

Appendix A

The Preexistence of the Messiah

Yahushua the messiah preexisted as the *eloah* or *ruach* being called Yahu Yahweh.¹ In Scriptures he is one of two ruling *eloahi*, being the son of father Yahweh, with whom he is אֱחָד (akhad; unified).² Together they are called Yahweh *eloahi* (a collective noun).³ It was in his *ruach* form as the angel Yahu Yahweh that Yahushua made the Covenants of Promise with Abraham. When speaking with Moses, this angel called Yahweh said, “I am the *eloahi* of your fathers, the *eloahi* of Abraham, the *eloahi* of Isaak, and the *eloahi* of Jacob.”⁴ At the time that the angel sent Moses to the Israelites in Egypt, he told him, “Thus shall you say unto the sons of Israel, Yahweh *eloahi* of your fathers, the *eloahi* of Abraham, the *eloahi* of Isaak, and the *eloahi* of Jacob, has sent me

¹ See Intro. to Three Vols., pp. 2f, n. 4; Chap. I, pp. 7f, p. 7, n. 4; and App. C.

² Cf., Deut., 6:4, “Hear Israel Yahweh our *eloahi*, Yahweh is *akhad* (unified), 10:17, “for Yahweh your *eloahi*, he is the *eloahi* of the *eloahim*”; Zech., 14:9, “In the day there shall be Yahweh *akhad* (unified), and his name *akhad* (unified).” For this reason Yahushua said, “I and the father are one (unified)” (John, 10:30, 17:11, 21, and so forth). This form of oneness (*akhad*) is as in a marriage, e.g., Gen., 2:24, where Adam and Eve were *akhad* (one) flesh; cf., 1 Cor., 6:16f, 11:2f; Eph., 5:22–24. The early Ante-Nicene Christians also recognized two Yahweh’s, one uncreated and the other created. To demonstrate, Origen, *Dial. Heracl.*, 1f, speaks of the uncreated father and created son and notes that they are distinct from one another, yet they are one. Origen writes, “And the two deities become a unity.” Heraclides agreed that this was the Christian view and Origen gives the example of Adam and Eve being one in the flesh as a type of this unity (Origen, *Dial. Heracl.*, 2f). Also see Hippolytus, *Noetus*, 7, which notes that this oneness in the deity refers to two persons (the father and the son), and one power (the spirit).

³ The Hebrew generic term for deity is אֱלֹהִים (*eloah*; mighty being). The plural and collective noun forms are אֱלֹהִים (*eloahi*) and אֱלֹהִים (*eloahim*)—a collective noun being a collection of persons or things regarded as a single unit (e.g., family, army, and so forth). These terms and the title אֱלֹהִים (*el*; mighty one) have been indiscriminately glossed into English by the single word God. Each term actually has its own unique meaning (see SNY, chap. i). For example, *eloah* is singular and *eloahi* is plural. When *eloahi* is used in reference to the two Yahwehs, it becomes a collective noun, the two *eloah* being אֱחָד (*akhad*; “united” into one unit, unified) (HEL, p. 10; SEC, Heb. #258, 259), the same word used when a husband and wife are united in a marriage (Gen., 2:24; cf., Eph., 5:33–32; 1 Cor., 6:15–17), i.e., “Yahweh *eloahi* is *akhad* (unified)” (Deut., 6:4; Zech., 14:9). As a body of beings ruled by father Yahweh the collective noun *eloahim* is used, i.e., “Yahweh is the *eloahi* of the *eloahim*” (Deut., 10:17). The following are two examples, out of many, proving the existence of two Yahwehs: In Genesis, 19:24f, we read, “And YAHWEH RAINED upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire FROM YAHWEH out of the heavens.” Two Yahwehs are named—one Yahweh was on the earth, speaking to both Abraham and Lot (cf., Gen., 18:1–19:23); the other Yahweh was in the heavens. The Yahweh on the earth brought fire and brimstone down on the sinful cities FROM the Yahweh who was in the heavens. In Zech., 10:12, we are told that it is Yahweh who is speaking. This Yahweh then reports, “And I will strengthen them in Yahweh and in his name they shall walk, says Yahweh.” In this passage Yahweh the son is speaking. He notes that he will strengthen the Israelites in Yahweh the father and in his (father Yahweh’s) name they shall walk. One Yahweh, accordingly, is speaking of another Yahweh who has ownership of the sacred name. Also see above n. 2, and see SNY, chap. i; and TTY.

⁴ Exod., 3:2–6. Though he is called Yahweh in Exod., 3:4, 7, he is described as an angel in Exod., 3:2, and Acts, 7:30–35.

(Moses) unto you. This is my (the angel Yahweh's) name for עֹלָם (*olam*, the world-age) and this is my memorial unto all generations."⁵

Proof of His Preexistence

There are eight areas of proof demonstrating that Yahushua preexisted as the angel Yahu Yahweh.⁶

- First, Yahushua is said to have preexisted. John the baptist notified his followers that Yahushua existed “before me,”⁷ this despite the fact that John was conceived six months prior to Yahushua.⁸ Yahushua himself told the Jews that he existed “before Abraham,”⁹ and in a prayer to father Yahweh just prior to his death, Yahushua asked father Yahweh, “now glorify me father with yourself, with the glory which I had with you before the world was.”¹⁰
- Second, Yahushua is specifically identified as an *eloah* (θεός; deity) “manifested in flesh.”¹¹ Thomas, for example, calls him, “my sovereign and my *eloah*.”¹² The apostle John, in reference to Yahushua as the λογός (*logos*; innermost expression, word),¹³ writes:

In the beginning was the *logos*, and the *logos* was with *eloah* (the father), and the *logos* was an *eloah*. He was in beginning with *eloah* (the father) . . . And the *logos* became flesh, and tabernacled among us.¹⁴

Saul twice makes the claim that Yahushua is one of the two *eloah* called Yahweh (i.e., Yahweh *eloahi*).

Saul, bondman of Yahweh and the apostle of Yahushua the messiah according to the trust of the elect of Yahweh and the knowledge of the truth which is according to piety; in the hope of eternal life, which *eloah* (the father) who cannot lie promised before the ages of time, but manifested in its own

⁵ Exod., 3:15.

⁶ For the large body of evidence that Yahushua the messiah is the angel Yahu Yahweh see TTY.

⁷ John, 1:29–34.

⁸ Luke, 1:24–35.

⁹ John, 8:56–58.

¹⁰ John, 17:4f.

¹¹ 1 Tim., 3:16. Also see above Chap. I, p. 9, n. 25.

¹² John, 20:28.

¹³ That the term λογός (*logos*) refers to the innermost thought as spoken, see ILT, *Lex.*, p. 60, “used by John as a name of Christ, the Word of God, i.e., the expression or manifestation of his thoughts to man”; SEC, #3056, “something *said* (including the *thought*) . . . spec. (with the art. in John) the Divine *Expression* (i.e. Christ).” *Logos* is the Greek translation of the Hebrew term דְּבַר (*debar*) (see CS, 2, pp. 881–886). *Debar* means, “a *word*; by impl. a *matter* (as *spoken of*) or *thing*; adv. a *cause*” (SEC, Heb. #1697). If the reference was merely to speaking or answering then the Hebrew term אָמַר (*amar*) suffices (SEC, Heb. #559–562). *Debar* is the active thought of that which is spoken. It arises from one’s innermost thought. Therefore, as an example, the Ten Commandments are called the ten דְּבַרִּים (*debarim*; innermost thoughts, the plural of *debar*) (Exod., 34:28; Deut., 4:13, 10:4; cf., the LXX Exod., 34:28, Deut., 10:4, which gives λόγους, plural *logos*).

¹⁴ John, 1:1–2, 14.

seasons his *logos* (word, innermost expression = the messiah) in the proclamation which I was entrusted with according to the commandment of our saviour *eloah* (Yahushua).¹⁵

For the grace of *eloah* (father Yahweh) which brings salvation appeared for all men, instructing us that, having denied impious and worldly desires, discreetly and righteously and piously we should live in the present age, awaiting the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great *eloah* and saviour, Yahushua the messiah.¹⁶

Yahu is similar in kind to father Yahweh,¹⁷ i.e., he is also an *eloah* or *ruach* (spirit) being who exists in the image of father Yahweh¹⁸—a phrase referring to an offspring,¹⁹ and especially in this case a son who is sinless as father Yahweh is sinless.²⁰

Finally, both Yahushua's followers and others, as demonstrated by the ancient Shem Tob Hebrew edition of Matthew, either recognized or ridiculed his claim as בן אֱלֹהִים (*ben eloqim*; son of *eloahim*), בן הָאֱלֹהִים (*ben ha-eloqim*; son of the *eloahim*), בן הָאֱלֹהִי (*ben ha-elohi*; son of the *eloah*), and בן הָאֵל (*ben ha-el*; son of the *el*).²¹ All of these terms, whether singular or collective nouns, were translated into the Greek of the New Testament as singular forms of the Greek word for deity, namely, θεοῦ (*theou*), θεός (*theos*), etc.—thereby, calling him the “son of the deity,” knowledge of which was basic scriptural doctrine.²²

Indeed, Yahushua not only claimed that he was “the son of *eloahim*”²³ but also reported, “I and the father are one (*akhad* in Hebrew, i.e., unified).”²⁴ At hearing his claim, the Jews wished to stone him.²⁵ The grounds for this stoning

¹⁵ Titus, 1:1–4.

¹⁶ Titus, 2:11–13.

¹⁷ John, 5:17f, Yahushua “called *eloah* his own father, making himself ἴσον (*ison*; similar in kind) to the *eloahi*.” The term ἴσον (*ison*) means, “similar (in amount of kind),” “equal to, the same as,” “equal, like” (SEC, Gk. #2470; GEL, p. 384).

¹⁸ 2 Cor., 4:4; Col., 1:15–20.

¹⁹ Cf., Gen., 5:3.

²⁰ The father is perfect (Matt., 5:48) and Yahushua, like him, never sinned (1 John, 3:5; 1 Pet., 1:19, 2:21f; Heb., 4:15, 7:26, 9:14; 2 Cor., 5:21).

²¹ ST, Matt., 4:3, 8:29, 14:33, 16:16, 26:23, 27:40, 43, 54. In ST, the forms אֱלֹהִים (*eloqim*) and אֱלֹהִי (*elohi*) are used for אֱלֹהִים (*eloahim*) and אֱלֹהִי (*eloah*). Pious Jews often used אֱלֹהִי to deform the generic names of the deity (CAIB, p. 39, n. 3).

²² E.g., Matt., 14:33, 16:15–17; John, 1:34, 49, 11:27; as basic doctrine see 1 John, 4:15, 5:1–5, 12.

²³ John, 10:34–36, quoting Ps., 82:6. John, 19:7, “he made himself the son of *eloah*.”

²⁴ See above n. 2.

²⁵ John, 10:22–40. This passage reflects the fact that the Jews understood that when the messiah made the claim that he was the son of *eloahim* (i.e., the son of the deity) that he was claiming to be one of the *eloahi*. For example, the angel Yahweh is called the “son of אֱלֹהִי (*eloahir*; Aramaic for *eloahim*)” in Dan., 3:25. In the LXX the Aramaic collective noun אֱלֹהִים (*eloahin*) is rendered by the singular “θεοῦ (*theou*; deity).” That the Jews recognized that the son of the deity was the angel who possessed the divine name see the discussion of the Jewish writer Philo (mid-first century C.E.), *Conf.*, 28 §146, 147, *Mig.*, 31 §174, *Heir.*, 42 §205f. Another example of the doctrine of the lesser Yahweh among the Jews is found in the Apocalypse of Abraham, composed sometime between 70 C.E. and the end of the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 C.E. (OTP, 1, p. 683). While dealing with the story in Gen., 15:1–17, where we read that Yahweh revealed himself to Abraham and made a covenant with him, the Apocalypse of Abraham reports that this deity identified himself as “the angel Yahu-el (Yahu is *el*)” (Ap. Ab., 13:1, 10:3–8). The angel Yahu-el adds that he possessed “the ineffable name” (Ap. Ab., 10:3, 7f).

were twofold. The first charge was blasphemy,²⁶ because Yahushua said, “I am the son of *eloahim*.”²⁷ Since Yahushua was also saying that he was *akhad* with father Yahweh, the Jews understood his claim as “the son of *eloahim*” to mean that Yahushua was proclaiming himself to be the archangel carrying the sacred name, i.e., the second or lesser Yahweh. To demonstrate the Jewish understanding during this period, the mid-first century C.E. Jewish priest and writer Philo writes:

But if there be any as yet unfit to be called the son of the θεοῦ (*theou*; deity) let him press to take his place under his (the deity's) first-born, the *logos* (word, innermost expression), who holds the eldership among the angels, their archangel as it were. And many names are his, for he is called, “the beginning,” and (having) THE NAME of the deity (i.e., the name Yahweh), and (being) his *logos*, and the man after his image, and “he that sees,” that is Israel.²⁸

Philo refers to this archangel as our “controlling guide, the divine *logos* (word, innermost expression)”²⁹ and adds:

For as long as he (mankind) falls short of perfection, he has the divine *logos* as his leader; since there is an oracle which says, “Lo, I send my angel before your face, to guard you on your road, that he may bring you into the land which I have prepared for you: give heed to him, and hearken to him, disobey him not; for he will not withdraw from (i.e., pardon) you;³⁰ FOR MY NAME IS IN HIM (Exod., 23:20f).”³¹

The last line in the Hebrew text more precisely reads, “for he will not forgive your transgressions; for my name is within his midst.”³² The Jews, therefore, were fully aware of the archangel known as the son of the deity and the *logos* of father Yahweh. They clearly understood that he was the angel discussed in Exodus, 23:20–23, who carried Yahweh’s name, could forgive sins,³³ and to

²⁶ The Jewish charge of a blasphemy worthy of the death penalty was derived from their interpretation of an unauthorized use of the sacred name, see SNY, chap. xiii.

²⁷ John, 10:33, cf., 36–38. Also see Matt., 26:63, where the high priest and leaders of the Jews asked Yahushua if he was claiming to be “the messiah, the son of θεοῦ (*theou*; the deity—the ST has *ha el*)” (Matt., 27:40–43; Luke, 22:70). The angels and demons made a similar pronouncement (e.g., Matt., 8:29; Mark, 3:11, 5:7; Luke, 1:30–35, 4:41, 8:28).

²⁸ Philo, *Conf.*, 28 §146.

²⁹ Philo, *Mig.*, 12 §67.

³⁰ Philo and the LXX both read, “οὐ γὰρ μὴ ὑποστειλήται σε (*ou gar me upostiletai se*).” The word ὑποστειλήται (*upostiletai*) means, “draw back . . . take away, remove . . . shrink from” (GEL, 1968, pp. 1895f). The sentence refers to the angel not drawing back from punishing the disobedient. C. D. Yonge, accordingly, translates this verse to read, “for he will not pardon your transgressions” (Yonge, *Philo*, loc. cit.).

³¹ Philo, *Mig.*, 31 §174.

³² Exod., 23:21, “כִּי לֹא יֵשֵׁן לְפִשְׁעֵכֶם כִּי שְׂמִי בְקִרְבּוֹ.” The Heb. word קִרְבַּ (qereb), which is used in this verse, means, “the **inward part** of body, considered the seat of laughter . . . thoughts Je 4₁₄. . . **body, corpse** (of cows) Gn 41₂₁. . . **womb** (of pregnant woman) . . . **inner parts** of sacrificial animal Ex 12₉; **interior, middle** . . . **in (the midst of)**” (CHAL, p. 324). Therefore, the name of Yahweh is more than just on this angel, it is inside of him, i.e., part of his very being.

³³ After the death of the messiah, and in an effort to oppose the Christian argument, the rabbinic

whom the Israelites were to be obedient. On this point both Jews and Christians of the first century C.E. agreed. The Jews differed from the Christians in that they did not believe that Yahushua, who they saw as only a mortal man, was this archangel Yahweh.

This disagreement brings us to the second charge made by the Jews against Yahushua: “AND because you, being a man, you make yourself a deity (i.e., one of the *eloahi*).”³⁴ That is, by claiming that he and the father were *akhad* (one, unified), Yahushua was also making the claim that he was one of the Yahweh *eloahi*, for Yahweh *eloahi* is *akhad*.³⁵ Many Jews felt that his claim was impossible. How could Yahushua, since he was merely a man and mortal, be the angel Yahweh, the son of *eloahim* (*eloah*, *el*), that is, the son of the deity? The early Christians, of course, argued with the Jews that this preexistence of Yahushua as the angel Yahweh was precisely the case.³⁶

- Third, Yahushua was the creator.³⁷ By means of Yahushua, father Yahweh created all things.³⁸ It is said of father Yahweh, “because you did create all things, and for your will they are, and were created.”³⁹ Therefore, father Yahweh was speaking to Yahushua (Yahu Yahweh) when he commanded in Genesis, “Let us make man in our image.”⁴⁰ These verses prove that father Yahweh did the creating, but the statement, “Let us make man in our image,” also shows that there was another being involved in the project. As Ephesians and Hebrews observe, the father created the world “through Yahushua the messiah.”⁴¹

Therefore, the one providing the power and the instructions was father Yahweh and the one carrying out these orders was his son, the angel Yahu Yahweh, who later became Yahushua the messiah. As a result, Yahushua had to preexist as an *eloah* being and as part of the *eloahi* of the *eloahim*.⁴² These

Jews reinterpreted the words of Exod., 23:21. By using a rather strained exegesis, they now denied that the angel Yahweh could forgive sins (CTM, pp. 289f).

³⁴ John, 10:33.

³⁵ See above n. 2.

³⁶ E.g., Justin Mart., *Trypho*, 56:4, 58:3; Tertullian, *Marc.*, 5:19:3; Eusebius, *D.E.*, 5:5, 6:1, *P.E.*, 7:12; Origen, *Prin.*, Pref., 1:4; Hippolytus, *Noetus*, 5, 8, 14. These debates are even recorded in Jewish sources, e.g., B. Sanh., 38b (that these *minim* or heretics here were Christians see TS, pp. 138f; CTM, pp. 285–290).

³⁷ That the creator being was Yahweh, see Gen., 6:7; Isa., 42:5f, 43:1, 45:6–8, 54:6–17. It was the creator Yahweh who rested on the seventh day (Gen., 2:1–3; cf., Exod., 31:17).

³⁸ John, 1:3f, 10; Col., 1:15–18; Heb., 1:1f; Eph., 3:8f.

³⁹ Rev., 4:1–11, esp. v. 11, and cf., 10:5f.

⁴⁰ Gen., 1:26.

⁴¹ Eph., 3:8f; Heb., 1:1f.

⁴² Deut., 10:17, “for Yahweh your *eloahi*, he is the *eloahi* of the *eloahim*.” This statement reveals that the *eloahi* (a collective noun when used for the two Yahwehs) ruled over the *eloahim*, or body of *ruach* (spirit) beings (Ps., 104:4; Heb., 1:7). That the collective noun *eloahim* includes the *ruach* angels (cf., Heb., 2:5–9, and Ps., 8:5) is even affirmed by EJ, 2, p. 957. They are the sons of the *eloahim* (see Job, 1:6, 2:1, 38:7, cf., LXX; Gen., 6:2–5, cf., Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:3:1; Alex. LXX and Philo, *Gig.*, 2, “the angels of the sovereign (i.e., Yahweh),” called “Watchers” by the book of Jub., 4:15, 22, 5:1; “the angels, the children of heaven,” by 1 En., 6:2, and the “angels” who had “fallen away” from *eloah* in the discussion by the second century Christian writer Justin Mart., *Trypho*, 79:1). As a result, biblical scholars like R. A. Stewart, in the NBD, conclude that the expression sons of (the) *eloahim* “means simply angels” (NBD, p. 37). *Ruach* angels can behold the face of father Yahweh (Matt., 18:10) and are exceedingly numerous (Matt., 26:53; Heb., 12:22; Rev., 5:11; Ps., 68:17).

eloahi of the *eloahim*, who are also simply called *eloahim*, created the world and all the things in it.⁴³

- Fourth, Yahushua is identified with Yahu Yahweh. In a direct reference to Yahushua, John the baptist cites Isaiah, which states, “The voice of one calling in the wilderness, Prepare the road of Yahweh, make straight in the desert a highway for our *eloahi*.”⁴⁴ John’s comment, and his recognition that Yahushua had previously existed,⁴⁵ reveals that John the baptist knew that Yahushua was Yahu Yahweh, the son of Yahweh. Indeed, this fact is also revealed by Yahushua’s earthly names, Yahushua and Immanuel.⁴⁶ Yahushua means, “Yahu saves,”⁴⁷ for Yahushua was to save his people Israel,⁴⁸ and Immanu-el means, “*el* is with us,”⁴⁹ Yahu Yahweh being the *el* (mighty one) of Israel.⁵⁰

In addition, Yahushua was the *eloah* called Yahweh that was seen by Abraham and the other patriarchs. This detail is uncovered by the fact that father Yahweh is the only being who has always been innately immortal. No human, except for the preexistent messiah, has either seen father Yahweh and his actual form or heard his actual voice at any time.⁵¹ No earthly man is capable of seeing him because father Yahweh dwells in unapproachable light.⁵²

On the other hand, the Yahweh with whom the patriarchs had contact was both personally seen by men,⁵³ even in his divine form,⁵⁴ and his

⁴³ Gen., 1:1–2:4, 5:1–2; Deut., 4:32; Mal., 2:10.

⁴⁴ Isa., 40:3, quoted in Matt., 3:3; Mark, 1:3, cf., 14f.

⁴⁵ John, 1:29–34.

⁴⁶ Matt., 1:21–23.

⁴⁷ See above Chap. 1, p. 7, n. 4. Christian writers until Eusebius, for example, define the Hebrew name *יְהוֹשֻׁעַ* to mean “*Ἰαὼ σωτηρία* (*Iao soteria*; Yahu saves)” (Eusebius, *D.E.*, 4:17:23).

⁴⁸ Matt., 1:21.

⁴⁹ Matt., 1:23; cf., Isa., 7:14, 8:8. Also see SEC, Gk. #1694, Heb. #6005 (from #5973 and 410).

⁵⁰ For the numerous references to both Yahwehs as *el* see YAC, p. 411, under #2. *Mighty one*, *אל*.

⁵¹ John, 1:18, 5:37, 6:45, cf., 3:13. Visions of the father, on the other hand, would not be included (e.g., Dan., 7:9–14, cf., 7:1, 13; Rev., 4:1–5:10, cf., 1:4f; Luke, 9:28–36, esp. v. 35; Mark, 9:2–10, esp. v. 7; Matt., 17:1–9, esp. v. 5 and 9; which also explains the voice heard in Matt., 3:17, Mark, 1:9–11; Luke, 3:21f). Visions are only images and imitated sounds. They are not reality.

⁵² 1 Tim., 6:13–16.

⁵³ Yahweh the father dwells in unapproachable light. This lesser Yahweh, on the other hand, could be approached: his human, manifested physical form could be seen as well as part of his innermost divine self. This could not be possible if it was father Yahweh. One Yahweh personally appeared to men. The Hebrew term used for “appeared” is *ראה* (*raah*), which means, “to see . . . seeing, i.e. experiencing” (SEC, Heb. #7200, 7202). The approachable Yahweh told Moses, “I am Yahweh, and I APPEARED TO (i.e., was seen by) Abraham, to Isaak, and to Jacob as *el shaddai* (the all powerful *el*).” These appearances could either be in vision or in personal form. The following are some examples of a Yahweh appearing in personal form, thereby proving that this Yahweh was not father Yahweh: Yahweh appeared to Abraham (Gen., 12:6–9, 17:1–22 [v. 22, after Yahweh finished talking with him, “*eloahim* ascended from Abraham”], 18:1–33). Yahweh appeared to Isaak (Gen., 26:1–5, 23f), to Jacob (Gen., 35:9–15, 48:3), to Moses (Exod., 3:2–4:17 [esp. notice 4:1]), to both Moses and Joshua (Deut., 31:14–16), and to King Solomon (2 Chron., 7:12–16). Yahweh also appeared to the Israelites (Lev., 9:1–24).

A list of other examples are as follows: Gen., 3:8–19, Yahweh was in the Garden of Eden and talked with Adam and Eve. Gen., 19:27, Abraham stood at the face of Yahweh. Exod., 24:9–11, Yahweh ate with the 70 elders of Israel, “and they saw the *eloahi* of Israel.” Num., 14:14, Yahweh was seen eye to eye by the Israelites. Deut., 34:10, And never since has a prophet like Moses arisen in Israel, whom Yahweh knew face to face. Deut., 5:4f, Yahweh talked to you (the Israelites) face to face at the mountain in the midst of the fire. You were afraid of the face of Yahweh.

⁵⁴ Exod., 33:12–23. Moses saw the back of Yahweh’s *כבוד* (*kabad*; splendor, glory) (SEC, Heb. #3519; HEL, p. 120), therefore, his innermost being, i.e., the form as he appears before the throne of Yahweh and not as when he is manifested to men.

voice was heard by men.⁵⁵ At the same time, Yahushua claimed that he and Abraham personally saw each other.⁵⁶ Accordingly, Yahu was the *eloah* who made the Covenants of Promise containing the inheritance of eternal life with Abraham. He was the angel Yahweh,⁵⁷ the “angel of the covenant.”⁵⁸ As a point of interest, the Ante-Nicaean Christian fathers not only argued that Yahushua was the angel Yahweh, calling him the second or lesser Yahweh, but also proclaimed him to be the lesser deity of the *eloahi*.⁵⁹

As another example, Yahushua, while healing a paralytic, forgave him of his sins. The Jews watching this immediately charged Yahushua with blasphemy, stating, “Who is able to forgive sins, except *eloahi* alone?” Yahushua retorted by reaffirming his claim, stating that he forgave the man so that “you may know that the son of man has authority on the earth to forgive sins.”⁶⁰

We know that the collective noun form “*eloahi*” is the correct translation of the Greek word θεός (*theos*; deity) in the above passage because the Jews were fully aware that both the angel Yahweh, as well as father Yahweh, could forgive sins.⁶¹ Indeed, only those who have the power to pass on something in a

⁵⁵ See for example the following: Exod., 33:11, “And Yahweh would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.” Gen., 18:10–15, Yahweh spoke to Sarah and Abraham. Gen., 18:17–33, Yahweh spoke to Abraham (esp. v. 33). Num., 16:20, Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron. Deut., 4:36, “He (Yahweh) made you hear his voice out of the heavens, that he might correct you; and he made you to see his great fire upon the earth; and YOU DID HEAR HIS WORD out of the midst of the fire.” Josh., 1:1, Yahweh spoke to Joshua.

⁵⁶ John, 8:56.

⁵⁷ For the Yahweh who was called an angel see the following examples: Yahweh, the angel who made the covenant with Abraham (Gen., 15:1–21, 17:1–27, 26:1–5, 28:1–22, 35:9–15; cf., Exod., 6:2; Judg., 2:1–2; 2:19f; Mal., 3:1). Hagar and the angel Yahweh, who is an *el* (Gen., 16:6–14; cf., Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:10:4; Exod., 33:23). Yahweh was one of the three angels who met Abraham and later went to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen., 18:1–19:29; cf., Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:11:2, 4). The angel Yahweh was at the attempted sacrifice of Isaak (Gen., 22:1–19; cf., Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:13:4). The angel, Yahweh *eloahi*, was in the vision of the ladder (Gen., 28:10–18; cf., Gen., 31:11–13, 35:1, 7). Jacob wrestled with the angel named Yahweh (Gen., 32:24–32; cf., Hos., 12:3–4; Gen., 35:9–15; Exod., 6:1–4; Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:20:2). Yahweh was the angel in the burning bush who met Moses (Exod., 3:1–15; cf., Philo, *Moses*, 1:12–14 §65–84; Jos., *Antiq.*, 2:12:1–4). Yahweh was the angel in the pillar of cloud (Exod., 13:17–14:24; cf., Philo, *Moses*, 1:29). In the MT of Exod., 4:24, Yahweh met Moses on the road, while in the LXX version it is said that the ἄγγελος κυρίου (*aggelos kuriou*; angel of the sovereign) met him.

⁵⁸ Mal., 3:1.

⁵⁹ See for example the following early Christian writers, Justin Mart., *Trypho*, 34:2, 56:1–57:4, 58:3, 10, 59:1–60:4, 61:1 (cf., Josh., 5:13–15), 126:1, 127:4, 128:1, 129:1, *1 Apol.*, 63; Tertullian, *Marc.*, 2:27:3, 2:27:6f, 5:19:3, 3:24:10; Irenaeus, frag., 23, 53, 54, *Ag. Her.*, 3:6:1, 4:5:2 (citing Exod., 6:3, and the discussion of this verse in Matt., 22:29), 4:5:4, 4:5:5, 4:9:1, 4:10:1, 4:13:4, 5:15:4; Eusebius, *D.E.*, 5:8, 11, 6:1, *P.E.*, 7:12, *H.E.*, 1:2:2–16, 3:27:3; Clement, *Exhort. Gks.*, 1:7f. Hippolytus describes the two Yahwehs and sacred *ruach* as “two persons,” a father and a son, and “one power” and as “two deities” and an “economy” (Hippolytus, *Noetus*, 7, 14). The view of a lesser Yahweh who was given the sacred name by father Yahweh was even acknowledged by some of the early Gnostic groups. The fourth century C.E. GN Truth, for example, states, “And the name of the father is the son. He it is who at the first gave the name to him who proceeded from him and who was himself. And he has begotten him as son. He has given him his name” (TJC, pp. 73f). One must not confuse this earlier doctrine of the Christians, about the relationship between father Yahweh and Yahushua, with the Trinity doctrine established later at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. For the transformation from the original Christian belief in a supreme being (father Yahweh), a lesser deity named Yahweh (who became Yahushua), and the father’s power (the sacred *ruach* [spirit], which was a thing and not a person) to the idea of three co-equal persons (the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) as one deity see TTY.

⁶⁰ Mark, 2:1–12, esp. v. 7; Luke, 5:17–26, esp. v. 21; Matt., 9:1–8.

⁶¹ Based upon Exod., 23:20–23. For Jewish knowledge of the angel with Yahweh’s name see above n. 25. Also see TTY.

covenant contract can forgive those who sin under that covenant. As John notes, "If we confess our sins, faithful he (Yahushua) is and righteous, that he may forgive our sins, and may cleanse us from all unrighteousness."⁶² These statements clearly identify Yahushua with the angel Yahweh, who was the *eloah* who made the covenants with Abraham and the Israelites. He could forgive sins against these contracts because he authored them.

- Fifth, Yahushua (Yahu Yahweh) was sent by father Yahweh out of heaven to do his will among men. Yahushua is several times reported to have been sent to earth by father Yahweh.⁶³ Yahushua, for example, states:

For I have come down out of the heaven, not that I should do my will, but the will of him who sent me.⁶⁴

In the book of Zechariah we read that one Yahweh will be sent to mankind by the other Yahweh.

Sing and rejoice daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I WILL DWELL IN YOUR MIDST, SAYS YAHWEH; and many nations shall be joined to Yahweh in that day, and they will be to me for a people and I WILL DWELL IN YOUR MIDST, and you shall know that YAHWEH OF HOSTS HAS SENT ME TO YOU.⁶⁵

In this passage, Yahweh the son will dwell in our midst. In that day many nations shall be joined to Yahweh the father and we shall know that Yahweh of hosts, i.e., father Yahweh, has sent him (Yahweh the son) to us.

Likewise, in Isaiah we once more find Yahweh speaking of another Yahweh.⁶⁶ Yahweh states:

Come near to me; hear this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From the time of its being there I was; and now my sovereign YAHWEH HAS SENT ME, and (has sent) his *ruach*. Thus says Yahweh your redeemer, the sacred one of Israel, I am Yahweh your *eloahi* who teaches you to profit, leading you on the road you should go.⁶⁷

This passage reveals that Yahweh existed at the beginning of creation,⁶⁸ and now Yahweh his sovereign (i.e., the father Yahweh) has sent Yahweh and his *ruach*. The one being sent is, by definition, less than the one sending him. For this reason, Yahu Yahweh is often referred to as an angel (dispatched

⁶² 1 John, 1:7–9.

⁶³ E.g. John, 3:17, 30–35, 4:34, 5:21–24, 30, 36–38, 6:38–40, 44, 57, 8:16, 18, 12:49, 14:24, 7:18–25, 20:21; Acts, 10:36; Gal., 4:4; 1 John, 4:9f, 14; cf., Matt., 10:40; Mark, 9:37; Luke, 9:48.

⁶⁴ John, 6:38.

⁶⁵ Zech., 2:10f.

⁶⁶ Isa., 48:1–17, and cf., 44:6 with 48:12.

⁶⁷ Isa., 48:16.

⁶⁸ Cf., the Hebrew in Gen., 1:1.

messenger),⁶⁹ for he has been dispatched by father Yahweh to give humankind his messages.

Further, as Yahushua points out, “The servant is not greater than his sovereign nor a messenger greater than he who sent him.”⁷⁰ For that reason Yahushua reports, “my father is greater than I,”⁷¹ and when someone called him good he retorted, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except one, *eloah* (father Yahweh).”⁷² A servant and a messenger do not go out to do their own work or send their own message. Instead, they do the work of their sovereign and speak the message of the one sending them. Yahushua, for example, notes, “For he whom *eloah* sent speaks the words of *eloah*.”⁷³ Therefore, it is no surprise that Yahushua clarifies his own position relative to father Yahweh when he said, “the father who sent me himself gave me the commandment of what I should say and what I should speak.”⁷⁴ He reported back to father Yahweh, “for the words which you have given me I have given them.”⁷⁵ With regard to the work Yahushua performed, he clearly stated that the many good works he showed were “from my father” and challenged those opposing him by saying, “If I do not do the works of my father do not trust me; but if I do, even if you do not trust me, trust the works.”⁷⁶

The evidence proves that father Yahweh had sent the angel Yahu Yahweh out of heaven down to earth to do his work and to bring his message to men. Since no man has been in the third heaven, where father Yahweh dwells, this can only mean that Yahushua preexisted as the angel Yahu Yahweh, sent from heaven to do the father’s bidding.

• Sixth, Yahushua was sent by father Yahweh out of the heavens to become a new type of fleshly man. To begin with, Yahushua described himself as the one “whom the father sanctified and sent into the world.”⁷⁷ He tells us:

And no one (of human flesh) has gone up into the heavens EXCEPT HE WHO OUT OF THE HEAVENS has come down, the son of man who was in the heavens.⁷⁸

Not that anyone (of human flesh) has seen the father, except he who is from Yahweh, he has seen the father.⁷⁹

There is no scriptural statement, whatsoever, that Yahushua, while he was a fleshly man living on the earth, ever visited father Yahweh, who resides in

⁶⁹ The word angel, מַלְאָכִים (*malak*) in Hebrew and ἄγγελος (*aggelos*) in Greek, means someone who is “dispatched as a deputy; a messenger; spec. of God, i.e. an *angel* (also a prophet, priest or teacher):—ambassador, angel” (SEC, Heb. #4397–4398, Gk. #32). That there was an angel called Yahweh who acted in father Yahweh’s name see above ns. 4, 25, 32, 53, 57, and below n. 102. Also see TTY.

⁷⁰ John, 13:16.

⁷¹ John, 14:28.

⁷² Matt., 19:16f (ST has מַלְאָכִים [e], which may be the original or might indicate a circumlocution for Yahweh); Mark, 10:17f; Luke, 18:18f.

⁷³ John, 3:34.

⁷⁴ John, 12:49, cf., 8:28, 14:10.

⁷⁵ John, 17:8.

⁷⁶ John, 10:32, 37.

⁷⁷ John, 10:36.

⁷⁸ John, 3:13.

⁷⁹ John, 6:46.

the third heavens.⁸⁰ Indeed, as a flesh and blood human he would be incapable of such a feat.⁸¹ Only the angels (*ruach* beings) can behold father Yahweh's face.⁸² The comment that Yahushua is from the father, the unapproachable *eloah*, and has seen him points to the fact that he preexisted and saw father Yahweh while he lived as one of the *eloahi* and an archangel in the heavens. It was only after Yahushua was resurrected and quickened that he ascended again to see father Yahweh and sit at his right hand.⁸³

That Yahushua came out of heaven is also testified to by Saul. He writes:

So also it has been written, the first man, Adam, was made into a living *nepshesh*; the last Adam into a quickening *ruach*. But the *ruach* (man) was not first, but the *nepshesh* (man), then the *ruach* (man): the first man out of the earth, made of dust; the second man, the sovereign, OUT OF HEAVEN. Such as he made of dust, such also are those made of dust; and such as the heavenly, such also the heavenly.⁸⁴

This passage shows that Yahushua came out of heaven to become a man. Yahu Yahweh's *eloah* or *ruach* angel form was altered into that of a human being. Saul writes:

For let this mind be in you which is also in the messiah Yahushua; who, in the form of *eloahi* (θεοῦ; *theou*; a deity) subsisting, esteemed it not a thing to be grasped to be like *eloah* (θεῶ; *theo* = father Yahweh); but EMPTIED HIMSELF, A BONDMAN'S FORM HAVING TAKEN, IN THE LIKENESS OF MEN HAVING BECOME; and in figure having been found as a man, he humbled himself, having become obedient unto death, even death of the (torture)-stake.⁸⁵

By saying that Yahushua had emptied himself and took on a form in the likeness of men, we have here a clear statement that Yahushua preexisted in a different form and then was altered to resemble fleshly man. This point is reinforced by the apostle John, who states:

⁸⁰ 2 Cor., 12:1-4; cf., Rev., 2:7, 22:2 (in context with 21:1-22:5). That there is more than one realm of "שַׁמַיִם (*shamayim*; heavens)," also written "שָׁמַי (shamay; heaven)," see Deut., 10:14; 1 Kings, 8:27; Pss., 68:34, 115:115f, 148:1-4; 2 Chron., 2:6, 6:18; and Neh., 9:6. The first heavens is the atmosphere around the earth (Gen., 1:6-8, 20, 7:11, 23, 8:2, 27:39; Dan., 5:21, 7:2, 13, 8:8, 11:4; 1 Kings, 18:45; Pss., 104:12, 147:8; Matt., 26:64; Mark, 14:62; Deut., 28:12; Acts, 14:17; James, 5:18; Zec., 2:6, 8:12; Job, 35:11, 38:29; Isa., 55:10; Jer., 15:3; Hos., 7:12). It was to this first *shamayim* (heavens) that Genesis makes reference when discussing the creation of "the *shamayim* and the earth" (Gen., 1:1-2, cf. 1:6-8; also see Exod., 20:11, 31:17; 2 Chron., 2:12; Ps., 146:6; Jer., 32:17, 51:48; Matt., 5:18, 24:35; Mark, 13:31; Luke, 21:33; Acts, 14:15). Within the bounds of the second heavens set the moon, planets, sun, and stars (e.g., Deut., 4:19; Ps., 8:3; Jer., 8:2; Job, 9:9; Amos, 5:8). In the third realm called *shamayim*, father Yahweh presently makes his home (e.g., Matt., 5:16, 45, 6:9, 8:21, 12:50, 16:17, 18:14; Mark, 11:25-26; Luke, 11:2; Pss., 8:2, 11:4, 103:19; Deut., 26:15; 1 Kings, 8:39; Job, 22:12; Isa., 66:1).

⁸¹ John, 3:13.

⁸² Matt., 18:10.

⁸³ John, 20:17; Acts, 7:54-57; Rom., 8:33f; Eph., 1:20; Col., 3:1; Heb., 8:1, 10:11-13; 1 Pet., 3:21f.

⁸⁴ 1 Cor., 15:45-49.

⁸⁵ Phil., 2:5f.

And the *logos* (innermost expression, word)⁸⁶ BECAME FLESH, and tabernacled among us, and we discerned his glory, a glory as a *μονογενοῦς* (*monogenous*; united, beloved one)⁸⁷ with the father, full of grace and truth. John witnesses concerning him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I said, He who after me comes has precedence of me, for he was before me.⁸⁸

Saul notes that “*eloah* (father Yahweh), having sent his own son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the requirement of the Torah should be fulfilled in us, who not according to flesh walk, but according to *ruach*.”⁸⁹ A Psalm predicts that one of the *eloahim*, called the son of Adam (being the messiah), would be made into a fleshly man.

What is a male that you remember him, and the son of Adam that you visit him? And you made him lack a little from *eloahim* (angels);⁹⁰ and glory and honor have crowned him. You made him rule over the works of your hands; you have put all under his feet.⁹¹

According to the epistles of Saul, this passage refers to the messiah, the son of man, who was made a little lacking from angels, then later raised to a high position over the works of Yahweh.⁹²

- Seventh, Yahushua was both the ancestor and a descendant of King David. In Revelation, 22:16, for example, the messiah states, “I am the root and the offspring of David.”⁹³ This statement brings together the fact that Yahweh was both the ancestor of David (i.e., Adam, the ancestor of David, was the son of Yahweh *eloahim*)⁹⁴ as well as David’s offspring.⁹⁵ This circumstance is true only if Yahushua was the creator Yahweh who later joined with the egg of Mariam, the descendant of David, to become Yahushua—a combined human and *ruach* being.⁹⁶

⁸⁶ See above n. 13.

⁸⁷ The Greek word *μονογενοῦς* (*monogenous*), “only born” (SEC, Gk. #3439), “only-begotten, single” (GEL, p. 518), is derived from *μονο* (*mono*), “remaining, i.e. sole or single” (SEC, Gk. #3441), and *γενοῦς* (*genous*), a form of *γίνομαι* (*ginomai*), “a prol. and mid form of a prim. verb; to cause to be (“gen”-erate), i.e. (reflex.) to become (come into being)” (SEC, Gk. #1096). The LXX at Gen., 22:16, renders the Hebrew word *יָחִיד* (*yakhid*), “prop. united, i.e. sole; by imp. beloved; also lonely” (SEC, Heb. #3173), as “beloved son.” The original Hebrew word indicates an offspring that is united with his father and his beloved. The translation *μονογενοῦς* (*monogenous*) for *יָחִיד* (*yakhid*) is found in Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:13:1, and Heb., 11:17. The Greek and Hebrew terms do not refer to an “only son,” as so often asserted. Isaak, for example, was the *monogenous* offspring of Abraham, despite the fact that Abraham had several other sons, including Ishmael, the older brother of Isaak (Heb., 11:17; cf., Gen., 16:15, 17:19–27, 25:1–6). Rather, *monogenous* refers to the fact that this particular son is the only qualifying heir that has been begotten (cf., Jos., *Antiq.*, 20:2:1, esp. 20:2:1 §20), and therefore the “favourite,” and “best-beloved” son (ZRG, 5, pp. 335–365).

⁸⁸ John, 1:14–18.

⁸⁹ Rom., 8:3f.

⁹⁰ Ps., 8:4–6, give *eloahim*, while Heb., 2:7f, translates this word as “angels.”

⁹¹ Ps., 8:5–6.

⁹² Heb., 2:5–9; 1 Cor., 15:24–28; Eph., 1:20–23.

⁹³ Cf., Rev., 5:5, the lamb, or messiah, equals the root of David.

⁹⁴ Luke, 3:31–37.

⁹⁵ Luke, 3:23–31.

⁹⁶ That Yahweh became the fleshly descendant of Abraham see App. C.

As another example, while teaching at the Temple in Jerusalem, Yahushua answered a question from the Jewish Pharisees—the response being in front of a large crowd. During this conversation, Yahushua asked the Pharisees, “What do you think concerning the messiah? Whose son is he?” They responded, “David’s.” Yahushua (speaking Hebrew) then inquired of them about the puzzle their answer created. Quoting Psalm, 110:1, Yahushua asked them:

How then does David in the *ruach* call him אֲדֹנָי (adeni; my foundation)?,⁹⁷ saying, “A declaration of יהוה (Yahweh) to אֲדֹנָי (adeni; my foundation), Sit at my right hand until I set your enemies as a stool for your feet.” If therefore David (who wrote the Psalm) calls him אֲדֹנָי (adeni; my foundation), how can he be his son?⁹⁸

None of his opposition was able to solve the riddle. Yet the answer is obvious: Yahushua preexisted as Yahu Yahweh, one of the *eloahi* who created Adam—i.e., Yahu Yahweh was the progenitor and foundation of Adam, the ancestor of David. As Yahushua the messiah, Yahu Yahweh was also the descendant of King David.

- Eighth, Yahushua died in order to pass on an inheritance left in a covenant will Yahweh made with Abraham. Saul wrote of this inheritance, “to Abraham, through promise, *eloahi* granted it (the inheritance).”⁹⁹ Yet, as the book of Hebrews points out, for this inheritance to be of any value, the one making the will must first die:

And for this reason he (Yahushua) is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions of the first covenant (i.e., the Old Covenant or Torah of Moses), the promise of the eternal inheritance they who have been called might receive. For where there is a διαθήκη (*diatheke*; covenant will) it is necessary for the death of the testator to come about.¹⁰⁰

This issue has been completely discussed in Part I of our present study and its accompanying appendices. For now, we need only point out that the angels of heaven cannot die.¹⁰¹ Yet the angel Yahweh who left Abraham the covenant will had to die, otherwise the promised inheritance is of no value. By Yahu Yahweh becoming the man Yahushua, he could die and pass on this inheritance.

⁹⁷ See App. H.

⁹⁸ Matt., 22:44; Mark, 12:36; Luke, 20:42f. That this is a quote from Ps., 110:1, using the name Yahweh, see SRB, pp. 1031, n. k, 1062, ns. x, y, 1105, ns. j, k; AB, NT, pp. 35, 70, 122; NJB, pp. 1646, 1678, 1724.

⁹⁹ Gal., 3:18.

¹⁰⁰ Heb., 9:15–18.

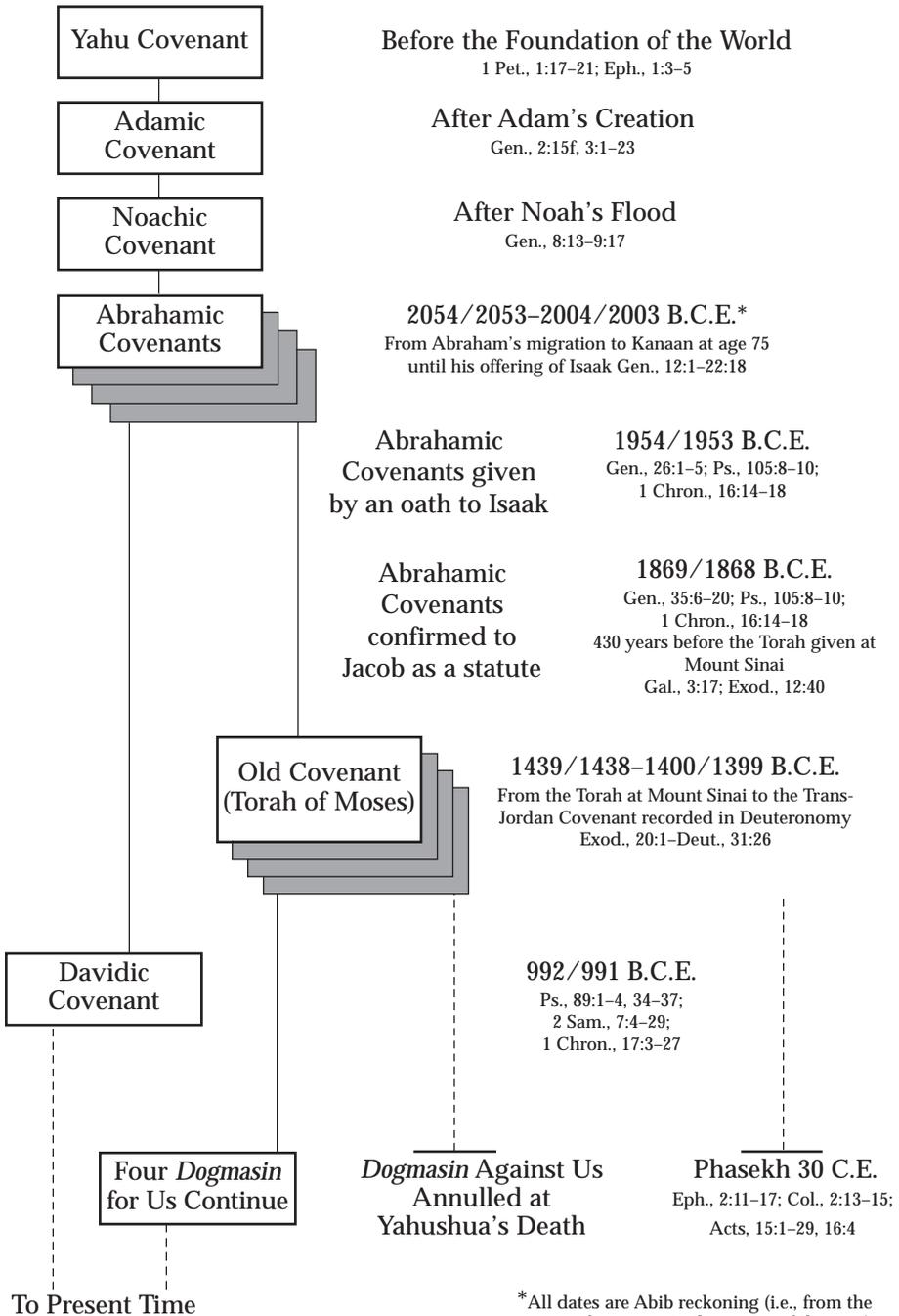
¹⁰¹ Luke, 20:35f.

For our purpose here, the very fact that Yahushua died in order to pass on an inheritance left by Yahweh *eloahi* in the Covenants of Promise to Abraham proves that Yahushua preexisted as one of the *eloahi* named Yahweh (more specifically, Yahu Yahweh). As a result, it was Yahushua the messiah who personally knew Abraham and left the promise of an inheritance to Abraham and his seed. If Yahushua was not “the angel of the covenant,” as he is called in Malachi,¹⁰² i.e., one of the *eloahi* named Yahweh who promised the inheritance to Abraham, then his death was meaningless. For if the Yahweh who gave the Abrahamic Covenant did not die then no one can ever receive any of the eternal inheritance. The plan works only if Yahushua preexisted as Yahu Yahweh.

¹⁰² Mal., 3:1. The NJB footnotes this statement in Mal., 3:1, by saying, “It is most probably an enigmatic designation of Yahweh himself, derived from Ex 3:2; 23:20, see Gn 16:7c. Mt 11:10 implies its application to Jesus.” Most scholars recognize that the angel Yahweh (no word for “of” actually appearing in the Hebrew) is identified in Scriptures with Yahweh *eloahi* (i.e., as deity). While speaking of the angel in Exod., 23:20–23f, M. Noth comments, “The ‘angel’ is the ambassador of Yahweh (cf., ‘my angel,’ v. 23) who represents Yahweh himself and in whom Yahweh himself is present; the latter is expressed in v. 21 by saying that the ‘name’ of Yahweh is present in the ‘angel’ as the name represents the one who bears it” (EAC, p. 193; and quoted in YDNB, p. 15). NBD, p. 38, speaks of the angel Yahweh by noting, “In many passages he is virtually identified with God as an extension of the divine personality, and speaks not merely in the name of God but as God in the first person singular.” MDB, p. 29, reports, “Many angelic references in the OT speak of ‘the angel of the Lord’ or ‘the angel of Yahweh.’ In some of these texts, such as Exod 3:2–4, this particular angel is virtually indistinguishable from Yahweh himself. . . . In this case and others (Gen 21:17–21; 22:11–14), the term ‘angel of the Lord’ seems to be a reference to God as he is perceived by human beings.” EJ, 2, p. 957, similarly states, “A further ambiguity is due to the fact that the Bible does not always distinguish clearly between God and His messenger.” NIDB, p. 47, comments, “In almost every case, this messenger is regarded as deity and yet is distinguished from God (Gen 16:7–14; 22:11–18; 31:11, 13; Exod 3:2–5; Num 22:22–35; Judg 6:11–23; 13:2–25; 1 Kings 19:5–7; 1 Chron 21:15–17). These references show that the Angel is the Lord himself adopting a visible form (and therefore a human appearance) for the sake of speaking with people (e.g., Judg 13:6, 10, 21). While himself holy as God is holy (e.g., Exod 3:2–5), the Angel expresses the Holy One’s condescension to walk among sinners ([Exod.,] 32:34; 33:3).” That the ante-Nicaean Christian writers identified the angel Yahweh, the second Yahweh, with Yahushua the messiah see above n. 59. Also see TTY.

CHART M

COVENANTS OF YAHWEH



*All dates are Abib reckoning (i.e., from the spring of one year to the spring of the next)