



The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls

New Covenant Lutheran Church
February/March 2026
Larry D. Person



Session 4: Messiah(s)

Messiah(s):

- 1. Judaism**
- 2. Qumran**
- 3. Early Christianity**

Jewish Messiah/Messianic Expectation

In Jewish tradition, the Messiah is expected to be:

1. A human
2. Non-divine
3. Davidic leader
4. Who will usher in an era of global peace and prosperity

Key expectations:

1. Will gather all Jews to Israel
2. Will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem
3. Will restore the Sanhedrin
4. Will establish universal justice

i.e. A national deliverer and king, not a personal savior from sin



Messiah(s)

Messiah

In Hebrew : mashiach

In Greek: christos

Both can be translated “anointed one”

Many religions have messiahs, especially Eastern religions where it is common to anoint rulers, holy men, prophets, etc. with oil.

OT Jewish Messiah/Messianic Expectation

- 1. The Hebrew term “mashiach” appears 39-50 times in the OT. But always means ‘anointed one’ referring to kings, priests, or prophets who were anointed with oil at the beginning of their reign/role.**
- 2. What never appears in the Jewish Scriptures is “The Messiah” referring to an end times messiah.**
- 3. Messianic expectations in the Jewish Scriptures are various compilations of prophecies Jews took to reference an end time Messiah.**
- 4. There were multiple combinations of opinions: a prophet, a priest, a king, an age of peace, or various combinations of these roles.**
- 5. The most prevalent was a king to restore nation Israel.**

Messianic Prophecies--Jewish

1. Jeremiah 23:1-8; 30; 32:36-44; 33:1-26
2. Isaiah 59-62
3. Ezekiel 7; 11:14-25; 36; 40-48

Pre-Exile Jewish Eschatology Main tenets:

1. End of world
2. God redeems Jews in captivity
3. God returns Jewish people to the Land of Israel
4. God restores the House of David
5. God restores the Temple in Jerusalem
6. Jewish Messiah from the House of David
7. Messiah ushers in an age of justice and peace
8. All nations recognize the God of Israel as the only true God
9. God resurrects the dead
10. God creates a new heaven and a new earth

OT Jewish Messiah/Messianic Expectation

In Second Temple Judaism:

- 1. This worldly, political expectation, i.e. Messiah is a kingly “Son of David”**
- 2. Or apocalyptic expectation, end times, resurrection of the dead and the Kingdom of Heaven established on earth, i.e. heavenly “son of man”**
- 3. Moving from an expectation of a better age to a Messiah who would make it happen**

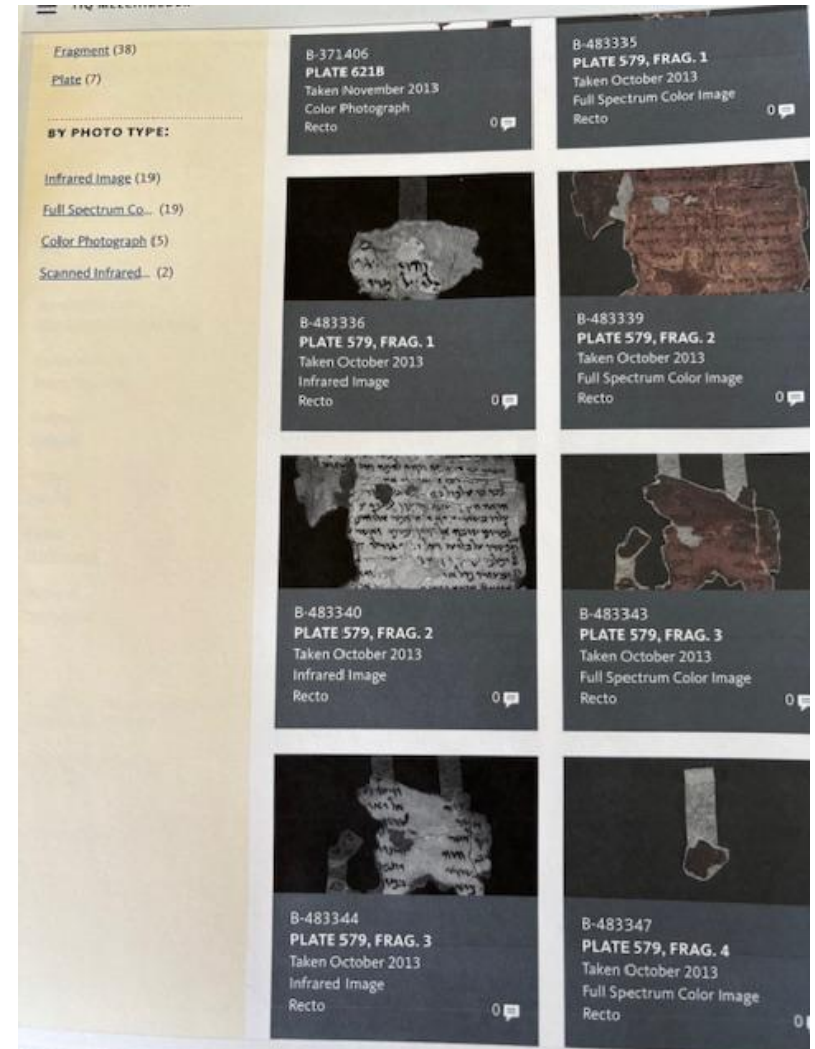
Essene Messiah(s)

- 1. “diarchic messianism” dominant expectation**
 - a. Messiah of Aaron—a priest
 - b. Messiah of Israel—a king
- 2. Alternative messianic expectation**
 - a. Melchizedek
 - b. Gen. 14:18-20
 - c. 11QMelchizedek
 - 1) fragmentary Dead Sea Scroll
 - 2) Combines Genesis 14:18-20 with Isaiah 61:1-2 & Daniel 9:24-26
 - 3) Jubilees year appearance
 - 4) An angel, semi-divine
- 3. The Teacher of Righteousness?**

Messianic Prophecies--Essene

1. CD 19:35-36
2. 1QS 9:10-11
3. 11Q Melchizedek 2:1-8; 13; 23-25
4. Leviticus 25:13
5. Daniel 9:24-26
6. Isaiah 40:3; 61:1-2; 59-62
7. Genesis 14:18-20
8. 4Q252 5:2-5
9. 4Q246 1:9-2:9
10. Zechariah 4:14; 9:14-15; 12:10-14; 13:1

11QMelchizedek13

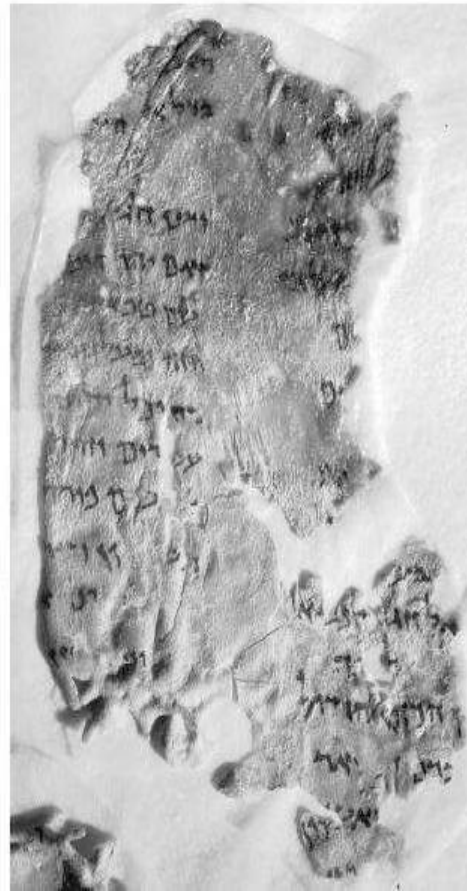


Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)

RGB Reference image



Infra Red 800 nm.





The Teacher of Righteousness

- 1. Never refers to himself as The Messiah**
- 2. Instead instructs his followers to look for the Messiah of Aaron and Messiah of Israel**
- 3. Often compared to Jesus, but comparison fails**
- 4. My theory (hinted at by Bergsma)**
 - a. Deposed High Priest**
 - b. Writings reflect his desire to be vindicated and restored**
 - c. Brought the start of the Dead Sea Scrolls library with him from the Jerusalem Temple when he was deposed**
 - d. Some from the Temple followed him to Qumran, and that was the start of the Essenes**
 - e. These early followers started the practice of copying scrolls**



Jesus The Messiah

For Christians, Jesus is The Messiah

Jesus proclaims himself The Messiah at the very beginning of his ministry:

Luke 4: 14-21

Messianic Prophecy from Isaiah 61:1-2 & 58:6

Suffering Servant/line of David King

Specific Messianic Expectations



OT Messianic Prophecies--Christian

1. **Jeremiah 23:1-40; 30:18; 32:44; 33:11, 26**
2. **Isaiah 7:14; 40:3; 53; 61:1-2; 59-62**
3. **Micah 5:2**
4. **Zechariah 4:14; 9:14-15; 12:10-14; 13:1**
5. **Daniel 9:24-26**
6. **Genesis 14:18-20**
7. **Amos 9:11-15**
8. **Joel 3:1**
9. **Deuteronomy 30:3-5**

Specific Messianic Expectations

- 1. Born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)**
- 2. Preceded by a Messenger (Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3)**
- 3. Enters Jerusalem on a Donkey (Zechariah 9:9)**
- 4. Betrayed by a Friend (Psalms 41:9)**
- 5. Betrayed for Thirty Pieces of Silver (Zechariah 11:12)**
- 6. Money Used to Buy a Potter's Field (Zechariah 11:13)**
- 7. Silent Before Affliction/Accusers (Isaiah 53:7)**
- 8. Hands and Feet Pierced (Psalms 22:16)**



Other Specific Messianic Expectations

9. Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14)

10. Descendant of David/Judah (2 Sam. 7:16 & Gen. 49:10)

11. Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53)

12. Rejected Cornerstone (Psalm 118:22)

13. Resurrection (Psalm 16:10)



Jesus The Messiah

Jesus is proclaimed The Messiah 49 times in the Gospels and Acts:

- 1. Matthew 16 times**
- 2. Mark 7 times**
- 3. Luke 12 times**
- 4. John 4 times**
- 5. Acts 10 times**

Matthew and Mark also mention False Messiahs



What would The Messiah do?

In the various groups we've discussed, what was the expectation?

For Second Temple Jews—restore the Kingdom of Israel, be the King

For the Essenes—vindicate Qumran as the True Temple and eradicate all evil/evil people from the world, so the Righteous will reign starting in the Jubilee Year

For Early Christians—Jesus The Messiah initiated His Kingdom at his first coming, will forgive sins and usher in Eternal Life at his Second Coming



Who is Jesus The Messiah to you?

Your Comments