



LOOKING FOR THE MESSIAH

During the Roman occupation of Israel, many of the Hebrews were looking for the Messiah. Some are mentioned in the Bible while others are mentioned in writings of the time.

Luke 2:25-38

25 And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts

may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

There is considerable information on

<http://www.christian-thinktank.com/messiah.html>

containing numerous Jewish scripts of the period.

The Jewish non-Christian writings that can be used to determine 1st century Jewish thinking are as follows:

- **The Septuagint (LXX) translation** of the OT [250 BC]. This translation of the Hebrew OT (into Greek) was done by Jewish scholars of pre-Christian date. In some cases they 'smuggled' THEIR interpretations into the translation. In some of these cases, they make their messianic interpretations EXPLICIT, by putting them INTO THE TRANSLATION. By comparing the Hebrew OT passage with the LXX version of the same passage, we can sometimes uncover messianic interpretations of OT passages--indicating messianic expectations of pre-Christian Jewry.
- **Jewish Apocrypha** - almost all of the ma-

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terial of these 15 books was written in the 1st/2nd centuries BC., and as such give us visibility into the thoughts of 1st century Judaism.

- **Jewish Pseudepigrapha** - many of these writings pre-date, or are contemporaneous with, the NT. As such they represent writings/sentiments present in 1st century Judaism.
- **Dead Sea Scrolls** - these writings ALL either pre-date the NT or are contemporaneous with it. As such THEY represent writings/sentiments present in 1st century Judaism (and often anti-Pharisaic, I might add--with a wink at James Still).
- The works of **Philo and Josephus**--both are either pre-NT or simul-NT. They will give us some data on messianic expectations.
- **The Targums.** These were Aramaic translations of the Hebrew OT, that apparently circulated during the time of Jesus (e.g. there are Targums of Job and Lev. in the Dead Sea Scrolls). Although these documents were written down AFTER the NT period, these represent typically VERY ancient understandings of OT passages. If the Targums interpreted OT passages messianically, this generally indicates that ancient Jewry had messianic expectations. We also know that targums circulated BEFORE the NT times, since some of them were found at Qumran.
- Hebrew Bible, as interpreted by **early (tannaic) rabbinical writers**, as they wrote commentaries on OT passages. If the earliest rabbis interpreted OT passages messianically, then this is strong evidence that the sources THEY used--1st century rabbis--held messianic expectations.) Like the targums, although these documents were written down AFTER the NT period, these often represent VERY ancient under-

standings of OT passages.

- **Historical data on messianic claimants.** If we find "early, frequent, and easy" popular acceptance of messianic claimants (esp. of varying shapes, colors, and sizes...) this will constitute data as to the popular expectation of messianic figures.

Writings in Enoch mentioned in Jude.

I Enoch 46.1ff: "At that place, I saw the One to whom belongs the time before time. And his head was white like wool, and there was with him another individual, whose face was like that of a human being. His countenance was full of grace like that of one among the holy angels...'Who is this?'...And he answered me and said, 'This is **the Son of Man**, to whom belongs righteousness, and with whom righteousness dwells.... **this Son of Man** whom you have seen is the One who would remove the kings and the mighty ones from their comfortable seats and the strong ones from their thrones..."

I Enoch 48.2-10: "At that hour, that **Son of Man** was given a name, in the presence of the Lord of the Spirits, the Before-Time; even before the creation of the sun and the moon, before the creation of the stars, he was given a name in the presence of the Lord of the Spirits. He will become a staff for the righteous ones in order that they may lean on him and not fall. He is the light of the gentiles and he will become the hope of those who are sick in their hearts. All those who dwell upon the earth shall fall and worship before him; they shall glorify, bless, and sing the name of the Lord of the Spirits. For this purpose he became the **Chosen One**; he was **concealed in the presence of (the Lord of the Spirits) prior to the creation of the world**, and for eternity. And he has revealed the wisdom of the Lord of the Spirits to the righteous and

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holy ones, for he has preserved the portion of the righteous because they have hated and despised this world of oppression (together with) all its ways of life and its habits and it is his good pleasure that they have life. ...For they (the wicked kings and landowners) have denied the Lord of the Spirits and **his Messiah.**"

Baruch

- *2 Baruch* (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 29.3f: "And it will happen that when all that which should come to pass in these parts has been accomplished, **the Anointed One** will begin to be revealed."
- *2 Baruch* (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 30.1: "And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance of **the Anointed One** has been fulfilled and **he returns with glory**, that then all who sleep in hope of him will rise." [Klijn, in OTP in loc., understands this as referring to the pre-existence of the Anointed One.]
- *2 Baruch* (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 39:7: "And it will happen when the time of its fulfillment is approaching in which it will fall, that at that time the dominion of **my Anointed One** which is like the fountain and the vine, will be revealed..."
- *2 Baruch* (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 40.1f: "And they will carry him (the last wicked king) on Mount Zion, and **my Anointed One** will convict him of all his wicked deeds and will assemble and set before him all the works of his hosts. And after these things he will kill him and protect the rest of my people who will be found in the place that I have chosen. And his dominion will last forever until the world of corruption has ended and until the times which have been mentioned before have

been fulfilled."

So when the Lord arrived 2000 years ago there were a number of the righteous who were waiting and expecting the coming of the Lord. The same is true today where there are many Jews and Christians who are looking for the Messiah. Just like the time was right 2000 years ago for the Lord to arrive the time is right for the Lord to arrive shortly.

The signs of the times indicate that the Lord will return when the world is ready to accept a world leader. The world is linked together by the Internet and there is the rise of the nation of Israel. The Bible talks about the final war against Israel where Israel's messiah delivers the tiny nation from all of the nations of the world who are bent on the destruction of Israel. Many felt that the time was right for the Lord to return during the reigns of Napoleon Bonaparte, Kaiser Wilhelm in Germany, Adolph Hitler, and many others throughout history. These and the others did not have all of the pieces of the puzzle of prophecy to make for the prophecy of the Lord's return to come true. Each were missing some key ingredients. I think that the world is ready for the return of the Lord today and that all of the pieces are either in place or are about to fall into place.

- Today we have the world connected via the Internet with email and Instant messaging.
- Credit cards with smart chips.
- Jerusalem is the Capitol of Israel.
- Many in Israel are expecting the Messiah.
- Many miracles are happening in Israel concerning their country and military.
- We now use either a check card or a MAC card for our purchases.

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- There is talk of embedding chips in either the wrist or forehead for scanning at stores. (Mark of the Beast)

So we are seeing the pieces of the puzzle come together one by one so the the Messiah can appear any day now. The technology along with the nation of Israel make for the rise of the Antichrist and the return of Jesus Christ to happen any time in the near future.

Just as the time was right for the Messiah 2000 years ago, the time is also right for the return of the Messiah. We are living in the greatest time where we will witness the Return of the great king, Jesus Christ. I do not know how close we are to the coming of the Lord, but I do know that I am to be ready at a moment's notice. If the Lord calls for the rapture during this service, I better have my robes white with the blood of the Lamb. If there is an area in my life that is not under

the blood and I am aware of the fault, then missing the rapture of the church will be on my hands.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

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