

Is Y'shua (Jesus) the Messiah of the Jews or Only the Savior of the Gentiles?

By Messianic Rabbi Ed Rothman

John Hagee, a well-known Pentecostal Pastor & Tel-Evangelist, is familiar to many in today's media savvy world. He is founding pastor of the 19,000 member Cornerstone Church, in San Antonio, Texas and is founder of C.U.F.I., Christians United For Israel. He has written a book entitled, "In Defense of Israel." The title is no surprise to anyone who is familiar with Pastor Hagee's love and devotion to Israel & the Jewish people. Most of the book is dedicated to educating the Christian Church at large about G-d's eternal, unconditional love covenant with Israel & the Jewish people, as well as explaining how the Church has blamed the Jews for the death of Christ for far too long. For all of this I am very grateful and stand in complete agreement. The one serious problem that I have with the book, along with many others who are called to minister to Israel & the Jewish people, is in chapter 10 – Answering Christian Critics. Under the sub-heading, *The Jews Did Not Reject Jesus As The Messiah*, Pastor Hagee asks the question, "Did the Jews reject Jesus as the Messiah or did Jesus refuse to be their Messiah?"

In answer to this question I will take a look at both the ancient Hebrew Scriptures and the New Covenant (New Testament) Scriptures.

The Time of Messiah's Death

First, let us consider a short passage from the Prophet Daniel that gives us the time of the appearance of Messiah in HIStory.

"(Daniel 9:25) Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem until [the coming of] the anointed one (Messiah), the Prince, shall be seven weeks [or years], and sixty-two weeks [of years]; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. (26a) And after sixty-two weeks [of years] shall the anointed one (Messiah) be cut off or killed, but not for Himself.

As I have studied this passage over the years I discovered that Sir Robert Anderson, formerly Head of Scotland Yard and author of the Coming Prince and Daniel in the Critic's Den, believed that this prophesy could give us the timeline for the death of the Messiah.

Sir Robert Anderson believed that the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem was given by King Artaxerxes on

March 14, 445 BCE¹ (Nehemiah 2:1-8). He then interpreted the prophetic years as $7 \times 7 + 62 \times 7 = 483$ weeks of years (transposing the years from 365 day solar years to 360 day lunar years including corrections for leap years) until the coming of Messiah the Prince, and arrived with the date of April 6, 32 CE.²

Now who is thought to be the Messiah that was cut off, but not for Himself on April 6, 32 AD? I think most people's answer would be Jesus Christ, otherwise known as Y'shua the Messiah.

The New Testament begins with the Gospel of Matthew and declares to us in Chapter One and Verse One, "The book of the ancestry **of Jesus Christ, (Y'shua the Messiah), the Anointed One**, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Christ is not Jesus' last name, He was not the son of Joseph & Mary Christ, but it is His rank and title as the virgin born, only begotten Son of G-d, sent to be the Messenger of the Covenant to all Israel.

"Behold, I send My Messenger and He shall prepare the way before Me. And the L-RD, *the Messiah*, Whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple; the Messenger or Angel of the

¹ BCE = Before The Common Era same as BC

² CE = The Common Era same as AD

Covenant, Whom you desire, behold, He shall come, says the L-RD of Hosts.” (Malachi 3:1)

Y’shua knew who He was and G-d made it abundantly clear for the rest of us through the prophets who proclaimed both of His advents and His future ministry. Y’shua Himself declared that He was the Messiah and allowed others to do so from the beginning of His ministry until the time He spent with His disciples just after His Resurrection. These truths are recorded in the Holy Scriptures for all to see.

The Two Comings of The Messiah

“(Isaiah 9:6) {1st coming} For unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; {2nd coming} and the government shall be upon His shoulder, {1st coming} and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty G-d, Everlasting Father (of Eternity), Prince of Peace. (7) {2nd coming} Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from the (latter) time forth, even forevermore. The zeal of the L-RD of Hosts will perform this.”

“(Isaiah 11:1) {1st coming} And there shall come forth a Shoot out of the stock of Jesse [David’s father], and a Branch out of his roots shall grow and bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of the L-RD shall rest upon Him (*for He is the Messiah, the Anointed One*), the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the reverential fear of the L-RD. (3) And shall make Him of quick understanding and His delight shall be in the reverential fear of the L-RD. And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, neither decide by the hearing of His ears. {2nd coming} (4) But with righteousness and justice shall He judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the meek, the poor and downtrodden of the earth; and He shall smite the earth and the oppressor with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. (10) And it shall be in that day that the Root of Jesse shall stand for a signal to the peoples; of Him shall the nations inquire

and seek knowledge, and His dwelling shall be glory and His rest glorious!”

“(Isaiah 61:1) {1st coming} the Spirit of the L-RD G-d is upon me, because the L-RD has anointed me (*The Messiah*) to preach the Gospel of good tidings to the meek, poor and afflicted; He has sent Me to bind up and heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the [*physical & spiritual*] captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; (2) to proclaim the acceptable year of the L-RD – the year of His favor - {2nd coming} and the day of vengeance of our G-d.”

In the ancient Hebrew Scriptures there are two distinct images of the Messiah. For centuries within Judaism, the Rabbinic commentators have resolved this quandary by deciding that there must be two different Messiahs. The first, Messiah Ben Joseph, to suffer for the sins of Israel and the second, Messiah Ben David, to conquer all Israel’s enemies and establish a reign of peace and prosperity. In the above passages we can clearly see that there are two comings of the same Messiah. I wonder if Pastor Hagee is overlooking the first mission of Messiah, as some of the Jewish leaders of the 1st Century did and relegating all of His Messianic attributes to His 2nd coming. We will now study the biblical passages that establish the 1st coming and initial mission of the Messiah, to suffer for the sins of His people and in so doing to become the Savior of the world.

Is Y’shua The Suffering Messiah?

“(Matthew 2:1) Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men (astrologers) from the east came to Jerusalem, asking (2) where is He Who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the east at it’s rising and have come to worship Him. (3) When Herod the king heard this, he was disturbed and troubled, and the whole of Jerusalem with him. (4) So he called together all the chief priests and learned men (the scribes) of the people and anxiously asked them where **The Christ (*The Messiah, The Anointed One*)** was to be born. (5) They

replied to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: (6) And you Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are not in any way least among the chief cities of Judah; for from you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.” (Micah 5:2)

“(Luke 2:11) For to you is born this day in the city of David, a **Savior, who is Messiah, the L-RD!**

“(Luke 2:25) Now there was a man in Jerusalem who name was Simeon and this man was righteous and devout, and looking for the Consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. (26) And it had been divinely revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen **The L-RD’s Messiah (The Anointed One)**. (27) And prompted by the Holy Spirit he came into the Temple; and when the parents brought the little child Y’shua to do for Him what was customary according to the Torah, (28) Simeon took Him up in his arms and praised and thanked G-d and said, (29) And now. L-RD, You are releasing Your servant to depart in peace, according to Your Word. (30) **For with my own eyes I have seen Your Salvation (Your Y’shua), (31) which You have prepared before all peoples, (32) A light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel.**”

Pastor Hagee quoted verse 32 as a proof text that Y’shua was sent first for the Gentiles and later for the Jews, at His 2nd coming. But the next verse that I quote says different.

“(Matthew 15:24) I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

“(Matthew 2:16) And when Y’shua was baptized (ritually immersed in water), He went up at once out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he (John) saw the Spirit of G-d descending like a dove (*anointing Him as Messiah*). (17) And behold, a voice from heaven said, **This is My Son, My beloved, in whom I delight!**”

“(John 1:29) The next day John saw Y’shua coming to him and said, **Behold, There is the Lamb of G-d, who takes away the sin of the world.** (32) John gave further evidence, saying, **I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and it dwelt on Him (*anointing Him to be the Messiah*).**”

“(John 1:41) Andrew sought and found his own brother, Simon and said to him, **We have found The Messiah (*The Anointed One*).** (45) Phillip sought and found Nathaniel and told him, **We have found him of Whom Moses and the Prophets did write, Y’shua from Nazareth.**”

“(Luke 7:11) Soon afterward, Y’shua went to a town called Nain, and His disciples and a great throng accompanied Him. (12) Just as He drew near the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out – the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a large gathering from the town was accompanying her. (13) And when the L-RD saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, Do not weep. (14) And He went forward and touched the funeral bier, and the pallbearers stood still. And He said, Young man, I say to you, arise! (15) And the man who was dead sat up and began to speak. And Y’shua gave him back to his mother.

(16) Profound and reverent fear seized them all and they began to recognize G-d and praise and give thanks, saying A great Prophet has appeared among us! And G-d has visited His people! (17) And this report concerning Y’shua spread throughout the whole of Judea and all the country round about. (18) And John’s disciples brought him (who was now in prison) word of all these things. (19) And John summoned to him a certain two of his disciples and sent them to the L-RD saying, Are You He Who is to come, or shall we continue to look for another?

(20) So the men came to Y’shua and said, John the Immerser sent us to You to ask, **Are You the One Who is to come, or shall we continue to look for another?** (21) In that very hour Y’shua was healing many people of sickness, plagues, and evil spirits, and to many who were blind He gave sight. (22) **So He replied to them, go tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight,**

the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Good News of the Gospel preached to them.”

“(Matthew 16:13) Now when Y’shua went into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, who do people say that the Son of Man is? (14) And they answered, Some say John the Immerser; others say Elijah; and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. (15) And Y’shua said to His disciples, **but who do you say that I AM?** (16) Simon Peter replied, **You are the Messiah, the Son of the living G-d.** (17) Then Y’shua answered him, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (20) **Then He sternly charged the disciples to tell no one that He was the Messiah.** (21) From that time forth Y’shua began clearly to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the high priests, and scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised from death.”

Pastor Hagee quotes verse 20 to prove that Y’shua did want His people to know that He was the Messiah. It is my conviction that it was because He did not want His ministry to be hindered by throngs of people trying to crown Him as King Messiah (John 6:14-15), interfering with His mission to suffer & die for our sins. In Luke 7:16-17 He doesn’t try to stop all the excitement about His ministry, but rather uses it to prove to John that He is the Messiah.

Y’shua Publicly Testifies That He Is The Messiah

“(Mark 14:61) But He kept still and did not answer at all. Again the high priest asked Him, **Are you the Messiah (the Anointed One), the son of the Blessed?** (62) **And Y’shua said, I AM; and you will all see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”**

“(John 4:25) The (Samaritan) woman (at Jacob’s Well) said to Him, **I know that Messiah is coming,** He Who is called The Christ (*The*

Anointed One); and when He arrives, He will tell us everything we need to know and make it clear to us. (26) Y’shua said to her, **I Who now speak with you am He.”**

“(John 7:37) Now on the final and most important day of the Feast, Y’shua stood and He cried in a loud voice. **If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink!** (38) **He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.”**

“(John 10:23) And Y’shua was walking in Solomon’s Porch in the temple area. (24) So the Jews surrounded Him and began asking Him, How long are You going to keep us in suspense? **If you are really the Messiah tell us plainly.** (25) Y’shua answered them, **I have told you so, yet you do not believe Me.** The very works that I do by the power of My Father and in My Father’s name bear witness concerning Me. (30) **I and My Father are One.** (31) Again the Jewish leaders brought up stones to stone Him. (32) Y’shua said to them, My Father has enabled Me to do many good deeds. For which of these do you mean to stone me? (33) the Jewish leaders replied, **We are not going to stone You for a good deed, but for blasphemy, because You, a mere man, make Yourself to be G-d.”**

“(John 11:27) She (*Martha*) said to Him, Yes, L-RD, I have believed that **You are the Messiah (The Anointed One), the Son of G-d,** who was come into the world.

“(Luke 24:25) And Y’shua said to them, O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe everything that the prophets have spoken! (26) **Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer all these things before entering into His glory?** (27) Then beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he went on explaining to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

The Apostles Preached Y’shua as Messiah

“(Acts 2:31) He (King David), foreseeing this, spoke (by prophetic foreknowledge) of **the**

resurrection of The Messiah (*The Anointed One*), that He was not deserted (in death) and left in Hades, nor did His body know decay or see destruction.” (Psalm 16:10)

“(Acts 3:6) But Peter said, silver and gold have I none; but what I do have, I give to you: **in the name of Y’shua The Messiah of Nazareth**, rise up and walk!”

“(Acts 3:18) Thus has G-d fulfilled what He foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, **that His Messiah should undergo ill treatment and be afflicted and suffer.**”

“(Acts 4:10) **Be it know unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Y’shua The Messiah of Nazareth**, whom you crucified, whom G-d raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you whole.

Did Y’shua claim to be the Messiah? Yes! Did the apostles believe and preach that He was the Messiah? Yes! Did the Jewish people of his day understand his claim to be the Messiah? Yes! Do the Jewish people need to accept Y’shua as their Messiah to receive the gift of eternal life? Yes!

“(John 14:6) Y’shua said unto him, **I AM The Way, The Truth, and The Life; no man comes to the Father, but by me.**”

“(Acts 4:12) **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**”

I believe in the depths of his heart that Pastor Hagee loves the Jewish people and wants to stop the church from abusing them any longer. Yet how great an error does He make by denying them the revelation that they need to receive Y’shua as Messiah, that He is the only way of salvation provided for all mankind.

“(John17:3) **And this is eternal life: to know You the only true G-d, and Jesus the Messiah, Whom You have sent.**”

“(John 20:31) **These things are written in order that you may believe that Y’shua (Jesus) is The Messiah (*The Anointed One*), the Son of G-d, and that through believing you may have live through His name.**”

“(Romans 1:16) **For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Messiah: for it is the power of G-d unto salvation to every one that believes: to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.**”

Y’shua is both the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of the World! Thanks be to G-d forever for His unspeakable gift, Amen & Amen!