

The Messiah

May the grace and peace of God be upon you!

The Jews have been waiting for the Messiah for thousands of years, and they are still waiting for Him today! But careful reading of several prophecies and scriptures of the Tanakh (Old Testament) will reveal that the Messiah already came, and He's getting ready to return again to this Earth!

These prophecies about the Messiah will show that that **the Redeemer of Israel had to die first!** The Jews were correctly waiting on a Messiah that would establish a worldwide kingdom with Israel as the leading nation, but when that didn't happen with Jesus of Nazareth, they incorrectly assumed that He wasn't the One—the fulfillment of the glory of Israel will happen on His second coming, though. But one can actually prove just with the Tanakh that Jesus of Nazareth was, in fact, the Messiah!

Prophecies in the Tanakh

There are many of prophecies about the Messiah in the Tanakh, some of them are very specific as we are going to see.

When ancient Israel sinned against God and went into captivity, God used the prophet Jeremiah to deliver them good news. In Jeremiah 33:14-18 we read, *“Behold, the days are coming,’ says the Lord, ‘that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah: In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David a Branch of righteousness; **He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.** In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’ For thus says the Lord: **‘David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.’”***

There are a couple of important things to notice in this prophecy: 1) God was going to restore the glory of Israel with the Messiah, 2) the Messiah was going to be King of Israel (and the whole world for that matter), and 3) the Messiah was going to be the High Priest as well.

The Jews in the times of Jesus were waiting on the Messiah to restore Israel to glory, and most of them thought that it would happen with the Messiah rebelling and defeating the Roman Empire. When that didn't happen with Jesus of Nazareth, the Jews incorrectly assumed that He wasn't the Messiah. They incorrectly assumed this because they were not carefully paying attention to the **other** prophecies of the Messiah—**where it clearly stated that the Messiah had to die first!**

Isaiah also prophesied about the Messiah. The entire chapter 53 of Isaiah is about the Messiah. Cutting into the prophecy, in verses 7-9 we read, *“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked—but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.”*

Again, we read a couple of verses down in Isaiah 53:12, *“Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoils with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”* This prophecy clearly states that the Messiah had to die first.

There’s another very interesting prophecy in the book of Daniel. It’s called the **Seventy-Weeks Prophecy**. In this prophecy, God foretells when the Anointed One (Christ, or the Messiah) will help Israel end their transgressions and sins.

We need a little historical background to understand this prophecy. In 587 BC, the southern Kingdom of Judah fell to the Babylonian Empire, and they went into captivity. Already in captivity was the northern Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrian Empire. So by 587 BC, all the Israelites were in captivity. Right about this time, at some point during the Babylonian captivity, Daniel writes this prophecy.

In the decades after 587 BC, a new power would arise—the Medo-Persian Empire. They would eventually conquer the Babylonians and the Assyrians. By 538 BC, all the Israelites were under control of the Persians. But, as Jeremiah had prophesied, the new empire would allow the Israelites to return to the Promised Land and rebuilt the Temple (Ezra 1:1-5).

Another important fact to know about this prophecy is that each day of the 70 weeks accounts for a **Prophetic Year**. So the total span of this prophecy is 490 Prophetic Years (70 times 7). This concept of a Prophetic Year being equated to a day has been used by God in other books of the Bible. We see the usage of this method in the prophecy of Ezekiel 4-5, where it details how the Israelites are going to be dominated by foreign forces from 589 BC to 153 BC.

Also, when using this concept of a Prophetic Year for a day, we have to use 30 days each month of the Prophetic Year because it’s based on a lunar calendar. In Prophetic Years, there are 30 days in a month and 12 months, which equates to 360 days per year. The Gregorian calendar, which is a solar calendar, has 365.25 days per year; therefore the Gregorian year is slightly longer than the Prophetic Year (5.25 more days).

Now, with that background in mind, let’s read the Seventy-Weeks Prophecy. In Daniel 9:25 we read, *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.”* So the prophecy starts by saying that from the command to restore Jerusalem until the Messiah, there will be sixty-nine weeks (7 plus 62). But really,

as we discussed earlier, this is a total span of 483 Prophetic Years (69 times 7)—each day of the week being a Prophetic Year.

In 445 BC, the Persian Emperor, Artaxerxes I, continuing the example of his father, Cyrus the Great, gave Nehemiah permission to restore Jerusalem and rebuild the city walls (Neh. 2:1-8). The rebuilding of the city walls is particularly important to this prophecy. A significant portion of the book of Nehemiah is dedicated to the rebuilding of the walls (Neh. 3; 6:15-19; 7:1-3; 12:27-43). So from 445 BC is when we should start counting the 483 Prophetic Years.

Continuing the prophecy, in verse 26 we read, *“And after the sixty-two weeks **Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself**; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.”*

Again, the *“Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself”*—meaning, **He was supposed to be killed** as we read in the other prophecies. Now reading carefully we notice that the Messiah was supposed to die at the end of the sixty-nine weeks, or 483 Prophetic Years. **It is certainly not a coincidence that if you count 483 Prophetic Years starting from 445 BC, you end up in 31 AD—close to the end of life of Jesus of Nazareth.** (Note: Counting 483 regular years from 445 BC would actually end in 38 AD (there’s no year zero, so just subtract 445 from 483). We then need to subtract the 5.25 different days that the solar calendar has from the lunar calendar, which the Prophetic Years are based upon (5.25 times 483 equals 2,535.75 days that we need to subtract, which represents about 7 years in the solar calendar; 2,535.75 divided by 365.25 equals 6.94); then, 38 AD minus 7 years is to 31 AD.)

Years to Subtract from Gregorian Calendar

	365.25 Days in solar calendar (Gregorian calendar)
	<u>(360.00) Days in lunar calendar (Prophetic Year)</u>
	5.25 Days to subtract for each Gregorian calendar year
	445 BC - Artaxerxes I gave command to rebuild Jerusalem and it's walls
	<u>(483) Years</u>
	38 AD
	<u>(7) Years to subtract (5.25*483=2,535.75 days to subtract, which equates to about 7 years to subtract (2,535.75/365.25=6.94))</u>
circa	31 AD - Crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth

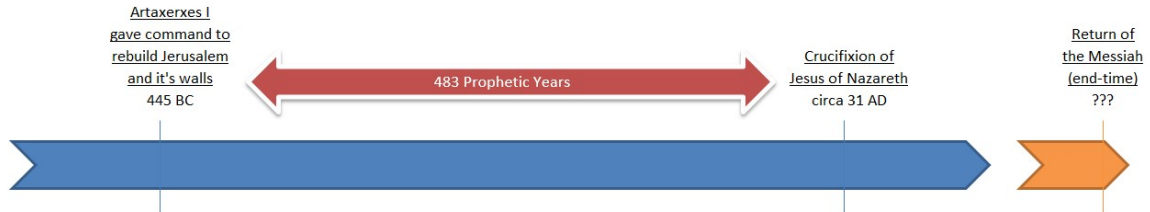
Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

Years until the Messiah Ends the Transgression of Israel

483 From the command to build and restore Jerusalem and its walls until the death of the Messiah (69 weeks * 7 days = 483)

7 Skips to the last seven years of the end-time, just before the Messiah returns and ends the transgression of Israel (1 week * 7 days + 7)

490 Total Prophetic Years



It's not easy to know with certainty the year of Jesus' death but most scholars put His death between 30 AD and 33 AD. But knowing my God (**who is perfect**), I would not be surprised that Jesus died exactly at the end of the 483 Prophetic Years! Indeed, some scholars have attempted to prove that He did die the same year that the 483 Prophetic Years ended—and not just the same year but the same week too! We won't go into that amount of scrutiny here, but let it suffice for now that there is no historical figure who can fit this prophecy better than Jesus of Nazareth!

The rest of the prophecy (or the final week) skips to the final seven years of the end-time, just before the resurrected and glorified Messiah returns a second time; and with His return, He ends the transgression of Israel and restores them to glory. But when it comes to the Messiah, let it be known that **there is only One Man who fits this prophecy perfectly, and that is Jesus the Christ!**

He was Pierced for You!

In Psalms 22, we read a psalm of David inspired by God that partially applies to David but, when considered carefully, we perceived that is talking about the Messiah's death. In verse 1 it says, "*My God, my God, why has You forsaken Me?*"—which is exactly what Jesus exclaimed before dying in the cross. As we read through the psalm, it talks about how bulls, dogs, and lions have surrounded Him trying to destroy Him—this being an allegory of His enemies trying to kill Him. In verses 15-16 we read, "*My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. **They pierced My hands and My feet.***" Now, King David was never pierced but Jesus of Nazareth was! This is referring to the Messiah of Israel—Yeshua (Yeshua is the name of Jesus in Hebrew). Even His name witnesses about Him being the Messiah, for as Joshua led ancient Israel into the Promised Land (Joshua is a form of Yeshua), so will Yeshua lead all His followers to the Kingdom of Heaven, the true Promised Land! Joshua was a type of the true Messiah—Yeshua! Not to mention that both, Joshua and Yeshua, means "God saves."

Even more compelling is a prophecy in Zechariah 12. In this prophecy we read about the end-times—our times! Starting in verse 2, we read, "*Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the*

surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and against Jerusalem.” Since the modern state of Israel declared independence in 1948, the Arab nations have tried to destroy them. They have surrounded (“*siege*”) them.

In verse 3 we read, “*And it shall happen in that day that will I make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut into pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.*” It is no secret that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has burdened (“*a heavy stone*”) the world since the declaration of independence of Israel. By some estimated, in recent years, this Middle Eastern conflict have been the subject of 76% of the United Nations General Assembly’s resolutions.¹ This is a problem that many nations and leaders have tried to resolve for many years. But no nations shall succeed militarily against Israel until the established time. That’s why since the declaration of independence, many Arab nations have waged war against Israel to find themselves losing in an embarrassing way. The Arabs even tried to destroy Israel on Yom Kippur (while they were weak due to fasting), and they still lost in an embarrassing way! In this light, the prophecy of this chapter is very much alive!

But dropping down to verse 10, we read, “*And I will pour upon the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications: then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*” God left mysteries hidden in the Tanakh for the Jews to recognize Jesus as their Messiah—and those mysteries are being revealed today, in the end-time, just before He returns to this Earth! Some Jews will recognize Jesus as their Messiah before His return but the majority of the Jews will recognize Him when He returns in all glory! On the day of His return, the Jews will realize that **Jesus, the One whom they pierced, is the true Messiah!** On that day, they will literally see His pierced hands and weep in repentance for what they did! In those days, they won’t feel any more like they are not Jewish because they believe in Jesus, but on the contrary, they will realize that there isn’t anything more Jewish for them to do but to recognize their true Messiah!

Today, the Jews, during the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah (Day of Trumpets) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), try to amend their behavior and seek forgiveness for their wrongs done against God. They call these the “Days of Awe.” They confess their sins and at the end of the 10 days, on Yom Kippur, they hope that they will be forgiven by God. It is interesting how God has guided them to do so because that’s exactly what’s going to happen after Jesus’ return on Rosh Hashanah. After His return and after the Jews realizing what they have done, they’ll be great weeping and repentance in Israel for 10 days until Yom Kippur.

In verse 11 we read, “*In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plains of Megiddo.*” But on Yom Kippur, our King and High Priest, being greatly merciful and full of grace, will enter the Holy of Holies and atone and forgive Israel. Then, Israel will realize that is not by their heritage or deeds that they are reconciled with God (for they will recognize

¹ "UN Involvement – Peace in the Middle East". *Peaceinthemideast.com*. Retrieved October 22, 2016.

that they actually killed their Messiah), but it's by God's amazing grace that they are reconciled. Therefore, Israel will have that "*Spirit of grace and supplications*" that most Christians have today.

Our Passover Lamb

Now, why did the Messiah have to die in the first place? If He was indeed the Son of God, why did He have to be crucified? The answer lies in the understanding the very first Feast of God called **Passover**. The Jews have kept this Feast since Moses gave them the command but they don't truly understand the meaning or the fulfillment of this Feast. That's one of the reasons Jesus was so disappointed at the Pharisees and Sadducees (the supposedly doctors and teachers of the Law of God). They taught and disputed with Jesus on what they didn't fully understand.

As a recap, while in captivity in Egypt, God commanded the Israelites to sacrifice a **perfect and without blemish Passover lamb** and put the blood at the doorpost of their houses. As God passed through the houses in Egypt, the firstborn of any house that didn't have the blood of the Passover lamb in its doorpost died! Why were the firstborn of Egypt killed? It is because the Egyptians withheld the firstborn of God when God commanded them to let them go. In Exodus 4:22-23 God gives a message to Pharaoh, "*Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn.*"

Through the sacrifice and blood of this Passover lamb, the firstborn of Israel were saved. And symbolically, because Israel is the firstborn of God, through the sacrifice of the Passover lamb, the entire nation of Israel was saved too! Indeed, after the death of the Egyptian firstborn, the Egyptians let the nation of Israel go free into the desert to worship God. Being a slave nation first, now they were a free nation thanks to that sacrifice of the Passover lamb!

The day after Passover, the Israelites would celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread. During that Feast, the Israelites don't eat leavened bread because leaven represents sin (1 Cor. 5:6-8). One of the symbolisms of this Feast is that we need to get rid of our leaven (or sin). Egypt represented sin to Israel because all of us are **slaves to sin** until freed from it (Rom. 6:5-7)—and just as we are slaves to sin, so was Israel a slave to Egypt. It was through the Passover sacrifice that the Israelites were able to be freed from their slavery in Egypt—they were a free nation at that time, however, it wasn't until the death of the true Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ, that those who would believe in Him would be freed from their sins. And yes, **it is no coincidence that Jesus Christ died on the day of Passover at the same time that the people of Israel were sacrificing their Passover lambs!**

It is through this sacrifice of Jesus, **the perfect and without blemish Lamb**, that the firstborn of God are saved. It is through this sacrifice that the whole world now has access to God and an opportunity to be saved—because at the end of the day, **God desires salvation for all mankind** (1 Tim. 2:3-4). But salvation to all mankind starts with the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb, Jesus the Messiah!

So going back to the original question; why did the Messiah had to die first? Well, if one of the purposes of the Messiah was to end the transgression of Israel, there was no other way to end its transgression than with atonement for its sins? And who better to do that than the Logos of God?

The Logos of God was with God the Father before Creation. In John 1:1-2 we read about the Word, "*In the beginning was the Word (Logos), and the Word (Logos) was with God, and the Word (Logos) was God. He was in the beginning with God.*" The Father and the Logos are of the same essence and nature. If you think about it, the very name of God in Hebrew (Elohim) means Gods—it's in plural form; meaning, there are more than one, yet they are still one. God's nature is triune; meaning one in three, three in one. God's nature include the Father, the Son (Logos), and the Holy Spirit. And you may ask, 'How can someone be one and yet three at the same time? In Genesis 1:26 we read, "*Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.*" Notice that God is using a plural form here "Us" to describe Himself. But also notice that God made us in His very own image. We also have a triune nature! We are composed of soul, spirit, and body (1 Thes. 5:23). So in a similar manner that we can be three and yet still be one, God can be three and yet still be one—except in a much more complicated way! This is a mystery that we will continue growing in understanding until we meet God!

But notice the triune nature of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures in Isa. 48:16. In this scripture the Logos (being the One that actually dealt with Israel most of the time, if not all the time) said, "*Come near to Me, hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, I was there. And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit have sent Me.*" In this scripture, the Father and the Holy Spirit sent the Logos to do His will.

Another scripture in the Tanakh that points to the pre-existence of the Messiah before His incarnation is found in Micah 5:2. It reads, "*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose going forth are from of old, from everlasting.*" This scripture, clearly talking about the Messiah, states that He is eternal. He wasn't an ordinary man. Although having the glory of God, He emptied Himself into a man to die for our transgressions (Phil. 2:6-8). That's our Messiah and Savior! Hallelujah!

But going back to the name of God (Elohim), just as His name is plural, the Plan of God is plural too! Meaning, at some point before Creation, God decided to add children to His Family. With that in mind, God sets His Plan with mankind. God wants mankind to partake of the eternal blessings and joy of being in the very Family of God! God wants mankind to eternally commune with Him. **Salvation really means being fully integrated into the Family of God!**

But when one high-ranking angel in the Kingdom of Heaven, called Lucifer, learnt about the Plan of God with humanity, he was at odds with God. He could not accept the idea that fleshly, weak humans (who start out as babies who can't even talk or walk) will one day rule over him because they'll be part of the Family of God (Psa. 8:1-9). He thought he should rule over mankind, not the other way around.

So Lucifer started a rebellion in which a third of the angels followed him (Rev. 12:4). He sets out to take the very throne of God the Father and war breaks out in the Kingdom of Heaven! Lucifer, then, becomes the Adversary—or Satan! Of course, this was an impossible task from the beginning—to defeat God, the Almighty and the Most High. So Satan's rebellion fails. Satan is defeated and thrown out of the Kingdom of Heaven into the Earth (Isa. 14:12-15; Eze. 28:12-17; Rev. 12:7-9).

In Earth, Satan has been allowed to rule over mankind for 6,000 years. This is his domain now until Christ returns. That's why we have so much wars, pestilences, abuses, injustices, starvation, pain, and death—which have pretty much been the history of mankind up to this point. However, if we overcome Satan and this world, we will be like **firstborn** children to God in His Family (Heb. 12:23). And when Christ returns to this Earth, the firstborn of God will inherit and rule righteously over the Earth under the leadership of Christ (Mat. 5:3-12, Rev. 2:26-28; 3:21).

But going back to the story of Satan, all the angelical hosts saw Satan exalt himself even to point of trying to take the throne of God. While all of this is happening, the Logos of God was watching. This same Logos becomes the sacrificial Passover Lamb. In doing so, with this perfect sacrifice, imperfect humans can now be truly cleansed from their sins and impurities and become part of the Family of God.

You see, as Hebrews 10:4 says, ***“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.”*** Think about it, if you sin, do you really think that killing a goat would take away your sins? If you harm your brother, do you think killing a goat would fix it? If you have an evil desire in your heart, do you really think the blood of a bull will take it away and clean you? No, those sacrifices were a representation of the true sacrifice that was to come—the one of Jesus Christ! Everything in the Temple was a copy, a shadow of the real things up in the Kingdom of Heaven—God made the Israelites perform all these sacrifices so they could better understand the heavenly things. Now we clearly understand that the sacrifice of Jesus would fulfill all sacrifices.

So the Logos, in a great example of humility, empties all His divine power and strength into a fleshly form. If that was not enough, He lets Himself be killed by a creation that He Himself helped create! And He didn't just die a normal death but a very humiliating and painful death—death by crucifixion! And He was convicted as a criminal (for the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 53:9) even though, like a perfect and without blemish Passover lamb, He never sinned. Through His sacrifice, He bore our sins and transgressions (Isa. 53:8). Now, being our High Priest, **He continually intercedes for us before the Father** (Heb. 7:25; 1 Tim. 2:5; Isa. 53:12; Jer. 33:18).

On that Passover day when Jesus died, there was silence in Heaven—all angels stopped what they were doing and watched Jesus breathe His last breath. They knew that this was no ordinary Man, this was the very Logos of God being executed by His own creation. On one hand, the angels saw Satan exalt himself to the point of trying to take the highest throne and being put down; and on the other hand, those very angels saw the Logos humble Himself to the point of death by crucifixion and being raised to the right side of the throne of God (Rom. 8:34). It is a lesson that Jesus knew very well, so it's not a coincidence that one of His most famous sayings found in Mat. 23:12 is, ***“And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”***

Also, it is not a coincidence that the very first thing that He said in His very first sermon was ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”*** (Mat. 5:3). ***“Poor in spirit”*** is another term for humble. Jesus, knowing very well the Plan of God, knows that only the humble, the ones who repent, the ones who are obedient, the ones who are willing to live the Way of life of God will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. If we are going to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, that means that we are going to

possess it. Right now, God possess everything in Heaven and Earth, but He can give it to whomever He desires. God will give His Kingdom to those who are humble. **God will give His Kingdom to His sons—those among mankind who are born of the Spirit into the Family of God!**

And so, this is the Messiah who we serve, One who shared the same divine power of God but gave it up for us. He is humble and full of grace! He is eternal and of the same substance of the Father! He is our perfect Passover Lamb, and thru His sacrifice, the veil was torn in the Temple as a symbolism that there is no obstacle between us and Father now (Mat. 27:51). He is our intercessor, advocate, and **savior!**

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