

# YHWH's Sign to Ahaz- a Virgin

By  
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Therefore YHWH Himself shall give you an *ot* (sign); Hinei, HaAlmah<sup>1</sup> (the unmarried young virgin) shall conceive, and bear Ben, and shall Shmo Imannu-El. Yeshayahu 7:14 OJB

If, according to the *TaNak*, *Moshiach* was not born of the *almah* (virgin), then He is not *Ben HaElohim*, he is not *Moshiach*, and we are not delivered from our Torah breaking by the one who is "EL with us." His birth was prophesied to be an *ot* (sign) or miraculous. Do they really believe that Elohim is subject to the laws of physics and biology? Nothing is impossible for Him. He is the Sovereign of the Universe. Thus, in order to find the true Messiah, we must look into the Scriptures.

- Is anything too hard for YHWH? Bereshith 18:14
- "... There is nothing too difficult for thee. Yirmeyahu 32:17b
- **H6381-HARD** pâlâ'-*paw-law*'A primitive root; properly perhaps to *separate*, that is, *distinguish* (literally or figuratively); by implication to *be* (causatively *make*) *great, difficult, wonderful*: - accomplish, (arise . . . too, be too) hard, hidden, things too high, (be, do, do a, shew) marvelous (-ly, -els, things, work), miracles, perform, separate, make singular, (be, great, make) wonderful (-ers, -ly, things, works), wondrous (things, works, -ly).

## The Text

The Hebrew of this text from Yeshayahu says, "*Hu' LaKes 'OT LaKen YiTen YHWH*"<sup>2</sup> this indicates that YHWH HIMSELF will give you a sign. The word "you" in the text is in the plural indicating that the sign would be given to the whole nation, not just Ahaz. The issue at stake in this SIGN is *emunah* (belief). Salvation from the enemies of Yisrael certainly would require *emunah*. Salvation from the enemies of the human soul also requires *emunah*. Temporal salvation reveals the soul's salvation in type. The Messiah would offer salvation to all who have *emunah* in His atonement. The *navi* (prophet) connects his vision of the distant future with the situation that Yehudah was then facing from her enemies.

The use of the Hebrew "*LaKen*" indicates a contrast in the context of Ahaz's unbelief in Elohim. YHWH would give the whole nation a sign in a prophetic promise of the Messiah being born in a miraculous manner. The Hebrew word "*Hineh*" (Behold) introduces something of great importance just about to happen, or to happen in the future. "*Hineh*" is used 18 times in Yeshayahu in the imperfect tense.

## The Words Almah and Betulah

**Judges 8** mentions royal bearing (**Shoftim 8: 18**) and also the word *pilegish* (concubine, in verse 31). Also, in **Shir Hashirim 6 : 8** a passage infers the royal bearing in the harem of the *pilegish* as concubine and the royal bearing of *malkah* (queen) as legitimate royal wife and the royal bearing of *almah* (who in the harem has the royal bearing of *betulah* or virgin, not merely "young woman" since a merely young woman would throw a question on hereditary rights to the throne in that any young woman who was only that, only a woman, only young, and then introduced into the harem other than a virgin could destabilize the dynastic heirdom for the reason that in dynastic monarchy the child would normally be of the king's body begotten and there can be no question about this fact; so in this matter the three classes of women in the harem--[1] *malkah*, [2] *pilegish* and [3] *almah*=*betulah*, **Song of Songs 6:8**---are crucial terms having to do with not only sexual matters in relationship to the king but political matters visa-vis the succession government of the dynasty of the monarchy.

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<sup>1</sup> See Gen.24:43;Ex.2:8 –There are three virgins in Scripture-Rivkah,Miryam, and Miryam

<sup>2</sup> This is one of the 134 places that the scribes substituted Adonai for YHWH. The Dead Sea Scrolls have YHWH as does the Aramaic Peshitta (MRY'). The Targum Jonathan also has "𐤎" the sign for YHWH in the text.

- “There are threescore *melakhot* (queens), and fourscore *pilagshim* (concubines), and *alamot* (young unmarried virgins) without number. **Shir HaShirim 6:8**

This matter of royal bearing of the *almah* as *betulah* or virgin is decisive in translating **Yeshayahu 7:14** "*ha- Almah*" as "the virgin" particularly here since the context of *Bait David*" (verse 13) shows that a royal *almah*, not just any *almah*, is in view.

In **Shir Hashirim 1:3; Yeshayahu 7:14; Bereshis 24:43; Shemot 2:8; Mishle 30:19** the word means explicitly or implicitly "virgin" and where "young unmarried woman" is not an adequate rendering, since the king was not interested in only "young unmarried women" in his harem, but demanded "virgin unmarried maidens"; the older Jewish translations like *Harkavy's* in fact translated the word as "virgin" in **Song of Songs 6:8** until it became "religiously incorrect" to do so in later Jewish translations into English.

In **Yoel 1:8** where *betulah* is used of a married woman; *almah* is always a young unmarried *betulah* in Scripture. We have no word in English to differentiate an unmarried from a married virgin. But they say, we have no word in English to differentiate a young horse from a younger horse--so what? Not so, in English we have a very precise nomenclature for horses. We have "filly" (a young female horse), or "mare" (a fully mature female horse) or "foal" (a horse not yet one year old), or "yearling" (a horse one year old dating from January 1 of the year after the year of foaling). So "young horse" is inadequate in the world of horses, just as "young woman" is inadequate in the TaNaK. Just as modern racetrack enthusiasts require more precision in their "horse" vocabulary, so too the Hebrews did with their "woman" vocabulary.

An *almah* is an unmarried, virginal, sexually ripening young woman; a *betulah* is a virginal married or unmarried woman, and she may be old, she does not have to be young; a *na'arah* is a girl or young woman; a *zonah* is a non-virginal harlot or prostitute; a *noefet* is an adulteress; an *agunah* is a woman whose husband's whereabouts are unknown; a *pilegish* is a concubine; an *isha* is a woman/wife; a *gerushah* is a divorcee; a *gevurah* is a noble woman or queen mother; and a *malkah* is a queen. Notice all these terms for women are defined by her relationship to the man, since, according to *Bereshith*, woman was made for man. "Young woman" is as out of place in Hebrew nomenclature as "young horse" is in racetrack nomenclature; "young woman" is imprecise. There is a Hebrew word for "young woman" which Boaz says twice in reference to Ruth- "*na'arah*" ("young woman"), used in **Ruth 2:5** and **Ruth 4:12**. Here virginity is not implicit and in fact Ruth is a young widow who had been married before and for some time. Notice the precision of language: **Song of Songs 6:8** does not say "*ne'arot*" without number (*ne'arot*=young women plural, *na'arah* = young woman singular); **Song of Songs 6:8** says "*alamot*" without number (*alamot*=virginal young women, plural of *almah*).

**Mishle** speaks of the *derech gever* (way of a man) with an *almah* (**Mishle 30:19**), but when this is referenced in Scripture in **Genesis 24:65**, the *derech* (way) of the *almah* Rivkah and the *gever* Yitzchak shows the young woman still a virgin (**Gn 24:65**). The virgin whose seed (*Moshiach*) crushes HaSatan's head (**Genesis 3:15**) is the *almah* whose supernatural conception of *Moshiach* is a sign to the House of David.

One more point, in **Genesis chapter 24**, *almah* and *betulah* (**24:43; 24:16**) are used nearly synonymously. Now, to illustrate, if we say the "lad" sat by the well and then if we say the "boy" walked around the well, and if we are talking about the same person, then obviously we are using "lad" and "boy" in a synonymous fashion and it is only our bias that would have us try to make some distinction between the terms.

In **Genesis 24**, Rivkah is called an "*almah*" and in the same breath she is also called a "*betulah*," showing some kind of interchangeable correlation between the words. In the illustration, the semantic freight which both "lad" and "boy" carry is youth and also maleness, making it possible to use the terms "lad" and "boy" of the same person interchangeably. One could not seriously, use the term "geezer" (elderly eccentric man) and "lad" interchangeably of the same person, and one could not use the Biblical Hebrew word "*zonah*" (a nonvirgin harlot, prostitute) and "*betulah*" of the same person interchangeably (the *TaNaK* never uses *zonah* and *almah* regarding the same person); but the *TaNaK* does in fact use "*almah*" and "*betulah*" in **Genesis 24:43** and **Genesis 24:16** of the same person (Rivkah) because both terms carry the common semantic view of femaleness and virginity. In **Genesis chapter 24**, Rivkah is called an *almah* and she is also called a *betulah*, showing that, if not virginal, an *almah* would not be an *almah*. In **Genesis 24** *HaAlmah* is used as a synonym for *na'arah-betulah*. Virginity is at implicit in the term "*almah*" or an *almah* could not be called a *betulah*. It would never do in Hebrew to say that the *pilegish* (concubine) approached the well and then say the *betulah* sat by the well and yet be talking about the same person. Virginity is definitely not implicit in the term *pilegish* (concubine). Moreover, as a translation for "*almah*," "young woman" destroys the virginal conception of the *Moshiach*, without which he is not *Ben HaElohim Moshi'a* of Adam's rebellious progeny. So we see the verse proves true that says "some twist the Scriptures to their own destruction (**2 Keph 3:16**)."

Those who convince themselves that there is no distinction between "*na'arah*" (young woman) and "*almah*" (young virgin) have Hebrew usage and context against them.

Also, in **Yeshayahu 7:14** the Jewish scholars, who translated the *Targum Hashivim* [Septuagint Hebrew Bible Greek translation] in the Third Century B.C.E. for the Hellenists, translated the Hebrew word "*almah*" as the Greek word "*parthenos*"--which can only mean, "female of marriageable age with focus on virginity" [*F.W.Danker Greek-English Lexicon, page 777*]. Notice other times *parthenos* ("virgin") is used in the Greek NT: **Mt 25:1, 7, 11; Lk 1:27; 1C 7:25; Acts 21:9**. The Septuagint translators also translated "*haalimah*" in **Genesis 24:43** as "*parthenos*" showing that both Rivkah the *almah* and the mother of the *Moshiach*, *Moshiach* who is "EL with us", are both "*haalimah*" and both "*parthenos*" and both "the virgin". Let it be said that perhaps these ancient sages understood the word "*almah*" better than the modern translators. **J.A. Motyer** writes:

- "In Song of Solomon 6:8, the *alamot* [plural of *almah*], contrasted with queens and concubines, are unmarried and virgin" (*The Prophecy of Isaiah, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester England, 1993*).

Yeshayahu was definitely speaking of the unmarried young virgin. This translation is "*orthodox*" because it is true to the Hebrew Scriptures and preserves the supernatural birth of the *Ben David Ben Elohim Moshiach*, the Savior (*Goel, Oisleizer*) of the World.

"EL-with-us" cannot be Hezekiah, as some teach, because Hezekiah had already been born. *Moshiach* is called not only "EL-with-us" but "mighty EL" (Isaiah **9:5[6] and 10:21**) and more than once is called *Ben HaElohim*. . Just as *Moshiach* had a real presence in the wilderness (**Num 21:16-18; 1C10:4**), *Moshiach's* real presence in the *Bait David* forms an eschatological time line: his coming is in the future when the *Bait David* will suffer subjugation indicated by the fact that desert food, thickened milk and honey, will be the future oppressive diet (**Yeshayahu 7:22**) because of the capitulation of Ahaz to Assyria, with Assyria's imperial despotic evil having various future manifestations from Babylonian to Roman Imperial kingdoms, until the prophecy to the dynasty of the *Bait David* is literally fulfilled in *Moshiach*. When this prophecy achieves its fulfillment, history would finally confirm that the time line here covers more than 700 years, with only a handful of years set apart to describe the brief time before Yehudah's enemies, Syria and the northern kingdom of Yisrael, will pose no more threat to Yehudah (**Yeshayahu 7:16**).

**Proverbs 30:1-19** should include a commentary that helps to explain how, in spite of teenage unwed mothers, the Isaianic unmarried young virgin conceiving is not as scandalous a sign as may at first appear. The reason is that in conceiving she is still the unwed "virgin," (not an unwed *zonah* worthy of stoning), and the one conceived is called "El" in Hebrew, even "EL with us," giving a clear derivative clue to his paternity.

- "*Bethulah*. Virgin, maid, maiden; probably from an unused verb *batal* 'to separate.' Although Hebrew lexicons and modern translations generally translate *bethulah* as 'virgin,' G.J. Wenham ('Bethulah 'A Girl of Marriageable Age,' VT 22: 326-48) and Tsevat (TDOT II, p.338-43) contest this as a general meaning but prefer 'a young (marriageable) maiden.' But whereas Wenham does not concede the meaning 'virgin' in any text, Tsevat allows this meaning in three out of its fifty-one occurrences (**Lev. 21:13f; Deut. 22:19; Ezek. 44:22**). In any case, a strong case can be presented that *bethulah* is not a technical term for *virgo intacta* in the OT, a conclusion that has important bearing on the meaning of "*almah*" in Isa. 7:14. **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds. R.L. Harris, G.L. Archer, and B.K. Waltke, Vol. I, Aleph-Mem, p. 137; "Bethulah, A Girl of Marriageable Age," Vetus Testamentum 22, p. 326-348); M. Tsevat, in Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, eds. H. Botterweck and H. Ringren, p. 338-343**
- "One argument against taking *bethulah* as *virgo intacta* is that such an understanding makes the following expression (No man had known her) redundant. But this is not necessarily the case, for the Hebrew Bible provides other instances of redundant or idem per idem constructions. Thus **Job 24:21** refers to "the sterile female who does not bear children." One would think that 'the sterile female' would be sufficient. Of course sterile women do not bear children. Cf. also **Isa. 54:1**, 'Sing, barren one, who did not bear.' Or **2 Sam. 14:5**, 'I am a widow and my husband is dead.'...A clearer indication that *bethulah* does not necessarily mean 'virgin,' as we use that word today, comes from verses like **Joel 1:8**, in which a *bethulah* mourns 'the husband of her youth'. Looking again then at the two phrases in v.16, I suggest that *bethulah* designates Rebekah as a marriageable woman. The following sentence, No man had known her, specifies her premarital virginity **V.P. Hamilton, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50, Vol. II, Comment on Genesis 24:16**

- "But it is altogether improbable that the wife of the prophet should be intended. For if it were to her that he referred, he could hardly have expressed himself in a more ambiguous and unintelligible manner; and we cannot see why he should not have said *ishtiy* or *hanviyah*, to say nothing of the fact that there is no further allusion made to any son of the prophet of that name, and that a sign of this kind founded upon the prophet's own family affairs would have been of a very precarious nature. And the meaning and use of the word *almah* are also at variance with this. For whilst *bethulah* (from *bathal*, related to *badal*, to separate, *sejungere*) signifies a maiden living in seclusion in her parents' house and still a long way from matrimony, *almah* (from *'alam*, related to *chalam*, and possibly to *alam*, to be strong, full of vigor, or arrived at the age of puberty) is applied to one fully mature, and approaching the time of her marriage." **F. Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. VII, Isaiah, Part I, p. 217**
- "If led by these remarkable coincidences to examine more attentively the terms of the prophecy itself, we find, the mother of the promised child described not as *a woman* or as any particular woman merely, but as *ha'almah* a term which has been variously derived from *'lm* to conceal, and from *alam* [Arab.] to grow up, but which, in the six places where it occurs elsewhere, is twice applied to young unmarried females certainly (**Gen. xxiv. 43; Exod. ii. 8**) and twice most probably (**Ps. lxxviii. 25; Sol. Song i. 3**), while in the two remaining cases (**Sol. Song vi. 8; Prov. xxx. 19**) this application is at least probable as any other. It would therefore naturally suggest the idea of a virgin, or at least an unmarried woman. It is said, indeed, that if this had been intended, the word *bethulah* would have been employed; but even that word is not invariably used in its strict sense (see **Deut. xxii. 19; Joel i. 8**), so that there would still have been room for the same cavils, and perhaps for the assertion that the idea of a virgin could not be expressed except by periphrasis." **J.A. Alexander, Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah, pp. 167-8**
- "There is no instance where it can be proved that *almah* designates a young woman who is not a virgin. The fact of virginity is obvious in **Gen. 24:43** where *almah* is used of one who was being sought as a bride for Isaac. Also obvious is **Ex. 2:8. Song 6:8** refers to three types of women, two of whom are called queens and concubines. It could be only reasonable to understand the name of the third group, for which the plural of *almah* is used, as meaning "virgins". In Ugaritic the word is used in poetic parallel with the cognate of *bethulah*." **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds. R.L. Harris, G.L. Archer, and B.K. Waltke, Vol. II, Nun-Taw, p. 67**
- "The translation virgin (*almah*) is widely disputed on the ground that the word means only 'young woman' and that the technical word for 'virgin' is *bethulah*. Of the nine occurrences of *alma* those in **1 Chronicles 15:20** and the title of **Psalms 46** are presumably a musical direction but no longer understood. In **Psalms 68:25; Proverbs 30:19** and **Song of Solomon 1:3** the context throws no decisive light on the meaning of the word. In **Genesis 24:43** and **Exodus 2:8** the reference is unquestionably to an unmarried girl, and in **Song of Solomon 6:8** the *alamoth* contrasted with queens and concubines, are unmarried and virgin. Thus, wherever the context allows a judgment, *alma* is not a general term meaning 'young woman' but a specific one meaning 'virgin'. It is worth noting that outside the Bible, so far as may be ascertained, *alma* was never used of a married woman. **J.A. Motyer, The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary, comment on Isaiah 7:14**
- "Although the primary idea of this word is not unspotted virginity, for which the Hebrews had a special word, *bethulah*, "virgin" is, nevertheless, the proper rendering in **Isaiah 7:14** of *almah*, which may not only take this meaning (**Gen. 24:43**), but in light of **Matt. 1:23** must take this meaning. The Holy Spirit through Isaiah did not use *bethulah*, because both the ideas of virginity and marriageable age had to be combined in one word to meet the immediate historical situation and the prophetic aspect centering in a virgin-borne Messiah. **Unger's Bible Dictionary, ed. M.F. Unger, "Virgin", p. 1159**

### The Septuagint

The Septuagint, the TaNaK translated into Greek by Jewish Sages 200 years before Yahshua came (200 BCE), is a valuable tool for helping us to understand how the ancient Jewish people of that time understood the Hebrew Scriptures. For *almah* in **Yeshayahu 7:14**, the Jewish translators used the specific Greek word for virgin (*par-thay-nos*).

Therefore, before any controversy about Yahshua being born of a virgin came into Jewish and Nazarene understanding, the authoritative Jewish version of the Greek TaNaK declared that the virgin would conceive and bear a son, and that he would be EL with us.

- 'Since *betula* is used many times in the OT as a specific word for 'virgin,' it seems reasonable to consider that the feminine form of this word is not a technical word for a virgin but represents a young woman, one of whose characteristics is virginity. This is borne out by the fact that the LXX' (Septuagint), 'translates it as *parthenos* in two of its seven occurrences, and that its use in **Isa 7:14** was quoted to Joseph by the angel as a prediction of the virgin birth. Some translators interpret **Mt 1:22-23** as being simply a comment by Matthew, but it is more reasonable to consider that the argument that convinced Joseph was the fact, pointed out to him by the angel, that such an event had already been predicted by Isaiah. There is no instance where it can be proved that '*alma*' designates a young woman who is not a virgin. The fact of virginity is obvious in **Gen 24:43** where *alma* is used of one who was being sought as a bride for Isaac. Also obvious is **Ex 3:8. Song 6:8** refers to three types of women, two of whom are called queens and concubines. It could be only reasonable to understand the name of the third group, for which the plural of '*alma*' is used, as meaning 'virgins.' *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

Throughout the *Septuagint*, the general word used to translate both *almah* and *bethulah* is *parthenos*, though *neanis* is used to render *almah* in both of that word's appearances in the Song of Solomon. Interestingly, the most explicit place in the TaNaK where *bethulah* is used to denote a woman who is obviously NOT a virgin is translated as *numphos* (young), not as *parthenos*, in **Yoel 1:8**.

- "Lament like a betulah girded with sackcloth for the ba'al of her youth."

#### From Mattithyahu

The verb EGENNESEN (begat) is used 38 times in **Mattithyahu 1.2-16**, but there is a change in the inflected form in its use in verse 16 - "and Ya'akov begat (EGENNESEN) Yosef, the husband of Mary, of whom was born (EGENNETHE) Yahshua, who is called Moshiach." The word EGENNESEN is the aorist active indicative and EGENNETHE is the aorist passive indicative of the root verb GENNAO. In vs.16, there is a deliberate change from active voice to the passive in describing the birth of Yahshua. EGENNETHE in the phrase "of whom was born Yahshua" is passive and it emphasises that in contrast to all the preceding men who sired their sons, Yosef did not begat Yahshua. This usage stresses that Yahshua was born of Miryam without any participation by Yosef. This is a strong biblical proof for the virgin birth of HaMoshiach.

In **Matt. 1:16**, the relative pronoun HES (of whom) is feminine singular and its antecedent is Miryam. This usage clearly indicates that Yahshua was born of Miryam alone and not of Miryam and Yosef. This is one of the strongest evidences for the virgin birth of HaMoshiach.

Yosef was represented as the guardian but not the father of Yahshua. Some "supposed" that Yosef was the father of Yahshua. **Luke 3:23** states: "and Yahshua himself was beginning to be about thirty years old; being as was supposed son of Yosef"; "As was supposed" is the translation of OS ENOMIZETO. The verb is ENOMIZETO the imperfect passive indicative of NOMIZO which means to think or consider. This verb is used 15 times in the Brit Chadasha and has the meaning of supposition rather than actuality (**Matt. 5:17; 10:34; 20:10; Luke 2:44; 3:23; Acts. 7:25; 8:20; 14:19; 16:13, 27; 21:29; 17:29; I Cor. 7:26,36; I Tim. 6:5**).

Mattithyahu's reference to the Messiah not having a human father is **Bereshith 3:15**. This is the first concept of the "woman's seed". A woman does not have seed. It is the man who possesses the seed and the woman carries it. We can see this in the Midrash on **Bereshith 4:25**:

- "...For Elohim, said she, hath appointed me another zerah in place of Hevel, whom Kayin killed."
- remember their homes [i.e. their wives] and repair thither immediately.1 AND SHE CALLED HIS NAME SETH: FOR Elohim HATH APPOINTED ME ANOTHER SEED, etc. R. Tanhuma said in the name of Samuel Kozith2: [She hinted at] that seed which would arise from another source, 3 viz. the king Messiah. INSTEAD OF ABEL, FOR CAIN SLEW HIM. Through the sin against Abel, Cain was slain.4 It was as if two trees were standing near each other, and a wind uprooted one of them, which fell upon the other and uprooted it too. Similarly, you read, INSTEAD OF ABEL, FOR HE SLEW CAIN. Midrash Rabah 23:5

## Honesty

When translators of the text of **Yeshayahu 7:14**, say that the word *almah* doesn't mean 'virgin' but a 'young maiden' implying that the woman could have known a man, they are being dishonest. We expect their knowledge of Hebrew to be excellent. For them to present *almah*, and say that it does not mean virgin, is nothing less than dishonest. If the leaders they rely upon are not being honest with them, how can they truly make a competent decision? The Rabbis should be trying to teach the Truth, even if it means laying down all their prejudices about Yahshua. They should be telling their people what the *TaNak* teaches about *Moshiach*. Many rabbis who actively oppose the *Besorah* of Yahshua have lost objectivity in their zeal to disprove the truth of the *Besorah*. The teachings of the sages are often contradictory and most rabbis simply follow whichever one expresses a viewpoint that gives no credibility to the Nazarene viewpoint of the birth of Messiah.