



Jesus: The Testimony of Prophecy & History

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The Promised Messiah

According to the Hebrew Bible, Messiah is to:

- Come & rescue his people from oppression
- Bring in a Golden Age
- Make Israel the chief nation, Jerusalem the world's capital
- Rule humanity with justice for all
- Ensure that all may live in safety on their own property and enjoy the fruits of their labors



Mixed Opinions on the Messiah

- Christians
 - He has already come, but won't start the Golden Age till he returns; he is Jesus!
- Jews
 - Messiah has not yet come, but he will; he's not Jesus!
- Secularists
 - Messiah is an empty hope, but we can occasionally expect great world leaders.



Who is Right?

- Does the evidence of biblical text and human history have anything to say about this?
- We suggest it does.
- The evidence is substantial.
- It supports two propositions:
 - If the Messiah has come, he is Jesus.
 - The Messiah has come.
- Let's see.



If the Messiah has come, he is Jesus.

- A light to the nations
- Born, yet pre-existent
- Humble, yet exalted
- Suffering, yet reigning
- King, yet priest



A Light to the Nations

I will appoint you as a covenant to the people [Israel], as a **light to the nations**, to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from the prison.

Isaiah 42:6-7



A Light to the Nations

And now, says the LORD, who formed me from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob back to Him, in order that Israel might be gathered to Him.... He says 'It is too small a thing that you should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make you a **light of the nations**, so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.'

Isaiah 49:5-6



A Light to the Nations

- This fits Jesus!
- Of the many claiming to be the Messiah, only he has started a world religion of Gentiles.
- Before Jesus came, few non-Jews were believers in a single God, much less the God of the Bible.
- Now nearly 1/2 the Gentiles in the world believe in the God of Abraham.



Born, yet Pre-existent

But you, Bethlehem Ephrata, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins* are from of old, from ancient times.

Micah 5:2

*activities, campaigns



Born, yet Pre-existent

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, Mighty 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 it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

Isaiah 9:6-7



Born, yet Pre-existent

- Messiah will count Bethlehem as his hometown even though he has existed for ages.
- That he will be born is explicitly stated by Isaiah, but he is also given the divine titles “Mighty God” and “Everlasting Father.”
- This is neatly explained by the New Testament picture of Jesus, the eternal God who became human to pay for the sins of those who trust him.



Humble, yet Exalted

In my vision at night, I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will never be destroyed.

Daniel 7:13-14



Humble, yet Exalted

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.

Zechariah 9:9



Humble, yet Exalted

- Jewish explanations; either:
 - Make the Zechariah coming more spectacular (miraculous donkey).
 - Make the comings in Daniel & Zechariah merely alternative possibilities.
- The NT view fits nicely:
 - Jesus comes first in humility.
 - Jesus returns in exaltation.
 - Also explains how Messiah can come both as child & adult.



Suffering, yet Reigning

- Several OT passages picture one who is to suffer, whose suffering & deliverance become worldwide news.
- Some Jewish interpreters sought to explain these passages by means of a 2nd Messiah-figure, Messiah ben-Joseph.
- This figure was to be a general, who was to fight the wicked Gentile armies, but be killed by them before Messiah ben-David comes.



Suffering, yet Reigning

- But the sufferer pictured in the Bible is pierced by Israel rather than the Gentiles (Zech 12:10).
- Though the 'lowly coming' passage in Zech 9:9 might otherwise be assigned to him, the donkey rider there is a king, Messiah ben-Joseph isn't.
- The main suffering passage is Isa 52:13-53:12, the climax of the Servant passages which speak of the Servant as "a light to the Gentiles."



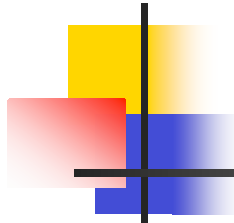
Suffering, yet Reigning

- Isaiah 53 marvelously fits Jesus:
 - Despised & rejected at his crucifixion (53:3)
 - Considered under God's wrath by many (53:4)
 - Strangely silent at his trial & execution (53:7)
 - Intended to be thrown in a common grave with criminals, he is buried in a rich man's tomb (53:9)
 - His death was God's way of providing payment for our sins (53:4,5,6,8,10)
 - After his death, he prolongs his days (53:10-11)
 - He will 'sprinkle many nations' (52:15)



King, yet Priest

- The offices of king & priest were kept strictly separate in Israel's religion.
- When priestly features show up in Messianic prophecy, not surprising that some saw 2 Messiahs, one a king, the other a priest.
- But a crucial passage in the Bible makes the one Messiah both king & priest.



King, yet Priest

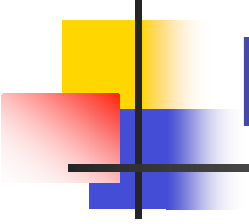
The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies. Your troops will be willing on your day of battle.... The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: 'You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek!'

Psalm 110:2,4



King, yet Priest

- Because the kingship & priesthood were kept separate, the author of Psalm 110 must go all the way back to Genesis, to a Gentile, to find a righteous priest-king.
- But this fits the NT picture of Jesus:
 - Acted as priest by offering a sacrifice for sins.
 - Will return to rule as king forever.



If Messiah has come, he is Jesus.

- A light to the nations
- Born, yet pre-existent
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But maybe Messiah hasn't come yet.

- Jesus hasn't reigned yet; how do we know he will?
- Jesus hasn't returned yet; how do we know he will?
- Good questions!
 - We don't want to make a mistake, erring in either direction.
- Messiah has come because certain time-oriented prophecies have expired in such a way as to point to Jesus.



Messiah was to come while Judah had its own rulers.

The scepter will not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his
feet, until he comes to whom it belongs,
and the obedience of the nations is his.

Genesis 49:10



Messiah was to come while Judah had its own rulers.

- Rulership comes to Judah some 500 years after the death of Jacob, about 1000 BC.
- Kingship remains in Judah & David's family till 587 BC.
- Then the Maccabees rule as kings of Judah from 103 BC to 63 BC.
- Then Herod the Great rules as king of Judah from 40 BC to 4 BC.
- Finally Herod Agrippa 1 rules 41-44 AD.



Messiah was to come while Judah had its own rulers.

- In one sense, the scepter departed 587 BC.
- In another sense, it departed 44 AD.
- There has been no king of Judah since.
- The Messiah must have come before 44 AD.
- Jesus came and was crucified about 30 AD.



Messiah was to come while the 2nd Temple stood.

'Who of you is left who saw this house [temple] in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing?... The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace.'

Haggai 2:3-9



Messiah was to come while the 2nd Temple stood.

- 'Glory' is ambiguous – wealth or God's presence.
- 2nd temple may have surpassed Solomon's in wealth at time of Herod; we don't know.
- 2nd temple lacked the ark of the covenant & the glory cloud; only if visited by the Messiah did it surpass the 1st temple in this kind of glory.
- The 2nd temple is destroyed in AD 70.



Messiah was to come after the 69th sabbath cycle.

Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One [Messiah] comes, there will be seven 'sevens' and 62 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the 62 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing.

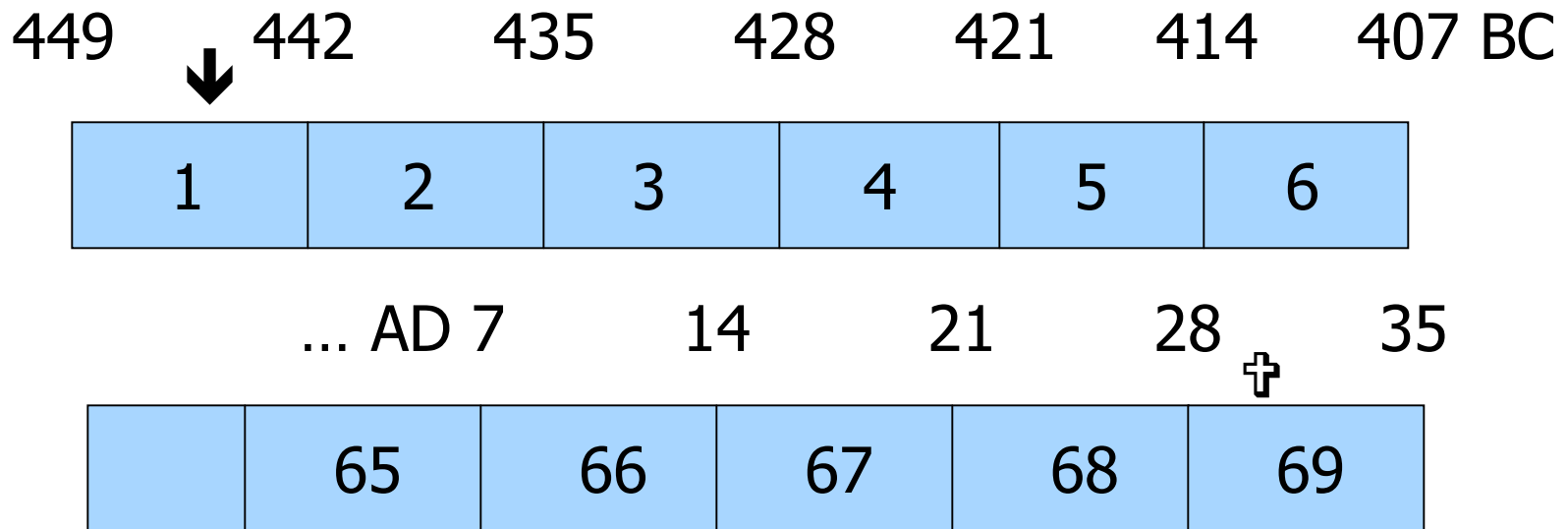
Daniel 9:25-26



Messiah was to come after the 69th sabbath cycle.

- The unit of time-measurement appears to be cycles of sabbatical years.
- The starting point seems to be the command of King Artaxerxes 1 in his 20th year (445 BC).
- The sabbatical cycle in which this falls is 449-442 BC.
- Using the usual inclusive method of counting, the 69th cycle is 28-35 AD.

Messiah was to come after the 69th sabbath cycle.



↓ Artaxerxes' decree, 445 BC

† Jesus' crucifixion, 30 AD



The Messiah has come.

- To come while Judah had its own rulers, i.e., before 44 AD.
- To come while the 2nd temple still stood, i.e., before 70 AD.
- To come (and be cut off) after the 69th sabbatical cycle, i.e., after 28 AD.
- This fits Jesus!

Conclusions

- If the Messiah has come, he is Jesus.
- The Messiah has come.
- He is Jesus!





The End . . .

What are you going to
do about it?