

Addressing Issues About the Deity of Yeshua the Messiah

In the Spirit of Phinehas

*Let the high praises of Elohim be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;
to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people. (Ps 149:6-7)*

PHINEHAS, THE GRANDSON OF AARON THE HIGH PRIEST, THRUST A SPEAR THROUGH ZIMRI THE ISRAELITE MAN AND COZBI THE MIDIANITE WOMAN AS THEY WERE BRINGING THE CURSE OF YHVH UPON THE NATION OF ISRAEL BY FORNICATING WITH EACH OTHER WITHIN THE CAMP OF ISRAEL. WITH THE SAME RIGHTEOUS ZEAL AS PHINEHAS, TODAY'S RIGHTEOUS SPIRITUAL LEADERS *must* rise up and stand against secular philosophies that threaten to bring YHVH's judgment upon redeemed Israel. In the face of evil in his day, David asked, "Who will rise up for me against the evildoers, or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?" (Ps 94:16) The present issue relates to the dangerous and damnable trend within the body of redeemed Israelite believers to question and even deny the deity of Yeshua.

You've all heard the Christian axiom, "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in everything else, charity." What are the *essentials of our faith* that we *must* unite in, and around which we must draw the line in the sand and defend that turf until death?

As one who has been walking in the Torah for more than 40 years, who has spent time fellowshipping and ministering in both traditional Sunday Christian as well as Sabbatarian churches, and then pastoring and teaching in a pro-Torah/Hebrew roots congregation for many years, it has become clear to me which issues are essential, and which are not. *Those biblical truths that are salvational in nature are the essentials.* These are the hills on which we must plant the flag of truth and be willing to defend at all costs! What are these immutable essentials?

1. YHVH Elohim (in Hebrew a plural word) is the Sovereign of the universe and the God of the Bible. He is one (Heb. *echad*, i.e., a compound unity), yet the Bible reveals the Godhead is comprised of three spiritual entities: the Father, the Spirit and the Son.
2. The Bible is the Word of Elohim from Genesis to Revelation.
3. The Torah is for all believers for all time.
4. Yeshua the Messiah, the Word of Elohim, is Elohim and is the Son of Elohim who was manifested incarnate on this earth being born of the virgin Mary.
5. Yeshua lived a sinless life, died on the cross as an atonement for the sins of man, was buried and resurrected on the third day where he is now at the right hand of Elohim, and at the same time is on the throne of Elohim as Elohim.
6. Salvation is by the grace of Elohim through faith in Yeshua the Son of Elohim. As a result of one's salvation, one will love Yeshua by keeping his commandments or word (the Torah), which will produce in his life the fruits of righteousness as defined by the Torah.

These are the essentials of our faith on which there can be no compromise. To take a weakened position on any of these issues is to begin down a spiritually slippery slope that can only lead to eternal separation from YHVH Elohim! Leaders must be quick to lift up the spiritual sword of the Word of Elohim against those who teach otherwise. In this brief treatise, I will deal with the major issues raised by those who want to diminish or eliminate the deity status of Yeshua the Messiah.

"The Earth Did Quake"

When the life of Yeshua, the divine Light of Elohim that pierced the spiritual darkness of this world, was being poured out while he was hanging dying on the cross, the earth was plunged into darkness (Matt 27:47). After

Yeshua yielded up his spirit and died, the veil in the temple was ripped in two from top to bottom, and the earth quaked and the rocky ground ripped open and the earth spit out many dead saints who were resurrected from their graves (Matt 27:51–52). The Creator (Col 1:16) and Sustainer (Heb 1:3) of all life had just died, and the created order or *cosmos* reacted, accordingly by literally coming apart at the seams. Yeshua was no typical human. To be sure, Yeshua was deity!

Though when speaking from his humanity side he elevated his Father above himself, he nevertheless claimed to be deity on several occasions. The Jewish sages who encountered Yeshua recognized he was claiming to be deity, which is why they accused him of blasphemy and attempted to kill him (John 8:58–59; 5:18; 10:33 cp. 19:7). It wasn't beyond the expectations of the Jewish leaders to expect a divine Messiah, for the Hebrew Scriptures clearly prophesied this (Mic 5:2; Isa 9:6; Jer 23:5–6; *Targum Jonathan* Isaiah 9:6; *Talmud Pesiqta Rabbati*, Pisqa 36). It's because of their doubt and unbelief they just couldn't handle a divine Messiah when he showed up!

Not only did Yeshua claim to be deity, but he received worship (John 9:38; Luke 24:52), and he didn't rebuff Thomas who called Yeshua "My Master and my God!" (John 20:28).

The apostolic writers confirmed Yeshua's deity when they wrote such things as "in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col 2:9), referred to him as the "God/Elohim [who] was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim 3:16), "the Great God/Elohim" who is returning to this earth (Tit 2:13 cp. verse 10), and viewed him as synonymous with Elohim on the throne of heaven (Rev 21:23; 22:1,3,4).

Furthermore, the Scriptures tell us that Yeshua and the Father are one (John 10:30), which is why there is only one throne in heaven (Rev 22:1,3; 21:5; 4:1; Dan 7:9; Isa 6:13) — *not two*. When Yeshua is not sitting on the throne as Elohim and one with Elohim, he is revealed as the Lamb and our Great High Priest Advocate (1 John 2:1) who is *on* or *before* or *at* (according to the Greek) the right hand of Elohim on his throne (Heb 8:1).

In John's vision of the New Jerusalem, he sees Yeshua as one with and equal to Elohim. To John, the Lamb and Elohim are synonymous concepts (Rev 21:3–6,23; 22:3–5).

Perhaps this explains why the sun was darkened, the earth quaked and the rocks split open when Yeshua died on the cross. The Godhead had literally been rent in two and the *cosmos* echoed the calamitous nature of this heavenly shake up.

In John 1:1,14, the beloved disciple and close confidant of Yeshua, categorically states that Yeshua *is* Elohim. ***This verse alone should close the debate on whether Yeshua is deity or not!*** Frankly, those who cannot accept this simple and direct statement from an eye witnesses of the facts not only have rejected Yeshua, but have rejected the Word of Elohim, which reveals Yeshua to us. This — the rejection of Elohim's Word — is, perhaps, the greater issue. It is a shame when men reject divinely inspired truth as verified by eyewitnesses and testified to be true by many early elders of the faith (see the "we" passages in John's first epistle, e.g. 1:1,2,3,4, etc.) and further validated as being an accurate record by many early church fathers who lived in the latter part of the first and the early part of the second centuries — less than 100 years after the death and resurrection of the Messiah!

Without faith in the accurate and trustworthy written record about the life and teachings of Yeshua, we cannot be assured of the truth about our Redeemer and Savior, the gospel message or the hope of eternal life via the resurrection of the dead *or the veracity of the whole Bible, for that matter*. To reject the deity of Yeshua and YHVH's Word that affirms this is to play into the hands of the devil, the father of lies, the perverter of truth and the arch-enemy of Yeshua the Messiah, ***and this places our own salvation and hope of eternal life on thin ice at best!***

The Importance of the Person of Yeshua

Have you ever wondered what the apostolic writers themselves called that part of the Bible the Christian church refers to as "The New Testament"? Assuredly the apostles didn't call it "The New Testament" — a term that originated much later! John the apostle and the final canonizer of the Apostolic Scriptures (sorry folk, the early church fathers and the Catholic Church didn't canonize the apostolic writings¹) in five places in the Book of Revelation refers to the "Old Testament" as the "Word of God [Elohim]" and the "New Testament" as the "Testimony of Yeshua" (Rev 1:2,9; 6:9; 12:17; 20:4). Since "The Testimony of Yeshua" was the title John the apostle under the inspiration of the Set-Apart Spirit of Elohim applied to this portion of the Scriptures, ***just perhaps the work and Person of Yeshua was its most important theme!***

The data gleaned from the Testimony of Yeshua itself confirms the centrality of the Person of Yeshua. For example, the proper name "Yeshua" [Hebrew for "Jesus"] is found 943 times in the Testimony of Yeshua (the New

1 See my teaching on the subject at http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/nt_canon_full.pdf.

Testament). This number doesn't include the use of personal pronouns (e.g., he, him, his) or any indirect references to, or other names that the Testimony apply to him (e.g., the Lamb, the Alpha and Omega, Chief Cornerstone, King of kings, Rabbi, Master, etc.). The title "Christ" (in Hebrew *Maschiach* or "Messiah" in English) is used 533 times. The title "Lord" is found 670 times in the Testimony of Yeshua and usually is a direct reference to Yeshua. In the Testimony of Yeshua (NT) there are 260 chapters and 7,958 verses. According to these statistics, the names *Yeshua*, *Messiah*, or *Lord* are found in more than one-quarter of the verses of the Testimony of Yeshua. This number doesn't include the use of pronouns (who knows how many such references there are), or other descriptive titles (some 326 references!) and other names that the apostolic writers use for Yeshua. If it did, the references to Yeshua in relationship to the number of verses in the Testimony of Yeshua would be much higher! By comparison, direct references to the Torah (i.e., *law*, *laws*, *commandment*, *commandments*) occur **only** about 260 times in the Testimony of Yeshua, or on average, one time per chapter. God forbid that I should in any way demean the importance or centrality of the Torah in the redeemed believer's life, but the statistics speak for themselves: the subject of Yeshua was front and center in the Testimony of Yeshua. His supernatural power in us enables us *to live* the Torah properly — in truth or letter and in spirit, and his life was a living testimony and example of *how to walk out* the Torah. John and Paul the apostles sum it up this way:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that says, I know him, and keeps not his [Torah] commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keeps his word, in him verily is the love of Elohim perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that says he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked. (1John 2:3–6)

Elohim sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (1John 4:9)

And this is the record, that Elohim has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

He that has the Son has life; and he that has not the Son of Elohim has not life.... And we know that the Son of Elohim is come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Yeshua the Messiah. This is the true Eternal, and eternal life. (1John 5:11–12,20)

I am crucified with the Messiah: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but the Messiah lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of Elohim, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20)

Sadly, many people in the Hebrew Roots/Messianic Movement have forgotten these truths and have relegated Yeshua to the back of the bus, if not kicked him out altogether!

The subject of the Person and work of Yeshua was so important that YHVH Elohim through his Set-Apart Spirit inspired four books of the Bible (i.e., the four Gospels) to be written all testifying to the life of Yeshua on earth based on eye witness accounts.

During his ministry on this earth, Yeshua spoke and taught about many subjects (136 to be exact) as recorded in the Gospels. What were the subjects he talked most about? The number one subject was himself! In Matthew's and John's Gospel accounts, there are 316 references to Yeshua speaking about himself as the way to the Father, the light of the world, the bread of life, the door to the sheepfold, the truth, the good shepherd, the one who would die to redeem man, and so on. Next, Yeshua talked about his Father (184 times). The Torah comes in seventh place with 44 direct or indirect references! Now I love the Torah and have devoted much of my life to teaching and writing about the Torah, but this subject *was not* number one on the list of important topics Yeshua or the apostles wrote or talked about. To be sure, they lived the Torah all the time although they weren't always talking about it, unlike many in our day who talk about it all the time, but don't live it! ***Obedience to the Torah is the result of coming into a loving relationship with Yeshua, and not the starting place according to the apostolic writers.***

The apostolic writers reveal that Yeshua

- is Elohim (John 1:1)
- is the Almighty (Rev 1:8)
- is the Creator of all things (John 1:3; Col 1:16)
- is the Author of Life (Heb 3:15)
- contains the fullness of the godhead bodily (Col 2:9)

- is the only begotten Son of Elohim (John 1:14,18; 3:16,18)
- is Elohim incarnate (John 1:1,14)
- is Immanuel or “God with us” (Matt 1:23)
- is the image of the invisible Elohim (Col 1:15)
- is the Anointed One (Acts 4:25)
- is one with the Father (John 10:30)
- is the Savior (Luke 2:11; 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Eph 5:23)
- died to redeem from the penalty of sin, which is death (1 Pet 1:18–19)
- is the only way to the Father in heaven (John 14:6)
- is the light of the world (John 1:1–9; 8:12)
- is Lord of the living and the dead (Rom 14:9)
- is the Overseer of our souls (1 Pet 2:25)
- is the door (John 10:7,9)
- is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
- is the Great Shepherd (Heb 13:20)
- is the Horn of Salvation (Luke 1:69)
- is the bread of life from heaven (John 6:35,48,51)
- is the Beginning and the End (Rev 22:13)
- is the First and the Last (Rev 1:17; 2:8)
- is the I AM (John 8:58 cp. Exod 3:14)
- is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25)
- is the Judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:24; Rev 19:11)
- is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Heb 12:2)
- is the Captain of our salvation (Heb 2:10)
- is the Chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4)
- is the Chief Cornerstone (Eph 2:20)
- is Chosen of Elohim (Luke 23:35)
- is the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 17:14; 19:16)
- is the Great High Priest on and at the throne of Elohim in heaven (Heb 4:14)

Sadly, in our day, many people have grown cold in their love for Yeshua and have fallen asleep spiritually. All too often religiosity, legalistic works (including Torah-obedience), and head knowledge (a.k.a. “the idol of intellectualism”) have replaced the worship of and a relationship with our Father in heaven by way of Yeshua and through the Set-Apart Spirit. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, all ten virgins grew weary waiting for the Bridegroom (Yeshua) to come and they fell asleep. As a result, five of the ten virgins were disqualified from entering into the wedding supper of the Lamb because they were spiritually unprepared and out of sync with Yeshua the Bridegroom. Those in the assembly of Laodicea had the same problem. When Yeshua was knocking on the door of their hearts, they were so spiritually naked, poor, miserable, deaf and blind that they refused to let him in (Rev 3:14–22). In Matthew 24:12, Yeshua warns that in the end days, the love of many will grow cold. Paul warns the believers in Corinth that even though they might be doing many great religious works and have all knowledge (including the truth of the Torah), *without love* (including a love for Yeshua!) their great works and knowledge *are nothing* in the eyes of Elohim.

The believers in Ephesus had a similar problem. Many years after Paul helped to found that assembly, John reprimanded the same congregation for having lost its first love (Rev 2:4). What was that first love? If we go back to Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, we see a spiritually healthy and vibrant body of believers that, unlike the other assemblies to whom the apostle wrote, needed no correction. So what was their first love that kept them spiritually

alive, but that they had lost by the time John wrote the Book of Revelation many years later? A careful analysis of the Epistle to the Ephesians will yield the answer. This letter contains 155 verses and at the same time 186 references to Elohim (God) or Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ). *There are more references to the Godhead than there are verses!* Such phrases as “in Messiah,” “in Elohim,” or “in the Spirit” occur 36 times. Evidently, based on Paul’s epistle, the saints in Ephesus were in a loving and life-giving relationship with Yeshua through whom we are able to enter into relationship with the Father and the Set-Apart Spirit.

What can we deduce from this brief study on the centrality of the message, Person and work of Yeshua as recorded in the Testimony of Yeshua? Quite simply, Yeshua was *NUMERO UNO* in the eyes of the apostolic writers. In fact, they mention him many more times than even the Torah! The bottom line is this: *Any attempt to diminish Yeshua’s place of pre-eminence by any so-called “Bible teacher” is not only totally incongruent with the dominant theme of the Testimony of Yeshua, but it is a demonic plot to unseat Yeshua from his throne and results in leaving humans lost out in the cold and darkness spiritually!*

What Are the Spiritual Implications of Rejecting the Deity of Yeshua?

- The rejection of or the watering down of the deity status of Yeshua is a form of secular humanism. Humanism is that evil counterfeit religion of the devil that he thrust upon man at the tree of knowledge in the garden whereby man (and the devil) seeks to elevate his own status by diminishing the status of Elohim (including the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). Anything that diminishes any aspect of the Godhead (e.g., the Word/Son/Messiah) and elevates man at the expense of the Word/Son/Messiah is humanistic in nature and follows in the rebellion of Satan whose goal it was and still is to exalt himself at Elohim’s expense. Such doctrines are dangerous and demonic in origin and must be rejected as evil.

Let us never forget that the mind and heart of man are so deceitful or crooked above all things and desperately wicked that man can’t even comprehend it (Jer 17:9). Not only that, he is totally antagonistic toward the laws and words of Elohim (Rom 8:7), and like the serpent that beguiled men to rebel against the clear word of Elohim, man continues to this day in this rebellious mode with the full blessing of the devil!

- The spirit of antichrist rejects that Elohim has come in the flesh (1John 4:1-3). Make no mistake about it, to either diminish the idea that Elohim came in the flesh, or that Yeshua was and is deity is of the spirit of antichrist.
- Some people reject the deity of Yeshua because they teach or imply that one cannot believe in the deity of Yeshua without adhering to the doctrine of the trinity. In reality, there are many people who believe in the deity of Yeshua, but who don’t subscribe to the doctrine of the trinity. In other words, one doesn’t have to be a Trinitarian to accept the deity of Yeshua. To wit, prior to the codification of the doctrine of the trinity by the Catholic Church (in the fourth century), in the early church, there were a several other ways of explaining the deity of Yeshua and his relationship to the Father besides the doctrine of the trinity.

Curiously some teachers who reject the deity of Yeshua at the same time will try to explain his diminished status using rabbinic Jewish concepts. The fact is that while the Christians have the doctrine of the trinity, the Christians have nothing on their rabbinic Jewish counterparts in this area! To look to the rabbinic Jews for a fundamental understanding of the nature of the Godhead, and the nature of the Messiah and how he fits into the Godhead can be great folly and outright dangerous. While the Christians teach a Godhead of three persons, there are many Orthodox Jews who subscribe to the tenets of mystical or Kabbalistic Judaism, which teaches that the godhead is comprised of ten “persons” or “spiritual entities” called the *sephirot* as illustrated by the sephirotic tree. As one gets deeper into Jewish mystical thought it gets even crazier as the Jewish sages pluralize the godhead more.

- Some people reject the deity of Yeshua claiming it is an unbiblical and Greco-Roman (Catholic or Byzantine) concept. Some believe that no good thing can come from Greco-Roman Christianity, and they therefore throw out the proverbial baby with the bath water. Is this a balanced viewpoint? How is it a sin to think along Greco-Roman lines? Admittedly, the human agents who co-authored the Bible with Elohim were Hebrews who thought Hebraically. But the fact remains that YHVH preserved the “New Testament” for us in the Greek language, and that a large portion of it was written by Paul who was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, but who also spoke Greek, was a Roman citizen from a Syro-Roman city, who

was able to quote Greek poets, and debate with Greco-Roman philosophers. In my paper entitled “Hebraic Thought Compared with Greek (Western) Thought,”² I show how both Hebraic and Greco-Roman thinking and methodologies have been useful in evangelizing the world — and all this by divine design.

- Some people reject the deity of Yeshua because it has been such a major Christian doctrine for so long. Since, in their view, little or nothing good can come from the Christian church, they reject the doctrine of the deity of Yeshua. We must be fair-minded in our evaluations of all things to always give credit where credit is due. As an aspect of spiritual Babylon, the church admittedly is a mixture of both good and evil, truth and error. Therefore, not all of her doctrines are evil. In the most general and fundamental sense, her teachings with regard to the deity of Yeshua, the message of the cross, the blood atonement, the means by which we are saved and her stand on moral virtues are true. We must not make the mistake of rejecting biblical truths simply because the church has continued to believe and propagate both good and evil. ***To reject the evil chaff at the expense of the good wheat is folly, and we do so to our own peril!***
- Some people diminish or reject the deity of Yeshua by taking a narrow view of the role of the Messiah. True, the concept of the Messiah in the *Tanakh* (“Old Testament”) was broadly applied to many humans. However, out of this broad panoply of messianic figures, the *Tanakh* reveals that a Messianic figure would arise who would transcend all the other “messiahs.” Both the Jewish and Christian sages have recognized this fact for millennia. This transcendent Messiah would be a king, a savior, a redeemer, a Torah scholar, a judge, a regatherer of his people and more. That is to say, the Scriptures (both the *Tanakh* and the Testimony of Yeshua) reveal that the job description of Messiah is more than just two fold (i.e., to turn the hearts of the people back to the Father and to be the emissary of the Most High). If we narrow the definition of anything (in this case, the concept of “messiah”) down small enough, we can make “messiah” to mean just about anything — *including that we ourselves can be the Messiah!* This is called “cramming it to fit and painting it to match” our limited view of something. Those who try to diminish and limit the role of the Messiah are guilty of this. ***The most important role of the Messiah was to redeem Israel from its sins, which he can only do if he’s deity!*** (See Isa 53.) Both the Jewish sages and the authors of the *Tanakh* and the Testimony of Yeshua knew and affirmed this.
- Some people reject the salvific death of Yeshua on the cross by parroting more rabbinic Jewish truth twisting by claiming that his death violates the Torah, which forbids human sacrifice. This is another lie proffered by those who are being swayed by religious teachers who have made of none effect the clear word of Elohim by their man-made traditions. Yeshua’s death on the cross ***was not*** a human sacrifice. It was YHVH-Yeshua giving up his life for his friends. His death can be comparable to a father who, in attempt to rescue his child from a burning building or a raging river, sacrifices his own life while saving that of his child. This is not human sacrifice in the sense that the heathens practiced it and which the Torah forbids. Yeshua’s death was an act of love to redeem lost sinners! There is a big difference. If Yeshua’s death on the cross was human sacrifice as the Torah forbids, then YHVH lies in Isaiah 53:10 when he prophesied through Isaiah speaking of the Messiah to come, “Yet it pleased YHVH to bruise him, he has put him to grief and made his soul an offering for sin...” In this same vain vein of reasoning, some Yeshua-deniers will even go so far as to say that man doesn’t need salvation through blood atonement (*ergo*, Yeshua’s death on the cross is needless), and that the father’s merciful grace and forgiveness is sufficient to justify and redeem man. Sadly, this line of reasoning totally denies the prophetic reality of the entire sacrificial system as summarized in Leviticus 17:11 which declares, “For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your soul, for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.” I discuss this issue thoroughly in my online teaching on this subject.³
- To diminish or outrightly reject the redemptive mission of the Messiah leaves man without any future hope. Period. To diminish in any way the deity or Elohim status of Yeshua and his status as Creator of the *cosmos* is to not only call the truths in the Testimony of Yeshua a lie, but it is to leave man Redeemerless. How is this? First, obviously a sinner who is under the same death penalty can’t redeem the life of another (Ps 49:7). Hypothetically, a sinless man might be able to exchange his life for that of one other human life from the penalty of sin, since a man’s life is only equal to that of another man’s life. But only Yeshua as

2 See http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/heb_grk.pdf.

3 For a discussion why blood has to be shed for the atonement of men’s sins, see <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/atone.pdf>.

deity and Creator of man (Col 1:16) can redeem all men, since his life as the Creator was worth more than all those human lives that he created.

- ***To reject the deity of Yeshua leaves man without a legally qualified Redeemer!***
- Yeshua warned that in the end times there would be many false Messiahs masquerading as the true biblical Messiah (Matt 24:4–5, 23–26). Paul warned that as the serpent perverted the Word of Elohim and subverted Eve, so there would be those who would come preaching another Yeshua and another gospel following in the footsteps of Satan who comes as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:3–4, 14). ***Those who reject the deity of Yeshua and attempt to peddle another Messiah are the deceivers Yeshua warned us against!***
- Some who teach against the deity of Yeshua attempt to make their case by relying on their superior understanding of the Hebrew language. A deep understanding of the Hebrew language is a wonderful thing, and truly helps us to discover many of the mysteries of the Bible. However, this knowledge is not essential to understanding the salvational truths of the Bible including the nature and deity of the Messiah. Yeshua said that the Spirit of Elohim would lead us unto all truth (John 16:13) — not a knowledge of the biblical languages!

Furthermore, if we feel that a deep understanding of biblical languages is necessary to understand the mysteries of the Bible, then Hebrew is not the only language that needs to be studied — so do Aramaic and Greek, since YHVH used these languages, as well, to transmit the written record of his Word to us.

- Some who are rejecting the deity of Yeshua affirm that redemption is based only on the mercy and forgiveness of Elohim alone. This is a lie of rabbinic Judaism, and not the truth of the Bible⁴. The Torah plainly tells us that “the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I [Elohim] have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul.” Yeshua was that offering for the sins of men when he spilled his blood at the cross (Isa 53:10–11; Heb 10:10–18). ***There is redemption from the wages of sin which is death by no other means than by the shed blood of Yeshua the Messiah!*** The false teaching of rabbinic Judaism that man can be redeemed by Elohim’s mercy alone without the shedding of blood for the atonement of sin is the leaven of the Pharisees (the ancestors of the modern rabbinic Jews) that Yeshua warned his disciples against (Matt 16:11–12). ***These are doctrines of men by which the Word of Elohim is made of non-effect (Mark 7:7–9).***

What Should Be Our Response to Those Who Diminish or Reject the Deity of Yeshua the Messiah?

The Torah teaches us that Israelites were to be cut off (i.e., put outside the camp of Israel; counted as dead) from Israel for a variety of reasons:

- For not putting leaven out of one’s house during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- For making counterfeit incense.
- For working on the Sabbath.
- For eating the peace offering without being ritually clean.
- For eating the fat of an animal sacrifice.
- For eating blood.
- For involving oneself in forbidden sexual practices.
- For profaning a hallowed thing.
- For having sex with your wife while she’s in her menstrual cycle.
- For not fasting on the Day of Atonement.
- For not keeping the Passover.
- For sinning presumptuously or willfully.
- For touching a dead body and coming into the tabernacle without purifying himself.

What’s more, Miriam was made leprous and was put outside the camp for speaking against Moses (a prophetic type of Yeshua) until she repented and was purified.

⁴ See <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/atone.pdf>.

The Torah concept of cutting people off from the camp of Israel was carried forward in the Testimony of Yeshua. For example, Paul cut off (or put out of the congregation) the Corinthian man who was caught in adultery until he repented, at which time he was restored to fellowship.

Yeshua teaches in Matthew 18 that those who are caught violating the Torah by several eye witnesses and the sin is verified by a *beit din* of elders and the offender refuses to repent, he is to be cut off from or put outside the congregation or “camp of Israel.” This individual is then to be viewed as a heathen and a tax collector. How do we view heathens? We witness to them and encourage them to repent of their sins, but we don’t have spiritual communion with them! If, by the grace of Elohim, they repent and come to faith in Yeshua, they are then allowed to experience the communion of the saints.

Paul confirms this approach in First Corinthians chapter five where he teaches us that we are not to keep company with a brother who is sexually immoral, covetous, an idolater, verbally abusive, a drunkard, or a thief. We are to consider them as leaven and to put them out of the body of believers.

Paul teaches that we are to excommunicate and avoid those who cause divisions, factions, strife and offenses contrary to the clear teaching of the Scriptures (Rom 16:17). We are to reject heretics after the first and second admonition (Tit 3:10), and to turn away from all those who engage in a number of sinful behaviors (2 Tim 3:5).

What is the bottom line here? Simply this, if the Israelites and early believers were cut off from their fellow Israelites for such sins, what should be our response to those who deny the deity of Yeshua the Messiah — a central, bedrock and trunk-of-the-tree truth of the Bible pertaining to the gospel message and the salvation of the world?

Conclusion

The wise counsel of John in his second epistle sums up our firm conviction on this matter.

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Messiah does not have Elohim. He who abides in the doctrine of Messiah has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds. (2 John 9–11)