



# Israelite Studies

## PREFACE

**Here at Israelite Studies©, we understand that for information to be provided which helps answer questions, that info must first be studied to give absolute conclusions based upon accurate examinations of any resource contributing to it.**

## HOW DO WE CONDUCT OUR STUDIES?

Our research team comes with a collective of 50+ years' experience in Biblical Studies and examination. Although each member holds a particular position for each topic, an unbiased approach is taken when applying the comparative research method to best harmonize concrete interpretations of scripture. Each topic is put under heavy scrutiny while taking into consideration, language, cultural and historical backgrounds, parallel texts, etc. Once any study has been exhausted, our team finalizes the findings with a collective position. If necessary, amendments to the studies are applied once all of the views expressed by our research team are made available for the public to form their own conclusions.

- Throughout some of our bible studies, we have replaced *LORD/the LORD* with *Yahawah*, *God* with *Alahayam*, and *Jesus Christ* with *Yahawashi Mashayach*.
- All Hebrew definitions referenced are listed in the *Tel-Dan Inscription* font, along with every Transliteration and Phonetic pronunciation provided in the earliest dialect of Hebrew studied by our team (commonly called '*Lashawan Qadash*' – Holy Language).

## **THE QUESTION OF SEMINARY ORIGINS**

The central question under examination is whether the origins of seminary schools are biblical. A primary modern reference point for this investigation is Frank Viola and George Barna's *\*Pagan Christianity: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices\** (Tyndale Momentum, 2012).[1] That volume surveys the historical development of many familiar church customs—from the pulpit and clergy vestments to choirs, altar calls, Sunday school, and Bible colleges—arguing that numerous practices widely assumed to be “Christian” in fact have pagan or purely human origins. From the extensive material compiled there (and in the sources it cites), this study isolates one strand: the evolution of formal theological education and the emergence of the seminary. Based on that historical record, the development of Christian theological training can be broadly divided into four stages: episcopal, monastic, scholastic, and seminarian.[1] Each stage carries the church further away from the biblical pattern of instruction and closer into dependence upon Greek philosophy and later Enlightenment rationalism.

### **PRIMARY SOURCE AND HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK**

The first stage, often called “episcopal” theology, arises in the patristic age, roughly the third to the fifth centuries.[1][2] It bears this name because the leading theologians of the period were bishops (\*episkopoi\*). This system centered on training bishops and priests in the conduct of liturgies and rituals—how to “do the work” of the institutional church. Instruction was focused on practical oversight and ecclesiastical ceremony, as attested in early church orders and episcopal manuals.[2][9]

**At this point, it is instructive to set that development alongside the New Testament portrait of the bishop.**

**In 1 Timothy 3:1–7, Paul writes:**

*“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A **bishop** then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of Alahayam? Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”*

The Greek term behind “bishop” is \*episkopē\* (G1984), from which “episcopal” ultimately derives. Thayer defines \*episkopē\* as “inspection, visitation; the act by which Alahayam looks into and searches out the ways, deeds, and character of men in order to judge them accordingly; oversight; the office charged with the care and direction of the church.” Strong’s similarly glosses it as “inspection (for relief); by implication, superintendence; specifically, the Christian ‘episcopate’—the office of a bishop, bishoprick, visitation.” Biblically, then, the bishop is an overseer distinguished by moral integrity, domestic faithfulness, and aptitude for teaching—not by academic certification. The earliest forms of Christian training for such overseers resembled, in some respects, the instruction given to Levitical priests in the service of the temple: practical preparation for divinely appointed duties.[2][9] In that limited sense, the first stage of theological formation is not yet intrinsically corrupt. Over time, however, as is well known from church history, pagan elements infiltrate both doctrine and practice. This includes the realm of theological education, which becomes progressively entangled with alien philosophical systems.[2][9]

### **STAGE ONE: EPISCOPAL THEOLOGY AND THE BIBLICAL BISHOP**

The first stage of theological education, then, is “episcopal” in character.[1] Its emphasis lies in the training of bishops and priests in liturgical performance and church governance. In form, this corresponds in part to the biblical notion of oversight, but in substance it begins to accumulate traditions and practices not mandated in Scripture. The New Testament’s description of the \*episkopos\* centers not on ritual technique but on holiness of life. The office is defined by qualities such as being “blameless,” “apt to teach,” “not a novice,” and one who “ruleth well his own house.” The responsibility of the bishop is pastoral and moral oversight rather than professionalized religious performance.

**The Greek term \*episkopē\* underlines this emphasis on divine inspection and oversight. It speaks first of Alahayam’s own searching of hearts and lives, and then of the entrusted office of those who, under Him, watch over the flock. When subsequent systems of training elevate liturgical skill and institutional ritual above these moral and spiritual prerequisites, there is already a departure from the apostolic pattern.[2][9]**

### **STAGE TWO: MONASTIC THEOLOGY AND ALEXANDRIAN PHILOSOPHY**

The second stage, the “monastic” phase of theological education, is closely tied to the rise of ascetic and mystical forms of Christian life. Instruction increasingly passed into the hands of monks living in monastic communities and, later, in cathedral schools.[1][2] Monastic schools appear as early as the third century and, by the fourth, were sending missionaries into newly reached territories, as attested in standard histories of monasticism and mission.[2][9] During this period, many Eastern Church Fathers became

deeply immersed in Platonic thought. Several of them had been pagan philosophers or professional orators prior to their conversion; they continued to regard Plato and Aristotle as “schoolmasters” whose methods and concepts could be pressed into the service of Mashayach.[2][9] Consequently, the Christian faith itself gradually took on a philosophical, Hellenic cast. Justin Martyr provides a striking example. As one of the most influential Christian teachers of the second century, he was known for wearing the garb of a philosopher.[2][7] Justin taught that Greek philosophy was, in effect, a revelation from God to the Gentiles, as he argues in his *\*First Apology\** and *\*Dialogue with Trypho\**. [7] He even claimed that Socrates, Plato, and similar figures occupied, for the nations, a position analogous to that of Moses for Israel. In other words, pagan philosophers were treated as divinely given preparatory tutors for the Gentile world.

**However, Scripture already assigns the role of “schoolmaster” to another authority.**

**In Galatians 3:24–25, Paul writes:**

*“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Mashayach, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”*

**According to the apostolic witness, it is the Torah—the law of the Most High—that functions as the pedagogical guide bringing Israel to the Messiah. The law exposes sin, disciplines the people, and points them toward their need for redemption. Plato and Aristotle are nowhere granted this role. To make Greek philosophy the effective schoolmaster unto Mashayach is to supplant Alahayam’s appointed tutor with a foreign, humanly constructed system.[2][9]**

The rise of Alexandrian theology further illustrates the depth of Hellenistic influence. After A.D. 200, Alexandria became the intellectual capital of the Christian world, just as it had earlier been for the Greeks.[2][9] Around A.D. 180, a catechetical school is established there which functions essentially as a theological college, as described by Eusebius and later historians.[2][9] In this setting, the institutional, systematic study of Christian doctrine begins in earnest. Origen, one of the earliest and most influential teachers at the Alexandrian school, was profoundly shaped by Greek philosophy. He was a contemporary and associate of Plotinus, often called the father of Neoplatonism; both studied under the same teacher, Ammonius Saccas, according to Porphyry’s *\*Life of Plotinus\**. [3][4] Origen drew extensively from Neoplatonic thought. Douglas Farrow, in *\*Ascension and Ecclesia\** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), analyzes how Greek patterns of thinking took hold of theology through figures like Origen and, later, Augustine, with inevitable consequences for many aspects of church life.[3] At this stage, the issue is no longer merely the use of occasional philosophical terminology, but a deep restructuring of Christian doctrine along Hellenic lines.[2][3][9]

## **HELLENIZATION BEFORE MESSIAH: ISRAEL AND GREEK THOUGHT**

**Israel had already encountered the seduction of Hellenistic customs before the advent of the Messiah. During the period described in 2 Maccabees, under the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes (2nd century B.C.), many Israelites fell under the spell of Greek culture.**

### **2 Maccabees 4:13–15 relates:**

*“Now such was the height of Greek fashions, an increase of heathenish manners, through the exceeding profaneness of Jason, that ungodly wretch, and no high priest; that the priests had no courage to serve any more at the altar; but despising the temple, and neglecting the sacrifices, hastened to be partakers of the unlawful allowance in the place of exercise, after the game of discus called them forth; not setting by the honours of their fathers, but liking the glory of the Grecians best of all.”[5]*

**Here, even the priests abandon the altar and despise the temple, rushing instead to participate in Greek athletics and customs. The process of Hellenization not only alters external customs but also reshapes inner loyalties and modes of thought. Standard works such as Emil Schürer’s *\*History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ\** detail this cultural and religious transformation.[21] Once removed from the ordinances of the Most High and the service of His house, minds become ripe for adopting foreign philosophies and ways of life. The later Christian embrace of Greek philosophy in the monastic and Alexandrian settings reflects this same pattern: Greek ways and categories being preferred to the ways and instructions of Israel’s God.**

## **STAGE THREE: SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY AND THE MEDIEVAL UNIVERSITY**

The third phase, the “scholastic” stage, emerges with the rise of the medieval university. By around the year 1200, a number of cathedral schools had evolved into full universities.[8][9] The University of Bologna in Italy is generally considered the first; the University of Paris followed closely, and Oxford soon thereafter, as documented in Hastings Rashdall’s *\*The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages\**. [8] In these institutions, theology became thoroughly intertwined with Greek philosophical abstraction. University academics adopted an Aristotelian model of thought that centered on rational knowledge, syllogistic logic, and dialectical argument.[8][9] The central aim of scholastic theology became the collection, organization, and articulation of doctrinal truths in a systematic, rationally coherent form. Even in antiquity, there were voices that perceived the danger of such a fusion. In the third century, Tertullian famously asked, “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” in his treatise *\*De praescriptione haereticorum\** (On the Prescription of Heretics), chapter 7.[6] That question was not merely rhetorical flair. “Athens” symbolized Greek philosophy and speculation; “Jerusalem” represented the revelation entrusted to Israel. The issue was whether the categories and methods of Athens had any legitimate

authority in interpreting or governing what had been revealed in Zion. Tertullian's implied answer was negative.

**Paul's warning in Colossians 2:8 speaks with enduring force:**

*"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Mashayach."*

**The term "philosophy" here, \*philosophia\* (G5385), is defined by Thayer as "love of wisdom," and more specifically, in its New Testament use, as a speculative, esoteric teaching concerning angels, ritual, and tradition. Strong's describes it as "Jewish sophistry or philosophy." In the immediate context, Paul confronts a blend of human tradition, mystical speculation, and ascetic regulation posing as higher wisdom. His concern is that such \*philosophia\*, being "after the tradition of men" and the "rudiments of the world," undermines the simplicity of faith in Messiah. Originally, this warning is directed toward those exalting the oral law and human traditions above the written commandments. Yet the principle extends further: whenever theology is constructed based on human systems and speculative frameworks, rather than on the straightforward testimony of Scripture, the result is "vain deceit." Over time, much formal theological training, shaped by Greek abstraction, has tended toward eisegesis—reading preconceived ideas into the text—rather than exegesis, drawing meaning out of the text.**

Among the architects of scholastic theology, Peter Abelard (1079–1142) occupies a pivotal place. Abelard's teaching prepared the way for the later synthesis of Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274).[9][10] Following Aristotle's example, Abelard mastered the art of dialectic—the logical disputation of truth—and applied this to Scripture and doctrine. Standard studies such as David Luscombe's *\*The School of Peter Abelard\** describe how his methods shaped medieval theology.[10] Christian theological education, according to the historical analysis cited by Israelite Studies, never fully recovered from Abelard's influence; Greek rationalism remains in its bloodstream.[1][9] Abelard, Aristotle, and Aquinas all share the conviction that unaided human reason is the primary pathway to divine truth. From the beginning, therefore, Western university education embodied a deliberate fusion of pagan and Christian elements.[8][9] This rationalistic impulse culminates later in the so-called "Age of Reason" or Enlightenment, whose ideas penetrate deeply into Western political and religious thought. Many of the founding fathers of the United States were deists and rationalists rather than orthodox biblical believers, as documented by David L. Holmes in *\*The Faiths of the Founding Fathers\**. [20] They prized "reason" as the highest authority and were influenced by philosophical currents that elevated human intellect above divine revelation. That same exaltation of reason over obedience to the commandments of the Most High is a key strand in the intellectual ancestry of the modern seminary.[1][16]

#### **STAGE FOUR: SEMINARIAN THEOLOGY AND PROFESSIONAL CLERGY**

**The fourth and final phase, the “seminarian” stage of theological education, grows directly out of the scholastic tradition. Seminary theology is essentially scholastic theology repurposed for the explicit training of professional ministers. Its declared aim is to produce academically credentialed religious specialists.[1] The figure held up as the ideal is no longer simply the morally qualified bishop of 1 Timothy 3, but the professionally trained minister whose authority is certified by degrees and formal examinations.**

This is the dominant theology of contemporary seminaries.[1] A vivid image has been used to describe its emergence: “Peter Abelard laid the egg and Thomas Aquinas hatched it.” Aquinas’s influence on theological education has been enormous. In 1879, his work was formally endorsed by papal decree in the encyclical *\*Aeterni Patris\**, which commended Thomism as the normative philosophy and theology for Catholic education.[11] His monumental *\*Summa Theologica\**—“The Sum of All Theology”—became the template for countless later systems. Even Protestant institutions, including those that explicitly rejected Rome’s authority, frequently adopted Aquinas’s method and structure as the skeleton of their own theological curricula.[1][9]

Aquinas’s central thesis is that Alahayam is fundamentally known through human reason. He prefers the intellect to the heart as the chief organ for arriving at truth.[9][11] In this view, the more highly developed a person’s rational faculties and the more extensive his logical training, the better he will know Alahayam. Aquinas drew this conviction from Aristotle. Under such a paradigm, spiritual authority and credibility become closely tied to academic prowess and rhetorical skill. If a person cannot reason and argue at a high intellectual level, he is tacitly regarded as not truly knowledgeable of the Most High, regardless of his obedience, repentance, or conformity to the biblical standards for leadership.

**The implications of this shift are stark. Qualification before Alahayam becomes associated less with godly character, submission to the commandments, and faith in Messiah, and more with the ability to articulate elaborate theological systems. If an argument can be made to “make sense” to human reason, it is treated as legitimate, even when it runs counter to the plain sense of Scripture.[1][9] In practice, obedience is subordinated to speculation.**

## **THE LIMITS OF HUMAN REASON IN THEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE**

**The Scriptures repeatedly warn against trusting in human understanding.**

**Proverbs 3:5 commands:**

*“Trust in Yahawah with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.”*

**Human understanding, detached from the fear of Yahawah, is fundamentally unreliable.**

**Jeremiah 17:9 declares:**

*“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”*

**In biblical usage, the “heart” frequently denotes the seat of thought and intention—the inner mind. Left to itself, it is deceitful and corrupt.**

**Sirach 3:24 (Ecclesiasticus) observes that:**

*“For many are deceived by their own vain opinion; and an evil suspicion hath overthrown their judgment.”*

**When theology is founded on unaided reason, the result is precisely this self-deception. This helps explain the character of much contemporary preaching that springs from seminary training. Sermons are often marked more by personal commentary, philosophy, and motivational speech than by extended engagement with the actual text of Scripture.[1][16] Because theological education has been shaped by Greek categories and rationalist habits, expository reading and application of the word frequently gives way to human discourse. Yet, as the prophet enjoins, the people of Alahayam are to “*seek ye out of the book of Yahawah, and read*” (Isaiah 34:16). Reliance upon one’s own mind, within systems shaped by pagan thought, inevitably leads away from the straight path.**

## **AQUINAS, THE BERLIN MODEL, AND MODERN SEMINARIES**

Aquinas’s influence continues into the modern era in more institutionalized form. Most Protestant seminaries in Europe and America employ what is often called the “Berlin model” of theological education, developed in Berlin around 1800.[1] This model, an outgrowth of Enlightenment rationalism associated with figures such as Wilhelm von Humboldt and F. D. E. Schleiermacher, reinforces the treatment of theology as an essentially cerebral discipline. An article in *\*Vantage Point\**, the newsletter of Denver Seminary (June 1998), notes that this model elevated theology into an academic science governed by critical reason.[18] Protestants and Catholics alike draw upon Aquinas’s categories and outline in structuring their theological studies; the *\*Summa Theologica\** remains, in one guise or another, the master pattern for formal instruction.[1][9] In this



way, the intellectual DNA of medieval scholasticism and Enlightenment rationalism is transmitted directly into the modern seminary classroom.

## **ORIGINS OF CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT SEMINARIES**

Turning from intellectual roots to institutional origins, it is important to note that the first formal seminaries were Roman Catholic.[1][12] By the mid-sixteenth century, at the time of the Council of Trent (1545–1563), approximately one-quarter of the Catholic clergy lacked any university education. In order to oppose the burgeoning Protestant Reformation and to strengthen its own ranks, the Catholic Church resolved to establish dedicated institutions for the training of priests. Session 23 of the Council, in its Decree on Reform, chapter 18, mandated the erection of diocesan seminaries for the education of clergy.[12] These seminaries, founded under the influence of Trent, were built explicitly upon the theology of Thomas Aquinas—a synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy, Neoplatonic thought, and Christian doctrine.[1][9][12] The origins of the first Protestant seminary are somewhat obscure, but the most credible evidence indicates that Protestants largely adopted the Catholic model. The earliest distinctively Protestant seminary in America was established at Andover, Massachusetts, in 1808.[1][22] Its curriculum, too, was built on the inherited scholastic framework, heavily indebted to Aquinas. Earlier Reformed efforts at education had taken a slightly different form. John Calvin established the Geneva Academy in 1559.[14][15] While the Academy did serve to train theologians, it was not originally conceived as a narrowly clerical seminary; it offered a broad education to non-clergy as well. Calvin's associate Théodore Beza traced the intellectual lineage of the Geneva Academy back to the Greeks, who, he maintained, had received their "true philosophy" from the Egyptians, a claim noted in reference works such as the *\*Concise Dictionary of Christianity in America\** and in studies of Reformed education.[13][14] This was presented as acceptable—indeed beneficial—since Moses himself had been "*learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*" (Acts 7:22). In effect, a lineage was claimed that ran from Egyptian wisdom to Greek philosophy, and from there into the heart of Christian theological education. The same pagan currents—Egyptian mysticism and Greek speculation—had been "baptized" and integrated into Christian institutions.[1][9][15]

## **AMERICAN SEMINARY EXPANSION AND PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCES**

In the United States, Christian higher education quickly became as Aristotelian and systematized as its European counterparts.[1][16][22] By 1860, there were some sixty Protestant seminaries on American soil. This rapid expansion stemmed largely from the influx of converts during the Second Great Awakening (approximately 1800–1835) and the perceived need to produce ministers capable of caring for them, as described in surveys of American religious history.[16][22] American seminary education was strongly influenced by the Scottish Common Sense philosophy of Thomas Reid, a rationalistic system emphasizing supposedly self-evident truths accessible to ordinary reason.[16][17] Later, more liberal seminaries came to favor the dialectical idealism of G. W. F. Hegel, while

conservative institutions tended to preserve Reid's approach, as discussed by scholars such as Mark Noll and John Morgan.[16][17] Before the founding of Andover, American Protestants relied heavily on Harvard (1636) and Yale (1701) to educate their clergy.[16][22] Ordination was often granted upon successful completion of an undergraduate course and a formal theological examination. Over time, however, both Harvard and Yale increasingly abandoned orthodox Christian doctrines; Harvard, in particular, embraced Unitarianism in the early nineteenth century, as documented by Conrad Wright in *\*The Beginnings of Unitarianism in America\**. [19] As confidence in these institutions declined, Protestants founded their own seminaries to assume direct control of ministerial training. Nevertheless, these new institutions remained within the same broad current of scholastic and rationalist tradition, retaining Greek philosophical assumptions at their core.[1][16][22]

### **BIBLICAL WARNINGS AGAINST LEARNING PAGAN WAYS**

**From the standpoint of Scripture, the critical issue is not whether believers receive instruction, but what sort of instruction and from what source.**

**The people of Israel are commanded in Deuteronomy 18:9:**

*"When thou art come into the land which Yahawah thy Alahayam giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations."*

**Originally, this prohibition addressed the idolatrous practices of the Canaanites. Yet the principle extends to all foreign systems and customs that contradict the ways of the Most High. Greek philosophy—with its roots in pagan worship and Egyptian mystery religion—falls within this category when it is adopted as a governing framework for understanding Alahayam, man, and salvation.[2][9][21] To shape theological education according to such patterns is to "learn to do" after the abominations of the nations.**

**Proverbs 11:20 likewise declares:**

*"They that are of a froward heart are abomination to Yahawah: but such as are upright in their way are his delight."*

**A "froward" (perverse, twisted) heart is one that departs from the straight path of Alahayam's law into crooked errors. When theological systems, built on alien philosophies, twist the doctrine of Scripture, they become abominable in His sight.**

**Psalms 7:9 adds:**

*"Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous Alahayam trieth the hearts and reins."*

**The Most High examines not only individual hearts, but also the collective dispositions embodied in institutions and traditions. Systems that perpetuate error and lead His people astray will, in due time, be judged.**

### **HUMAN ESTEEM, SEMINARY CREDENTIALS, AND DIVINE ABOMINATION**

**The Messiah's words in Luke 16:15 bear directly upon these matters:**

*"Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but Alahayam knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of Alahayam."*

**Professional theological training, degrees, and scholastic achievement are highly esteemed in the eyes of men.[1][16] Seminary graduates are often regarded as the natural authorities in matters of faith. Yet, when such training rests on Greek rationalism and Enlightenment thought rather than on humble submission to the commandments of the Most High, it is an abomination before Him. To justify oneself before men by appealing to seminary credentials and human wisdom, while neglecting obedience to the revealed will of Alahayam, is to stand under the same condemnation the Messiah pronounced upon the Pharisees.**

**Jeremiah 23:16 offers a complementary warning:**

*"Thus saith Yahawah of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of Yahawah."*

**Many who have passed through seminary schooling speak visions of their own hearts, shaped more by Athens than by Zion. Where Greek thought, scholastic abstraction, and Enlightenment rationalism have been allowed to govern doctrine, the result is a philosophy that is, in the words of Colossians 2:8, *"after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Mashayach."*[1][9][16]**

### **CONCLUSION: ARE SEMINARY ORIGINS BIBLICAL?**

Historically and theologically, a consistent picture emerges. The Roman Catholic seminaries established after the Council of Trent were consciously designed to defend the Church's position against Protestantism by producing better-educated clergy. Their curriculum was built upon the theology of Thomas Aquinas, a synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy, Neoplatonic elements, and Christian teaching.[1][9][12] The Protestant seminaries that followed, beginning with Andover in 1808, deliberately imitated this institutional form and retained the same basic intellectual framework.[1][16][22] Both streams, Catholic and Protestant, are thus deeply marked by Greek philosophical assumptions and Enlightenment notions of reason.

**In the light of this history and in the light of Scripture, the conclusion reached by Israelite Studies is that seminary schooling, in its origins and structure, is not a biblical institution. It is the product of a long entanglement between the visible church and pagan philosophy.[1][2][9] The remedy, for those shaped by such systems, is repentance: a turning away from the authority of pagan thought and autonomous human reason as ultimate, and a return to the law, the prophets, and the testimony of Yahawashi, interpreted by scripture and obeyed in faith.**

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