

Vom Schem Hamphoras (3)

The Other Part

83. From the beginning of the gospel, as St. Luke and St. Mark wrote it, the question has arisen: why the two apostles have told the story of the origins of the family of our Lord Jesus Christ so differently (or, as many have explained it, so contradicted by one another?) and it is peculiar that both agree upon the lineage or origins of these persons and end with Joseph and not with Mary and Christ; from this the wise sought to conclude it is not proved with that that Christ is of the family of David, because he does not come from Joseph, whom the apostles trace as coming directly from the line of David, and then suddenly abandon the same Joseph and substitute Mary.

84. Here everyone is involved, particularly the Jews, and thereafter the emperor Julian and his heathens. (46) In fact, many of the old teachers and not a few of the new; they need to better understand this and other wonders as to whether our Christian belief is wrong here, or uncertain or totally in the dark. That is why we want to talk about this a bit but with permission, if I may, that we are happy to let anyone do it better.

85. First, to answer the Jews, if anyone even wants to get into an argument with them. Since the Jew moved me the last time to write about the Jews and touched upon this point: it cannot be proved that Jesus is of the tribe of Judah, because the apostle Matthew traces the tribe of Judah to Joseph and not to Mary; therefore he could not be Messiah as proved by the tribe of Judah and David. Prickly and poisonous are the snakes and make every effort to make our books appear wrong. For they do not ask because they wish to learn from us and know the truth, but to bother and heckle us with such questions-with scorn and derision of our beliefs as if we could not prove it.

86. Therefore one should step on the heads of these poisonous snakes and answer in the coarsest and rawest manner, defying the Devil, that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is of the tribe of Judah and the house of David says not only the apostle Matthew, (about whom they laugh) but even Moses, the first to say it after whom all the prophets agreed together. And if we Christians otherwise had nothing of the Old Testament, other than Moses, then we would have enough, easily enough, to prove that Mary must be of the tribe of Judah and the House of David so that all devils and the whole world cannot overthrow. (Keep quiet the miserable, screaming Jews.)

87. Moses however says (1 Mos. 49:10): "the scepter shall not be removed from Judah until the Silo comes." Here it is certain that the Silo or the Messiah shall come from the tribe of Judah, as there is also no doubt about it among the snakes, no matter how poisonous they are. (47) Moses 5, 18, 15, says this: "God will arouse a prophet from

among your brethren just like myself and you shall hear him." Verse 18 follows: I will, says God, raise a prophet for them from among their brethren, just like you, and will place my words in his mouth so that he may say everything that I command him to say and I will myself revenge myself against those who will not hear him." (48)

88. Here it is written that Mary is of the tribe of Judah and David, and therefore needs no more proof; the Jews owe it this Shilo and Prophet to obey him as Moses commanded and God himself warned. Now this Shilo and Prophet has said, his mother Mary is of the tribe of Judah and David and commanded his apostle Matthew to write it. With this, the prickly Jews have their answer: If they will not believe Moses, that he said this concerning Mary, then it is not necessary and they aren't worth it, that they should listen to Matthew or a few Christians or believe in the truth, but Shem Hamphoras, yes, Shorn Haperes (49) they shall believe. Such a belief belongs to such Saints.

89. We Christians know (and no devil or Jew can deny it) that the Messiah or Silo must come from the house of David. As he does not have a father, but only a mother, the mother must of course be David's daughter. Therefore, whoever believes that Jesus, born of the virgin Mary, is the true Messiah has already acknowledged, sealed and proved that his mother Mary must be of the house of David, as certain or more certain as her bridegroom Joseph.

90. Yes, here one encounters resistance from the Jews: they don't want to have Jesus as the Messiah, therefore they bother us with their poisonous, slanderous goads about Joseph, Mary; for they are hardly concerned as to whether Mary is of the house of David or not. And even if they had seen it themselves, that she was born of David, like Solomon and his other children, still they would not believe that Jesus, her son, was the Messiah. They are concerned with the son, whom they do not want; they know, the knaves and lying mouths, that if Jesus is the Messiah, then there is no question that Maria is of the house of David.

91. It is precisely the son who is our Christian concern. For if he is not considered Messiah, then we care nothing as to what the origin of his mother is, in fact, as little as what the origins of Sara, Isaac's mother, or where other unknown women came from. If, however, he is Messiah then God speaks to the Jews through Moses: "You shall listen to him." And if we Christians believe the evangelists and apostles the one main contention that Jesus is Christos or Messiah, why then should we not also believe all other lesser assertions? For whoever does not believe or want to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, does not need to know who or where his mother is; in fact, he would have been better off if he had never heard one word of the entire scriptures and would also have been better off if he had never been born. For God gambled everything on this man, has shown and changed, and judged everything and put everything into his hands; whoever has him shall have everything, whoever does not have him shall have nothing; so, it says.

92. And what would we do if St. Matthew and St. Luke had not described the lineage of the birth? How many things are not described, as St. John says at the end. And as proof of the truth, he writes a good deal that was omitted by Matthew, Mark and Luke. What Christian would not love to know what the Lord did during the thirty years before his baptism. St. Paul described Jesus far more glorious and in more detail as the Messiah than all the others; nevertheless, he deals with the mother and touches her in passing so briefly, that he mentions her only once even then without a name, Gal. 4.4: "He was," says he, "born of a woman," (50) and, Rom. 3, 1 "who was born from the seed of David according to the flesh." He knows, the dear apostle, that if this main issue is presented, that it makes the Messiah believable, so that everything which is the truth must be discovered, or it must not be necessary to find it: "For in him, [he says] all treasures of wisdom and revelation are hidden" (51) (Col. 2:3) since the Holy Spirit does not let anything false be taught or believed.

93. But the Jews, the circumcised saints, carry themselves with a proud courage, brag and hold their heads high against us damnable, miserable heathens, and consider it certain that not we, but they alone have the holy scriptures; therefore it is ridiculous to them what we teach concerning baptism, sacraments, keys and other articles of the New Testament because they don't find it in their book. They believe that everything must be only in their book or it cannot be right. And also, because they do not find in their book the words: Mary is David's daughter, or from the house of David, so they argue and rebel against this as if they were certain that it may no be so.

94. Very well, I will pay them in their own coin and say that they are not Jews; for there is not one letter in the Holy Scripture about these Jews and are unable to prove it from their book that they are Jews or the seed of Israel; I surely believe that they would deny this. Further, I say in a serious mood and on my conscience: If nothing more existed than the Old Testament, I would close down, and no man should try to talk me out of it, than that the present day Jews must be the worst; the most vicious and malicious fellows from the whole world who come together here and again scatter here and there like the Tartars or the Gypsies and their like to make life hard for people with their usury, to spy out and betray all countries, to poison water, steal children, and to do all sorts of other dastardly damage; as brother Richards writes in the edition of the Al-Koran concerning the assassins who were sent into all the world by the Saracenes to rob the rulers of all the world with stealth and to murder whoever they can, in order to seize countries deprived of masters. They are called Ismaelites. This can be read in the tenth chapter of the work called Al-Koran. (52)

95. History supports such views of mine, as it is written of the Jews and leans more and more each day how in all the world into which they have been driven, burnt and killed as is mentioned in that book. (53) Now one can also see how they love to encroach upon lords and nobles using the physician's skill as a pretext. They trade skill with magic and

letters with which they have satiated Christendom for all kinds of weapons and irons. For even the village pastors and sextons have been fooled by these tricks in which we found many of the books with names such as Tetragrammaton, Ananisapta, (54) and rarely prayers, signs, names of angels and devils which are undoubtedly Hebrew. That is how we found out how they often helped noble ladies to get from illness to the graveyard, meanwhile and without doubt laughing up their sleeves.

96. About thirty years ago I heard it told, how a Jew ingratiated himself with Count Albrecht of Saxony, and taught him magic against all weapons so that he could not be punctured, beaten, shot, etc. Oh, those are fine arts by which our masters are misled so that they are murdered by stealth. But Count Albrecht was clever and wanted to be sure of that magic in advance. So, he rode out to the field with that Jew and said: "Jew, I must try this magic on you," drew and stuck the Jew through and through that he lay dead so that neither his Shem Hamphoras nor his Tetragrammaton and any of his tricks could help him. "You lout," said the count, "how you led me around by the nose risking my life!" Yes, he may even have softly laughed up his sleeve. Now it was better that the count tried it on the Jews than that the Jew tried it on the count. I still have a crystal ball which once belonged to Count Frederick of Saxony, which my present gracious lord, Count John Frederick, gave me. It is covered with gilded Hebrew letters and symbols and is without doubt finished in this manner. But that same count was far too clever for such tricks. Nevertheless, the louts tried it.

97. Yes, I say, I would consider these Jews to be evil vagabonds and no true Israelites, if there were nothing else available than the Old Testament. For that same [book] tells us about Jews who were in the land of Canaan, and should still be there, and if they were led away because of their sins, then they should have come home long ago, according to the promise in Moses, 5 Mos. 4:31, 3 Mos. 26:44. (55) However, since that did not take place, one cannot think otherwise than that they will be dried up with time and disappear entirely (like Moab, Ammon and several other peoples) or even change into another people and nothing [more] be left of them than a bad remainder of meandering foreign louts or gypsies, who circumcise themselves and pretend as if they were Jews, for they keep nothing in Moses or the Prophets. Since they praise the Old Testament, however, we are better off than they. That they circumcise themselves, that the Turks do also, and is no more a true sign of Jewish kind or blood, but a real den of cutthroats, full of all kinds of meanness and loutishness, to damage country and citizens and to make life hard for them. This is also found in the "Beggar book" that the same people talk a dialect including a lot of Hebrew as a sign that they are with or of the Jews. (56)

98. Since however, the New Testament asserts that the Jews shall be dispersed among all the heathens, and Jerusalem trampled out by the heathens, until the time of the heathens is fulfilled, (that is until the end of the world) as our Lord says, Luc. 21, 24 (57) for Christ will remain for ever and no other Messiah will come: that is why I must believe

that a few remnants of Jews will remain in the world without ever having their own sovereignty, but be always in a precarious condition as is predicted by Psalm 59, verse 11, 12, in the spirit and in the person of Christ and his people: "By my enemies, God lets me see my joy, he does not kill them so that my people not forget; disperse them with your might, Lord, our shield, and knock them down." (58) And it should happen to them as to Cain the fratricide, 1 Mos. 4:14: You shall be Nogvonod uncertain and flighty, with no home of your own, to sit on the swing and on the scales, and have not certain roots nor place. (59)

99. At the same time, because they are so greedy to attract to themselves and collect the loose, wayward, depraved Christians, although they collect nothing good there, having done this for many years, the Israelite blood is being mixed, unclean, watery and brutalized who have soon learned from them to hate Christians and to murder them. Again, the Jews have learned nothing good from them, so that masters and students have practice on each other, sharpened and improved, until they became a den of cutthroats and devil's dregs for a renegade Christian will be a bitter enemy of Christians.

100. This is said in reference to the pride with which the miserable Jews brag about their holy scriptures, as if no one else had the holy writ; they ought to make use of our New Testament, where they ought to be known as Jews who have nothing otherwise, so that they prove it. Furthermore, there is nobody who has the Holy Scriptures less than the Jews; that we shall see.

Notes

46. This refers to *Plavius Claudius Julianus* (331- 363). He was called the *Apouaze* (from a Greek word meaning "rebel"), a label *Ju*; eanzed in Christian history because he *desem:d the Christian religion a11d sought w reescalilisli the pagan Roman religio11*. He also promised the *J; iws* chat he *'?)J)OUld rebuild eheir temple i11Ji:rusalem*. When he died suddenly only at the age of 32, Christians saw this as a sign that God did not wish the temple rebuilt because, according to Christian theology, it had been *desm,yed as punishment for the crime of deicide*.

47. Luther views this passage as final proof of the Christian message because Luther and other Christian commentators chose to translate the Hebrew word *Shiloh* to mean "The Messiah. " However, "Shiloh was the location of the Jewish sanctuary in the days of the Prophet Samuel before Jerusalem became the center of Jewish worship. "See *Genesis, additional notes, in The Pentateuch, J.H. Hertz, ed., London, Soncino, 1961, p. 202*. Hence, Jewish authorities claim that this passage means only that Judah will be established in Shiloh. There are also numerous other interpretations of this sentence based on various possible spellings of the word *Shiloh* in the Hebrew.

48. Luther uses the German word *rachen*, derived from *sich rachen*, which means to avenge oneself. However, the Hebrew word *Edroshe*, which Luther translates "revenge," can also be translated "to require."

49. There is dirt.

50. "Born of a human mother," Phillips, p. 405.

51. The modern English translation is, "For it is in him and in him alone, that men will find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." See Phillips, p. 431.

52. a.) The word "Koran" is Arabic, meaning "The Writings." It refers to the revelations received from Allah by Mohammed, who was his prophet. Mohammed lived from 570 to 632 according to the Gregorian calendar. In the tenth chapter of the Koran, called *Jonah*, there is indeed a suggestion that unbelievers (in the Koran) will be punished. However, Luther's interpretation of this chapter is enormously exaggerated. It should be kept in mind, however, that Luther and Christians generally were frightened by the swift Turkish Moslem advances in the Balkans which they witnessed in their lifetime. Thus, Christian Serbia was overrun in 1459, one year after Athens was taken by the Turks. In 1529, five years before Luther wrote *Vom Schem Hamphoras* the Turks besieged Vienna.

b.) In 874 C.E., an Iraqi peasant, Hamdan ibn al-Ashrath, also known as Quarmai, became the leader of the Ismaeli sect of Islam. He inspired the Ismaelites of Northern Iran to wage a campaign of murder against all opponents at the end of the eleventh century. Seeking to give themselves courage and to disregard the emotional consequences of their murderous conduct, the killers used a hemp derivative called hashish. Hence they were called "hashishin," from which the English word "assassin" is derived.

53. *Of the Jews and Their Lies*.

54. A medieval book of magic.

55. "He will not forsake you, nor will he destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which he swore to them." 3 Moses 26: 44: "I will not cast them away, nor will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them. "

56. The dialect Luther mentions here refers to the Yiddish language. This German-Hebrew mixture of words and phrases was first used by the German Jews at the end of the eleventh century and came to be known as "Judisch" or "Yiddish." The language was spoken by millions of Jews in all of Eastern Europe until the Nazi annihilations of the 1930s and 1940s. Today the language is hardly used by anyone so that in Israel, where Hebrew is spoken, Yiddish is regarded as a foreign language and is listed as such in university catalogues. In the U.S. the language has nearly disappeared as evidenced by the fact that erstwhile Yiddish newspapers have either ceased publication or are now published in English. Nevertheless, the Yiddish writer Isaac Bashevis Singer won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1978.

57. *This passage predicts that "Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the heathen until the heathen's day is over." See Phillips, p. 173.*

58. *The Jerusalem Bible of 1988 renders these sentences as: "God who loves me shall come to meet me: God shall let me gaze upon my enemies. Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down. "*

59. *The German transliteration of the Hebrew is mistaken. The words should be "Na Vanad" which means "perpetual wanderer." This refers to Cain, who, according to Genesis, was to be a "navanad baaretz," i.e., a perpetual wanderer on the earth. The current translation of this sentence as presented in the Jerusalem Bible of 1988 is "Behold thou has driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face I shall be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass that anyone that finds me shall slay me." Some Christian theologians view this passage as justification for the expulsions of the Jews from numerous communities over many centuries and further see in the last section of that sentence justification for the mass murders committed against the Jews.*