



## Critical Study of Rita Wahyu's Interpretation of Matthew 1:20 - Is Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit?

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### ABSTRACT

An article titled “Yesus dan Roh Kudus” written by Rita Wahyu and published on the website “Sarapan Pagi Biblikal” became highly controversial in 2021, particularly regarding her interpretation of the text in Matthew 1:20. The article contains elements of Modalism, Modalistic Monarchianism, or Sabellianism, which teach about the Oneness of God, meaning that God has one nature and one person with three names: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Rita emphasizes her thesis on the preposition *ἐκ* in the text, which she believes should be interpreted as “of” in English, indicating that the child in Mary’s womb is the Holy Spirit. However, research on the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 using exegetical methods based on Biblical grammatical laws shows that Rita’s interpretation lacks a basis that can be sustained exegetically. Her interpretation of the preposition is eisegesis, not exegesis. From an exegetical standpoint, the preposition *ἐκ* in the text indicates the source or origin of the child; the cause or agent of Mary’s pregnancy; and/or the giver of the seed of the baby in Mary’s womb, namely the Holy Spirit.

**Keywords:** Baby Jesus, Holy Spirit, Mary, Rita Wahyu, Matthew 1:20.

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### INTRODUCTION

An article titled “Yesus dan Roh Kudus” by Rita Wahyu, which was published on the “Sarapan Pagi Biblikal” website, (Rita Wahyu, 2021) became highly controversial in 2021, particularly in regards to her interpretation of Matthew 1:20. This controversy stemmed from the fact that her interpretation contained theological elements of Modalism, Modalistic Monarchianism, or Sabellianism, which teach the “Oneness of God”, meaning that God has one nature and one person with three names: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Donald

K. McKim, 2014). Rita explained Matthew 1:20 as follows: “the birth of Jesus Christ came from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God.

There is an equivalent word in English: ‘gennêthen (is begotten) *ek* (of) *pneumatōs* ([the] Spirit) *estin* (is) *hagiou* (Holy),’ [which can be translated as] “is begotten of the Holy Spirit,” meaning that the Child in the womb of Mary is the Holy Spirit himself, not a ‘gift from’ the Holy Spirit. Therefore, contextually, Matthew 1:20 means that ‘the child conceived in her is the Holy Spirit (Rita Wahyu, 2021).

Rita emphasizes her thesis on the preposition *ek* in the text, which she believes should be interpreted as “of” in English and not include the idea of “from,” where the Child is from or a gift from the Holy Spirit, but rather the preposition indicates that the Child in the womb is the Holy Spirit. According to this idea, the preposition *ek* (of) is equivalent to “is - *adalah*” in Indonesian. In this point, Rita states that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are the same person, as taught in Sabellianism. It is crucial to respond to Rita’s conclusion because it is not consistent with Evangelical theology or orthodox faith. Therefore, this research is dedicated to providing a critical response to Rita’s interpretation based on an exegetical study of the preposition *ἐκ* (τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος ἑστὶν ἁγίου) in Matthew 1:20.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is the exegetical method based on the hermeneutical principles that are biblical. The exegetical method is often referred to as the literal-grammatical-historical approach (H. Z. Laia et al., 2022). The word “exegesis” is a transliteration of the Greek noun *ἐξήγησις*, which comes from the verb *ἐξηγέομαι*. This word consists of two words, *ἐκ* (out of) and *hegeomai* (to lead, to bring), thus the word can be translated as “to lead out” or “to bring out,” meaning to inform, announce, or practice stating. There are two ideas in this word, namely: (a) to introduce, presenting; (b) to explain, narrate. Therefore, if exegesis is applied to the Bible, it means a careful investigation of the original meaning of the text based on the historical context and literary form of the book (Binar et al., 2019).

It is acknowledged that the principles or methods of exegesis have different patterns among scholars. However, the pattern used in this research includes contextual, historical, lexical, grammatical, structural, exegetical, and theological analysis, (S. Laia et al., 2020) to understand the original meaning of the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 in order to provide a critical response to Rita Wahyu’s interpretation of this preposition.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Rita Wahyu Vs English Language

Rita translated the preposition *ἐκ* as ‘of’ in English, which was then considered to be a preposition that indicates that the Child in Mary’s womb is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this preposition is like a preposition that ‘indicates identity’ of the Child (who is that Child? The Child in Mary’s womb ‘is’ the Holy Spirit. And this concept gives the meaning of the preposition *ἐκ* equivalent to the word ‘is - *adalah*’ in Indonesian.

In English grammar, ‘of’ is never used to ‘indicate identity’. The preposition ‘of’ in English has a broad meaning and function that can be interpreted as: (1) relationship of “part” and “whole”; (2) ownership; originated from; (3) used in expressions of measurement; value, year; (4) used to indicate position; (5) used to indicate that something belongs to a category (Catherine Soanes (ed), 2001). Of these five functions of ‘of’ in English, none of them have the function of ‘indicating identity’ that is equivalent to the word ‘is - *adalah*’ in Indonesian. Therefore,

from the perspective of English grammar ('of') itself, the meaning of 'of' proposed by Rita for the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  in Matthew 1:20 (the Child in Mary's womb is the Holy Spirit) is not justified.

If Matthew intended the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  as Rita meant it, then the correct English grammar used is 'is' (to be) instead of 'of', because in English, 'of' is never used to indicate someone's identity. And English Bible translators never translated the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  in Matthew 1:20 as 'is', because they understood that this was not what Matthew, the author of the Gospel, intended.

### **Rita Wahyu Vs KJV Translation**

Rita justified her translation of the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  in Matthew 1:20 as 'of' instead of 'from' based on the fact that the KJV also translated it as 'of.' However, the intended meaning of KJV's translation of  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  as 'of' is not the same as Rita's. In Matthew 1:3 and 5, KJV translates the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  there as 'of' in the context of *gennao*, meaning 'to beget, conceive, or bear,' as in Matthew 1:20. KJV meant 'of' ( $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ ) in its translation to indicate 'source, origin' [Peres and Zerah "from" Tamar], not to express someone's identity [Peres and Zerah "are" Tamar]. It would be absurd for KJV to mean that Peres and Zerah 'are' Tamar.

Another example is in Matthew 19:12, where the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  is used in the context of 'gennao,' meaning 'to beget, conceive, or bear,' as in Matthew 1:20. KJV translates it clearly and explicitly as 'from' [For there are some eunuchs, which were so born "from" their mother's womb], which serves to express the source or origin of someone's birth.

Therefore, KJV's translation of  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  as 'of' in its usage in the context of 'gennao' is never meant to express someone's identity but rather to indicate the source or origin of someone's birth (more specifically 'from' in 19:20). Hence, the meaning of 'of' in KJV is equivalent to the word '*dari*' in Indonesian and does not function to express someone's identity (equivalent to the word '*is - adalah*' in Indonesian). It is therefore very wrong for Rita to use KJV to support her conclusion about the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  in Matthew 1:20 only because KJV also translates it as 'of.' Or, it is possible that Rita did not understand the intended meaning of KJV choosing the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  to be translated as 'of' in the context of 'gennao' in Matthew 1:20.

### **Historical Analysis**

The readers of the Gospel of Matthew were Jewish believers (Andrew Marshall Woods, 2007). As Jews, they never knew the concept of Jesus as the Holy Spirit (for example, Matthew, John the Baptist, and Jesus Himself, see theological analysis). Therefore, teaching that the Son (Jesus) in Mary's womb was the Holy Spirit is something that was not present in the concept of the original readers of the Gospel of Matthew at that time.

### **Lexical Analysis**

The etymology of the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  is not difficult; it is derived from the Latin *ex* (*e*), Gallic *ex*, Old Irish *ess*, and Cymric *eh*. In the Greek language, it has various forms:  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  before vowels, *eg* (assimilation), *e* (in Locrian and Latin), *es* or *ess* as in Old Irish (in Arcadian, Boeotian, and Thessalian). The original form of the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  was *eks*, which later became  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  like in Latin *ex*, *e*, (A. T. Robertson, 2006) meaning "out of, (Silvia, 2003) and "from within".

The preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  is a primary preposition that indicates 'origin,' pointing to the point where movement continues. It is usually translated as 'from, out of' (James Strong, 1997). The meaning of the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$  as 'source, origin' has different meanings in various language families. As 'source, origin,' it is common in the Indo-European

language to express ‘agent,’ as found in Latin and some Romance languages, some Germanic languages, including Modern German, some Slavic languages, and Modern Greek. It is based on the metaphor of an event seen as a moving entity originating from a source. Seen as ‘agent,’ it indicates the initiator of a state, seen as ‘location,’ it shows where the state originated, giving control at the outset (Silvia, 2003). Therefore, in various language families, the preposition *ἐκ* can function as a preposition indicating ‘source, origin,’ ‘agent, initiator,’ and indicating ‘location.’ Robertson, a New Testament Greek grammarian, identified several functions of the preposition *ἐκ*, namely indicating origin or source, location, time, cause or event, partitive, combining function, and the use of *ἐκ* and *ἐν* (A. T. Robertson, 2006).

Therefore, the original meaning of the preposition *ἐκ* is to indicate the source or origin of something. In Matthew 1:20, since it is related to the personal noun (i.e., the Holy Spirit), it must be interpreted as ‘from,’ indicating the origin or source of the Child, namely from the Holy Spirit. Robson asserts that if the preposition *ἐκ* is related to a personal noun, it functions to indicate where someone is descended or originates from (Charles Robson, 1839). Louw-Nida further explains that if it is used to indicate the physical origin of someone or something, the preposition indicates the ‘relation’ between two persons in it (Johannes P. Louw, 1999). From this original meaning, the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 and because it is related to personal nouns (the Child and the Holy Spirit), this preposition functions to indicate the origin of the Child, namely from the Holy Spirit.

Another function of the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 lexically is to indicate the ‘actor, author’ of Mary’s pregnancy (A. T. Robertson, 2006). That means the Holy Spirit is the author of Mary’s pregnancy. It does not mean that the Holy Spirit had sexual relations with Mary but in the sense that the one who made (created) Mary pregnant was the Holy Spirit. And this is a supernatural and miraculous pregnancy. Therefore, Rita’s interpretation of the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 is far from the original meaning of the preposition. It is a groundless and fabricated interpretation, and therefore should be condemned and discarded.

### Grammatical Analysis

The word τὸ γεννηθὲν in Matthew 1:20 is a neuter singular nominative aorist passive participle. It is a substantival participle subject (Ray Summer, 1988), which can be translated as “the one who was conceived”.

The preposition *ἐκ* is only used in one case, namely the genitive case. Wallace states that this preposition has the meaning of “from, out of, away from, of”. Then he identifies five functions of this preposition, namely: (1) origin, source, translated as “out of, from”; (2) separation, distance, translated as “away from, from”; (3) cause, translated as “because of”; (4) partitive (replacing the partitive genitive), translated as “of, indicating a part of the whole”; (5) manner: “by, from” (Daniel B. Wallace, 1996).

Several important considerations about the meaning of the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 grammatically are as follows:

First, the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 is related to the word *πνεύματος* (Holy Spirit) because it has the same case, which is genitive. The formula *ἐκ* + genitive noun functions as a genitive source or origin (part of the ablative genitive), indicating the source or origin of something (Daniel B. Wallace, 1996). Therefore, the meaning of the phrase *ἐκ πνεύματος* (Matt. 1:20) is “from the Holy Spirit” where the preposition *ἐκ* functions to indicate the source or origin of τὸ γεννηθὲν (the one who was conceived), which is from the Holy Spirit.

Second, the context of the use of the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 is *gennaō* (to beget, to conceive, or to bear). BDAG states that if the preposition *ἐκ* is used in the context of begetting and bearing, this preposition indicates the role of the male in the birth of the child (Frederick William Danker (rev & ed), 2011). Based on this statement, the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 and used in the context of giving birth, then the preposition serves to indicate the

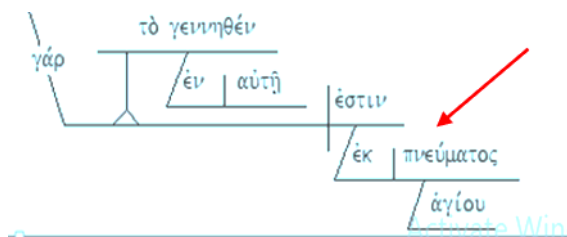
role of the Holy Spirit in Mary's pregnancy, where the pregnancy is the work of the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit is the giver of the baby seed in Mary's womb. This is also confirmed in Thayer's Lexicon that if the preposition is used in the context of giving birth, it functions to indicate origin, source, or caus (Joseph Henry Thayer, 1889). Thus, the preposition *ἐκ* also serves to indicate that the Holy Spirit is the cause of the Child in Mary's womb.

Third, the relationship between the passive verb *γεννηθὲν* and the preposition *ἐκ*. Liddell and Scott state that if the preposition *ἐκ* is used after a passive verb (*αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος*), the preposition serves to indicate the "agent (Henry George Liddell & Robert Scott, 1996). Buttmaan states that if the preposition *ἐκ* is used with a neuter gender passive verb, it serves to indicate the "cause (Philip Buttman, 1858). Based on these two statements, the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20 appearing after the neutral passive verb *γεννηθὲν* indicates that the Holy Spirit is the agent or cause of the Child in the womb of Mary.

Therefore, based on the grammatical meaning of the Greek preposition *ἐκ* (Matt. 1:20) and its relationship with the surrounding words, it is highly incompatible with the meaning proposed by Rita Wahyu as 'of' in the sense of 'The Child in the womb is the Holy Spirit.' This has never happened and will not happen, as the Greek preposition *ἐκ* in the context of childbirth, in conjunction with a genitive noun and a neutral passive verb, can function as a preposition indicating someone's identity.

### Structural Analysis

Structurally, the phrase *ἐκ πνεύματος* (from the Holy Spirit) is the indirect object of the verb *ἐστίν* (is).



Based on the lexical, grammatical, and structural functions of the preposition *ἐκ*, the phrase *ἐκ πνεύματος* answers the questions of where the Son in Mary's womb came from, who caused or provided the baby's seed in Mary's womb, or who was the agent of Mary's pregnancy. The answer is the Holy Spirit.

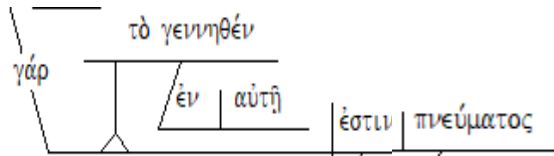
Rita's translation (is begotten of the Holy Spirit) needs to be examined in its Greek structural form. Wheeler explained that if the genitive noun functions as a genitive adjective, its translation is equivalent to the preposition 'of' in English, without conveying the idea of 'from'. The ablative genitive is equivalent to the preposition 'from' in English. As noted in the grammatical analysis, the phrase *ἐκ πνεύματος* functions as an ablative-source genitive.

An example of using and translating a genitive adjective can be seen in Matthew 1:1, "*Biblos "geneseos" Iesou Christou.*" The genitive noun *geneseos* functions as a genitive adjective, and is translated as 'of the generation,' which means 'The book "of" the generation of Jesus Christ'. The translation 'of' in 'of the generation' is the translation of the genitive adjective *geneseos*, without having to use the preposition *ἐκ* before the noun *geneseos*. Thus, the genitive adjective is translated as 'of' in this passage to answer the question of 'what book is it?' namely the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, when Rita says that the Son in the womb is the Holy Spirit (is begotten "of" the Holy Spirit) where 'of' does not indicate a source or origin, this is highly inaccurate in the Greek Bible sentence. If this is what Matthew meant, then he would not need to use the preposition *ἐκ* before the noun *πνεύματος* so that the noun functions as a genitive adjective, which can be translated as 'of the Holy Spirit', where 'of' does not convey the idea of 'source' or 'origin'. Thus, Rita's translation, 'is begotten of the Holy Spirit', when translated back into Greek would be, 'τὸ γὰρ

ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου’ (the one begotten in her “of” the Holy Spirit). However, Matthew did not write it like this, but rather he wrote, ‘τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου,’ where the use of the preposition ἐκ in this sentence emphasizes the Holy Spirit as the source of the Son in Mary’s womb. Therefore, the question is where did the Son in Mary’s womb come from? Who caused the Son in Mary’s womb? Who was the agent of Mary’s pregnancy? It is not ‘what is the Son in Mary’s womb?’ or ‘who is the Son in Mary’s womb?’

Therefore, Rita’s translation structure, “is begotten ‘of’ the Holy Spirit” if rendered in Greek, would be τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου, as shown below.



The noun πνεύματός no longer functions as an indirect object, but as a direct object. And this is very different from its original structure as shown previously.

### Contextual Analysis

The phrase ἐκ πνεύματός appears twice in the context of Matthew 1:18-25 (verses 18 and 20), and its usage is the same. However, Rita’s translation of the preposition ἐκ in verse 20, when applied to the preposition ἐκ in verse 18, does not make much sense. Matthew 1:18 reads: *Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γένεσις οὕτως ἦν. μνηστευθείσης τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας τῷ Ἰωσήφ, πρὶν ἢ συνελθεῖν αὐτοὺς εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου,* which can be translated grammatically as “But the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child ‘from’ the Holy Spirit.”

However, if Rita’s interpretation of the preposition ἐκ (ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου) in verse 20 is applied to the preposition ἐκ (ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου) in verse 18, the phrase αὐτοὺς εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου in verse 18 would mean “she (Mary) was found to be pregnant ‘is/of’ [adalah] the Holy Spirit.” This translation and meaning are very misleading and do not correspond to the intended context. Mary is not the Holy Spirit. Therefore, this phrase must be translated and interpreted as “she (Mary) was found to be with child ‘from’ the Holy Spirit.” Thus, based on the use of ἐκ in the phrase ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου in verse 18, it confirms that the meaning of the preposition ἐκ in verse 20 is the preposition that indicates the source, cause, and agent of Mary’s pregnancy, which is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the meaning of the phrase ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου in verses 18 and 20 must be the same and cannot differ, as both express the source, cause, and agent of Mary’s pregnancy, which is the Holy Spirit.

The phrase τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, if translated as “because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit,” which is very fitting for the context that occurred at that time. Matthew 1:18-25 speaks of Mary’s pregnancy before marrying Joseph. Because of this event, Joseph was afraid to take Mary as his wife. Joseph considered divorcing Mary. However, it is certain that Joseph must have continued to wonder in his heart, “Why did Mary become pregnant? Who is responsible?” And surely, he did not ask “What is the baby?” or “Who is the baby?” Verse 20 provides the answer to Joseph’s question, “Why did Mary become pregnant? Who is responsible?” The angel answered, τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου (because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit). Therefore, this context confirms that the preposition ἐκ in Matthew 1:20 should be understood as “from”.

For any man whose fiancée is pregnant before they are married, the question that surely arises in his heart is not “What is the baby in her womb? Or who is the baby in her womb?” but rather “Why is his fiancée pregnant? Or

who is responsible for his fiancée's pregnancy?" This is the question that must have been in Joseph's heart at that time when he saw Mary pregnant before they were married.

### **Theological Analysis**

#### **Matthew's Theology vs Rita Wahyu**

Matthew's theology about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit is not Jesus, and Jesus is not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit and Jesus are two distinct persons, not one and the same person. When Jesus was baptized (Matt. 3:13-17), the Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove. Here, Matthew clearly shows the presence of Jesus and the Holy Spirit at the same time and in the same place. If Jesus were the Holy Spirit, then it would be impossible for Jesus to appear again in the form of a dove at that time. After Jesus was baptized, Matthew notes that the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness to be tempted (Matt. 4:1). This narrative also confirms that the Holy Spirit is the subject who leads and Jesus is the object who is led. Matthew's distinction between subject and object here emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is distinct from Jesus. The text would be highly illogical if the Holy Spirit were Jesus, meaning Jesus led Himself into the wilderness to be tempted.

Therefore, Matthew's theology about the identity of the Holy Spirit is vastly different from Rita Wahyu's theology. Only those who refuse to learn would follow Rita Wahyu's theology that the Son (Jesus) in Mary's womb is the Holy Spirit.

#### **John's the Baptist Theology vs Rita Wahyu**

John the Baptist once spoke about the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of Matthew, declaring, "I baptize you with water, for repentance, but the one coming after me is more powerful than I am— I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Matt. 3:11, NET).

The preposition 'with' (with the Holy Spirit) in this text is translated from the Greek preposition *ἐν*, which has the root meaning of 'in, within' (Henry George Liddell & Robert Scott, 1996). According to Wallace, the preposition *ἐν* + dative noun expresses 'agency,' and the dative noun does not have to be personal but can also be the agent performing the action. Therefore, *ἐν πνεύματι* (dative) expresses that the Holy Spirit is the agent of the Lord Jesus in baptizing the disciples. By declaring the Holy Spirit as the Lord Jesus' agent in baptizing the disciples, John the Baptist implicitly showed that these two Persons are not the same, but different. In this regard, John the Baptist's theology of the Holy Spirit is significantly different from Rita Wahyu's theology based on her interpretation of the text of Matthew 1:20.

#### **Lord Jesus vs Rita Wahyu**

Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of your [disciples] Father" (Matt. 10:20). The use of the second person plural pronoun "your" (*humon*) in the phrase "your Father" (*tou patros humon*) strongly emphasizes that the Spirit of your Father is different from Jesus, or not Jesus himself. For instance, "Harman said, 'your mother will speak to you,' it is clear that Harman is different from your mother, and your father is different from Jesus, and your father is different from his wife. Similarly, Jesus' statement in Matthew 10:20 indicates that Jesus who was speaking is different from the Spirit of your Father, and the Father is different from Jesus, and the Father is different from the Spirit of your Father.

On the other hand, this text implicitly affirms the doctrine of the Trinity, that is, Jesus who is speaking, the Holy Spirit who speaks within the disciples during future persecutions, and the Father (in the phrase "the Spirit of

your Father”) of those disciples. The difference between the Holy Spirit and Jesus can also be seen in Matthew 12:32. In this context, Jesus distinguishes blasphemy against the Son from blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This distinction is clear to indicate that Jesus is not the Holy Spirit, or Jesus (the Son of Man) is very different from the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19 is a very popular statement of the Lord Jesus about the Trinity. Jesus said, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (NET).” Rita Wahyu’s theology of the Holy Spirit strongly opposes what was taught by the Lord Jesus himself. Is Rita Wahyu greater than the Lord Jesus?

### **God the Father vs Rita Wahyu**

Jesus quoted the Father’s words to Isaiah and said, “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles” (Matt. 12:18). The Father is the person speaking to Isaiah. “My servant” refers to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the person whom God the Father placed upon Jesus. This is a statement from God the Father about the Trinity, in which the three persons are distinct but one.

Rita Wahyu’s theology strongly opposes what God the Father said about the Holy Spirit in Matthew 12:18, when contrasted with her interpretation of Matthew 1:20. Is this due to her lack of understanding of the Greek language or is it because she is too clever and knows better than God the Father?

### **Church Fathers vs Rita Wahyu**

Hypolitus said, “*o ‘ek’ pneumattos kai parthenou teleios uios theou apodedigmenos*” (G. W. H. Lampe, 1961) Cyril of Jerusalem, “*gennetheis ‘eks’ hagian parthenou kai hagiou pneumattos*, (W.K. Reischl, 1848) in the Symbolum Nicaenum-Constantinopolitanum, “*sarkothenta ‘ek’ pneumattos hagiou kai Marias test parthenou kai enantheopesanta*, (F. Diekamp, 1938) and Origen, “*peri de tou soterou ouk eirentai dia gunaikos, all’ ek gunaikos. Oti epi pantos men anthropou cheran echei touto, epei pro tou dia gunaikos gegonen ex Andros, epi de tou soterou me genomenou ex Andros ouk echei to gegonenai auton dia gunaikos. Dioper ekei, epei to gegonemenon ek tes sarkos sarks estin es sarks auton, me genomene ex Andros, gegonen ek gunaikos kai on dia gunaikos* (H. Ramsbotham, 1912)

The church fathers above quoted the preposition *ἐκ* in Matthew 1:20, interpreting it as a preposition indicating the source or origin of the Son who was in Mary’s womb, namely from the Holy Spirit. As church fathers who were closer to the apostles, they are more credible than Rita, who emerged only in the present century and has opposing views regarding the Holy Spirit in Matthew 12:18, in contrast to her interpretation of Matthew 1:20.

### **Exegetical Analysis**

#### ***Preposition ἐκ in Relating to the Lord Jesus***

John 8:42, *ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἦκω*, literally translated, “for I come *from* God and arrive.” If the preposition *ἐκ* in this text is forced as interpreted by Rita Wahyu in Matthew 1:20, then the text would mean, “for I came is God and have come.” This is highly illogical. Jesus is not God the Father. Therefore, the use of the preposition *ἐκ* in this text affirms its function as a preposition that indicates the ‘source or origin’ of Jesus in the context of incarnation, namely from God the Father.

### ***Preposition ἐκ in Relates to the Holy Spirit***

John 3:8 reads, “οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος” (So it is with everyone who is born ‘of/from’ the Spirit, NET). The preposition ἐκ in this text is the same as in Matthew 1:20, both used in the context of *gennao* (birth), although the birth referred to is different, one physical birth and the other spiritual birth. If the preposition ἐκ in this text is forced to mean what Rita Wahyu interpreted in Matthew 1:20, then the text would mean, “So it is with everyone born ‘is’ Spirit.” Again, this is highly illogical. Not everyone who believes is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the use of the preposition ἐκ in this text emphasizes the source or origin of the birth of every believer, namely from the Spirit.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the exegesis study of the preposition ἐκ in Matthew 1:20, it can be concluded that the preposition signifies the source or origin of the child in Mary’s womb, namely from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the agent or cause of Mary’s pregnancy; He is the one who gave the seed of the baby in Mary’s womb.

Rita Wahyu’s interpretation of the preposition ἐκ in Matthew 1:20 as “of” in English, which signifies that the child in Mary’s womb is the Holy Spirit, has no exegetical basis. Rita’s interpretation is a made-up interpretation, and it is eisegesis. Her approach demonstrates her ignorance of the Greek language of the Bible and her theological shallowness. A person referred to as an expert in the Greek language of the New Testament would not fall into such a ridiculous interpretation.

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