

Women & More

Messiah and More

Lesson 13: February 5, 2015—*God Is*

Christians believe that Messiah is God—in the Person of Jesus Christ the Anointed One—Lord! He’s already come to us and will return; He has left His Holy Spirit within us, and has given us His Word: from Genesis to Revelation!

Who is messiah to the Jew? (Not capitalized because they believe he is a *man*.) What do they say, and what have they written down about messiah?

•**The Torah** is a scroll of the first five books of the Old Testament and used in synagogue. It represents the body of divine knowledge and law found in the Jewish scriptures and tradition, and **makes no reference to messiah**.

•**The Tanakh** is the canon of the Hebrew Bible—Old Testament only—also known as the Masoretic Text or Miqra, meaning ‘that which is read’. (Greek translation of the OT is called the Septuagint.) It was passed on by each generation along with the oral tradition—Oral Torah. Tanakh is an acronym of the first Hebrew letter of each of the Masoretic Text’s three traditional subdivisions:

A. **Torah** (Teaching) the five books of Moses;

B. **Nevi im** (Prophets), and

C. **Ketuvim** (Writings)—hence **TaNaKh**—and it gives several speculations concerning messiah—what he will be to the Jew:

1. a descendent of King David (2 Samuel 7:12-13);
2. observant of Jewish law (Isaiah 11:2-5);
3. a righteous judge (Jeremiah 33:15), and
4. a great military leader.

Judaism emphatically rejects Jesus of Nazareth as *messiah*. The Jews—in Judea (southern region) and in Galilee (northern region)—look for a ‘man’ who will deliver them from their enemies and reign on a human throne. Isn’t this what our world will look for when it embraces Antichrist? Jesus was not the political, military or economic leader they wanted; and they did not believe He was God. But Jesus was and is **God-incarnate—*The Christ; The Messiah***—Savior of the soul, and so much more than what Judaism would seem to settle for!

Tracey R. Rich, author of “Messiah” *Judaism 101*, wrote: “Jews do not believe messiah will be divine. The Jewish conviction is that God is so essentially different from and beyond humanity that he could never become a human.” This reminds us of the early Jews who would not even say God’s name aloud; because He was so Holy to them they would whisper it—*Yahweh*.

And notice how noble that sounds: God is so far above humans that He could never become a human! But **God Himself is the One who said** that He would send the Christ—God incarnate; the suffering Savior—fully God and fully man to die for the sins of the whole world. The incarnation is an offense to Judaism!

In the *LifeWay* materials study of the Gospel of John, page 80, it states: “Jesus was more than just a Man from Nazareth; He was the Messiah—God in the flesh!” It is absolutely a true statement, but when we understand that to the Jew messiah would be only a man; that, in their view, God was too divine to ever condescend to become a man, that we further understand that **the Jewish Jesus was so much more than the messiah His nation envisioned!**

When do the Jews believe messiah will come?

Rich again: “The ‘when’ of the messiah’s arrival is not made clear in the Tanakh and has been a source of much scholarly speculation.

“A wide variety of opinions have been given by Jewish scholars as to the circumstances that will prompt messiah’s arrival. Some say the messiah will come when the world is especially good; others say when the world has become especially bad. The biblical [OT] clues that are offered suggest the messiah will come after a period of war and suffering” (Ezekiel 38:16).

When we read about some of these belief systems, they can be confusing and Satan makes sure they are. Our thoughts can be overwhelmed. The evil one can make his case believable by the unwary, so we must be on guard. Very, very thankfully, it’s not Judaism’s word against ours, but it is God’s Word that proclaims Jesus as Christ; Messiah for the Christian and for the Jew!

There are only two mentions of Hebrew ‘Messiah’ in Scripture: amazingly, both are in the New Testament—from a Jewish man and a Gentile woman. John 1:41-42a (Andrew—a **Jew**—to his brother Simon Peter) “*The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.*” And then in John 4:25-26 (the Samaritan—a **Gentile**—woman to Jesus at the well) “*The woman said, ‘I know that Messiah’ (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.’* ²⁶*Then Jesus declared, ‘I who speak to you am he.’” And wasn’t that exactly what Jesus was doing, explaining everything to her? And that is what Scripture does; as we read and study it we receive Christ’s wisdom and understanding.*

There are 530 mentions of Christ in the New Testament—remembering that ‘Christ’ is the Greek word for the Hebrew ‘Messiah’! The first mention is Matthew 1:1 “*A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham.*” Remember the Tanakh said that messiah will be a descendent of

David, so right out of the scriptural gate, Matthew wants Jews to know: **This is Him!** The Old Testament begins with a presentation of God: “*In the beginning God*” and the New Testament begins with a presentation of Messiah: “*Jesus Christ the son of David*”.

In Matthew 16:16-18 “*Simon Peter answered, ‘**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**’* ¹⁷*Jesus replied, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter, and **on this rock** (this statement) I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it.’”* The church of Jesus Christ was built, not on Peter, but **on Peter’s profession**: “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (also in Mark 8:29 and Luke 9:20).

Remember that Lazarus of Bethany had died and Jesus arrived to meet with the mourning family, and He has been speaking to the dead man’s sister, Martha. John 11:25-27 “*Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, ²⁶and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’*

²⁷“*Yes, Lord,’ she told him, ‘I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.’”* Peter, Martha, Nathanael and Thomas all made this claim; they pronounced Jesus’ messiahship! You are the Christ—Messiah!

Luke wrote about those who faithfully proclaimed the gospel in Acts 5:42—“*Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.*” And the many Jews rejection of it in Acts 18:5-6—“*When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.* ⁶*But when the Jews opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, ‘Your blood be on your own heads! I am clear of my responsibility. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.’”* And he extolled the persistent preaching of Apollos in Acts 18:28 “*For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.*”

In reviewing the speculations concerning *the Jewish messiah* from the **Tanakh**, we’ll address them one by one: **1.** Matthew 1:1 “*genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David*” meets the demands of the first, that he will be ‘**a descendent of King David**’. **2.** About being ‘**observant of Jewish law**’, in the strictest sense because Jesus fulfilled the law, is addressed by Paul in Romans 10:3-4—“*Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. ⁴Christ is the end of the law so that there may **be righteousness for everyone who believes.***” Galatians 2:15-16 “*We who are Jews by birth and not ‘Gentile sinners’ ¹⁶know that **a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.** So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.”*

Speaking about how Messiah **3.** must be ‘**a righteous judge**’, Paul said in Romans 2:16 “*This will take place on the day when **God will judge men’s secrets through Jesus Christ**, as my gospel declares.*” And Christ as victor in 1 Corinthians 15:56 “*The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷But thanks be to God! **He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.***” But the Jews are also seeking **4.** ‘**a great military leader**’! We have but to go to Revelation to see that great military leader—Jesus Christ—who will descend to the Mount of Olives and destroy the enemies of Israel.

In Revelation 19:11-13 John said, “*I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called **Faithful and True**. With justice **he judges and makes war**. ¹²His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself! ¹³He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and **his name is the Word of God**. ¹⁴The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.” **And there’s more!** Revelation 19:15 “***Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations**. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.*”*

John, in the New, gave an eloquent introduction to Christ in John 1:1-3, 14 saying, “***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. And in verse 14 “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. **We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*****”

Jesus Christ remains the most important ‘man’ in the history of the whole world: in fact, history is **His story!** The Old and New Testaments come together beautifully to show the nation that God raised up in the Old to bring about the God ‘man’ in the New. If we miss knowing Christ, The Messiah, we will miss everything. In 1 Corinthians 1:23-25, Paul said, “*But **we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jesus and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength.***”

Paul said he was in great sorrow and anguish because of the Jews unbelief, and in Romans 9:3-4a lamented: “*For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, ⁴the people of **Israel**.*” As to the argument that God could not and would not become human, Paul gives evidence in Romans 9:5 “*Theirs (speaking of the Jews) are the patriarchs, and **from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen.***”

We've had a long look at **Messiah** (Hebrew)/**Christ** (Greek); so let's look at the 'more' that He is. See what two Old Testament prophets said about Him: Zechariah in 9:9—*“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, **your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**”* Isaiah 9:6-7—about the yet to be born—*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And **He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.** Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. **He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.**”*

Christ's greatest conquest was at Calvary's cross where He took the sins of the world upon Himself. He bled and died on that vile 'tree' so that by believing in His atoning work we could be reconciled to God. Men will fail us; Christ will not! 1 Corinthians 3:21-23 *“So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, 22whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, 23and **you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.**”*

This 'tree' was not a pretty sight

It wasn't smooth or polished bright

Rough and splintered and misshapen

It spoke of a slow dying life...

This 'tree' was reserved for evil men
Those whose deeds had been condemned
An instrument of torture and death
Amusement for watchers to attend...

This 'tree' was where justice was meted

For those whom it was bound to be needed

But Jesus did no wrong—ever—He didn't deserve

This horrible death to be so deeded...

This 'tree' was for me, sinner from birth,
Separated for life from the Truth
But Christ took my place and paid for my sins
Made '**at-one-ment**' for me at His death!

01-01-14/jmoore

“Much ignorance of Jesus may remain in hearts which yet feel the power of his blood,” said Charles Spurgeon. “We must not hastily condemn men for lack of knowledge; but where we can see the faith which saves the soul, we must believe that salvation has been bestowed. **The Holy Spirit makes men penitents long before he makes them divines;** and he who believes what he knows, shall soon know more clearly what he believes.”