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Messianic Perspectives®

God has not forgotten the Jewish people, and neither have we.

Is Messiah's Name Revealed in the Old Testament?

BY DR. GARY HEDRICK

Some of the material in this article was adapted from *Yeshua in the Tanach*, a small brochure (circa 1960) by the late Arthur E. Glass. Our copy was provided by CJFM board member Donna Allen. This booklet has been out of print for decades, but Donna has very kindly supplied us with a limited quantity of her remaining copies. Call Julie at 1-800-926-5397 (or email orderline@cjfm.org) if you'd like to know how you can order one. Some of Arthur's audio messages are available online at <https://sschotsprings.com/?s=Arthur+Glass>.

Sometimes skeptics say, "If it's really true that Jesus fulfilled so many Old Testament (OT) prophecies, why don't they mention Him by name?"

It's a good (and fair) question. There are at least three answers.

The first and most obvious answer is that we're never—I repeat, *never*—going to find the name "Jesus" in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures because it's an English word that has only been around for about 500 years.¹ There's nothing wrong with calling Him by His English name (Jesus), or by His name in any other language; after all, He knows our hearts and He knows whom we mean. However, His Hebrew name was (and is) Yeshua, so that's the name we should be looking for in the OT.

Second, if the OT prophets had come right out and said that the Messiah's name was going to be Yeshua, tens of thousands of young Jewish mothers would have almost certainly named their baby boys Yeshua throughout the OT era, rendering the name itself nearly useless as a means of identifying Him.²

The third point is actually another question: are you certain the OT doesn't reveal His Hebrew/Aramaic Name—Yeshua—in subtler yet clearly discernible ways?

Messiah in Prophecy

The main theme of the Bible is the Messiah and His redemptive work. The Good News of Yeshua and the salvation He purchased for us by His sacrifice on Calvary weaves its way through all 66 books, from Genesis 3:15 to Revelation 22:17.

There is no question that God wanted His People Israel (and everyone else, as well) to have the information they needed in order to identify the Messiah when He arrived on the scene. The amount of detail the prophets provided about this coming Redeemer-King is uncanny (see inset "Getting a Positive ID on the Promised Messiah").

As far away as Persia, where the People of Israel had sojourned during their exile from the Land, and where Daniel had lived, curious magi remembered those prophecies. They evidently analyzed them and were able to determine when and where the Messiah would be born, and even the fact that His birth would be marked by the appearance of a star (Matthew 2:1-11).³

And those are just the predictions about Messiah's first coming! There's a whole, other set of prophecies about His Second Coming! But for now, we're dealing with the predictions that were fulfilled when He came the first time. This painstakingly detailed evidence shows us that God wanted anyone who was truly interested to be able to recognize His Deliverer.

What Are the Chances?

In the iconic "Dirty Harry" movies, the Clint Eastwood character was fond of asking the bad guys, when they were staring down the barrel of his .44 Magnum and weren't sure if he had one more bullet left, if they were feeling lucky. Had Harry already fired all six bullets? Or just five? That was their quandary.

Unbelievers face a similar quandary when they confront the Bible's prophetic evidence. How "lucky" would a mortal man have to be to fulfill dozens of prophecies by accident? Or to be a con man who knew he wasn't the Son of God but deceived people by deliberately scheming to fulfill the prophecies? Or to be a crazy person who thought he was the Messiah but really wasn't?⁴ Fortunately, we don't have to hazard a guess about those odds. Others have already crunched the numbers for us and the results are staggering.



Harry Callaghan, the Clint Eastwood character in the Dirty Harry film franchise (1971-88).

So, what are the chances that Yeshua could fulfill the prophecies without actually being the Messiah? Many years ago, a Christian mathematician named Peter Stoner calculated that the probability of Jesus of Nazareth fulfilling *only eight* of these many prophecies by chance would be roughly one in 10^{17} (that's one in 100,000,000,000,000,000 or one hundred quadrillion). He estimated that this number of silver dollars (10^{17}) would cover the entire State of Texas two feet deep. So then, what are the odds that you could helicopter your way to any random point in Texas, from El Paso to Texarkana (a distance of roughly 800 miles), shove your arm down deep into that vast sea of coins, and pull up one, pre-marked silver dollar? Most reasonable people would agree that apart from any sort of divine direction, it would be a virtual impossibility.⁵

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Getting a Positive ID On the Promised Messiah

Much to the chagrin of the skeptics, it is indeed possible to find Messiah's given name in the OT—that is, if we're really looking for it. But even if it wasn't there, the ancient prophets still provided an abundance of information in advance so that anyone with an open mind and willing heart would be able to recognize Him when He appeared.

Stepping back to take in the big picture, one could say that the entire OT is one, big Messianic prophecy and the entire New Testament (NT) is the fulfillment. But zooming in to examine the OT more closely, we see that there are literally dozens of amazing Messianic prophecies pointing to Yeshua. For instance, they said He would be:

- Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4-7)
- Born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:21-23)
- A descendant of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 22:18; Matthew 1:1; Galatians 3:16)
- From the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10; Luke 3:23, 33; Hebrews 7:14)
- Of the royal House of David (2 Samuel 7:12-16; Matthew 1:1)
- Endangered by Herod killing the infants (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:16-18)
- Taken to Egypt (Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:14-15)
- Announced by the messenger of the Lord (Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1; Matthew 3:1-3)
- Anointed by the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 11:2; Matthew 3:16-17)
- A preacher of Good News (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:14-21)
- A worker of miracles (Isaiah 35:5-6; Matthew 9:35)
- Cleansed the Temple (Malachi 3:1; Matthew 21:12-13)
- A minister in Galilee (Isaiah 9:1-2; Matthew 4:12-16)
- Carried into Jerusalem as a King on the back of a young donkey (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:4-9)
- Presented as King and subsequently executed sometime between AD 30—33 (Daniel 9:25-26; Matthew 21:4-11)¹
- Rejected by the religious powers-that-be in Jerusalem (Psalm 118:22; Matthew 26:57-66; 1 Peter 2:7)
- Subjected to a humiliating death (Psalm 22; Isaiah 53)
- Rejected even by associates (Isaiah 53:3; John 1:10-11; 7:5,48) and by a close friend (Psalm 41:9; Luke 22:3-4; John 13:18)
- Sold for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 26:14-15)
- Silent before His accusers (Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12-14)
- Mocked (Psalm 22:7-8; Matthew 27:31) and beaten mercilessly (Isaiah 52:14; Matthew 27:26)
- Spat on (Isaiah 50:6; Matthew 27:30)
- Pierced through His hands and feet (Psalm 22:16;² Matthew 27:31) and through His side (Zechariah 12:10; John 19:34)
- Crucified with thieves (Isaiah 53:12; Matthew 27:38)
- Praying for His persecutors (Isaiah 53:12; Luke 23:34)
- Given gall and vinegar to drink (Psalm 69:21; Matthew 27:34; Luke 23:36)
- Spared from the breaking of His leg bones, which was normally a cruel yet merciful part of the Roman crucifixion process (Psalm 34:20; John 19:32-36)
- Buried in a rich man's tomb (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60)
- Stripped naked while bystanders gambled for His clothing (Psalm 22:18; John 19:23-24)
- Resurrected triumphantly from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Mark 16:6; Acts 2:31)
- Taken up to Heaven from the earthly Jerusalem (Psalm 68:18; Acts 1:9)

¹ Some dispensationalists say the exact number of days (from the command to rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of Messiah) is 173,880 days. Proponents of other views cite slightly different figures. However, the vast majority of evangelical scholars agree that Daniel 9:26 predicts Messiah's arrival and execution after a period of 69 "weeks" of years—pointing unmistakably to a date sometime around AD 30 to 33. The prophecy doesn't rely on counting a specific number of days. Even a three- to four-year window is extremely difficult to dismiss as merely coincidental since virtually everyone agrees that's when Yeshua lived and died.

² The translation of Psalm 22:16 (22:17 in the Hebrew Bible) has been a source of intense controversy since medieval times. The standard view in traditional Judaism is that the Masoretic (Hebrew) text (dating from around a thousand years ago) is correct where it reads "like a lion" (כָּאֵרִי, *k'ari*). However, the Septuagint (LXX) and the Dead Sea Scrolls (which predate the Masoretic text by a thousand years or more) both support the reading (כָּרוּ, *karu*), "they pierced (my hands and my feet)." *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014) summarizes five reasons why "pierced" is the preferred reading (779-780). In the NT, Yeshua says His hands and feet bore the marks of the spikes the Romans used to affix Him to the Cross (Luke 24:39-40). Some critics claim that inserting crucifixion into this psalm constitutes an anachronism because crucifixion was Roman and was unknown as a means of execution when King David lived (10th century BC). But isn't that the whole point here? David was a prophet (Acts 2:29-30) and one feature of prophecy is that it unveils the future, including things previously unknown.

So, the question for our unbelieving friends, when they face the preponderance of prophetic proof, is, "Are you feeling lucky?" That is, "Are you willing to roll the dice when the evidence is so overwhelming and your eternal destiny is at stake?"

As we said earlier, it's clear that God wanted His people to recognize their Messiah when He entered this world. The Scriptures provide an abundance of information about Him.

But still, what about His Name? The prophets told us how and where He would be born, what His lineage would be, how He would live, and how and when He would die; but did they mention Him anywhere by name?

Messiah's Name

In Bible times, names were more charged with meaning than they are today. They were often descriptive of a person's character and sometimes they were even prophetic of the person's destiny or calling. God sometimes revised names when there was a significant change in the trajectory of someone's life—like when He changed Abram's name to Abraham or Jacob's to Israel.

The name *Yeshua* is likewise significant. The Hebrew variants *Yeshua*/*Yeshuah*/*Yehoshua* are all related and mean "salvation" or "God [is] salvation." What better name could there be for One whose mission was to **save** His people from their sins? Messiah stepped out of Eternity and entered our space-time universe so He could die.⁶ It was the greatest act of humility and self-sacrifice in history. The angel told Joseph and Mary to name their Baby *Yeshua* because He would **save His people from their sins** (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:31). The New Testament (NT) boldly declares:

Therefore God [Elohim, Creator-God] also has highly exalted Him [the Messiah] and given Him the name [haShem] which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus [Yeshua] every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [Yeshua HaMashiach] is Lord [HaAdon], to the glory of God the Father [Elohim HaAv] (Phil. 2:9-11).⁷

Adon/Adonai is the Name which is above every name,⁸ so Paul is equating Yeshua the Messiah with Adonai, Lord of heaven and earth! That is quite a remarkable statement, especially coming from a Jewish rabbi!⁹ Yeshua is the Preeminent One, both in Heaven and on the earth. Even heavenly beings ("those in heaven," i.e., the angels) bow to Him!

Yeshua in the Older Testament

We've already seen that the variants *Yeshua*/*Yeshuah*/*Yehoshua* all mean essentially the same thing: "the LORD [is] salvation." So, there's a general sense in which we could go to almost any one of the 400-plus places in the OT where a form of *yeshuah* ("salvation") appears and say, "There He is—that term prefigures or points us to Yeshua!" After all, He is the embodiment of everything God has ever done to "save," "rescue," or "deliver" His people throughout their history.

But there are a number of occurrences of *Yeshua*/*Yeshuah*/*Yehoshua* where the application to the Messiah is even more direct. Here are some notable instances.

לישועתך קייתי יהוה

I have waited for your salvation, O LORD!
Genesis 49:18

This verse grabs our attention at first because it's nestled in the midst of one of the most significant prophetic chapters in the Torah. Genesis 49 is where Jacob (or Israel) calls his sons together and blesses them and the tribes they represent. However, it quickly becomes apparent that this is far more than just a collection of ancient blessings. These utterances from Jacob's deathbed are also prophetic: *And Jacob called his sons and said, "Gather together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last days"* (v. 1). "Last days" (Heb., *acharit hayamim*) is an eschatological term that points forward in history to the "end of days."

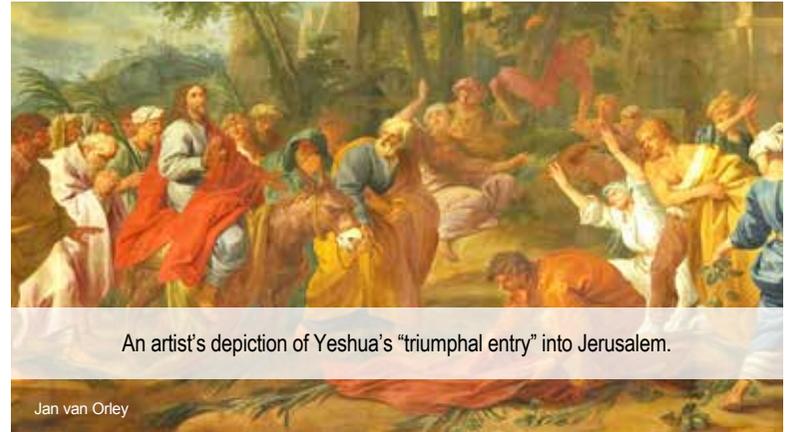


The Messiah is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" in Revelation 5:5, referring back to the Messianic prophecy in Genesis 49:9-10.

Jacob proceeds to speak to his sons one at a time, beginning with Reuben (v. 3), then on to Simeon and Levi, and continues down through the list. When he comes to Judah, the "lion" prefigures the Messiah, the Davidic King of Israel to whom the royal scepter rightfully belongs (vv. 9-10; note also the reference to "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" in Rev. 5:5).

Suddenly, in the midst of this series of prophetic utterances, Jacob cries out, *I have waited for your salvation* [*yeshuatekha*], *O LORD!* (Gen. 49:18). The verse looks like it's out of place here. It disrupts the flow of what he's saying. We don't know if the utterance is connected to the Dan prophecy before it (vv. 16-17) or to the Gad prophecy after it (v. 19)—or to neither of them.

Again, Jacob said when he started that he would be talking about the last days in some of these prophecies. It's entirely possible that the phrase ("I have waited for *yeshuatekha*, O LORD") stands alone in this prophetic context—between Dan and Gad—as an oblique allusion to Yeshua, Israel's future Salvation and Messiah. That could explain the dying patriarch's Spirit-inspired, seemingly out-of-the-blue outburst, saying he was awaiting the Lord's Yeshuah.



An artist's depiction of Yeshua's "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem.

למען אספרה כל-תהלתך בשערי בת-ציון אגילה בישוע

*That I may tell of all Your praise
In the gates of the daughter of Zion.
I will rejoice in Your salvation.*
Psalm 9:14

"The daughter of Zion" here, of course, is a metaphor for Jerusalem and her inhabitants.¹⁰ The psalmist says he wants to praise the LORD in the gates of the city. Could this be a prophetic foreshadowing of Yeshua the Messiah, who would someday pass routinely through those very gates? After all, He lived in Galilee but made regular treks up to Jerusalem. With His small band of disciples in tow, He crisscrossed the city ministering to hurting people, visiting the Temple, teaching His followers, visiting His friends, and on occasion telling the city's religious leaders in no uncertain terms exactly what He thought of them and their politically-motivated antics. The NT suggests that He passed through the Eastern Gate (i.e., the Golden Gate) on one very significant occasion, shortly before His Crucifixion, when crowds lined the streets and welcomed Him as the Messiah (Matthew 21:1-11).¹¹

King David, the writer of this psalm, represented the House of David, the God-ordained dynasty through which the promised Messiah would someday be born (Matthew 1:6). David literally says here, "I will rejoice in Your *yeshua*" (Psalm 9:14). We have no way of knowing if David had a Messianic significance in mind when he penned those words, but since it's inspired Scripture, that makes them no less powerful and potentially prophetic.¹²

ארך ימים אשביעהו ואראהו בישועתי

*With long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation.*
Psalm 91:16

Does this psalm sound familiar? It should! It was quoted by none other than Satan himself in his war in the wilderness with Yeshua. In Matthew 4:6, as they both stood on the pinnacle of the Temple, towering roughly 16 stories over the street below, Satan recited Psalm 91:11-12: *and [the devil] said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone'"* (see also Luke 4:10-11).¹³

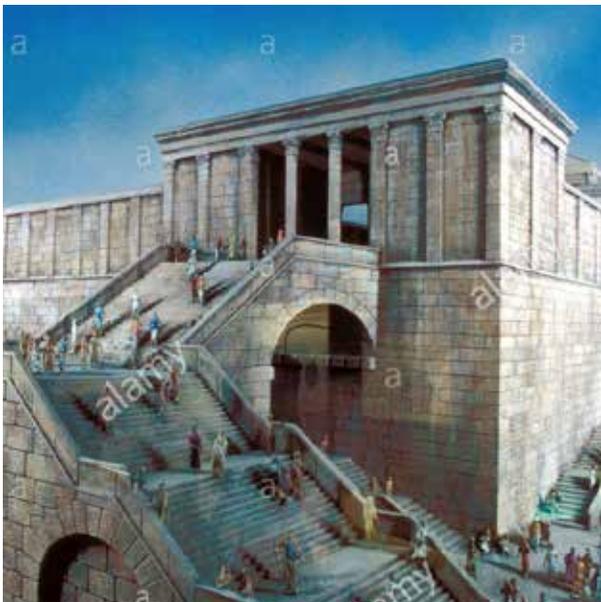
Ironically, then, by applying its words to the Lord, the Adversary is the one who confirms the Messianic character of Psalm 91. Skipping down to Verse 16, it says, "*With long life I will satisfy him, And show him My salvation* [Heb., *yeshuati*]."¹⁴ God uses the Messiah's own name to show Him [i.e., Yeshua] His [God's] salvation.

הנה יהוה השמיע אל-קצה הארץ אמרו
 לבת-ציון הנה ישעך בא הנה שכרו א
 ופעלתו לפניו

*Indeed the LORD has proclaimed
 To the end of the world: "Say to the daughter
 of Zion, 'Surely your salvation is coming;
 Behold, His reward is with Him,
 And His work before Him.'"*
 Isaiah 62:11

Once again, as we saw in Psalm 9, the addressee here is "the daughter of Zion," a phrase used 24 times in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Micah, Zephaniah, and Zechariah as a reference to Jerusalem and her people.¹⁵

The prophet says, "Say to Jerusalem, 'Surely *Yeshuek* [i.e., your Salvation] is coming and His reward is with Him.'" One can't help noticing the similarity between this phrase and something another prophet said: "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King* [Heb., *malkek*] *is coming to you; He is just and having salvation [yesha], Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey*" (Zech. 9:9).



The southwest corner of the Temple Mount is believed by many to be where the devil tempted Yeshua to throw Himself down.

BibleLandPictures.com / Alamy Stock Photo

The NT writer Matthew identifies this passage from Zechariah as Messianic: *All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey'"* (Matt. 21:4-5).

Since the wording in Isaiah 62:11 is curiously close to what we find in the Messianic prophecy in Zechariah 9:9, one can't help wondering if Isaiah, like Zechariah, was referring, albeit indirectly (and again, perhaps unknowingly), to Yeshua's entrance into Jerusalem on that renowned day in the first century: "Surely your Yeshua/Salvation is coming!"

The Bible is One, Unified Story About Yeshua, the Son of God

The entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is about God's marvelous plan—spanning the past, present, and future—to bring salvation to a lost world through the redemptive work of His Son.

Each of the Bible's 66 books reveals Yeshua in its own, unique way:

- Genesis – Yeshua is Creator of the universe Who made promises to Abraham
- Exodus – He is our Passover Lamb sacrificing Himself for us
- Leviticus – He's our great High Priest and mediator with God
- Numbers – He gets us ready to enter the Promised Land
- Deuteronomy – He wants His People to "hear" Him
- Joshua – He's the Commander of the army of the LORD
- Judges – He raises up heroes to counter the threat of apostasy
- Ruth – He's our Kinsman-Redeemer
- 1 Samuel – He's our Prophet, Priest, and King
- 2 Samuel – He's the Rock of our Salvation
- 1 Kings – He's the God who keeps His promises in spite of human failure
- 2 Kings – The King who reigns even when earthly kings fail
- 1 Chronicles – Son of David who will come again to rule
- 2 Chronicles – The King who reigns eternally
- Ezra – He reassures us that we can be strong and do His will
- Nehemiah – Restorer of things that were broken (even people!)
- Esther – He works invisibly behind the scenes to protect His people
- Job – He's our Advocate when the Enemy accuses us and friends abandon us
- Psalms – He's our song in the morning and at night
- Proverbs – He's our wisdom and strong tower
- Ecclesiastes – He's the One who gives meaning to my life
- Song of Solomon – He's the lover of my soul
- Isaiah – He's Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace
- Jeremiah – He weeps over the sins of His people and the consequences
- Lamentations – He's the Giver of hope, even to those who deserve judgment
- Ezekiel – He's the Son of Man, defender of God's holy name
- Daniel – He's the One who is sovereign over history and empires
- Hosea – He's a faithful husband even when the bride is unfaithful
- Joel – He shakes the earth and sets in motion the apocalyptic Day of the LORD
- Amos – He's the LORD who roars from Zion and utters His voice from Jerusalem
- Obadiah – He gives restoration and victory to His people Israel
- Jonah – He's the God of the second chance
- Micah – He's the One whose steadfast love is greater than our sin
- Nahum – He's an unshakable stronghold for those who take refuge in Him
- Habakkuk – He's the Justifier of those who live by faith
- Zephaniah – He has no grandchildren, only children
- Haggai – He blesses the whole world through the House of David
- Zechariah – He's Lord and King over all the earth
- Malachi – He's the Son of Righteousness who brings healing to the nations
- Matthew – The Messiah is our King
- Mark – The Messiah is a Servant
- Luke – The Messiah is a Deliverer
- John – The Messiah is God in the flesh
- Acts – His Spirit lives in us and works through us
- Romans – His story is the power of God unto salvation
- 1 Corinthians – He is Conqueror of our last enemy, death
- 2 Corinthians – He is the down payment on what's to come
- Galatians – He is our freedom from the bondage of human expectations
- Ephesians – He is the head of one body, the community of called-out ones
- Philippians – He supplies all our needs
- Colossians – He is the Creator and holds the supreme position in all things
- 1 Thessalonians – He is our comfort in the last days
- 2 Thessalonians – He is our returning King
- 1 Timothy – He is our crown of righteousness
- 2 Timothy – He preserves us through suffering
- Titus – He works patiently in us to bring behavior into line with belief
- Philemon – He is a friend Who sticks closer than a brother
- Hebrews – He is our priest forever after the order of Melchizedek
- James – He is no respecter of persons
- 1 Peter – He is our hope in times of suffering
- 2 Peter – He is the restorer of all things
- 1 John – He is our love and light
- 2 John – He is our defense against deception
- 3 John – He helps us remain faithful so we can walk in the truth
- Jude – He's the Lord coming with ten thousand of His saints
- Revelation – He is our soon-coming King of kings and Lord of lords

ישוע

Yeshua: the Hebrew Name of the Son of God

If we could climb into a time machine and travel back to first-century Nazareth, we would be in for a big surprise if we stopped someone on the street and asked him where “Jesus Christ” lived.

Why? Because he wouldn’t have any idea whom we were talking about. You see, the Lord’s name wasn’t “Jesus Christ.” In fact, the English language as we know it today didn’t exist in the first century.¹

But if we asked where *Yeshua ben Yosef* (“Jesus Son of Joseph”) lived, that would be a different matter. That’s because His Hebrew name is *Yeshua*. It’s a contracted (shortened) form of the name *Yehoshua* (יהושוע), meaning “the LORD is salvation.” The angel instructed Joseph and Mary to name the promised Child *Yeshua* because He would “save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31 emphasis added). The Hebrew word for “salvation” is *yeshuah* (ישועה).²

Yeshua and *Yehoshua*, then, are simply variations of the same name. The two are interchangeable. We know this because there are people in the Bible who were known by both names. In Zechariah 3, for instance, we find a somewhat mysterious yet compelling Aaronic high priest in Jerusalem named both *Yehoshua* (Zechariah 3:1ff) and *Yeshua* (Nehemiah 7:7).³

Sometimes people ask if it’s wrong to call *Yeshua* by His English name, “Jesus” or “Jesus Christ.” No, it’s not. People call Him by many names in hundreds of languages all over the world—and He answers to each and every one of them! Language may be a barrier for humans, like it was at Babel, but not for God.

In the former Soviet republics, for example, where our CJFM ministry team spends a good bit of time each year, He’s known by a variety of local names:

- *Ieso Qriste* (Georgia)
- *Iisus Khristos* (Russia)
- *Isus Khrystos* (Ukraine)
- *Jezus Kristus* (Latvia)
- *Yezus Kristus* (Belarus)
- *Isus Hristos* (Romania)

Even in the first century, when the Lord was here on earth, He would have been known by several versions of His name—in Hebrew/Aramaic, Greek, and even Latin.⁴ Whatever language is employed, the name refers to the same wondrous and glorious Person—the Messiah-King of Israel and Son of the Living God.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Yeshua every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:9-11).

¹Most modern English speakers can’t read *Beowulf*, for example, because it was written in Old English (Anglo-Saxon) dating from AD 1000 or so. The English name “Jesus” arose 500-600 years ago as an anglicized form of the Greek *Iesous* (pronounced yay-sous) found in the NT text. *Iesous*, then, is *Yeshua*’s Greek name and Jesus is His English name.

²The Hebrew word for “salvation” is the name *Yeshua* with the suffix *hey* added: *yeshuah*.

³This high priest in the Book of Zechariah is also mentioned in Haggai 1:1 and should not be confused with Yehoshua (Joshua) the son of Nun mentioned in the Torah as Moses’s right-hand man (Exodus 17:9).

⁴The NT tells us that the inscription over the head of *Yeshua* when He was crucified appeared in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (John 19:19-20). The familiar INRI acrostic represents the Latin *Iesvs Nazarenvs Rex Ivdæorvm* (“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews”).

יצאת לישע עמך לישע את־משיחך מחצת ראש מבית
רשע ערות יסוד עד־צואר סלה

*You went forth for the salvation [yesha] of Your people,
For salvation [yesha] with Your Anointed [Mashiach].
You struck the head from the house of the wicked, By
laying bare from foundation to neck. Selah.
Habakkuk 3:13¹⁶*

Some commentators say “the Anointed” here is a reference to the nation of Israel rather than to a person;¹⁷ however, distinguishing the Messiah from His People Israel (*Am Yisra’el*) can be a tricky business because the Person (Messiah) is so closely and intimately identified with the nation (Israel).¹⁸ Jakob Jocz, longtime professor of theology at Wycliffe Seminary in Toronto, reminds us:

The fate of Israel and of the Messiah seem to coincide to such a degree that it is often impossible to distinguish the one from the other. . . . In other words, the Messiah is Israel par excellence. In the life and experience of the Messiah is Israel’s history reenacted, but with a difference. Where Israel failed, the Messiah succeeds; what Israel was meant to be, the Messiah is the perfect Servant of God.¹⁹

Habakkuk’s poem (or song) celebrates the LORD’s *yesha* (“deliverance/salvation”) from Egypt by Moses in the Exodus. Consider the many parallels in the Bible between Moses and Yeshua. For example:

- An evil king tried to kill each of them (Exodus 1:22; Matthew 2:16).
- They both took refuge in Egypt (Exodus 2:3-4; Matthew 2:13-15).
- Each surrendered his royal estate to become like a common man (Exodus 2:15-19; Philippians 2:5-7).
- Both proclaimed deliverance from bondage by the shedding of sacrificial blood (Exodus 12:12-13; Matthew 26:28).
- Both were shepherds (Exodus 3:1; John 10:11).
- Both spent 40 days fasting (Exodus 34:27-28; Matthew 4:2).
- Both performed authenticating miracles (Exodus 7:1-5; Acts 2:22).

When Moses stood before the Red Sea and the Israelites were in a panic, what did he tell them? He said, “Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation [*yeshuah*] of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever” (Ex. 14:13). So, it’s really not much of a stretch to say that Habakkuk, whether he realized it or not, may have been using Moses’s story to point forward to the Messiah whose name and mission would be “Salvation” for Israel and ultimately for the whole world.²⁰

A literal paraphrase of the middle part of Verse 13 could be: “For *Yesha Mashiach* You (i.e., the LORD) crushed the head of the house of wickedness.” This should be close enough to *Yeshua HaMashiach* to get our attention!

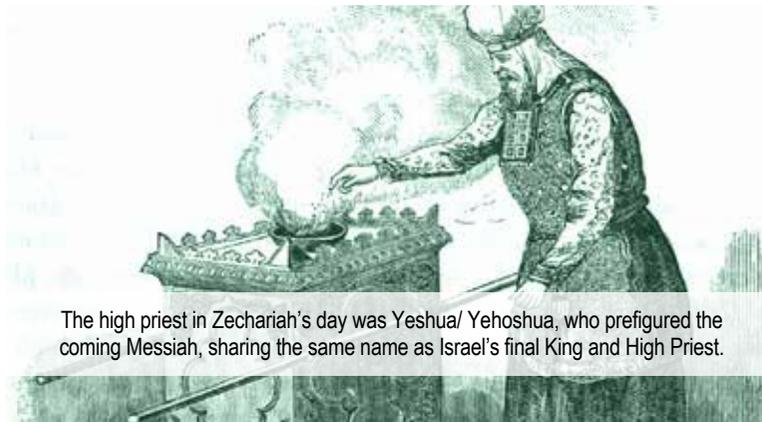
Note how Habakkuk’s statement parallels Genesis 3:15 where Moses says the Messiah would bruise/crush the head of the serpent/Satan. Addressing the Serpent, the LORD said, “*And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.*” Habakkuk speaks as though the event has already taken place, declaring that “*Yesha Mashiach* bruised/crushed the head of the house/dynasty of the wicked.”²¹

ויראני את־יהושע הכהן הגדול עמד לפני מלאך יהוה
והשטן עמד על־ימינו לשטנו

*Then he showed me Joshua [Yehoshua] the high priest
standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan
standing at his right hand to oppose him.
Zechariah 3:1*

The formula “in that day” in Zechariah 3:10 telescopes beyond the immediate setting during Zechariah’s lifetime and jumps forward to the eschatological Day of the LORD when God rains judgment down on the nations, rescues His People Israel, cleanses her sin, and establishes His millennial Kingdom on the earth.

The scene in this vision (vv. 1-10) is set up like a courtroom with Joshua, the high priest in Zechariah’s day, standing before the judge (i.e., the Angel of the LORD), with the accuser (Satan) standing to his right. The immediate context has to do with the cleansing of the priesthood in the early days of the post-exilic period.²² However, the Angel of the LORD says and does things here that can only point to Israel’s need for spiritual cleansing and physical deliverance at the end of the age.



The high priest in Zechariah’s day was Yeshua/ Yehoshua, who prefigured the coming Messiah, sharing the same name as Israel’s final King and High Priest.

In Verse 8, the LORD declares, “For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.” The Hebrew word *tsemach* (“branch”) literally means “to sprout” and refers to the Messiah (Isaiah 11:1; Hebrews 8:1). It portrays Him as One who would emerge like a new plant persistently pushing its way up through the parched and cracked surface of a desert wilderness (cp. Isaiah 4:2). The term “My Servant” here reminds us of Isaiah’s Servant who is exalted at first but then descends into unspeakable suffering and ignominy (Isaiah 52:13-53:12).

Then the LORD says He, “will remove the iniquity of the Land in one day” (v. 9). This statement is quite amazing because it prophesies the salvation of the entire nation “in one day.” Nothing like this has ever happened before. Yet this is precisely what the Bible says will happen someday: “Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children” (Isa. 66:8).

We’re not claiming that Zechariah’s high priest, *Yehoshua*, is Yeshua the Messiah in any preincarnate sense. However, this high priest can nonetheless be seen as a type or foreshadowing of the future Messiah. In fact, this same high priest is mentioned in Ezra 2:2 and Nehemiah 7:7—and in both places, his name is *Yeshua* rather than *Yehoshua* (the longer form). Virtually all authorities agree that Yeshua would have been Messiah’s name in the first century. He was known as Yeshua, the carpenter’s Son from Nazareth (Matthew 13:53-56).

ולקחת כסף־זהב ועשית עטרות ושמת בראש יהושע
בן־יהווצדק הכהן הגדול

*“Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown,
and set it on the head of Joshua [Yehoshua] the son of
Jehozadak, the high priest.”
Zechariah 6:11*

The next two verses say:

“Then speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: ‘Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD; Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both’” (vv. 12-13).

The Hebrew word for “crown” in Verse 11 (*atarot*) isn’t the term we would expect for a priest’s turban. Instead, it’s a kingly crown, a royal diadem. It’s a plural form—so the KJV has “crowns” here. Who else in Scripture is said to have multiple kingly crowns on His head? The Messiah! John’s description of the Second Coming includes this telling phrase: *His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself* (Rev. 19:12; emphasis added).

Yeshua (ישוע) and Related Names: an Overview

Name (Hebrew/English)	First Recorded Usage	Reference
הושע / Hoshea (Hosea) “Save!”	Moses’ Time	Numbers 13:8, 16
יהושוע / Yehoshua (Joshua) “YHWH is salvation”	Moses’ Time	Numbers 13:16
ישעיהו / Yeshayahu (Isaiah) “The salvation of YHWH”	Before the Exile	Isaiah 1:1
ישוע / Yeshua (Jeshua/Jesus) “Salvation”	After the Exile	Nehemiah 8:17
ישעי / Yishi (Ishi) “My salvation”	After the Exile	1 Chronicles 2:31
ישעיה / Yeshayah (Jeshaiah) “The salvation of YHWH”	After the Exile	Ezra 8:7

Simeon's Proclamation in the Temple In Hebrew and English

29 "Vih-Ah-tah', A-don-ai', ptor' nah et av-deh-cha' bih-shal-om', kah-ah-shehr' dee-bar'-tah,
30 Kee rah-oooh' ay-neye' et Yeh-shu-ah-teh'cha
31 Ah-sheh' ha-chee-noh'-tah lih-ay-nay' kol ha-a-meem':
32 Ohr lih-hah-eehr' le-goy-eem' vih-tee-feh'-ret Yis-ra-el' ahm-eh'chah."

29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word;
30 "For my eyes have seen Your salvation
31 "Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,
32 "A light to [bring] revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

—Luke 2:29-32

Simeon's cry seems to have been based on various Messianic passages like Psalm 119:166, 174; Isaiah 52:10; 9:2; 42:6; 49:6, 9; 51:4; and 60:1-3. Hebrew transliteration provided by Marvin Kramer, CJFM's attorney and longtime friend in Haifa, Israel.

Another point of interest is the LORD of Hosts saying, "Behold, the Man" (Rev. 19:12). This phrase is echoed exactly in the words of Pilate when Yeshua stood before Him in judgment: "Behold the Man!" (John 19:5).²³ Later, Pilate told the mob, "Behold, your King!" (John 19:14).

Next, notice that the Man's name is Branch (Zechariah 3:8; Isaiah 4:2). We saw the Branch earlier in Zechariah 3:8. There is no question about it being Messianic. Both the Talmud and Midrashim confirm this from earliest times. *Targum Jonathan* paraphrases Zechariah 6:12 like this: "Behold the man, Messiah is his name. He will be revealed and he will become great and build the temple of God."²⁴

Then we are told that this Man, prefigured by the High Priest *Yehoshua* here in Zechariah 6, will rebuild the Temple, "bear the glory," and "sit and rule" as King on His throne (v. 13). Who else can this be, if it's not the Messiah? The ancient rabbis nailed it in *Targum Jonathan* (above).

Many Christian commentators—especially old-timers like Calvin and Owen—disagree. They say this prophecy looks beyond the literal Temple (to be rebuilt in post-exilic Jerusalem by Zerubbabel) to a future spiritual Temple, the Church.²⁵ However, as our world descends more and more into the darkness of sin and depravity, it's becoming harder and harder for Calvinists to convince anyone that the Temple (the Church) has been built (rebuilt?) and Yeshua is already reigning over the earth. Just take a look around you, dear reader; if this is what the Kingdom of God looks like, we're in a lot of trouble! This cannot possibly be the prophesied Messianic Kingdom where God's will is to be "done on earth as it is in Heaven" (Matt. 6:10).²⁶

Our Reformed friends are right, however, when they say the description here in Zechariah cannot be shoehorned into the setting of Zechariah's day. It obviously looks forward to events in the distant future. Rather than saying the Temple is the Church, though, it makes more sense to take a literal-historical-Messianic approach and say it's a literal Temple—the future Millennial Temple described by the Prophet Ezekiel (Chapters 40-48). This sprawling, magnificent edifice will be built when Messiah returns. It will replace the much more modest Tribulation Temple that will have been defiled (and possibly destroyed) by the anti-Messiah (Antichrist).²⁷

Again, Zechariah's description looks beyond the mortal priesthood of his day—and the human high priest bearing the Messianic name Yeshua—and telescopes forward to Israel's future King-Priest, Yeshua the Messiah, who shares God's glory (John 17:24).

Conclusion

Is the Messiah's name revealed in the OT? Yes, we believe it is. *Yeshua/Yeshuah/Yehoshua* is everywhere you turn in the OT, if you're truly looking for Him!

Skeptics might say this is like a Rorschach test, where test subjects look at random blotches of ink and tell researchers what they see. Maybe there's some merit to that claim. I would agree that we all tend to see what we want to see; however, isn't the inverse also true? That is, we turn a blind eye to things we *don't* want to see. So, in this case, which is it?

In the first century, there was an old man named Simeon who asked God to let him see the promised Messiah before he died. He knew the evidence (most likely from Daniel's Messianic timeline) and he yearned with all his heart to see the Messiah before he died. One day, the Holy Spirit prompted him to go to the Temple. His heart must have raced as he quickly left his house, wondering if this would be the day!

When he entered the Temple, Simeon was drawn, even in the midst of all the hustle and bustle of daily Temple life, to a young Jewish man and his sweet wife who had brought their Baby to be consecrated according to the Law of Moses.²⁸ The elderly Simeon hobbled over and scooped the newborn Yeshua up into his arms, crying out to God, "For my eyes have seen *yeshuatekha* [Your salvation]" (Luke 2:30). For him, it was an answer to prayer, only more so than he had ever imagined. God not only let him *see* Yeshua, but he was actually *holding* Him!

Simeon found exactly what (or Who) he was looking for. You can, too! Yeshua himself offered good advice for anyone who's searching and really wants to find Him:

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."
Luke 11:9²⁹



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is president of
CJF Ministries.

¹ The “j” sound (as in “juice”) didn’t enter English usage until about 500 years ago. Hebrew, Latin, and Greek have no equivalent to the “j” consonant. Before that, the Lord was known in Greek as *Iesous* (pronounced *yay-sous*) and in Hebrew/Aramaic as *Yeshua* (or the longer form *Yehoshua*). The unabridged 1611 KJV had the word *Iesus* (rather than Jesus) in passages like Acts 7:45: *Which also our fathers that came after, brought in with Iesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God draue out before the face of our fathers, vnto the dayes of Dauid.* No one in the first century, even His disciples, would have known who “Jesus” was. To them, He was Yeshua.

² The Messiah was “the desire of women” (Dan. 11:37); that is, every Jewish girl for many generations had hoped and prayed that she might be the favored one who would give birth to the great Deliverer God had promised to send (Genesis 3:14-15). In her famous prayer (from the Magnificat), Miriam (Mary) acknowledged the honor the Lord had bestowed on her: *“For [God] has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed”* (Luke 1:48). And she was right!

³ For more details about young Yeshua’s Persian visitors and the “star” that guided them to Him, see the Nov-Dec 2014 issue of *Messianic Perspectives*, our bimonthly paper (available in the resources at cjfm.org).

⁴ Anyone who says that Yeshua must have deliberately tried to fulfill the prophecies is going to be hard pressed to explain the events over which He had no control (humanly speaking), like the place of His birth, His genealogical pedigree, His forerunner (John the Baptizer), as well as details and circumstances surrounding His death (e.g., onlookers gambling for His clothes), among numerous others.

⁵ See “The Christ of Prophecy,” Chapter 3 in *Science Speaks* by Peter Stoner (Chicago: Moody Press, 1958). Stoner’s calculations were reviewed and certified by Harold Hartzler, PhD, of the American Scientific Affiliation (see Foreword). Dr. Hugh Ross of Reasons to Believe surveys 13 prophecies in his article “Fulfilled Prophecy: Evidence for the Reliability of the Bible” with a similarly mindboggling statistical result (accessible at reasons.org).

⁶ It was necessary for the Son of God to enter our world as a mortal man, born to a Jewish mother in Bethlehem, because that was the only way He could subject Himself to death. God in His exalted, immortal state cannot die. Death would represent a change (from a state of living to a state of non-living) and the Bible says God (as to His eternal nature and essence) never changes or diminishes (Psalm 90:2; Malachi 3:6); therefore, He cannot die. The only way He could allow Himself to be killed was by voluntarily setting aside some of His divine attributes and taking upon Himself a mortal body with its limitations (Philippians 2:5-8).

⁷ Hebrew equivalents in this verse are in brackets and taken from the Hebrew-English *Sefer HaBeritot* (Jerusalem: Bible Society in Israel, 1997).

⁸ Messianic scholar David Stern, for example, states: Here “Sha’ul reveals the extraordinary fact that this name above every name is **Adonai!**” (*The Complete Jewish Bible* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998], 1690). Stern says Yeshua was given the honor of also being known as *Adonai*. He translates Philippians 2:10 like this: *that in honor of the name given Yeshua, every knee will bow—in heaven, on earth and under the earth.* Other commentators suggest that the “name above every name” is Jesus/Yeshua. *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2014) mentions both views (Yeshua or Adonai as the highest name) and concludes that Jesus/Yeshua is “more likely” the Name Paul had in mind (1861). There is no Christological issue here, though, because both views equate Yeshua with Adonai.

⁹ Unbelievers who say Yeshua is not the incarnation of eternal deity often point out that *Adon* can refer to a human “master” or “lord,” and that is true. The same thing is true in English—and also in Greek, where the word *kurios* (“lord”) can apply to either man or God. In English, we differentiate between the two by capitalizing “Lord” when it refers to God. There are no capital letters in Hebrew, though, so the context (usage) determines the meaning (i.e., man or God). Here it can only be “Lord” with a capital “L.” It’s crystal clear in the Hebrew translation of Philippians 2:9-11, where the Hebrew *Adon* is “the name above every name” (which can only refer to God) and Paul then applies it to the “exalted” Yeshua. According to Paul, even “things in heaven” (i.e., angelic powers) bow to Him!

¹⁰ See 2 Kings 19:21 and note the parallelism equating “daughter of Jerusalem” with the “daughter of Zion.” See also endnote 15.

¹¹ We know Yeshua passed through the Eastern Gate on that day because it was the only direct route from the Mount of Olives on the east into Jerusalem proper.

¹² See endnote 20 below.

¹³ According to Dutch archaeologist Leen Ritmeyer, the “pinnacle” (high point) was most likely at the southwest corner of the Temple Mount compound, where a fall to the street below would have been roughly 164 feet and would have attracted the maximum amount of attention in the bustling *cardo* (a wide Roman thoroughfare lined with shops) below (see “The Pinnacle of the Temple” [Dec. 7, 2010] on Dr. Ritmeyer’s blog at ritmeyer.com). Some commentators prefer the southeast corner, however, where the fall would have been a greater distance (into the Kidron Valley below); but hardly anyone would have seen or heard what was happening because most of the foot traffic was on the western side. The devil presumably would have wanted the largest possible audience for this strange spectacle.

¹⁴ The question is, to whom do the personal pronouns (“you,” “he,” and “him”) in Psalm 91 refer? The devil applied the “you” in Verse 11 to Yeshua—and the Lord didn’t correct him on that point. The “he” and “him” in Verses 15 and 16, then, could also be Yeshua. The promise of “long life” parallels another Messianic passage in Isaiah 53:10 (“He [i.e., God] will prolong His [the Messiah’s] days”; cp. Heb. 7:3). Another possible parallel is that Isaiah 53:11 says the Messiah will be “satisfied” (cp. Psalm 91:16).

¹⁵ Note the parallelism in Zechariah 9:9. “Daughter of Zion” = “Daughter of Jerusalem.” See also endnote 10.

¹⁶ “By laying bare from foundation to neck” most likely means “to lay him open from thigh to neck” (translation from *The New American Standard* translation of the Bible).

¹⁷ Passages cited in support of this view include Exodus 19:6 and Psalm 114:2.

¹⁸ Rabbinic theology recognizes this close association between the Messiah and His People Israel. That’s precisely why the prevailing (yet erroneous) rabbinic interpretation of Isaiah 53 is that the prophesied “suffering servant” is the nation collectively rather than an individual [i.e., the Messiah].

¹⁹ Jacob Jocz, *A Theology of Election: Israel and the Church* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1958), 106.

²⁰ Sometimes the writers of Scripture penned things under the inspiration of the *Ruach HaKodesh* (Holy Spirit) that they themselves didn’t fully understand (1 Peter 1:10-12). Peter wasn’t suggesting that the prophets were totally clueless; he just meant that they didn’t understand the full import of everything the Spirit prompted them to write in Scripture. He says even the angels had difficulty seeing what God was doing at certain stages of His redemptive plan: “things which angels desire to look into” (v. 12). The infinitive “to look” in that verse (Gk., *parakupsai*) conveys the idea of “stooping so they could inspect something more closely.”

²¹ The Hebrew term “house” (*bayit*) is used in the Jewish Scriptures as a metaphor to designate the Messianic dynasty (“the House of David”; 2 Samuel 7:8-16) through whom King Messiah would enter the world to *redeem* His people and then return later to *rule* as the final Davidic King. At the same time, God’s dynasty is opposed by a “wicked” dynasty of spiritual rulers and powers that’s traceable back to the Serpent in the opening chapters of Genesis (3:14-15; cp. Ephesians 6:12). God will destroy this dynasty of evil at the end of the Millennium when He judges the Serpent (Satan), the Anti-messiah (Antichrist), and the False Prophet for their defiant, deceptive, and destructive works (Revelation 20:10).

²² “Post-exilic” refers to the period *after* Israel’s exile in Babylon. The people of Israel faced many problems when they returned after having been banished for 70 years. Families were divided (some elected to remain in Babylon), Jerusalem and the Temple were in ruins, and the priesthood wasn’t prepared to function in its mediatorial capacity. In our generation, we have a similar situation in the Middle East. Israel has returned to her Land but she’s still in need of the spiritual cleansing that can only come through the mediatorial work of her Great High Priest, Yeshua the Messiah (Hebrews 4:14-16). The prophetic aspect of *Yom Kippur* (the Day of Atonement, one of the four Fall Feasts enumerated in Leviticus 23) will be fulfilled when “all Israel” comes to faith in her Messiah (Romans 11:26) and the entire nation is saved in one glorious day (Isaiah 66:8).

²³ Pilate probably spoke Hebrew/Aramaic; but if he was speaking Latin (being a Roman), the equivalent would have been *Ecce Homo* (“Behold [the] Man”).

²⁴ *Targum Jonathan* is an early (AD 100s) Jewish commentary (in Aramaic) on the prophetic books (*Nevi’im*). Later Jewish authorities (like Rashi and Ibn Ezra) thought “the man” in Zechariah 6:12 was Zerubbabel (because he supervised the rebuilding of the Temple when the Jewish people returned from Babylon), even though he isn’t mentioned anywhere in the chapter. The Targum, however, predates these other sources and clearly identifies “the man” as the Messiah (*Promised Messiah: Messianic Hope in the Old Testament, Vol. 2* by James E. Smith [Lulu Edition: 2013], 283).

²⁵ Calvin and Owen forcefully declare that Zechariah’s prophecy points beyond Zerubbabel’s Temple to the Church. They say “the Jews” had “weak minds” and needed inspiration that pointed beyond the immediate historical situation. The foreigners (“those from afar”) who would help build the “Temple” (6:15), according to Calvin and Owen, are Gentile Christians who contribute toward the spread of the Gospel (John Calvin and John Owen, *Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets, Vol. 5, Zechariah-Malachi*, “Lecture 145 on Zechariah” [Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010], 161-62).

²⁶ It’s true that Peter calls the Church a “spiritual house” and says we are “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:5). Using physical realities (i.e., the Temple and priesthood in Jerusalem, which we believe will be rebuilt and reinstated someday) to point to corresponding spiritual realities (believers as a “priesthood” and the Church as a “house” or Temple) doesn’t do away with the original reality any more than calling a grumpy child a “bear” means there are no more bears in the forest! So yes, there’s a sense in which the Church is a spiritual Temple and believers are a spiritual priesthood; but that doesn’t do away with the realities upon which those metaphors are based. In this context, a Jewish reader would have indeed understood Peter’s “house” (Heb. *bayit*) to be an antitype of the *Bayit HaMikdash*, or Temple. Even when the Temple (or its forerunner, the Tabernacle) was still standing, it was full of typological symbols that pointed to Yeshua the Messiah. It was razed by the Romans in AD 70 but will be raised by Messiah when He returns.

²⁷ There are several groups in Israel today who describe themselves as being devoted to the rebuilding of the third Temple in Israel’s history. Some of them propose an approach to the new Temple that would be very inclusive, forego animal sacrifices (in deference to animal rights groups), and incorporate elements of New Age philosophy, Jewish mysticism, and other elements that most Christians would find objectionable. In any case, they reportedly have blueprints ready and could erect the structure in a relatively short time if the various constituent groups could agree on a site. (At least one prominent Israeli archaeologist believes it could be built on the Temple Mount without disturbing the Muslim Dome of the Rock.) This is the Tribulation Temple that Yeshua said the Anti-messiah would desecrate someday (Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:14-15). The fourth Temple comes later. It’s the one Messiah will build at the onset of the Millennial Kingdom (Ezekiel 40-48).

²⁸ The Baby Yeshua would have been 40 days old when He and the aged Simeon met in the Temple (Leviticus 12:1-4).

²⁹ cp. Matthew 13:14-15.

Bible Questions AND Answers

by DR. GARY HEDRICK

Have a Bible question?

Submit it to Dr. Hedrick at garyh@cjfm.org, or mail it to 611 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78215.

You may see your question addressed in a future issue of *Messianic Perspectives*.

QUESTION: *When Jesus went to the cross, wasn't He essentially committing suicide? He could have stopped the execution but He went through with it anyway. Wasn't that suicide? And if God Himself committed suicide, how can it be wrong for us to do it?*

ANSWER: First, I hope you're not thinking about killing yourself. If you're having suicidal thoughts, you should reach out and get help. God loves you, whether you realize it or not, and He wants you to LIVE! Help is available. There's a list of free 24/7 crisis lines for almost every problem imaginable at brokenbelievers.com. Get the help you need! What do you have to lose?

Yes, Yeshua (Jesus) could have saved Himself. When He was in the Garden of Gethsemane with His disciples and they tried to defend Him from the Roman soldiers who had come to apprehend Him, He told them to put their swords away. He said, "*Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?*" (Matt. 26:53). A legion of Roman soldiers was around 6,000 men, so 12 legions would have been 72,000 angels, any one of which would have wielded immense power and could have easily and quickly killed Judas and his approaching entourage.¹

Referring to Yeshua's death on Calvary as a *de facto* suicide is misleading.² Suicide is the ultimate act of negativity—often borne out of a sense of hopelessness, futility, despair,

and sometimes rebellion. Yeshua, on the other hand, said, "I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father" (John 10:17-18). Does that sound like someone in despair? Of course not. Yeshua's voluntary self-sacrifice was purposeful and hopeful. He was acting under the authority of His heavenly Father and He knew He would be resurrected. He knew that His mission of Redemption—in spite of its infinitely high price—would be a resounding success.

If you define "wrong" as "anything that's contrary to God's will," then I would absolutely agree that self-destructive acts (including suicide) are wrong. That doesn't mean such acts are unforgivable, however.³ Some people consider suicide an unforgivable sin; however, I don't see any such teaching in Scripture. I have known dear believers (not many, but two or three) in my nearly 50 years of ministry who suffered terribly from mental illness and ended up taking their own lives. I have every confidence that they went straight to Heaven. One of them, by the way, was told by a preacher that she didn't need her meds.

Again, I hope your question was purely academic; but if not, please do not hesitate to reach out for help. We will add you to our prayer list here upon your request to Della Miller, our prayer coordinator, at dellam@cjfm.org. 🙏

¹In 2 Kings 19:35, one angel is said to have "struck" (killed) 185,000 Assyrian soldiers overnight after they had laid siege to Jerusalem.

²Synonyms listed for "suicide" in the online thesaurus for Microsoft Word include "recklessness," "perversity," "irresponsibility," and "madness," none of which has ever been descriptive of Yeshua.

³The Bible says, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* (1 John 1:9). Note that John says that "all unrighteousness" (not just minor offenses) can be forgiven.

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Fruit from the Harvest

by Violette Berger



They Shall Return to Me

At times, CJFM workers join evangelistic sorties with other Jewish mission organizations. Recently, **Jenya Drazman, CJFM representative and Hebrew and Russian translator (Canada)**, volunteered to help another Jewish ministry with an outreach in Toronto. Following is her account of that week's events.

"In the mornings, we would stand with a banner greeting the morning traffic. There were always a lot of different reactions—from angry people hanging out of their car windows making obscene gestures and yelling insults, to people waving in support and saying, 'God bless you!' A delivery truck driver stopped his vehicle, ran up to us and asked what we wanted from the local coffee shop, as he wanted to bless us. He spent some time with us and gave us all hugs.

There were some Israelis who drove and walked by, and some did stop for a short conversation. I also spoke with a few Russian-speaking people. One was an elderly man who came to Canada to live with his sister's family. I met another in the subway, an 88-year-old man who was an incredible violinist playing in the subway station. We had a great conversation. He is a Holocaust survivor. Please pray for L's salvation.

I also met a husband and wife whose hearts are not yet opened. They were quite strong in stating that Jews cannot be Jewish and believe in Jesus, but I enjoyed having a conversation with them, because at least they were open to having one. I encouraged them to read the Tanakh (Old Testament), especially Daniel and Isaiah 53, and ask God to reveal to them who the Messiah really is.

Among other things, we had our study times in cafes in the Jewish community while wearing T-shirts with Messianic messages. One memorable time of study was in a kosher coffee shop in an Orthodox area during a very busy time. Someone called the local anti-missionary group and reported our presence. The anti-missionaries promptly showed up, as they tried to do every day, to prevent or distract us from witnessing to people. When they came, we were finished with our study and were on our way to our next destination. They weren't able to follow us, as they were detained by the police."

"Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the LORD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart" (Jeremiah 24:7).

He Got It!

CJFM representative Eric Chabot (Columbus, OH) met Ohio State University (OSU) student, "D," while ministering on the campus. During their conversation, Eric learned that D had heard the Gospel message from a pastor, but apparently did not understand it and thus had never come to faith in the Messiah. After Eric explained the Gospel in detail to him, D prayed to receive the Messiah. Eric asks for prayer for D in his new-found faith and that he be open to being disciplined.

Gone But Not Lost

Richard Hill, CJFM representative (Las Vegas) and pastor of Beth Yeshua Messianic Congregation, writes about a blessing his wife, Oanh, received recently. While Rich is preaching during the service at *Beth Yeshua*, Oanh teaches the youth group in "Shabbat School," which is similar to Sunday School. She teaches the children Bible lessons and also shares the Good News with them. Oanh had the privilege of leading two Jewish girls to the Lord. It was the first time one of the Jewish girls had attended the class, as she and her family had just moved to Las Vegas. However, soon afterwards, her father was offered a much better job in New York, and they hastily left Las Vegas. The Lord works in such wondrous ways! Please pray for the girls' new faith and for their spiritual growth and maturity in *Yeshua HaMaschiach*, Jesus the Messiah.

Shopping For Souls

Rich and his team of volunteers regularly walk a number of malls looking for opportunities to share the Gospel message with the many Jewish Israeli individuals who run the kiosks. The team wears Jewish evangelistic T-shirts, and the Jewish Israelis are happy to see them again, as Rich has given many of them "I Love Israel" T-shirts. Rich says, "One of the vendors even told us to keep up the good work for the Lord and Israel. And he was not a believer of Yeshua! We always praise the Lord for the good reputation He has given us with the Israelis. Pastor Richard Cooper, a long-time volunteer, recently led a young ex-Mormon to the Lord right there at this vendor's kiosk. Please pray for this young man's sanctification and for the Las Vegas Jewish community's salvation and revival."

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Jewish Funeral

Recently, Rich officiated at a Jewish funeral. The deceased was saved, but her daughter was not. However, the daughter agreed to Rich's condition—that he would be able to share the Good News message of Yeshua. The only two unsaved individuals who attended the funeral were the daughter and the Orthodox Jewish supervisor who listened to the service and found it very interesting. Rich asks, "Please pray for God to open these two Jewish hearts to the Gospel."

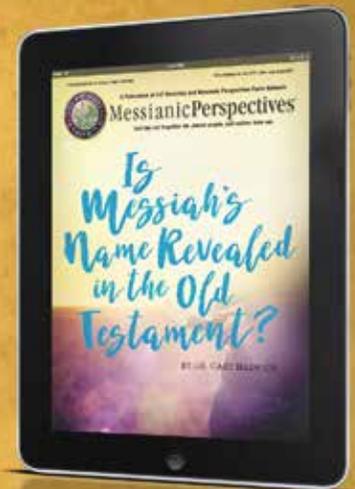
"See You Later, Peter!"

One of our own, Peter Parkas, CJFM northeast representative (New Jersey), was called home to Glory on July 21. His wife, Diann, is continuing their ministry and relates the following account. When Peter was diagnosed with leukemia, he was immediately hospitalized to begin chemotherapy treatments. Shortly after his admission, he received a phone call from "R," one of his best childhood Jewish friends. R told him that he was in the same hospital waiting for a liver transplant. Peter visited R right away, eager to witness one more time to his unsaved friend. Sadly, R's condition worsened and he passed away while Peter was still in the hospital. However, Peter and Diann had numerous opportunities to pray and share the Lord with R's wife. Diann and "C" remain in touch, and Diann asks for prayer—that C will come to saving faith in her Jewish Messiah.

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing, You have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to you forever (Psalm 30:11-12). 🙏

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