

WHY JESUS IS NOT THE JEWISH MESSIAH • with Rabbi Michael Skobac

Christian missionaries profess that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah.

Why has Judaism rejected this claim for 2,000 years?

The concept of the Messiah has its foundation in our *Jewish Bible*, the *Tanach*, which teaches that ALL of the following criteria must be fulfilled before any person can be acknowledged as the Messiah:

1, The Messiah must be from the Tribe of Judah, a Descendant of King David and King Solomon

The Messiah must be a member of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10) and a direct descendant of King David & King Solomon (2 Samuel 7:12-14; 1 Chronicles 22:9-10). Genealogy in the Bible is only passed down from father to son (Numbers 1:1-18).

There is no evidence that Jesus really had this pedigree, and the Christian Bible actually claims that he did not have a "birth-father" from the tribe of Judah descending from King David and King Solomon (Matt. 1:18-20).

2. Ingathering of the Jewish Exiles

When the Messiah is reigning as King of Israel, the Jews will be ingathered from their exile and will return to Israel, their homeland (Deut. 30:3; Isaiah 11:11-12; Jer. 30:3, 32:37; Ezekiel 11:17, 36:24).

This has clearly not yet happened and we still await its fulfillment.

3. Rebuilding of the Holy Temple

The Temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt (Isaiah 2:2-3, 56:6-7, 60:7, 66:20; Ezekiel 37:26-27; Malachi 3:4; Zech. 14:20-21).

The Temple was still standing in Jesus' day. It was destroyed 38 years after Jesus' crucifixion and it has not yet been rebuilt.

4. Worldwide Reign of Peace

There will be universal disarmament and worldwide peace with a complete end to war (Micah 4:1-4; Hoseah 2:20; Isaiah 2:1-4, 60:18).

Wars have increased dramatically in the world since the start of Christianity.

5. Observance of the Torah Embraced by All Jews

The Messiah will reign as King at a time when all the Jewish people will observe G-d's commandments (Ezekiel 37:24; Deut. 30:8,10; Jeremiah 31:32; Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:26-27).

Jesus never ruled as King, nor have all Jews embraced the commandments of G-d's Torah.

6. Universal Knowledge of G-d

The Messiah will rule at a time when all the people of the world will come to acknowledge and serve the one true G-d (Zechariah 3:9, 8:23,14:9,16; Isaiah 45:23, 66:23; Jeremiah 31:33; Ezekiel 38:23; Psalm 86:9; Zeph. 3:9).

This, as well, has not yet taken place and we await its fulfillment.

A Biblical Portrait of the Messiah

All of these criteria for the Messiah are found in numerous places in the Jewish Bible. One foundational example is in the book of Ezekiel, Chapter 37:24-28:

“24 And My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd, and they will walk in My ordinances, and keep My statutes, and observe them

25 and they shall live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers have lived; and they shall live there, they, and their children, and their children’s children for ever; and My servant David will be their prince forever.

26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant, which I will give them; and I will multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever

27 and My tabernacle shall be with them, and I will be their God and they will be My people.

28 And the nations will know that I am the Lord who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.”

Anyone can claim to be the Messiah or a group of people can claim that someone is the Messiah. However, if that person fails to fulfill ALL the criteria found in the Jewish Bible, then he cannot be the Jewish Messiah.

According to the Christian scriptures, Jesus seems to have understood this. As he was being crucified by the Romans, he cried out “My G-d, my G-d, why have You forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46).

The Christian Rebuttal

In order to deal with Jesus’ failure to fulfill the Biblical messianic prophecies, missionaries argue that he will accomplish them when he returns in the future.

It’s important to understand that this second coming doctrine is an admission that Jesus didn’t fulfill the Messianic criteria. This rationalization for his failure certainly provides no reason to accept him as the Messiah today.

Furthermore, the Jewish Bible does not have a Messianic “installment plan” where Messiah comes, fails in his mission, and then returns thousands of years later to finally succeed.

Missionaries will claim that because Jesus performed miracles, he must be the Messiah. However, we have no real evidence that Jesus actually performed any miracles. More significantly, even if Jesus did perform miracles, they would not prove that he was the Messiah.

Our Bible never says that we will be able to recognize the Messiah through the miracles that he will do. The Torah actually teaches that even false prophets can have the ability to perform supernatural miracles (Deut. 13:2-6).

The Real Messiah

We Jews prefer to wait for the “real thing” according to G-d’s promises and guidelines. The Jewish Bible provides a clear and consistent description of what the world will look like when the Messiah comes and this has clearly not yet transpired. So, we still await the coming of the true Messiah. May he and a utopian world come soon!