorian" Church. In the south, we have the Ethiopian Church, and in the west, the Celtic Church - Christians in those regions of western and northern Europe not yet subjugated by Roman arms.

There was a weak remnant of the Jerusalem Church which remained in the Palestinian region. They were called "the Ebionites" or "the poor." Embittered by their abandonment by the Gentile churches, they reacted negatively to the theological developments of Pauline theology and increasingly marginalized themselves by that polarization. We have some second-hand records, usually derogatory, which have been preserved of their teachings and practices. They retained and used what was called "the Gospel According to the Hebrews," perhaps the original Gospel. This Gospel was no longer circulated after the time of Jerome. Christian leaders came to view them as heretics as early as the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century (Irenaeus). Yet, if we want an authentic

witness of New Testament Christianity, we cannot neglect these Jewish roots. Nor can we ignore the fact that the Church was a Jewish movement during its first century of existence. Thus, to the extent that the Ebionites retained that heritage, their witness becomes valuable on the question of Jesus' marital status.

It is important to understand the development of the New Testament Canon of Scripture. During the time of our Lord's ministry, there were records kept of His teachings and activities, very likely by Matthew (also known as Levi), who was a scribe and tax collector before becoming Christ's disciple. Later, these records would be preserved under the care of the bishop of the Jerusalem Church, the first being James the Just, the brother of Jesus. Like any other movement in that primitive time, the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church relied heavily upon oral tradition. There were no printing presses in those days. Manuscripts were usually short summaries, like our sermon notes, to assist the teacher's memory. As Christian evangelists and missionaries spread over the world preaching the Gospel, notes of their teachings were kept by their converts. This process created a second source for the New Testament. Over time, these records were expanded from memory, collected and compared with other similar records among the

various churches in a particular region. These collections would take the final form of our current Gospels late in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century. Prior to that time, however, the records of the Jerusalem Church, as contained apparently in this "Gospel of the Hebrews," were the Canon of the Church.

Church scholars generally assume that Justin Martyr - our earliest Christian apologist - relied upon the Gospel of the Hebrews as his source. Justin quotes texts which are either not found in any of our current Gospels, or he uses a different phraseology which indicates another source.<sup>12</sup> Justin does not demonstrate any knowledge of our current Gospels which strongly suggests that the Four Gospels were still in development. The Four Gospels were written in Greek; the Gospel of the Hebrews was written in Aramaic. Our Lord taught in Aramaic and the first Church operated in the Aramaic-speaking world. While the educated, including our Lord, were well-versed in Greek, it was considered a profane language and would not have been the language of discourse in the Holy Land among the Jews of that

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<sup>12</sup>For example, at our Lord's baptism, Justin introduces an element of the story not found in the other Gospels; namely, that "a fire was kindled" when He stepped into the Jordan River to be baptized (*Dialogue with Trypho*, § 88). The works of Justin Martyr can be found in the collection of volumes called *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, (hereafter sometimes abbreviated as *ANF*) volume one (Roberts & Donaldson, Hendrickson Publishers, 1994)

time.<sup>13</sup> The Four Gospels were written for a Greek-speaking audience and were based, initially, upon the oral teachings of the Apostles which founded their churches.<sup>14</sup>

Later, the Gospel of the Hebrews influenced the final form of the Gospels. For example, our modern translation committees tell us that the story of "The Woman Caught in Adultery" in John 7:53-8:11 cannot be found in the earliest Greek manuscripts. Some of the modern versions have either omitted that story or have demoted it to a footnote based upon the strength of the claim. Yet, we find in the historian Eusebius that the source of the story is none other than the "Gospel According to the Hebrews."<sup>15</sup> It is probable that later editors of the

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<sup>13</sup> The Septuagint, the Old Testament text in Greek, was not used by the faithful in Palestine.

<sup>14</sup> Relying on Papias who was an apostolic source for Irenaeus, Eusebius (the 4<sup>th</sup> Century, Church historian) writes: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities [of his hearers], but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements. [This is what is related by Papias regarding Mark; but with regard to Matthew he has made the following statements]: Matthew put together the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could." - "Fragments of Papias", *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 154-155.

<sup>15</sup> Quoting Papias again: "And he also gives another story of a woman, who was accused of many sins before the Lord, which is to

Gospels - perhaps someone as illustrious as Jerome, the author of the Latin Vulgate and translator the Gospel of the Hebrews, as well<sup>16</sup> - realized that it contained information which the Four Gospels lacked and interpolated it. The same might be said of other verses which the Received Text contains but which have been omitted by the modern versions. The modern versions omit the final verses of Mark 16 and others based upon the fact that they are not contained in the oldest Greek manuscripts. We are indebted to the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Gospel of the Jerusalem Church, for this kind of information.<sup>17</sup>

Unfortunately, not everything in this Gospel has been supplied. We know as much from Papias, whose works on the personal lives of Jesus and the Apostles were conveniently "lost." And we know this from Justin's works (and others also, such as Clement),

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**be found in the Gospel according to the Hebrews" *Ibid*, p. 155. Eusebius alleges that Papias' records contained "other things from unwritten tradition, amongst these some strange parables and instructions of the Saviour, and some other things of a fabulous nature." Eusebius betrays his theological biases, for he cites the Millenarian doctrine, a view popular among pre-Nicene leaders, as one of those "fabulous things." This statement suggests an esoteric tradition.**

<sup>16</sup>**Jerome's Commentaries on Micah: "And whoever gives credence to the gospel circulating under the title "Gospel of the Hebrews", which we recently translated . . ." (*The Complete Gospels*, Robert J. Miller, ed., p. 432)**

<sup>17</sup>**These committees do a disservice in their disrespect for the Texts received by Church Tradition. For Tradition takes into account the full witness of the Fathers who gave us the Gospels in the first place. It does not carve the texts like a cadaver on a laboratory table.**



which contain texts not found in our current Gospels.<sup>18</sup> **(Figure 1)**

Thus, we are challenged to take the same approach as the disciples did in proving the Resurrection: they relied upon the Prophets. While the disciples were witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, they did not expect their hearers to believe them based upon the strength of their witness alone. How could they? Anyone can make-up fairy tales. Instead, they turned to the Law and the Prophets to prove that Jesus was both Lord and Christ. We will do the same in proving a married Jesus. For, as our Lord said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

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<sup>18</sup>There has been some confusion between the Gospel of the Hebrews and the Gospel of Matthew, which was also written in Hebrew. I refer the reader to the footnoted commentaries in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, in *The Nicene & Post Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 159 for a full treatment of this question. In summary, what appears to have happened is that the original "Gospel of the Hebrews" was written by Matthew. It was later abridged to become our current Gospel of Matthew, as indicated by the missing story provided later by John's Gospel. What became the Gospel of the Hebrews in later centuries was itself an abridged edition of the original Gospel of the Hebrews retained by the Jerusalem Church. The later editions, as says Epiphanius, were "not complete, but spurious and mutilated" which reflected the increasingly sectarian and heretical views of the Ebionites. It should be added that Epiphanius identifies the "Diatessaron of Tatian" as "the Gospel According to the Hebrews." If that is true, then the Diatessaron precedes the Four Gospels. "Diatessaron" is a harmony of the Gospels. Tatian was a Syrian and a pupil of Justin Martyr, but later is alleged to have become heretical.

When it comes to the matter of a married Jesus, there is a certain smugness among the deniers: "Where is it in the Gospels? If it is true, show me in the Gospels, and I will believe it. Surely, something as important as this would have been recorded." While it will be demonstrated later that the fact of our Lord's marriage is hidden in plain sight in the Gospels, it would do us well to remember that not everything Jesus taught and did has been recorded:

*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

- John 20:30-31

*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.*

- John 21:25

Clearly, the central mission of Jesus Christ is to save the world. Spiritual understanding which produces eternal life is the principal purpose of the

Gospels. To give us a narrative of His daily life did not fit into the economy of records. Still, the Scriptures are not altogether silent on this question.

### **The Witness of the Ebionites**

In the somewhat garbled accounts that have come down to us, the Ebionites might be described best by Eusebius:

*The ancients quite properly called these men Ebionites, because they held poor and mean opinions concerning Christ. For they considered him a plain and common man, who was justified only because of his superior virtue, and who was the fruit of the intercourse of a man with Mary. In their opinion the observance of the ceremonial law was altogether necessary, on the ground that they could not be saved by faith in Christ alone and by a corresponding life.*

*There were others, however, besides them, that were of the same name, but avoided the strange and absurd beliefs of the former, and did not deny that the Lord was born of a virgin and of the Holy Spirit. But nevertheless, inasmuch as they also refused to acknowledge that he pre-existed, being God, Word, and Wisdom, they*

*turned aside into the impiety of the former, especially when they, like them, endeavored to observe strictly the bodily worship of the law.*

*These men, moreover, thought that it was necessary to reject all the epistles of the apostle, whom they called an apostate from the law; and they used only the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews and made small account of the rest. The Sabbath and the rest of the discipline of the Jews they observed just like them, but at the same time, like us, they celebrated the Lord's days as a memorial of the resurrection of the Saviour.*

*Wherefore, in consequence of such a course they received the name of Ebionites, which signified the poverty of their understanding. For this is the name by which a poor man is called among the Hebrews.<sup>19</sup>*

The most pronounced distinction which offended the orthodox leaders of the Church was the denial by the Ebionites of Christ's supernatural origins. Theologically, the view of the Ebionites has been called "Adoptionism": the belief that Jesus was an ordinary man until the Christ spirit - or the Divine Logos - descended upon Him at His baptism, at

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<sup>19</sup>*Nicene & Post Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, p. 159-160

which time He became the Messiah, the begotten Son of God. It must be remembered that the Christ of the Creeds was not the required confession of the New Testament Church. Jesus was the Messiah and Savior of Israel. God raised Him from the dead to reign from His Throne in Heaven. That was the only baptismal confession required of converts in those early days (Romans 10:9-10). There was no requirement to believe He was born of a Virgin or that He pre-existed as the eternal God.

However, it is clear from the above account and confirmed by others (e.g. Origen), that there was a sect of Ebionites which did believe in Christ's Virgin Birth. Epiphanius<sup>20</sup> distinguishes them with a different name: that of the "Nazoraeans." In his *Panarion*, he devotes chapter 29 to a discussion of the Nazoraeans and identifies them as Davidic Jews, including the family of Jesus, who embraced Him as their Messiah.<sup>21</sup> James, the brother of Jesus, was among them, and presumably, all of his successors to the Episcopal office of the Jerusalem Church down to the Bar Kochba rebellion. However, Eusebius tells us they did not believe in Christ's pre-existence.

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<sup>20</sup> See Appendix B for a brief explanation and defense for the prominent Christian leaders relied upon in this book.

<sup>21</sup>Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, *The Panarion*, trans. Philip Amidon, Oxford University Press, Oxford, England (1990)

This is a slippery area, as the events of the Nicene Council demonstrate, because the Creed insists upon language not used in the Scriptures to define Christ's nature.<sup>22</sup> What further complicates the matter is simply that the language of the Creed is in Greek, the profane language, and not Hebrew, which was the language of doctrine for the New Testament Church. When the Nazoraeans denied Christ's pre-existence, were they denying that His Divine nature had no pre-existence? Or did they deny that He had a pre-existence as the Christ?

Certainly, the later Nazoraeans would follow the Ebionites and the Arians to say that Christ had no Divine nature, but became as the angels of Heaven, or was created as an angel at His conception. As for James and the Jerusalem Church, they would have affirmed the pre-existence of the Divine Logos but not the incarnated Christ. The Incarnation was a new creation in the world. Nicea may very well be an example of the inadequacy of the Greek language to describe Hebrew concepts.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *homoousios*. Eusebius, "We are well aware that the Bishops and writers of ancient times when discussing the theology of the Father and the Son never used the word *homoousios*." (as quoted by Hugh Nibley, *The World and the Prophets*, Volume 3, p. 47)

<sup>23</sup> St. Hilary, the western contemporary of Athanasius, the champion of Nicea: "It is a thing equally deplorable and dangerous that there are as many creeds as opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us; because we make creeds arbitrarily, and explain them

Other "Hebraisms" of the Ebionites further offended the later defenders of orthodoxy. Their devotion to the law was one. Another was their rejection of the moral superiority of virginity in defiance of the Church's drift toward celibacy. Epiphanius says,

*At present they strictly forbid virginity and continence, as is true of the other sects like theirs. . . (30.6)*

*They force the young people to marry even before they reach maturity . . . They allow not just one marriage, but if anyone wants a divorce from his first marriage, and to contract another, they allow it - they do not hesitate to permit anything - up to a second and third and seventh marriage. (30.18.2-3)*

This view corresponds with the general opinion of the Jews - and of Jewish Christians - during those times. Among the faithful, the Creation Mandate to "be fruitful and multiply" was taken seriously. That

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**arbitrarily . . . The *homoousian* is rejected, and received, and explained away by successive synods . . . Every year, nay every month, we make new creeds to describe invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done, we defend those who change their minds, we anathematize those whom we defended. We condemn either the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others; and, reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin." *Epistle to Constantine II, Ibid p. 49.***

command was considered mankind's primary directive as God's vicegerents upon the earth. We will visit this question again in the next chapter, but it is useful to cite the apocryphal "Gospel of the Nativity of Mary" in which a Scripture is quoted as saying, "Cursed is every one who has not begot a male or a female in Israel." This was certainly the Ebionite view, in which case, we are faced with this important conclusion: *the Ebionites would never have followed someone as the Messiah who had not fathered children.* As we shall see in a later chapter on eunuchs and the sins of uncleanness, there was no distinction between celibacy and homosexuality in the Hebrew mind. A fatherless Messiah would have been considered a wicked Messiah in the ethical system of the Old Testament. To think that a celibate Jesus ever could have obtained a following among the Jews is as ludicrous as the idea that modern Jews would be willing to vote for Hitler in the next German election.

### **Modern Ebionism in Mormonism**

It ought to be mentioned, briefly, that the idea of a married Jesus is not a novel idea to Mormons. Various Mormon leaders - from the time of Joseph Smith to today - have expressed the belief that Jesus



was married and fathered children. Their emphasis on fecundity as morally preferable to virginity is similar to the Ebionites.

Mormons have been ascribed other teachings similar to the Ebionites. Epiphanius explains how Christ and Satan stand with equal footing before God in Ebionite doctrine:

*They teach, as I said, that there are two who are appointed by God, one of them Christ and the other the devil. They say that Christ has been allotted the future age, but to the devil has been entrusted the present one, by the decree of the Almighty according to the request of each of them. (30.16.2)*

The Mormons, likewise, have been alleged to believe that Jesus and Satan are brothers, although involved in an antagonistic rivalry.

Like some Mormons, the Ebionites also believed that Jesus and Adam were the same person:<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The beliefs herein ascribed to Mormons may not necessarily be official positions of the Church of Latter Day Saints. There are variations of emphasis and doctrine among Mormon sects just as there are among Protestant sects. When I present these views, I do so as a general consideration of the teachings set forth by notable figures within the Mormon movement who may or may not have been speaking with authority from any specific ecclesiastical body. It is probable that Epiphanius misunderstood the subtleties of Ebionite theology, just as modern churchmen misunderstand the Mormons.

*For some of them say that he is from above, but created before everything, being a spirit and above angels and lord of all, and is called Christ, and has been allotted the world there. He comes here when he wants, as when he came in Adam, and when, putting on the body, he appeared to the patriarchs. . . he came also in the final days, put on Adam's own body, appeared to men, was crucified, rose, and ascended. (30.3)*

This view would be considered heretical by traditional Christians. However, as an Ebionite opinion, it is unfair to accuse the Mormon prophets of just "making things up." It cannot be known whether there was an intentional alignment of Mormon thinking with the Ebionites, but there has been, certainly, an Ebionite "flavor" to their teachings.<sup>25</sup>

Mormon proofs of a married Jesus will be included in our survey in the next chapter.

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<sup>25</sup> The more orthodox Ebionites, of course, I am not referring to here, since they avoided these strange beliefs as Eusebius testifies in the text above.

## The Jews: Christ as Fornicator

As was indicated at the beginning of this chapter, Jesus was criticized by Jewish leaders for His commerce with "low-life" individuals. We know that Jesus came to save sinners, not to call the righteous. Like the Good Shepherd, He leaves the ninety-nine sheep to search for the one lost one. Notwithstanding His worthy motives, He still earned a reputation for sexual immorality.<sup>26</sup>

Mormon advocate, Ogden Kraut, claims that Christ's polygamy earned Him this stained reputation. He cites an obscure Roman physician from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, Aurelious Cornelius Celsus, to support his view:

*The grand reason why the Gentiles and philosophers of his school persecuted Jesus Christ was because he had so many wives; there were Elizabeth and Mary and a host of others that followed him.*<sup>27</sup>

This is a startling claim from an allegedly early source. Although it begs for clarification and verification, this author has not been able to find it. But there is a hint of a polygamous Jesus in *The*

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<sup>26</sup> Sanhedrin 107b; Sotah 47a; Luke 7:34; John 8:41. I have not personally verified these Talmudic sources.

<sup>27</sup> *Jesus Was Married*, p. 49

*Apocalypse of James*,<sup>28</sup> a writing from the Nag Hammadi discovery, where James the Just is quoted as saying to Jesus:

*Yet another thing I ask of you: who are the seven **gune** [wives or women] who have been your disciples? And behold, all women bless you.*

## **The Gnostics & Christ's Companion**

The idea of a married Jesus is not really a Gnostic doctrine because marriage in the Gnostic traditions is viewed as a bestial custom. Feminists make a mistake to think that they find an ally in Gnosticism. According to the Gnostics, the material world is either the creation of an evil god or a creation made by a weak god that has spun out of control. They believe that the spirit world is the purer existence and that the material world is the world from which our spirits must escape to find eternal life. Since marriage, sex, and childbirth are all a part of this world of matter and women are the matrix of that existence (the word "mother" comes from the word

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<sup>28</sup> *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (Harper & Row, 1988). Discovered in the same era as the Dead Sea Scrolls and just as significant, this literary collection escaped Church censors from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries and give us an independent glimpse at early Gnostic and Ebionite theologies.

"matter"), women must be redeemed from womanhood and become "male" in order to find salvation. This is said in a number of places in the Gnostic writings.<sup>29</sup>

Of course, feminism is Gnostic and because it has followed a Gnostic path it has had the effect of making women masculine in our modern society. Feminism has been destroying the feminine principle rather than vindicating it.

But not all Gnostic writings are truly Gnostic. Much of the Nag Hammadi library is identified by its translators as "Jewish Christian," rather than Gnostic (see Robinson's Introduction). Because the collection has been labeled "Gnostic" by scholars - and indeed, the majority of its contents are Gnostic texts - it has been assumed that the entire collection is Gnostic. To the contrary, I would argue that a number of these documents reflect an Ebionite tradition as much as they do a Gnostic one.

The idea of an eternal feminine principle in the Godhead is an Ebionite, as well as a Gnostic doctrine.

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<sup>29</sup>**E.g. *Dialogue of the Saviour* and the *Gospel of Thomas*. In the *Gospel of Mary*, the Magdalene exhorts the apostles with these words: "Do not weep and do not grieve nor be irresolute, for his grace will be entirely with you and will protect you. But rather let us praise his greatness, for he has prepared us and made us into men." - *The Nag Hammadi Library*.**

The goddess Sophia (Wisdom) figures prominently in these texts - as she does in the Septuagint. In this respect we see the Greek translation of a very Hebrew concept: the *Hokhmah* - the Spirit of Wisdom, which is always feminine, as the Shekinah - the Holy Spirit which dwells among the children of God.

In the clearly Gnostic documents, such as the *Pistis Sophia*, we find Mary Magdalene presented, not only as the eminent disciple, exceeding even Peter, but we find the Lord suggesting that she will be exalted as a representative of the Church as the Bride of Christ and further deified as the eternal Sophia. While the Christian leaders of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century declared such views heretical (Simon Magus, who is viewed as a proto-Gnostic from Apostolic times, deified his courtesan, Helena) the Church did retain Mary as a personification of the Church (e.g. Hippolytus). Although a chaste relationship, it was a spousal one, nonetheless.

The early Fathers claimed that some Gnostics were indifferent to the things of the flesh and used that as an excuse for sexual license. Under the garb of sex magic - the use of sex to obtain spiritual energy and not pleasure - they were accused of designing rituals for these bestial practices. But we do not see this in the Nag Hammadi texts. We do see, however, strong hints of a phallic Jesus and a sexual relationship with

Mary Magdalene. In the *Gospel of Philip*, which I think is more an Ebionite than a Gnostic document; Mary is described as our Lord's "companion" and consort:

*There were three who always walked with the lord: Mary his mother and her sister and Magdalene, the one who was called his companion. His sister and his mother and his companion were each a Mary.*<sup>30</sup>

In another place, the physical affection between Jesus and Mary is recounted:

*As for Sophia [Wisdom] who is called "the barren", she is the mother [of the] angels. And the companion of the [Lord, she is the mother of the Christians and is] Mary Magdalene. [He loved] her more than [all] the disciples [and used to] kiss her [often] on her [. . . lips]. (63)*<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>*Ibid*, p. 145 - *koinonos*: a Greek word which means, strictly speaking, "fellow-coupler." It is better translated as "partner" or "consort," a woman with whom a man has had sexual intercourse.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid*, p. 148, the text suffers mutilations in places. The words in brackets are provided by this author or the translator. That Mary Magdalene is the mother of the faithful completes the analogy that Sophia - the Holy Spirit - is the mother of the angels. See this author's book, *The Mother Heart of God*, 1997, which explains how the Holy Spirit is a manifestation of the feminine principle in the Godhead and is sometimes referred to in the Biblical text as Sophia, the Spirit of Wisdom. This was an Ebionite belief, as well, for the Holy Spirit is referred to as the "mother" of Christ in the Gospel According to the Hebrews.

The disciples are offended that He is neglecting them because of these amorous pursuits:

*The rest of the disciples . . . They said to him, "Why do you love her more than all of us?"<sup>32</sup>*

These texts, I think, represent more of an Ebionite tradition than a Gnostic one. For it presents Jesus as a man of the flesh, a condition which the Gnostics found repugnant, as did the Church in later years.

### **Neo-pagans: Christ the Pagan Spouse**

Dissatisfied with the Gnostic paradigm, many feminists have moved beyond it to greener pastures - pun intended - in a revival of the nature religions of ancient times. Wicca, Earth worship, and the goddess have become the motifs of their new faith and world view. This movement has moved in a more positive direction toward an affirmation of nature, the physical world and the integrity of the feminine principle.

Within this new paradigm, we find a Christ transformed into an Israelite king following the pattern of the apostates of the Old Testament: the

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<sup>32</sup>In the *Gospel of Thomas*, Peter is harsher: "Let Mary leave us, for women are not worthy of Life."



kings who worshipped the various deities of their Canaanite neighbors and “did evil in the sight of the LORD.” Contrary to the Jesus we find in the Gospels, with this perspective, He and his priestess wife, Mary Magdalene, are secret apostates from the Law of Moses.

We introduced this thesis in the last chapter in our reference to the novel, *The Moon Under Her Feet* by Clysta Kinstler. But a more serious advocate can be found in the books of Margaret Starbird, a Roman Catholic convert to a bowdlerized version of Grail theology. Her books, more than any other during the past decade (as the success of Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* illustrates), have pushed the agenda of redefining Christianity as a pagan religion: first in exalting Mary Magdalene to the status of the spouse of Christ (*The Woman With the Alabaster Jar*, 1993), and then to that of a mediatrix and co-deity (*The Goddess in the Gospels*, 1998).<sup>33</sup> While her contribution to the question of a married Jesus will be explored in the next chapter, her central argument, as it relates to the figure of a pagan Christ, ought to be addressed here.

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<sup>33</sup>Margaret Starbird: *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar; The Goddess in the Gospels* (Bear & Co. Publishing, Sante Fe, NM, 1993, 1998); Dan Brown: *The Da Vinci Code* (Doubleday, 2003)

In her first book, *The Woman With the Alabaster Jar*, she asserts that Mary Magdalene performed a pagan ritual when she anointed Jesus with the perfumed ointment just days before His arrest and crucifixion. Drawing upon examples from antiquity of the *hieros gamos* in which the priestesses of goddess cults would inaugurate rulers by a ceremony of ritual sex in anticipation of their immolation to appease the gods of fertility, she argues that Mary Magdalene was a member of such a cult and that the anointing of Bethany fits this profile. Marshaling a wide array of circumstantial evidence - from the bride/bridegroom analogies in the Bible and suggestive epithets, such as "the shepherd" and "the lamb of God" which parallel various pagan myths of the ancient Near East, then on to the *hieros gamos* in the Song of Solomon along with the cryptic metaphors sometimes used by the Early Fathers (e.g. the Agape Feast) and the heretical cults of the Middle Ages which were massacred by Papal crusaders for teaching that the Magdalene was Christ's concubine - she lays out a convincing case for her thesis, *if*, and only if, we are willing to believe, in addition to all of this, that the Gospel records have a hidden message of a Christ with inverted values from the ones which are openly declared in the sacred texts. This is always a tenuous premise. History as a discipline loses definition and credibility if we must assume that the

writings which have been handed down to us – such as Julius Caesar’s war journals – contain coded messages which contradict their open meaning. This is Gnostic to the core and typical of secret societies which teach one set of doctrines for the higher initiates and an opposite set of doctrines for the lower initiates. Starbird has not proven that the Gospel records have an opposite meaning in their esoteric messages.

The relationship between Christianity and paganism is a troubling issue for many people who want to believe that the message of Jesus was something new and wonderful. Skeptics have weakened the faith of many because they have been able to find the sayings and works of Jesus in the records of pre-Christian religions. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls was disconcerting to scholars for this very reason, for it proved that the Qumran Community was in many respects a proto-Christian sect, suggesting that Jesus may have borrowed many of His ideas from them to start His own religion.

But even Jesus Himself declared that His teachings and mission were a fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17). He affirmed that there was nothing new in what He said or did. We should not think that the value of Christianity lies in the fact that it is in some sense original.

Indeed, it was argued by the fathers - Ignatius being among them - that Christianity was the first and only religion of mankind, even predating Judaism.<sup>34</sup> The antiquity of pagan mythology does not disprove our thesis. For the doctrines of mankind's condition and the coming Savior were taught orally by righteous men from generation to generation until Moses. It was even written in the stars: hence, the Wise Men of the Christmas story. It should not surprise us that the story of Christ would be written in advance in the mythologies of the ancients.

The early Christian apologists, such as Justin Martyr, complained that the heathen borrowed and

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<sup>34</sup>While Ignatius did not commit to writing the mysteries of the Church, he strongly hinted at them. To the Philadelphians, he said, "but better is the High-priest to whom is committed the holy of holies; for to Him alone are committed the hidden things of God" and to the Trallians, "Am I not able to write to you of heavenly things . . . who are yet babes in Christ." To the Magnesians, he said of the antiquity of Christianity, "It is monstrous to talk of Jesus Christ and to practice Judaism. For Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity, wherein every tongue believed and was gathered together unto God." Such a statement makes no sense if we understand Christianity without the context of the Messianic office. Ignatius is referring to the shepherds of Israel who were of the royal house of David and were priests "after the order of Melchisedec." This is the Christianity which existed before Judaism. "Christian" comes from "Christ" which means "anointed one." The Old Testament faithful which followed the "anointed ones" - the kings and priests of Israel - were following the Christs of old and were, in that sense, Christians. But even before the kings, the patriarchs were referred to as "christs" (Psalm 105:15). He said the Old Testament prophets were Christians and not followers of Judaism (Magnesians 8). Because of their faith, "and for this cause He whom they rightly awaited, when He came, raised them from the dead." (9)

twisted the concepts they found in the Old Testament. Relating one example, he says:

*For when they tell that Bacchus, son of Jupiter, was begotten by [Jupiter's] intercourse with Semele, and that he was the discoverer of the vine; and when they relate, that being torn in pieces, and having died, he rose again, and ascended to heaven; and when they introduce wine into his mysteries, do I not perceive that [the devil] has imitated the prophecy announced by the patriarch Jacob, and recorded by Moses?*

*- Dialogue with Trypho<sup>35</sup>*

The Jews see Christianity as pagan idolatry. The idea of exalting a man to godhood and then worshipping him has always been problematic for the Jews. In this, we see that the Gentiles were more ready than the Jews to receive a Divine Savior, as the Apostle Paul discovered on several occasions in the Acts of the Apostles. Their mythologies had already taught them the Incarnation: the idea of a god becoming a man to save the world. The Jews had no doctrinal basis for this idea. Their Messiah was to be a national warrior-king who would liberate them from the corruption of pagan laws and religions. To

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<sup>35</sup>*Ante-Nicene Fathers vol.1, p.232*

carry the day, Christians had only to convince the Gentile world that Jesus Christ was more divine than Caesar: that there was a discontinuity in being between the Creator and the creation. It was a metaphysical debate to delineate the difference between the big God - the Creator of the universe - and the little gods who were themselves creatures of the earth. Caesar could never become the savior that Jesus was simply because he could never be the god that Jesus was. As for the Jews, they had to be reached through a different method: through a doctrine of atonement which satisfied Divine justice. They had to be persuaded that the blood of sacrificial animals and even the blood of a righteous man - including their precious messiah - could never be efficacious in cleansing them from the guilt of sin. Only God Himself could be the sacrificial lamb. The doctrine of public justice requires the Incarnation. Once this is understood, we can see how all the religions of mankind are perfected in the message of Gospel, and why Christianity sometimes looks like a pagan religion, and then at other times, it looks like pure Judaism.

The reason why Christians can never say that Mary Magdalene is a goddess is the same reason why they will never say the Virgin Mary is a goddess. The entire Christian world is united on this question.

While the Catholics will teach that it is appropriate for Mary to receive prayers and veneration, they will never say that she is God in the same sense that Jesus is. Jesus is the Incarnation of the Divine Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity. There is no woman who is an incarnation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a divine indwelling that has been reserved for all believers. The most that any Christian can say of Mary Magdalene is what has been said by some of the Fathers already: *that she was the embodiment of the Church*. But that is a radical doctrine by itself. A proper understanding of that doctrine is revolutionary enough. We do not need to follow the craze to exalt Mary to some kind of co-deity with Jesus.

As for Starbird's thesis that the anointing at Bethany represented a ritual initiation into the *hieros gamos*, we should not allow our judgment to be clouded by the speculation that Christianity is simply a continuation of these ancient pagan religions. When does the mundane become idolatry? The Apostle Paul explained to his Gentile converts that eating meat sold by the pagan temple was no different than eating meat sold on the street or at the Jewish temple (Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8). It was just meat and if it was sanctified with a Christian blessing, it could be eaten lawfully to satisfy one's

hunger. Many pagan rituals are based upon mundane events in a person's life - such as eating, drinking, sleeping, copulating, etc. - and dramatizing them with incantations to a deity. Did Mary offer any invocations or incantations when she washed the feet of her Lord? There is no record that she did, and had she done so, the entire weight of the Gospel record tells us that she would have been roundly condemned by Jesus Himself - the One who refused the idolatrous temptations of Satan in the wilderness (Matthew 4).

It is true, as any good Bible commentary will point out, that an alabaster jar of spikenard would have been saved by daughters among the wealthy for their wedding day. In John Thomas' authoritative study of the history of footwashing, it appears that a custom existed in ancient times, as a prelude to sexual relations, for women to wash their husband's feet to confirm their submission and love.<sup>36</sup> This fact is important to the question of a married Jesus and will be explored in a later chapter. But used in this sense, the practice has no cultic implications.

In the Gospel accounts, Mary washes His feet, weeping, and anoints both His feet and His head with

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<sup>36</sup>John Christopher Thomas: *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community*, "Journal for the Study of the New Testament #61" (JSOT Press, Sheffield, England, 1991)



the costly perfume, which according to the indignant Iscariot, could have fed many among the poor. Was this a pagan rite, a consecration of the god-king for sacrifice or just a grieving concubine who knew her master was about to die?

The final answer all depends upon the interpretation of Jesus' words, "Leave her alone, she hath done what she could. For my burial hath she done this."<sup>37</sup> There is an anomaly here which is passed-over by traditional commentators. In what sense was an anointing necessary to prepare a body for burial *before it was even dead*? We know that this could not have been a part of the customary burial preparations, because Joseph of Arimathea (with the help of Nicodemus), the primary figure who removed Jesus from the Cross and laid Him in his private tomb, wrapped the body in herbs and spices. Furthermore, on the day of the Resurrection, the women, including Mary Magdalene, came to the tomb to finish what they had started. Why would she return to do this, when at the anointing of Bethany, she had already "done what she could"? Are we not

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<sup>37</sup> These accounts can be found in Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8. Luke 7:36-50 gives us a different occasion of footwashing. A careful reading of the Diatesseron - based on the Gospel According to the Hebrews - reveals that it was the same woman who was the footwasher: Mary of Bethany, also known as Mary Magdalene.

compelled to look elsewhere for a better explanation of what Jesus meant?

We are justified to ponder whether it had any symbolic or typological significance. But we have no reference for such a custom of a deathbed anointing in the Old Testament. We have the anointing of kings and priests. They were anointed with sacred oil at their inaugurations.<sup>38</sup> Mary did not have this sacred oil. She used spikenard.

In the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, there were various meal offerings which were waved by the priest as a “memorial” before the Lord. These meal offerings (also called “peace” or “thanksgiving” offerings) were anointed with oil.<sup>39</sup> One might justly connect them with the Last Supper, in which the Lord offers the unleavened bread of the Passover as a symbol of His broken body. Like the priestly sacrifices, it was set forth as a “memorial.” So was Mary’s anointing.<sup>40</sup> We might be tempted to say that

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<sup>38</sup> Psalm 133 describes these anointings as a symbol of national unity.

<sup>39</sup>e.g. Exodus 29:2; Leviticus 2:4

<sup>40</sup>“Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her” - Matthew 26:13. The idea of a memorial existed in the Old Testament as a reminder between parties to a covenant agreement. Hence, the rainbow in Genesis 9 is a reminder to God of His covenant with the earth. Circumcision is God’s reminder of his promise to Abraham, and so forth. What covenantal reminder does Mary’s footwashing become for the Church and is it meant to be ritually repeated in Christian liturgy?

Christ - the Bread of Life - was anointed by Mary. But we must stop short of this conclusion; for these offerings were not sin offerings. It was forbidden to use oil with sin offerings (Leviticus 5:11).<sup>41</sup> This point is important. We might be able to see the Eucharist - the great Thanksgiving - as a memorial after the fact, and not as a sin offering. Mary's anointing of Jesus, however, would have violated the Old Testament types if she was confusing the meal offerings with the sin offerings. Our Lord's mission was to become an offering for sin (Hebrews 9:22-28). **It would have been forbidden to anoint the sin offering.**

Facing the fact that Mary's actions would have violated Old Testament types if they were to be interpreted as some kind of priestly or sacerdotal ritual, we must look to another possibility: **the custom of anointing the sick for their recovery**, including the recovery from leprosy (Leviticus 14:18; James 5:14). Since Jesus was not sick, we might, at first, dismiss this proposition, as well. However, he was sick in spirit with increasing sorrow, even with a spiritual leprosy as He prepared to bear the sins of the world. In ancient times, the anointing of the head by a fragrant oil was used to bring joy and pleasure (Psalm 23:5; Hebrews 1:9;

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<sup>41</sup> “He shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering.”

Matthew 6:17). It was the opposite action one would take when mourning (2 Samuel 14:2). We might view Mary's actions as merely a means of comforting Jesus: "She hath done what she could." She knew He was facing a life threatening crisis. Like any other loving wife, she sought to encourage Him and to demonstrate her highest esteem for Him with the most precious item in her possession. But more than that, she may have been anointing Him in anticipation of the battle for the Resurrection. Mary and Martha both confessed their faith in His lordship, even over death, when He raised their brother Lazarus in John 11, just days before this episode. Could Jesus defy His own death and raise Himself from the grave? That was to become His greatest test. While her weeping at the first footwashing may have been over grief and mourning for sin (Luke 7), may not Mary's weeping at the Bethany anointing have been from the overwhelming emotion and the trembling anticipation of knowing that Jesus was now face-to-face with His destiny?<sup>42</sup>

Although Jesus memorialized it after the fact, this author does not believe that Mary Magdalene used the anointing at Bethany as a ritual with any religious significance - pagan or otherwise. We have

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<sup>42</sup>James Stivers: *The Ordinance of Footwashing: The Kingdom Come* (Stivers Publications, Moscow, ID, 2003)

no examples of an anointing in anticipation of someone's death and burial in the Scriptures. Allowing for the fact that there were similar rituals among the pagans, it does not explain why Jesus would have allowed her to perform such a rite which would have disqualified Him as the sin offering of Israel. In all other respects, Jesus was careful to fulfill Old Testament types. Why would He be so careless at this critical moment?

### **The Esotericists: Christ as Antichrist**

Another source for knowledge among the Gnostics was the claimed ability to decipher secret messages in the Biblical texts, either through the use of the numerical values of words or the ability to translate figures of speech. We know that such messages exist in the Scriptures. The number of the Beast in the book of Revelation - 666 - is supposed to tell us who the Antichrist is (of which there are still as many varied opinions as there are commentators). We also know that some terms were used in the place of others to veil the identity of certain individuals or places. Jerusalem was sometimes referred to as "Sodom" (Revelation 11:8) and Rome was the whorish "Babylon" (Revelation 17:18).

While there are certain Biblical texts which invite these kinds of interpretations, the Gnostics used this method of interpretation for all of the texts. With the introduction of the Dead Sea Scrolls, some modern scholars are beginning to interpret the Gospels as if they were written as coded messages. Margaret Starbird is one such interpreter. She relies upon David Fideler and John Michell, for example, to work out the numerical value of "and his number is 666" which comes to 2368, the same sum as the Greek letters for the name "Jesus Christ".<sup>43</sup> She uses this kind of logic to argue that the high Christology of the Creeds is a form of idolatry condemned in the book of Revelation. In other words, she argues that the Christian Jesus is the Antichrist!

She also uses the same method, called the *gematria*, to argue that Mary Magdalene is the "goddess in the Gospels":

*But in the case of Mary Magdalene, the gematria of the epithet "the Magdalene" must also be added to her name. In the instances when her name would be Mariam, the addition of the epithet "the Magdalene" . . . meaning "the elevated," "great", or "tower" - leads to a*

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<sup>43</sup>Starbird: *Magdalene's Lost Legacy* (Bear & Co., 2003) p. 100. What would happen if the superfluous word "and" (*kai*) was left out of the equation?

*gematria of 345. Because of the colel of +1 (and this case +2) that can be added to or subtracted from any number without altering its symbolic significance, the name of this special intimate of Jesus is very closely associated with the "eternal feminine" - the virgin or wisdom goddess whose symbolic number is seven - for 343 is  $7^3$ , the epitome of seven. This number also links the Magdalene with the Greek goddess Pallas Athene, who was also associated with seven by the gematria of her name: for Pallas . . . equals 342 by gematria, and the gematria for Athene . . . is 76 (plus the colel +1 = 77). The distinctive gematria of 345 may be one reason Gnostic Christians, who were accused of using "numbers theology", associated Mary Magdalene with the Sophia - Holy Wisdom - in so many of their sacred texts.<sup>44</sup>*

One is left to ponder why a doctrine so important in Gnostic theology would be trusted to eccentric mathematicians. But that was the nature of the exclusivity of the Gnostic system: only the initiates who were smart enough to figure out such a convoluted system were worthy of eternal life. The rest were too dumb to be trusted with truth. Their

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<sup>44</sup>***Ibid*, p. 124 Gematria is an ancient practice which encoded messages in respective texts.**

destiny was to die like the beasts of the earth; for that was all they were.

Laurence Gardner, a popular esotericist and historian from Britain, also relies upon cryptography, only he uses Barbara Thiering's method allegedly discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls. While it is obvious that the writers of the Scrolls used code to avoid detection by the Romans (for example, the Romans are called the "Kittim"), to say that all of their writings were written in code is to overstate the case, for the simple reason that no one had the leisure to benefit from such an elaborate system that these interpreters envision. While it is possible to believe that "Kittim" referred to the Romans in some documents, might it not refer to its original nomenclature in other documents: the ancient Philistines? This is for the same reason that sometimes when the Bible uses the word "Babylon"; it is *actually* referring to the ancient city of Babylon. When Thiering borrows this method and applies it to the Scriptures, are we to believe that every time the term "the Word of God" (i.e. the *Logos* of God) is used in the New Testament that it is referring to Jesus Christ? Thus, in 2 Timothy 2:9 when it says "the Word of God is not bound", are we to interpret



that to mean, as Gardner does, that Jesus Christ has been released from jail?<sup>45</sup>

This method leads to other absurdities. Thiering believes that the events of the Gospels never happened. All the stories, parables, and miracles occurred as metaphorical descriptions of the ritual movements of Qumranian adepts who maneuvered themselves on a human-sized chess board set up at the Dead Sea encampment. She even believes that the Crucifixion and Resurrection were staged rituals that occurred at Qumran and not at Jerusalem.<sup>46</sup> If she is correct, no historical record can be trusted, Biblical or otherwise.

Gardner uses this method to teach that Joseph of Arimathea was really James the Just, the brother of Jesus. He offers no explanation as to why we must believe that James - as the real Joseph - would be the one who brought Christianity to Britain, when the Acts of the Apostles and all other historical records available tell us that he was the leader of the Jerusalem Church and was martyred in Jerusalem.

Gardner's books are the European counterpart of Starbird's in America. As a historian, he is much

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<sup>45</sup>Laurence Gardner: *Bloodline of the Holy Grail*, (Element Books, 1996) p. 27; also see *Genesis of the Grail Kings* (2000)

<sup>46</sup>Barbara Thiering: *Jesus and the Riddle of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (Harper San Francisco, 1992)

more carefully documented than Starbird, who, frustratingly, writes to a more popular audience and does not rely upon cold, historical facts to prove her case. She does not believe that the case can be proved one way or the other. Instead, using a purely existential method, she argues from synchronicities.

As a genealogist, Gardner uses an objective research method which can be tested. His bibliographies are impressive and useful. However, he is a mystic, also, and shares a similar cosmology with Zachariah Sitchin, which discounts the Biblical account of origins and argues for a UFO-type "pan spermia": that we are the offspring of extra-terrestrial beings who are colonizing space. Like a true Gnostic, Gardner sees the House of David with a Cainite origin, which, of course, makes Jesus a Cainite - a descendant of Cain. As if our heads aren't spinning enough already, Gardner further argues the case for the ingestion of menstrual blood as the wine of the gods which brought psychic powers and longevity to the ancient god-kings. Thus in true Gnostic form, he completely inverts the values of the Bible which forbids the eating of blood. The good guys of the Old Testament become the bad guys - or at least some of them do - and the bad guys, like Cain, become the good guys. It should not be forgotten that James, the brother of Jesus and the

first bishop of the Church, likewise forbade the eating of blood in the first Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). Gardner is defying all standard historical sources, including the witness from the Jamesian Church which he claims to embrace, to promote his view of the past.

What relevance does this have to the question of a married Jesus? We must look honestly at the motives of its proponents. There are many heretics and antichristians who find a married Jesus convenient to their cause. It tends to discredit the quest of serious scholars who want to know if the historical record supports the proposition of a married Jesus.

It might also engender sympathy for why the Church so zealously opposes it. But we must temper that sympathy with another consideration: do Church leaders oppose it because it is heretical in the sense that it undermines the teachings of the Bible? Or do they oppose it because it undermines their *power* to control Biblical interpretation? **Are we confronting two kinds of heresy here: the heretics on the outside and the heretics on the inside of the Church?**

To help answer such questions, we should turn next to the academics. Without an attachment to the

Church or a heretical agenda, perhaps the curious historian will prove to be a more trustworthy guide.

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***Who do men say that I am?***

(Matthew 16:16)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE MARRIED JESUS ACCORDING TO THE ACADEMICS**

#### **Which Church Tradition?**

The previous chapters were not meant to suggest that popular and passionate writers on the question of a married Jesus have been entirely deficient of a reasoned case in favor of the proposition. Indeed, a number of them have provided compelling evidence. What I am trying to do in this chapter is to isolate that evidence from speculation and partisan hyperbole and then determine if there are any cold, hard facts which remain.

The first question to wrestle with is "What sources are we willing to rely upon?" That is a tough one because reliable sources are really a question of faith.

For instance, do we want to believe that Julius Caesar gave an accurate description of the Celts? He was their conqueror in Gaul and wanted to conquer them in Britain. Do his memoirs represent an unbiased opinion? When he said that British men were cannibals who shared their wives in common, was that true or was that wartime propaganda?

When some historians tell us that King James the First was a homosexual, is that truthful or just gossip propagated by his enemies?<sup>47</sup>

We like to think that there are certainties when it comes to history. We like to think that everyone will know until the end of time that George Washington was the first President of the United States. But is that really true? He was the first President under the Constitution of the United States, but he was not our first President. The United States existed for over a decade as a confederacy before it adopted the Constitution. During that time, the Continental Congress had presidents who presided at their deliberations. You can see here how interpretive methods will change the perception of a fact.

Thousands of years from now, perhaps the only remaining proof that there ever was a "United States

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<sup>47</sup> This king commissioned the Authorized Version of the Bible, also known as the "King James Version."

of America" will be the monument of Mt. Rushmore. "These by thy gods, oh House of America!" may be the mantra of our primitive successors who will look upon the magnificence of those four images and feel compelled to worship them. Will there be descendants who know the legends of our presidents and will they be persecuted because they believe them to be mere men unworthy of adoration?

Imagine the dilemma of skeptics who do not believe that Jesus Christ ever existed. Not only of Jesus Christ are there skeptics, but there are Jews who do not believe that King David or Abraham ever existed. They believe the whole Bible is a literary fiction. They are not interested in the kinds of questions we are dealing with here because, in their minds, it's like trying to reconstruct the script of a long-forgotten screen play from which we have only a few scraps of scribbled notes. What is the point of arguing over whether Jesus was married or not if He never existed in the first place?

If we reason from a purely utilitarian point-of-view, we could say it matters to everybody because so many people *believe* that Jesus really existed and that He was truly the Son of God. The *belief* that He was celibate has profoundly affected how Western civilization has looked at sexuality. Had we believed that He was a homosexual, how would that have

affected our sexual mores? Would the best and brightest among us be aspiring to emulate Him in such a way? Of course, they would. Had we believed that He was a polygamist, would that not have profoundly affected the direction of our civilization in a different way? Yes, indeed it would have. So, even to the skeptics, because they have to live in a culture that is influenced by the Christian religion, this question is of great importance.

But what should be our sources? Our sources must be the records which have been used to present Jesus Christ to the world: principally, the Bible. Should that be our only source? It is for many people. If they cannot find the answer to this question in "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John," then there is no answer. Religious dogma tells them that all that we know about Jesus comes from the Four Gospels. However, as we discovered in a previous chapter, the records about Jesus grew from the life of the Church, the community of followers which He left behind. Are the Four Gospels the only reliable sources available to us? What about the Gospel According to the Hebrews? What about the writers of the Early Church - such as Justin, Irenaeus, Clement, and so on - who tell us things about Jesus which are not found in the Gospels? Are they frauds? How is it possible to dismiss them when it is upon the strength



of their witness, and others of their time, that we have the Gospels in the first place? Is **Church Tradition** a reliable guide on this question?

The unexpected answer to that question is "No, it is not." That is so because there is more than one Church Tradition. We have to do some detective work here. As will be demonstrated shortly, the early Fathers - from the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century on - believed and taught that Jesus was celibate. The New Testament appears to be silent on this question. There is a murky period between about 70 AD and 150 AD, when the records are scanty and require reconstruction.

Do the later 2<sup>nd</sup> Century leaders really represent the 1<sup>st</sup> Century Church? Most scholars think so. If that is true, then why not just let it be? Why make waves and reopen the case?

It's because there are too many anomalies. Sometimes, the Fathers were sloppy and let information pass through that was not consistent with a celibate Christ. We have hints that there was an earlier tradition which either the Fathers did not understand or changed because they did not agree with it.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> A more detailed discussion of these conflicting traditions is provided under "The Historical Case" in Chapter Four.

For example, Terrance Sweeney, in his Forward to Margaret Starbird's book, *The Woman with the Alabaster Jar*, presents us with this one: if Jesus was never married, why didn't St. Paul use Him as an example of celibacy instead of himself? Would that not have clinched the case for celibacy, the fact that Jesus was celibate? Undoubtedly, if Jesus was not married, Paul would have used that in His argument. The fact that Paul was constrained to use himself as a standard for emulation - even at one point admitting that it was his own doctrine with no authority from Jesus (1 Corinthians 7:6 & 12) - seems to be a compelling contradiction of the traditional view. It smells of a cover-up.

### **William Phipps: The Voice Crying in the Wilderness**

Perhaps the most academically disciplined and useful study on the question of a married Jesus is the book by William E. Phipps, *Was Jesus Married? The Distortion of Sexuality in the Christian Tradition*, published in 1970. Long out-of-print, it was republished in recent years as *The Sexuality of Jesus*. In the opinion of this author, it remains the standard in the field by which all other works must be measured. Any rebuttal to the proposition of a

married Jesus which does not address the issues raised by Dr. Phipps is necessarily truncated and useless.

Now, Dr. Phipps is no cult freak. He is a Presbyterian and was for many years the department head of Philosophy and Religion at Davis-Elkins College in West Virginia. When Harper & Row first published his book in 1970, it raised some eyebrows and in a brief moment of fame, he made the pages of some important newspapers across the country. As a scholar, he was not given to sensationalism and speculation. Consequently, his book never circulated like the more flamboyant and iconoclastic books of Baigent and Company: *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* and *The Messianic Legacy*. Yet, these authors, and others like them since then, have relied upon Phipps' scholarship as the chief cornerstone for their historical revisionism. What is remarkable, more than anything, is that no other academic has dared to follow in his footsteps. He remains alone in this field of inquiry.

**Phipps does not provide any direct evidence of a married Jesus but he offers an explanation as to why we should not expect any.** He points out that Jewish males married quite young by modern standards - about age 16. He surmises that Jesus may have been a widower before

He began His public ministry. Or, He may have been deserted by a faithless wife, in which case, in keeping with His public teaching against divorce, He may have remained single. It is very possible that the disciples never knew His wife and that might explain the silence in the Scriptures.

Lacking any direct evidence, Phipps engages the question on two main fronts: *first*, he argues the case that the cultural milieu of a Jew in Palestine in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD would have required a married Jesus. He does this thoroughly and convincingly.

*Second*, and more important to Christianity, he analyzes the historical foundation for the denial of a married Jesus. He demonstrates that the early Fathers were just as speculative in *denying* that Jesus was married as we are in *affirming* it. Furthermore, he shows that bad theology and outright heresy lie at the foundation of the arguments against the proposition. For these reasons, a married Jesus follows as the appropriate conclusion by default.

We proceed now with a survey of his book by chapter and section.

## **Chapter I: Tackling a Taboo Question**

In this chapter Dr. Phipps acknowledges the professional price one might have to pay in challenging the prevailing view on this subject. The response to his book was overwhelmingly negative. The affinity of priests within the Church for that of their high priest - Jesus Christ - is founded upon the supposition that the work of the kingdom is better done by the sacred minister freed "from the bonds of flesh and blood." Celibate priests are naturally hostile, theologically speaking, to the incongruity of a married high priest.

Many people expressed strong moral objections to a married Jesus, as if sexuality was intrinsically sinful. Phipps was the object of anti-Semitic censure by people who refused to believe that he was a Christian, as no good Christian would ever so smear the reputation of the Lord with the idea that He was married and possessed a sexual nature.

He briefly visits the Mormon view (which will be addressed later in this chapter), some of the marginal speculations of recent years (that Jesus was homosexual, for example) and then shocks us with this one from Martin Luther (p. 12):

*Christ was an adulterer for the first time with the woman at the well, for it was said, "Nobody knows what he's doing with her" (John 4:27). Again with Magdalene, and still again with the adulterous woman in John 8, whom he let off so easily. So the good Christ had to become an adulterer before he died.*

Phipps is quoting Luther's "Table Talks" recorded by his friend Pastor John Schlaginhaufen (between April 7 and May 1, 1532, No. 1472). No editor has ever disputed its authenticity.

How might we interpret such an astonishing assertion by the great Reformer? We might suggest that he had too much beer. Luther loved his beer and he was sitting at the table shooting the breeze when this remark was made. Pity the man had he lived in the age of electronic recording devices. Who knows the raucous exchanges which might have further embarrassed the pious among us!

The editor of *Luther's Works*, obviously troubled by this entry, offers this explanation in his footnote:

*The probable context is suggested in a sermon of 1536 (WA 41, 647) in which Luther asserted that Christ was reproached by the world as a glutton, a winebibber, and even an adulterer.*

That might be true, although this sermon occurred four years after his remarks. We might be willing to believe that he was commenting on a recent sermon but not commentary separated by four years.

George Lamsa, the great Aramaic scholar, provides this opinion of the exchange between Jesus and the Woman at the Well:

*Speaking to a woman at a well is resented by most easterners, who suspect the motives of those who do this. Many eastern poets speak of lovers meeting at the well or the spring. This is why the disciples were surprised when they saw Jesus conversing with a woman at the well and judged him by their own standards.<sup>49</sup>*

This seems to support the idea that Luther was referring to Christ's violation of convention rather than any immoral behavior.

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<sup>49</sup>George M. Lamsa, *Gospel Light*, (Harper & Row, 1964) p. 341

Regardless, Phipps points out that this record is consistent with Luther's view of sexuality in general. "Luther believed that the satisfaction of all physical appetites was necessary. Consequently, he held that a vow of continence was as impossible to fulfill as a vow to create the stars, or to grow old as Methuselah. Sexual indulgence between a closely associated man and woman was as inevitable as the burning of dry straw when ignited. . . . If Luther's assumptions about sex are understood, it is easy to see how he could have declared that Jesus fornicated. Jesus' hunger for food and drink was substantially gratified throughout life . . . . If the need for the opposite sex is as demanding as the need for water by a thirsty man, then obviously every man, Jesus included, must satisfy the dictates of his organism." (p. 12)

## **Chapter II: Sexual Attitudes in Ancient Judaism**

In chapter two Phipps examines the genesis of sexuality, Hebrew marital customs, sexual asceticism in the light of the Jewish Scriptures, and the Essenes.



He begins with the account of creation and reminds the reader that God declared all of His works "very good", which includes sexuality. God created male and female for the human species and their coming together, as Jesus said, to become "one flesh" is the destiny of man. Citing the leading Jewish schools of Hillel and Shammai which existed the century before Christ: "No one may abstain from keeping the law, 'Be fruitful and multiply.'"

The Jews have no obsession with the notion of "original sin" or a tainted sexuality like Christians do. Phipps transmits the famous Jewish expression which is characteristic of this outlook: "A man will have to give account on the judgment day of every good thing which he refused to enjoy when he might have done so." As for the Fall of Man, he notes that its sexual interpretation was created by later patristic mythology and does not appear in the early commentaries, Jewish or Christian.

Hebrew marriage customs reflect this attitude. Marriage was expected of all and early. It was the burden of the father to find spouses for his children.

These customs did not change throughout the history of Israel and even into the times of Jesus. Phipps attacks the view that the Essenes were a branch of Judaism which practiced celibacy: "When the Essene discipline manual was discovered at Qumran, scholars expected it to contain references to celibacy. Surprisingly, in none of the 'Dead Sea Scrolls' is there any mention of a member of the community living in an unmarried state." He explains the belief of celibacy among the Essenes to represent the ignorance of later commentators about their doctrine of the war camp: "Any man who is not pure with regard to his sexual organs on the day of battle shall not join in battle" (p. 31). The Essenes were organized as a holy army which required the avoidance of ritual defilement. Frequent abstention from women was not based on misogyny but on the necessities of battle. (As a side observation, this might be the foundation of Paul's advocacy of celibacy, as well.)

At most, the Essenes were the exception within Judaism, not the rule. The Hebrew Scriptures did not teach perpetual warfare and for that reason, we cannot expect that the followers of the Law would have made celibacy perpetual either.

### **Chapter III: The Sexuality of Jesus**

In the light of the Jewish customs of Jesus' day, Phipps asserts that the silence of the New Testament Scriptures on the Lord's marital status would favor the proposition that He was married. The burden of proof lies with those who deny it; for they must show why Jesus and His parents would have defied the ancient Israelite custom of arranging marriages for pubescent children.

He notes that we have no record that Jesus cried as an infant. Should we assume that Jesus was like any other baby and cried when He was hungry or messy? Or should we assume that, since He was the Son of God, He was a perfectly placid child? The New Testament never mentions that Jesus ever laughed or smiled. Are we to assume that laughter is an evil to be shunned by Christians? Or can we assume that Jesus, as any other human being, had light-hearted moments? Jewish villages of Jesus' time had elementary schools due to the scarcity of the sacred scrolls. The Scriptures say nothing about His school attendance. Is it reasonable to assume that Jesus attended school, or must we assume that because Jesus was the Son of God, He did not need to learn how to read? We see here, then, that

doctrinal bias will dictate how we answer these questions.

The last Gospel record of an event in the life of Jesus as a child was His experience at the Temple when He was twelve years old. He began His recorded ministry when He was about thirty. That leaves us with eighteen silent years. A lot can happen in eighteen years. The silence of the Scriptures does not favor those who deny Jesus was married.

Phipps moves on to a discussion of the virgin birth and Jesus' relationship with Joseph. He takes the position that a normal humanity would require a normal conception. Citing the Jewish belief that Yahweh is an active partner in all conceptions - in addition to the husband and wife - Phipps adopts a more Ebionite position that looks upon Jesus as a special man imparted with a unique measure of Divine grace, as was His cousin, John.

The relevance of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth to the discussion of the celibacy of Jesus seems to be in the general view of virginity which began to prevail in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Church: namely, the pagan notion that sacred virgins who were "undefiled" by normal sexual relations were

better connected to the gods. When this Hellenistic idea carried over into the Church, the doctrine of perpetual virginity supplanted the previous one in which married men were considered spiritually superior.

As for Joseph's fatherly role, there is no reason to believe that he treated the young Jesus any differently than his other children:

*In his time a Jewish father's obligation to a son was clearly defined: "He must circumcise him, redeem him, teach him Torah, teach him a trade, and find a wife for him." What evidence is there that Joseph fulfilled these five duties? Although there are only a few sentences in the New Testament about Joseph, even those show that he was faithful to Jewish standards. In Matthew 1:19 it is stated that he was "a just man," which meant that he regulated his life by the Torah. It is recorded that Jesus was circumcised and redeemed at the age prescribed in the Mosaic law. In accordance with Exodus 13:11-15, a sacrifice was presented at the temple for the first-born son as a symbol of redemption from Egyptian bondage. . . And since both father and son are referred to as carpenters, evidently Jesus was apprenticed in the craft*

*at Joseph's shop in Nazareth. At the age for job training [twelve], Jesus was obedient to his parents according to Luke 2:51; acceptance of the same vocation would have been a prominent way of displaying obedience. (p. 47)*

Since we have evidence that Joseph fulfilled his civic duties as a father in Israel in four of the five elements cited above, should we not reasonably assume that he was faithful to fulfill the last one: the one of betrothal? He did for Jesus' brothers (1 Corinthians 9:5).

*He who loves his wife as himself, and honors her more than himself; who leads his sons and daughters in the straight path, and marries them near their time of maturity; to his house the words of Job apply: "Thou shalt know that thy tent is in peace." (Jewish saying from the 1<sup>st</sup> Century)*

Phipps dismisses the assertion by some that Jesus was too poor to pay a dowry for marriage. He argues that since both Joseph and Jesus were carpenters, it does not appear that they were men of abject poverty. And commentators often forget the treasures brought to the Holy Family by the Wise Men. As kings, surely they brought more

than token presents. Men, who will traverse from afar, risking life and limb in a hostile dominion, will not dishonor the object of their homage with trinkets. The treasures they brought were bountiful supplies of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Joseph's escape to Egypt no doubt prevented the confiscation of this wealth by the envious Herod. Being wise and frugal, it can be assumed that Joseph saved these resources for the benefit of Mary and Jesus in later years.

Phipps then turns his attention to the question of the ascetism of the Essenes and whether they influenced Jesus. While sufficient evidence exists that John the Baptist came from among them, the same cannot be said of Jesus. His teachings were in stark contrast to those of John. While John's disciples fasted, the disciples of Jesus did not. John was a warrior in "the original salvation army", "preparing the way of the Lord." Jesus was the bridegroom who preached the Jubilee (Luke 4). Quoting J. B. Lightfoot from a century ago,

*When we find Christ discussing the relations of man and wife, gracing the marriage festival by his presence, again and again employing wedding banquets and wedded life as apt symbols of the highest theological truths, without a word of disparagement or*

*rebuke, we see plainly that we are confronted with a spirit very different from the narrow rigor of the Essenes. (p. 51)*

Phipps cannot help himself, at this juncture, but to illustrate the inverted values of the later Church Father, Cyprian, who castigated weddings and queried: "What place is there at weddings for one who has no thought of marriage . . .?" Would he have dared to rebuke his Lord?

The Creed of Chalcedon affirms that Jesus was "of one substance with us according to humanity, like us in all respects apart from sin." He experienced the full-range of human emotions and was "tempted in every respect" as we are. With this, Phipps moves into a discussion of our Lord's experience "in the days of his flesh." As we are taught in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Jesus "learned obedience" through the things that He suffered. He was "in every respect tempted as we are, yet without sinning" (Hebrews 4:15). By these temptations, we do not mean those messianic temptations which followed His baptism, but rather those temptations "which are common to man." To deny that Jesus ever felt the surge of sexual arousal would be an open denial of His human qualification as a priestly mediator. We will return to this issue in a later chapter; for



it challenges us with the question: if Jesus produced semen, since that is the source of sexual arousal, what did He do with it? Did He copulate, did He masturbate, or did He wait for nocturnal emissions? Was He ever unclean from the production of seed? And how does that square with the assertion that He never sinned?

But Phipps does not go there. Instead, he looks at the mundane temptations of married life which are usually not sexual but relational. How did Jesus handle women and family life? Phipps quotes Clement of Alexandria on this question:

*True manhood is shown not in the choice of a celibate life; on the contrary the prize in the contest of men is won by him who has trained himself by the discharge of the duties of husband and father and by the supervision of a household, regardless of pleasure and pain - by him, I say, who in the midst of his solicitude for his family shows himself inseparable from the love of God and rises superior to every temptation which assails him through children and wife and servants and possessions. On the other hand he who has no family is in most respects untried. (p. 60)*

If we are left to this line of thinking, Jesus would have been deficient in human character, and thus unqualified to be our Savior, if He did not enter this most critical stage of life.

Jesus' relations with women were in stark contrast with the ascetics of all ages, who distrusted and sometimes hated women. Jesus always spoke directly to them, sometimes sternly, but always with compassion. There is no record of Him saying anything disparaging of women like other religions, such as Buddhism. Some of the early Church Fathers - among them being Jerome, Augustine, Cyprian, and Tertullian - all shared a common misogyny: the belief that women, as women, tempted men with the affairs of this life and led them away from heavenly pursuits. Phipps provides extensive proof of this attitude.

#### **Chapter Four: Traditional Arguments for Jesus' Celibacy**

The first argument for the celibate Jesus is the notion that Jesus is already the spouse of the Church. It would make Him a bigamist to have been married to someone else. Phipps considers

this to be an "unimaginative view" but one which still retains a wide currency in Christian thinking. Arguing from metaphor is always a hazardous venture. Revelation 1-3 presents seven churches, not one. In these texts Jesus would have been a polygamist anyway as some of the Fathers concur. But since it is a sexless polygamy, they were not bothered by the analogy.

Phipps points out, however, that the bridegroom metaphors in the Gospels do not present Jesus as married to the community of his followers. Mark 2:19 (with Synoptic parallels) and Matthew 25:1-13 have been shown to identify the bridegroom as YHWH Himself, and not Jesus. "Moreover, the disciples are compared by Jesus to wedding guests, not to the bride" as in Matthew 22:1-12 (p. 71). "Jesus chose the marriage metaphor to refer to the quality of his relationships to his disciples. . . It was the early Christians who introduced the bridegroom-bride imagery in reference to Christ and the church." (p. 72)

The next argument for a celibate Jesus is the notion that sexual desire is inherently evil. Matthew 5:27-28 is a text used frequently to justify this point of view:

*You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her.*

As another unimaginative view, Phipps correctly points out that Jesus was not here offering a condemnation of sexual desire in general. He was referring to "adultery", the act of sin with another man's wife. One cannot commit adultery - in the Biblical context - with an unmarried woman. Had Jesus meant to include all sexual desire, He would have used the word "fornication" rather than "adultery." Phipps notes that the word for woman is *gune*, which can be translated, arbitrarily, as wife or woman. Since Jesus was talking about adultery, the translator should have translated "gune" as wife. Thus, Jesus was saying "every one who looks at a *married* woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her." *Epithumia* - the Greek word for lust - is used by Paul in the same sense as "covet" (Romans 7:7). Jesus was teaching against the sin of covetousness, and as always, was taking a stand with the Mosaic Law (Matthew 5:17). The word lust is a neutral word meaning "very strong desire." Phipps notes that the word is used in Luke 22:15, where Jesus confides to His disciples,

"I have earnestly desired (*lusted*) to eat this passover with you." It is the Law of God or the object of desire which determines whether the desire is sinful or not.

Luke 14:26 teaches that a man must "hate" his family, including his wife, before he can become Christ's disciple. Texts like this one are used to teach that celibacy is a prerequisite to discipleship.

We might extrapolate from this text that Jesus, if He practiced what He preached, would have been, Himself, a man who "forsook his wife" for the kingdom of heaven's sake. Even though it still would not prove that Jesus was celibate - since He might have been a married man who deserted His wife when He began His ministry - a literal interpretation of what Jesus said leads to other absurdities, as well.

For instance, did Jesus ever display "hatred" toward His mother? No, He was always kind and loving to her. Did any of His disciples do the same? No. Jesus was speaking in hyperbole, and as Phipps points out, His saying is better understood when read with Matthew 10:37: "He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." Jesus is teaching His disciples not

to let their respective families stand in the way of their service to God. It is a matter of priorities.

The strongest text which has been used to support the idea of an unmarried Jesus is probably Matthew 19:12,

*There are eunuchs, who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it.*

Although Jesus did not explicitly include Himself among the number who were "eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven," it is generally assumed that He was since the saying indicates that it represents a higher spirituality.

The section involving this question is the largest in Phipps' book, using twelve pages out of two hundred. The context of Jesus' instructions is the issue of divorce and remarriage. Jesus forbade remarriage and the disciples, troubled by the standard, complained that it would be better not to marry in the first place. Jesus responds with this observation about eunuchs, implying, as Phipps thoroughly demonstrates, that Jesus was

not forbidding remarriage in all cases, but that celibacy after a frivolous divorce is the higher calling.

**Penance** might be a better term to describe the continence required after a divorce, because if a man breaks faith with his wife and divorces her, he has forfeited his right to domestic dominion. Jesus is not teaching that celibacy is the better way; it is the *punishment* imposed upon the servant who is unfaithful in his marital relationship. "For the kingdom of heaven's sake" does not mean the eunuch has a higher calling. Rather, the imposition of celibacy after the divorce is a sanction designed to prevent dishonor to the institution of marriage in God's kingdom. This seems to be an interpretation more consistent with the generally favorable view of marriage which Jesus displays elsewhere.

The next argument in favor of Jesus' celibacy, second only to the one cited above, is found in Luke 20:34-36, where Jesus teaches that "the sons of the resurrection" are "equal to the angels and are sons of God", for which the institution of marriage no longer exists. This is interpreted to imply that Jesus, since He was the Son of God, would be like the angels and not be married

either. The angels are sexless, so was Jesus, and so should we.

Phipps reminds us that angels are not incarnate beings. Jesus was an incarnate being. To think that anyone would denigrate sex and marriage because the angels do not participate in it demonstrates the same logical deficiency as those who think that they can jump off of cliffs and defy other laws of nature. Phipps cites Clement's challenge of the ascetics to stop eating and drinking, since the angels don't (p. 94).

We must remember that the context of this passage was the attempt by the Sadducees to refute the doctrine of the resurrection. Their hope was to befuddle Jesus with the relational tangles of a woman widowed seven times. Whose wife will she be in the resurrection? Jesus did not bite the bait. As St. Paul declares, death ends the marriage covenant. The resurrection is a new beginning and the community of heaven will be different then just as it will be on earth. It is not our place to sort these things out. They are left to the wisdom of our Father in heaven. We have the assurance that we will not be separated in heaven from those that we love (1 Corinthians 13:12).



## **Chapter Five: Paul and Sexual Relations**

Phipps proceeds in chapter five with a review of St. Paul's sexual ethics - the supposed champion of celibacy - as it pertains to the notion of a married Jesus. We have already noted 1 Corinthians 9:4-5 in which Paul acknowledges that the apostles and the brothers of the Lord were married. He defends his own right to be married. Phipps clarifies the meaning of this passage by reminding us that the Greek term - *guné* - can be translated as either "woman" or "wife". Obviously, since the subject matter is about marriage, the context suggests that it should be translated as "wife" or "married woman".

Phipps follows other commentators in this translation in other New Testament passages. He joins Erasmus and Calvin in reading *gunaiikes* in Acts 1:14 - the women disciples who resided in the upper room until the day of Pentecost - as "wives". Clement explains that the apostles took their wives along on their missionary journeys "that they might be their fellow-ministers in dealing with housewives. It was through them that the Lord's teaching penetrated also the women's quarters without any scandal being aroused." (p. 102) Phipps mentions other

"husband-wife" teams in the New Testament, such as Priscilla and Aquila in the book of Acts and Andronicus and Julia in Romans 16:7.

What bearing does this practice have on the question of a married Jesus? Once again, Phipps points out the incongruity of a celibate Jesus - who is supposed to be the "Head" and "chief cornerstone" of the Church - *setting an example which none of His disciples have followed*. Even Paul, who some suppose to have been more spiritual than the other apostles, is generally believed to have been married at one time because he could not have been affiliated with the Sanhedrin otherwise. And some, including Clement and Origen, believed that Paul eventually married again himself, this time to Lydia of Philippi, of whom he refers to as his "yoke-partner" in Philippians 4:3 (p. 107).

The circumstantial evidence cries out for a married Jesus. But do we find any direct evidence in the New Testament? Phipps helps us by referring to Luke 8:2-3 which tells us that "many women or wives (*gune*)" itinerated with Jesus and the Twelve and "provided for them" (p. 101). It seems unlikely that Jewish society would have tolerated a large band of unmarried men and women roaming over the countryside:

*If Jesus married as hypothesized, then his wife, if still alive during his public ministry, may also have accompanied the group. Mary, called Magdalene, is the first named woman (gune) in Luke 8:2 and she may have been his wife (also gune).*

While proof of Jesus' marriage to Mary Magdalene cannot rest on this reference in Luke alone, it should certainly be considered supportive evidence.

Phipps offers a number of other observations on Paul's sexual ethic. But perhaps the final word would be 1 Timothy 4:1-5 in which Paul counsels his successor, Timothy, to reject those "who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from foods" as demonically inspired deceivers.

## **The Remaining Chapters**

The issues raised by Phipps in the remaining chapters of his book deal with the descent of later Christians into various compromises with pagan philosophies which were hostile to women, sex, and marriage. They do not have a direct bearing on the question of a married Jesus, except to demonstrate that the doctrine of a celibate Christ

arose, not from any apostolic doctrine, but rather from the conclusions of a Christianity which was no longer Biblical. The Greco-Roman dualism between "flesh" and "spirit" captured the imagination of the early apologists, such as Justin. Gentile Christianity, which was cut-off from its roots in the Jerusalem Church, was particularly vulnerable to this deception of man's dichotomy. Of course, it was popular among the Gnostics, which, even though the Church rejected its various forms, it was still influenced through a dialectic process.

It was a slide which took generations to complete. The early leaders were married men. There is some evidence that even the early popes were married. But the doctrine of celibacy prevailed eventually.

Phipps does refer to the Gospel of Philip and the texts cited in an earlier chapter of this book, which allude to Jesus' romantic relationship with Mary Magdalene (p. 136-137). He believes that the Gospel was a product of the Valentinian movement (circa, 130-150 AD), which was later dubbed as a Gnostic cult, but which appears to have been more Ebionite and did teach a married Jesus. "The holy man is altogether holy, even his body" was a doctrine which fits more with the

Jewish view of creation rather than the cosmic dualism arising from the Gnostic movement. The Gospel of Philip does not glorify virginity, and for that reason, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Church lost interest in its message. It cannot be known whether the accusations of the later Fathers against the Valentinians were accurate, but lacking corroborating evidence, the value of the recent discovery of the Gospel of Philip certainly casts serious doubt.

Clement of Alexandria stands out as a beacon in that demented era. Phipps quotes his commentary on the goodness of creation (p. 146):

*It is not the sex organs, or marital coitus, which is obscene . . . The sexual parts of man's body deserve not to be treated with prudery but with privacy. It is only the immoral use of sex which is obscene.*

Phipps digresses to inform us that an unholy prudery among the Victorian editors of the multi-volume collection, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, led them to leave untranslated this text and the entire "Book Three" of Clement's major work, *Miscellanies* which provides guidance on sexual matters.

He quotes him again:

*Those who from a hatred for the flesh ungratefully long to have nothing to do with the marriage union and the eating of reasonable food, are both blockheads and atheists, and exercise an irrational chastity like other heathen. (p. 147)*

Contrast Clement's attitude with Augustine, "everyone who is born of sexual intercourse is in fact sinful flesh" (p. 171). "Augustine regarded the involuntary penis erections, spontaneous ejaculations, and the intensity of venereal pleasures as proof that human nature had fallen." (Phipps, p. 172). Augustine in league with Jerome founded the Roman Catholic attitude toward sex which has pervaded all of Christianity. To this very day, Christians are horrified at candor about sexual matters. It causes one to wonder if the pagans of Roman times were justified in calling these people "the enemies of humanity."

Phipps has been a courageous pioneer in this field of inquiry. His work is carefully documented which aids further research. However, his low view of the Virgin Birth is a doctrinal deficiency which weakens his argument, rather than strengthening it. As will

be demonstrated in a later chapter, the Virgin Birth is essential to the case of a married Messiah and the doctrine of hierogamy.<sup>50</sup>

## **The Mormons**

It would not be possible to do justice to this subject and not consider the contribution which various Mormon leaders have made to the question of a married Jesus. While it may not be of the caliber of William Phipps's disciplined study, they ought to be commended for questioning the docetic views of traditional Christians and suggesting a more realistic perspective. My primary source comes from Ogden Kraut's book entitled *Jesus Was Married* first published in 1969 by Pioneer Press. I am using the 1995 edition.

There are three reasons why some caution ought to be employed when considering his presentation and the presentations of Mormon apologists in general on this question. The Mormon polemic for a married Jesus arose during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and was all entangled with the Mormon justification for polygamy. For this reason, Kraut, who supports polygamy, is naturally interested in presenting a

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<sup>50</sup> This refers to a chapter in the textbook edition which is not available in this abridged version.

polygamous Jesus. That bias should not dissuade us from a balanced evaluation of the legitimate evidence which points to a married Jesus.

Second, it should be mentioned that the Mormon doctrine of "celestial marriage" has influenced that movement's view of Jesus' marital status. "Celestial marriage" teaches that one's salvation or certainly one's status in the after-life is affected by whether one has entered into marriage in this life. According to this doctrine, Christ's own status would be in question had He not been married.

And third, our evaluation of the Mormon contribution ought to be tempered because of their deference to the "prophetic authority" of their leaders. Religious debate is often clouded by the fear of being labeled as an "unbeliever" or "heretic" within one's own religious group. This is not a fault unique to Mormonism. Virtually all Christian groups have a tendency to ascribe sinister motives to "unbelievers" simply because they remain unconvinced by their evangelism. They never stop to consider that their dogma might represent sloppy scholarship or irrational thought.

Returning to Phipps' work briefly, he refers to Orson Hyde, an early leader of the Mormon Church



as teaching that Jesus married Martha and more than one Mary (p. 9). In the words of Phipps,

*He wrested biblical support that Jesus married and had children from the suffering servant passage of Isaiah. In Isaiah 53:10 it is prophesied: "He shall see his offspring." These words were interpreted as a literal description of Jesus, who would be born centuries later.*

He cites a "confession" by one of Brigham Young's wives which indicates that the founder of the Mormon colony in Utah agreed with Hyde:

*Brigham Young, in one of his sermons . . . declared that "Jesus Christ was a practical polygamist; Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, were his plural wives, and Mary Magdalene was another. Also, the bridal feast at Cana of Galilee, where Jesus turned the water into wine, was on the occasion of one of his own marriages. (p. 10)*

Phipps handles these speculations in a balanced manner. While he acknowledges that polygamy was an Old Testament custom which carried over into the period in which Jesus lived, monogamy was the norm.<sup>51</sup> "Even if the New Testament stated that Jesus

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<sup>51</sup>Actually, Phipps is mistaken on this point; the opposite is true. At the time of the Exodus, polygamy was a universal custom among the

was married, it would be unwarranted to assume that this meant that he had more than one wife."

Ogden Kraut also uses the argument that the marriage of Cana was Jesus' own wedding. There do seem to be anomalies in the account found in John 2. For instance, why would Jesus, an honorary guest at the wedding, bear any responsibility for the beverages? Apparently, that was the responsibility of the bridegroom, for the "ruler of the feast" commends the bridegroom for saving the best for last (v.9-10). Why was Jesus performing the duties of the bridegroom, if He was not the bridegroom?

And why did His mother assume responsibility for the success of the festivities? Why was she even there? Why were the disciples there? Why did she think that Jesus was responsible for doing something about the problem? And where did she obtain the authority to order the servants around?

While these are tantalizing questions, they do not help us to answer the question of whether Jesus was married or not. These anomalies can be answered by the possibility that the wedding was for a close relative, perhaps a sister or younger brother;

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**Israelites. The average Israelite household had 27 sons, not counting daughters (compare Numbers 3:40-43 with Numbers 1:46 and do the math). But it is true that the frequency of polygamy diminished in Israel the closer we get to the New Testament era. The polygamy issue in the Biblical period will be addressed at length in Chapter 4.**

in which case, Jesus would have been simply solving a family crisis.

Of course, even if this incident proved that Jesus was married, it would not prove that He was a polygamist. It is important for the reader not to dismiss evidence of a married Jesus, simply because it is presented by an advocate of polygamy.

The Mormon contribution to this question seems to be largely speculative and peculiar to their sectarian doctrine. For instance, Kraut cites a "revelation" received by the Prophet Joseph Smith that the "stem of Jesse" in Isaiah 11:1 is Christ:

*Since Christ was identified as the "Stem", it is interesting to note that the "Stem" was to have posterity; according to Isaiah - "there shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. (p. 92)*

Like Orson Hyde's attempt to literalize Isaiah 53:10, Kraut fails to provide exegetical evidence as to why Smith's interpretation would be correct or why we should literalize these texts. While a literal interpretation of these texts would certainly support - although it would not prove - a doctrine of a married Jesus, these men fail to explain why we should

discard nearly two thousand years of exegetical interpretation.

Kraut turns to archaeology. Citing an interesting discovery in 1875 near the ancient village of Bethany in which certain sarcophagi bore the inscriptions of Salome, Lazarus, Martha, Simeon (identified as the "son of Jesus"), and Salomzion, the daughter of Simeon, he thinks we find proof that Jesus had a son and a granddaughter. He thinks that the only reason why this discovery was not hailed by the Christian world is because of its prejudice in favor of a celibate Jesus. (p. 90-91)

That all might be true, but at most, it is suggestive evidence. There are too many other possibilities. There were many men in ancient Judea named "Jesus" (Joshua). Perhaps these empty tombs once contained the remains of the Bethany family. Even if they did, it is just as likely that another person named "Jesus" - perhaps named in honor of the Lord - was the father of this Simeon.

Kraut says, "It is only logical that Jesus and His Apostles would honor all the laws of marriage in order to set the proper example for their followers." I agree wholeheartedly, but that does not *prove* Jesus was married.

Much of what Kraut offers have been addressed already in our review of the book by William Phipps. What appears to be his single greatest contribution to this discussion is his presentation on Psalm 45, as he quotes Orson Pratt (p. 63-65):

*Indeed, the Psalmist, David, prophesies in particular concerning the wives of the Son of God. We quote from the English version of the Bible, translated about three hundred and fifty years ago: "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia; when thou comest out of the ivory palaces, where they have made thee glad, King's daughters were among thine honorable WIVES; upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in a vesture of gold Ophir." (Psalm 45:8,9) That this passage has express reference to the Son of God and His wives, will be seen by reading the sixth and seventh verses which are as follows: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." This Being, whom the Psalmist here calls God, is represented in the next verses as having "honorable wives".*

It should be recalled that Hebrews 1:8-9 treats Psalm 45 as a Messianic prophecy, as Pratt continues:

*Paul applies the words of the Prophet David to the Son of God, to the anointed Messiah, who is called God, and whose "throne is forever and ever." Let it be remembered then, that the Son of God is expressly represented as having "honourable wives". King James' translators were not willing that this passage should have a literal translation, according to the former English rendering, lest it should give countenance to polygamy; therefore, they altered the translation to honorable women instead of wives; but any person acquainted with the original can see that the first translators have given the true rendering of that passage.*

Kraut provides support for Pratt's assertion by producing facsimile copies of Psalm 45 from The Geneva Bible (the Bible of Calvin and many of the Reformers) and from an Anglican Bible used before the King James Version. All of them do render v. 9 as "honorable wives," rather than "honorable women."

*Notwithstanding the Queen is numbered among the "honorable wives" of the Son of God, yet she is called upon to worship Him as her Lord. If her*

*husband were a mere man, she would not be exhorted to worship him. . . (Orson Pratt, The Seer, p. 159-160)*

**Psalm 45 appears to be the most significant argument of a married Jesus which has been offered thus far;** yet it presents, seemingly, not just a married Jesus, but a *polygamous Jesus*, as well. This idea is troubling to the modern mind. It was troubling to the minds of the later Church Fathers. That was why they interpreted these texts allegorically. They acknowledged that Christ was a polygamist, but only in a symbolic sense. They saw these Old Testament wives as figures of the Church and not as real women who would be married to the Messiah. Both Pratt and Kraut have failed to provide any hermeneutical rule as to why we should literalize these texts. Paul allegorizes Messianic prophecies (Galatians 4:22-26). Why should we not do so here? These Mormon commentators have failed to explain how we are to know which prophecies are to be taken literally and which ones are allegorical. It is because their tradition does not provide a consistent rule of hermeneutics. Instead, they must rely upon the shifting spiritual states of their prophetic leaders for guidance.

While Psalm 45 will be explored more thoroughly later in our discussion on hierogamy, it might be helpful to provide the reader with a preview of what is to come. The doctrine of hierogamy recognizes that Jesus, as the titular head of the house of David, was the heir to the royal harem. This harem – also known in the Scriptures as “Zion” or “the daughter of Zion” – was passed down from generation-to-generation among the principal heirs to the Davidic throne, even during the years of captivity. Not all women of the royal harem were available to the heir. Some of them were mothers, sisters, and other female dependents that were forbidden according to the Law of Moses. It was from the royal harem that spouses were provided for the heir’s brethren, servants, and other worthy recipients of the Davidic Covenant. In this sense, the Crown Prince was the family matchmaker, and Jesus, as the Messianic Prince, would have been so, as well. At this juncture, we know of only one person with whom Jesus had any intimacies, and that was Mary Magdalene. Even though Jesus was responsible for the care of this harem – which was later called the Church – we have no evidence to suggest that Jesus was anything other than monogamous.



## **Feminist Authors: Magdalene as the Daughter of Zion**

If we explore the question of a married Jesus from the perspective of Mary Magdalene's story, we gather more valuable information. Herein we find a meaningful contribution from Margaret Starbird's books as well as others, such as Susan Haskins' monumental work: *Mary Magdalene in Myth and Metaphor*.<sup>52</sup> While lacking certain vital information which will be provided in the next chapter, these books have been effective in dispelling a number of myths about her.

One such myth is that she was a common prostitute. There is no convincing evidence that she was such a person. This view originated with the later Fathers, and one is tempted to see in their descriptions a desire to diminish her stature in the New Testament Church.

The Talmudists confused her with Mary, the mother of Jesus; for in their frequent derogatory remarks about the Virgin Mary, they claim that she was either raped or was a whore, and that Jesus was a bastard child. In their descriptions of this Mary,

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<sup>52</sup> *Mary Magdalene in Myth and Metaphor* by Susan Haskins (Riverhead Books, New York, 1993)

they call her "a perfumer" or "hairdresser," which, as we shall see, is more applicable to Mary Magdalene.

The usual assumption about Mary Magdalene is that she was from a village in Galilee called "Magdala" which was notorious for licentiousness. Margaret Starbird disputes that traditional view, arguing that,

*The actual Greek letters for the epithet "the Magdalene," . . . are very distinctive. The -ene (hnh) ending is not a correct or typical one for designating a person from a particular town or region; to denote a person from a particular region or town, the ending should be -ios. If Mary were from a town called "Magdala," the correct Greek spelling of her epithet would be . . . "Magdala<sup>ios</sup>."<sup>53</sup>*

Starbird says that there are no maps or records in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century which identify the existence of a fishing village called "Magdala". The site which was later called Magdala was called "Taricheae" during the time of Jesus. Thus, it seems that the epithet, "Magdalene," must have other significance.

Adam Clarke's *Commentaries* (Matthew 27:56) cites Lightfoot among those who likewise do not

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<sup>53</sup> *Magdalene's Legacy*, p. 128

believe that the term *Magdalene* signifies her place of origin. "A plaiter of hair" is offered as another possibility since "migdala" means in Hebrew "spice, perfume"<sup>54</sup> and "dallah": "something dangling, i.e. a loose thread or hair."<sup>55</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary associates "dallah" with poverty, disheveled hair and social lowliness (2 Kings 24:14). Song of Solomon 7:5 also uses the word to denote something that "hangs down," as in disheveled hair. Lightfoot gets his information from the Talmud, for he states:

*. . . there is mention made in the Talmudic authors of "Maria Magdila" the daughter of Maria, "a plaiter of women's hair", who they say was the wife of "Papus" Ben Juda, but an adultress. They make this "Papus" contemporary with Rabban Gamaliel (of Jafneh) and R. Joshua, and with R. Akibah: who all lived both before and after the destruction of Jerusalem; so that the times did not very much disagree. And probable it is, that the Gemarists retained some memory of our Mary Magdalene, in the word "Magdil."*<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> See *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Hendrickson Publishers, 1997) p. 955 and compare with Strong's #4026 "a tower of flowers")

<sup>55</sup> Strong's #1803

<sup>56</sup>A *Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica*, (John Lightfoot, 1602-1675)

But "mag" may refer to "magi" from which we get "magician" and the "wise" men of the Christmas story who brought frankincense and myrrh.<sup>57</sup> Mary may have been a sorceress, a fact which would explain why Jesus had to cast seven demons out of her. The use of ointments, perfumes, herbs and spices were all a part of ancient sorcery, as was disheveled hair for pagan prophetesses. All of these factors may combine to explain why Mary was a footwasher, had expensive ointments, and let her hair down to dry the Lord's feet. It was her vocation which was sained in the service of Jesus. She would have known of the *hieros gamos* tradition in pagan religions and may have participated in such rituals. But as we explained earlier, she would not have considered performing such a ritual upon Jesus as one of His faithful disciples.

More pertinent to our inquiry, Starbird sees "Magdalene" in Old Testament prophecy:

*As for you, O [Magdal-eder], watchtower of the flock, O stronghold of the Daughter of Zion! the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to the Daughter of Jerusalem. Why do you now cry aloud - have you no king? Has your counselor perished, that pain seizes*

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<sup>57</sup> **Brown-Driver-Briggs**, p. 550 - soothsayer - Greek #3095 and Hebrew #7248 and #4018

*you like that of a woman in labor? Writhe in agony, O Daughter of Zion, like a woman in labor, for now you must leave the city and camp in the open field.*

- Micah 4:8-10<sup>58</sup>

Since no vowels occur in the ancient Hebrew, "Magdal" and "Migdal" (#4029) are indistinguishable in the text. Although obscured in the Septuagint, no reader of the Hebrew would have missed this association. Since this passage is woven in the middle of two important Messianic prophecies which were, no doubt, frequently read by the New Testament Church - vss. 1-7 which speak of the Messianic kingdom and then 5:2 which foretells the birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem - it seems likely that "Magdalene" was added as a special epithet to the Lord's companion. Other more tenuous Messianic associations were made by the New Testament authors and by the early Fathers.<sup>59</sup> John the Baptist was the expected Elijah based upon one passage in Malachi 4:5. **Is it unreasonable to suppose that the Messianic prophecies also expected a human representation of Zion?**

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<sup>58</sup> *Woman with the Alabaster Jar*, p. 50

<sup>59</sup> "Out of Egypt have I called my son" in Matthew 2:15 is a good example. The Old Testament reference has nothing to do with the Messiah. It is a reference to the nation of Israel.

We might find a helpful explanation if we consider the naming rituals of ancient times. Males were usually named at their circumcision, but they also acquired nicknames, epithets, and titles later in life to distinguish them from others and to identify them as special. One's place of origin was just one way of identifying people. One's father was another.

Sometimes, these namings occurred at significant events in the life of the individual. An easy example would be when a man acquired a title when assuming a public office. David the shepherd son of Jesse became David the King. At Jesus' baptism, John named Him "the Lamb of God." Of course, Jesus had many epithets.

Jesus did his share of giving people nicknames. Simon, of course, became Peter (which means "rock") at his confession in Matthew 16. James and John became "the sons of thunder."

So what about Mary Magdalene? Rather than acquiring an entirely new name, her name may have been simply altered to reflect her new status in the Christian community. Remember, Abram was changed to Abraham and Sarai was changed to Sarah (Genesis 17:5, 15).

Mary may have begun as “Miriam Magdala” (the anointer and footwasher) and then became “Miriam Migdala” (the tower and stronghold of Zion). This name change may have occurred at the anointing in Bethany. Mary is always listed first among the women disciples. Jesus commanded that her loving deed be recorded as a memorial to her. She became "God's tower" by being "God's footwasher." All of this would have been lost to Gentile Christians in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century.

Starbird also points out that the use of spikenard occurs only one other place in the Bible: in the Song of Solomon 1:12. It reads:

*While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard  
sendeth forth the smell thereof.*

Compare with the Bethany anointing:

*There they made him supper . . . then took Mary  
a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly,  
and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet  
with her hair: and the house was filled with the  
odour of the ointment (John 12:2-3).*

How could anyone at that dinner table not have known what she was doing?

Returning to the Song, the very next verse declares:

*A bundle of myrrh is my well-beloved unto me; he shall lie all night betwixt by breasts.*

Is it reasonable to believe that this prophecy was consummated that night between Jesus and Mary as the Bridegroom and Bride, the Messiah and the Daughter of Zion? There will be much more to say about this in later chapters.<sup>60</sup>

## **Miscellaneous Evidence**

The authors of *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* - Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln - provide most of whatever else is available on the market right now to prove Jesus was married. Their material focuses largely on the legends and mysteries of European origin, in which it is claimed that Mary Magdalene fled Jerusalem after the Crucifixion with her child (or children) to protect them from dangerous inquisitions. The traditions are almost universal in saying that she hid in southern

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<sup>60</sup>I refer to Haskin's book. Her work is simply a historical review of how Mary Magdalene is presented in the Bible and Christian doctrine. She does not attempt to prove that Jesus was married, but she does cite some of the familiar evidence already presented in this book. Hippolytus and Origen were both early Christian leaders who interpreted Mary Magdalene as the Shulamite in the Song of Solomon and a figure of the Church (see p. 60-63 and 89-90). It will be demonstrated later that the opposite is true: the historic church is a symbol of a symbol. Mary Magdalene was the true Bride of Christ, the mother of the faithful, and the daughter of Zion.



France. None of this proves that Jesus was married. It only proves that there were legends that He was married to her.

Any other evidence they offer is largely speculative. For example, they speculate on the name of Barabbas, who was released by Pilate while Jesus was sentenced to death. It so happens that there is an extra-biblical source which names Barabbas as *Jesus-Barabbas*. *Bar*, meaning "son," and "*abbas*," meaning "father." It is suggested to mean: "the son of Jesus" (p.350). This kind of evidence is interesting, but does not help much.

There is one useful discussion that seems solid: the events surrounding the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11. The authors believe that they find evidence of a special relationship between Jesus and Mary which is contrasted by how He relates with Martha. Apparently, there is a sacred mourning custom among the Jews called *Shiva*: in which a woman is expected to mourn until her husband calls her. We see evidence of this custom in this account. When Mary and Martha learn of the Lord's arrival, it is Martha who arises to meet Him unbidden. Mary remains behind in the house and continues to mourn until word comes that Jesus has called for her (p. 336).

This same kind of unusual behavior is displayed at the Resurrection tomb. Mary is pleading with Jesus - who in the early morning shadows she mistakes for the caretaker - to tell her where His body is, "so that I might take him away." Here she is assuming the rights of a widow to dispose of her husband's body. Surely, she was prepared to prove her spousal status to this apparent authority.

In John's Gospel, Mary attempts an intimate embrace, which Jesus discourages,

*Touch me not: for I am not ascended to my Father*  
(v.17).<sup>61</sup>

This is an unusual request, considering that He allowed His disciples to do that very thing just hours later. We will explore more of this kind of evidence in the next chapter.

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<sup>61</sup> Notice in this account that Mary refers to Jesus as *Rabboni*, which in the Aramaic is the stronger "my great Master." The Hebrew equivalent for husband is *ba'al*: which also means "master." *Rabboni* was the title reserved for the president of the Sanhedrin, the chief magistrate of the Jewish people (see *Vine's Expository Dictionary*, p. 504). Her touching ought to be compared with 1 Corinthians 7:1 in Paul's reference to sexual relations. George Lamsa supports this view in *Gospel Light*, p. 400 - "She drew near to embrace and kiss him as one who was given up for dead but is alive. Such an act would certainly have aroused the suspicions of those around who would have given it a wrong and immoral interpretation."

*They have taken away my husband [lord] and I  
know not where they have laid him.*

- John 20:13 (cf. 1 Peter 3:6)



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE CASE FOR A MARRIED JESUS**

#### **Doctrinal Commitments of Author**

I must anticipate that some readers have skipped the previous chapters and have turned here first – not a good idea, but here you are.

You must understand that I am clearly biased in favor of the proposition that Jesus was married. I am not approaching this topic from the point of view of a disinterested academic who is just writing a thesis. I have a personal interest in the outcome of the evidence.

Does that disprove my case? No, not at all - you are the judge and jury. You will decide the question for yourself when you compare the information

presented in this book with the arguments of the traditional view.

You should also be aware that I have not always believed Jesus was married. In fact I never really gave it much thought until I was introduced to the Grail tradition. That is kind of odd when I think about it. Like most people, I guess I thought the Bible never presented a married Jesus. So, like everyone else, I just assumed He was not.

The first time I ever met someone who believed Jesus was married, the guy believed that Jesus was also a polygamist. I wanted to punch him in the nose. Even though I agreed that polygamy was a lawful and acceptable custom in the Bible, the idea of Jesus being this way bothered me. I completely understand people's emotional reaction to this question. However, like me, you have to get past the emotional barrier and look at it through new eyes. I believe Christianity would be a better religion if it taught the world that Jesus was married.

Having said that, we do not have the existential imperative to make Christianity into anything we want it to be. Christianity claims to be a historical religion based upon Divine revelation found in the Bible. That fact must be respected. We must

construct our case based upon sound historical and theological foundations.

There are three main categories of consideration when dealing with this question. **The first should be theological.** How does a married or an unmarried Jesus affect the doctrines of the Bible? Many readers will not be interested in approaching the issue from this angle because they have no religious commitment to the Bible. They either do not believe it was ever the inerrant Word of God or they believe that it was corrupted by later copyists.

However, like me, many of my readers will have a spiritual commitment to the idea that the Bible is of Divine origins and that its teachings form a seamless garment of spiritual truth. If it all does not fit together, then none of it does. If the Lord's marital status contradicts other teachings of the Bible, then that idea must be rejected.

I am also committed to the Ecumenical Creeds of the Church. Those creeds teach the miraculous origins of Christianity, the deity of Jesus Christ, the doctrine of the Trinity, the reality of sin, and the necessity of Christ's sacrificial death, among other things. Does the doctrine of a married Jesus enhance those teachings, or does it in some way contradict them? I believe a number of doctrinal problems are

resolved with the idea of a married Jesus. Yet, as a Christian, if it can be demonstrated that a married Jesus diminishes the message of the Gospel, then I would reject it.

Some of the theological questions I address in the following pages will seem arcane or weird to the secular mind. The average Joe is going to wonder why some of these strange and obscure Biblical teachings are important. I need to ask the average Joe to leave his modern world behind and think like the people of ancient times. Jesus lived in ancient Judea and followed a moral code which was even more ancient. The customs and beliefs may seem ridiculous to some readers. I can't help it. It's the data we have to work with and we have to respect it.

After the theological case, I will address **the textual case** for a married Jesus. The crux of my argument here is that we do not really understand the texts which describe Jesus' relationship with His disciples and the community which He founded. We look back to that time period through the lenses of commentators who lived much later and who lived in an alien culture from the one in which Jesus lived. I will be working from the Old Testament to define those relationships because the Judea of Jesus' time was closer culturally to the Jewish heritage in the Law of Moses than it was after the Bar Kochba



disaster, which ended Judaism as a cultural force in the ancient world. The difference was profound. It would be comparable to what would have happened to the United States had the old Soviet Union won the Cold War. What if the Soviets destroyed our American institutions and assumed the authority to interpret the Constitution? Can you imagine how differently nine Soviet Supreme Court Justices would have handled it? Well, the same thing happened to Christianity when it was cut-off from its heritage in the Jerusalem Church.

Finally, I will present **the historical case** for a married Jesus. We will look at some anomalies in the writings of the early Church Fathers. They provide remarkable support for the married Jesus doctrine without intending to do so. In some respects it will be our best evidence.

## **The Theological Case**

The case for a married Jesus must first confront the problem that the Bible does not provide any obvious account about this aspect of His personal life. Other than the Christmas stories, we find very little to tell us about Jesus the man.

Our immediate inclination is to demand a record something like what we find in the book of Genesis. For example, in the reference to Adam and Eve, we are told that "Adam knew his wife Eve, and she conceived, and brought forth a son and called his name Cain." We do not have anything like this in the New Testament. We do not have an account where it says, "Jesus knew His wife, so and so, and she conceived . . ."

We do have two genealogies of Christ's ancestry, one in Matthew's Gospel (chapter 1) and the other in Luke's (chapter 3). These authors offer no clear reason why they provided them (they are different, by the way). Jesus never used them to defend His Messianic claims, even when He perhaps should have and could have easily done so (John 7:41-52). His disciples never mention any personal need to see them. Nor do they appear to have been used to establish any New Testament doctrine. Even in Paul's passing references to the Lord's descent from Abraham and David, he focuses on the covenantal implications of Christ's mission in fulfilling the promises made to the fathers and criticizes teachers of the law who rely upon genealogies as a source of authority (1 Timothy 1:4; Titus 3:9). Whether or not we can identify the reason for the presence of the Messianic genealogies in the Gospel records, it is

clear that both of them stop with Jesus. There is nothing to suggest that the genealogies of this sacred lineage continued after Jesus or that there was any Messianic succession which followed Him.

There is probably an important theological reason why this is so. The Gospel writers affirm that Jesus is still alive, having been raised from the dead. Being alive, there is no need of a successor to His office. Indeed, according to the Epistle of Hebrews (7:16, 27), Christ's Atonement would have been of no value were it the work of a mere mortal man. The Aaronic priesthood was faulted for this very weakness. Its priests were susceptible to sin and death themselves. For such reasons, that priestly order was unable to truly absolve the sinner of his sin. Jesus Christ, on the other hand, was a redeemer who was both sinless and eternal.

Since the Christian savior and heavenly priest is immortal, there appears to be no longer any need for a doctrine of succession to His Divine office. Jesus will remain the savior of mankind until the end of time.

Lacking the need for a succession, are we free, then, to assert that Jesus did not marry and have children? At first, it might seem to be an obvious conclusion. What use would be the marriage institution and

children to a man whose mission was comprehended in a sacrificial death? It would seem to be an unnecessary trauma on a family to experience the wrenching agony of witnessing the torture and death of someone so loved as He would have been.

But there are other issues which must be considered. Although our Lord's priestly and kingly offices were His and His alone, it does not mean that they were not meant to be *mediated* in some sense through earthly agents. The witness of the Church tells us that Christ's followers were destined to be infused with Divine power to equip them as messengers and rulers within His kingdom (Acts 1:8). From the beginning, the Church had spiritual leaders in the apostles and various prophets which arose. Later in Acts 15, we learn that the Jerusalem Church had an **episcopal office** which was held by the person of James, the Lord's brother. It seems that the New Testament record offers only glimpses of this government. Ascribed to the Desposyni, its methods and operations are shrouded in mystery.<sup>62</sup>

So, while we do not have a succession in the traditional sense of the word - of sons succeeding their fathers in their priestly or kingly offices - **we do have a succession of leadership.** The Apostles

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<sup>62</sup> You will recall that “the Desposyni” refers to the relatives of Jesus. It is a term which means “of or with the Lord.”

set forth leaders - usually called "elders" - in the respective churches which they founded. These leaders, in turn, are charged with the task of setting forth new leaders to succeed *them* when they face death. Thus, we have a caliphate of sorts, with a succession of these temporal offices chosen from a pool of qualified candidates - not as a right of primogeniture (of a son to his father) - but rather as a **diaconate** (of one servant to another).

From this perspective, if Jesus was married, He was not married because He needed any sons to succeed Him. This situation would have been unlike anything the ancient world would have ever known up to that time. The ancient kingdoms depended upon a reliable and accurate doctrine of succession. The fact that the Church needed no such doctrine was truly a new development in the history of mankind.

### **The Second Adam**

But Jesus was not just a priest and a king. He was also the second Adam. As St. Paul explains,

*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order:*

*Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. . .*

*And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. . . The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

-1 Corinthians 15:22-23, 45-47 (KJV)

This analogy deserves further examination.

The first Adam was commanded "to be fruitful and multiply." In so doing he was the originator of the human race. Faced with this fact, what would be the suggestion in the title "the second Adam"? Would we not be compelled to infer that Jesus Christ, too, was called "to be fruitful and multiply" and to become the father of a new race?

Barnabas certainly thought so:

*For thus the Scripture saith concerning us, where it introduceth the Father speaking to the Son; Let us make man after our likeness and similitude; and let them have dominion. . . And when the Lord saw the man which he had formed, that behold he was very good; he said, Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth.*

*And this he spake to his Son . . . The Lord saith;  
Behold I will make the last as the first.*

-Epistle of Barnabas 5:12-15  
(Emphasis added)<sup>63</sup>

Barnabas is here arguing the point that Adam was a theological type to Jesus, who was the anti-type and the real Adam. It is clear that Barnabas considered the Creation Ordinance (also known as the *Dominion Covenant*), with its procreative mandate, as still in force, and one which has been passed-down to Jesus.

Clement of Rome, from the same time period as Barnabas, held to the same opinion:

*For thus saith God; “Let us make man after our image and after our likeness. And God made man; male and female made He them.” So having finished all these things, He praised them and blessed them and said, “Increase and multiply”. We have seen that all the righteous were adorned with good works. Yea, and the*

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<sup>63</sup>*The Epistle of Barnabas*, (from *The Apostolic Fathers*, J. B. Lightfoot, Baker Book House, 1978) while not in the Canon of Scripture, is ascribed to Paul's missionary companion mentioned in Acts who apparently shared with him the status of an apostle, was one of the seventy, and one who, unlike Paul, personally knew Jesus. Some early Christian leaders, such as Clement of Alexandria, believed this epistle was Scripture. Whether it was or not, it certainly represents a very early Christian tradition. James Kkeist's translation for the Catholic University, states plainly concerning the Creation Ordinance, “This is what he said to his son” (*Ancient Christian Writers* #6, Newman Press, 1948).

*Lord Himself having adorned with works rejoiced. Seeing then that we have this pattern, let us conform ourselves with all diligence to His will; let us with all our strength work the work of righteousness.*<sup>64</sup>

The tone of Paul's passage in Corinthians seems to suggest that the second Adam will not rely upon fleshly means to populate His kingdom. It is a spiritual kingdom, as Paul explains later in the passage, "For flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (v. 50). He then reveals the doctrine of the resurrection and our physical transformation as the basis for this regeneration.

But a closer examination of Paul's doctrine reveals a unity with Barnabas and Clement on this question. The redemption of the body is a *result* of becoming a member of the Christian race (15:18). He identifies the superiority of the second Adam, not in the fact that He eschews the physical nature, but rather that His *point of origin* is spiritual and heavenly. While the first Adam was of the earth and had no inherent power to impart eternal life, the second Adam does have this power. Unlike the first Adam, whose sin

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<sup>64</sup>***Clement to the Corinthians* § 32 (Lightfoot): Clement is mentioned in Scripture (Philippians 4:3) and is well-known to Church history. It is interesting how closely he associates "the work of righteousness" with procreation and asserts – unless we must believe the spiritualizers – that "the Lord Himself" was "adorned" with such "good works."**



brought death upon him and his posterity, the second Adam is uncontaminated with Original Sin, and is thus free of the principle of death:

*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned . . . For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. . . For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*

- Romans 5:12, 17, 19

In some sense our union with Jesus Christ absolves the sinner, not only of personal sin, but also the power of Original Sin. Paul describes this union as an adoption through the rite of baptism (Romans 8:23; 6:4; Colossians 2:12). It is the negation or the decontamination of Original Sin - the sin of our federal head, Adam - that saves the believer from eternal death. Since the principle of death had no legal claim upon the sinless Jesus and could not hold Him, He was resurrected at the appointed time. Likewise for His followers, the principle of death has no legal claim upon them either and they, too, shall

enjoy the resurrection of their bodies at the general resurrection (John 6:39-40, 44, 54).

### ▪ **Dominion and the Resurrection**

Up to this point, we have standard Christian doctrine. We see how Christ saves the Adamic race and how that is mediated through the Holy Spirit at baptism. But that is only half of the equation. We have yet to answer whether Jesus was called, as the second Adam, to found a new race which could do what our first parents failed to do; namely, to fill the earth with a righteous people and through them to exercise dominion over the terrestrial universe.

Unlike heaven, the earth is a growing and dynamic place. While heaven is a place of rest and communion, Earth is the place for activity and growth. We know that the Christian vision describes an eternal role for the terrestrial universe in a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21:1). In the eternal kingdom, there are still nations, the tree of life, and the material existence (v. 24; 22:1-3). So while those who are blessed with the resurrection of their bodies enjoy the splendor of heaven and its celestial hosts, there remain those who are alive at the Lord's coming, who do not partake of physical death, but are transformed in their fully human natures to continue their existence upon the earth:

*Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.*

- 1 Corinthians 15:52

In this very text where Paul introduces us to Jesus as the second Adam, we have two specimens of the Christian race. First, we have those who die and receive their adoption at the resurrection, and second, we have those who do not die, who do not need to be adopted, and who do not need to be resurrected because their bodies will be transformed. Furthermore, He describes this doctrine as a *mystery*, an esoteric doctrine, which requires special revelation to understand.

This scenario becomes problematic for traditional Christian theology. What criterion is used to differentiate between those who enter the eternal terrestrial kingdom from those who enter the celestial kingdom? Is it merely an accident of history? Both classes of individuals are free from the claims of Original Sin through the Atonement and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Both have eternal destinies of joyful service in God's Kingdom. All of mankind are destined for death (Hebrews 9:27). How is it that this class of humanity is exempt from the sting of death? God is never arbitrary.

To find the answer to this question, we must return to the reason for physical death. Physical death was the result of the first Adam's sin which affected not only his posterity, but also the entire creation. Adam was the federal head of the earth and of all the creatures upon it. The principle of death was imposed upon them, as well. His spiritual death was manifested throughout the physical creation, even though it was not a party to his sin. Animals do not have the capacity for spiritual life or for moral choice; yet they still die.

That is why Christians die, also. Even though they enjoy the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which imparts spiritual life, their physical bodies die. They may not bear any moral culpability in Adam's sin, yet their bodies are still subject to the Curse upon the first Adam's sin. There is a physical depravity which descends through the line of Adam. Although Jesus was of heavenly origin, He inherited a fleshly body which was imperfect and defective. It was a source of His sufferings.

However, in Jesus we have the specimen of a different kind of humanity. While His physical nature was under the curse of human depravity, His Divine nature was not. Taking it yet a step further, because the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth teach that Jesus had no human father, Adam was not

His federal head according to the flesh. Christ, in His human nature, was born without Original Sin, even though it was a nature which was corrupted by the cumulative effects of ancestral sin. And because He lived a holy life, death had no claim upon Him. He was in a position to offer a sacrificial death and become the federal head of the new human race.

In the light of this fact, one must ponder what kind of offspring Jesus would have had had He been a father. We know they would not have been supernatural in any Divine sense, as some have speculated. The Creeds tell us that there was no mingling or confusion between Christ's Divine nature and His human nature.<sup>65</sup> They would not have been some kind of supermen with super-human powers because Jesus would have fathered them according to His human nature and not His Divine nature.

However, they would have enjoyed a different kind of human nature from the rest of the human race. Because the seed of Jesus would have been uncontaminated with Original Sin, His offspring would have been free of that contamination, as well. Unlike ordinary believers who enjoy Christ as their federal head in a spiritual sense but must await the

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<sup>65</sup> **“Who although he be God and Man; yet he is not two, but one Christ. One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God. One altogether; not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.” (The Athanasian Creed, §34-36)**

resurrection before their physical natures are redeemed, the offspring of Christ would have required no such redemption. They would need only a transformation. So even though they would be subjected to the discipline of the flesh, as was their father - including the *potential* for sin and death - they would not have been *required* to die after the usual manner of men. They belong to a different species with a different headship.

Could this be, in part, what the Apostle was alluding to when he declared that "all of creation groans," awaiting the "manifestation of the sons of God" (Romans 8:17-23)? While most of us look to the *redemption by adoption*, there are some who await a *physical transformation by inheritance*. Could this be the principle of Divine justice which accounts for why some of the saints will not be required to taste the sting of death at the *Parousia* (Revelation 20:6)?

*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

- 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

After diligent research, there appears to be no commentary on this obscure text among the Early Fathers which addresses this anomaly. **(Figure 2)**

▪ **Dominion and The Holy Offspring**

We shall return to this issue later in our discussion on hierogamy. But there is an objection which must be addressed first; namely, that it was morally impossible for Jesus to have been as intimate with a woman as to father a child by her. Because He was holy and undefiled, there was no woman on earth who would have been a worthy match for Him. The objection further states that Jesus Himself would have been defiled by having carnal knowledge with such a woman who was unholy and still under the Adamic curse.

This objection is somehow considered a viable one, probably because of passages in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, in which believers are forbidden "to be unequally yoked" with unbelievers. While this objection may contain some merit, it does so only superficially. We might ask upon what moral principle the heavenly Father could have had carnal knowledge with the Virgin Mary without polluting Himself? What greater intimacy could the Son of God have had with a

woman than to have been born of her? Are we to believe that Jesus would not have been defiled by *partaking* of the "seed of the woman," yet He would have been defiled by *giving* that same seed to a different woman? And how might we apply this principle, as enunciated by Paul:

*For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.*

- 1 Corinthians 7:14

It is true that under the Old Covenant, the unclean defiled the holy. But under the New Covenant, the reverse is true. **The holy sanctifies the unclean.** In the Old Testament, men were defiled for touching corpses, unclean meats, menstruating women, seminal emissions, lepers, and so on. In the New Testament, we find - everywhere it seems - Jesus touching and being touched by these same defiling elements. In every instance, His royal virtue overcame their defilement and cleansed them. For the same reason, we cannot imagine that Jesus would have been defiled in any way by sexual intimacies with His wife.



Based upon this Scripture in Corinthians, the offspring of Jesus would have been clean in terms of the Covenant of Promise and they would have been free of Original Sin, although their physical natures would still have suffered the infirmities of the flesh. With a different federal head in both their spiritual and physical natures – unlike their brethren by covenant adoption who must await the resurrection before exercising dominion upon the earth – the offspring of Jesus are direct and current recipients of the Dominion Covenant.

### **The Phallic Christ**

We know that Jesus had a penis. We know this because He was circumcised (Luke 2:21). This was an important spiritual ritual among the Jews, which identified them with their heritage in the Abrahamic Covenant.

#### **▪ Phallicism & Citizenship in Israel**

But there was more. The Law of Moses forbade incapacitated males entrance into the covenant assembly:

*He that is wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.*

- Deuteronomy 23:1

This was a serious matter. In the subsequent verses bastards (presumably mixed offspring) and other people of heathen extraction were forbidden, as well. "The congregation of the LORD" was the assembly of the elect of God to perform the civic and religious duties of the nation of Israel. To be banned from this assembly was to be relegated to a non-covenantal status. Without that status, one could only enjoy the benefits of the covenant if one had a secondary relationship with Israel's respective covenant heads (by marriage, servitude, and so on).

Of the sons of Aaron, only the unblemished could perform the priestly service and "offer the bread of his God" (Leviticus 21:20). Men who were considered disqualified included those with various physical handicaps, including those who "hath his stones broken" (v.20). He was permitted to eat this holy bread, but he was forbidden to enter the veil or to approach the altar (v. 22, 23).

Likewise, the sacrifices had to be males "without blemish" (22:19), not "lacking in his parts" (v. 23),

nor "bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut" (v. 24). Whatever might have been the reason for these restrictions, they were clear and definite.

All Israelite males would have been physically inspected at the time of their circumcision. Had they lacked the necessary anatomical parts, they would have been declared a female or a eunuch. As a female or a eunuch, they would not have been permitted into the sanctuary, nor would they have been admitted into any assembly in which civic decisions were required.

But there were, at least, two other inspections that an Israelite boy would have encountered before he reached his majority. At his marriage, he would have been inspected by the bride's father. In fact, the very Hebrew word for "father-in-law" means "he who tests the circumcision."<sup>66</sup> It is understandable why Israelite men would expect the right to verify the covenantal status of their prospective sons-in-law. Without an inspection, it was possible for a daughter to unwittingly marry someone who was either not covenantally faithful or one who would not have been qualified to enter the congregation. This had serious

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<sup>66</sup> See R. J. Rushdoony: *The Institutes of Biblical Law* (The Craig Press, 1973), p. 344. Actually, Rushdoony points out that "bridegroom means 'the circumcised'", and father-in-law means "he who performed the operation of circumcision." (Ref. *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, p. 368 under #2859 & #2860)

civic and religious implications, as noted above. But it also affected descent of title to the family estate. While foreigners and unbelievers had the right to buy and sell property in the cities of Israel, the lands outside of the city walls were the perpetual inheritance of the respective Israelite families which originally settled the Promised Land. An uncircumcised Israelite could not hold title to that land, nor could a eunuch (Leviticus 25).

The next time an Israelite male would have been tested would have been when he reached his majority at twenty years of age. At twenty, the Israelite male attended the assembly of the hosts of Israel.<sup>67</sup> He would have been vouched for by the seniors who knew him, or lacking such sponsors, he would have had to submit to inspection. He was inspected for three things: first, the presence of the necessary anatomical parts, second, his circumcision, and third, proof of fatherhood. That last indicia will require some background understanding.

### ▪ **Eunuchs in Israel**

In modern times, we normally think of eunuchs as men who lack penises and/or testicles. Such men may have been born as hermaphrodites (men either

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<sup>67</sup> Exodus 30:14; 38:26; Leviticus 27:3-5; Numbers 1:3 et al; 26:2. Compare Numbers 14:29 with Deuteronomy 1:39 which identifies persons under twenty as possessing civic innocence.

lacking such parts or having impartially formed parts) or they may have been cruelly mutilated. In either case, we assume that the eunuch is one who is visibly deficient of his male members.

However, this definition was not the one known to the ancient world. Prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> Century, eunuchs were known as men who were simply impotent or sterile. Whether the cause was a physically obvious ailment or not, any man who could not father a child was considered a eunuch. This classification was much broader than the one which was invented by the Church during the Nicene era and which has been handed-down in Western law codes.

For instance, the Roman jurist Ulpian says, "If a woman marries a eunuch, I think that a distinction must be drawn whether he has been castrated or not . . ." clearly implying that castrated men were just one kind of eunuch. The castrated kind was ineligible for marriage.<sup>68</sup> Ulpian says again in another place in reference to eunuchs who are marketable slaves: "to me it appears the better view that a eunuch is not diseased or defective, but healthy, just like a man with one testicle who is also able to procreate."<sup>69</sup> Ulpian widens the definition of eunuch even further

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<sup>68</sup> **Roman Digest of Laws: Book XXIII 3.39** as quoted by Faris Malik. Source *The Civil Law* by Samuel Parsons Scott, 17 volumes in 7, NY: AMS Press, 1973. These texts are found in law libraries.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, Digest, Book XXI 1.6.2

here to describe them as men who are hampered but not altogether devoid of the capacity to procreate.

Another Roman jurist, Paulus, says the same thing: "If someone is a eunuch in such a way that he lacks a necessary part of his body, even internally, then he is diseased."<sup>70</sup> Like Ulpian, he divides eunuchs into those who can procreate from those who cannot, whether the defect is internal or external.

Clement of Alexandria, who lived long before this controversy arose in the Church, warned against the use of eunuchs in the charge of harems, because they will become sexually involved with them for "the true eunuch is not unable, but unwilling to have sex."<sup>71</sup>

Prior to the 5<sup>th</sup> Century, leadership of the Church was limited to family men. Following Paul's criteria in the Pastoral Epistles, elders and deacons were expected to be married and to have children – a lot of them if the above definition is considered. Men who were celibate were classified as eunuchs who were so, presumably, "for the kingdom of heaven's sake" (Matthew 19:12). Since eunuchs were forbidden leadership in the Church, celibates could only operate in catechetical schools, monasteries, and other marginalized institutions associated with the

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 1.7

<sup>71</sup> *Paedagogus*, III 4.25 (*ANF*, v. 2, p. 278)

Church. After the Arian controversy, the definition of a eunuch was limited to men who were mutilated. With this narrowed definition, which was probably a compromise with the Arian faction, leadership within the Church was opened to men who were formerly classified as eunuchs because **they were not family men**, not because they were anatomically deficient. Since they were single men who were anatomically whole or married men without children, they were taken out of the eunuch category and placed as eligible candidates for elders and deacons.<sup>72</sup> One must remember that in the ancient world, eunuchs were not only the guardians of harems; they also constituted the civil service. With the rise of the Christian church and its married clergy and diaconate, it posed as a genuine threat to the Roman bureaucracy which consisted, primarily, of eunuchs. Since mutilated eunuchs constituted a small percentage of the number of eunuchs as a whole, a deal was struck to take anatomically intact (or whole)

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<sup>72</sup> St. Athanasius says of the Arians: *It was the eunuchs who instigated these proceedings against all [the Nicene Christians]. And the most remarkable circumstance in the matter is this; that the Arian heresy which denies the Son of God receives its support from eunuchs, who, as both their bodies are fruitless, and their souls barren of the seeds of virtue, cannot bear even to hear the name of son. . . The eunuchs of Constantius cannot endure the confession of Peter [Matthew 16:16], nay, they turn away when the Father manifests the Son, and madly rage against those who say that the Son of God is His genuine Son, thus claiming as a heresy of eunuchs that there is no genuine and true offspring of the Father.* (Athanasius, "History of the Arians", 5.38, Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers vol. 4, p. 283).

eunuchs out of that category and place them into a spiritual class of celibates or monks. Thus, they were eligible for Imperial appointments to the leadership of the churches throughout the Empire. **This change in standards for leadership was the exact mechanism which created the state church.**

Notice that the text from Deuteronomy 23 provides two classifications of a eunuch: one, the man who has had his "privy member" removed (the anatomically mutilated eunuch) and two, the man who has been "wounded in the stones" (the anatomically intact eunuch). The fact that this text recognizes that a eunuch may have his testicles, yet be incapacitated for some reason not clearly obvious, fits into the ancient profile of eunuchs as simply men who, for any reason, had great difficulty in fathering a child: men who were either impotent (unable to achieve an erection) or sterile (men who have a sexual capacity but are infertile).<sup>73</sup>

The sexual proclivities of ancient eunuchs are well known. Men who were castrated or emasculated as boys usually had effeminate interests. Sometimes,

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<sup>73</sup> In the Talmud, the rabbis inspected twenty-year old males for the absence of pubic hair, watery semen, and other signs of eunuchism which were beyond the presence or absence of the penis and testicles.



the lack of testosterone led them into homosexual behavior.

Men who were castrated after puberty did not lose their sexual capacity. We have abundant testimony that such eunuchs were fully enjoyed by the women of harems. Not unlike the experience of vasectomy patients today, these eunuchs could engage in full sexual intercourse. They simply lacked sperm to cause conception.<sup>74</sup>

Biblical law forbade body mutilations, which included eunuchism.<sup>75</sup> But that did not mean that eunuchs, as a class, did not exist in ancient Israel. They were present in the courts of the kings, including that of King David (1 Chronicles 28:1).<sup>76</sup> There are many reasons why a man may lose sexual interest or fail in his attempts at procreation.

In the light of this standard, we can now comprehend the importance of concubinage to the Israelite male should his wife fail to conceive. If he was able to father a child by his maidservant, it would prove that he was not a eunuch, but rather that it was his wife who was barren.

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<sup>74</sup> See also *Harem: The World Behind the Veil*, Alev Lytle Croutier (Abbeville Press, 1989), p. 125-141

<sup>75</sup> Deuteronomy 14:1; 25:12; Leviticus 19:28; 21:5; 1 Kings 18:28

<sup>76</sup> The Hebrew word is “saris” (eunuch: #5631, also translated as officers, chamberlains, etc.)

Abraham knew Sarah was barren because he had fathered a child by his concubine. The same was true of the other Biblical patriarchs. In the curious story of Zachariah and Elizabeth in Luke's Gospel, it tells us that Elizabeth was barren. How did these Biblical characters know this was so? Why did they not simply assume that it was Zachariah who was sterile? The text does not tell us, but in the light of what we have just discovered, we are justified in assuming that Zachariah had taken a concubine and had fathered children (probably daughters) by her. It ought to be clear that had he not fathered children, he would have been considered "wounded in the stones," and ineligible, not only to be the high priest, but also, to enter "the congregation of the LORD."

It follows also that Jesus, being a son of Abraham, would have had to comply with these same criteria to obtain covenant status within the house of Israel. As it says in Hebrews,

*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. . . For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren . . .*

- 2:14-17

This is a most remarkable passage, not only in its use to refute Gnostics and Docetists who refuse to believe that Jesus was genuinely human, but also to refute the so-called traditional view that Jesus was a eunuch. This text says that Jesus did not take upon Himself "the nature of angels." Angels are usually considered as asexual beings, like what eunuchs are supposed to be. This text is telling us that **Jesus was not a eunuch; He was not asexual.** Rather, "he took on him the seed of Abraham." Was it ever a characteristic of the descendants of Abraham to be asexual? In the light of the above restrictions, the answer is obvious. Abraham's descendants were virile and fertile to the shock of the ancient world (Exodus 1). If Jesus was "made like unto his brethren" - if words mean anything - He would have been endowed with potency and virility. He would have been like any other Israelite in His sexual capacity.

▪ **Omni-Potency & the Glory of God**

*For a man indeed ought not to cover his head,  
forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God*

- 1 Corinthians 11:7

The idea of man as the image and symbol of God is a familiar concept in Christian theology. Theologians will generally explain that the essence of that image

is the ability to rule creation. That ability separates him from the rest of creation. Symbolically speaking, it is represented by the open hand. The Hebrew word is "yada."<sup>77</sup>

A much neglected area of consideration is what it means of man as the "glory of God." "The glory of God" is a distinct concept from man as "the image of God." While the hand is the symbol of man's ability to rule and exercise dominion like God does, what symbol and what activity would represent man's ability to reflect the glory of God?

Noah Webster, America's famous orthographer and a devout Christian, was preeminent for finding the etymology of words. Etymology refers to the origin of words and the experiences, events, or concepts they were meant to express - first as pictures, then as words. The following is what he had to say in his first dictionary (1828) about the word "glory":

**GLORY, n. (L. gloria;. . . W. eglur, clear, bright. . . It coincides with clear, and the primary sense seems to be to open, to expand, to enlarge. So splendor is from the Celtic ysplan, open, clear, plain, L. planus; hence, bright, shining.**

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<sup>77</sup> *Vine's Expository Dictionary*: words like do, reach, take, give, divide, throw, strike, scepter, work, and so on - all have reference to things which can be done with the hand. "To fill someone's hand" meant to be given power or authority.

**The L. floreo, to blossom, to flower, to flourish, is probably of the same family.)**

**1. Brightness; luster; splendor.**

**The moon, serene in glory, mounts the sky. (Pope).**

**2. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory.**

**2 Peter 1.**

**In this passage of Peter, the latter word glory refers to the visible splendor or bright cloud that overshadowed Christ at his transfiguration. . .**

**3. Splendor; magnificence.**

**Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Matthew 6.**

**4. The circle of rays surround-ing the head of a figure in painting.**

**5. Praise ascribed in adoration; honor.**

**"Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2.**

Webster has no less than twelve applications for the word "glory": praise, honor, adoration, fame, renown, celebrity, the blessing of heaven, the divine presence of perfections and excellence, pride, arrogance and so forth. There is some help in these definitions. But they seem obtuse. They are

derivative meanings. Only when we go to the original languages and their Hebrew roots do we find what is meant by "glory", and what is meant by the Apostle when he says man is uniquely a representative of that glory.

Hebrew is an ancient language. Some of the Church Fathers taught that it was the original language of mankind. Regardless, its letters are one step removed from hieroglyphics, which makes it very old. Hieroglyphics - as used by the ancient Egyptians, for instance - is a written language which presents pictograph-type words to convey concepts. This is still true of modern Oriental languages. The words of the English language are phonetic, using the symbols of symbols.

The Hebrew alphabet consists of letters which were originally abbreviations drawn from hieroglyphics. Like the zodiacal constellations, they are lines meant to convey pictures, and thus universal concepts. The value of such a primordial language is its concrete images which are common to human experience.

The word for "worship" is an example of that concreteness. The Hebrew word for worship is *shachah* (#7812) and actually describes the act of prostrating oneself. The word for "female" (*neqebah* -

#5347) is another. It means "one who is pierced," a visually graphic term.

Now, the primary Hebrew word for glory, certainly in reference to the Glory of God, is *kabod* (Strong's Concordance #3514). It means "heavy" or "weighty" or "thick". According to *Vine's Expository Dictionary*, "the word does not mean simply 'heavy', but a heavy or imposing quantity of things" - a lot of something. It is used to describe great wealth (Genesis 31:1), power (Isaiah 17:3), or abundance (Hosea 9:11). It is applied to one's reputation (Genesis 45:13), duties (Proverbs 20:3), or rank (Isaiah 5:13).

The *presence* of God is described as His "glory" because it is heavy. In Exodus, for instance, it is accompanied by the glory cloud (16:10; 24:16-17; 40:34-35). Solomon's Temple was filled with the glory cloud at its dedication (1 Kings 8:11), which became so thick that the priests had to flee the sanctuary.

What does this mean about God? It means He is awesome. His presence inspires fear, much like an approaching tornado. Sometimes, a father may wrestle with his little children. He will restrain his strength to provide them with a meaningful

challenge. However, when they get a little overconfident, he may lay on them and let them feel some of the weight of his body. It inspires respect. Compared to their tiny frames, he is awesome. If he did not love them, he would strike terror in their little hearts. But because he does love them and they know this, his awesomeness gives them a feeling of safety. So it is with God.

A vault door might also illustrate the concept of glory. It is heavy, unyielding, and imposing. It keeps its contents "safe." Few people dare to mess with it.

We learn more about glory from a story of Moses. On one occasion, he is described as showing forth God's glory upon his face, which radiates with such intensity that he must wear a veil to protect the people (Exodus 34:33, 35). The Apostle Paul provides commentary on this incident in 2 Corinthians 3:

*But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?*

...



*But we all, with open [unveiled] face beholding as in a glass [mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

-3:7, 8 & 18 (emphasis added)

What the Apostle has done here is to open a vista. It is remarkable that so few scholars are either aware or willing to comment on the significance of this passage. Do they think it is unimportant or do they fear professional criticism? Paul has taken the concept of glory and led us to its hieroglyphic: the picture which symbolizes the concept. That picture is one which threatens to shake Classical Christianity at its very foundations.

### ▪ **The Phallic Symbol of the Bible**

The Hebrew word Paul uses to describe the radiance which shone around Moses is the word *qeren* (#7162). Paul translates it as "glory" and uses it as a term equivalent with *kabod*. In almost all places in the Old Testament, it is translated "horn". In one passage, it is translated as hill and corner because the meaning of the word is, literally, "a hard projection" (Isaiah 5). Consequently, most verses where "qeren" appears refer to the horns of animals which are their weapons, or horns that are used as

trumpets to announce significant events, as containers of liquid (such as anointing oil), and their symbolic applications. Such symbolic applications, most commentators readily recognize, refer to strength, power, and deliverance (Psalms 18:2; 89:17; 92:10; 112:9; 148:14; Daniel 8:5,8-9; Micah 4:13; Luke 1:69; etc.).

Thus, when Moses descended from the mountain and "shone" the glory of God, Paul means for us to understand that he was "horned." **He uses "horn" as a symbol of God's glory.** Most interpreters believe the glory shone like rays or spokes of the Sun, hence the definition #4 as given by Webster above.<sup>78</sup>

But it does not end there. These are still symbols of a more organic concept. There is more. There are, at least, five texts where the use of *qeren* is used in reference to fertility (Deuteronomy 33:17; 1 Samuel 2:1,10; Psalms 75:10; 132:12; Ezekiel 29:21) - meaning, that the failure to procreate (impotence) is described as a "broken horn" and the ability to procreate is described as an "exalted horn." **In these passages the horn symbolizes the strength of the procreative power of God's chosen.** A good

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<sup>78</sup> The Statue of Liberty and the various paintings of Christ with a halo are examples of this symbolism.

example of this is Deuteronomy 33:17 in reference to the demographic growth of Joseph:

*His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.*

Unicorns were mythical bulls or stags (later horses) - as in the Grail legends - which have a single horn in the center of their head. It was a favorite headdress among the ancients, as the accompanying picture amusingly illustrates (**Figure 3**).

The ancients understood the horn of the unicorn as a phallic symbol, of which, we have sufficient evidence in Richard Knight's classic, *The History of Priapus*,

*To the head of the bull was sometimes joined the organ of generation, which represented not only the strength of the Creator, but the peculiar direction of it to the most beneficial*

*purpose, the propagation of sensitive beings.”*  
(Emphasis added)<sup>79</sup>

That the Bible would use the unicorn and the word *qeren* within the context of fertility proves that phallic symbols were not considered inappropriate. Such symbols, Mr. Knight claims, were original with the Patriarchs, but degenerated into the paganism of the so-called fertility religions.

In Psalm 132:17, we find:

*There will I make the horn of David to bud: I  
have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.*

To which, the Lamsa Bible, the Aramaic translation, provides this footnote: "Give him an heir."<sup>80</sup> Bluntly speaking, this text is saying that God will give David an erect penis (horn), it will emit fertile semen (blossom), and it will produce offspring (lamp). **God has made David His stud.**<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>*A History of Phallic Worship* by Richard Payne Knight and Thomas Wright (Dorset Press, NY, 1992), p. 43 (two volumes in one written in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries).

<sup>80</sup>George Lamsa (*Old Testament Light*, p. 940), after providing the usual definition to horn, alludes to the phallic interpretation: "But one has to be careful how this metaphor is interpreted. In the book of Daniel horns represent kings (7:8). 'I will make the horn of David to bud' means that God will give him an heir. . ."

<sup>81</sup>Recall Webster's reference to the link between glory and flower. Two kinds of "male" are described in the Hebrew text: the *zakar* (male stud) and the *saris* (non-stud male).

The question arises, then, as to whether *qeren* ought to be interpreted as primarily a phallic term to which the animal's horn is the symbol; or otherwise, that the animal's horn ought to be taken as the primary meaning?

For example, when it says in Psalm 75:10 that the "horns of the righteous shall be exalted," is it saying that God will give righteous men erect penises (potency)? Certainly, it does not mean they will grow horns on their heads. It may mean they will grow strong, but in what way?

We may find conclusive evidence in Genesis 49:3, where Jacob says of his son, Reuben:

*Thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.*

Here, the ability to father children is likened to "might" and "strength." In the Hebrew, "might" is *kowach*, which has wide applications, but means, in its strictest sense: "to be firm" (#3581). "Strength" is the rarely used word *one* (#202, cf. Ps. 78:51), which means "successful exertion" or competence. "Excellency" is *yether* (#3499), a fairly known word meaning "overhang" or excess. The word "dignity," however, provides our best clue. The Hebrew is

*shebuw* (#7613) - "to shoot a flame," "to flash," "streamer" and "a sparkling gem." Putting this all together, we could suggest the following translation:

*Thou art my firstborn, my firmness, and the beginning of my potency, the abundance of my flames, and the abundance of my erections.*

Just as Moses shone with the luminous rays of God's glory, so also were Jacob's children his "flashes" of glory. The glory of God is His creative power. The glory of God, as it is manifested in the man, is his procreative power. God surrounds Himself with a Host ("LORD of Hosts"). So likewise, the men of the Bible sought to surround themselves with a host of wives and children to manifest the Glory of God. A man may *image* his Creator all of his life, but he does not begin to manifest the Creator's *glory* until he enters into fatherhood.

Thus, the rule of precedence supports the view that *qeren* (glory) ought to be seen as first a phallic symbol, and then, as a symbol of the animal's horn. The ram which grows the skull horn is first brought into existence by the phallic horn.

### ▪ **Christ: the Unicorn of Prophecy**

Nay Sayers may argue that if the horn is a phallic symbol, then why does Hannah in 1 Samuel 1 - a

woman - refer to the exaltation of her horn? Women do not have penises.

To which, I reply, "Cannot a woman claim her husband's penis as her own?" In Hannah's case, we find graphically illustrated the attitude of ancient society. Hannah's husband was a bigamist. His first wife had children. Hannah was barren. The stigma, of course, that attached to the barren woman was that her husband did not love her - meaning, he was not sexually aroused in her company. The shame of barrenness was the wife's failure to give her husband an erection to manifest his glory in her presence.

It was not enough for Hannah that Elkanah told her he loved her. She needed proof for herself and the world. When Hannah finally did have children, it was the proof she needed of her husband's love to silence her critics. "My horn is exalted," i.e. "my husband can get erections and plant his seed in my womb."

In our text above, the Apostle declares the woman is the "glory of the man" because it is she who sees and receives the erect penis. Children are proof of his glory, of his erect penis.

Now, most people are understandably frightened by this kind of imagery. Why is it that society

tolerates and even enjoys the naked woman, but it does not tolerate the naked man? The reason is that the naked man is unnerving. Exposure to an erect penis is a threatening thing. The erect penis represents power and aggression. People feel safe when it is covered-up and hidden from view. That is why fathers foolishly let their daughters date boys and not men. They indulge the illusion that boys do not have erections like men do.

Only the Bride sees the erect penis. Only she is initiated to see and know the man's glory. It is in the bed chamber that the man reveals his glory to the woman who is prepared to receive it. It may be painful at first, but fulfillment and ecstasy await the Bride who comes.

So it is with God's glory. People feel safe when it is hidden (clothed) with clouds. Christ, the only Begotten of the Father, is proof of His glory (John 1:14). By the Holy Spirit, the Gospel provides the soul with the ability to see and experience God's horn. Only the Bride of Christ can receive it and not be destroyed by it.

Thus, Moses saw the glory of God. The horn symbolizes that glory. The horn is a phallic symbol. A mighty erection of the phallus is symbolic of



strength, potency, and fertility. It is a sign of God's favor. And children are proof of that horn, proof of that glory.

Classical Christianity teaches the opposite value. It teaches sexual repression. St. Augustine went so far as to say that the erect penis was proof of Original Sin and inherited depravity. He changed the symbol of God's glory into shame. He committed theological blasphemy. Christianity has been polluted ever since by an anti-sexual and anti-fertile perspective.

This inversion of values in the Church came as a result of the Mahuzzim heresy, which manifested itself early in Church history in the Encratite heresy with various strains of Gnosticism. Augustine was a Manichean before his conversion. Manichaeism taught that the human body was evil, as was all matter. Augustine never completely purged himself of its influence. He tried. He valued procreation, but to be sinless procreation, he said it had to be sexless procreation. It had to be devoid of lust. It had to be done without an erection, which of course, is impossible. It makes as much sense as saying that drinking water to quench one's thirst is a sin unless you can do it without swallowing.

Like Augustine, many Christians were admirers of the Stoics, adherents of an austere moral philosophy. Even today, the term "stoic" is used to describe an emotionless and passionless person.

The Mahuzzim heresy is first described in Daniel's prophecy, where we are told that the Antichrist worshiped the God of Fortresses (Daniel 11:38). Fortresses are military fixtures. The Antichrist worships militarism: its coldness, austerity, and power. Sir Isaac Newton, the famous physicist and theologian, noted that any form of institutional structure patterned after a military design is a manifestation of the Mahuzzim doctrine. This was true of the Roman Empire. Roman civil law was imperial and militaristic. It was passed-down into European law codes and is alive and well today in modern institutions.

Another attribute of the Mahuzzim heresy is that it forsakes the "desire of women" (Daniel 11:37). It is either asexual or homosexual in orientation. Sexual love for women, the love of children, and the family structure are discouraged. We can see why any satanic ideology would have it so. If the family is meant to represent the image and glory of God in the earth, then to deface that image, another structure

for society - the pyramid structure - must be devised to replace it.

In spite of these adversaries, the phallic religion of the Biblical patriarchs miraculously survives in Christianity. Thanks to the Templars, our churches are built still with spires and steeples: phallic symbols with origins unknown to virtually all Christians. Even the Cross itself is a phallic symbol. Follow carefully the words of Tertullian, who was heavily compromised by the Mahuzzim heresy, yet made this astonishing admission in reference to the unicorn of Deuteronomy 33:17 (quoted earlier in reference to Joseph's virility):

*Of course no one-horned rhinoceros was there pointed to, nor any two-horned minotaur. But Christ was therein signified: "bull," by reason of each of His two characters, - to some fierce, as Judge; to others gentle, as Savior; whose "horns" were to be the extremities of the "cross". For even in a ship's yard - which is part of a "cross" - this is the name by which the extremities are called; while the central pole of the mast is a "unicorn". By this power, in fact of the cross, and in this manner horned . . . .*

(Emphasis added)<sup>82</sup>

After referring to Christ, again, as the "bull" of prophecy, he quotes a Scripture unknown to us (but well-known to the Fathers) that the Lord "might reign from the tree" - meaning, that this was the unique feature of his government. Later, he quotes Isaiah 53:12,

*Therefore He shall have many for an heritage, and of many shall He divide spoils.*

Tertullian condenses the sense of two verses here, but it clearly refers to the Messiah's procreative power:

*He shall see his seed.*

- Isaiah 53:10, Received Text

Tertullian also refers to the Messianic prophecy in Psalm 21 in the Septuagint (Psalm 22 in our Bibles), which speaks of the Messiah's seed serving the LORD.<sup>83</sup>

**Thus, to summarize, Christ "rules from the tree," the Cross, as Savior and as Judge, and**

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<sup>82</sup> Justin Martyr embraces this same interpretation and refers to this passage in Deuteronomy as teaching "the mystery of the cross" (ANF, vol. 1 p. 244-245)

<sup>83</sup>Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, p. 165-166. Of course, both Tertullian and Justin allegorize these texts.

**then, as "unicorn": the symbol of the phallic Christ.**

It is God's desire that His Glory fill the earth (Habakkuk 2:14; Numbers 14:21). It appears that the faithful of the Old Testament believed that can only happen if those who image Him also replicate themselves. When the world is full of people who are like God in their moral character, then can it be said that the earth is full of His glory. Sexual intercourse and procreation become moral virtues in this context. It would have been expected that Jesus Christ, as the Messiah, would have served God in this way.

Returning to the text in 2 Corinthians 3, the Apostle was declaring the superior glory of the Gospel over the Law because it could write the Word of Righteousness upon the "fleshy tables of the heart." The follower of Christ can possess more of God's glory because he has a clearer revelation of it. He has the spirit of the law written upon his heart (Ezekiel 36:25-27). By fulfilling his design as God's symbol, "to be fruitful and multiply," he manifests the Glory of God.

*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

- John 15:8<sup>84</sup>

God's creative energy is inherent in His being. He creates from compulsion. Likewise, Christian men should not feel ashamed of "horniness," to borrow a colloquial expression. The Christian can expect to be blessed with greater sexual energy as an inducement to further God's glory on the earth.

### **Review of the Arguments Thusfar**

Having indulged in a rhetorical digression in the above paragraphs, it might be that the reader has failed to notice the milestones in this discussion.

First, it was demonstrated, that while Jesus needed no successor to His Messianic office, still, as the second Adam, He was called to procreate just as the first Adam. Unlike the first Adam, Jesus can fulfill the Dominion Covenant because He can father a race that is not disqualified by Original Sin.

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<sup>84</sup> **These texts are always interpreted to refer to the "fruit" of moral character and not procreation. This is a perpetuation of the Hellenistic dichotomy between flesh and spirit in the realm of Biblical hermeneutics. A sound interpretation would recognize both the spiritual and physical applications of this text: the fruit of our bodies (children) and the fruit our souls (virtue).**

Second, it was established that Jesus was not a eunuch, and could not have been a eunuch and been admitted into the civil and religious life of the Jewish people. It would have been a violation of the Mosaic Law had He done so. Proof of fatherhood, given the ancient definition of the eunuch, was necessary.

Third, it was shown that Jesus manifested the glory of God, not only in His Divine nature, but also in His human nature. Man shows God's glory in his sexual potency and virility. The men blessed of God manifest these characteristics. This fact was affirmed by the strange and cryptic passages of the Church Fathers which refer to Christ as "the unicorn" of prophecy.

And fourth, what is to come below: had Jesus not married and used His sexuality in a righteous manner consistent with the Creation Mandate to "be fruitful and multiply," He would have been guilty of sin, specifically, the sin of uncleanness.

### **Christ and the Sin of Uncleanness**

For most Christians, the sin of uncleanness is one of great obscurity. Perhaps, it is because of what might be called "an unholy prudery"; perhaps, it is because of theological confusion over the Ceremonial

Law of the Old Testament. But in my opinion, I believe it is the result of the Gnostic inversion of Biblical values which was, as noted above, created by the Mahuzzims of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, expanded by the Apologists of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Centuries, and crystallized into dogma by the followers of Augustine.

By and large, sins of uncleanness were the “little” sins of ignorance. These might be masturbation and menstruation, for instance. These were sins associated with our fallen natures as members of the human race.

Other sins of uncleanness were classified as presumptuous sins. These were the “big” sins like homosexuality, necrophilia, and bestiality. These sins were known as “wicked” sins in Biblical times (Genesis 13:13; Romans 1) and represented a studied decadence.

### ▪ **The Ceremonial Law**

Traditional Evangelicals are not interested in the ceremonial laws of the Bible. The only ones who do write on them are usually scholars with sympathy for the Puritan movement such as modern Christian Reconstructionists: R. J. Rushdoony, Gary North, James Jordan, etc. Holiness denominations and mystics sometimes show a selective interest. Bill



Gothard - a spiritual leader among conservative Evangelicals - has taken the ceremonial laws seriously. However, these scholars are Augustinians and because they are careful not to stray too far from their dogmatic roots, their contribution is limited to perpetuating unscientific phobias about bodily fluids and inedible creatures.

Since I am not an Augustinian, I work with a different paradigm. My research on the sins of uncleanness has been influenced by three main sources: the pre-Nicene Church, 1<sup>st</sup> Century Judaism, and Celtic Christianity.

The Reconstructionist writers, which have offered the most promise on this topic, have been a disappointment. For instance, in his 1000 page commentary on Leviticus, Gary North spends two pages on the Laws of Uncleanness and spends much of that telling us that they were symbolic. Most of the Bible's systematic treatment of the clean/unclean status is found in Leviticus. Of course, North is an economist and is more interested in an economic commentary of the Bible. But Jordan, a first-rate theologian, has demonstrated the same shortfall. I have carefully studied his extensive writings on the ceremonial laws. Most of them can be summed-up as apologetics for pork-eaters (re: kosher laws). Little exists on the New Testament ratification of these

laws, and what is there, is used as a case for nullification. Jordan ends his studies with a defense of birth control.

In my mind, it seems highly problematic to impose 20<sup>th</sup> Century values onto New Testament writings. While Paul appears to have had no problem with eating pork, I do not think he would have approved of condom sex.

Rushdoony and Gothard teach that these laws are for purposes of hygiene, i.e. health laws. Jordan seems to adequately refute the hygienic school – uncharacteristic of an Augustinian - but fails to provide an alternative, except the symbolic approach (which North adopts and expands into a typological hermeneutic. A "typological hermeneutic" says that if an Old Testament law can be shown to have foreshadowed Christ and the Church, then it is nullified through its fulfillment, e.g. the Jubilee laws).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>The error of this hermeneutic can be demonstrated in its assumption that these laws were *merely* typological in nature, meaning that they served only one purpose, and that was to point to Christ. Of course, everything points to Christ, but it does not mean it is nullified by Christ. What is sin? The transgression of the law. One of the laws we transgress is the Jubilee found in Leviticus. Does transgressing the Jubilee lead to bondage? Yes, in a very real sense, it does – both spiritually and physically. Physically, people become slaves when they lose their land. Spiritually, they come under the control of Satan when they disobey God. Does Christ deliver us from this sin? Yes, he does: first, by pardoning our disobedience and shining His favor upon us, and then, by providing for us,

While I do not dismiss the hygienic and the typological aspects, I do not believe they express the primary purpose for the ceremonial laws. The ceremonial laws were **pedagogical**; they were training tools. Paul described them as a "tutor" leading us to Christ - not just in an eschatological sense, but also in an ethical sense (Galatians 3:24). Lacking the Holy Spirit, these laws existed as hedges designed to prevent the pious Israelite from falling down the slippery slope of moral degradation. What this means for Christians is that we do not need now to practice the Ceremonial Law to protect us from sin, since we have the pedagogical intent of it (the spirit of the law) written upon our hearts (Ezekiel 36:25-29). However, it is perverse reasoning to say that we are entitled to set aside and ignore ***the moral law it was intended to teach us.***

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providentially, a form of government which will obey this precept. The fact that we do not have such a government is not the fault of our Lord. We do not *want* to be free from the bondage of this sin. Consequently, we might say that the sanctification of the Church has not reached a point where it will plead for the Jubilee.

What I have demonstrated here is that Biblical law served, and continues to serve, a dual purpose. First, like a tutor, it leads us to Christ. It has a *soteriological* purpose. It leads us to recognize our need of a Savior. Second, it has a *dominical* purpose. It equips us to serve Christ in time and on Earth in a just manner which glorifies Him.

Just because we can find typology in a law does not nullify it. All things in the Law are typological. The Law has a soteriological purpose and a dominical purpose. The soteriological purpose has been fulfilled by Christ, *and could only have been fulfilled by Christ.* The dominical purpose is fulfilled by us, because we have been left in the world to rule with Christ.

## #1 – The Early Church

The Early Church said that the Ceremonial Law (also known as the Ordinances) was an expression of various aspects of the Moral Law.

Certainly, this opinion was true of Clement of Alexandria, who revisits this subject again in *Stromateis* and *The Instructor*, which, unhappily, because he discusses the morality of deviant sexual practices, these writings have been left in the Latin by prudish translators.<sup>86</sup> After reciting numerous laws out of the Mosaic code, he adds,

*Do you see how the legislation proclaims simultaneously the justice and goodness of God . . .? It has already been clearly shown that the Law is good and humane, a tutor leading us to Christ."*

*- Stromateis, Book Two*

We find the same in the *Epistle of Barnabas* which takes us back to the time of the Apostolic Fathers:

***But forasmuch as Moses said; Ye shall not eat swine nor eagle nor falcon nor crow nor any fish which hath no scale***

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<sup>86</sup> I'm referring to the Philip Schaff's edition of the Patristic writings frequently quoted in this book.

***upon it, he received his understanding three ordinances. Yea and further He saith unto them in Deuteronomy; And I will lay as a covenant upon this people My ordinances. So then it is not a commandment of God that they should not bite with their teeth, but Moses spake it in spirit.***<sup>87</sup>

Here, Barnabas follows the same theme introduced in the book of Hebrews, where it was pointed out that all aspects of the Ceremonial Law were Biblical types designed to teach moral truths to the people in figures. This appears to be the approach of virtually all of the Church Fathers of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries.

## **#2 – Early Judaism**

A Jewish composition from the Intertestamental Period says the same thing,

*Therefore lest we should be corrupted by any abomination, or our lives be perverted by evil communications, he hedged us round on all sides by rules of purity, affecting alike what we eat, or drink, or touch, or hear, or see. . .*

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<sup>87</sup> This lengthy extract has been abridged here but can be found complete in the textbook edition of this book.

*Wherefore all the rules which he has laid down with regard to what is permitted in the case of these birds and other animals, he has enacted with the object of teaching us a moral lesson.*<sup>88</sup>

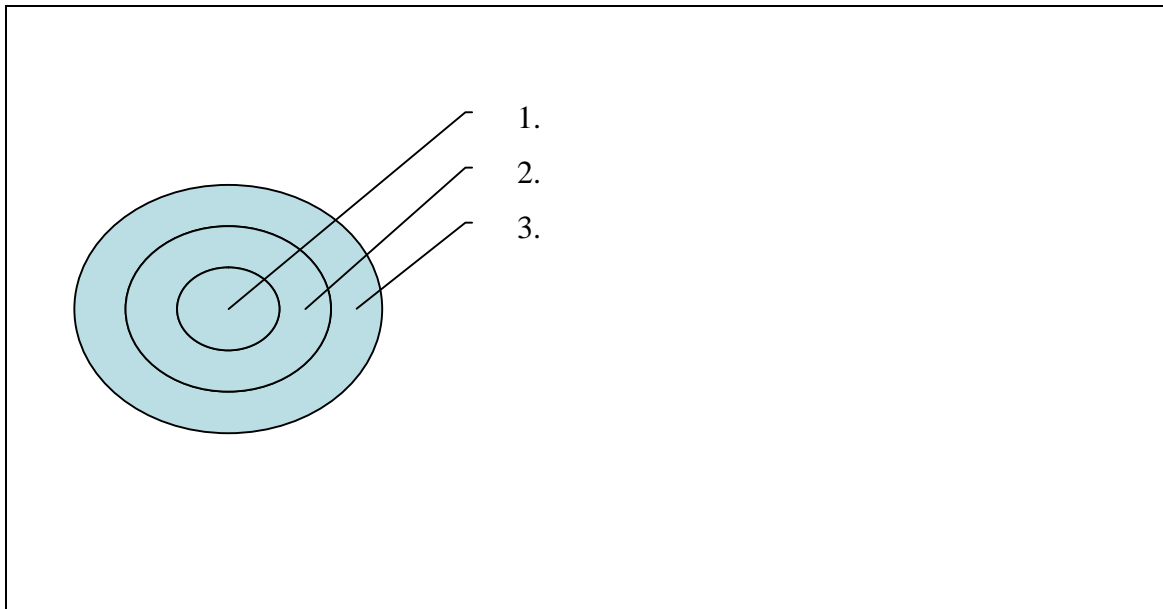
-emphasis added

While it is likely that few of us would agree with these ancient interpreters in regards to the particulars of the dietary laws and their significance – for they differ even among themselves – there can be agreement that their purpose was simply to teach the spirit of the moral law (its meaning, its purpose, and its applications) in metaphor as expressed in the various Mosaic regulations (**Figure 4**).

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<sup>88</sup> *Letter of Aristeas to Philocrates*, § 6:22 & 32. (The Forgotten Books of Eden, Alpha House, 1927)p. 158. (Also, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Volume 2*: ed. James H. Charlesworth, Doubleday, 1985) The entire chapter is basically a restatement of Barnabas' discourse.

**Figure 4: Spiritual Hedges**



- 1. Moral Law: The Great Commandment, The Golden Rule, The Ten Commandments**
- 2. The Statutes: Law of the Covenant (Exodus 21-23), Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), Apostolic Rulings (e.g. Acts 15)**
- 3. Ordinances: Dietary laws, Proverbs, Precepts, Sacraments**

### #3 – The Celtic Church

We see later in the Celtic Church a refusal to follow the general trend of the Imperial Church toward superstition and legalism pertaining to ceremonial regulations. Pelagius, the Welsh monk whose fame (or infamy, as some would have it) arose from his confrontation with Augustine, is representative of the true Celtic tradition. His emphasis upon free will and the human ability to obey the moral law led to a general dismissal of ceremonial defilement.

In reference to sexual uncleanness, we see Pelagius finding support in Clement of Alexandria, who held that seminal emissions were no longer defiling for a Christian because the seed was now clean. A couple could arise immediately after intercourse and proceed to worship without any moral impediment or even the need to bathe.<sup>89</sup>

Julian, a champion of Pelagianism, held to the same position in his debate with Augustine, who, in turn, was horrified to think that this married bishop felt no shame in the sexual act or in his “filthy discharge” as Augustine would come to describe it. Both Augustine and his contemporary, Jerome, in their desperation to prevail over the

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<sup>89</sup> *Stromateis, Bk.3:82*



Pelagians, finally resorted to human sexuality as the common denominator which would condemn all of humanity as sinful. In the mindset of Augustinians, to attack the notion of this universal sexual corruption is to attack the heart of the Gospel itself; for it suggests that some may have escaped that corruption and have no need of Christ as their Savior.

▪ **"Uncleanness" in the Biblical Texts**

*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.*

- Matthew 23:27

*Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:*

- Romans 1:24

*I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your*

*members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*

*- Romans 6:19*

*I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

*- Romans 14:14*

*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.*

*- 2 Corinthians 6:17*

*For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.*

*- 1 Corinthians 7:14*

*And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not*

*repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.*

*- 2 Corinthians 12:21*

*Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ.*

*- Ephesians 4:18-20*

*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater. hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

*- Ephesians 5:3-5*

*Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness. which is idolatry: For which things sake the*

*wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.*

- Colossians 3:5

*For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*

- 1 Thessalonians 4:7

*Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their minds and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

- Titus 1:15-16

*Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

- Hebrews 13:4

*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft . .*

- Galatians 5:19-20

*The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*

- 2 Peter 2:9-10

▪ **Commentary**

It is clear from the above texts that the subject of uncleanness is of extreme importance in the New Testament. But what was in the minds of the Apostles when they used the term "unclean"? What did the recipients of their Epistles understand it to mean?

While the above references are not exhaustive, they are representative of apostolic treatment. In some cases uncleanness refers to evil motives (Matthew 23:27). In other cases it refers to defilement from association with idolatry (Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 9), or other sins, such as covenant union with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:17). Most of the time, however, it refers to a sin related to human sexuality. It is distinct from adultery, fornication, and lasciviousness. What is the sin of uncleanness?

The New Testament does not tell us, directly. It merely ratifies the Old Testament standard, as I will show. To understand what that standard is, we must return to the Old Testament.

An example of this ambiguity is found in Romans 1 and Paul's condemnation of homosexuality. It is quite clear from that text that homosexuality is a sin of uncleanness, specifically, although it might be considered fornication in a general sense. But Paul does not say *why* it fits under that category. He assumes that his readers understand. Paul is writing to Roman Christians who are well-versed in the Mosaic Law. Their understanding of that Law had equipped them to understand why homosexuality was not only sin, but also why it was a sin of ***uncleanness***.

In Romans 14 Paul does give us a clue, however. In reference to Christians purchasing and eating "unclean" meat from the market - meats which were ritually defiled by consecration at a pagan temple - Paul makes it clear that there is no physical change which takes place in the meat because of a magical rite performed over it (v.14). It is still perfectly edible.

In verse 20 he tells us that "it is evil for that man who eateth with offence." So, it is the *motive* which

decides the question. The man who eats with ***an unclean mind*** - an evil purpose - is defiled by his deed.<sup>90</sup>

In reference to homosexuality, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with semen or seminal ejaculation. The sin lies in its being taken "with offence" by the man who uses it to reproach the Creator and His created purpose for the semen - which is procreation, principally, according to the Law.

The book of Leviticus is the focal point for the Bible's teaching on defilement. It is too extensive to cite here, but I reference it here, especially chapters 5 through 18. There were three things which caused uncleanness: 1) things associated with death, 2) things associated with dirt, and 3) things associated with human reproduction.

For instance, if a man touched a corpse, he was ceremonially defiled. (If a man was defiled by touching a corpse, how much more perverse was necrophilia - to have sex with it!). He was not allowed to eat a corpse of an animal that died with its blood. He was not allowed to eat animals, like pigs,

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<sup>90</sup> **This is reflective of New Covenant changes. In the Old Covenant world, there seems to be an intrinsic defilement from these things.**

that received their sustenance from dirt or from eating carrion (vultures).

In reference to human reproduction, leprosy caused uncleanness. Most people do not know that the leprosy in the Bible was not Hansen's disease, a disease where the flesh rots away. It was a venereal disease. The Septuagint, in fact, calls it "gonorrhoea."

Consequently, the hygienic school finds supporting evidence here that these laws served as health laws. The quarantine of highly contagious diseases protected the public health.

But this was a secondary application; there was more to this. Why did God punish people with venereal diseases? What was the ***moral uncleanness*** that was manifested as a physical and ceremonial defilement? Why were natural events, such as death, treated with such revulsion? Why were certain animals prohibited, such as the rabbit? A rabbit does not root in the dirt like a pig and is not usually considered a parasite infested species. It must be because, as was explained by Barnabas cited above, each of these aspects of nature contains within them a reflection of a spiritual reality or a moral precept.



Why, then, did the Law hold childbirth as an uncleanness? Why was menstruation? Why was the seminal emission? What was the moral law that these regulations were trying to guard and teach? We are told that these things caused revulsion. Do you really think it reflected paranoia by the Hebrew God about bodily excretions? The Early Fathers did not think so. They saw more.

### ▪ **Purity Laws and the Design of Creation**

Christian dogma teaches us that God is entirely consistent and immutable. His laws are not unnatural. They stand harmoniously with His Design for Creation.

Fallen man does not think so. He thinks God, if there is a God, was sloppy when He made the world. He thinks it is full of mistakes. He thinks God is either too weak, or too ignorant, or too malevolent to create a harmonious universe. He does not believe in divinely revealed Law. He believes in an everchanging Natural Law.

Marquis de Sade believed in this kind of “Natural” Law. He said that anything which is possible is natural. If it is natural, then it is moral. If it is possible to insert a penis into an anus, then it is perfectly moral to do so. We get the term "sadism"

from his name. Sadism is a term we use to describe sexual torture.

All interpreters are agreed that the Bible condemns sodomy in several places. Law codes usually define sodomy as the insertion of the man's penis into an orifice other than the woman's vagina. Whether that is what the Biblical writers meant by the term "sodomy" will be explored later. Regardless, it was considered an "unnatural act" because it prevented procreation.

Christian commentators tell us it is a violation of the Creator's purpose for the male member. Where do we find the Creator's purpose for the male member? We are sent to Genesis and the narrative of creation.

We understand that man was created to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). "Fruitful" means to "have lots of seminal ejaculations." "Multiply" means to "abundantly procreate." He was to do this with the female - the woman (Genesis 1:27). The Hebrew word for female, as noted earlier, means "to puncture." The female is designed to receive the penis and the semen. She is designed to conceive seed and bring forth offspring. A man's anus is not.

To reinforce this view, the story of Sodom and Gomorrah is recounted. Apparently, the men of Sodom did not agree with the Creator's design for their sexuality. So, as a warning to the rest of us, He toasted them.

We gather from stories like this one that the Creator does not want the seed of man misused. It is a life force He has created to perpetuate the species. It represents future generations He has made in His image. He does not want them spilled on the ground. We are warned with another story. A man in the Bible did that once. He intentionally spilled his semen on the ground during intercourse. His name was Onan. God killed him (Genesis 38:9).

According to the Jewish purity laws, it was more serious for a woman to spill seed than it was for a man. She was quarantined and was required to make sacrifice. We don't know why. It might be because a man was believed to reproduce his seed from his gonads every time he ejaculated; while the woman does not. Every time a woman menstruates, she passes seed that is lost forever. But that might be disproved by science someday. Regardless, the Law made it very cumbersome for the woman if she failed to conceive. It seems to teach us that women should not menstruate; it is contrary to design. She is designed to conceive, not menstruate. A man who

uses the female, yet does not help her conceive, is considered a wicked man. He might get Onan's judgment.

The Bible recognizes that all men spill seed. Man is but flesh and is evil from his youth (Genesis 8:21). He masturbates and has nocturnal emissions. Nobody's perfect. It still disgusts God.<sup>91</sup> He calls it uncleanness. All men are sinners. All men need Jesus Christ as their Savior to save them from their defiled sexuality. This seems to be the sum of Christian teaching on the matter.

We might see in this scenario the foundation for *the Semitic equation of holiness with fatherhood*. Fathers are not promiscuous; they try not to spill seed. They try to get their wives pregnant. We might also see in this the motive for polygamy and sexual customs which maximized unions that resulted in conception. The men of the Bible married as early as they could. They married as many women as they could. They had sex as much as they could. They tried to please God by not wasting seed.

In contrast, Biblical writers and then the later Jewish writers of the Intertestamental Period became

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<sup>91</sup> A more liberal thinking person might wonder why God should take any more offense with a man's random spilling of seed than with the scattering of acorns from an oak tree. The Pelagians wondered the same thing. But that is not germane to the context of this argument at this point in our discussion.

increasingly strident in their opposition to Canaanite culture as it was expressed in the various pagan empires of antiquity. Canaanite culture embraced sex for pleasure, as the wine of the gods, and for magic. Conception was inconvenient in such a culture, as it is today, so potions to avoid conception were used, and when that failed, abortion.

The prophets thundered in protest and warned of an angry God. He judges sexual abuse with barrenness and disease, and finally death.

That is God's design.

▪ **Purity Laws and the Secondary Purpose of Sex**

Not everybody has a sexual capacity that fits neatly into the male or female category. They are eunuchs, as was described earlier. Jesus said there are some who are born eunuchs (Matthew 19:12). God made them this way. They are confused about their sexual role because the Church does not explain it to them. The Church does not understand the role of eunuchs.

Eunuchs are like the angels of heaven. They do not have a reproductive capacity. But that does not mean they have no sexual capacity: the ability to give and receive sexual pleasure. Some are drawn to women; others are drawn to men. Jesus said the usual rules

pertaining to marriage do not apply to them. He said, "He who is able to receive it [his teaching on marriage], let him receive it" - meaning that eunuchs do not fit this category.

Does that mean the New Testament has given eunuchs a license to engage in unclean sexual practices? No, it does not. While the issue of procreation may be irrelevant to the status of a eunuch, it does not mean he has the right to dishonor his body in promiscuous intercourse with other men.<sup>92</sup> There is a secondary purpose of sex which must be honored.

The Bible tells us that God made the man and the woman to become "one flesh" (*henosis* in the Greek). That does not occur until the woman receives the man's semen into her body (1 Corinthians 6:16). Sex with a condom does not create the *henosis*. Paul would have condemned condom sex as both the sin of uncleanness and lasciviousness. It would be uncleanness because it is a fancy way of masturbating. It would be lasciviousness because it excites sexual passion in the woman but does not give her the seed. The Church has historically opposed artificial contraception for reasons such as these, but it has not embraced "natural"

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<sup>92</sup> **With this definition, sodomy between eunuchs would seem to be an impossible crime, unless the secondary purpose is considered.**

contraception, such as oral sex. Even though oral sex would be morally superior to condom sex, the Church still has condemned it because it defeats the opportunity for conception.

The woman has a physiological need for semen, apart from the needs of procreation. Long standing research shows that there are critical chemical substances in the semen which contribute to the physical and psychological health of the woman. Without semen, she increases her risk of cancer and depression, substantially, among other things.<sup>93</sup>

**Spiritual and physical union creates the foundation for family government.** This is the secondary, yet essential function of sex. That is why sexual intercourse can still be valid, even if conception is not possible, provided that it does not exceed in precedence over the moral obligation to procreate. Sex was not meant to be used merely for sport or entertainment. It was meant to create bonding and to build relationships. It creates the fabric of society. When sex is used promiscuously, it defeats the purpose of social bonding. While man, ultimately, does not have sovereignty over conception, he does have it in his power to use sex in

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<sup>93</sup> See Appendix C: “Why Women Need Semen”

a loving and constructive way, and he is under moral obligation to do so.

### ▪ **Biblical Remedies for Uncleanness**

By the 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD, there were two trends within Judaism to remedy sexual uncleanness. The first were the institutions which had prevailed in ancient Israel for centuries: early marriage, procreative sex, and harems. The second trend was asceticism. We see glimpses of asceticism in John the Baptist and the Essene community. Among these Jews, they regarded the messiness of human sexuality as offensive to Yahweh. The Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, depict ceremonial defilement as the cause of Israel's defeat and ruin. This view was true among other branches of Judaism, including the Pharisees and the Sicari.

However, among the followers of Jesus, as was noted by Phipps in the previous chapter, a lack of concern for cleanliness prevailed. Jesus defended His disciples when they failed to wash their hands before eating. He allowed menstruating women to touch Him and even touched dead people and lepers. It hardly seems likely that He would have been



troubled by coming in contact with seminal emissions.

Nevertheless, Jesus was ever an upholder of the moral law. Whatever ceremonial defilements He may have permitted in contradiction to human traditions and superstitions, He never would have violated the moral principles which the Mosaic code tried to protect.

In reference to human sexuality, Jesus would not have allowed Himself to spill seed in an unrighteous manner by neglecting marriage or, as was common in that era, the use of a concubine.<sup>94</sup> To the Jews, a bachelor either meant a eunuch or a man polluted by nocturnal emissions. In either case, He would have been ostracized. As a violation of the moral law, it would have disqualified Him as the Savior of the world.

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<sup>94</sup>***Concubinage was a sexual ministry and it worked both ways. It provided a kind of sexual freedom for both men and women that is inconceivable to the moralists of our day. I find it hard to believe that Keturah was Abraham's personal "whore." She was his concubine who later became his "mistress" (Mrs. = wife) upon Sarah's death. Concubines were junior wives and enjoyed a dignity which harlots did not have in the Bible. Indeed, during the very incident in Genesis 18 in which God came down to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah for its predatory homosexuality, Abraham had Hagar as his concubine. It is hard to imagine that God would have neglected to set things straight in Abraham's household had concubinage been a sin. Had it been sinful, as our moralists claim today, Abraham's intercessory prayer would have come to naught.***

## ▪ Answering Objections

**Objection #1** - "Why were childbirth and normal sex still considered acts of uncleanness, if what you are saying is true?"

**Response:** In the Old Testament, before the coming of Jesus Christ, *the seed of man was itself considered unclean*. Not only was the *misuse* of seed an act of uncleanness, so was the seed. It was not sanctified until the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Recall Paul's explanation in 1 Corinthians 7:14 - the children of believers are holy and not unclean. The children of unbelievers are unclean. Children born in the Old Testament were unclean. Nocturnal emissions were unclean for the same reason. Now they are no longer a source of uncleanness *unless they represent willful barrenness*.

Notice in this reference that the children are holy, even if one of the parents was an unbeliever. This was why our Lord Jesus Christ was not contaminated by Original Sin. He was begotten by the Father in Heaven. According to His humanity, He was the son of an unclean woman and a clean father. Mary was sanctified by this union and her offspring was made holy.

**Objection #2** - "In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul the Apostle teaches the moral superiority of perpetual virginity. This would mean he saw nothing evil in menstruation and nocturnal emissions, which celibates would surely have experienced."

**Response:** Let's take a closer look at this.

First, observe in verse 25 that Paul admits that this counsel is not written under Divine inspiration. This point is important. Paul is honestly telling us that these are his thoughts based upon his human reasoning. How can we use this with any universal authority when the Apostle has emphatically told us that it was meant merely as personal advice? We know that Paul considered Peter to be capable of mistakes (Galatians 2:11). It is certainly not disrespectful to believe that Paul made a mistake here.

Second, he clearly bases his advise upon eschatological expectations ("the time is short", v. 26, 29). It contains the same sense as our Lord's exclamation in Matthew 24:19, where He pronounced a "Woe" upon pregnant and lactating women. He was not diminishing the maternal calling; rather, He was warning of its hazards during a time of tribulation.

Third, Paul saw the elimination of "distraction" as a spiritual benefit. The Corinthians lived in a sexually perverse culture. Paul felt a fast from sexual activity would allow the Corinthian Church the opportunity to pursue spiritual growth in other areas that were more urgent. These new converts were starting from scratch. Learning to control one's desires is a healthy exercise; although a prolonged abstinence is not (v. 1-2).

Finally, Paul reverses this ruling in 1 Timothy 4:3-4; 5:14 and elsewhere. According to Clement of Alexandria, Paul remarried himself and refers to his spouse in Philippians 4:1. So much for the celibacy movement.<sup>95</sup>

**Objection #3** - "Some of the patriarchs in the Bible married late in life. According to what you say, they should have been married at puberty to avoid sin?"

**Response:** Considering the longevity of those who lived in that period, they probably experienced a late puberty. But I never said they were perfect.

**Objection #4** - "It is a harsh moral standard to require pubescent girls and unhealthy women to bear children which can cause injury or even death."

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<sup>95</sup>This issue is addressed again in Chapter Six on Virgins in the textbook edition of this book.

**Response:** I agree. The Bible never said that overcoming sin would be easy. There is something heroic in a woman who risks her health to have a baby. But I think we find ample evidence in the Bible, as well as the writings of the Early Church, that our sexual fruitfulness ought to be treated with as much respect as fruit trees. The Law required that fruit trees be left unharvested during the first three years of production. Contraceptive sexual practices would be appropriate for immature women. This would be the Celtic view. Pruning enhances fruitfulness. There is a difference between wisdom and fanaticism (Ecclesiastes 7:16-18).

Ezekiel 16:7 tells us that a woman is ready for sexual intercourse when her pubic hair is grown and her breasts are formed. That occurs long after puberty. The Bible never sets an arbitrary age – like 16 or 18 as found in our modern statutes – of when maturity is achieved. It can occur earlier for some, but probably later for most.

In reference to women who are ill, we must remember that our Lord's "yoke is easy and His burden is light." He has suspended the curse of the Law. That is just another reason we need a Savior. The Law does not yield in its standard. We will never achieve perfection in this flesh and we should stop fretting about it.

**Objection #5** - "These laws are done away with in Christ."

**Response:** This objection is the general objection of antinomians. It is not my intention to waste time refuting it. Many other writers have adequately responded to that error.<sup>96</sup>

However, these Ceremonial laws in the Old Testament are often held to be abolished, even by those opposed to antinomianism. I do not quarrel with that view. I do not believe that menstruating women must provide a blood atonement every time they menstruate (Leviticus 15:29-30). That sort of thing is abolished in Christ.

**However, I will say again that the Moral Law still stands, and whatever it was in the Moral Law that these ordinances represented, it is still valid and binding for us today. In reference to sexual uncleanness, I am saying these ordinances were designed to compel obedience to the Creation Mandate.** Until we become angels, it still stands. Consequently, sins such as menstruation are no longer sinful because the seed is unclean - at least for the Christian. Rather, menstruating might be evidence

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<sup>96</sup>Antinomianism is the belief that moral law is made void through faith, and that faith alone is necessary to salvation. See Greg Bahnsen: *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (The Craig Press, 1977).

of the existence of sin in the heart: the antecedent choice of willful infertility. This could be expressed in the selfish use of contraception, deviancy, the avoidance of marriage, and so on.

**Objection #6** - "If Jesus had nocturnal emissions, then He sinned, also."

**Response:** This objection provides us with an opportunity to discuss unique theological questions. No one seems to have faced this issue for 18 centuries, not since the Docetist heresy.

▪ **Jesus and "The Infirmary of the Flesh"**

Since Jesus was not a eunuch, He had seminal emissions. *Was He defiled by these emissions?* No, His emissions were not sinful because His seed was holy. Herein lays the importance of the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth as prerequisites to the Atonement. Had not Christ been supernaturally conceived, He would have been defiled by Original Sin and disqualified as our Savior. Since He was begotten of the Father, not only was *He* holy, His *seed* was holy, also.

Nevertheless, the Scriptures do teach that Jesus experienced the "infirmary of the flesh" - the sinful

nature. He bore the burden of seminal production. He was tempted by His flesh to ejaculate sinfully, such as masturbation. This is the meaning of passages like Romans 8:3, which says that Christ came in the "likeness of sinful flesh."

Obviously, as was true of His baptism, our Lord complied with the ordinances pertaining to nocturnal emissions, "to fulfill all righteousness," and thus, "condemn sin in the flesh."

Looking at this from a different angle, these factors compelled Jesus to marry, or at least, to have had a concubine. If He experienced our "infirmities," then He must have experienced sexual desire. If He had sexual desire, then He must have had seminal emissions. If He had emissions, then He must have obeyed the Creation Ordinance, married and had children. **Had He not married, He would have sinned for wasting His seed and for *failure to make use of the female.***

*For we do not have a high priest who cannot share our infirmities, but we have one who was tempted with everything as we are, and yet without sin.*

- Hebrews 4:15<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup>In the Aramaic text (The Lamsa Bible), see also Hebrews 5:2



What are the "infirmities" the Apostle is speaking of here? He certainly isn't talking about the common cold. How are you tempted to sin by having a cold?

The "infirmities of the flesh" are a direct reference to a man's uncontrolled erections and seminal emissions. They are things that cause defilement such as nocturnal emissions. Paul refers to this condition specifically in Romans:

*I speak after the manner of men [to those things which are uniquely the experience of the male sex<sup>98</sup>], because of the infirmity of your flesh [seminal production]: for as ye have yielded your members [your penis and ejaculations] servants to uncleanness [nocturnal emissions and masturbation] and to iniquity unto iniquity [fornication, adultery, sodomy, etc.]; even so now yield your members [your penis and ejaculations] servants to righteousness unto holiness [marriage, concubinage, hierogamy].*

- 6:19

For the Christian, we stand on the same footing as our Lord, judicially. We are no longer required to

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<sup>98</sup> The Biblical usage of the expressions "after the manner of men," "after the manner of women," and so on refers to those things unique to that group. See the following: Rachel in Genesis 18:11; Exodus 21:9; Esther 2:12; Ezekiel 23:45; 1 Corinthians 15:32; Galatians 3:15

comply with the ordinances of the letter of the law. But we are required, as He was, to comply with the "spirit of the law" (Romans 7:22), "that the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (8:4). In this case we are talking about procreation "that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (7:4) and not infertile acts which "bring forth fruit unto death" (7:5).

To the novice, this discussion on the sins of uncleanness and ceremonial defilements is no doubt unbearably tedious and confusing. I can understand the reader's frustration. But do not dismiss the argument because it seems petty to the modern mind. We are trying to understand the culture in which Jesus lived and whether He was compelled by the moral standards of His time to marry. When the evidence is properly weighed, I believe this matter may be the most conclusive theological argument in favor of a married Jesus.

### **Summary**

This concludes the discussion on the theological case for a married Jesus. In summary, there were basically four major themes presented: *first*, to fulfill His role as the second Adam and to fill the earth with

a race uncontaminated with Original Sin in their physical natures, Christ had to "be fruitful and multiply" in a sexual and reproductive way.

*Second*, to qualify as a legitimate citizen within the nation of Israel, Jesus had to demonstrate that He was not a eunuch. Since eunuchs often have sexual capacity, the definitive proof of virility is to father a child.

*Third*, God's glory in man is manifested in the sexual potency and virility of righteous men. Jesus was the "unicorn" of prophecy. He was God's stud.

And finally, *fourth*, had Jesus not provided for His sexual emissions in a righteous manner by marriage with a woman who could receive His seed, He would have been guilty of the sin of uncleanness, not merely as a ritual infraction, but as a violation of moral law.

Let us move on to other matters.

## **The Textual Case**

The textual case for a married Jesus must begin with a correct definition of terms. Law is words and words have exact meaning, especially if we believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired Word of God. The Bible says, "Thou shalt not steal." The sin of theft presupposes the notion of private property. Before we can know what theft is, we must first define property.

The Bible says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." We cannot know what adultery is until we first know what marriage is. We can say that we support "family values," but that expression has no meaning until we define what a family is.

The reason why classical theologians have not recognized Jesus as a married person is because they have labored under an erroneous definition of marriage and the family. Once we can define these terms according to Old Testament law - the moral code under which Jesus and His followers lived - then we will be able to see the truth of it everywhere.

## **The Family in the Hebrew Lexicon**

Is it possible that Jesus earned the title of the bridegroom, not because of some meaningless allegory about the "Church-Bride," but because He was the great matchmaker? Could it be that He healed people relationally, as well as physically and spiritually? Is it not reasonable to believe that He found husbands for the unattached women who followed Him?

Before we can consider such possibilities, we must come to a full and correct understanding of the Biblical view of the family. We must begin with the very meaning of the word "family" in the Biblical text.

Very often, the etymology of a word – that is, its primitive meaning - can be profoundly different from its derivative meaning in common usage. For instance, few of us are aware of the origin of the word "sincere." Originally, it meant pure honey from which all wax has been purged. Composed of the Latin words *sine*, "without", and *cera*, "wax", it appears to have been first used in reference to honey strained or separated from its wax-like comb. The word "sincere" was originally a technical term to

describe this process. Later, by analogy, it came to be applied to human motives, to describe people who mean what they say. The analogy has overtaken the etymology and has become the “*usus loquendi*” – the current usage.<sup>99</sup>

When we look at the Hebrew language, we must remember that it is an ancient language which operates with words according to their etymologies. We discovered that to be true above in our discussion on the phallic symbol of the Bible. Likewise for the Biblical use of the word “family”, our modern *usus loquendi* is not an accurate representation of its cultural milieu.

Bible scholars tell us that there is no Hebrew word for the conjugal family. The word for family is too broad and is translated with too many applications. There is no Hebrew concept of the family that is equivalent to our modern understanding of the nuclear family. All you have is what we would call, by current standards, the “extended family group.” We might use the word “clan”, we might use the word “tribe” - but by any measurement, the tiny nuclear family is a foreign concept to the Old Testament. That is why the word is sometimes translated “nation” or “tribe” or “kind”, simply because “family”

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<sup>99</sup>Milton Terry: *Biblical Hermeneutics* (The Methodist Book Concern, New York, 1911) p. 79

does not convey the full meaning of “**mishpachah.**”<sup>100</sup>

When the Old Testament looks at the family, it looks at it as an inter-generational governmental unit:

*Although "Family" in early Israel was a broad concept, there was no special term for the nuclear or conjugal family. The smallest family unit recognized in the language was the 3 and 4 generation site-resident family living in neighbouring houses on a single site. . . there is no English word-equivalent for this institution.*<sup>101</sup>

Of course, there is a biological condition of mating between the sexes which happens within the context of marriage. *This union is not the same as marriage.* The minimal requirement of biology - one male and one female - is acknowledged in Genesis 2 as a necessary condition for procreation and the perpetuation of the family. But this relationship is not the family. Nor is it marriage. **Marriage is the act by which a family becomes a self-**

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<sup>100</sup> #4940- "a family, i.e. circle of relatives; fig. a class (of persons), a species (of animals) or sort (of things); by extens. a tribe or people: - family, kind (-red)." The most inclusive term which might fit is "a self-perpetuating group".

<sup>101</sup> "The Christian Case for Family Associations" by Dr. Michael Schluter, as published by Chalcedon, 1986

**perpetuating governmental unit in society.**

Marriage *presupposes* the family. The family is not the result of marriage. The family comes first, and then comes marriage. This description may seem peculiar and may be at odds with so-called "traditional values." Let me explain.

The word ***mishpachah*** (*mish-pah-kah*) reflects the earthy and organic character of the Hebrew language. If you examine its meaning and its etymology in standard Hebrew lexicons (such as Strong's Concordance), you will find some startling information.

As previously footnoted, Strong tells us that "mishpachah" is translated as family, but with broad applications - a circle of relatives, a species of animal or plant, a tribe, a kinship group and so on. He also tells us that ***mishpachah*** comes from the words ***shaphah*** (#8192) and ***shiphchah*** (#8198). "Shaphah" is a verb meaning "to abrade" or "to bare", presumably, by some kind of rubbing action. "Shiphchah" means "to spread out," "a wench." A wench is a female slave used for sexual purposes. While Strong does not use the term "wench" in the modern pejorative sense, he did use it to make clear



that the kind of slave "shiphchah" refers to is the sexually available female.<sup>102</sup>

We find supporting evidence of this etymology in Vine's Expository Dictionary:

*The word [mishpachah] is related to the verbal root "siphah" but the verbal form is absent from the Old Testament. Another noun form is "pehah" ("maidservant"), as in Gen. 16:2: "And Sarai said unto Abram . . . I pray thee, go in unto my maid. . ."*

Note *shiphchah* is a feminine verb. The female is *doing* something which identifies her sexual status. *Shiphchah* means "to spread out" as in **spreading out the legs to expose the female genitals for copulation**. Adding the "mish," *mishpachah* turns the verb into a noun.

Thus, "mishpachah" simply means a group or circle of female slaves. Modernists will bristle, feminists will object, and theologians will make excuses. Since such a definition will be widely disputed because of its implications, let me give you examples of other

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<sup>102</sup>See *Brown-Driver-Briggs*, p. 1046. A review of the selections provided, as in Ruth 2:13, we may surmise that *shiphchah* is a sexually *available* but not yet sexually *active* female (i.e. a virgin), while a concubine - *pilegesh* - is a *shiphchah* who has become sexually active.

similar words in the Hebrew language so that you know how we can come to such a translation.

**#4942 Mishpat - a verdict from #8199  
*shaphat* - to judge**

**#4946 Mishqowl - a weight from #8254  
*shaqal* - to weigh**

**#4926 Mishma - a hearing from #8085  
*shama* - to hear**

**#4932 Mishneh - a repetition from #8138  
*shana* - to duplicate**

**#4942 Mishpath - a stall from #8192  
*shaphah* - to rub bare**

**#4940 Mishpachah - a family from #8192  
*shaphah* - to rub bare and #8198  
*shiphchah* to spread out (the legs to expose  
the vulva) compare with #8212 *shopkah* -  
feminine of a derivative of #8210 (to spill  
forth); the penis.**

*Shopkah* is the feminine derivative of the Hebrew word for penis. A woman does not have a penis, so *shopkah* really means “vulva.” But the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was Victorian and did not allow such frankness in referring to female genitalia. Its Bible translators routinely sanitized their renderings. Since

*shopkah's* sister word, *shiphchah*, means “to spread out,” we now understand why Strong and other lexicographers would see these maidservants as more than housekeepers. The thing that these women do is expose the vulva for copulation. The other sister word, which is *shaphah*, means “to rub bare.” It is the root word for "stall", presumably, because that is what a group of penned animals do to each other. They rub up against each other and wear off their coats. What is the result of making bare the female genitals?

Notice, too, that the family refers to a group of women, not to the man or to the children. It is, strictly speaking, a feminist institution.<sup>103</sup> **When the family (i.e. the group of women) acquire a husband - which is marriage - then the family becomes a governmental unit.** Just as a verdict presupposes a judge, and just as a report presupposes a messenger who brings the report, so a group of female slaves that are available in a sexual way presupposes that they have a master (i.e. a husband). The result of marriage is children who become members of the family. They represent the

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<sup>103</sup>This etymology also suggests tribadism, a possibility which will be explored in a later chapter on virgins. A “tribade” is a woman homosexual (lesbian). It comes from the Latin “tribas” and the Greek “tribein”, which means “to rub” – the identical meaning of the Hebrew word “shaphah”.

family's future and are the means by which the family becomes perpetual.

Understandably, some modern women will argue that it is degrading to women to focus on their sexual role and that this Biblical view is representative of a barbarous age. That may be true, but it has no bearing on the fact that this was the cultural milieu in which Jesus lived and on the question of whether He was married or not. But since we cannot imagine Jesus endorsing or practicing oppression, we might want to look closer at this objection.

Is it really true or is it a feminist myth that women want to be viewed as sexless creatures that are unavailable to men? Since there are male eunuchs, as was described earlier, who are uninterested in sex or in their masculine role, is it not possible that there are female eunuchs – women who are not interested in sex or in their feminine role? Such women would naturally feel degraded by sex. Is it not possible that the feminist movement represents the views of women eunuchs who have imposed their values on all women and have dominated public discourse on the subject? If we follow the Biblical argument, should we not say rather that it is more degrading for women *not* to submit themselves to their husbands sexually? In comparison, does not a man's insubordination to God degrade himself, a creature

who is made in the image of God? And does it not degrade a woman who is made in the image of man, if we follow the correlation as set forth by St. Paul? Analogously, men who lower God to an idol degrade themselves, since they image their god. Women who lower men from their leadership role by competing with them degrade themselves, since they are made in man's image (1 Corinthians 11:1-4).

Some women, perhaps most women, want to be junior partners in the marriage relationship. They don't want to dominate. They admire and are sexually aroused by strong masculine leadership. They are not abnormal for feeling this way and they should be respected.

I have been drawn into this discussion as an apologist for this social system. The reader must understand that I have sympathy for anything Biblical and ponder its relevance for our modern era. But whether you believe in it or not, it is important that you understand that this was the social system in which the ancient Israelites functioned. It governed the institutions and the thinking of Jewish society in Jesus' day. We will have no understanding of that society unless we acknowledge that when the ancients thought of the family, they thought of the harem. "Harem" is the modern word equivalent for *mishpachah*. **The harem was the central**

**institution of Biblical society - not the temple, not the synagogue, and not the church.** Underline and circle that statement. You will never understand how the Mosaic Law worked among the Israelites, nor will you understand the mission of Christ and His Church, until you have given full weight and consideration to that fact.

To anticipate what is to come in our discussion, remember that the Dominion Covenant, which was given to Adam, was passed down through the generations until it was handed to Israel, which I have already shown was a polygamous society. We can understand why Israelite women regarded the women of a harem as having the greater glory. When God said to Abraham that “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed,” he was saying that Abraham was heir, figuratively, to all of the women of the world. He and his descendants were given the earth for dominion and the seed of all women. In giving full weight to that consideration, we are getting to the essential elements of the Dominion Covenant. Whoever gets the land and whoever has sexual commerce with the women gets to propagate himself, take possession of the earth, and exercise dominion. He becomes God's stud and God's vicegerent.

In that ancient time, fertile women were considered the booty of war or the objects of economic success. They were the prize, the holy grail of human civilization. It should not surprise us that the Biblical patriarchs revered those values.<sup>104</sup>

In the Abrahamic Covenant, God offered Abraham the federal headship of the world (Romans 4:12 cf. Genesis 17). Federal headship was meaningless to Abraham if he lacked an heir. That was why Abraham was so unnerved by Sarah's barrenness. And while a case can be made that his union with Hagar was a mistake, his consort with other concubines, such as Keturah in particular, was blessed by God and resulted in sons (Genesis 22:24;25:6 KJV).

Modern moralists cannot handle the visually graphic nature of the Hebrew language. When we find that *mishpachah* means a group of women who are spreading their legs for their master, we need to understand that this was the picture in the minds of Israelite men and women when you mentioned the word "family." It was almost pornographic. They would have viewed with disdain our modern vision of

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<sup>104</sup>In the Brehon laws of the ancient Celts, female slaves were the basic monetary unit – not that they were actually used in economic exchanges, considering how impractical that would be. Like gold is today, they were treated as a “store and standard” of wealth. See Patrick C. Power: *Sex & Marriage in Ancient Ireland* (Mercer Press, 1993 edition), p. 9

the family: a husband, a wife, 2.1 kids, a dog, and then a divorce.

Of course, in a derivative sense (in the *usus loquendi*), *mishpachah* includes a kinship group living together with a family chieftain in charge. That can include a multi-generational interlocking of relatives, servants, eunuchs, guests, and so on. Mishpachah, over time, acquired a multitude of applications, connotations, and derivative meanings. But the core meaning - the meaning in its hieroglyphic - is as I have described above.

### **Family Government in Biblical Law**

The basic governmental unit of Hebrew society was a free man on his estate and all the people who lived on his land. He was their chieftain and lord. He was also their kinsman-redeemer, their avenger of blood, and their legal guardian. In return and depending upon how the various relationships were created, he had proprietary rights in them that were regulated by the Mosaic Law.

He did not own them in any absolute sense. All Israelites were considered tenants on the land which God had given them (Leviticus 25:23). But the property owner was the magistrate on his estate and



had the right to expect that the people who lived on his land would fulfill various covenantal and contractual obligations if the need arose.<sup>105</sup>

For example, if he went to war, he had the right to expect that all able-bodied males over the age of 20 would join him in battle against his enemies. If he wanted sex and offspring, he had marital rights to any undesignated female who lived on his estate.

In Exodus 21, you will find a picture of the family in Israelite culture. You will recall that in Exodus 20 God gave the Ten Commandments. In this same setting God gave the judgments which followed. These are the case laws which flesh-out or give substance to the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are the skeleton of the Torah. It is the case law of Exodus 21- 23 which gives flesh to the frame.

If we reject the Book of the Covenant found in these chapters, we must also reject the moral authority of the Ten Commandments. Modern humanists know this; modern Christians do not know this. Humanists are more consistent in their understanding of the Scriptures than are Christians. Christians think they can have the Ten Commandments without the case

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<sup>105</sup> *Geber* – the landed gentry. This Hebrew word is the root for our old English word “baron.”

laws which give them definition. They think that they can have a society which punishes thieves, yet not have an understanding of what private property is. They think that a Christian society can punish adulterers, yet change the rules of marriage and divorce to suit themselves. The humanists know better.

While it would require a different volume altogether to argue the case for the moral and practical value of Old Testament laws, it should be sufficient to point out that Jesus declared that it was His mission as the Savior of His people "to fulfill the law and the prophets" not to destroy them (Matthew 5:17). The Epistle of Hebrews quotes the prophets to show that the proof of regeneration was the spiritual internalizing of these statutes and judgments (8:10; Ezekiel 36:27).<sup>106</sup> Understanding and applying Biblical law was considered the sign of spiritual maturity for the Christian (Hebrews 5:12-13). Even St. Paul, the champion of the doctrines of grace and justification by faith, repeatedly took sides with the ancient law of his people, declaring: "the law is holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12). He rejected only the ceremonial and ritual laws which no longer held any relevance in the Gospel age (Romans 14:17).

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<sup>106</sup> "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." These Biblical customs will be irresistible in the new golden age.

Again, whether we want to embrace these laws and customs or not, it does not change the fact that Jesus and His followers did embrace them. The abiding validity of "the law of liberty" (James 1:25) was the central pillar of the Jamesian Church in Jerusalem. In answering the question of a married Jesus and understanding the custom of hierogamy in the New Testament Church, we must consider how these laws worked.

▪ **Marriage in Israel**

*If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.*

- Exodus 21:2

Who is the "thou" here? Who is God speaking to as the immediate recipients of these commandments? These are heads of households. And who are these heads of households? Well, in the Bible - as mentioned in a previous chapter - the average "family" had two dozen sons.<sup>107</sup> The heads of these families were the equivalent of Arabic sheiks.

The kind of man that God is addressing at the giving of the Law is probably about 60 years of age, he has two dozen sons, he has as many daughters, he

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<sup>107</sup>Stivers: *Eros Made Sacred*, see bibliography

has several wives and concubines, and he has servants drawn from the “mixed” multitude which left Egypt with the Israelites but were not numbered with them in the census. And he likely had Hebrew servants - either eunuchs or males - who made alliance with him.

“If thou buy an Hebrew servant” - Yahweh is speaking to the elders of Israel, also known in the Hebrew as *Gebers*. This term referred to the valiant or "mighty" men of Israel - not necessarily warriors, but certainly the landed gentry who had the right to lead men into battle. They were the leaders who met at the city gates.<sup>108</sup> The *geber* is the federal head of his family group and is the one who provides coverture for them. He ransoms, redeems, and avenges them.

Continuing now with our text in Exodus 21:3-11, of the Hebrew servant, it says:

*If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant*

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<sup>108</sup> Ruth 4:2. See also Stivers: *The Kinsman-Redeemer* at <http://www.grailchurch.org/kinsman.htm>

*shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever.*

*And if a man sell his daughter to be a maidservant, she shall not go out as the menservants do. If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her. And if he hath betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters. If he take him another wife; her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.*

The rest of these chapters, of course, discuss other areas of Biblical law. But here we find set forth, with the claim of Divine inspiration, **the definition of the husband as a master**. That is why we still call men “Mister” (Mr.), because it means “master.” The wife is called a “mistress” (Mrs.), a lady master. The word in Hebrew for “marriage”, “to marry”, and so

on, is *ba'al* which means *marry, to be mastered*.<sup>109</sup> If a man “marries” a woman, he makes her a mistress. She shares in his authority. If she comes as an undesignated maidservant (a *shiphchah*), then she comes as a ***pilegesh***: a concubine. She has not been *ba'aled* - that is, made a mistress - but she has been made a part of his estate, of which the master and mistress are both guardians and heirs. Maidservants and concubines were never referred to as “wives.” Thus, a man may have had many concubines, but still only one wife.<sup>110</sup>

The Hebrew family centered on the lord of an estate and an allotment of land which a man inherited by operation of Biblical succession. This man was the master of that estate. All the people on that land, unless exempted by pre-conditions or the requirements of Biblical law, were his servants and dependents. He was the husband, or master, to all the women on that property, whether he ever had sexual relations with them or not. He was also their lord and guardian. He protected them.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Strong's Hebrew Dictionary, #1166, 1167

<sup>110</sup> George Lamsa: *Old Testament Light* (Harper & Row) p. 55, “In the East the status of a married woman is different from that of a concubine . . . the latter was not a wife.” Jacob's declaration that his concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah, were his wives indicates that they were promoted to that status sometime during the course of their relationship.

<sup>111</sup> Ruth 4:5 – The purchase of an estate imposed a legal obligation of the buyer to the members of the harem which decided to remain on

Whether a woman was made a mistress or a maiden, she was transferred from one master to another. This practice hearkens back to the first marriage in the Garden of Eden. God brought the woman to the man. God was the first father and the first master who brought his daughter and maidservant, Eve, to Adam. By that transference, Adam became her guardian in God's stead. As God's successor, He became her master and father. He became her covenant head and God's representative to her.

With this view of marriage in mind, we find that the *Geber* (or *gever*) was the only one who was legally competent to marry and to give in marriage. He was the lord, magistrate, and principal heir of the estate. He held title to the land and to the people who chose to live on that land. All other men were menservants and were required to obtain his permission to marry. He was the master of the estate's harem. No one had access to the harem without his permission.

## ▪ The Church as the Messiah's Harem

The city of Jerusalem was King David's private estate. He obtained title to its precincts, buildings, and inhabitants by right of conquest.<sup>112</sup> It was passed down through the right of primogeniture to each succeeding generation of David's descendants. If Jesus was indeed the Messiah, then He was the legitimate heir to the city, to the temple, the palaces, the houses, structures, people, and so on.

Judea was an occupied country. The Romans controlled everything. So while Jesus had title to this family estate and the right of possession, He did not take possession of it. That was because the occupation of foreign troops was originally Yahweh's judgment upon the people of Israel for their idolatry and lawlessness. Nothing had changed, so the Messiah left the city to its eventual demise.

As we know, however, Jesus had a loyal following. These people joined themselves to Him as disciples. Most scholars define Christ's relationship to His disciples in terms of the Greek model of the philosopher's school. That is because their knowledge is based upon Gentile Christianity and not

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<sup>112</sup>That is why it was called “the City of David.” The story of its conquest can be found in 2 Samuel 5.



the Christianity of the Jerusalem Church. The Gentile Church did not understand the Mosaic Law, so they viewed Jesus as the Jewish version of a Socrates or an Aristotle.

The relationship between Jesus and His disciples was more than that of an educator with his students. It was the same as the master/servant relationship described in Exodus 21. The only difference was that His disciples were not forced to unite themselves to Him because of debt, crime, or legal obligation. It was voluntary. They believed in His message and His ability to create a better world for them. Yes, they needed a Savior. But the relationship was a voluntary servitude created by love.<sup>113</sup>

He was their master and they were His servants. That they called Him "lord" was more than a title of honor. He was not just a rabbi, a teacher of the law. The relationship with His disciples was a permanent bond which created a new tribe, a new governing unit. Unlike the Old Testament gentry, Christ's authority did not grow out of land tenure. It was truly spiritual in origin and extended over His followers no

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<sup>113</sup>Although, the band of disciples – not just the Twelve - bear striking similarities to the followers of David: “And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them: and there were with him about four hundred men” along with “all his father’s house” (1 Samuel 22:2).

matter where they lived upon the earth. He was truly the second Adam and lord over all the earth.

According to the Biblical law quoted above, a permanent adoption could occur during the sabbatical year. Did Jesus' disciples become His adopted brethren? Indeed, they did:

*Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*

- John 15:14-15

The distinction that Jesus makes between friends and servants is interesting. "Friends" remain servants because they are still expected to obey the master of the house. However, they are not ordinary servants because ordinary servants only do what they are told. The master does not impart his vision or purpose to them. With "friends", on the other hand, he shares his confidences. In this text, the disciples have graduated from being common servants to servants who can speak on behalf of their master. They are soon to be set forth as apostles. Apostles are servants who are messengers and spokesmen for

their master. It is not a term unique to the New Testament. In the Roman world, any master, head of household, or official could have an "apostle" - someone who is sent as a representative. In modern law, they are called "agents" and there is an entire body of law dedicated to the subject of "the law of agency."

An example of this in the Old Testament was Abraham's commissioning of Eliezer, his head servant (and potential heir through adoption), to find a wife for his son Isaac (Genesis 24). Another example is the relationship between Moses and Joshua. Joshua was a deacon/servant for Moses (Joshua 1:1). In this case, Joshua became Moses' successor as Yahweh's spokesman to the people of Israel.

What about the unattached women that followed Jesus? What was the nature of their relationship?

According to the law, they were His *mishpachah* whether He had sexual relationships with them or not. Had they not been provided with His coverture, then they would have been treated as harlots outside the covenant protections of a *geber* in Israel. He was their husband and under His authority and protection. ***The women disciples were His harem.***

Now, notice an interesting provision in the relationship of a master with his maidservant. If he fails to marry her or to give her in marriage to either his son or his manservant, then he has been morally derelict. He has "dealt deceitfully with her" (Exodus 21:8). Is it not reasonable to expect that Jesus would have performed His duties to His harem faithfully?

*And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*

- Hebrew 3:5-6

If Moses as a servant "was faithful in all his house"; Jesus was more so as a son.

### ▪ **The Daughter of Zion**

In the ancient world, cities were usually walled villages designed for added security from invading armies, wild animals, marauding bandits, and other dangers or mishaps. The walls of a city served for purposes of security but also for the purpose of defining citizenship. Everyone who lived inside of the city walls was under the jurisdiction of the rulers who

lived there. So were their properties which might lie outside of the city walls.

Within each city there was a citadel, a higher and more impregnable fortress in which the rulers and aristocracy of the city lived or could flee to in times of danger. Within this fortress, everything of great value to the life of the city was stored and protected. Anything that a city would need to rebuild after an attack would be preserved there: skilled craftsmen, warriors, the wealthy, the priests, the king, and his heirs. At the core of the fortress was the harem, the place where the most valued women of the city were guarded. It was they who would repopulate the city after it was devastated by war and famine. These women were the holy grail of every principality, of every people, and of every civilization. That was why cities were spoken of in the feminine gender. The royal and temple harems were the heart and soul of the city-state. When you spoke of the "daughter" of a city, you spoke specifically of the harem.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>George Lamsa: *Old Testament Light*, p. 740-741. Although Lamsa does not associate this title with a city's harem specifically, compare his note with 1 Kings 20:3-5. The king of Syria does not trust the king of Samaria to give him the best of the citadel – the harem – but insists on sending his own servants to confiscate the booty. "Daughters" is sometimes used in reference to the female inhabitants of a place (Genesis 6:2; 27:46; 28:6; 36:2; Numbers 25:1; Deuteronomy 23:17; Isaiah 3:16; Jeremiah 46:11; 49:2-4; Luke 23:28) and other times of dependent towns or hamlets, while to the principal city the correlative "mother" is applied (Numbers 21:25; Joshua 17:11, 16; Judges 1:27; 1 Chronicles 7:28; 2 Samuel 20:19).

When a conqueror succeeded in overcoming a citadel, it was there that he found the reward of his conquest. There, he found the booty of war: the gold, the silver, the treasures of all kinds, and the talent and technology of the conquered city. That was where he found the king and his legal heirs either to kill them or demand homage which would legitimize the conquest. There he found the women of the harem whose members he kept for himself or gave as rewards to his most favored comrades. By mingling his seed with theirs, he would solidify his right to the city's crown.

In the ancient world, the conquered had no rights. If you were allowed to live, your life served the interests of the conqueror. He could use you and discard you as he pleased. You were his property.

When the Israelites initially conquered the land of Canaan, they were forbidden to leave any human alive. Other than the wealth of Jericho, which was reserved to God, the Israelites were permitted to take the booty of war: gold, silver, clothing, tools, cattle, and so on. They were permitted to inhabit the cities and take possession of the orchards, vineyards, and fields of the exterminated Canaanites.

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**Ref. *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (Fleming Revell, 1975), p. 131. This, of course, is a derivative meaning.**

Centuries later, there remained one Canaanite city in the midst of the land which had withstood all attempts at conquest. It was Jerusalem. It was a formidable city. Israelites had gotten used to its presence. They were no longer interested in conquering it.

Jerusalem was different than the other Canaanite cities. It had once been known as Salem. During the time of Abraham, the mysterious Melchisedec had been its king. Melchisedec was a wise and righteous ruler. He was the priest of the "Most High God." Abraham received his blessing and paid tithes to him. The book of Hebrews tells us that Melchisedec was greater than Abraham and his priesthood was greater than that of Abraham's great-grandson, Levi.

By the process of regal succession, the kings of Salem which came after Melchisedec received his priesthood. By the time of King David, the kings of Salem had become wicked. They opposed the Israelites when they entered the land of Canaan. They went to war against them.

David was determined to conquer Jerusalem. He wanted to make it his capital. It was formidable and strategically located. But more than anything, it was a sacred place. It was near the place where Abraham offered Isaac on Mt. Moriah. David was not

interested in the city's wealth, although his warriors were, no doubt. David wanted to become Jerusalem's king so that he might become a priest after the order of Melchisedec. Although he honored the Levites and their role in Israel, as the Lord's anointed, he did not want to be under the authority of the Levitical priesthood. The Levites were good enough for the people, but he felt that the kingship should be spiritually independent of the priesthood. Like the patriarchs of old, he believed the king should be his own priest, and he and Solomon affirmed as much when they built their own altars.<sup>115</sup>

The citadel in Jerusalem was called "Zion." When David conquered it, he was then able to transfer title of the city to himself. He became the lord of all its inhabitants. He also took possession of the "daughters of Zion" - the harem.<sup>116</sup>

As time went on, these "daughters of Zion" - or simply "Zion" for short - were passed from generation-to-generation to each succeeding king of

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<sup>115</sup>2 Samuel 24; 1 Kings 9:25. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4). In this one mysterious Messianic prophecy we find the foundation of the royal priesthood.

<sup>116</sup>He took the royal harem of Saul upon becoming king (2 Samuel 12:8) and then, later, he took the harem of Jerusalem, according to the law of the war bride (Deut. 21:12), after he conquered the city (2 Samuel 5:13). Unlike other Israelite cities, this harem would have taught the "hieros gamos" known to Melchisedec. David's son, Absalom, attempted to prove the success of his insurrection against his father by sexually possessing ten of his father's concubines which were left behind to care for the palace (2 Samuel 16:22).



the city. Centuries later, Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians. The kingly succession was destroyed and the royal harem was carried away captive. No doubt, many of these women were dispersed throughout the ancient Near East into the various harems of their conquerors. Their descendants would later supply the leadership of the Parthian kingdom.<sup>117</sup>

These women never lost their sense of identity, as the story of Queen Esther attests. Many of these women were guarded by the various prophets and priests who had been taken into captivity. Pursuant of the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah, a portion of the harem was preserved - secretly at times - to make ready for the Messiah.<sup>118</sup>

While the apostate kingly line of David was destroyed, there was the promise that a cadet branch of David's line would be used by God to restore the kingdom. In each successive generation, the harem was given to whoever was selected to be the titular head of the house of David. They had a moral obligation to propagate the line. If he was endangered, the women were distributed among the

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<sup>117</sup>Steven Collins: *The Lost Ten Tribes of Israel . . . Found!* (CPA, Boring, Oregon, 1995)

<sup>118</sup>Rev. Charles F. Lawter: *The Lineage of the Scarlet Thread* (Destiny Publishers, Merrimac, MA, undated - probably late 19<sup>th</sup> Century)

royal eunuchs who posed as their husbands. If he was killed, the women were given to the *levir*.<sup>119</sup>

Joseph, the husband of Mary, was just such a head. That title was passed on to Jesus, and that explains why Jesus had a harem.

### **Miscellaneous Texts**

It was mentioned in an earlier chapter that both the Hebrew and Greek words for "wife" and "woman" are the same. This fact would suggest that the Gospel accounts which refer to the women who followed Jesus may, in fact, be referring to His wives. Certainly, they would have been viewed by His contemporaries as His wives. Unattached women were categorically considered harlots, unless they were widows with an estate. But even widows would have quickly remarried according to the Jewish levirate custom. So the women who followed Jesus, shared private space with Him, and ministered to Him were categorically under His coverture, and hence, were His wives, whether He had sexual relations with them or not.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup>The levirate refers to the ancient custom of a widow marrying the next-of-kin of her deceased husband.

<sup>120</sup>There is no direct evidence that He did, except with Mary Magdalene.

We also noted the Messianic prophecies, such as Psalm 45, which require a married Jesus if He were the true Messiah. These passages are in dispute because the early Fathers used a rule of hermeneutics which interpreted these prophecies as allegories, just as they did the texts pertaining to Zion. I will address that issue in the next section under the Historical Case.

### ▪ **The Lord's Harem in Luke's Gospel**

But there is a more obvious text which refers to the Messianic harem of Jesus. It has been glossed and passed over by virtually all Biblical commentators.

It is found in Luke and it is immediately obvious why it would be found there and not in the other Gospels. It is generally acknowledged that Luke is unique in its presentation of the Gospel story from the point of view of the women in Jesus' life.<sup>121</sup> In the early chapters, we have, of course, the accounts of the birth of John the Baptist and the story of Mary and Elizabeth's relationship which could have only come from a feminine source. We have the Christmas narrative which is much more detailed than the other Gospels. Even aside from the stories, feminine personalities figure prominently.

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<sup>121</sup> E.g. *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 3, p. 183 and Phillip Schaff: *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 1, p. 662 – “It is the Gospel for women.”

In Luke chapter seven, we have the story of the sinful woman and the first footwashing, presumably by Mary Magdalene. Other texts mention the women in Jesus life and provide more detail.<sup>122</sup>

At the Crucifixion, the women are mentioned again as present, but we have another detail of striking importance. In 23:48-49 it reads,

*And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned. And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.*

The word "acquaintance" is a curious word. As it is translated, we are led to assume that the word is referring to "his acquaintances", a generic term to describe the people that knew Him, but not too well. However, the usual word for "acquaintances" as we understand it in modern English is found only in the Hebrew Old Testament.<sup>123</sup> It does not appear in the New Testament.

The Greek word in this text is a variant of *gnostos*, "known" (#1110), from *ginosko* "to know" (#1097) which means the **opposite** of someone who is only a

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<sup>122</sup>E.g. Martha, Anna the Prophetess, the widow of Nain and so on.

<sup>123</sup>*Makkar*, #4378, which means a casual acquaintance

casual acquaintance. *Gnostos* appears in only one other place, and that is also in Luke. It, too, is translated "acquaintance" (2:44). In that text Mary and Joseph are looking for the missing Jesus who, as we know, was left behind at the Temple. They searched for him among their *acquaintance* and kinsfolk. Notice that "acquaintance" is used in distinction from "kinsfolk." So, an acquaintance is not the same as kinsfolk. What is awkward about *gnostos* is its plural usage in these two references: *gnostoi* (its gender is inclusive of male and female). It is not translated in the plural because that is the Greek word *gnostes* - a "knower" (#1109 - an expert or specialist). So we cannot translate the text in 23:49 as "knowers"; for that would mean "all of his experts." We are forced to look at *gnostoi* as a *class or group* of individuals that *He* knew well. And it is the group that we know "He" knew well because of the possessive pronoun in the text.<sup>124</sup>

These people are not casual acquaintances and they are not relatives. So, who else might they be? They cannot be the disciples; for the Gospels claim they all fled (Matthew 26:56). Could they be friends? Possibly, but they must be a special class of friends

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<sup>124</sup> References can be found in Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew & English Lexicon, Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, The Expositor's Greek New Testament and other standard sources.

because the usual Greek word for friend is *philos* (#5384). The Old Testament equivalent of *gnostoi* is *yada* (#3045)<sup>125</sup> and is translated in this form by the Greek Septuagint in each of these texts: Psalm 30 (31):12 (11); 87 (88):9, 19; and Nehemiah 5:10. In Psalm 31:11 the *gnostos* is distinguished from "neighbor"; so we can rule out that class of friends. In Nehemiah we find the term is translated as "servants" in the Authorized Version and it is distinguished from "brethren" in the sense of a man's fellow countrymen.

Psalm 88:18 provides more distinctions:

*Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and  
mine acquaintance into darkness.*

Here, "lover" should not be understood as a sexual lover in the modern sense of the word. It is the same term used to describe King Hiram's love for David in 1 Kings 5:1. Perhaps "admirer" would be a better translation. A modern equivalent would be the "fan of a celebrity." "Gnostoi" refers to more than the follower of a famous person.

We have eliminated most classes of people in the above process of word comparison: casual

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<sup>125</sup> Meaning "to know". Not to be confused with *yadah*, a derivative of *yad* (#3028) with a different ending meaning "to use" (with the hand).

acquaintances, relatives, disciples, neighbors, fellow citizens, and fans or admirers. There isn't much that remains to provide definition to this term.

If we return to the etymology of the word, perhaps we can find a better clue. We noted above that the Hebrew equivalent of *ginosko* is *yada*. *Yada* has wide applications. Its verb form means "to know" and is used to describe carnal knowledge, as in the case of Genesis 4:1, where "Adam *knew* Eve his wife; and she conceived. . ." <sup>126</sup> So with this etymology, it is possible to interpret "acquaintance" as one with whom one has shared carnal knowledge. Indeed, such a view is supported in *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon* which defines "gnostoi" as "acquaintance, intimates" as used in these texts in Luke. <sup>127</sup>

With this evidence, I think we can say in confidence that "acquaintance" in both Lukean texts refers to a class of intimates who are familiar enough to be trusted with small children. Joseph and Mary assumed that the boy Jesus might have been playing with the children of this group. If we were to divide the royal harem into separate classes of wives, concubines, and virgins with their eunuch assistants, it makes more sense to suppose that the pubescent Jesus would have found children of his own age

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<sup>126</sup> It is also used in Genesis 19:5 of homosexual encounters.

<sup>127</sup> p. 120

among them. Considering that it was not unusual for Jewish girls to be betrothed by nine years of age, the virgins of the royal harem would have been approximately the same age as Jesus.

At His Crucifixion, it is logical to expect, that if this group existed, it would have been present. Just a week earlier, Jesus had entered triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem as the coming Messiah. We would expect that the Davidic harem would have accompanied Him on this journey in anticipation of His enthronement.

In contradiction, it could be argued that the *gnostoi* are distinguished from the women at the Crucifixion scene, and thus, did not include them. That is possible, but that does not defeat the argument that this text is identifying the presence of the Lord's harem. *Gnostoi* may simply refer to the eunuchs of the harem or to both the eunuchs and the virgins which had not yet reached marriageable age. Or it might include concubines in the classification. As noted earlier, wives (or “the women”) had a separate status from the *shiphchah* and the *pilegesh*. Sometimes, a Biblical figure can be mistaken for a monogamist because the text mentions only one wife; yet we find that he may have had concubines.



If it is argued that *gnostoi* does not refer to the Messianic harem, we must explain, somehow, why the term refers to intimates with a thinly-veiled sexual connotation. The word "harem" seems to fit better than any other, although it is obvious that translators have rejected it because of theological prejudices against the notion of a married Jesus.

### ▪ **The Footwasher as Concubine**

The ancient custom of footwashing is not a subject that has drawn very much attention from scholars. This was the complaint of John Christopher Thomas, as the author of perhaps the only current reference available dedicated to this topic. Although his sources are significant in what they say, there just isn't much out there. The Church has neglected footwashing as one of doctrinal or liturgical interest.

Many people are vaguely aware of the importance of footwashing in the ancient world. It is usually thought to be associated with hospitality and good hygiene. Daily travel was on foot in those times and few roads or streets were clean. Most of them were dusty and contaminated with the filth of dung, garbage, rodents, and any other defilement one could imagine. Footwear usually consisted merely of sandals; the poor wore nothing. Given these realities, the importance of footwashing can be better

appreciated, both in its role of enhancing cleanliness and health, and also in its benefits of imparting comfort and refreshment.

Footwashing could be an ugly and nasty job. The poor washed their own feet; servants washed the feet of their masters. It was a task which uniquely identified the status of the individual to distinguish the servant from the master.

That was one reason why Jesus incorporated this custom and raised it to a sacramental level within Christian liturgy. His mission was to teach forgiveness and humility. What better way to do so than to make it a part of the communal meal?<sup>128</sup>

Among the ancients, footwashing was used in a ritual sense also, not as a part of pagan worship, but rather as a domestic - and sometimes civil - affirmation of subjugation and inferiority. The footwasher, by kneeling to perform this humbling task, acknowledged the superiority of the person being washed, either in the case of a slave to his master or of the conquered to his conqueror. The washer was below the feet of the washed, a fact which calls to mind the allusion of John the Baptist to his

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<sup>128</sup> James Stivers: *The Ordinance of Footwashing: The Kingdom Come* (2003). This rite teaches meekness to rulers, which is necessary to the right of dominion.

unworthiness to be the Lord's footwasher, let alone His baptizer (Mark 1:7).

Wives washed the feet of their husbands and maidservants the feet of their masters. This fact added an erotic element to the task. Since men wore tunics as undergarments and not trousers, the man's genitals were clearly visible to the woman - and easily accessible. In private quarters, servant girls were usually topless or naked. There is a fair amount of Roman and Greek commentary on the sexual pleasures associated with this service.<sup>129</sup>

So closely tied were feet to the idea of sexuality that the Old Testament uses "feet" as a euphemism for the genital area. "To cover one's feet" meant to use the latrine. "To uncover one's feet" meant to expose the genitals or to engage in sexual relations. Thus, Ruth's nocturnal approach of the intoxicated Boaz (at the behest of Naomi her mother-in-law) in which she "uncovered his feet" - it simply meant she seduced him (Ruth 3:7).

Women who were possessive of their husbands jealously guarded their right to wash their feet. The Jewish tradition of Aseneth's courtship of Joseph illustrates this ancient attitude:

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<sup>129</sup> John Christopher Thomas: *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community* (JSOT Press, Sheffield, England, 1993) p. 42-56

*And Aseneth said to Joseph, "Come, my Lord, and enter our house, because I have prepared our house and made a great dinner." And she grasped his right hand and led him into her house and seated him on Pentephres' her father's throne. And she brought water to wash his feet. And Joseph said, "Let one of the virgins come and wash my feet". And Aseneth said to him, "No my Lord, because you are my lord from now on, and I (am) your maidservant. And why do you say this (that) another virgin (is) to wash your feet? For your feet are my feet, and your hands are my hands, and your soul my soul, and your feet another (woman) will never wash". And she urged him and washed his feet. And Joseph looked at her hands, and they were like hands of life, and her fingers fine like (the) fingers of a fast writing scribe. And after this Joseph grasped her right hand and kissed it and Aseneth kissed his head and sat at his right (hand). (Emphasis added)<sup>130</sup>*

In sending away the servant girls, Aseneth laid claim to her rights of betrothal. More than a mere act of hospitality, Aseneth's prayer for Joseph's safety identified footwashing as part of her spousal role:

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<sup>130</sup> "Joseph and Aseneth" §20: The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Vol. 2, p. 234

*Lord, I commit him to you because I love him beyond my (own) soul. Preserve him in the wisdom of your grace. And you, Lord, commit me to him for a maidservant and slave. And I will make his bed and wash his feet and wait for him and be a slave for him and serve him forever (and) ever.<sup>131</sup>*

Another example is found in the Scriptures in the account of Abigail's encounter with the then fugitive David:

*Here is your maidservant, ready to serve you and wash the feet of my master's servants.*

- 1 Samuel 25

The story tells us that Abigail has just been widowed and offers herself to David now as his *shiphchah*. Notice that the washing of feet is the distinguishing feature of this relationship. Impressed by her humility and presence of mind, David exalts her above his servants to become his own concubine (v. 42-43).<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, p. 224

<sup>132</sup> This is an allusion to the ancient custom “that the female slave was used promiscuously in her master’s household” (*Interpreter’s Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 4, p. 386a). See also Job 31:10.

In the light of this background, one wonders what kind of footwashing Paul was alluding to in his first Epistle to Timothy. There, it is listed as one of the criteria for admittance to the Church's Order of Widows: she was to have previously qualified herself as a deaconess and a footwasher of the "saints' feet." Was he merely referring to the religious rite instituted by Jesus? Or did he have the qualifying feature in mind of the maidservant? And to what extent did the erotic element come into play?

In the case of Mary Magdalene we have, perhaps, the most direct evidence of a marital relationship with Jesus. She was His personal attendant who washed His feet. Her first encounter was that of the sinful woman in Luke 7, in which she washed His feet with her tears and dried his feet with her hair.<sup>133</sup>

Thereafter, she followed Him everywhere, according to the Gospel record, and *ministered* unto Him (Luke 8:1-2). As the Mary of Bethany, she may have used her footwashings as an excuse to sit at His feet and to listen to His teachings. With all of His traveling, He certainly needed to wash His feet at the

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<sup>133</sup> *The Magdalene Gospel* (see Bibliography) emphasizes the erotic elements of her kissing and touching Jesus in a manner which made His host feel uncomfortable. A woman's hair is her glory (1 Corinthians 11:15). She was wrapping her hair around His feet - symbolically wrapping her glory around His genitals (his glory). Her penitence and humility were mingled with seduction, comparable to that of Abigail's.

end of every day. There is no reason to believe that Mary washed His feet only once or twice in the course of their travels together. It was, as the term "ministered" suggests, one of the routine tasks of daily life. The two footwashings recorded in the Gospels were noted because one was the first (as the penitent sinner) and the other was the last (the one with the costly perfume). As David accepted Abigail as his footwasher/concubine, so Jesus accepted the penitent Magdalene.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, there is a striking similarity between the spikenard anointing in the Song of Solomon (1:12) and the anointing in John 12. If, as the Fathers tell us, we must take the Song as Messianic typology, then it is reasonable to conclude that the Bethany anointing was the anti-type to this one. Mary became the Shulamite, just as Jesus became the greater Solomon. Within this pericope, there was only one outcome for this ritual anointing to fulfill the prophecy, and that was the sexual consummation described in v. 13:

*He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.*

If Christ never had sexual relations with Mary Magdalene, it was imperative that He did that night - the night of His espousals:

*Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold  
King Solomon with the crown wherewith his  
mother crowned him in the day of his espousals,  
and in the day of the gladness of his heart.*

- Song of Solomon 3:11

That night, Mary the Footwasher became Mary the Magdalene, the heir-apparent as Queen of the Messianic harem, pending a successful pregnancy.

▪ **The Widows in Acts 6**

The presence of the women disciples in the early chapters of Acts raises some problems for the traditional view. Whatever harem Jesus might have had as the royal head of the house of David - it would have been passed-on to an appropriate successor. During the months following His Ascension, His physical absence would have rendered the women of the harem as widows, even though He was still alive.<sup>134</sup> His death ended, legally, the marital relationship (Romans 7:1-3), as it did the maternal relationship (John 19:26-27). Like any other ancient harem, these women would have continued as a group, not as individuals, awaiting clear direction concerning their status.

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<sup>134</sup> **Note 2 Samuel 20:3 which defines a woman deprived of sexual relations with her husband as a woman in widowhood.**



It is noteworthy that the Virgin Mary, as the King's Mother, would have been the leading member of the harem - as was usually the case for royal harems of that time. Considering that fact, the account in John's Gospel of the mysterious "beloved disciple" becomes uniquely significant to this question. In that story, Mary is given to the care of this unnamed disciple who takes her "unto his own" in solemn obedience. Whoever is charged with the care of the King's mother assumes the care of the harem. In a later chapter we will discuss the identity of this disciple. For if we can identify him, then we can ascertain what became of the Messianic harem.

It is enough, for now, to ponder the significance of the account concerning the widows in Acts chapter six:

*And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.*

*Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.*

*Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.*

- v. 1-3

Of course, Luke's interest as the author of this account was to introduce Stephen, who was appointed as one of these seven deacons. It was Stephen - the great preacher and miracle-worker (one wonders if he had any time to do his job) - who became the first Christian martyr. It is in the setting of Stephen's martyrdom that Saul of Tarsus is introduced, who in turn becomes Paul. Paul is the real star of the book of Acts, a book which can never be looked upon as really the Acts of the Apostles (only Peter, John, and James are given more than honorable mention).

Another deacon, Philip, is mentioned. But he is quickly absent from his appointed task, as well, and is busy preaching elsewhere.

Nicolaus (Nicanor in the Authorized Version) was another of these seven deacons. Described in the text as a proselyte of Antioch, he was probably chosen to represent the interests of the Grecian widows. Church Tradition alleges that a later heretical sect

arose in his name which practiced various kinds of unlawful intercourse.<sup>135</sup> This group was known as the Nicolaitanes, and was alleged to be the same as the one condemned in Revelation 2:6, 15. Their evil doctrine is compared to that of Balaam who taught Israel to eat meat offered to idols and to commit fornication (i.e. miscegenation, v. 14). Both of these things were items forbidden by James in the ruling of Acts 15. Apparently, these Nicolaitanes, operating in western Asia Minor, were in direct revolt against the Jerusalem Church.

Eusebius absolves Nicolaus of responsibility for this sect and cites Clement's explanation of the incident which appears to be its point of origin:

*Having a beautiful wife, and being reproached after the ascension of our Lord, with jealousy by the apostles, he conducted her into the midst of them, and permitted any one that wished to marry her. This they say was perfectly consistent with that expression of his, "that every one ought to abuse his own flesh." And thus those that adopted his heresy, following both this example and expression literally, rush headlong into fornication without shame. I have*

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<sup>135</sup> Irenaeus: *Against Heresies* §26:3 – "They lead lives of unrestrained indulgence." He believed Nicolaus was responsible for this cult; although the Fathers seem to be divided on this question.

*ascertained, however, that Nicolaus lived with no other woman than the one to whom he was married, but that his daughters continued in the state of virginity to advanced life; that his son also remained uncorrupt.*<sup>136</sup>

One wonders what this episode was really all about. It obviously had something to do with distributing to the needs of these "widows." That was his job. Perhaps these seven men were chosen because they could be trusted not to become sexually involved with these women. Usually, the only men of that era who could be trusted with groups of women – that is, harems – were eunuchs.

It was not unusual for eunuchs to have wives of their own, depending upon their sexual capacity. Some eunuchs were also characterized as petty and given to emotional instability.<sup>137</sup> It would certainly explain the melodrama of the above story. Can you imagine the scene? Here is a man who parades his wife before the Apostles and offers her to anyone who wants her. We are told that Nicolaus had children, but as was noted in an earlier section, eunuchs sometimes had the capacity to reproduce, only with great difficulty. In an age when real men might have a dozen or more children, a man who had two or

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<sup>136</sup> Eusebius: *Ecclesiastical History* §39

<sup>137</sup> Alev Lytle Croutier, *op cit.*

three would have been considered in a lower class. If Nicolaus' jealousy was true, it would have grown from some sense of insecurity. We cannot imagine that the Church consisted of men – including the Apostles – who were coveting other men's wives. Lacking that kind of social pressure, it is reasonable to assume that he was deficient in some unmanly sort of way.

Also, Nicolaus was said to have been from Antioch. If he was from the Antioch of Edessa – the Parthian kingdom which was in communication with Jesus and the Apostles – he could have been a former eunuch of King Abgarus' harem.<sup>138</sup>

Whether Nicolaus was a eunuch or not and whether he founded a sex cult or not does not decide the question as to who these widows were in Acts 6. But it certainly suggests that this group of women were being treated like someone's harem.

There was a complaint that the Grecian Jews were being neglected. It was an issue that required the attention of the most spiritual men among the disciples. Yet as soon as they were appointed, either the problem went away, or else larger issues

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<sup>138</sup> Robert Eisenman: *James, the Brother of Jesus* (Viking, 1996). Eisenman presents a convincing case that the real Antioch of the book of Acts is the Edessian Antioch.

appeared (i.e. the first organized persecution of the Church which required flight out of Jerusalem).

How many widows there might have been at this point is difficult to gauge. We might be able to approximate the number by working probabilities from the number of believers recorded in Acts. On the day of Pentecost, there were three thousand added to the baptismal roles (2:41). A short period afterward - perhaps only months - a miracle at the Temple resulted in the conversion of another five thousand (4:4). Now at about eight thousand, we lose count. 5:14 simply tells us that "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes of men and women." By the time we get to Acts 6, we know there are a lot more believers, but we don't know how many. It is reasonable to believe that the number stood at tens of thousands, but probably not more than forty or fifty thousand, as that would have involved a saturation of the city's population.<sup>139</sup> If the whole city were Christian, it hardly seems possible

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<sup>139</sup>William Smith: *Smith's Bible Dictionary* (Fleming Revell, 1975), p. 284 sets the city's population at 60,000 or 70,000 based upon the extent of the city's walls, encompassing 2,250,000 yards. Josephus and Tacitus claim the population at its siege was much higher (about 600,000), but that can be explained by the population of the countryside fleeing to its protection.

that the Sanhedrin would have continued to function as the governing body for the Jews.<sup>140</sup>

At this critical stage, we have disciples selling their properties within the city to pay for the mission. If the city was saturated with Christians, who were they selling the property to? It is assumed that the widows were supported from this common treasury. But where did these women come from? Whose widows were they? It was a time of peace, so there were no war widows. The first persecution of the Church was yet to come. Did they belong to the indigent? Was the Church running a soup kitchen for the down-and-out, or did these women represent a different class of believer not immediately obvious? How many were there?

If we allow a percentage of ten per hundred and a Church of fifty thousand, we have five thousand widows. Can seven men handle the needs of this many women? Not likely. We know that at least two of the deacons were busy preaching. Either the number of widows was much lower than this, or this text is referring to a special class of widow.

If the standard enunciated by Paul in 1 Timothy 5:2-11 was the tradition received from his mentors in

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<sup>140</sup> However, it does seem that it was a body in crisis which required importing outsiders, such as Saul of Tarsus, to rid the city of Jesus' followers.

the Jerusalem Church, then any widow under sixty and all widows with kinsmen were forbidden membership on the roll of Church-supported widows. Paul required that younger widows remarry and restricted support to women who were "widows indeed". This would narrow the number considerably. In a culture where everyone had a kinsman, it hardly seems likely that anyone would have qualified, certainly not enough to justify the attention of seven men. Now, we have a reversal of the scenario and an explanation as to why two of the deacons could preach in addition to serving these widows. However, Paul's standard would have excluded the Lord's mother, as well, as she would have been about fifty. And she would have had kinsmen: such as James, the bishop of the Jerusalem Church. These widows in Acts 6 were women who had an *entitlement* to support from the Church. The Grecians were complaining that *their* widows were being neglected. According to St. Paul's standard, a widow who was truly destitute and without kinsmen would have had no advocate to complain on her behalf. Yet, these widows have parties who act in the role of kinsmen to plead their cause. It bears little resemblance to the order of widows envisioned by Paul.



If Mary herself was excluded from this body, it would have seemed highly incongruous, if not impious. It is unthinkable to suppose that anyone was more worthy than she to receive support from the Church. If these Grecian widows were entitled to support, surely Mary was and any remaining members of the Messianic harem. In fact, it might be argued that this text is a direct reference to the Messianic harem; for it is an order with different standards than the one set forth by Paul. The widows of Paul's churches received support as an act of grace and mercy. The widows of Acts 6 were receiving support as if it was a legal right, as if they were the beneficiaries of a deceased husband.

If these widows were members of the Messianic harem - of which Jesus was the guardian and lord - then their actions were logically consistent with their status. Considering that Jesus had a following from Galilee, the Decapolis (a contiguous area of Gentile cities), Samaria, and Judea, it is reasonable to suppose that the royal harem - the Lord's *mishpachah* - consisted of both Hebrew and "Grecian" Jews. This dispute may have been caused by the inability of the Apostles to maintain an unbiased ministry toward these women. Considering Peter's later difficulties with Gentile converts (and as the Apostle to the Jews and not to the Gentiles), it is

not a stretch to suppose that the proselyte members of the Messianic harem were treated with less deference.<sup>141</sup> He did make light of the task, calling it “serving tables”, in distinction from the higher calling as custodian of the “Word of God” and the life of prayer.

Some might argue that the Messianic harem, if it ever existed, would have ended at the Crucifixion. The widows added to the Church later would not have been, properly speaking, the widows of Christ, since they would never have been married to Him in the first place.

This is a curious and complex issue because everywhere, it seems, in the Patristic writings, the Fathers speak of widows - and virgins who are called widows - as being espoused to Christ. Later leaders supposed this was all allegory, but as is the case with all allegories, there is a real relationship from which the metaphor is drawn. In this case, I would argue that the Messianic harem became the "Order of

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<sup>141</sup> Prior to this incident, the Church experienced success and miraculous protection from all of its enemies. Afterwards, the situation deteriorated until the disciples were forced to flee Jerusalem. The author of Acts puts a positive light on the reversal, declaring that the disciples “went everywhere preaching the Word.” But one wonders what would have happened had the Church continued in its success. Did the leadership fail in its primary mission by marginalizing these women? Had the whole city become Christian, would Christ have returned to a Christian Jerusalem in their generation?

Widows" which, after Pentecost, admitted new members, pending the soon return of the Messiah. They would be available to resume their role in the Solomonic tradition. The "beloved disciple", along with the Apostles and then later the seven deacons, served as eunuchs and "friends" of the bridegroom in guarding the Messianic bed. Since Jesus was still alive, there was no successor - or so it seems. Perhaps these women were widows in a legal sense, but as women of faith, they appear to have been waiting for the imminent return of their husband. As the years went by and there was no return, the vision began to fade. It was spiritualized and then transformed into the ecclesiastical institution which exists today.

There is more evidence which takes this speculation from the realm of plausibility and into the realm of probability. In Acts 1 immediately after the Ascension, we have a classification of the disciples which follows this same incongruous path:

*And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.*

*These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

- v. 13-14

Here, we have three classifications of the disciples: first, we have the eleven, second, the women with Mary, and then third, the Lord's brethren. From these three classes, we have a body "the number of names together about a hundred and twenty" (v. 15). Let's do the math.

We know that Jesus had four brothers identified in the Gospels: James, Simeon, Judas, and Joses. If we add four to the eleven, we get fifteen men. The rest would be women, about 105. Even if we allow for the possibility that some of these women were the wives of the Apostles and the Lord's brethren, we still have a vast number of women: as many as eighty or ninety. These women would have constituted the first order of widows. They would have been the women entitled to support from the common treasury.

It might be argued that this text should be interpreted loosely as to identify those in attendance of special interest to the reader. There might be some merit to that argument; we do have to account from what body the candidates for Judas' replacement -

Matthias and Joseph Barsabbas - originated. Church tradition says these men came from among the seventy (Luke 10:1). We could say that some of the seventy were there. If they all were there with their wives, it would have been over a hundred and forty - allowing for monogamous relationships - beyond the hundred and twenty in verse 15. So, it is unlikely they all were there.

But why would not Luke single out the seventy as a separate classification? He is the only Gospel writer who introduces them. He is presumed to be the author of Acts, as well.

Since the text does not say that the seventy, as a class, were there, then their presence was not sufficient to justify any mention. Certainly, several of them may have been there, but not enough of them to say they were there as a distinct body.

Peter's speech in vss. 16-22 was addressed to "men and brethren" who are "numbered with *us*." He is addressing his fellow apostles. This was not a democratic assembly. He was addressing his colleagues concerning the need to fill a vacancy in their body. "Wherefore of *these* men [very likely pointing to them] which have companied with us *all the time* that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" - it narrows the field considerably. It is not

known whether the seventy would have fit this criterion, but these two men did. Anyone who would have been a eunuch in the royal harem would have, also.

In saying that these men may have been of the Lord's "acquaintance" - that is, eunuchs of the Messianic harem - seems to be a more natural extension of the three classifications which are offered. Eunuchs were usually identified with the women as attendants and guards.

Recall that this meeting occurred in "the upper room" of an obviously large house belonging to a member of the aristocracy. It did not occur in the temple, where eunuchs were not allowed.

Even if the size of this group of women cannot be ascertained with any accuracy to the satisfaction of the skeptical reader, it must be admitted that they were a class of their own, without covenantal dependency upon the Apostles or the Lord's brethren. The text does not say the "apostles and *their* women." It simply describes them as "*the* women."<sup>142</sup> As widows, they would have had the authority to negotiate for a kinsman-redeemer,

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<sup>142</sup> The irregularity of the Greek here has been noted by the commentators in the *Expositor's Greek New Testament*, citing Lightfoot.

probably through the person of Mary the mother of Jesus who is identified with them by name.<sup>143</sup>

## **The Historical Case**

### **Suggestive Texts**

There are a significant number of texts, both in the Scriptures and in the Patristic writings, which refer to a married Messiah and messianic offspring. They are obscure and usually appear without commentary. For that reason, they do not draw attention, and interpreters usually ignore them or write them off as allegory.

If the reader suspends his prejudices briefly, and pretends to be a heathen completely ignorant of Christian theology, the discovery of these texts would likely assume a more natural and literal interpretation. For instance, in Hebrews 3:13 in

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<sup>143</sup> Numbers 30:9 – The ability to vow is the same as the ability to covenant. It is the essence of headship. In this text, widows and divorced women can enter binding agreements without permission from a covenantal head. Consider this scenario in the light of the story of Ruth. In that situation we have two widows binding themselves together in a covenantal pact and negotiating with Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer.

reference to the Messiah, the writer quotes Isaiah 8:18 which reads, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." The heathen reader might suppose that the Messiah has children, but the enlightened theologian will tell him "no, these children are Abraham's descendants who are given to the Messiah through adoption" (v. 14).

Earlier in the chapter, Psalm 132:17 was cited to establish a phallic interpretation of the word "horn":

*There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.*

But notice that this is a Messianic prophecy that has been covered-up in the translation. The word "anointed" is #4899 or "Messiah." This text ought to read "I have ordained a lamp for my Messiah." Recall that George Lamsa, the Aramaic scholar, provided commentary to the effect that this text uses "lamp" as a metaphor for "heir." This Messianic prophecy declares that the true Messiah must have an heir.

Are we compelled by any rule of hermeneutics to interpret these texts figuratively? Just because there are adopted sons, does that fact preclude the existence of natural sons? The Apostle Paul spends three chapters in the Epistle of Romans (9-11)



arguing the case for racial Israel in God's plan for the Church. He rejects the notion that racial Israel has been abandoned by God and that all of the prophecies respecting Israel have been allegorized and absorbed into a spiritual fulfillment in the Church. If Paul believed in ethnic Israel as nothing contrary to his doctrines of grace and justification by faith, why should we be bothered by the notion that the Christian brother worshipping beside us may be a physical descendant of Jesus Christ?

Clement of Alexandria records words from the lips of Jesus which are not preserved in our Bibles. He quotes Jesus as saying, "My mystery is to me and to the sons of my house."<sup>144</sup> How are we to interpret this remark? Must we assume He is referring to His disciples as his sons? We have no other parallels in the Gospels which would lead us to believe that Jesus regarded His disciples as a substitute for sons. Twice, He refers to them as children (John 13:33; 21:5) and often as children of their Father in heaven, but none which allude to them as being His own offspring.

Yet, here is Clement, the preeminent spokesman for Christianity in his day, speaking about the children of Jesus. Where did he get this passage of Scripture? Could it have come from "the Gospel

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<sup>144</sup>*ANF* vol. 2, p 459. It begins: "For it is not in the way of envy that the Lord announced in the Gospel. . ."

according to the Hebrews" which we referenced in earlier chapters? What else might this Gospel have said?

Clement, of course, has told us in another place that Jesus was not married.<sup>145</sup> So, obviously, his view of this Scripture is symbolic. He did not believe - or at least he *said* he did not believe - that Jesus could have had physical offspring. But then again, the Alexandrian school was notorious for its allegorical interpretation of Scripture.<sup>146</sup> Does that mean this passage must be allegorical also?

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<sup>145</sup> *Stromateis Book III, §49*: "There are those who say openly that marriage is fornication. . . They are arrogant and claim to be emulating the Lord who did not marry . . . Next, they do not know the reason why the Lord did not marry. In the first place, he had his own bride, the Church. Secondly, he was not a common man to need a physical partner. Further, he did not have an obligation to produce children; he was born God's only Son and survives eternally." Each of these arguments has been countered by previous discussions. Clement fails to cite any writings, tradition, or other source which states that Jesus, as a historical fact, was unmarried. Each of these arguments is theological in nature. What is significant is that Clement opposed the idea that it would have been a sin for Jesus to have married.

<sup>146</sup> Origen was the prince among the allegorizers. But Clement, his predecessor, indulged in the hermeneutic, as well (see Schaff's: *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 2, §185). And there is evidence that Clement was willing to lie to conceal the mysteries of the Church. See Morton Smith: *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harvard University Press, 1973), in which he is quoted in a lost letter to a Palestinian monk, "To them [the heretics] . . . one must never give way; nor, when they put forward their falsifications, should one concede that the secret Gospel is by Mark, but should even deny it on oath." It should be noted that the authenticity of this letter has not yet been resolved.

Early in the chapter, we referenced the writings of Tertullian concerning the phallic Christ as the unicorn of prophecy. Isaiah's prophecy about the suffering Messiah was quoted extensively by the Early Church to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah. Yet, this very prophecy assures us that this sacrifice would "see His seed" (53:10). We have no instances elsewhere in the Bible in which a man's seed is used metaphorically. Yes, "seed", such as the seed of plants, is used metaphorically (as in the Parable of the Sower), and we have rhetorical statements about a man's seed which can be taken with poetic license (as in John the Baptist's challenge to the Pharisees that God could raise up seed unto Abraham from the stones of the earth), but we have no case in which "seed" as semen refers to something else other than offspring.<sup>147</sup> "Seed" always has a covenantal status in the Scriptures.

Yet, Clement, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian - all dismiss the notion that Jesus was married? Why would they tease us with such powerful imagery and then deny it?<sup>148</sup> Is it possible that they did not really

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<sup>147</sup>God covenants, blesses, and punishes "seed" (1 Kings 2:33; 11:39; Psalm 37:26-28; Jeremiah 22:30; 36:31. Seed can glorify God (Psalm 22:23), fear God (Psalm 22:23), serve God (22:30), inherit the earth (25:13) and so on. Seed have a heart (Deuteronomy 30:6). The term *seed* is distinguished from "children" or infants (*zera*: seed; *taph*: children; *olah*: babe).

<sup>148</sup> If they were right and these children are supposed to be understood as spiritual only and not physical children, we must

know the heritage of Christianity and the particulars of Jesus' personal life? Or were they hiding a secret?

There is no doubt that the Early Church had a secret tradition which only screened initiates were allowed to know. Tertullian in his *Apology* says, "None are admitted to the religious Mysteries without an oath of secrecy."<sup>149</sup> Statements about a secret oral tradition can be found in Clement's writings, Origen's, Basil's, and others.<sup>150</sup> Why did the orthodox leaders deny the Gnostics' claim that there was a secret tradition and then turn around and admit one? What were they trying to hide?

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ponder this incongruity with the whole witness of the Old Testament. The case of Abraham and his servant Eliezer is an example. Abraham offered him to Yahweh as his heir, but God rejected the proposition of adoption and insisted upon literal descent in the Messianic line (Genesis 15:1-5). Why would the Almighty spend thousands of years developing this Covenant line, only to abandon it?

<sup>149</sup> *Apology* §7, Tertullian's remarks were made to deny that Christianity was a secret society. He chose his words carefully and some translations are not so obvious.

<sup>150</sup> Clement: *Stromateis I*, §13 – "The secrets, like God himself, are entrusted not to writing but to the expressed word." Origen: *Against Celsus* §7 – "To speak of the Christian doctrine as a secret system is altogether absurd. But that there should be certain doctrines, not made known to the multitude, which are (revealed) after the exoteric ones have been taught, is not a peculiarity of Christianity alone . . . so that it is in vain that he endeavors to calumniate the secret doctrines of Christianity . . ." St. Basil: *On the Spirit* §27 "We receive the dogmas transmitted to us by writing, and those which have descended to us from the Apostles, beneath the mystery of oral tradition: for several things have been handed to us without writing, lest the vulgar, too familiar with our dogmas, should lose a due respect for them." These quotes are only a sampling.

Hippolytus is another example of orthodox fumbling on this issue. In his commentary on the Song of Solomon (which is not available in English), he makes the allegory a real representation of a marriage between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, which he uses as a symbol for the union between the Church and the Divine Logos. But in a confusing turn, he makes Mary a composite figure for both Mary and Martha of Bethany. Thus, making Christ a bigamist!<sup>151</sup> And the Fathers don't blink an eye, but enthusiastically pick-up on the analogy and propagate it for centuries. How could they do that? It's because, for them, it was all symbolism. It wasn't real.

Another early reference provides more tantalizing evidence,

*For these reasons, we assert that the ministry of female deacons is especially required and urgent. For our Lord and Savior was himself served by deaconesses, such as Mary Magdalene . . . along with still other women.*

*- Didascalia of the Apostles<sup>152</sup>*

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<sup>151</sup> Susan Haskins: *Mary Magdalene: Myth and Metaphor*, op cit. See p. 60-64 for a direct translation of the pertinent passages.

<sup>152</sup> Aime Martimort: *Deaconesses, An Historical Study* (Ignatius Press, 1986), p. 38.

When we consider that the Greek word for deacon is a general term for the common slave, the above record presents interesting possibilities. Before the Church became institutionalized, the leaders or elders of the Church gathered their worshipping groups into their homes. The household servants served as deacons and deaconesses. We have the same family structure in this scenario as we do in Exodus 21 with menservants and maidservants. If we do not look at this historical record through the lenses of the later Catholic custom of nuns and nunneries, but through the perspective of Jewish culture rooted in the Mosaic Law, we would have to say these "deaconesses" who served Jesus were the members of His *mishpachah*, His harem.

A later father, Methodius, uses the polygamy of Solomon's Court as a Biblical type for Christ and the Church.<sup>153</sup> He is representative of how the orthodox handled this issue.

### **Creedal Hermeneutics**

We must never forget that the Early Fathers were increasingly compromised by the Mahuzzim heresy as time went on. At first, sex was okay within

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<sup>153</sup> Methodius: "Banquet of the Ten Virgins", *ANF*, Vol. 6

marriage; later, it was banned to the clergy. The leaven leavened the whole lump.

Because of that compromise, their Canons contradicted their own Creeds. You will recall that the Docetist heresy denied the genuinely human nature of Jesus. The Creeds condemned Docetism while the Canons (the ecclesiastical rulings) embraced it.

St. Basil, considered a leading champion and exegete during the post-Nicene era, offers two astonishing admissions, which indicate that the tradition of the New Testament Church was very different from the one which he and his colleagues elected to pass-down to us. In the “Canons of Basil”, which, for the most part, any Christian would have sympathy; there are two canons in which he admits innovation.

The first is the 13<sup>th</sup> Canon:

*Our fathers did not think that killing in war was murder; yet I think it is advisable for such as have been guilty of it to forbear communion three years.*

Again, in the 80<sup>th</sup> Canon:

*The Fathers say nothing of polygamy as being beastly, and a thing unagreeable to human nature. To us it appears a greater sin than fornication .*

Naturally, who the “Fathers” are in these canons becomes all important. They were obviously from an earlier time. The 1<sup>st</sup> Canon tells us that “the Fathers” are the bishops. Presumably, Basil is now a father because he has become a bishop. To the fathers of what time period is he referring?

In this same Canon, he refers to “the ancients,” namely Cyprian and Fermilian. This takes us to the pre-Nicene Church. But there the clues seem to stop. To pick up the trail again, it might be better to ask, “Was there ever a time in the Early Church when polygamy and warfare were accepted as ethical?” If we can ascertain such a time, then we can identify “the Fathers” Basil is referring to in these canons.

Unfortunately, we have no standard records of any period in Church history when these customs were embraced. Almost to a man, the pre-Nicene fathers opposed Christians serving in the army and practicing polygamy. We must look farther back, prior to the Bar Kochba rebellion when the Church was predominately Jewish and Parthian, before we can find scanty references to these customs.



It has been noted that the Bar Kochba leadership may have involved some members of the Desposyni, since the pre-Nicene Fathers refer to a “Bar Kochba persecution” of Gentile Christians who refused to participate in the insurrection. This suggests that the leaders of the revolt believed they had the moral authority to conscript support from the Christian churches. A merely Jewish sect would not have expected support from the followers of Jesus unless the revolt was in some sense an alliance.

The polygamy of the Parthian kingdoms is well known to ancient historians.<sup>154</sup> We know from the book of Acts that Parthians were present on the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter two, and that many of them became Christians at that time. There is an entire tradition of apostolic contact with these kingdoms. Armenia rivals Britain as the first Christian nation.

Surprisingly, it is in the text of the New Testament itself that we find evidence of polygamists and soldiers in the Church. Paul’s apparent restrictions on ecclesiastical offices in 1 Timothy and Titus – in which he requires monogamy – suggests that the laity were under no such restrictions. Indeed, in the Aramaic text, Paul is quoted as saying, “Let the

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<sup>154</sup>e.g. Bardesan in a 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Syriac document entitle, “The Book of the Laws of Divers Countries,” *ANF, vol. 8, p. 732*

deacons be appointed from those who have not been polygamous” (The Lamsa Bible, 1 Timothy 3:12). We might quibble over the purpose of Paul’s restriction, but certainly, the very existence of the restriction infers that at least some in the Church were practicing polygamy.<sup>155</sup>

As for soldiers in the Church, one need not look past Acts 10 and the household of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert. Cornelius is a centurion, a commander in the Roman army. Nowhere do we find any rebuke or admonishment from the Apostles concerning his status as a military man.

From this evidence, we may deduce that Basil was referring to the first generation of bishops in the Church. It was that period in which soldiering and polygamy were considered normal – as Basil declares in his 80<sup>th</sup> Canon – but which fell into disfavor among the Gentile Christians after they were cut-off from the Desposynic leadership.

After the martyrdom of Simeon at 120 years of age - the Lord’s brother - historians record a change in the spiritual condition of the Church:

*Up to that period the Church remained like a virgin pure and uncorrupted: for if there were*

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<sup>155</sup>See Stivers: *Eros Made Sacred* for a more thorough investigation on the polygamy question in the Bible, ref. Bibliography.

*any person who were disposed to tamper with the wholesome rule of the preaching of salvation, they still lurked in some dark place of concealment or other. But, when the sacred band of apostles had in various ways closed their lives, and that generation of men to whom it had been vouchsafed to listen to the Godlike Wisdom with their own ears had passed away, then did the confederacy of godless error take its rise through the treachery of false teachers, who, seeing that none of the apostles any longer survived, at length attempted with bare and uplifted head to oppose the preaching of the truth by preaching knowledge falsely so-called.<sup>156</sup>*

The irony before us is that we find the “polygamous” age of the Church to be the spiritually purer age. But in the light of our discoveries concerning the Mahuzzim heresy, if it is the doctrine of the Antichrist to disregard “the desire of women,” then the inverse must be true of Christian doctrine: the love of women. Men who despise women do not try to marry as many as they can. They don’t try to make babies, rear them, and pass an inheritance on to them.

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<sup>156</sup>Hegesippus: *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, p. 764

Considering this profound change in perspective in the Church, one must be prepared to use great caution in evaluating the interpretive methods of the pre-Nicene Fathers. Their symbolic theology, especially as it pertains to a married Jesus, becomes suspect.

When it comes to interpreting the Messianic prophecies, it must be remembered that Christ had *two* natures, one Divine and one human. The human perfectly imaged the Divine, since Jesus was the perfect man. Thus, we can say that Jesus Christ, as the Divine Logos, fulfilled these prophecies in the cosmic Church, but also, as the Davidic Messiah, which is a human office, He fulfilled them in His human nature. According to His Divine Nature, His marriage was with the Church; according to His human nature, He fulfilled these Messianic prophecies with the royal harem which consisted of real flesh and blood women who were His brides. **To insist that Jesus Christ fulfilled these prophecies in either His Divine nature or in His human nature - to the exclusion of either the Divine or the human - but not in both, is heresy and a denial of the Ecumenical Creeds of the Church.** For if we can say that He failed to fulfill even one of the Messianic prophecies in either His human or His Divine nature, then we must deny

that He was the true messiah. He came to fulfill all the law and the prophets (John 19:28).

It was not possible for Christ, in His human nature, to be the bridegroom of the Church. A simultaneous fellowship with billions of sentient beings is only possible to an omniscient mind, a Divine mind.

On the other hand, it was not possible for Christ, in His Divine Nature alone, to be the Messianic bridegroom of women in the flesh. It required locality and corporality. The Divine Nature is a spirit. The flesh of Christ was necessary for union with the woman.

Liberals want to say that Jesus was a mere man, who married, fathered children, and died, just like any other man: no resurrection, no ascension, and no future judgment. They deny Christ's Divine Nature, implicitly, if not explicitly.

Inversely, traditionalists want to say that Jesus was so completely divine that He could not have been defiled by the flesh of a woman. They say that they believe in His humanity, but it is really a fake, sanitized humanity - just like the Docetist heretics of old.

**This hermeneutical rule becomes the linchpin in deciphering the cryptic writings of**

**the Church Fathers.** Whether they believed in their own rhetoric or not is beside the point.

They may not have understood the meaning of the tradition which they passed-on to us. Or, they may have been hiding the secret about the family of Jesus. But once we understand that all Messianic prophecies and all treatises of the Fathers must be run through this creedal paradigm, then a vista opens before us and for the first time, we have an opportunity to understand that mystery body which was born on the day of Pentecost almost two millennia ago.

## **SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS**

Since the foregoing study has sometimes meandered through various digressions, perhaps a more complete summary – numbered according to logical consistency – might assist the reader in grasping the essential arguments in favor of a married Jesus.

1. From the Introduction, onwards, we have returned to the issue of the humanity of Christ. Our sexuality is so fundamental to the meaning of our humanity – at least in this life – that to separate it from the reality of Christ’s humanity seems absurd. The Biblical witness insists that Jesus was truly a human being, with all of the wants and needs characteristic of our species. Most humans are driven by a biological and psychological urge to mate, and to mate abundantly. In compliance with the demands of religious dogma, we pretend it is all for procreation and companionship. But in reality, unlike the animals which mate only when the female is in estrus, the human sexual

urge is simply old-fashioned lust. How can anyone take seriously the claims of the humanity of Christ, if it excluded this aspect of sexuality?

2. The historic Church, with few exceptions, has taught us that lust is always an evil motive which reflects our fallen natures. This is Augustine's view. The reader will recall the argument in reference to eunuchs and their usurpation of Christian leadership at the behest of the Roman Emperors. A celibate clergy facilitated state control of the Church, and the doctrine of human depravity was a useful tool in solidifying that control. The witness of the Church has been tainted by this aspect of political subservience and must be recognized for what it really was, and is: propaganda.

3. We briefly surveyed the abiding presence of a dissenting tradition within the Christian movement - from the time of the Ebionites who taught a more earthy, Old Testament view of human sexuality, to the Gnostics and Medieval heretics who saw Mary Magdalene as Christ's consort. The Grail legends, free-thinkers of the Renaissance, and modern heresies, such as Mormonism, have nurtured this view. Although disparate groups within



this dissenting tradition, they show unity in a persistent dissatisfaction with the idea of a celibate Jesus. And while the notion of a phallic Christ has never been declared - “ex cathedra” - as a heresy, yet it has aroused such rage among churchmen that few have escaped their murderous zeal unscathed.

4. The failure of the historic Church to speak positively to the idea of a married Jesus has created a spiritual and psychological vacuum among millions of Church drop-outs who have dabbled in paganism, Wicca, and other alternative religions, seeking to find a faith which will unite their spirituality with their humanity.

5. While it was not clearly delineated, the importance of a married Jesus to the Protestant Reformation cannot be overlooked. If Luther can be viewed as representative of the Protestant movement, his railing against a celibate priesthood implies either a married Jesus or an absurdity - **the idea of a Church led by married clergymen whose head was celibate.** It is absurd to argue for the moral superiority of a married clergy when the first priest and founder, the Lord Jesus Christ, was not himself married. In this sense, it is appropriate to assert that the

doctrine of a married Jesus is an imperative of Protestant doctrine and a completion of the Reformation.

6. We saw anomalies in the Scriptures, such as Paul's appeal to his own experience of celibacy. If the life of the eunuch is the higher path, why would not Paul point to Jesus Christ as the appropriate role model. He said, "Follow me, as I follow Christ," yet he does not declare a celibate Jesus. Why not?

We also discovered other anomalies, such as Mary Magdalene's pleading with who she thought was the gardener at the tomb. Why would she assert the rights of a widow – to claim the body of Jesus - if she was not indeed the widow of the deceased?

The accumulation of these kinds of unexplained anomalies removes the burden of proof from the claim that Jesus was married. It is left to those who *deny* that He was married to show a unifying explanation for these anomalies.

7. Further on this matter of the burden of proof, we found that William Phipps' treatise reached this same conclusion, but from a different collection of facts: Jesus

taught as a rabbi in the synagogues (Mark 1:39) and was even addressed as a “rabbi.” It was contrary to early Jewish law for rabbis to be unmarried. While we might acknowledge that Jesus broke some of the ritual laws of the Jews, we cannot imagine a master of any synagogue surrendering his chair to an unmarried Jew.

His parents were also faithful to the law. According to the customs of their people, they would have contracted a marriage for their son while He was still a young teenager.

It does no good for the detractors and deniers to simply assert that Jesus was bringing a new law into the world. They have failed to show why this new law would have disparaged marriage so far as to relieve Christ of its moral obligation. Excuses are cheap and plentiful. There have been no compelling reasons, consistent with the Creeds and the Scriptures, which have relieved them of this burden.

8. When we approach the arguments presented in Chapter Four, the deniers find new challenges. If Jesus was not married, the meaning of His office as the last Adam begins to break down. The first Adam was given the Dominion Covenant which involved the procreative mandate. If

Christ was truly the last Adam, He would have been the one and only legitimate heir to the Dominion Covenant. How could He have fulfilled this Covenant without procreating?

9. We showed that Christ was also an heir of both the Abrahamic and the Davidic Covenants. In both of these covenants, procreation was an essential moral obligation. How could Jesus claim to be a true son of Israel and its long-awaited Messiah, if He did not procreate?

10. As we proceeded through Chapter Four, we discovered that the legal criteria for citizenship in Israel excluded eunuchs. Jesus would have never been permitted to enter the precincts of the Temple had He been a eunuch. Proof of fatherhood – not simply the sign of circumcision – was required to secure one's status in the Israelite community.

11. Many have supposed that Christ had a sexual capacity, but that it was never used. However, that is not a solution either, because it does not address the issue of nocturnal emissions. With a sexual nature, Jesus would have had ejaculations, either voluntary ones or involuntary ones. In both instances, such ejaculations would have been sins of uncleanness according to the standards of the Old and

New Testaments. The only appropriate ejaculations according to Biblical ethics were those during sexual intercourse. Our modern culture simply cannot comprehend the seriousness of this kind of sin. A single instance of inappropriate ejaculation would have disqualified Jesus as the sinless Messiah.

12. We discovered that the ancients considered virility to be a sign of Divine favor. That Christ manifested this aspect of God's glory seems to be implied by the reference in the Patristic writings to Christ as "the unicorn of prophecy."

13. Furthermore, the Old Testament defines the family as a harem. The royal harems were the central institutions of any given society in the ancient world. If Jesus was truly the titular head of the house of David, He would have inherited the royal harem in some manner.

14. According to Biblical Law (Exodus 21), the followers of Jesus would have been defined as His menservants and maidservants. Maidservants who had no husbands when entering a new household for service were *de facto* members of the master's harem. Consequently, by operation of law, the unmarried disciples of Jesus were

considered his wives, whether He had sexual relations with them or not.

15. We found evidence of this harem in textual anomalies in the New Testament. In Luke's Gospel, we found a passing reference to the Messianic harem as the *gnostoi* at the scene of the Crucifixion. We found it again in Acts 6 in reference to the order of church widows. These texts are usually overlooked by commentators who regard these references as props for a more important drama involving the men. Yet, they are critical in understanding the marital relationship of Christ with these women.

16. We saw that one of Christ's followers, Mary Magdalene in particular, was His personal attendant who daily washed His feet. The task of footwashing was a defining aspect unique to the wife or concubine in the ancient world. It was also the usual prelude to sexual relations. To suppose that this woman attended to Jesus in this way, yet was not used in a sexual manner, defies the very meaning of this custom in the ancient world.

17. This kind of evidence demands that we revisit Biblical texts and Patristic references which portray the Messiah as a father and a family man. No longer does the

preponderance of evidence require us to look at these unusual texts allegorically, but rather, they demand that we first interpret them literally. Thus, when the prophet Isaiah says of the Messiah that “He shall see his seed,” he speaks literally of Christ’s children.

18. And then, finally, we must confront the meaning of the Creeds. The early Fathers tell us that all of these references to a married Messiah must be taken symbolically to mean Christ and the Church, that He is married in His Divine nature, but not in His human nature. Yet, the Creeds give ultimate primacy to both natures: to Christ as man and as God. To say that He fulfilled some prophecies in His Divine nature and not also in His human nature is to deny the Creeds. It breaks the continuity of the Incarnation in history and destroys any meaningful fulfillment of the Prophets. It is a tactic of evasion and diminishes the Gospel because it leaves unredeemed some aspects of the human condition. In reference to human sexuality, the failure of Christ to enter this part of our existence would prove His inability to save mankind in the totality of its humanity. It would concede that the creation is a failure and would require that the

human species be made into something else before it could be worthy of salvation.

Having made the case for a married Jesus, let us now investigate further its relevance to the doctrine of hierogamy.

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*These were more noble . . . in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

- Acts 17:11



## CHAPTER FIVE

### HIEROGAMY: A PRIMER

#### The Age of Gold & Fulfilled Design

*For lo, the days are hast'ning on, By prophet bards  
foretold. When with the evercircling years Comes  
'round the age of gold:*

*When peace shall over all the earth Its ancient  
splendors fling, And the whole world give back the  
song Which now the angels sing.*

- The Christmas Hymn, "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"

Every civilization has what is called a "golden age," a time in the life of nations when a particular people reach their ascendancy in the world. It is usually a time of peace for its citizens achieved through the wisdom of its laws or the strength of its armies. Such times are marked by leaps in technology, a revival of the arts, and an interest in education. They are times of plenty when the needs of most of its citizens are met with minimal labor. In general, the people are happy.

Golden ages end when the principles which created them are forgotten by the people. Or, if they occur through an accident of history, they end when events demonstrate a serious flaw in their first principles which prevent them from neutralizing outside enemies.

Our most documented civilization is, of course, Rome. Historians will usually tell us that Rome fell, not because of the invading barbarians, but because of corruption from within. After that point of agreement, historians depart from one another and differ as to what that "corruption" might have been. Christian historians see Rome's fall as a result of decadence. Secular historians see it as the fault of Christianity, which diminished the manliness of Rome's

army and citizenry. The Biblical record contains a standard of success and failure for human civilization which might help decide this controversy.

There is an Age of Gold described in the Bible. It occurred during the time of Solomon. Thanks to King David's warriors, it was a time when Israelite hegemony reached the limits promised to Abraham and when the number of his descendants became as many as "the sands by the seashore."<sup>157</sup> It was a time of unmingled blessing and material prosperity for all Israelites.<sup>158</sup> Israel became the priest-nation of the earth where heads of state from all nations of the world came to hear the wisdom of Solomon and honor Solomon's God.<sup>159</sup> And the Jerusalem Temple became the only place where the visible presence of God on Earth could be found.<sup>160</sup>

The Golden Age of Solomon was an age of wisdom, balance, and harmony. It was an age of justice. It was also an age of sensuality when Israelites were "eating and drinking, and making merry" (1 Kings 4:20). Solomon is

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<sup>157</sup>1 Kings 4:21; 2 Chronicles 9:26 (cf. Genesis 15:18) 1Kings 4:20; 2 Chronicles 1:9

<sup>158</sup>1Kings 4:20; 10:27

<sup>159</sup>1 Kings 4:29-34; 10:24; 2 Chronicles 9:23

<sup>160</sup>1 Kings 8:11; 2 Chronicles 5:13-14

renowned for his harem: seven hundred wives (daughters of kings) and three hundred concubines (1 Kings 11:3). For this, pious commentators are deafening in their condemnation. But Solomon is never condemned for his polygamy in the Scriptures. Indeed, his harem was a fulfillment of his father's messianic prophecy:

*Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.* - Psalm 45:9<sup>161</sup>

Solomon was criticized because he practiced miscegenation with unbelievers that led him into idolatry (1 Kings 11:8). His *unbelieving* wives were his downfall, not his believing wives.

Solomon's Golden Age became the defining moment of Israelite history. It was then that all the promises made to the fathers were fulfilled. It was their eschaton. The message of later prophets would be the promise of its restoration by a worthy Davidic heir.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>161</sup>You will recall from Chapter Three that in the Geneva Bible, the Bible of the Reformers, "honourable women" is here translated "honourable wives." The Hebrew word can be translated either way.

<sup>162</sup>"Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his

The message of the New Testament Church cannot be understood without this context. The claim by Jesus to be "the greater Solomon" (Matthew 12:42) was essential to the assertion by His followers that He was the true Messiah (Acts 2:36). It was their first message to the Jewish nation.

Of course, from the perspective of later Christian doctrine, we understand that the mission of Jesus had to first remedy the problem of sin in the heart of man. That was why Solomon's Golden Age failed. God's presence was confined to the Temple. In Jesus, it embraces all men through the Holy Spirit:

*Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

- Revelation 21:3

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**good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant." - 1 Kings 8:56. See also Isaiah 9:6, 7 of the Messiah.**

*And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

- Ezekiel 36:27

The Bible promises a future Age of Gold for the earth. It is called "the Millennium" by some theologians, "the new heaven and earth" by others. It is described specifically in the final chapters of John's book of Revelation. The established Church, especially after Constantine and Augustine, spiritualized these chapters.<sup>163</sup> It denied that there would be any future Golden Age on Earth. Rather, it believed the Golden Age was an inward psychological condition or eternal bliss in Heaven. The belief in any literal fulfillment of these prophecies was viewed as carnal and beneath the higher spirituality of the Christian message.

That was not so during the first two centuries of the Church. Justin Martyr and Irenaeus are two examples of the "carnal" interpretation. It was a doctrine taught by the

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<sup>163</sup> This view is generally called "amillennialism". See Louis Berkhof's, *History of Christian Doctrine* (Baker House Books, 1937).

Desposyni.<sup>164</sup> Now granted, Justin and Irenaeus and the others were premillennialists. After the failure of the Bar Kochba rebellion, that was the viewpoint which prevailed among the Gentile churches. But even Justin admitted that there was another view which was considered orthodox.<sup>165</sup> That other view was **postmillennialism**: the belief in the current Messianic kingdom which requires the Church's

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<sup>164</sup>“Of the family of the Lord there were still living the grandchildren of Jude, who is said to have been the Lord's brother according to the flesh. Information was given that they belonged to the family of David, and they were brought to the Emperor Domitian by the Evocatus. For Domitian feared the coming of Christ as Herod also had feared it. And he asked them if they were descendants of David, and they confessed that they were. Then he asked them how much property they had, or how much money they owned. And both of them answered that they had only nine thousand denarii, half of which belonged to each of them; and this property did not consist of silver, but of a piece of land which contained only thirty-nine acres, and from which they raised their taxes and supported themselves by their own labor.

Then they showed their hands by continuous toil as evidence of their own labor. And when they were asked concerning Christ and his kingdom, of what sort it was and where and when it was to appear, they answered that it was not temporal nor an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly and angelic one, which would appear at the end of the world, when he should come in glory to judge the quick and the dead, and to give unto everyone according to his works.

Upon hearing this, Domitian did not pass judgment against them, but, despising them as of no account, he let them go, and by a decree put a stop to the persecution of the Church.

But when they were released they ruled the churches, because they were witnesses and were also relatives of the Lord.” - Eusebius as he quotes Hegesippus, Book III, Chap. XX

<sup>165</sup>[B]ut, on the other hand, I signified to you that many who belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians, think otherwise. - *Ante-Nicene Fathers* v. 1, p. 239

participation in its prophetic fulfillment. Recent translations of the Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrate that this was the prevailing view among the Jamesian Christians at Jerusalem.<sup>166</sup>

It can be argued that the spiritualizers represent the result of the Mahuzzim heresy in the Early Church. The Mahuzzim heresy was specifically identified by the prophet Daniel as the doctrine of the Antichrist which denies our humanity and its sensuality. Sometimes known as Manichaeism, Gnosticism, Platonism, etc. - it views the material world as something created by an evil deity and the flesh as inherently evil. In these systems escaping the body becomes man's salvation. That was why the Church taught celibacy and monasticism. And while the Church

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<sup>166</sup>See Robert Eisenman's *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the First Christians* and then Gabriele Boccaccini's, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*, both highly respected scholars in their field, yet providing very divergent perspectives. Essentially, Messianic Judaism - revolving around James the Just and which encompassed a following from among Enochian Jews, Essenes, and the Qumran community - taught a liturgical fulfillment of prophetic literature, i.e. that once the Church (the House of Israel) fulfilled the law in the realm of personal holiness, Divine assistance would be forthcoming in achieving institutional victory, resulting in the refounding of the Kingdom of Israel: "And they asked him if he will restore the kingdom of Israel, and will do away with the foreign king, and with Pilate, Caesar's subordinate, and will rule himself, or perhaps appoint one of the family of David [to rule]?" - Acts 1:6 (Magdalene Gospel).



never surrendered the doctrine of the resurrection, it described the resurrected body as something less than truly physical.<sup>167</sup> The Church has always had difficulty explaining why the physical resurrection is necessary. If, as it says, the spirit is the real you, why would a liberated spirit want to return to a fleshly body?

The credibility of this view is weakened in the Gospel accounts of Christ's own resurrected body, which retained its previous bodily functions, yet had clear supernatural abilities, as well. In this respect the resurrected body bears resemblance to angels, which can pass from the material to the immaterial dimensions at will. This ability explains the legend of how certain angels were able to cohabitate with women prior to Noah's Flood and how they could eat food with Old Testament heroes (e.g. Abraham, Genesis 18).

It would serve well any satanic revolt against the Creator to convince mankind, especially the Church, that the material world is evil and cannot be redeemed. Yet, the witness of Scripture is just the opposite.

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<sup>167</sup>Gregory J. Riley: *The Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy*, Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN (1995), p. 179

The creation is good and the material world is man's natural habitat. That is why there is such a thing as demon possession. Lacking a human body, we are told that demons will settle for animals (Luke 8:33). They know that the physical body is a higher form of existence. Indeed, as the Druids taught, the material creation is a part of God's body itself, so to call it evil would be the same as calling God evil. The holiness of the material world is proven by Christ's own Incarnation and His eternal union with His corporeal body. Why would there be a permanent bodily existence for Him and His followers if the physical world must be considered evil or a lower form of existence?

Yes, Christian doctrine says the material creation is fallen, but that is because it lacks a godly headship to exercise dominion over it. Separated from its head, the body perishes. So it is with the terrestrial universe. The remedy is not further abandonment of dominion - which ultimately leads to hell - but rather the restoration of the righteous to their place of rulership.

## **The Messianic Golden Age: A Failed Attempt?**

What would have this Messianic kingdom looked like? Imagine the court of Solomon replicated in every locality over the entire earth. I would suggest that was the paradigm for Christian dominion during the New Testament era. The Apostles were the vanguard who went to the Diaspora and started new churches among the Jews and Gentiles. Later, they were to be joined by a representative of the Jerusalem Church who would settle among them as a Desposynic prince. This was how Christ's kingdom would overspread the earth.<sup>168</sup>

The Gentile churches rejected the Desposyni later in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century. They came to embrace the Roman paradigm of Christian dominion. The result of their unfaithfulness was ten Imperial persecutions that gutted the Church's leadership and produced a State Church.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>168</sup>“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth” – Psalm 45:16. This is the meaning of the prayer, “Maranatha”: *The Lord has come, may my lord come.*

<sup>169</sup>The persecution of Diocletian was so devastating that catechumens, men ignorant of the mysteries, were elevated to the bishop's throne (e.g. Cyprian). See Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. 2 §24 and Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*.

In the State Church we find the pinnacle of Mahuzzim doctrine. No longer is the Church the family of Jesus which is built through a sacramental process. Rather, it is an Imperial institution which is increased through the strong arm of the state. Through the threat of physical death instead of the promise of eternal life, people are coerced into becoming Christians. In this practice, we find the manifestation of the satanic doctrine. The book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus came to destroy him that had the power of death, "that is, the devil"(2:14). Now in an amazing twist, we find this very satanic principle revived and being used, ostensibly, to build the State Church. It is a complete inversion of values. The State Church becomes the Moloch Church whose supralapsarian God burns babies in a fiery hell for all of eternity.<sup>170</sup>

The hideous fruits of this doctrine were the frequent Inquisitions during the Middle Ages, when heretics and all enemies of the State Church faced the rack and the stake.

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<sup>170</sup>One of the sacrifices of Moloch (or Molech) religion was "passing children through the fire" (Deuteronomy 18:10; Joshua 15:8; Isaiah 30:33, Jeremiah 7:31et al)

The systematic and perverse torture of the accused fits the profile of satanic ritualism.<sup>171</sup>

The Desposynic church operated underground, sometimes within the established Church (in the monasteries), other times in other institutions, such as the Templars and the Masons. They were accused of witchcraft and their gatherings labeled as witch's covens. As is often the case, it is the accuser who is guilty of what he accuses another of doing. In America, the Salem Witch Trials stand as a lasting testimony of the evils of mass hysteria based upon superstition. Yet in that unfortunate episode, it was the practicing witches who were protected by the magistrates. They received this protection because they promised to serve as informants for the state, an arrangement which resulted in the deaths of many innocent people.

Today, Evangelicals and mainline churches continue to serve the interests of a state religion. They throw out

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<sup>171</sup>See the classic *Fox's Book of Martyrs*. While modern editions are heavily abridged, they still contain sufficient evidence to prove my point. Pay particular attention to the persecution of the Covenanters of Scotland. Their pregnant women were raped, disemboweled, and their breasts eaten by their persecutors. Any religion which systematically tortures its victims to induce confession, and then practices cannibalism and ritual execution through fire is a satanic religion.

similar insults and accusations against those who bear witness to a different truth. Labeling them as cults or “New Agers” is enough to doom any ministry to a marginal existence. Rarely does it result in bodily harm, but it does remain an effective tool to neutralize ministries which seek to advance the reformation of Christianity.<sup>172</sup>

## **The Messianic Government**

When the New Testament Church was founded, Jesus became the “firstborn among many brethren.” (Romans

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<sup>172</sup>**One shocking exception occurred in 1993: the destruction of the Branch Davidians, a harmless and insignificant cult near Waco, Texas. Their proselytizing caused great offense among traditional church groups resulting in a slanderous series of articles in the local newspaper. Shortly afterward, the government attacked the church complex with over a hundred worshippers trapped inside. In the siege which followed, fantastic stories - proved false much later - of child abuse, sex orgies, and gun fanaticism by the cult's leader convinced the nation that the government's actions against him and his followers, including small children, were justified. Analysis of government films (called the "FLIR Videos") of the siege in recent years - from the backside of the building and out-of-view of television cameras - has revealed involvement of military personnel, the firing of incendiary devices into the building, and the systematic murder of fleeing occupants from the resulting inferno. It is not enough to describe what happened in traditional terms. It was more than mass murder. It was more than a massacre. It was *cherem*: a Manson-style, satanic orgy of human sacrifice. If the government of the United States will terrorize its own citizens, is it any wonder that foreign agents will do so, as well? God will not be mocked.**

8:29). He became king and priest. He became the royal kinsman-redeemer and avenger of blood (1 Corinthians 1:30). “He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men” (Ephesians 4:8). He ascended into heaven and left behind a Messianic government. The Messianic government was one consisting of descendants of the House of David who assumed the role of the princes or firstborn in each respective congregation. They became the kings and lords of whom Christ was the King of kings and Lord of lords.<sup>173</sup> The Apostle Paul spread the Gospel quickly among the Gentile cities and established provisional governments of elders in each one. They were presbyterian in form, not episcopal - and very restrictive of the rights and duties of the leaders. However, as we discover from other writings of the Early Church, the House of David (the House of Jesus) grew, and as these men who were reared in Nazareth and Kochba among the Desposynic leaders (the Lord’s kinsmen), they formed a college from which the

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<sup>173</sup>How extensive this Desposynic network was is still uncertain. We know that the Desposyni were dominant in the Palestinian area, but their influence in other Roman provinces is obscure. See Richard Bauckham, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church*, T&T Clark, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1990 and Steven M. Collins, *The “Lost” Ten Tribes of Israel . . . Found!*, CPA Books, Boring, Oregon, 1992, especially his chapters on the Parthian kingdom. The quote from Hegesippus earlier concerning the grandsons of Jude indicate that the Desposyni still “ruled” all the churches, probably from behind the scenes.

leaders - the overseers or bishops - of the churches would be chosen. They were known in the Hebrew tongue as “Mebbakers.”<sup>174</sup>

Christian commentators accept the proposition that the Age of Solomon typified the triumphant Church and the fulfilled Abrahamic Covenant. It was this Golden Age which all Messianic Jews were working to establish, ultimately, on a global scale. Thus, the Early Church was meant to replicate the court of Solomon throughout the world. The Desposynic leaders were as Solomon in the respective churches where they served Jesus as viceroys, although they referred to themselves as “servants” (James 1:1). The elders represented the Apostles. Just as the Apostles served Jesus, so the elders served the Desposynic bishops. In turn then, the church deacons represented the angelic host of heaven which served the elders and bishop. According to Ignatius, as was cited earlier, this was the pattern of church government.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>174</sup>Robert Eisenman, *James, the Brother of Jesus*, Penguin Books, 1996 p. 12, 86-7, 569, 722.

<sup>175</sup>*Epistle to the Trallians 1:8-9*



This vision of government began to break down (according to prophecy<sup>176</sup>) after the failure of the Bar Kochba rebellion. And, as alleged by Hegesippus, it was usurped by wolves which corrupted the teachings of Christ and gave us this pathetic specimen which some derisively call “Churchianity.”

How do we get back to this Messianic kingdom? By the sword? By a final Armageddon? Or simply by a sacramental process which transforms the human species?

## **The Five Rites of the Jerusalem Church**

*Truth did not come into the world naked,  
but it came in types and images.*

- Gospel of Philip, 67

Mankind is made in the image of God. Because man himself is an image, it means he is a symbol, the symbol of God. Man thinks with symbols – words and images in the mind. Without symbols man cannot think; he cannot feel

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<sup>176</sup> Ref. “the times of the Gentiles” in Matthew 24.

with his soul. He cannot experience the meaning of the world without symbols. He cannot experience God.

That is why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1). That is why Jesus taught in parables. That is why the Bible is a storybook. Logic might be the skeleton of our reasoning powers, but it is a dead thing without the images of our existence. We need sacraments.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. Only He can perform the heavenly rites which are necessary to bring us near to God through the Holy Spirit.

The mediators between men are the Desposyni who work as bishops to bring restitution and reconciliation through a sacramental process. They are the earthly symbols of a heavenly reality. Historic Christianity has operated for many centuries with the wrong symbols. If we want to get back to the Messianic kingdom and the purity of the New Testament Church, we must restore the rites as they existed among these primitive Christians. They are as follows, according to Grail Church literature:

- **Baptism:** This is the *initiatory rite* into the Church. We recognize the baptisms of other churches, including infant baptism, if they have followed the Trinitarian formula. We offer a rite of *Confirmation* to Catechumens coming from other faiths.<sup>177</sup>
- **Chrism:** This is the *empowering rite* which acknowledges that the Holy Spirit has been imparted to the believer. The normal sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is given in the book of Acts as ecstatic utterances in an unknown language.<sup>178</sup>
- **Communion:** This is a *confirmatory rite* of fellowship with the Church. Footwashing is included as a *restorative rite* to heal broken or strained relationships as needed.<sup>179</sup> We encourage the worshipper to use the liturgy found in the *Didache*.
- **Redemption:** This is the *consummative rite* which makes the Catechumen a member of the Desposynic Family. It follows the laws of adoption in the Bible.

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<sup>177</sup> The earliest Churches practiced nude baptism and followed the procedure found in the *Didache*.

<sup>178</sup> This involves an anointing with oil and prayer. The miracle of tongues is the work of God.

<sup>179</sup> The Common Rite of Footwashing, not the Magdalene Rite. See Stivers on Footwashing in the Bibliography.

- **Bride Chamber:** This is the *dominical rite* through which the Kingdom is established upon Earth. It is a part of the esoteric tradition.

The Lost Rites of the Church are **Redemption** and the **Bride Chamber**. Although they are present in the Bible, it is through extra-biblical sources that we find their open discussion. Since this is esoteric knowledge, we would not expect to find them in the canonical Scriptures, except in types and allegories. The canonical Scriptures were the Scriptures for the reading of the general public.

*Truth did not come into the world naked, but it came in types and images. The world will not receive truth in any other way. There is a rebirth and an image of rebirth. It is necessary to be born again through the image. Which one? Resurrection. The image must rise again through the image. The bridal chamber and the image must enter through the image into the truth: this is the restoration... The Lord did everything in a mystery [sacrament], a baptism and a chrism and a Eucharist and a redemption and a bridal chamber.*

- Gospel of Philip, §67

The Fathers used the words “mystery” and “sacrament” interchangeably. That was because a “sacrament” was meant to teach a secret.<sup>180</sup> In the Gospel of Philip, there are five sacraments (or mysteries) which are identified: **baptism, chrism, Eucharist, redemption, and bridal chamber.**

## **The Sexual Rite of the Church**

*But it becomes all such as are married, whether men or women to come together with the consent of the bishop, that so their marriage may be according to godliness, and not in lust.*<sup>181</sup>

*My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. . . There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.*

- Song of Solomon 6:2 & 8

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<sup>180</sup>Of which the Gnostics wrote much, and understood little.

<sup>181</sup> Ignatius, *Ibid*, p. 191

*These, O fair virgins, are the orgies of our mysteries;  
these the mystic rites of those who are initiated in  
virginity.*

*- Methodius<sup>182</sup>*

During the early persecutions of the Church, there were two charges which were consistently made by its adversaries. The early Christians were accused of practicing cannibalism and debauchery during their Eucharist and Agape Feasts. Since these Feasts were held in secret, only the initiated knew what went on during them.

Typically, accusations such as these are exaggerations of facts which contain within them a kernel of truth. For instance, the charge of cannibalism grew from the fact that the rite of the Lord's Supper was a symbolic ingestion of the blood and body of Christ. The pagans and other outsiders took this symbolism literally and viewed it as proof of cannibalism.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> *ANF*, vol. 6, p. 330

<sup>183</sup> Tertullian indignantly responds to this charge: "Monsters of wickedness, we are accused of observing a holy rite in which we kill a little child and then eat it; in which, after the feast, we practice incest, the dogs – our pimps, forsooth, overturning the lights and getting us the shamelessness of

Then, there was the accusation of debauchery, of illicit sexual activity. This charge is puzzling, because there were many groups in the Roman Empire, like the Epicureans, which practiced debauchery without rousing the ire of the Roman public. In fact, debauchery was a common past-time at this point in Roman history. Why should it be a public scandal?

It may have been a public scandal because of its implied hypocrisy. The Christians claimed to adhere to a higher form of morality and the pagans, always looking for ways to discredit Christianity, claimed that the Christians, during their secret meetings, were no different than any other decadent fertility cult.

Was this merely a wild accusation with no foundation? Or was there something the Christians were doing which was subject to misunderstanding and exaggeration? Where is the kernel of truth?

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**darkness for our impious lusts. This is what is constantly laid to our charge, and yet you take no pains to elicit the truth of what we have been so long accused.” (“Apology” §7, ANF vol. 3, p. 23). The Inquisition accused witches of these same nefarious deeds.**

You are already aware of the fact that the Christians baptized in the nude.<sup>184</sup> This was not anything unusual for that era, since nudity was a common sight at the public baths. There was, also, a greater familiarity among the early Christians than what there is today. It was not uncommon to kiss on the lips, even for men and women. Tertullian appears to be the first Father to discourage this practice, since it gave grounds for jealousy among the pagan husbands of Christian wives who greeted their Christian brethren in this way.<sup>185</sup> But affectionate kissing is not sufficient grounds to create the hysteria around the charge of debauchery. There must have been something within Christian doctrine which gave it foundation.

Justin Martyr was quick to deny the charge, insisting “that promiscuous intercourse is not one of our mysteries.”<sup>186</sup> But he offered absolutely no explanation as to why the rumor arose.

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<sup>184</sup>Although a fact not disputed by scholars, the *Didascalia* can be referred to for proof of this custom’s existence. See the expanded discussion on the “Five Rites of the Jerusalem Church” found in the textbook edition of this book.

<sup>185</sup>Tertullian “On Modesty,” *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3

<sup>186</sup>Note his careful wording in this reference. He refines it by saying *promiscuous* intercourse and not denying that there might be a valid ritual of intercourse, *ANF*, vol. 1, p. 172.



In the lost letter of Clement, in which he speaks of the so-called “secret” Gospel of Mark, he says:

*Thus he [Mark] composed a more spiritual Gospel for the use of those who were being perfected. Nevertheless, he yet did not divulge the things not to be uttered, nor did he write down the hierophantic teaching of the Lord, but to the stories already written he added yet others and, moreover, brought in certain sayings of which he knew the interpretation would, as a mystagogue, lead the hearers into the innermost sanctuary of that truth hidden by seven veils.*<sup>187</sup>

Compare these remarks with those of the Apostle in Hebrews (5:10-11):

*Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec. Of whom we have many things to say and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.*

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<sup>187</sup>Morton Smith: *Clement of Alexandria and a Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harvard University Press, 1973), translation from the folio, p. 446. The professor has also written *Jesus the Magician*, a revisionist view of the life and work of Christ in sympathy with the Talmudic tradition. He has received heavy criticism for this Clementine discovery, but it is not altogether certain whether it is because somehow it is a forgery or whether his critics simply do not like his interpretive license. One would think thirty years sufficient time to disprove an unpopular thesis.

What was it about Melchisedec that even the Christians of the apostolic period did not understand?

The simplest answer to that question is also one which is morally unacceptable to classical Christians: **Melchisedec was a priest-king who practiced the *hieros gamos*.** Invoking the image of a pagan ruler in a Canaanite city is suggestive of a parallel custom in the Christian tradition.

I offer the thesis that ***there was a sexual rite in the Early Church***, but it was not the debauched excesses of the pagans. As in the case of Melchisedec who worshipped the true God, this sexual rite would simply have been the consummation of a bridal procession adding a new member to the royal harem.

Such a custom would not at all have been a startling event in the ancient world; although with the arrival of the classical period of Greece and Rome - separated by many centuries from the age of mythology – the interests of militarism and empire would have made such a custom obsolete if not adverse to public policy. In an age which believed its kings to be the descendants of the gods, it made sense to propagate them in a prolific manner. But

when a more skeptical age arrived, such pretensions were dismissed as amusing folklore. With both democratic and republican values emerging from the Greco-Roman city-states - especially in philosophies such as Stoicism which heavily influenced Pauline theology – the notions of Desposynic viceroys, sultan-style harems, and sex rites would have been quickly discarded, if not repudiated, by the Gentile churches.

Such a thesis may not be as shocking as modern advocates of the *hieros gamous* – ala *The DaVinci Code* – have offered. But it still requires more substantial support, which is presented here.

### **Defining the Thesis**

Based upon what was said earlier about the demographic growth of the Desposyni, how was this to happen? How was the local church body, which was in covenant with Christ, to become one spirit and one flesh with Him? It was through the **sacrament of the bridal chamber**. Women who were betrothed to Christ as church virgins were brought to their Desposynic bishop, a member of the House of Jesus, for consummation of the marriage. They were joined to him as were the women of Solomon's Court

in days of old. If they were maidservants, they could be given to the menservants of his Court. If they bore him a firstborn son, he would be retained in fosterage until he came of age. Then he would become the Desposynic prince to the rest of her offspring which she had by the manservant. In this case, the New Testament Church was a replica of Solomon's Court. Jesus was the greater Solomon. The Church was the clearinghouse for qualified candidates to join the House of Jesus. They began as catechumens and learned Christian law. Then, they were baptized and became observers of his glory during the Eucharist, when the Desposynic family was brought in by procession and seated for the Agape Feast.<sup>188</sup>

Freemen, who had families already, gave their firstborn sons and daughters to the Church, to Christ, in the person of His heir, the Desposynic bishop. He was the Solomon to that local body, and the goal was to become one flesh with Him, either immediately through marriage or through the generational intermarriage of future offspring.

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<sup>188</sup> **The Agape Feasts were not just church potlucks as modern scholars would have us believe. Consider the 28<sup>th</sup> Canon of the Synod of Laodicea (343-381 AD): "Beds shall not be set up in churches, nor shall love feasts be held there." ("Ancient Epitome," *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 14, p. 148). This prohibition suggests an earlier use of the Feast for sexual purposes, at least by some Christians.**

For instance, if a young male joined the Church, he came as a six-year indentured servant (Exodus 21). During the course of his service, if the Desposynic master/bishop gave one of his daughters to him, he could become his son-in-law. If he gave him one of his concubines and he left during the Year of Release, then the woman and children stayed with the bishop, as required by the Law. The reason was because Christ was their spouse, their master, in the person of their Desposynic lord. If the servant decided to stay, he was adopted as a son. This happened in the **sacrament of redemption**. Redemption is the buying back of property by Christ, who becomes the new master through His Desposynic representative, who himself is an offspring of Christ according to the spirit and the flesh.

As suggested in Chapter Four in our discussion of Christ as the Second Adam, Christians may be the offspring of Christ according to the spirit by operation of the Holy Spirit upon their hearts, but they are not offspring according to the flesh until they have united themselves genetically through inter-mingling with His seed.

## Verifying the Tradition

What would we predict to find in the way of evidence if what I have said is true? Well, first of all, we would expect that these conjugal unions would be kept secret. This is because Roman law did not legitimize polygamy.<sup>189</sup> Since the local church was a replica of Solomon's Court, it would have existed as a shadow government rivaling the Imperial government of Rome. It would have been necessary to keep both the conjugal and governmental aspects of the Desposynic mission a secret, since they were the heirs of the Davidic kingdom, which Roman emperors considered subversive and dangerous.<sup>190</sup>

Second, we would expect that the practice of the two sacraments - *the redemption and the bride chamber* - would be couched in symbolic language within the context of Old Testament usages. Only those familiar with the Old Testament would understand the symbols.

Third, we would expect frequent references to the "bride" and "servants" in the New Testament, and to

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<sup>189</sup>E.N. Jecks, *The History and Philosophy of Marriage*, 1869

<sup>190</sup> See the textbook edition of this book for evidence of Roman policy toward the descendants of David.

marriage-based analogies.

Finally, we would expect that rival splinter groups would arise and distort these teachings - what little they knew - which would have to be repudiated by the leaders of the Early Church, without giving away the secrets.

Do we find evidence of this? We do.

*First*, I have already mentioned the well-known fact that the Early Church had secret meetings and secret doctrines and customs.

*Second*, we find affirmed a continuation of the moral authority of Old Testament law (Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 7:12, 14, 22; James 1:25).

*Third*, both domestic service and polygamy were recognized as valid institutions among the New Testament writers.<sup>191</sup>

*Fourth*, we do find, according to Methodius, that there was a **liturgy for a bridal procession for the espousing of widows and virgins to Christ**.<sup>192</sup> These

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<sup>191</sup>See Chapter Four

<sup>192</sup>"Banquet of the Ten Virgins", *ANF*, vol. 6

were women who were dedicated to the Church and were brought under the coverture of the bishop. Although, by the time of Methodius, the sexual aspects of this liturgy were lost - because of the leavening of the Mahuzzim heresy in Gentile doctrine - this fact is significant because it acknowledges everything that I have said, except for the sexual and procreative aspects, which were invalid for Gentile bishops anyway, since this was a prerogative of the Davidic bishops only.<sup>193</sup>

As to the sexual aspects, we may find conclusive, although unintentional evidence in Origen. His commentary on the Song of Solomon taught that it was written as an ***epithalmium***: a play or pageant.<sup>194</sup> It was an X-rated wedding feast for Solomon's trophy wife. Was this highly sensual book used as a liturgy in the New Testament Church? If we believe that the Psalter was God's ordained song book for the Church, we must believe the Song of Solomon was, as well. If we believe there is

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<sup>193</sup>I should add, lest the point is not clear, that these customs were voluntary. A woman betrothed to Christ was not required to have sexual relations with her Desposynic lord. She could remain as a "virgin in waiting" or be given directly to a man of the church who would be either the bishop's son or adopted son (lifetime manservant cf. Exodus 21, already discussed).

<sup>194</sup>*Origen*, trans. Rowan Greer (Paulist Press, NY, 1979), p. 217



both a divine and human fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies and types, as was argued in Chapter Four, we must believe that there was a sexual rite in the Early Church.

The Feast of Tabernacles may have been the occasion for this sexual rite to occur. This Israelite custom is mired down in much arcane superstition. The anti-types of Passover and Pentecost have already come. The Gentile Church put off to the Millennium the fulfillment of Tabernacles. But as we have already seen, the Millennium, in the sense of initiating the Messianic kingdom, has already begun, although it has not reached the zenith of its glory.<sup>195</sup> It is still as a mustard seed. But it is real, nonetheless.

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<sup>195</sup> **Tabernacles was basically a harvest festival when the people were commanded to camp outdoors and indulge in hard drink. It is not difficult to imagine that Tabernacles was the season for intense sexual activity (Deuteronomy 14:26) and that some Christians tried to make the Agape Feast its New Covenant anti-type.**

## Desposynic Successors

Hebrew culture was a family-based culture which saw members of households assume duties which in our modern era government officials and professionals do. The Avenger of Blood was the guardian and protector of his kinship group. He made certain that crimes against members of the clan were punished according to the dictates of Biblical law and that no one would be left unpunished.

Also translated as “kinsman-redeemer, the *go’el* was usually the firstborn son.<sup>196</sup> The father was the king-priest and his firstborn was his assistant. As the kinsman-redeemer, he had a double inheritance in the estate so that he had the assets to help his kinsmen if they were running into financial or legal problems. This was the Biblical safety net.

As the father’s deacon, the firstborn was also his successor as king and priest. It was God’s intent to

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<sup>196</sup>Stivers: “The Ministry of the Firstborn”, Internet at <http://www.grailchurch.org/firstborn.htm>

preserve this institution in Israel, but Israel's apostasy at the Golden Calf incident left Yahweh with no choice but to replace the firstborn with the tribe of Levi. Originally, the family village setting was to be the primary place of worship to Yahweh (Exodus 20:24).<sup>197</sup>

The Levites served at the Tabernacle (the place of worship prior to the Temple) as deacons to the priests, but their primary task was as Teachers of the Law. Levitical cities were set up that became like our college towns, places for devoted study and service. They were centers for the professions such as medicine, religion, sciences, and arts, etc. The cities were also cosmopolitan. People from foreign nations would come to learn the Law, the secret of Israel's success. The Levites served as tutors for these foreigners.

With the coming of Jesus, the firstborn was brought back into the world (Hebrews 1:6). The Aaronic priesthood and Levites were consolidated into the functionaries of the Church. The churches came to erroneously view their bishops as the successors of the Levitical priests. Pastors, teachers, and elders were by extension. However, these

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<sup>197</sup>The Tabernacle was to be attended three times a year at the feasts of Israel (Exodus 23:17).

ministries were originally intended to be functions, not offices. The authority was meant to return to its familial structure.

A truly family-based society will see a restoration of the *go'el* to the firstborn of every kinship group. The *go'el* received the double-portion and a tithe from his brethren which enabled him to perform those duties that we associate with the pastors of churches - men who come to your aid when you were sick or in trouble - but also as your avenger of blood, someone who came to your defense in legal matters or in warfare. There were some pastors like this in early America who led their congregations off to war. But there are not many left now.

The role of priest and pastor today is truncated, even a parody of the Biblical model. That is because it has become a bureaucratic office. Bureaucrats are peer-oriented because they answer to no one with clear proprietary rights. They have superiors, but there are no owners. Servants without a master rely upon manipulation and not faithfulness for success.

For this reason, the role of the pastor cannot work right unless it operates within the context of the kinship group. The abbots of the old Celtic Church bore a much closer resemblance to this Biblical role of the spiritual leader.<sup>198</sup>

### **The Desposyni as Shepherds**

*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.*

- John 10:11-12

Ever since the earliest times of the Christian era, there has lived an unusual sect in the Near East, mostly in modern-day Iraq. To Western eyes, it is a stupid religion whose survival is as miraculous as the credulity of its believers. It despises Jesus Christ, describing him as a fraudulent rival to John the Baptist. It centers itself on the rite of baptism but has incoherently mingled various

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<sup>198</sup> On the role of family abbeys in the Celtic Church, see <http://www.grailchurch.org/familyabbey.org>

Gnostic and pagan superstitions. It still practices strange blood rituals to ward off demons and practices other cumbersome magical rituals which have no obvious benefit. It doesn't evangelize and each Middle Eastern group has had its turn in an attempt to exterminate its adherents. Saddam Hussein has been their most recent foe. I speak of the Mandaeans.

The survival of the Mandaean cult has seemed most improbable.<sup>199</sup> It has no great thinkers or body of literature worthy the name. It cannot claim a history of miracles or spectacular divine visitations. Unlike Christianity, it doesn't offer any attractive doctrine of love or self-sacrifice. Unlike Islam, it has no doctrine of dominion. The Mandaeans still wait for a future eschaton. A history of persecution has left them, usually, in poverty. By all historical standards, it should never have survived its first century, let alone twenty. It is a religious movement which has defied the odds. Why has it survived?

While Mandaeanism is not an appealing religion, there is a single principle which has enabled it to endure through

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<sup>199</sup>My primary source is Edmondo Lupieri: *The Mandaeans, the Last Gnostics* (Eerdman's, 1993).

the generations: *it requires its leadership to be polygamous.* At first appearance, the efficacy of this custom may not seem obvious, but the one thing that any movement requires is a strong doctrine of succession if it is to cross the generations. The leadership of any movement usually has the most dedication to its perpetuation. Leaders know their traditions the best. They are the most diligent and competent to teach those traditions. If it is the law that the members give the best of their resources, including their daughters, to their leaders, it is guaranteed that the integrity of the religion will be perpetuated.

Like everything else, Mandaeanism probably learned this custom from another group. The question of “who?” might produce interesting results.

Lupieri takes us on this short journey of discovery, who I quote at length:

*I cannot believe that mandaiia [the origin of “Mandaean” – JS] means “Gnostics,” since the Mandaeans within their own group distinguish from others among themselves the nasuraiia, or “those who possess nasiruta,” profound knowledge of the secret*

*religious mysteries of Mandaeanism. These are the real “Gnostics,” while the mandaiia include all the Mandaean, even ordinary believers. When asked, a modern Mandaean would answer that in the past all the Mandaean were nasuraiia but that there are only a few today: the elders, the wisest, the most erudite. In any case the nasuraiia of today are not like the nasuraiia of the past. Those of former times were infinitely powerful: they knew the secrets of the stars and of herbs, they could read the future in the stars and in magic cups, they lived in absolute purity and were invincible, and they were not touched by fire and were unmoved by even the sharpest of blades. Apart from the hyperbole surrounding the legends of their past, we have to conclude that the nasuraiia make up a sort of caste of cultural elites within Mandaeanism, a caste that does not coincide with the priesthood. . .*

*Things are complicated further by the apparent connection between the words nasurariia and Nazoraeans and/or “Nazarenes,” a name usually used to indicate members of Christian groups or sects in the entire area stretching from Palestine to India (footnote: Region where the Mar Toma Nazrani live,*



*that is, the Saint Thomas Nazarenes – Christians). To confuse things even further, in a rather ancient text the term nasurāiia is used not in reference to the best or most ancient of the Mandaeans, but to their Christian antagonists. . .<sup>200</sup>*

He concludes this line of thought by suggesting “that the Mandaeans derived the term from some Gnostic Christian group that they had come into contact with during their formative period,” although he cautions there is no “proof” of this.

When is a tornado not a cyclone? Lupieri is unwilling to say that the Mandaeans were influenced by the Nazoraeans, even though they called themselves by that name, or at least, an inner circle did. Considering the weight of evidence provided by this book, can we say otherwise? It ought to be obvious that this inner circle, the group which practices polygamy to this very day, is an offshoot of the first Christians. Whether they are an apostate branch, or whether their incoherent belief system is a ruse to protect their identity, it will not be answered here. But,

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<sup>200</sup>*Ibid*, p. 9-10. It should be noted that the Mandaeans define “purity” in the same manner as the Ebionites: marital intercourse. They have contempt for the supposed unclean sexual practices of celibate Christians.

it is enough to say that what has often been labeled “paganism” in the past has really represented an attempt to avoid obvious affiliation with any major religion in conflict with another. The appearance of stupidity and weakness can sometimes work to one’s advantage.

These very same customs of polygamy and *[deleted]*<sup>201</sup>were practiced by the so-called witches’ covens of the Middle Ages. The covens, at least until they were parodied by dissidents responding to the propaganda of the Inquisition, were nothing more than the Messianic harems meeting secretly with their Desposynic lords. The highest levels of the Medieval Church knew this but contrived the charges of Satanism and witchcraft to hunt them down and destroy them.

In our text above, Jesus describes the true shepherd who cares for the flock because it is his own and not that of another. Mandaeanism has survived because its inner circle has shepherded and protected its most loyal followers: the members of their own harems. Compare that with Christian pastors and priests who look upon their roles as little more than a noble career. They change

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<sup>201</sup> **This reference to the esoteric tradition is deleted here but included in the textbook.**

parishes when it suits them. While there are many dedicated ministers, it might also be noted that there are many dedicated managers of McDonald's restaurants, as well. Christ identified true shepherds as men who "owned" their flocks. Today, the ecclesiastical structure is an arrangement for hirelings. Churches are euphemistically called "families," but they really aren't. The Messianic Church is genuinely a family by its very definition.

## **Transsexuality & Hierogamy**

### **The Fisher King in Grail Theology**

Although the Medieval development of hierogamy is not within the scope of this book,<sup>202</sup> it will help to mature our understanding if we can identify hierogamy as a solution to mankind's fundamental psychological condition. Previous chapters have addressed extensively the use of hierogamy to overcome the objective reality of sin, both in

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<sup>202</sup>A sequel is planned which will attempt to trace the story of the Messianic harem through the centuries.

providing a sinless Savior and a new race uncontaminated with Original Sin.<sup>203</sup> This redemption is an objective reality which remedies humanity's judicial problem. But it does not address the subjective struggle with sin and the physical corruption which even Jesus experienced. Even the Immortals need a Savior to sanctify their "flesh": the flesh being the principle of death which tempts and threatens them should they falter in their life of obedience.

Historic Christianity has failed to adequately address the need to transform human nature. Sometimes, its mystic branches have spoken of prayer, fasting and other contemplative exercises. But these have never met broad appeal because they are, quite frankly, debilitating to the human organism. Having failed to inspire the masses with these unnatural practices, the Church has avoided any serious quest to change human nature. Instead, it has focused on the objective and judicial reality of sin, while surrendering itself to its inability to change the human condition.

This was the complaint of the Grail Church during the medieval period: that the answer which says that man's

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<sup>203</sup> The "big book" provides a more thorough treatment of hierogamy in the **Virgin Birth of Christ**.

fallen condition cannot be changed is no answer at all. While the traditional Church wanted to defer solving the problems of humanity to an after-life or some future elusive Millennium, the Grail Church said that Christianity was a false religion if it could not save man in a practical sense in this life. Jesus proclaimed the Jubilee. Where was it?

In the final analysis, Grail theology can be described as a medieval pronouncement that Christianity has failed in its claims and declared objectives. A religion which cannot cure anyone and which kills anyone it cannot cure is simply a religion which is contrary to the survival of the species. When considering the masses of fertile and talented women killed as witches during the Inquisition, it is a wonder that Europeans have survived at all. The human will to live and to be happy will naturally turn away from or radically adapt such a dark religion.

At the turn of the first Christian millennium, a time of fevered eschatological expectations, nothing happened. Thinking people began to turn away from Christian symbols as wholly inadequate or contrary to the needs of human existence. The Grail movement resulted in a

number of dissident cults: the Cathars, Albigensians, Waldensians, Mystics (both within the Church<sup>204</sup> and without) and so forth. The established Church's response to this development was the rack and the stake. In disgust, the greatest minds of the age rejected Christianity and embraced the principles of science and reason, hence, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Others, still hoping that Christianity was true, turned to the printed Bible as their answer, hence, the Protestant Reformation. These two movements combined in the Anglo-American world to produce the Industrial Revolution and the modern age. We stand at the pinnacle of human achievement in meeting the physical needs of humanity. But mankind is still unhappy. What are we missing?

This condition was anticipated in the Grail legends, a collection of writings which also included the prophecies of Merlin. Merlin was a mentor and benefactor of King Arthur. Merlin was a Druid – a sorcerer and Magi – who understood that the magical age of nature was coming to an end and being displaced by rational man. Christianity was a part of this development because it taught that all

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<sup>204</sup> The “spiritual Franciscans,” as they are known to historians, was one such group.

magical powers were disarmed at the resurrection of Christ.<sup>205</sup>

Merlin is introduced in the final chapters of Emma Jung's study, *The Grail Legend*,<sup>206</sup> as a "Mercurius" figure who can change his form at will. Harkening back to the legends of the Druids who had shape-shifting capabilities (a power the Christian Patrick used against them), Mrs. Jung's interest lies in the problem of opposites. Mercury, of course, is the ancient god from the classical period whose speed and ability to change from one form and then suddenly into its opposite describes the need of creatures in nature to adapt in order to survive. Jung sees Merlin – who is the son of a union of incubus - as both a Christ and an Antichrist figure:

*It is remarkable how many features Merlin and the Mercurius of the alchemists have in common. Both are capable of infinite transformations. Both are now compared, now with Christ, now with the Antichrist. Both serve as analogues for the inspiring breath of the*

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<sup>205</sup> Ignatius: *Epistle to the Ephesians* 4:13-14

<sup>206</sup> Emma Jung and Marie-Louise Von Franz: *The Grail Legend* (Princeton University Press, 1970). Emma Jung was the wife of the world-renown psychologist, Carl Jung. Published after his death, her study of the Grail Romances still profoundly reflects the influence of his symbolic psychology.

*Holy Spirit, or are derided as false prophets. Both have the nature of the trickster, both are hidden away, both are the mysterious agent behind the transformation of the “King” and are connected with the gods of love. Both are associated with Saturn, and both engender or themselves fall victim to insanity. Finally, both represent the mystery of a “divine vessel” which serves as the object of men’s search. Both are connected with the experience of the divine in nature or in the unconscious.<sup>207</sup>*

In Jung’s account of Merlin’s story, we have a recapitulation of the cause of man’s fall: it was from the interference of a divine being. The serpent – a fallen angel teaching forbidden knowledge according to Christian dogma – was responsible for the fall from Paradise. Fallen angels and their mingling with earth-women (also teaching them the forbidden knowledge of the arts and sciences) led to the violence prior to the Flood of Noah. Merlin shares with the pre-Flood “Nephilim” a nature half human and half divine. The result is a clumsy combination of extraordinary powers with extraordinary

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<sup>207</sup>*Ibid*, p. 368-369. Taliesin, the bardic poet, is mentioned as Merlin’s pupil. Students of the Celtic Church will appreciate this connection.



vulnerabilities that lead to madness. In Christian dogma, Christ Himself is both human and divine and the Antichrist is, likewise, the son of Satan and of an unknown chosen woman.

As noted in an earlier chapter, the fallen angels interred themselves in inanimate objects, such as trees and stones, rivers and lakes, and the various “charms” of man’s making. This event gave rise to various superstitions and animistic beliefs in spirits, fairies, and other angelic beings inhabiting the things and forces of nature.

In contrast, the impression from the Biblical account and later commentaries is that had the human species been left alone, its happiness would have been assured. Over and over again, the Biblical witness suggests that the Holy Spirit has been given, not to impart divine powers to man, but rather to neutralize the *influence* of these demons upon the human mind and their malevolent power in nature.

Unintentionally perhaps, to acquire the nature of angels became the object of Christian aspirations. In its Manichean dichotomy between flesh and spirit – half human and half god – Christian dogma calls upon man to

finish the transformation, in most cases through a denial of the urges and wants of his human organism. Modern science has corrupted itself by nurturing this same hostility toward nature. It believes that nature is basically unfriendly to man's physical existence and must be conquered. Man is born with no fur, must be suckled and protected, and finds he cannot subsist without the making of tools. If he lives according to his beastly nature, he will surely perish. He must live by his wits.

Jung explains how Merlin becomes the "Antichrist":

*Medieval alchemy prepared the way for the greatest intervention in the divine world order that man has ever attempted: alchemy was the dawn of the scientific age, when the daemon of the scientific spirit compelled the forces of nature to serve man to an extent that had never been known before. It is the demonism of this spirit which destined Merlin for the role of Antichrist. He did not take on this role, however, because he withdrew from the world and its power politics and resolved to serve only God in his "Calidon."<sup>208</sup>*

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<sup>208</sup>*Ibid*, p. 392

It is not clear whether Jung sees the connection between the spiritual alchemy of Christian dogma with that of science and that fact confuses the role which she ascribes to Merlin. But one thing is certain, modern science is a continuation of the Christian apostasy and its alliance with state power. The patrons of science have always been the various elites which have existed in every culture since ancient times and their use of that knowledge has been to insure their own hegemony, not to serve humanity. In this sense, Merlin serves as an antichrist to the pseudo-Christ.

Jung ends her study of Merlin with his surrender of earthly power to embrace “Eros”: he falls in love with Morgana, a fairy to whom he has taught his magic. She uses it to betray him and entomb him forever in a stone. Merlin defeats Hubris only to be overcome by Eros.

With Merlin’s misfortune, we are prepared to confront the core message of the Grail Romances: **that Christianity has failed to unite doctrinally the wellspring of man’s life-force – his sexuality – with the quest for true spirituality.** By creating a false dualism between man’s spiritual aspirations and his sexual energy, Christianity has doomed the race to an

unacceptable psychological condition. Man has come to hate the very source of his life. In genetic engineering, cloning and test-tube babies, Augustinianism has triumphed. The source of life has now become a clinical application of rational thought and not the passion of the soul.

In the Grail Romances, this problem with sexuality (*Minne*) figures prominently in the Grail castle, as Jung calls it, the “Castle of Damsels”:

*A Queen grandmother and a superfluity of women and untried men (squires who have not yet become knights) all live in this magic castle, thus indicating a purely matriarchally structured region of the soul, which is compensated by Gauvain’s one-sided solar masculinity. Inwardly, the civilizing task of overcoming the more elementary forms of instinctuality has to be carried further.<sup>209</sup>*

Jung is referring to the immaturity of the Grail heroes, who only see women from the point of view of masculine pleasure, as in the Islamic world:

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<sup>209</sup>*Ibid*, p. 231

*At the time of the Crusades, the Christian Crusader knights came into close contact with the mysterious traditions of the East, and the solution of the problem of Minne as presented in the primitive institution of the harem must have made a deep impression on them, since in the Minnedienst they too were seeking a solution of the anima problem that should transcend Christian conventions. The harem, however convenient in many respects, is none the less far too primitive a solution. Certainly, sexuality is not repressed, but beyond that there is no individual psychic relationship between man and woman, therefore its adoption by the knights subject to the Minnedienst would have meant a regression.*

*The lion that attacks Gauvain, as well as the magic arrows of passion that wound him, can therefore be understood as a temptation to fall back into a primitive situation, in which the erotic problem appears to be solved on the sexual level, through polygamy, but at the price of sacrificing the possibility of psychic relationship.<sup>210</sup>*

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<sup>210</sup>*Ibid*, p. 232-233

With this interpretation, Jung has misdirected her concerns and the meaning of the Grail symbol. It is not to satisfy the immaturity of masculine pleasure for which the harem exists, but to diffuse the feminine capricious impulse. As in the case of Merlin and Morgana, when the man gives himself – his heart and soul – to only one woman, he is left alone at her mercy. Unintentionally perhaps, she will kill him and consume him by the irresistible embrace. Usually, men are no match for women in a one-on-one relationship. In the harem, no single woman can control him; thus, the husband – the king – is free to serve everyone. The female is forced to socialize in a domestic setting. Instead of viewing her husband as a potential rival, her attentions are turned to negotiating with her sister wives. The lord is protected from emotional dependency upon the harem by the “almah,”<sup>211</sup> who is not deceived by the ploys of coquetry and sympathy (e.g. Sarah and Hagar).

*[deleted paragraph in reference to esoteric tradition]*

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<sup>211</sup> A reference to a special class of virgins in the Biblical text described at length in the textbook edition.

The task of any ruler – whether husband or king – is to broker compromise between competing interests. Without compromise, society breaks-down in chaos.

To succeed as a broker, the ruler must command the respect and admiration of his subjects. If they do not perceive him as benevolent and wise and immune to manipulation, then they will not trust him with their best interests. Men will compromise and forfeit their interests, if by deferring them they have the hope of better benefits in the future. A ruler fails in this task if he cannot convince his subjects that a sacrifice today for the good of the whole will lead to greater rewards tomorrow.

In the Grail legends, the Fisher King, or the Grail King, has weakened and lost his ability to hold the opposites together. His “wound in the thigh” – his private parts – leads his opponents to believe that he no longer can perform the [*deleted portion follows – see textbook*]. And thus, the land descends into darkness.

## **Gender Conflict and Henosis**

*For the Lord himself being asked by a certain person, When his kingdom should come? answered, When two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within; and the male with the female, neither male nor female.*

-2 Clement 5:1

There are many things that Jesus said and did which are not recorded in the four *canonical* Gospels (John 20:20-21; 21:25). Some of those sayings are found in the Patristic writings: the writings of the Fathers of the Early Church. The text above may have been written by Clement of Rome, a disciple of Paul and Peter, and one of the early bishops of Rome. He is mentioned in the Bible (Philippians 4:3).

Some scholars believe 2 Clement is a spurious document, meaning, not really written by Clement. I think part of their problem is that they do not like what the Epistle says. Whether it was penned by Clement, or a later disciple (or perhaps even a son), the tradition that it is Clementine is



strong. It is also orthodox - except, seemingly, for the reference above.

We find validation for this saying of Jesus in the writings of Clement of Alexandria (not to be confused with the Clement I just mentioned), a Christian leader who accepted the above as Scripture and credited the question to Salome.<sup>212</sup> Clement lived during the 2nd Century and taught a catechetical school at Alexandria. Alexandria, Egypt succeeded Jerusalem as the center of Christianity during this time. He is an important witness.

What do these words of Jesus mean? Let me quote the rest of the text in 2 Clement to find his interpretation of what Jesus was teaching:

*Let us therefore await the kingdom of God betimes in love and righteousness, since we know not the day of God's appearing. For the Lord Himself, being asked by a certain person when His kingdom would come, said, "When the two shall be one, and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female, neither male nor female." Now "the two are one", when we speak*

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<sup>212</sup>**Stromateis Book III, 92-93: he cites the Egyptian Gospel as its source. Could this have been the "secret" Gospel of Mark?**

*truth among ourselves, and in two bodies there shall be one soul without dissimulation. And by “the outside as the inside” He meaneth this: by the inside He meaneth the soul and by the outside the body. Therefore in like manner as thy body appeareth, so also let thy soul be manifest in its good works. And by “the male with the female, neither male nor female”, He meaneth this; that a brother seeing a sister should have no thought of her as of a female, and that a sister seeing a brother should not have any thought of him as of a male. These things if ye do, saith He, the kingdom of my Father shall come.*

- 2 Clement 12<sup>213</sup>

Compare this with another version,

*Now "two are one", when we speak the truth to each other, and there is (without hypocrisy) one soul in two bodies: "And that which is without as that which is within"; - He means this: he calls the soul that which is within, and the body that which is without. As therefore thy body appears, so let thy soul be seen by its good works.*

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<sup>213</sup>**Lightfoot: *The Apostolic Fathers*, op cit. p. 48**

*"And the male with the female neither male nor female "; - He means this; he calls our anger the male, our concupiscence the female.*

*When therefore a man is come to such a pass that he is subject to neither the one nor the other of these (both of which, through the prevalence of custom, and an evil education, cloud and darken the reason,) But rather, having dispelled the mist arising from them, and being full of shame, shall by repentance have united both his soul and spirit in obedience of reason; then, as Paul says, there is in us neither male nor female . . . (here the text ends)<sup>214</sup>*

This Scripture became of interest to Clement of Alexandria in his polemic against the Gnostics. The Gnostics saw two options available to eliminate anger and desire, and thus neuter the human race. The one was eunuchism. By repressing sexual desire through asceticism and practicing pacifism, male and female could become obsolete.

The other was sexual license. By practicing free love, jealousy would be eliminated, and thus, anger. And by

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<sup>214</sup>*Lost Books*, op cit., translation credited to Archbishop Wake.

satisfying sexual desire and living in nudity, the human race would return to a primordial innocence. These Gnostics held that the simplicity of a "back-to-nature" lifestyle would produce a view of sex which operated as a normal biological function, rather than as "concupiscence" - a desire out of all proportion to ecological needs.

There is a kernel of truth in all heresies. But the Gnostics were not guided by Biblical law. Consequently, they fell into strange and destructive practices.

Clement responded that God ordained marriage and the family as disciplines to renovate the soul. In marriage, the covenant bond requires the man to look upon his wife as a brother does his sister, as with Abraham and Sarah. There is still sexual ardor, but it is tempered by a relationship, a friendship which prevents him from hurting her. Marriage provides the yoke which eliminates anger and lust. When the brother does not use his anger as a tool of domination and the sister does not use her sensuality as a tool of manipulation, then there is hope for unity.

There is more, however. The apocryphal Gospel of Thomas relates this same saying, but with more detail:

*Jesus saw infants being suckled. He said to his disciples, "These infants being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom." They said to him, "Shall we then, as children, enter the kingdom?"*

*Jesus said to them, "When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, and when you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male not be male nor the female female; and when you fashion eyes in place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and a likeness in place of a likeness; then will you enter (the kingdom)." <sup>215</sup>*

Jesus is offering an impossible invitation. We can enter the kingdom if we can make human limbs and create new creatures like God does. The answer to this paradox is that only God can bring you into the kingdom. Just as a little child has no control over his birth, so a Christian has no control over his entrance into the kingdom of God (John 3). Jesus is telling His disciples that their works will not

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<sup>215</sup>§II, 22 (from the Nag Hammadi Library)

get them into the kingdom. Only by God's sovereign will, can it be done.

Of course, Jesus may have been speaking in metaphor. In which case, interpreting the metaphors are not so easily done. But if we are looking for a way to merge the male and female into one, then there is one way described in the Bible - and only one: *the henosis*.<sup>216</sup>

Only in the bed chamber does the male and female become "one flesh" and cease to be only male and only female. In the "henosis" (the Greek term for "one flesh") - the union of coitus - the two become one. That was why the Ebionites, an off-shoot of the Jamesian Church, taught the moral superiority of marriage over celibacy. Celibacy and virginity do not provide the opportunity for the two sexes to become one in flesh and spirit (Malachi 2:14-15). Although most people do not understand the mystery of the *henosis*, yet when it is understood, it is the only means for this precept of Christ to be fulfilled. The kingdom cannot come until it has.<sup>217</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> The "henosis," as experienced between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, is the theme suggested by the picture on the front cover of this book.

<sup>217</sup> Phallicism is a concept identified with holiness in Semitic theology.

Returning to the Grail legends, Jung considers the significance of the enchanted bed encountered by the Grail heroes:

*The concept of a miraculous bed of this kind goes back to the legend of King Solomon who, according to the Song of Songs (3:7-8), possessed such a bed, which then became identified with his throne.<sup>218</sup> According to late Jewish legends, whoever mounted this throne unlawfully would be wounded by a lion. The throne is also described as a chariot or a Minnebett (bed of love). In alchemy this bed is identified with the alchemical vessel and with the Bride of God; it symbolizes the place of unification, of the unio mystica with the divine, a place which is also surrounded by infinite danger, where he who lacks understanding falls victim to his drives and affects (the lion). As the constructor of the bed, Merlin is here identical with Solomon.<sup>219</sup>*

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<sup>218</sup>**This association calls to mind the story of Adonijah's request for the hand of Abishag, David's young concubine. Solomon interpreted his brother's request as a design against his throne and had him killed (1Kings 2).**

<sup>219</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 391

Merlin lost his bid to achieve wholeness by Morgana's betrayal. He failed to find a trusted "almah" who could bring him his harem.

Covenant man must learn to unite the male and female principles. Marriage is the discipline which teaches this union. And it is manifested most intensively in the bed chamber. Thus, there is a liturgical value to the sexual union.

### **Sex in the Temple**

*Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD. . . Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD. . .*

*Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

- 1 Samuel 2:12, 17, 22



In the ancient world, sex with priests and priestesses and sex between priests and priestesses were a common practice. It was a part of their fertility religion. There were no priestesses appointed in Israel, so there was no sex between priests and priestesses. But there were women who worshipped and served at the tabernacle and later, at the temple. Sometimes, they had sex with the priests, but it was not a part of the religion of Israel, except during its periods of apostasy (1 Kings 15:12).

In the text above, we have a clear example of priests exploiting their positions to obtain sexual favors. They were also greedy in other ways. Earlier in this account (not quoted here), the sons of Eli are rebuked for stealing the sacrifices for their own use and depriving the worshippers of their portions. They were clearly corrupt and were using the priesthood as a means for personal gain, rather than as a service to God. But it did not represent the activity of a fertility religion.

Why did not Yahweh allow sex to be incorporated into public worship? Considering our study earlier on the sins of uncleanness in the Old Testament, semen was unclean. The spillage of seed in the sanctuary would have been as

offensive as defecating. But would such a ban exist now under the New Covenant, when the seed has been declared holy?

Most commentators still think mixing Christianity with sacramental sex is banned. Consider these words by one conservative theologian:

*In paganism, the marriage relation between a man and his god is seen in sexual terms. Thus, sexual relations are sacramental in pagan religions, and repeatedly in Scripture this “fertility cult” form of religion is warned against (for example, see 1 Sam. 2:22). Because of the Creator/creature distinction, there is no sexual relationship between God and man. The sexual relationship between man and woman symbolizes the Spiritual marriage between God and His bride. The act of this Spiritual marriage is not ritual fornication in a temple, but the communion meal. Eve was said in 2 Corinthians 11 to have committed fornication with the serpent; what she actually did was eat the serpent’s food. Similarly, the act of marriage between God and His Church is*

*nothing more and nothing less than the Holy Eucharist.*<sup>220</sup>

Apparently, this writer has forgotten the doctrine of the Incarnation. God the Father had sex with a woman. Of course, God did not make use of a penis and He probably did not experience an orgasm. But He did implant seed within Mary's body and to say that was not sex is to turn its definition on its head. In law, a man who has not discharged semen into his wife's body has not consummated the marriage. The historic understanding of sexual relations involves the transmission of the man's seed, not whether it feels good or not.

That the Holy Eucharist is the spiritual meaning of sex is a disingenuous and laughable attempt to avoid the sexual imagery of the Bible. Everyone knows that a wedding feast is followed by intercourse between the wedded spouses. Can we think of any wedding which ended with just a feast?

*He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth*

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<sup>220</sup>James Jordan: *The Law of the Covenant* (Institute for Christian Economics, Tyler, Texas, 1984), p. 259-260

*him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.*

This text is taken from John 3:29, where John the Baptist rejoices at the success of Christ's ministry. He is speaking allegorically, of course, but his point is this: the bridegroom has sex with the bride, not dinner. That is what marriage is all about; otherwise, a club (or a church) would be sufficient.

There are two principles you have learned in this book which should have enabled you to dismiss the assertion by the commentator quoted above. First, the dual nature of Christ required a dual fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies. Jesus had to marry the cosmic church according to His Divine nature, but he also had to marry a daughter of Zion – representing the Messianic Church – according to His human nature.

Second, we are called to walk in Christ's footsteps that our Father's will might be done "on earth as it is in heaven." Made in the image of God, we manifest that image in our mundane relationships. We are called to

ritually manifest that image in our worship. When it comes to ritual sex, that is why God gave us the Song of Solomon and the Feast of Tabernacles: “as above, so below.” Unlike the Gnostic cults, however, which were hostile to acts resulting in procreation (they practiced deviant sex), the Covenant People are called “to be fruitful and multiply.” Our sexual acts of consecration will rejoice in that fertility.

It ought to be added, although it should be obvious to the reader at this point in the discussion that the sex rituals of Israel occurred at the royal palace and in the private booths during the Feast of Tabernacles, not in the Temple. **The Temple was not the appropriate location because the temple was Yahweh’s palace, the place of His throne and His bed, not the bed of any other man.** It is very likely that the Virgin Mary conceived before her first menstruation and that her Divine encounter occurred while she was still at the temple.

The same holds true for today. If these rites are restored to Christian worship, they would be appropriate only in the bedchamber of a home church environment.

## **Restoring Hierogamy**

*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.*

- Mark 8:35

*And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*

- Luke 1:38

In searching for a Biblical model for marriage, the previous chapters have provided a suggestive sampling of various examples and laws in the Bible which have offered us guidance. But there is in human nature the desire for an all encompassing principle which provides unity to the whole. This is true of any system or discipline of inquiry - whether it is science, law, theology, music, and so on. The human spirit is ever on a quest of understanding, and

understanding requires a logical connection of everything to everything else.

When it comes to marriage, Christian leaders have argued that it is meant to be an analogy of Christ's relationship to the Church. This has been their unifying principle. Christ is the bridegroom and the Church is the bride. In previous chapters, we have discovered the entire inadequacy of this paradigm. It represents only one half of the Creedal equation; for it recognizes a relationship which manifests Christ in His Divine nature, but not in His human nature.

Through the centuries, Christian heretics have rejected this view and have sought a different standard in a very human Jesus and in His real or imagined relationship with Mary Magdalene. They have erred to the other extreme: one which emphasizes Christ in His human office of Messiah to the neglect or even denial of His Divine nature.

Our journey through the previous chapters should have taught this certainty: that Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets in their entirety in *both* His human and Divine natures. When it comes to marriage as an institution, we see that the Church Fathers have favored it with

ambivalence, preferring celibacy. Very early - somewhere in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> Century - the Church surrendered itself to the doctrines of the Mahuzzim heresy. The values extolled in the Old Testament were inverted in a denial of our humanity to embrace the quest for an angelic nature.

Unlike the heretics within the Church and without, **Grail theology teaches that hierogamy was first manifested in the relationship which occurred between the Father in heaven and the Virgin Mary.** While we find perverse attempts at hierogamy among the "sons of God" and the "daughters of men" (Genesis 6) and valid types among the messianic figures of the Old Testament (Abraham, Solomon, etc.) and then analogously with the nation of Israel, it is only with Yahweh and His carnal knowledge with this peasant girl that we find a true example and the fulfillment of hierogamy in the history of mankind. This was described as one of the great mysteries of the Gospel by the early Fathers which they, being separated from the esoteric church, admittedly did not understand.

As the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus established the doctrine of hierogamy in the Church, both in the mystical



body and in the corporate body. In the mystical body, as the Divine Logos, the Church of the entire cosmos has been finding its unity in the headship of Christ over all things (1 Corinthians 15; Ephesians 1). In the corporate body - the Church as the messianic harem - Christ is imperceptively and irresistibly effusing His undefiled human nature throughout the human race. This began with His carnal knowledge of Mary Magdalene, the daughter of Zion, and continues through the offspring resulting from that union. When this process has reached its conclusion, then shall we have what has been called "the manifestation of the sons of God."<sup>221</sup>

Following in the footsteps of our Lord, we find firmly established the law of the kingdom pertaining to marriage. The bishops of the Desposyni - unlike the ecclesiastical orders of later times - were clearly meant to continue this practice of hierogamy at the symbolic or human level ("Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven"), either personally, as the *go'els* (the kinsmen-redeemers) of the "the widows" or as stewards of the Church's virgins in arranging their marriages with worthy Christian men.

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<sup>221</sup> Here is yet another topic developed in the textbook.

The implications of this practice are somewhat troubling to the modern moralist. For several generations, we have been inculcated with the notion that matrimony ought to be an individual choice in the pursuit of personal happiness. The customs of arranged marriage, early marriage, harems, and so on are regarded as relics of a barbarous age. Yet, in spite ourselves, we find these practices still among us, although subliminated and labeled with euphemistic terms. We don't call women "concubines"; we call them mistresses or lovers. We abhor early marriage, yet our daughters still lose their virginity before their sixteenth birthdays. We despise polygamy, yet we divorce and remarry two or three times. We anathemize homosexuals, yet we exploit their talents, as the eunuchs of old, in the civil service and in the professions.

Why has marriage as an institution failed in the modern world? What is the cause of all marital problems? ***It is self-will. The failure of any relationship occurs when both parties stop compromising.***

The freedom of the individual, free-will, democracy, investment economics and associated concepts have

institutionalized selfishness in our culture. **The central doctrine of modernist society is the very cause of its failure.** The exaltation of the self, that every person must look out for himself, has been imbedded in a perverse way and has made it impossible to sustain long-lasting relationships.

Lest I am misunderstood, let me hasten to add that Grail theology teaches all of these doctrines: free moral agency, individual freedom, a free market, libertarianism. These doctrines are core teachings which historically originated with the Grail phenomenon. So then what has gone wrong?

**The new wine has been put into old wineskins.** The traditional institutions of the Augustinian church and the hierarchical state cannot take the place of people, the clan and the village. As artificial persons, they compete and then corrupt the relationships between real people.

Individual freedom has been turned into mass psychology. The free market has come to mean the capitalism of corporate empires. Libertarianism has been replaced by democracy and the tyranny of the majority.

The answer is found in restoring the right of people to covenant together, to swear fealty to their chosen leaders, and to restore the customs and sacraments outlined in this book.

But in our institutional age, people who take one another seriously and who want to live close to each other – or even with each other - are treated with contempt. Leaders who accept this responsibility are depicted as cult leaders. They are not cult leaders. They are simply institutional competitors with the state and church. These institutions want to control people's thoughts. The state uses processes of indoctrination within public education and the military to win allegiance. The church uses oratory and other sensory dependencies, such as music, to advance itself, especially among children and vulnerable women. And then it creates social dependencies. Working in tandem, these two institutions control the definition of what is right and wrong. People who think outside of the box are suspect as sinister antisocials. It is a control process so successful that it is not even recognizable from within.

Since most marriages are founded upon self-will and the quest for personal happiness, they will end whenever the

reservoir of mutual attraction is used up. In every case of divorce, this principle is operational.

Selfishness is the essence of the sinful heart. Charles Finney, among America's greatest theologians, developed his whole theological system around the understanding of how the human will is corrupted by selfishness and how it can be liberated from it. The remedy is disinterested benevolence: love without consideration of what can be returned. But it is love guided by the wisdom of God and a surrender to His Providence. What has God revealed about marriage?

The believer must rely upon God's providential care of His children. We are to marry in the faith. In so doing we honor our Lord. In a general sense, all Christian marriages are hierogamy because they establish the Lordship of Jesus Christ - the master of the *mishpachah* - over the marriage. However, lacking Biblical definition, most marriages within the faith differ little from those outside of the faith because the "faith" itself is too fuzzy.

In a historical sense, hierogamy was marriage to a holy man, even if it required polygamy and other "indecencies."

For our purposes, it is marriage as a form of altruism: the attempt to serve a greater good in the conjugal union.

Some may want to continue the old hierogamy with a holy man. The problem, of course, is in defining who that "holy" man might be. What kind of standard shall we use? Has this book not suggested the answer to that question in searching out *moreh ha-zedek* (a teacher of righteousness)? If the holy man is asking the right questions (How shall we then live? - Ezekiel 33:10) and is a student of the Torah as well as the Gospels, then one is on the right track in finding a spiritual and judicial covering. Ought not such a man be enthroned to become a *melech ha-zedek* (Melchisedec: king of righteousness)?

Not everyone can come to any certainty on the right spiritual leader. Therefore, hierogamy would say choose *marriage by lottery*. In this we see the old Amish practice of choosing leadership by casting lots. That was how the apostolic replacement for Judas was decided. A leader and then a spouse could be chosen using the same process. It certainly couldn't be any worse than the era of "mail-order" brides.

Why can't a group of likeminded people covenant together and choose their spouses by this method? If they are weak in faith, let them choose new spouses every sabbatical year.

What of the children? Remember, this would be a covenant group, not necessarily living in the same house, but living in close proximity in a village or neighborhood setting. It should be arranged in advance that the children are wards of the entire body in order to maintain a continuity of family life.

Strangely, liberals are more open to other forms of family structure. Hilary Clinton was right. It *does* take a village to raise a child. Most conservatives are the "law and order" types who prefer the status quo. They cannot come to terms with the idea of hierogamy because they lose control. Conservatives love control, but they will lose it anyway in a divorce or in teenage rebellion. Hierogamy requires a personal surrender to the providence of God.

That is why hierogamy in its purest form is not for everyone. To borrow from the Parable of the Sower, some bear thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, and some a hundred-fold. Some build with gold, silver and precious stones; others

build with wood, hay, and stubble. Some people are eunuchs; others are concubinists (divorce and remarry). Monogamy through arranged marriage is a higher spiritual discipline, but polygamy is even higher. In polygamy, men do not see divorce as an option. The polygamist husband must still love and care for the woman who may please him less. It restricts his self-will, as it does for the wives, as well, who must defer to one another for the attentions of their husband.

But higher than all of these forms of marriage is hierogamy; for in hierogamy, you have complete surrender to the providence of God for both the man and the woman. It is a system which only the most spiritual will dare to embrace, yet it is the most rewarding, as the witness of our Lord's example would seem to suggest.



## **CONCLUSION**

Regrettably, we do not live in a judicious age, when people will make the effort to understand the position of an opponent. This is especially true of extremists among the clergy and in the ranks of theologians which man our seminaries. Although some will be intrigued and even supportive at first to the proposition of a married Jesus, it is inevitable that reactionary elements within their respective denominations will demand a response which will condemn this re-emergence of Grail theology as an unchristian heresy.

However, it is also true that organized religion no longer controls the culture. In our age of freedom, the yearning for a positive faith which reaches every facet of our lives, including our sexuality, will prevail eventually. As a truly human Jesus is continually portrayed in our literature, cinema and the arts, people will become more comfortable with the idea. In time, the human spirit can overcome its own prejudices.

This book represents an important advance in the discussion on this question. Until now, proponents have been writers with dubious commitments to historic Christianity. In this text, the reader found a loyalty to the Scriptures, the Creeds, and the fundamental truths of the faith. In demonstrating that an orthodox faith demands a married Jesus and that denying His married status is itself to traffic in heresy, the Christian is challenged with the same cry of the Reformation: *sola scriptura, tota scriptura*. A right understanding of the Bible – which requires using the cultural standards of the Old Testament to interpret the stories of the New Testament, rather than using the categories of Hellenistic thought – liberates us from the biased dogma of a compromised Church.

In 1620, before the Pastor John Robinson sent away his faithful followers on a journey which made them the first American Pilgrims, he surveyed the condition of the Reformation churches and warned them of their complacency and unwillingness to embrace new truth (according to Winslow's account):

*We are now ere long to part asunder, and the Lord knoweth whether ever he should live to see our faces again. But whether the Lord had appointed it or not, he charged us before God*

*and his blessed angels, to follow him no further than he followed Christ; and if God should reveal any thing to us by any other instrument of his, to be as ready to receive it, as ever we were to receive any truth by his ministry; for he was very confident the Lord had more truth and light to break forth out of his holy word. He took occasion also miserably to bewail the state and condition of the Reformed churches who were come to a period in religion, and would go no further than the instruments of their reformation. As for example, the Lutherans, they could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so also, saith he, you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them, a misery much to be lamented . . . **For saith he, it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.***

- Emphasis added

It is impossible to know whether the Pilgrim's would ever have approved of the married Jesus

doctrine, but following Robinson's advice, they certainly would have allowed the proposition on the table for debate.

The doctrine of hierogamy has been sketched only so briefly in this abridged edition. The meaning of the phallic Christ to the institution of marriage has not been adequately explored in these pages. If you believe that the proposition of a married Messiah stands on solid ground, you are urged to make the investment and purchase the unabridged, textbook edition of *Hierogamy & the Married Messiah*.

Within its pages, you will find more evidence supporting the case that Jesus was married. But you also will find why the doctrine became the esoteric tradition of the Church and why it is now critical that it be restored to Christian teaching. The world needs a new paradigm for marriage, family life, and social organization. The doctrine of hierogamy can lead the way.

## APPENDIX A

The following appeared as *The Cambrian Peshier* for Holy Week of 2005.

### The Doctrine of the Bridegroom

*Behold, the bridegroom cometh; Go ye out to meet him!*

- Matthew 25:6

Brethren:

One of the problem passages for classical Christianity is the one found in Luke 5:33-35 (cf. Matthew 9:14; Mark 2:18):

*And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?*

*And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?*

*But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.*

This text leaves us with unanswered questions. The accounts in Matthew and Mark have the disciples of John coming to Jesus with this question. Why were they following John instead of Jesus? Better yet, why wasn't John following Jesus?

If John truly received the spiritual vision at the baptism of Jesus that announced He was the Son of God, why would John continue any longer with his mission? It had become superfluous as soon as the Messiah was introduced. Indeed, according to John's Gospel, he told two of his disciples, "Behold, the Lamb of God", and they promptly left John to follow Jesus (John 1:35-40). Why would John continue in a ministry which competed with Jesus for followers?

This anomaly calls to mind the old religious sects in the Middle East, such as the Mandaeans, which believe that John and Jesus were rivals. Their traditions are very old and cannot be simply dismissed as the latest fad in liberal theology. While we do not see a rivalry in the Gospels - for John says "He must increase, and I must decrease" (John 3:30) - we do catch a glimpse of it here among their disciples.

We also catch a glimmer of doubt in John when he was in prison; for he sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He were the true Messiah "or do we look for another?" (Luke 7:19).

The early fathers tell us that Simon Magus, the alleged arch-rival of Peter and a proto-Gnostic, was a disciple of John who claimed to be John's successor (e.g. see the *Homilies* and *Recognitions of Clement*). Fantastic claims of miraculous powers were ascribed to him, such as the ability to float in the air. He also claimed divine powers of his courtesan, Helena, who, we are told, he exalted to some kind of goddess.

All of this is suggestive of a rift between the movement which originated with John and with the Jesus movement.

There could be two explanations for this.

First, the Dead Sea Scrolls have enlightened us to the fact that the Essene community, of which John was a part if not its leader, believed that there were to be two Messiahs: a kingly messiah of the House of David, and a priestly messiah of the House of Levi (ref. Isaiah 33). If this was the case, then we can understand John's confusion. Thinking that he might be the priestly messiah whose mission was to inaugurate the reign of the kingly messiah, he would have continued with his baptism ministry until Jesus was ready to enter Jerusalem and assume His throne. At such time, Jesus would have summoned John to anoint Him as Israel's king and to reform the worship at the temple. When John was cast into prison, he would have naturally wondered why Jesus was doing nothing to liberate him.

Second, less likely, but still possible, is the notion that this was a strategic move to confuse the opposition. This was exactly the case with Herod, who thought that Jesus was John raised from the dead. Until John's death, Jesus did not have a separate public identity. It was John who drew the attacks from the Establishment.

If John would have made an immediate merge of his following with that of Jesus, public attention would have been all focused on Jesus. John had the attention of the religious and civil authorities. It provided at least a year for Jesus to define His teachings for His disciples.

Here, Essene theology was defective in its Messianic doctrine. The reason they saw two messiahs was because they were looking for a restoration of the old institutional order which existed during the time of David and Solomon. At that time, church and state existed side-by-side and provided institutional support for the other.

That system had failed. It was God's intent to "turn the heart of the fathers to their children, and the heart of the children to their fathers" (Malachi 4:6). God wanted the restoration of the old

patriarchal system of the pre-Mosaic period in which fathers were the kings and priests of their own household. That could only happen if there was a restoration of the Melchisedecal priesthood.

### **Is the Bridegroom with us?**

The Gospels challenge us with this contradiction: Jesus told His disciples just before His Ascension, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20). How can we reconcile that assurance with the one above in which we are told a time would come when He would be gone? Has the Bridegroom been taken away or hasn't he?

If we look at the fact that the Apostles practiced fasting after Pentecost, we would have to say that the Bridegroom has been taken away. Jesus is not with us.

On the other hand, if Jesus is truly with us, as He promised in His parting Commission, then why are we fasting? The Bridegroom is still with us.

Of course, commentators will say that Christ is with us "in spirit." He isn't "really" with us like He was when He was physically present with His disciples.

I'm willing to go along with that idea. But what we are then saying is that the idea of the "bridegroom" requires a corporeal presence in which a "spiritual" presence is insufficient. If Jesus is with us "in spirit", then He is not with us as the bridegroom, which means that to be a bridegroom, He must be physically present.

Dispensationalists will add another element that the symbolism of Jesus as the bridegroom will be fulfilled when He "raptures" the Church and then rules with them in the current city of Jerusalem during the Millennium. This all sounds very nice and sweet but it presents us with another problem: John's disciples were fasting and the disciples of Jesus were not. Does this mean that everyone



in the world during the Millennium must continue to fast, except for the ones who get to see the physical Jesus every day? The disciples of Jesus and John were separated by just a few miles. Apparently, the bodily presence of Jesus on Earth did not make everyone "the children of the bridechamber" whose "bridegroom" was with them. The disciples of John did not have a bridegroom. Nor did the Pharisees. But the disciples of Jesus did.

What this suggests is that the Biblical concept of the bridegroom is not something which can be satisfied by an analogy of Christ with the Church. Perhaps, as the Divine Logos, there is some significance to a spiritual union with the cosmic Church (whatever that might be), but the office of the Bridegroom is a human function which can only be fulfilled in a human counterpart.

On this point, once again, the Creeds - Chalcedon in particular - become important. We are taught that Christ had two natures, one human and one divine, in a perfect union "without confusion, without change, without division, without separation." This fact mandated the Incarnation. God simply could not assume a human function in His deity without the Incarnation. The Divine was not and could not be mingled and confused with the human. When Jesus defecated, He did so in His human nature, not His Divine nature. Likewise, when He engaged in sexual intercourse, He did so in His human nature, not in His Divine nature. Yet, in these completely human activities, He was in each and every moment in complete and perfect union with His Divine nature, such that, as the Creeds say, in His person, He bore our infirmities and shared in our joys.

### **Why is there no Bridegroom?**

This idea of fasting in the absence of the bridegroom has an interesting history in prophetic literature. In texts, such as those in Isaiah and Jeremiah, the paramount sign of Divine blessings upon

a society is the "bridegroom emerging from the bedchamber" (Psalm 19:5):

*For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.*

- Isaiah 62:5

*I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*

- Isaiah 61:10

In the inverse, a society which lacks the bridegroom is one which is under a Divine curse:

*Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.*

- Jeremiah 7:34

Jeremiah repeats this exact expression twice more as a poetic refrain in 16:9 and 25:10, and then in 33:10 to describe a reversal of fortunes for Israel under the New Covenant:

*Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant, and without beast,*

*The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that*

*shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth forever . . .*

And tying this text with the Christian era, in verse 15 he adds,

*In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land . . .*

(The rest of the chapter describes the eternal covenant of God with the descendants of David and with the Levites).

Lest it be lost to the reader, let me point out that the "voice" of the bride and the bridegroom refers to the sounds of people experiencing sexual pleasure. This rather pornographic imagery - of a man having sexual relations with the new addition to his harem - is the *creme de la creme* of the Golden Age according to Biblical values. The time for which men must fast in mourning is the time when men no longer have harems. It is the time when there is no longer the shout of the bridegroom.

Our understanding of the bridegroom cannot be disconnected from the fact that Israel was a polygamous culture in which men aspired to have as many wives and concubines as they could support. The cultural icons of that time - the "rich and famous" so to speak - were the kings and their royal harems, which everyone sought to emulate. The size of the harem became the measure of God's blessings upon their society and the invitation to join a harem, an honor which every daughter of Israel coveted:

*Therefore do the virgins love thee. Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.*

- Song of Solomon 1:4

*There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number.*

- Song 6:8

Following through with this symbolism, we see then that the Church fasts in mourning when there are no longer any harems. It is not so much that Jesus is absent, but rather that the *bridegroom* is absent. In this respect, Jesus is not arguing that His absence will require men to fast - for He has never left us. Rather, it is the taking away of this doctrine - the doctrine of the bridegroom - which He prophesied would require His people to fast. If Jesus cannot be the bridegroom for everybody, even in the Millennium (just as He wasn't for the disciples of John), it follows that there must be more bridegrooms. Jesus was the first of many bridegrooms.

The doctrine of the bridegroom is integral to the doctrine of dominion. The Dominion Covenant which God has given to righteous men requires they "be fruitful and multiply" and "to subdue and have dominion" over the earth. Dominion is predicated by the physical presence of he who has the right of dominion. Someone must physically set his hands to the plow before the earth can be cultivated.

We see then that the Dominion Covenant follows a logical progression from "fruitfulness" (sex) to "multiplication" (childbirth) to "subjugation" (work) to "dominion" (rulership). A man who has no legal right to marry and have sexual intercourse is a man who has been denied dominion. That is why Israelite men were the greatest men who have ever lived in the history of mankind. They were a culture of polygamists who maximized the ability of their society to provide harems as a reward to the men who worked the hardest. Israel's decline first began when it adopted Canaanite religion and was no longer willing to sustain this custom.

A society which finds that it must ration its marriageable women to one per household to keep the peace is a society which is in decline and under God's curse. Aided by religious dogma, the West - by that, I mean "of European origin" - has engaged in a centuries-long quest of self-immolation as it systematically weeds-out males with polygamous tendencies. The result has been a matriarchal and feminist culture which cannot sustain itself. Without immigration, these nations will be gone in a single generation.

Herein lies the key to the doctrine of deliverance and ushering in the millennial kingdom: restoring the doctrine of the bridegroom. It is prophesied in Isaiah 4:1-2,

*And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying,  
We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us  
be called by thy name, to take away our reproach.*

*In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and  
glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely  
for them that are escaped of Israel.*

There is much instruction in this simple text which I must save for another time, but in short, it affirms that polygamy and women who bind themselves together to form harems is the very mechanism which ends the age of mourning and fasting - the age of Divine judgment - and brings in the age of rejoicing. If this is the case, it shouldn't surprise us that satanic delusions have been foisted upon the Church to attack this very doctrine as a wicked perversion. The Church finds itself unable to reenter the Garden of God because it neither understands nor wants to understand how this ancient custom is intended to work. For that reason, it continues to endure demonic oppression and the fate of the wicked. The glories of the Millennium will be left to be enjoyed by the obedient remnant.

During this season of the Holy Week, let us not forget that it was the time when the bridegroom was taken away. Notwithstanding the Resurrection, we still lack the bridegroom, but only because we have rejected the doctrine. This is something we can do to fulfill Biblical prophecies in a positive way. Some Bible prophecies can only be fulfilled by our obedience. This is one of them.

A Servant of Jesus,

James

## APPENDIX B

The following appeared as *The Cambrian Peshier* for Annunciation of 2004.

### On Hierogamy

*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.*

- Luke 9:24

*And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*

- Luke 1:38

Beloved:

Grail theology is Pelagian; it teaches that each individual is endowed with free moral agency - free will. Pelagianism is also Druidism; for the Druids taught that man's ability to originate choice is what separates him from the beasts of the earth. It is what enables him to exercise lordship over creation. He has instincts, but he also has the power to say "no" to his instincts.

The Culdees were Druids who converted to Christianity. Christianity taught the fall of mankind from the state of dominion. Man abused his freedom; therefore, his will was wounded. The first Culdees were Pelagians. Pelagius - known as "Morien" among the Welsh - was the son of a Druid and the head of Britain's largest center of Christian instruction (Bangor).[\[1\]](#) He believed that man was a fallen creature unable to harmonize his will with the created order. Pelagius taught that man needed

spiritual enlightenment before he could be restored to his pre-fall condition. The will of man is changed by the action of truth upon the soul. Christ came to reveal that truth.

Augustine was Pelagius' main rival. He accused Pelagius of not believing the doctrine of Original Sin. Augustine lied. Pelagius did believe in Original Sin; he just did not believe Augustine's weird interpretation of it. Augustine taught that Original Sin was sexual in nature. Like most of the Latin fathers, he had a pathology about sex. The Pelagians didn't see anything inhuman or sinful about mankind's disposition to enjoy sex. The Celtic Britons represented a tribal culture and had a relaxed attitude toward sexuality - so relaxed, in fact, that the Romans accused them of not having marriage at all.

*The mixed intercourse in the married state was the subject of a taunt addressed by the Empress Julia Augusta (wife of Severus) to the wife of Argentocoxus, a Caledonian; but the latter lady retorted that, while in Britain they had openly intercourse with the best men, the Romanae had secretly adultery with the worst men.*

- Arthur Whatmore, *Insulae Britannicae*, p. 64

The Christians of the classical world (Greco-Roman) were uptight about sex. In contrast to the tribal Celts, they lived in an imperial culture (a culture of master/slave, conqueror/conquered). Relational boundaries were carefully marked and institutionalized. The battle over Pelagianism demonstrated the stark contrast between these two cultures. The traditional leaders of Christianity had a lot of repressive rules on sexual behavior to deal with the pathologies of urban society.[\[2\]](#) The Celts were a people of villages and clans. The rules of the Church Councils didn't fit their societies which were lived close to the earth and the rhythms of nature.



The Pelagians could tell the difference between *human* nature and *sinful* nature. The Augustinians confused the two. In the minds of the Pelagians, what was human was not necessarily sinful. Sex was human, therefore, it was innocent. For the Augustinians, sex was sinful because it *was* human and not angelic. Augustinians had a *metaphysical* definition for sin: whatever was imagined not to be the nature of the heavenly hosts. Since angels are, presumably, asexual, eunuchism is the higher earthly calling because it, too, is asexual.

In contrast to this, the Pelagians had a *moral* definition for sin: whatever was contrary to the law of God. "Of all the trees, thou mayest freely eat, except . . ." For the Pelagians, Christ has made us free from the law of sin and death. The children of God may now eat freely in the Garden, except for what He forbids. The Pelagians said, "What is not expressly forbidden is allowed". The Augustinians said, "What is not expressly allowed is forbidden."

Who was right: Pelagius or Augustine? Considering that Jesus said "the law [the sabbath] was made for man, not man for the law", my vote is with Pelagius.

Now comes the paradox. **Mankind is given free will and then invited to surrender it to God.** This is not a surrender of the capacity to choose; it is not an obliteration of man's essence. Man is not required to surrender his humanity, only his claim to divinity and the right to make his own moral law. As in our text above, Jesus tells us the law of life. It comes through self-sacrifice. By surrendering our own interests for the good of the Christ, we regain them. And how is that possible? It is possible because Christ has taken the journey first. His self-sacrifice has imparted life to us. Our self-sacrifice will impart life to others. "The parents ought to lay up for the children, not the children for the parents" (2 Corinthians 12:14).

When it comes to marriage and sexual relationships, what is the single cause of failure? When it is distilled and reduced to a single

principle, the cause of marital failure is **self-will**: the quest of people looking out for their own happiness. The modern philosophy of marriage is skewed because we are taught that marriage, as an institution, is supposed to make us happy.

What did the young peasant girl say to the angel when he told her God was going to make her pregnant? "I want an abortion"? No. "I want the going rate for surrogacy?" No. "God, I'm having your baby. You'd better pay child support and give me an easy life." No. She said, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word."

The doctrine of hierogamy can be summed up in this proverb: **"Marriage by lottery, love without limits. Marriage by choice, love in chains."** God crossed the boundary between the human and the Divine to manifest His love for the world. Because Mary surrendered her girlish dreams to a union most unnatural, she became the mother of the bridegroom, and the bridegroom of the bride.

Only when you read my book, [\*Hierogamy & the Married Messiah\*](#), will you understand this riddle.

A Servant of Jesus,

James

### **Footnotes:**

[1] See my book [\*The Holy Conspiracy: Christian Druidism & Cultural Alchemy\*](#) for more about Pelagius.

[2] An example is the veiling of women. Among the Celtic Christians, women were not required to wear veils. In fact, in Celtic villages it was not an unusual sight to see bare-breasted women. Contrast that with Tertullian's rule that a woman must wear a blanket over her head and completely cover her face when seen in public.

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