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STUDY GUIDE

JESUS - THE MESSIAH?

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Q. Is Jesus the Messiah? Why does it matter?

The Messiah: the promised anointed One, anticipated in history to save, deliver and lead His people. Luke 2:25-26

The history of the Messiah has its foundations in Rev 13:8 - the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. In the Garden of Eden God told the serpent He'd institute a program of redemption for mankind. We see this a few verses later when God clothed Adam and Eve with garments of skin - the first bloodshed as a pattern of things to come.

The Messiah came to His people (the Jews) who were centred around two things - the Tabernacle which was a copy of the Heavenly one, and the Teachings of Heaven as given to Moses on Mt Sinai. This backdrop is further illustrated by Paul in Romans 9:4-5, where he highlights the Adoption, the Glory, the Covenants, the Torah (Pentateuch), the Temple Service, the Promises and the Fathers. Lastly, Paul shows how the Messiah was birthed into this pattern established by God.

“Our Bible tells us when the angel appeared to Mary, he commanded her to name the child she would bear ‘Jesus’ (Matthew 1:21). Now ‘Jesus’ is, in fact, His Greek name, which we use in the English language, ‘Yeshua’ (Joshua) is the Hebrew pronunciation of the name. The other familiar name for Jesus is ‘Christ’, which is the Greek word for saviour, and in Hebrew the word is ‘Messiah’, meaning deliverer. There would only ever be one Messiah.

Daniel also predicted and recorded facts about the Messiah, being the coming Jewish King. One of his predictions was that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem 434 years after the city walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt by Nehemiah and he was right (Daniel 9:25). Two elderly people named Anna and Simeon were also at the temple when Jesus came to be dedicated. During one of their prayer times, God told them that they would not die before they saw the Messiah. When they saw baby Jesus they immediately knew He was the One.

They went on to tell Mary and Joseph of the marvellous things Jesus would do for mankind and then they left happy, ready to go and meet their Creator (Luke 2:25-38). Jesus then fulfilled another Scripture from Psalms 22, written by King David declaring what the Messiah would say, feel and do, predicting the sentiment behind Jesus’ words on the cross, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

Born 4 BC



Jewish religious leaders actually taught that the Messiah would be identified by four miracles that He would perform that no one else could (Isaiah 35:5-6). Jesus fulfilled these criteria by (1) healing a blind person, (2) casting a demon out of a mute person, (3) opening deaf ears, and (4) causing the lame to walk. Jesus performed these miracles in public, but the religious leaders still would not accept Him as the Messiah as they always expected the real Messiah to follow and honour the present religious order.”

Born 4 BC

Some prophecies concerning the Messiah:

His Person:	Descendant of Abraham	Gen 49:10
	Son of David	Is 11:1-2
	His Deity	Is 7:14
His Nature:	Full of the Holy Spirit	Is 11:1-2
	Be the Son of God	Ps 2:7-12
His Appearing:	Virgin birth	Is 7:14
	Born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2
	483 years after Jerusalem rebuilt	Dan 9:24-27
His Offices:	King	Numb 24:17
	Priest	Ps 110:1-7
	Prophet	Deut 18:15-19
His Mission/Ministry:	Bring salvation to Gentiles	Is 42:1-4
	Be rejected	Is 53:12
	Only a remnant to believe	Zech 11:1-7
	Seated at right hand of God	Ps 80:17
His Suffering & Death:	He would suffer	Is 50:4-9
	He would die	Ps 16:1-11
	His death to be substitutionary	Is 52:1 - 53:12
	He would rise from the dead	Ps 16:1-11; Ps 22
His Future:	To return for His bride, the remnant	1 Thess 4 & 5

Jesus' claims of Messiahship are based on the Messianic prophecies in the OT, of which there are over 300.



STUFF TO TALK ABOUT

— HEAD —

YOUNG	When and where did the promise of redemption begin? Rev 13:8
GROWING	How do you know that Jesus is Messiah? Discuss the question Jesus asked in Matthew 16:15
MATURE	What is the importance of Paul's list in Romans 9:4-5 ? Is there one covenant for Jews and another for Gentiles?

— HEART —

YOUNG	If Jesus is Messiah, how does this affect my trust in Him?
GROWING	How does the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy regarding the Messiah affect the way I feel I should respond to Jesus and the Jewish people? Luke 24:13-35
MATURE	How does the knowledge that there is a remnant among the Jewish people affect how I should feel about the Jewish people? 1 Kings 9:9-18; Romans 11:1-7

— HANDS —

YOUNG	As Messiah is Jewish, is anti-Semitism (prejudice or hatred of Jews) hating Jesus?
GROWING	If Jesus came first to the Jews then to the Gentiles, what should my response be to Israel?
MATURE	How do I live out the One New Man created by Messiah? Eph 2 & 3 How should Jesus coming as a Jew into Jewish culture effect how I should read and interpret the Bible?



STUFF TO DO

Have a discussion with another Life Group member about how you could dig deeper into understanding the Hebrew roots of our faith.

Ask the Lord to connect you with a Jewish person with a view to forming a friendship.

PRAYER POINTS & COMING UP

FAMILY SUNDAY - 29TH MAY

BOOM JUNE - 5TH, 12TH, 19TH & 26TH JUNE

Get a BOOM JUNE card and do something nice for someone!

STUFF TO THINK ABOUT

The question of Jesus being the Messiah has vexed the minds of mankind for 2000 years. But He must be judged by Biblical Judaism. He came not to abolish the 'Law' but to interpret it correctly (Matthew 5:17).

We need to distinguish between His first coming as the son of Joseph (Luke 3:23), and His second coming as the Son of David (Rev 5:1-5). The purpose of His first coming was to bring salvation through suffering and death; the purpose of His second coming will be to bring His peace to Earth.

It's easy for Gentiles to ask, "If Jesus was Messiah, why don't the Jews accept Him?" but we also must ask, why don't the Gentiles accept Him as Messiah?

Truth is never determined by a majority - if it's true, it's true. Just because the bulk of mankind reject the claims of Jesus as Messiah, that fact does not disqualify Him from being the Messiah.

Many passages in the OT speak of a remnant, being the section of mankind who have a heart for God (1 Kings 9:9-18; Isaiah 1:9; 10:20; 11:11). The majority are always in disobedience - that in no way negates Jesus Messiahship (Jesus as the Messiah). The remnant theme is constant throughout the Bible, both OT and NT. Truth is not truth because the majority accept it.



Finally, when a Jewish person becomes a believer in Jesus as Messiah as prophesied in the OT, that person does not in any way diminish or negate His Jewishness (Jewish identity). He does not become a non-Jew (Acts 21:20). Likewise, a Gentile does not become a Jew when he trusts in Jesus.

The challenge for both Jews and Gentiles is to work out our salvation within Biblical patterns (Eph 2 & 3).

An example of Jewish people recognising Jesus as their Messiah can be seen in this quote from English evangelist David Hathaway who held an outreach in Israel in May 2011.

“Again I showed them first from Matthew’s Gospel, then from their own Scriptures, who their Messiah is – Yeshua who came to give His life as a willing sacrifice.... through torture and rejection, then on a cross to forgive their sins and heal their wounds. Their response, as 90% of them came to receive Him, was overwhelming. Then, each night as I prayed for their Heavenly Father to reveal His love by fulfilling the prophecies of their Scriptures, the miracles of healing flowed as they did in Biblical days.

The next night again a capacity crowd. As it was the Sabbath some Messianic Jews joined us, still outnumbered by unbelieving Jews and Moslems, but sharing the outpouring of mercy and grace. Again almost all unbelievers came to receive Yeshua as their Messiah and Saviour.

Many came forward each night to testify of miraculous healing, but the Pastors told us that on each of the buses we had chartered to bring these Israeli Jews, as they streamed out of the meeting even the Holocaust survivors were amazed to find tumours, blindness and broken limbs healed by the power of God! And all the hundreds of converts on the buses were known by name and had been brought personally by the supporting Messianic congregations....”

One of the local Pastors said, “ This was an historic breakthrough, never seen in Israel before. We have had other conferences with crowds of Western believers and Messianic Jews – but never before have we seen thousands attending when 90% of them were unbelieving Jewish and Moslem Israelis. We wept tears of joy as we saw our brothers and sisters receive salvation in the Name of their Yeshua and Messiah.”

Bibliography: “Messianic Christology”, Fruchtenbaum, 1998





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