

Israel's Messenger

Winter 2015

Publishing Salvation to Zion - Isaiah 52:7
A ministry of Jewish Awareness Ministries

Prophet
Kabbi

Emmanuel

PRIEST

MESSIAH

Jesus Christ

Jehovah

Lamb
OF God

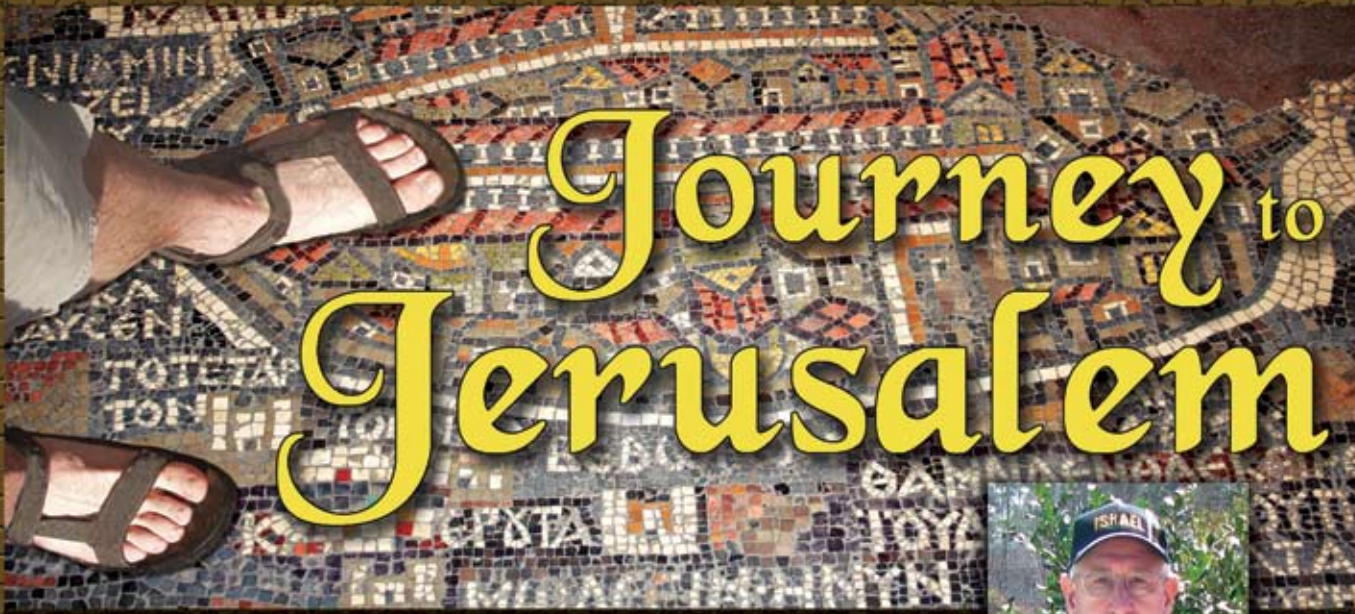
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Savior

PASSOVER

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Rev. Robinson is the Executive Director of Jewish Awareness Ministries.

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Dr. Doug Bookman is a professor at Shepherd's Theological Seminary in Cary, NC.

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Dr. Hanna Shahin is the founder and director of Endure International and is also adjunct Professor at Lebanon Baptist Seminary, the Middle East regional home of Luther Rice Seminary.

LOCATION:

Jewish Awareness Ministries' headquarters
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Angier, NC 27592
919-275-4477

MISSION STATEMENT

Israel's Messenger is a quarterly publication of Jewish Awareness Ministries, a Christian ministry proclaiming the Messiah to Jew and Gentile, preaching the Word of God, and praying for Israel.

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POSTAL INFORMATION

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to
P.O. Box 1808, Angier, NC 27501



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To subscribe to Israel's Messenger, please write to
Jewish Awareness Ministries
P.O. Box 1808, Angier, NC 27501
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Subscription rate \$9.95 per year



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The concept of Messiah is fundamental to God's choosing of the Jewish people. Messiah, the anointed One, though, is just one of many titles or names we find in the Bible for this promised One. The cover of this issue portrays some of these names and titles, and shows the primary purpose of Messiah coming the first time - the Jewish born Redeemer who died for the sins of the world.



From the Director's Desk

WINTER 2015

Dear Reader,

Many of our readers are aware of the ordeal Moshe and Shoshanna Gold have been through over the last 2 years. Just before Thanksgiving in 2013, Moshe had a major stroke. For months he was in a coma. He was eventually moved to a hospital in the Haifa, Israel area and placed in a bed on the 5th floor. According to hospital staff less than 1% of patients on the 5th floor eventually leave this floor and go to the 4th floor where rehabilitation is begun. Praise be to God that not only was Moshe moved to the 4th floor but he has now been home in the Galilee region of Israel for about 4 months. To say it is a blessing to have Moshe again write the *Apples of Gold* column would be an understatement. Welcome back Moshe (and Shoshana) as a valued contributor to *Israel's Messenger*. May God give you continued health and recovery and many years of service for our King!

This issue of *Israel's Messenger* focuses on the Messiah. I have contributed an article on *Messiah: How to Identify Him*. Not only does this article look at some of the major Messianic prophecies and their fulfillment in the New Testament, but it also quotes Jewish sources and their understanding of that scripture being Messianic. We have this article in booklet form if you would like to have some to give to Jewish friends. Contact us for information on getting one or more.

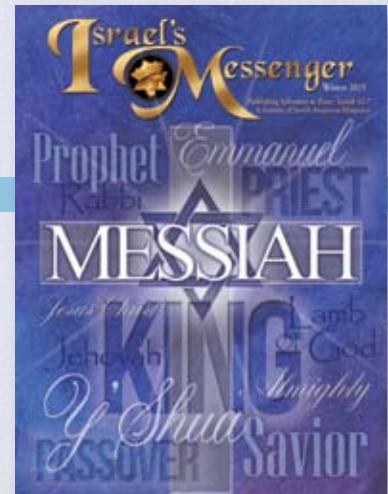
Rev. Ken Symes has written an article on *Messiah: Prophet, Priest and King*. Understanding the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King in ancient Israel are

foundational to understand the concept of Messiah. Christians regularly speak of Jesus Christ. Christ is Messiah, or *Mashiach* in Hebrew, and is not Jesus' last name but His title, or His office. Read Ken's article to better understand the concept of Messiah.

There have been many false messiahs in the history of Israel. From the first century to the present, Israel has repeatedly been offered false messiahs. Some of these false messiahs have been interesting people, but were not Israel's Messiah. Dan Bergman introduces us to some of these imposters. As Dan mentions in his article, one of the things common to all these false messiahs is that none of them come close to lining up with the prophecies of the Jewish Bible about the Messiah. Jewish evangelism is based on showing Jewish people from the Jewish Bible the prophecies concerning the Messiah. When this is done, it is easy to compare the prophecies with historical persons and determine who fulfills the prophecies.

Dr. Keith Megilligan has contributed a look at *Messianic Expectation in Israel*. The first century was ripe with expectation of the arrival of the Messiah. Unfortunately, the expectation was loosely based on biblical teaching and more on rabbinical thought. This has been true through the centuries. The only authoritative source for Messianic expectation is the Bible.

The "Shadows of the Tribulation" article in this issue has been written by Rev. Ken Overby. Ken looks at many events happening in our world that are setting the stage for the Tribulation period. The occurrences of these events are "shadows" of that dark time of Tribulation.



Our recent Journey to Jerusalem tour had 29 travelers. From Dan to Beersheba we traveled the land with 4 days in Jerusalem culminating our journey. Great fellowship, food, and Bible teaching were highlights of the trip. The accommodations were first class. We are already working on next year's tour. It will be 11 days leaving the U.S. on Tuesday, September 20, 2016 and returning on Friday, September 30, 2016. The price is \$3,750 from Raleigh and most domestic cities in the U.S. Everything is included except lunches. Contact us for a brochure with all the details of the tour or access the tour brochure at our website, www.jewishawareness.org.

From Thursday, March 17, 2016 in the evening through Saturday, March 19, 2016 to lunch, Jewish Awareness Ministries is hosting a prophecy conference at our headquarters. For those planning on attending from out of the area registration is a must. We are over 50% registered for this conference presently. Contact us to reserve your spot for this very timely conference. More details are available on page 11.

If you have questions or would like a speaker from J.A.M. to come to your church, please contact us. It is our pleasure to help you. ☞

In Messiah,
Mark Robinson



Messianic Expectations in Israel

by Dr. Keith Megilligan

Messianism thrives on suffering.

—Abba Hillel Silver

The Jews of history anticipated the coming of the Messiah with various historical “triggers” which set off calculations as to when the Messiah’s return would be or could be expected. In fact, those rabbis and sages of Jewish tradition who entertained such calculations have come to be known as the “calculators.” “These calculators sought, and apparently found, support in the Bible...All the ingenuity of rabbinic method in hermeneutics [the science and art of interpretation] and homiletics [the science and art of preaching] was therefore brought into play, and words, and phrases and letters, vowels, accents and tropes, and all the mystic science of letter and numeral were marshaled into service,” (Abba Hillel Silver). Nonetheless, any calculations regarding the specific hour of the Messiah’s return are found wanting in Jewish writings.

The history of messianism among the Jews has pre-Christian origins. Both biblical and apocryphal writings are quoted by Jewish writers with claims to messianic prophecies. But the first century, especially just before the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (70 AD), “witnessed a remarkable outburst of Messianic emotionalism,” *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel: From the First through the Seventeenth Centuries*, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver. A common thread among the surges in Messianic thought and expectation down through the centuries were periods of persecution, suffering and difficulties that impacted the Jewish communities throughout the world. Silver, as quoted above, refers to these melancholic periods as “Messianic

emotionalism.” Realistically, though these periods hit various pockets of Jewish communities throughout the world, “Messianic emotionalism” gave Jews hope, even if for a brief period. Their focus was shifted from their stress and difficulties to their promised Messiah and the relief that he would bring them.

From a Christian perspective, this outburst of messianic prophecies just before the destruction of the Temple is understandable. Those Jews whose heightened expectations for the Messiah’s coming was already at fever pitch because of Roman oppression gained new impetus with the advent of the young rabbi from Nazareth. His preaching, teaching and prophetic insight(s), Matthew 7:28, 29; John 1:47-51; 11:21-27, stirred the crowd with great messianic fervor, Luke 19: 37-40, and provoked his enemies to have him put to death, John 11: 45-53. But not only New Testament texts refer to Jesus’ messianic claim, but Josephus also makes reference to a Messiah in the context of the period of the Millennium being ushered in. So beyond the periods of oppression that spurred messianic thinking, the concept of Millennium was also part of the “formulaic” thinking that Jews would entertain for the desired coming of the Messiah. The question then becomes, when do you start the clock for the Millennium? Who determines that? What formula do you use? This takes us back to the “calculators.”

From the period of the development of the Talmud to the period of Mohamed (roughly ~200 AD to ~650 AD) there were a variety of rabbis and learned Jewish scholars who believed that the “days of Messiah” had come, were coming, etc. These various men developed various time tables and

calculations to arrive at the time for the Messiah. Typically, and this would be true during any period in Jewish history, there would need to be a revision of the time table as successive prognostications would become unfilled and the next generation of rabbis would derive new time parameters. And so it would be for the calculators of any period: from the 7th century into the 17th century.

KABBALAH

The calculators were sincerely trying to establish the time and platform for the “days of the Messiah” and as such, their spiritual level of interest would vary according to their personal intensity of spirituality. That being said, the extreme or “profound” portion of the spiritual spectrum was impacted many times by Kabbalism.

Kabbalism has roots that date from the second/third century AD - or the 11th century AD, depending! The reason for the difference is the decision you make as to who wrote the Zohar, a somewhat mystical and “spiritual” commentary on the law. It contains teaching on all the 125 degrees of a spiritual ladder that one might experience in his personal journey in life (more precisely the degrees that one travels back to the origin of one’s soul). The original author (Rabbi Rashbi) wrote the book in the second/third century; the work remained “hidden” for 900 years when it was “rediscovered.” Then in the sixteenth century Rabbi Luria opened up the *Zohar* and Kabbalic teaching for everyone. Thus, when you consider Kabbalism, you’re pondering the mystical understanding of the law and how it impacts your life. Most Jews would consider Kabbalic thinking outside the framework of normal Jewish teaching.

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However, many, certainly not all, of Jewish thinkers and authors through the centuries who commented on the “days of Messiah” evidenced mystical if not Kabbalic thought in their teaching.

For example, the thirteenth century became a high water mark of sorts for Messianism. The previous century or two of Jewish history within Europe had been brutal. They were victimized socially, ethnically and racially. They were persecuted at every turn; blamed for everything from economic and social upheaval to the origin of the plague. They fled Western Europe and migrated to Eastern Europe. Their intense suffering encouraged, once again, a renewed quest for the Messiah and the Millennium. Along with this quest was an avid association with Kabballism.

Rationalism and rationalistic thought was on the way out. Mystical thinking, poetry and Talmudic literature was on the rise, including a considerable launching of Kabbalic thinking. Perhaps the greatest mind in Jewish history, Maimonides, 1135-1204 AD, who was known for his rationalistic thinking, had been dismissed. Replacing him were men known more for philosophical and speculative thinking. “The period is rich in Messianic speculation,” (Silver). Pseudo-messiah’s came to the forefront under the influence of Kabbalic thinking and exegesis: numerical and literal mysticism were prominent. Again, as the Jewish people suffered, their thoughts turned longingly to Messianism. Sadly, whether the calculators used the Scriptures (Daniel and Deuteronomy were prominent starting points) or the Zohar, they not only came to varied conclusions but also left the Jewish and Christian communities dissatisfied and confused.

REFORMATION TO TODAY

Messianic speculation, for the most part, was “quiet” among the Jews in the 150 years or so leading to the time of the Reformation (16th century). Mostly this was due to the failure of the Messiah to

appear in 1358 AD, as was anticipated (particularly) by rabbis such as Rashi and Nahmanides. However, an interesting by-product of this (unfulfilled) messianic expectation down through the centuries was the appearance of various pseudo-messiahs.

As the period of the Reformation opens, Messianism and in particular Millennialism come to the forefront in both Jewish and “protestant” minds. Jews (and Christians) had just witnessed a period of expulsions and suffering (Spain, Portugal and Germany). In Italy living conditions for Jews deteriorated with the advent of *ghettos* (first established in Venice for Jewish residents). Since suffering for Jews was again intense in much of Europe, thoughts turned to relief and Messianic hope. Confusion and despair were abundant. Political and religious schisms likewise added to the frustrating populace of many countries. Christianity was going through a split (Catholicism vs. the various reformers considered protesters or protestants) from Constantinople in the east to Hungary in the west. The 16th century was a period

of being overrun by followers of Islam. Turmoil: religious, political and national was rampant.

Jewish thought and writers of this period evidenced a belief that with the split of Christendom, the rise of the Turks overrunning Europe and the renewed interest in Millennialism, it “...led many to feel that they were actually living in the period of the great denouement of the Messianic drama,” (Silver).

Together with the instability of Europe came the excitement of the discovery of the New World. This brought with it a renewed fervor of interest in the lost ten tribes of Israel. Perhaps the New World would be the place of the ten tribe’s relocation (!). This concept received serious review by several Jewish writers of the time - however, they squelched the frivolous rumors of such thinking. Instead they pointed back to Palestine (Israel) as the resting place for the lost tribes. Some of that thinking was based upon an examination of Deuteronomy 30:3, where Moses shows that God promises to return the

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MESSIAH: THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

Throughout the millennia, the heartbeat of the Jewish people has been the hope of the Messiah - the Messianic king who would bring peace and prosperity to not only Israel but the entire world. Moses Maimonides, the RamBam, an acronym for Rabbi Mosheh ben Maimon, was a rabbi, philosopher, and physician in Egypt in the 12th century. Concerning his 13 articles of faith, these well accepted foundational truths of Judaism, he stated they are “the fundamental truths of our religion and its very foundations.” His twelfth article is “The belief in the arrival of the Messiah and the messianic era.”

Messiah is a Hebrew word, *mashiach*, משיח, which means, in its verb form, “to anoint,” – the act of anointing. It is also found in the noun form 39 times in the Jewish Bible. Most of these references are to priests, prophets and kings but there are references to the One unique individual who is the promised Redeemer and King, the coming “anointed One” – the Messiah. *Mashiach*, or Messiah, comes down to us in the English language as Christ, or “the Anointed One.”

The scriptural revelation of the coming Redeemer, the Messiah, begins shortly after the sin of Adam and Eve which is recorded in the beginning of the third chapter of Genesis.

The progressive revelation of the Word of God, given through the prophets of Israel, weaves a beautiful tapestry to bring us a portrait of this promised One.

The writing of the Hebrew Scriptures covered a period of about 1,000 years. From the royal palaces of kings such as David, to the priestly line such as Ezekiel, to the fields of a goat herder such as Amos, to the proclamations of Israel’s law giver, Moses, God revealed His redemptive plan for the world through His prophets.

A journey through the writings of the prophets is absolutely necessary in identifying the promised Redeemer, Messiah - the Coming One that God promised to Israel and the world. The prophecies of Messiah are pointed and clear, revealing information about His time of birth, manner of birth, place of birth, His life, His death, and, yes, His resurrection, as well as the purpose of His coming.

An understanding of these prophecies helped a Jewish man by the name of Philip proclaim to his brother Nathaniel two thousand years ago, “we have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write.”

May your spiritual journey end with this same proclamation!

captives back to the Land. Messianic calculators contributed to the prophetic expectations of the time. The primary contributor was Issac Abarbanel who wrote three significant pieces: *The Wells of Salvation*, *The Salvation of His Anointed*, and *Announcing Salvation*. These works were reflections on the book of Daniel, Talmudic Messianic prophecies, and biblical Messianic prophecies (other than Daniel), (Silver). These works stand out as the highlight of Jewish literature and thinking of the 16th century on Messianic and Millennial themes.

Moving to the 17th century brings with it continued Messianic fervor. As Silver writes, "Messianic speculation suffered no abatement in the seventeenth century. This century also witnessed its most tragic consequences." The year 1648 was the much anticipated year of Messianic climax taught in the Zohar. Rabbis throughout Judaism called for prayers to be recited twice a day by Jews everywhere, "...asking for the restoration of the Kingdom of David and for the remission of the travail pangs of the Messianic times," (Silver). Accompanying the prayers were pamphlets calling for repentance, anticipating the great day of the coming of the Messiah. All of Europe suffered during the 17th century (30 Years War and Cossack Rebellion are two examples), but the Jews suffered the most. Their communities, peoples and possessions were ravaged. Both the Germanic and Polish Jews suffered greatly. All of this laid open an increasing desire for Messianic and Millennial dreams. The result was that most Jews (especially Polish Jews) turned to the mystical for comfort - the Kabbalah was restored to prominence and everyone began reading it. Messianic hopes were renewed.

There was also a partial theological melding of Jewish and Christian minds in the 17th century. There were certain mystical Jews and Christians who were looking for the Messiah. The former were looking for his first appearing, the latter for his second. But the Christians (those

mostly under the influence of mystical writers like Jacob Boehme) were calling for Jews to recognize Christ as their Messiah and look for Him to return. Those who followed Boehme's teaching were "exceedingly" friendly toward the Jews. From their point of view, "The return of the Jews to the Holy Land and their conversion to the faith in Christ was dogmatically inseparable from the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom," (Silver). Jewish and Christian scholars of this time reached out to each other, sharing their mystical and apocalyptic hopes. There were, of course, opposing or at least differing views between the camps: Jews resisting conversion to Christianity and Christians allowing esoteric conclusions to cloud their theology/eschatology. Theme and variation on these patterns have existed down to today.

THE BIBLICAL VIEW

So what about today? Where does all this history leave us? To be sure, if you are a biblicist, things like the *Zohar* or even Talmudic thinking do not appeal to you. If you are a Jew, you still may be on the outside looking in at a Kabbalic view of Judaism and Messianism - too much mysticism. No matter Christian or Jew, messianic and millennial considerations and conclusions need to be founded upon the Word of God.

Rabbi Shmuel Boteach in 1993 wrote, "Contemporary Jewish society treats the concept of Messiah with much apprehension." Will Varner in 2004, in his book, *The Messiah: Revealed, Rejected, Received*, wrote, "It is a sad fact to acknowledge that the 'church' has often been the biggest barrier between Jesus and Jewish people." These two men write from opposite ends of the theological spectrum. On the one hand, they each show the conundrum of introducing the biblical Messiah to our Jewish friends. On the other hand, they also speak to the need for clarity on understanding who that Messiah is. While the Christian who loves the

Lord, His Word and His people will undoubtedly come to the conclusion that Jesus is indeed the Messiah of Israel (with Scriptural passages like Isaiah 53 for support), his Jewish friends will stumble over that very conclusion.

In recent times, Jewish expectations regarding the coming of Messiah among "religious" (Orthodox) Jews has been increasing. Varner points out that the anticipation of the coming Messiah has been added to the list of mitzvah (good deeds) that Jews should practice: "if performed faithfully, will hasten the coming of the Messiah—that of settling the land of Israel." Varner demonstrates that the fervor over the establishing of the modern State of Israel has added to this expectancy. Certain "faithful" groups of Jews have settled in the Land promoting the coming of the Messiah. While their desire and teaching is significant, they have failed to see the biblical evidence that Messiah has already come! Further, He will need no help in establishing His temple and kingdom when He does return.

There is yet another group of Jews in Israel today who do wait expectantly for the return of the Messiah. As Varner observes, "A generation ago there were only a handful of assemblies in Israel composed of Jewish believers in *Yeshua Hamashiach* (Jesus the Messiah)." According to *Kehila News Israel: Messianic Community News from Israel* (2015), there are presently 221 Messianic congregations in Israel.

The question of our Jewish friends accepting Jesus as their Messiah and redeemer is the heart of Jewish evangelism. Though the history of the Jew in anticipation of their Messiah has been marked with suffering (and will continue that way till Messiah returns [cf. Zechariah 12]), there is still hope for individual Jews to receive their Messiah today! Christian, study to show yourself approved in this matter! The hope of eternal life for your Jewish friends is waiting for your witness to them of the marvelous truth that Messiah has come. His name is Jesus! 🕊



Israel's False Messiahs

by Rev. Dan Bergman

The idea of a coming Messiah is central to the teachings of the Hebrew Scriptures. Within them, there are a plethora of prophecies describing all manner of specific details regarding the person of the Messiah, the Anointed One. In fact, we can find a prophecy about one known as “the Seed of the woman” as early as Genesis 3:15 - the one who would deal a fatal wound to Satan himself.

However, it is not He who is the focus of this article, but rather false messiahs - counterfeits from Satan to mislead God's chosen people. The writers of the New Testament and Jesus Himself warned about these imposters. They are many. We will examine a few of them.

FALSE MESSIAHS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The apostles are brought before the Jewish council in Jerusalem after preaching and healing in Jesus' name. The high priest is very upset. The apostles then preach the gospel to the council! The Bible says that “they were cut to the heart,” and “took council to slay them!”¹ Gamaliel (a respected Pharisee, and doctor of the Law) stands up and tells the council that if this is of God it cannot be overthrown, but if not it will fade away. He continues, and gives the following two examples of first century false messiahs:

Theudas and Judah of Galilee

“For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as

obeyed him, were dispersed.”²

These two men and their followers disappeared about as quickly as they came. If it were not for this recorded statement in the book of Acts and the first century Jewish historian Josephus, we'd probably never even hear of them.

FALSE MESSIAHS FROM 100 A.D. TO TODAY

Shimon Ben-Kosevah (Bar-Kokhba) - 135

Ben-Kosevah was the leader of the second Jewish revolt against Rome (132-135 A.D.). In Judaism, names mean a great deal. Note that the real name of “Bar-Kokhba” is Ben-Kosevah. This most likely signifies that his father's name was Kosevah. He was called “Bar-Kokhba” by Rabbi Akiva, who proclaimed him as the Messiah. Akiva taught that Kosevah was the fulfillment of Numbers 24:17 “...there shall come a Star out of Jacob...”. “Bar-Kokhba” means “son of the star” in Aramaic. After creating an independent Jewish state and holding off the Romans for three years, he perished at their hand. His rebellion was crushed, and Israel was renamed Syria Palestina by the Roman Emperor Hadrian.

Moses of Crete - 440

In the 5th century, a man named Fiskis of Crete renamed himself Moses. He was able to convince many Jewish congregations on the Island that he was the Messiah. They were so ready to be delivered from Roman rule that they neglected their usual duties, awaiting the day when Moses would lead them through the sea back to Israel on dry ground. That day came, and Moses commanded the Jews to cast themselves into the sea, and that the waters would be divided. There was a great loss of life

that day. Those that didn't drown or find their death on the rocks below were rescued by mariners. Moses disappeared.³

David Alroy - 1160

Claiming that he had been sent by God to free the Jews from Muslim rule, David led two armies in an attempt to capture the Persian city, Amadia. He failed, and was possibly killed in his sleep by his own father-in-law.

Abraham Ben-Samuel Abulafia - 1279

Abulafia declared himself to be a prophet. In Sicily, it is said that he declared himself the Messiah and announced 1290 as the year for the Messianic era to begin. After leaving Sicily, he went to the island of Comino, near Malta, continuing his teachings. His end is unknown.

Shebbetai Zevi - 1676

At 22 years old, in Smyrna, Zevi (a mystic rabbi in-training) began declaring that he was the long awaited Jewish Messiah. He and his followers were eventually excommunicated from Judaism and exiled from Smyrna by the local rabbinical leadership, when his claims to messiahship became too bold.

Ten years later, in Constantinople, he met a false prophet named Abraham Yachini who verified Zevi as the Messiah. Yachini is said to have forged a manuscript in archaic characters which, he alleged, bore testimony to Shebbetai's messiahship. It reads:

“I, Abraham, was confined in a cave for forty years, and I wondered greatly that the time of miracles did not arrive. Then was heard a voice proclaiming, A son will be born in the Hebrew year 5386 [the year 1626 CE] to Mordecai Zevi; and he will be called Shabbethai. He will humble the great dragon; ... he,

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the true Messiah, will sit upon My throne."⁴

Zevi declared himself "the One Without End". He met a man known as Nathan of Gaza. Nathan claimed to be the risen Elijah, in order to proclaim the arrival of the Messiah. In 1665, Nathan announced that the messianic age would begin the following year.

Samuel Primo, who became Shebbetai's secretary, directed in the name of the Messiah the following circular to all of the Jews:

"The first-begotten Son of God, Shabbethai Tebi, Messiah and Redeemer of the people of Israel, to all the sons of Israel, Peace! Since ye have been deemed worthy to behold the great day and the fulfilment of God's word by the Prophets, your lament and sorrow must be changed into joy, and your fasting into merriment; for ye shall weep no more. Rejoice with song and melody, and change the day formerly spent in sadness and sorrow into a day of jubilee, because I have appeared."

In 1666, Shebbetai was taken from Abydos to Adrianople, where the sultan's vizier gave him three choices: subject himself to a trial of his divinity in the form of a volley of arrows (in which should the archers miss, his divinity would be proven); be impaled; or he could convert to Islam. The next day, (September 16, 1666) Zevi came before the sultan, cast off his Jewish garb and put a Turkish turban on his head. Zevi's conversion to Islam was completed. Zevi's wife and approximately 300 families among his followers also converted to Islam.


Menachem Mendel Schneerson - 1994

Born in what is now the Ukraine in 1902, Schneerson was born into an ultra-Orthodox Jewish family. He did much to advance Orthodox Judaism in the 20th century. The organization that he led

By the grace of G-d www.7for70.com

MOSHIACH IS HERE

Just add in goodness and kindness



We live in a special time when the Rebbe, King Messiah, has announced:

"We are in the actual true and complete Redemption".

We should now begin to live accordingly.

(Dvar Malchus 1991-92)

RABBI M. M. SCHNEERSON THE KING MESSIAH
LONG LIVE THE REBBE KING MESSIAH FOREVER

is one of the biggest "anti-missionary" groups within Judaism. They despise evangelical Christianity. To remain concise, we will focus on his status as a false messiah.

Schneerson (known as the Rebbe) died in Brooklyn, NY in 1994. There were many during his life, who declared him to be the Messiah. Schneerson largely denied many of these claims. However, those that believed he was the Messiah (the Chabad messianists) continued to propagate the message of "the Rebbe King Messiah." These declarations heightened in 1992 after Schneerson suffered a stroke and was left paralyzed and speechless. After his death in 1994, many of his followers still believed him to be the Messiah, and were awaiting his resurrection. Some even took to sleeping near the Rebbe's grave in a Queens' cemetery, hoping to be the first

to see their Messiah rise from the dead.

Some Chassidim actually pronounce the sentence, "The Rebbe is the Creator," though the number is not as negligible as one might imagine."⁵

In an interview with the Jerusalem Post in 2001, Rabbi David Berger explained the view of many of these messianists: "...the Rebbe is omniscient, omnipotent, and entirely without limits. He is 'indistinguishable' from God. Because he is a transparent window for pure divinity, a 'man-God,' when you speak to him, you speak to God."

It should be noted that none of these false messiahs fulfill even the simplest of messianic prophecies, and yet many were accepted by large numbers within Judaism.

THE TRUE MESSIAH OF ISRAEL

As the prophets foretold, the Messiah did come! He was born of a virgin, Isaiah 7:14, of the lineage of David, Isaiah 9:6-7,

and in Bethlehem, Micah 5:2. He came exactly at the specific time prophesied within the book of Daniel, Daniel 9:24-27. He was and is the Creator in human flesh, Isaiah 48:12-17. He lived a perfect sinless life and died a cruel death as a perfect substitute sacrifice for all of the sins of the entire human race, Isaiah 53. He rose again from the dead, Isaiah 53:10, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, Psalm 110:1-2. His name is Jesus. Don't accept a counterfeit, when you can have the true Messiah. Trust Him today! ☞

End Notes

1. Acts 5:33
2. Acts 5:37
3. Socrates, "Historia Ecclesiastica," vii. 38; Grätz, "Gesch." 3d ed., iv. 354-355
4. Abraham Yachini, "The Great Wisdom of Solomon," 1651
5. Rabbi David Berger, *On the Spectrum of Messianic Belief in Contemporary Lubavitch Chassidism*



Messiah: Prophet, Priest And King

by Ken Symes

In the Old Testament economy there were three classes of public servants: prophets, priests and kings. All appointed to one of these offices were consecrated by being anointed with oil (prophet, I Kings 19: 16b; priest, Exodus 28:41; king, I Samuel 15:1). A prophet is one who is God's spokesman. In the biblical economy, it involved both foretelling and telling forth. A priest is one who represents the people before God. Kings were anointed to represent God for the purpose of governing the people according to God's directions.

Moses is probably the most stellar of all of God's prophets. God confirmed that there would come another prophet like unto him (Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18). Of all the prophets that followed Moses none were like unto Moses. The Jewish people have a saying, "From Moses [the law giver], to Moses [Moses Maimonides – an influential 12th century rabbi], there is none greater than Moses."

Aaron, Moses' brother, may be the most stellar of God ordained priests as he was the first appointed high priest, Exodus 40:13.

When the kings of Israel are considered, certainly the most stellar personality was David. The writer of many psalms, the slayer of Goliath, David would be the family from whom Israel's greatest king, Messiah, would come.

As great as these men of God were as they functioned in their offices serving God, there would be One coming who would far surpass the greatness of these men. In Him all these offices would reach their pinnacle and come together.

MESSIAH: THE PROPHET

The religious leaders of Jesus' day were looking for such a prophet. This is recorded in John 1:19-21 where the Jews sent priests and Levites to John the Baptist to ask him if he was the promised Messiah, to which he answered "no." It was Jesus who perfectly told forth God's word. He stated: "Believest thou the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works," (John 14: 10). In the Olivet discourse Jesus foretold the future (Matthew 24-25). He also prophesied of His own death and resurrection. He even connected Himself back to Moses when He stated: "Do you think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me," (John 5: 45-46). Yeshua, Jesus, is that prophet of which Moses prophesied. John states it perfectly: "He that hath received his testimony has set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him," (John 3:33-34).

As one must be anointed into these offices, the question arises as to when Jesus was thus anointed. Isaiah gives us the clue to the answer of this question in Isaiah 11:1-5 which I encourage you to read. The passage begins: "And there shall come a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD." The "rod out of the stem of Jesse" is a reference to the Messiah. This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus as recorded in Mark 1:9-11. This is the account of the baptism of Jesus where we are told that: "straightway coming up out of the

water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven saying, Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." John gives witness to the occurrence of this incident in John 1:32-34. Oil, at times, in the Old Testament economy, is representative of the Holy Spirit. Herein was Jesus anointed, becoming God's spokesman, His Prophet.

MESSIAH: THE PRIEST

The Messiah was also to fulfill the office of the priest. Speaking to David of the greater David who was to come, God described the Messiah saying: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," (Psalm 110:1-4). Melchizedek, as a type of Christ, represented His eternal and unchanging priesthood. One responsibility of the priest was to make intercession for the worshippers. Jesus is often recorded as praying for the people. The best example is His intercessory prayer recorded in John 17. Note the words of Hebrews 7:25. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them." You may want to read Hebrews 7:22-28 to get the full impact of this great truth.

It was also the responsibility of the priest to offer the sacrifices. It is interesting to note that Jesus was both the one who offered the sacrifice and was Himself the sacrifice. The Bible states: "For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." There are two issues here. First, God requires a "blood" sacrifice because "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," (Leviticus 17:11). Second, a body

Continued on page 11

PROPHET A PRIEST MESSIAH KING *Jesus Christ*

Continued from page 10

was required (Hebrews 10:5-10) so a perfect sacrifice could be made. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice and willingly offered Himself.

As He celebrated Passover for the last time with His disciples, Jesus took bread and said: *“This is my body which is given for you... Likewise the cup after supper saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you,”* (Luke 22: 19-20). The author of Hebrews put it all together when he wrote: *“Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law, Then said he, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all... Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus... let us draw near with a true heart,”* (Hebrews 10: 7-10, 19, 22). Messiah was to be both the priest offering the sacrifice and the sacrifice itself (I Corinthians

5:7; John 1:29; Exodus 12:21). The Messiah was to be the perfect and eternal priest. Only Jesus qualifies.

MESSIAH: THE REIGNING KING

Through the Davidic Covenant, recorded in 2nd Samuel 7:10-16, covenanted by God with David, David was given the unconditional promise that his throne would be established forever. This is in perfect harmony with the promise made to Judah that *“the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be,”* (Genesis 49:10). This Messianic Kingdom is also prophesied in Jeremiah 23:5-6. Psalm 72 gives us an additional description of the Messianic Kingdom. Isaiah 9:6, among many other scriptures, establishes the kingship of the Messiah. Messiah will be of the seed of David. A study of the genealogies of Matthew and Luke establishes Jesus’ Messianic credentials. We are told, when the angel appeared to Mary, that the son of her womb would be the eternal King. *“And the angel said unto her, fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring*

forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the highest; and the LORD God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end,” (Luke 1:30-33).

CONCLUSION

The first three verses of the book of Hebrews presents Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King (the Messiah), to the target audience of the writer of Hebrews – Jewish people. *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”*

Messiah Jesus is THE Prophet, *“spoken unto us by His Son”*; THE Priest, *“he had by himself purged our sins”*; and THE King, *“His Son [is] heir of all things.”*

To Him be the glory! ☩



Identifying The Messiah - Who? How?

By Rev. Mark Robinson

“The Messiah is dead!”

“The Messiah is dead!”

As the word filtered throughout the community, denial was paramount in the minds of many of the believers. “It can’t be! Just yesterday we were greeting him with, ‘Long live our master, our teacher, our rabbi, the king Messiah forever and ever.’” However, as the news became a reality it brought anguish, devastation and disillusionment.

Some of his followers insisted he would rise from the grave, and for weeks they kept a vigil by his gravesite expecting the resurrection of their Messiah. As long as five years after his death a number of his followers were still patiently waiting for his return.

Who was this individual whom many still fervently cling to as “the hope of Israel?” He was the revered leader of the Chabad Lubavitch movement: Menachem Mendel Schneerson. He was born in 1902 and died on June 12, 1994, at the age of 92, leaving a void in the lives of many of his followers that may never be satisfied.

The history of Israel is littered with “Messiahs” who left their followers leaderless and disillusioned. One of these was Shimon Bar Kochba who led an unsuccessful revolt against Rome from 132 - 135 A.D. and died at the battle of Betar. He was acclaimed as the Messiah by Rabbi Akiba, the leading rabbi of the day. Another, David Alroy, proclaimed to the Jews of Babylon that he was the Messiah in 1147 A.D., but was later killed by his father-in-law. Shabbetai Zvi, born in Smyrna, Turkey, acquired thousands of followers throughout Europe by 1665. He was eventually imprisoned by the Turkish sultan, converted to Islam, and died in exile in

1676. These and many others join the Rebbe, Menachem Schneerson, as failed messianic hopes. These false messiahs are indicative of the need for a careful analysis of anyone who might claim to be the Messiah.

After centuries of being misled, Israel truly needs an authoritative voice to speak to this issue. Even more, we are all in need of an impeccable source whereby we can substantiate the claims of the one asserting he is the Messiah. God’s given us this source in His Word. The Jewish Bible contains many prophecies that allow us to make this determination.

RECOGNIZING THE MESSIAH

The specific time of the Messiah’s coming is a major factor in His identification. The Bible reveals not only the time of His coming, but also how He could be recognized. For example:

1. The Messiah would come before 70 A.D.

“And after 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...” Daniel 9:26

The Hebrew prophet Daniel foretold with precise accuracy in verses 9:24-27 the time of the Messiah’s coming. He stated that the city of Jerusalem and the Temple would be rebuilt, and the Messiah would come during this same time period -- the period of the SECOND Temple. It is interesting that his prophecy also told us that the second Temple would be destroyed after the coming of the Messiah, by the “people of the prince.” This was accomplished in 70 A.D. when General Titus, the son of the Roman emperor Vespasian, led his people (the Roman armies) in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

Among many Jewish references

regarding the coming of the Messiah in the first century, one rabbi had this to say:

“The first century, however, especially the generation before the destruction [of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem], witnessed a remarkable outburst of messianic emotionalism. This is to be attributed, as we shall see, not to an intensification of Roman persecution but to the prevalent belief induced by the popular chronology of that day that... the Messiah was expected around the second quarter of the first century C.E...”¹

It is apparent the Messiah had to come before 70 A.D.

2. The prophet Micah told us the place of His birth.

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” Micah 5:2

The ancient writings agree that this verse speaks about the Messiah being born in Bethlehem. The Targum Jonathan, an Aramaic paraphrase of the Scriptures dating from approximately the second century C.E., says:

“And you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, you who were too small to be numbered among the thousands of the house of Judah, from you shall come forth before Me the Messiah, to exercise dominion over Israel, he whose name was mentioned from before, from the days of creation.”

3. Isaiah told us the manner of His birth.

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14

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The Messiah would be born of a virgin. The Hebrew word used here for virgin is *almah*. *Almah* is used seven times in the Jewish Bible (Genesis 24:43; Exodus 2:8; Psalm 68:25; Proverbs 30:19; Song of Solomon 1:3, 6:8; and Isaiah 7:14) and always refers to a young woman who is a virgin. Even Rashi, the highly-revered French Talmudic scholar of the thirteenth century, believed this verse indicated a virgin birth. He said, "Behold the 'Almah' shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel. This means that our Creator shall be with us. And this is the sign: the one who will conceive is a girl who never in her life had intercourse with any man. Upon this one shall the Holy Spirit have power."²

4. The Messiah would suffer on our behalf.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53:4-5

It was because of our sins (transgressions) that the Messiah was stricken by God, and by the Messiah's punishment (stripes) we are forgiven.

5. The Messiah would die for our sins.

"He was taken from prison and from Judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of my people was he stricken." Isaiah 53:8

To be "cut off out of the land of the living" means to be killed. "For the transgression of my people" means he died for our sins (transgressions).

6. The Messiah would be buried in a rich man's grave.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Isaiah 53:9

7. The Messiah would resurrect - rise from the grave.

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand." Isaiah 53:10

To "prolong His days" after dying and being buried, means He would have to resurrect from the grave.

Actually, the entire fifty-third chapter of the Book of Isaiah is a detailed account of the life of the Messiah. Concerning this chapter, Rabbi Moshe Kohen ibn Crispin, of Cordova and afterwards Toledo, Spain (14th century), said:

"Those who for controversial reasons apply the prophecy of the suffering servant to Israel find it impossible to understand the true meaning of this prophecy, having forsaken the knowledge of our teachers, and inclined after the stubbornness of their own opinions. Their misinterpretation distorts the passage from its natural meaning, for it was given of God as a description of the Messiah, whereby, when any should claim to be the Messiah, to judge by the resemblance or nonresemblance to it whether he were the Messiah or no."³

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

There are literally hundreds of prophecies about the promised Messiah of Israel. We have looked at only a few of them. To an unbiased individual there can be only one person in all history that fulfills the messianic requirements.

He came before 70 A.D. and was born in Bethlehem.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem." Matthew 2:1

He was born of a virgin.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost... that it might be fulfilled

which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Matthew 1:18, 22-23

He suffered and died for our sins.


"For Messiah also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." 1 Peter 3:18

He was buried in a rich man's grave *"Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."* John 19:40-42

He rose from the grave.

"And the Angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I told you." Matthew 28:5-7

Dear friend, look no further; you have found the Messiah. He is the only One in history who has fulfilled these, and many other messianic prophecies. He wants to be your Messiah and Savior if you will come to Him today as the One who died for your sins and rose from the grave.

"...and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21 

End Notes

1. Rabbi A.H. Silver, [A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel](#), reprinted in 1978 by Peter Smith, pages 5-7. The Jewish community doesn't accept Jesus as Lord and thus uses C.E. (Common Era) in place of A.D. ("in the year of our Lord").
2. Rashi, [Mikraoth Gedoloth](#), Isaiah 7:14
3. Driver & Nebauer, [The Suffering Servant of Isaiah According to Jewish Tradition](#), pages 114, 199ff.



GOOD NEWS

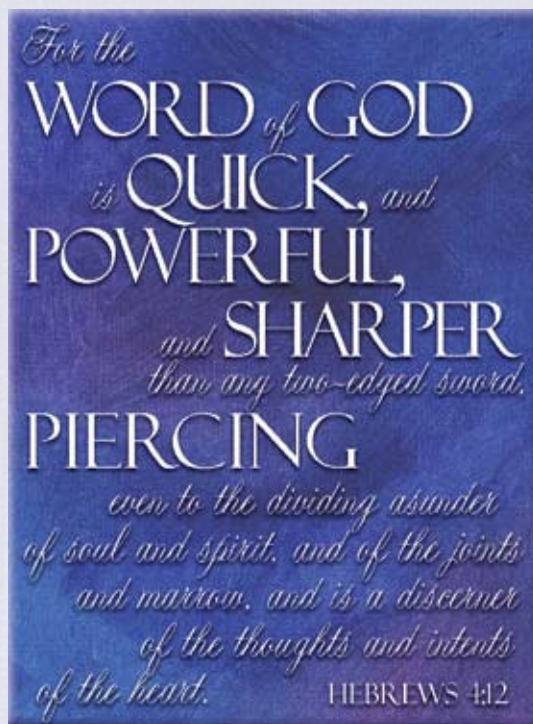
by Moshe and Shoshona Gold

For the last 21 months, since my severe stroke in November of 2013, my time has been spent in hospitals. Recently, I was able to come home and am now continuing to recover. God is gracious and merciful and has shown His favor in preserving me. Shoshana has been by my side the entire time and has been a tower of strength to me.

Just recently Shoshana and I were in Tiberias doing some errands. The car was parked outside a passport photo shop owned by a believer we know. Ariella immediately came out of the shop and greeted us both very warmly. I visited with Ariella while Shoshana left to go shopping.

After a few minutes of conversation I noticed that there was a man in the shop looking at Ariella and me through the window. Ariella also noticed him looking and motioned for him to come out. She spoke in Russian informing him as to who I was. Speaking to me in Hebrew he told me his name and Ariella continued the conversation with me in Hebrew. Yitzak stated that he was not yet a believer in Jesus, but was open to discussing his faith. So I began to explain Jesus to him from the Old Testament.

I began with Deuteronomy 18 verse 15 where the Lord promises to raise up a prophet like Moses from among the Jewish people. He declares that this prophet will carry the same authority as Moses. Keep in mind that Moses is best known as the lawgiver. Therefore this new prophet will also be a lawgiver. The law that He will give will be called the New Covenant which is mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31. There God states that He will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and also with the House of Judah. This New Covenant will be internal and individual. Hebrews 12:24 states that Jesus is the mediator of this New Covenant which He initiated by the shedding of His blood and the breaking of His body. The resurrection of Jesus was proof that His sacrifice was accepted for the remission of sin.



Yitzak accepted this although not fully believing that Jesus is that prophet. From there we moved on to the time and place of the prophet's birth, also noting that He would be a descendent of King David through King Solomon. In Micah 5:2 we are informed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judea. Daniel 9:24-26 tells us the time of Messiah's coming. The command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, verse 25, took place in 445 BCE as Nehemiah 2:1-8 states. From that date until the coming of the Messiah would be 483 years. Therefore, Messiah had to arrive before 70 CE (the time of the destruction of the Temple by the Romans).

Just as Moses was approved of God by signs, miracles and wonders which God did by him in the midst of the people, so too, was Jesus approved by doing signs, miracles and wonders

(Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Exodus 4:17; John 7:22; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Exodus 40:34-38; John 8:20-31; 6:30-40; 44:51; 33:58; 62:65).

Furthermore, the Messiah died for the sins of the people of Israel and for all mankind (Isaiah 53). It also states in Isaiah 53 that God was pleased with this sacrifice; His wrath was satisfied and His anger appeased. Isaiah 53:11-12 tells us that God is also pleased when we make the Messiah's sacrifice for our sin our own. Isaiah 9:6 tells us that this Messiah is God, in stating that He is eternal.

Yitzak was shocked to hear these things! The Word of God truly pierces through the mundane life and strikes the very soul of mankind. Yitzak needed time to reflect on these things knowing they came from the Bible. He walked away, sat down and contemplated all that had just been said. After he returned he requested another meeting in order to further discuss these truths.

Pray with us for Yitzak, that the Word of God would pierce his heart, and he would embrace his Messiah. 🕊

Shadows of the Tribulation

By Rev. Ken Overby

When events that are predicted in the Bible to precede Jesus' second coming to earth begin appearing even before the rapture, Jewish Awareness Ministries refers to them as "Shadows of the Tribulation." The approach of the seven year "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7) is foreshadowed in similar events appearing on our horizon today.

But let's be clear, THE ONLY "SIGNS" GIVEN FOR THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH ARE THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL AND THE TRUMP OF GOD (1 Thessalonians 4:13-19). Only after 1 Thessalonians was written could the Apostles look for a "caught up" event at the "signs" of the voice and trumpet. But although they did not know the term at first, Jesus' return later described as the "rapture" was imminently expected in their lifetimes.

In Matthew 24 and 25, on the Mt. of Olives, only Jesus' second coming as Messiah King was being presented and understood. "What are the signs of your coming?" His answers therefore could not have been signs of the rapture of the church. The second coming is different and seven plus years later. The signs of Matthew 24 and 25 are for Tribulation saints of Israel not the absent Church. They wanted to know when He would remove the Gentile yoke from their necks and set up His eternal kingdom.

Even forty days after Jesus' resurrection, just prior to His ascension from the Mt. Of Olives, their last question evidences that they had a total Israel/Kingdom mind set. "Will you at this time restore the kingdom?" Jesus didn't rebuke their correct assumptions of a literal kingdom but basically said, not yet. They were to spread the gospel worldwide until He returns.

Therefore, we must limit our interpretation of these signs to Israel during the "Great Tribulation" prior to the second coming. Signs are during the Tribulation. Shadows of those signs are prior to the rapture.

First let's look at the "shadows" that have already come to light.

ISRAEL

1. Israel's rebirth as a nation was fulfilled when she was reestablished as a nation on May 14, 1948 (Ezekiel 37:8, Zephaniah 2:1-2, Isaiah 11:11-12).
2. Israel regained possession of Jerusalem on June 7, 1967 (Zechariah 8:4-8, Revelation 11:8, Daniel 11:41).

INTERNATIONALLY

1. Israel's agricultural rebirth and success as a global supplier of produce (Ezekiel 36:34-35).
2. Ongoing "wars and rumors of wars" – Iranian Nuclear Threat, new Russian aggression, ISIS' (Matthew 24:6, 7).
3. Incurable disease epidemics and famines (Matthew 24:7).
4. Increasing meteorological mayhem - earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and tornados (Matthew 24:7).

5. Persecution and martyrdom of Christians (Matthew 24:9).
6. Exponential explosion of information technology and global travel (Daniel 12:4).
7. Development of biometric identification technology with potential for the Mark of the Beast (Revelation 13:16-17).
8. Instant worldwide handheld visual communication (Revelation 11:3-9).
9. Massive deception through apostasy and false prophets (Matthew 24:5-11, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:3-5, 2 Thessalonians 2:3).
10. Israel's newly discovered natural gas and oil resources as a future spoil to lure Russian invasion (Ezekiel 38).
11. Formation of the Magog alliances of Russia, Turkey, Iran, Libya (Ezekiel 38).
12. European Union formation of a pre-revived Roman Empire (Daniel 2:33-43) – 1950, "The Treaty of Rome" - 1957.
13. "Palestinian" dispute over the West Bank and Jerusalem causing Jerusalem's cup to tremble (Zechariah 12:2).
14. The Beastly relationship of the "harlot" signaled as the Pope joins EU nations calling for Israel to be divided up for a "Palestinian state" (Revelation 17 and 12).
15. Worldwide increase in social, national and religious anti-Semitism (Zechariah 12:9).
16. Lukewarm apathy and defilement of the church (Revelation 3:14-19).

What are the major pieces that must fall into place after the church is gone before Messiah Jesus steps into Jerusalem?

1. Seven year peace treaty.
2. Rebuilding of the Temple (although the Temple could be built before the Tribulation begins).
3. Rise of the Anti-Christ.
4. Gog/Magog invasion and defeat.
5. Mark of the Beast.
6. The seal, trumpet and bowl judgments of Revelation.

Will we see more "shadows of the Tribulation" before the rapture? Likely, as the Lord tarries. As we look back, look around and look ahead, let's keep looking up. We who know the Lord Jesus as our Messiah and Savior need not fear the shadows. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

When these dark shadows that signal our Lord's second coming precede even the rapture, how close must it be!

And most importantly, look around at the lost sheep of the house of Israel and guide them through the Messianic prophecies. Before we hear the trump of God we must "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain," Joel 2:1. ☪

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