

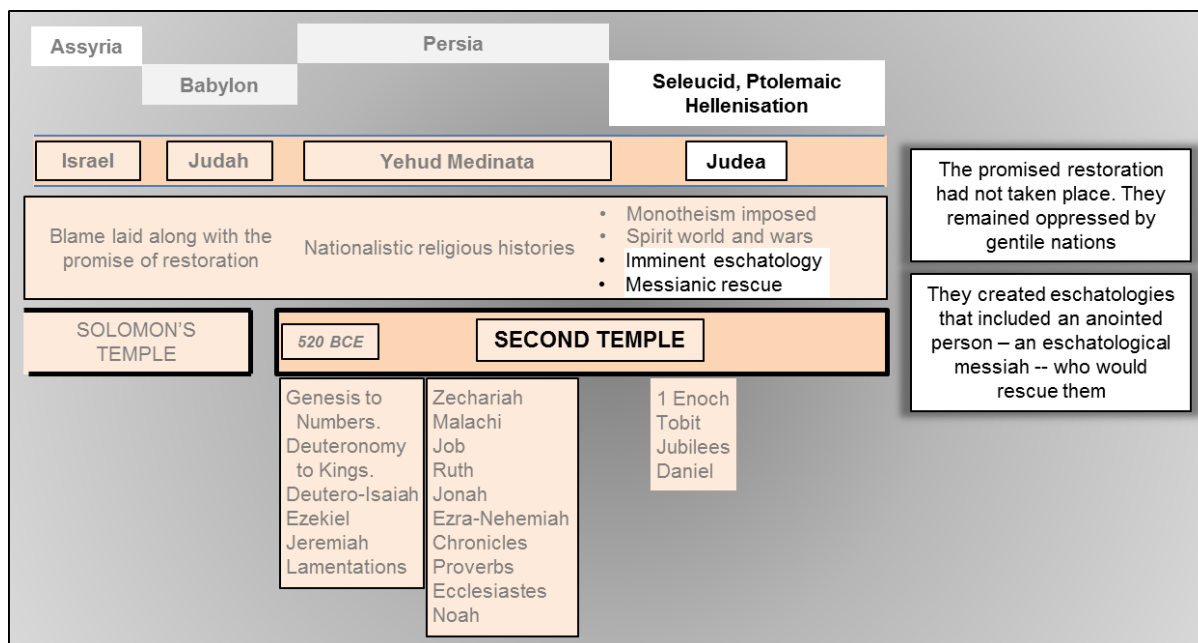
MESSIAHS EMERGED:

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Doug Mason

doug_mason1940@yahoo.com.au

This will become a Chapter in my Study on the Second Temple period. This diagram illustrates the location in the Study where this Chapter fits:



SUMMARY

THE LITERAL MEANING OF THE WORD MESSIAH (CHRIST)

- “*Messiah*” in the Old Testament alluded to a currently reigning “anointed one”
- Christos was originally an adjective – not a noun – meaning “anointed (with ointment or oil)”

JEWISH CONCEPTS OF “MESSIAH(S)” WERE VAGUE

- Jewish hope for messiah(s) was never the centre of religious concern for its own sake
- Neither “messiah” nor “son of God” automatically conveys a specific meaning
- Jews did not distinguish between concepts of “the Messiah” and others
- The Jewish texts do not reveal a coherent picture
- “Son of God” could be applied to the Jewish people or to an individual close to God

ANOINTED POSITIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Only the high priest and the king were anointed
- David’s descendants were Yahweh’s anointed without requiring symbolic anointing by a priest

THE JEWS DID NOT USE “THE MESSIAH” AS A NOUN

- The term “the Messiah” does not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)
- The Old Testament does not contain a programmed mission for “the Messiah”
- Neither “Messiah” nor “Christ” is used as a noun in the Old Testament Apocrypha

OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES DID NOT PREDICT A FUTURE APOCALYPTIC “MESSIAH”

- Some important Old Testament passages were implicitly messianic but they do not predict an apocalyptic, eschatological “Messiah”

- In Deutero-Isaiah, the servant is explicitly identified as Israel but in 1 Enoch the servant is an individual
- Many scholars do not see the four Servant Songs of Isaiah connected with a future Savior king

THE SEPTUAGINT AMENDED THE CONCEPT OF “MESSIAH”

- The Septuagint (LXX) does not have a uniform messianism
- The Septuagint gave the messianic connotation a different nuance
- The Septuagint often obscures possible references to an individual royal Messiah
- Scholars disagree regarding the degree to which messianic expectation can be detected in the Septuagint (LXX)
- Messianic readings are not prominent in the Greek LXX

LATE IN THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD, JEWS CREATED A FUTURE “MESSIAH”

- Probably in the Hellenistic period, Jews came to use *māšīah* (Greek: *christos*) to designate God’s future agent to restore Israel
- “The Messiah” appears with unusual frequency and urgency especially from the first Century B.C.E. to 135 C.E.
- Jewish messianology developed out of the crisis and hope in the second Century B.C.E.
- *Psalms of Solomon* tied the restoration of Israel to a descendant of David as “the Lord’s anointed one”
- The corruption of the Hasmonean “kings” apparently stimulated a messianology that portrayed a Messiah who was not a king (*PssSol* 17)
- There is no clear development of the messianic expectation until the times of the Maccabees and Hasmoneans
- The earliest explicit use of the term "Messiah" or "Christ" technically is in the first Century B.C.E.
- “The Anointed One” (“Messiah”) at Daniel 9 referred to the anointed high priest Onias III

THE JEWS HAD VARIOUS UNDERSTANDINGS OF “THE MESSIAH”

- Numerous early Jewish sources provide various portrayals of the Messiah
- The Messiah is not portrayed in Early Judaism as a miracle worker
- No evidence that Jews in Jesus’ time expected the Messiah would suffer
- Old Testament Pseudepigrapha contain some of the most impressive and significant records of Jewish messianism
- We are left with uncertain, and perhaps fluid, Messianic traditions
- Not all Jews expected the Messiah to be a military figure (*Psalms of Solomon* 17; *2 Baruch* 72)
- *Psalms of Solomon* was written before 70 C.E.
- Inconsistencies regarding the Messiah
- The Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls show that there was no coherent early messianology

QUMRAN DOCUMENTS ON “THE MESSIAH(S)”

- Most of the Qumran documents do not contain the noun "Messiah"
- While the Pharisees and the Qumran community, looked to idealized "anointed" figures, the Jewish peasantry recognised *kings*
- The Qumran community expected two messiahs
- The earliest Qumran documents with an eschatological messianic figure date to the period 100 – 50 B.C.E.

THE SIMILITUDES (1 ENOCH 37-71)

- Dating *The Similitudes* (1 Enoch 37-71) to before 40 C.E.
- *1 Enoch* depicted the messianic, elect, “son of man” in exalted terms
- *The Similitudes* provide Daniel’s “son of man” title with a completely new concept

PAUL AND THE EARLY JESUS MOVEMENT

- Paul and the Gospels are not reliable resources for earlier Messianic beliefs
- In the early Palestinian Jesus Movement, “Christ” was a proper name

THE MESSIANIC STATUS OF JESUS AFTER PAUL’S DEATH

- The messianic status of Jesus was not a matter of concern until the generation following Paul’s career
- Some ask how well Paul connected the term *christos* to an understanding of Jesus as “Messiah,”
- The Gospels were composed after Paul and several decades after the beginning of the Christian movement
- In Mark, Jesus does not proclaim he is the Messiah; he does not accept Peter’s confession; and he orders that it be kept secret
- Mark does not openly declare that Jesus is the Messiah
- In Mark, Jesus’ vision of his messianic role was not that of a Davidic, royal figure with military intentions
- Mark: Apparently none of the pre-Christian definitions of *christos* prepared anyone to understand Jesus’ mission
- Mark: How can messiah be David’ Son if the Messiah is his Lord?
- John’s Gospel displays the redefinition and tension over *christos* in early Christianity
- The connection between *christos* and Jesus’ suffering in 1 Peter indicates his crucifixion was seen as a messianic event
- Revelation includes *christos* as a messianic title
- Messianology does not easily flow into Christology
- Terms as “messiah” and “son of David” are remarkably infrequent prior to the end of the first century A.D.
- The New Testament makes little of the matter concerning the Davidic Messiah

MESSAGES ATTRIBUTED TO JESUS

- No saying of Jesus mentions the Messiah-king who is to crush the enemies of the People
- Jesus’ message was not messianic
- Jesus never proclaimed himself to be the Messiah
- Jesus conformed to none of the traditional “Son of David” messianic descriptions
- Jesus did not accept himself as a political saviour-king

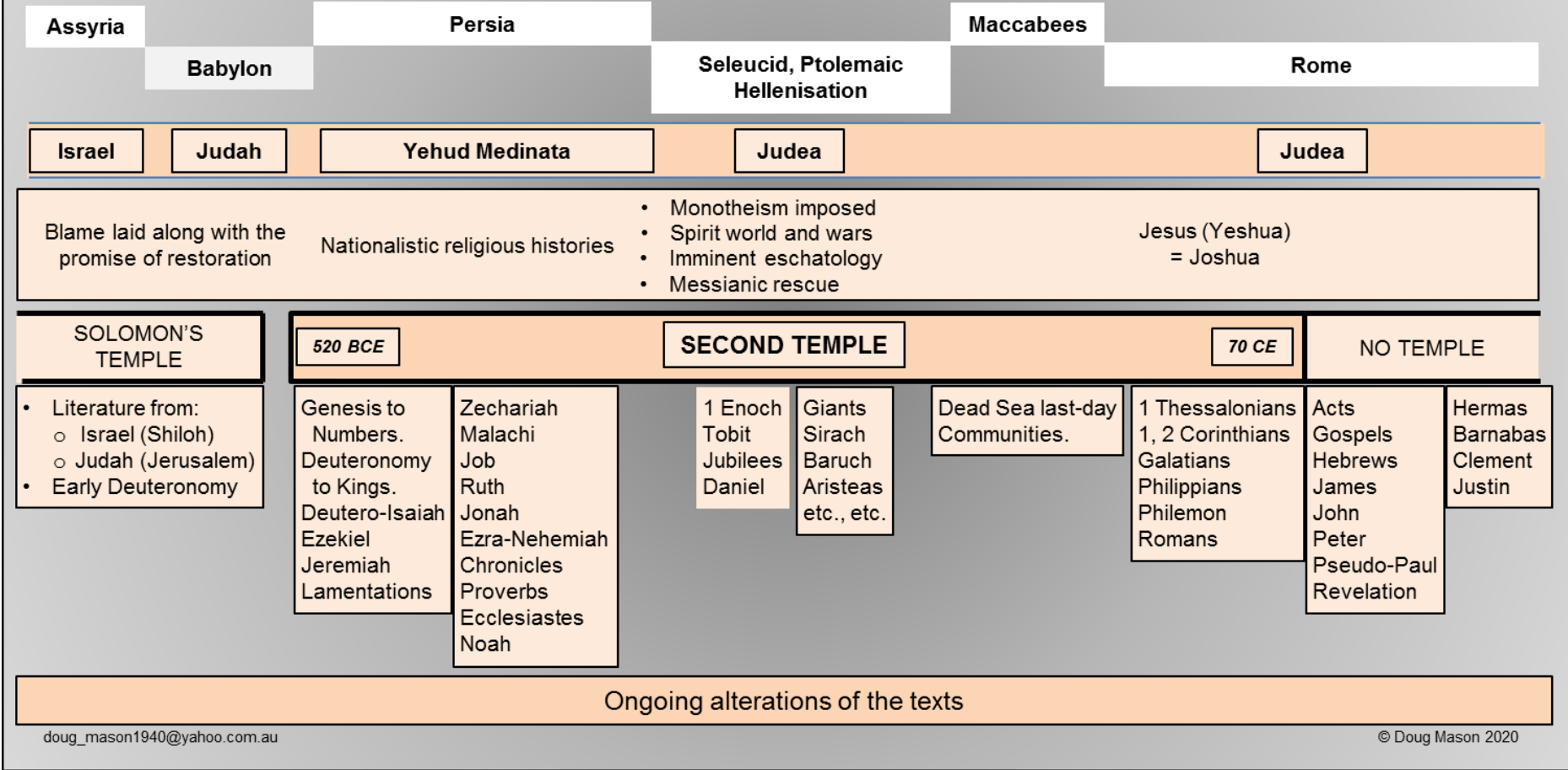
OTHER TITLES OF HONOUR ATTRIBUTED TO JESUS

- When it proclaimed salvation in Christ, the NT made use of other titles of honour
- Hebrews 1 refers to Jesus’ anointing at his ceremonial enthronement
- Jesus’ message focused on the coming of God’s Kingdom, not the kingdom of the Messiah
- Proclamations and teachings in the earliest Jesus communities are evidence of what the earliest “Christians” created
- The old “Christian” tradition claimed that Jesus would fulfil the messianic prophecies when he returns in the future as the Christ
- Jesus was not celebrated by his earliest followers as “a” or “the” new David

4 EZRA AND 2 BARUCH

- 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch written about 100 C.E.
- 4 Ezra was written about 100 C.E.
- The death of the Messiah in 4 Ezra 7:29 simply marks the end of a set period
- The judgment commences only after the Messiah dies (4 Ezra 7; 2 Baruch 40)
- The Messiah does not bring in a new age (4 Ezra 7)

SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM WROTE AND REWROTE



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THE LITERAL MEANING OF THE WORD MESSIAH (CHRIST)

“Messiah” in the Old Testament alluded to a currently reigning “anointed one”

It would help if we have a clear description of the concepts Messiah and Messianic idea.

- ❖ the term “Messiah” in the Old Testament is consistently employed as a royal title and means “anointed one”. The Greek translation employs the term “Christos”. The expression “Jesus Christ” is thus identical to the expression “Jesus Messiah”. The title “Messiah” in the Old Testament mostly alludes to a reigning king and never to a future idealised salvific figure. It was only later that the expression took on the more specific significance of “future redeemer”.
- ❖ This does not prevent us from arguing that the Messianic *idea* was already present in Israel at an earlier date. The people expected a miraculous redeemer who would bring God’s promises to definitive completion. Such a description can be considered a general definition of “individual Messianism”.
- ❖ It is possible to speak in addition of a collective Messianism or a Messianism without an individual messiah. Such Messianism expected an ideal endtime for this world, in which God’s dominion would ensure the triumph of righteousness. This pattern of expectation would seem to have less space for a human ruler-redeemer. (Lust, 216)

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Messianism is the expectation of an individual human and yet transcendent saviour. He is to come in a final eschatological period and will establish God’s Kingdom on earth. In a more strict sense, messianism is the expectation of a royal Davidic saviour at the end time. (Lust, 10)

Christos was originally an adjective – not a noun – meaning “anointed (with ointment or oil)”

The Greek word translated “christ” (christos) appears 531 times in the NT. ... The term christ is an anglicized form of the Greek word *christos*, originally an adjective meaning “anointed (with ointment or oil)” from the verb *chriō* (“to anoint or smear with oil or ointment”). *Christos* had no special religious significance in Greek culture prior to the influence of ancient Jewish and Christian usage. ...

In ancient Greek-speaking Jewish and Christian circles *christos* translates the Hebrew term *māšîah* about forty-five times in the LXX, which likewise means “anointed (with oil)” but carries a special significance owing to the Israelite practice of anointing with oil a person installed in a special office, such as king or priest. (Reid, 141)

SUMMARY

JEWISH CONCEPTS OF “MESSIAH(S)” WERE VAGUE

Jewish hope for messiah(s) was never the centre of religious concern for its own sake

In the Jewish texts the expectations and speculations about messiah(s) are tied to and overshadowed by other aspirations, such as freedom of the Jewish people from Gentile domination, and/or the triumph of a particular religious vision of the divine will (e.g., at Qumran), and/or a more general longing for God’s kingdom or triumph over unrighteousness and injustice.

That is, Jewish hope for messiah(s) was never the center of religious concern for its own sake but functioned as part of the attempt to project God’s eschatological

triumph and the realization of aspirations connected with God's triumph. This contrasts with the way the person of Jesus quickly became central and vital in early Christian devotion. (Reid, 142)

The messianic expectation for Jews is a more vague and complex concept

Messianism represents one of the most significant points of disagreement whereby Jews and Christians follow distinct paths. For Christians the Messiah is an individual figure. The messianic expectation for Jews, however, is a more vague and complex concept that has been cast in a variety of mostly collective hues. The Jews expect the advent of a messianic kingdom at the end of time rather than a messianic king. (Lust, 216)

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The Septuagint clearly does not accentuate the messianic idea in any systematic fashion. (Lust, 218)

Neither "messiah" nor "son of God" automatically conveys a specific meaning

Since neither "messiah" nor "son of God" automatically conveys a specific meaning, the significance of these terms must be determined by studying how each author uses them.

(Sanders, E. P.: Encyclopedia Britannica, *St Paul the Apostle: Christology*.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Paul-the-Apostle/Theological-views>

(accessed 8 August 2020)

Jews did not distinguish between concepts of "the Messiah" and others, such as "the Son of Man", and the Righteous One"

Another question has been disclosed to be misleading: How did Jews distinguish between the concept of "the Messiah" and other concepts, such as "the Son of Man," "the Righteous One," and "the Elect One"? It will come as a shock to many scholars that this is a very poor question. It is inappropriate because it assumes that all Jews made such a distinction. In fact, according to the Book of the Parables of Enoch (= IEn 37-71), which was composed by a Palestinian Jew before 70 C.E., these four concepts were related and at times identical. There was considerable fluidity among the various titles that could be or become messianic titles. (Charlesworth (1992), 13)

The few Jewish texts that contain references to "the Messiah", "Christ", or "Anointed One" do not reveal a coherent picture

Most of the Jewish texts contain no reference to "a" or "the" Messiah or to "a" or "the" Christ. The texts that do contain references to "the Messiah," "Christ," or "Anointed One" do not reveal a coherent picture. (Charlesworth (1992), 14)

"Son of God" in the Hebrew Bible is used metaphorically and could be applied to the Jewish people or to any individual who was close to God

Various Jewish groups, however, expected different kings or messiahs or even none at all, and these titles therefore did not have precise meanings when the Christians started using them. "Son of God" in the [Hebrew Bible](#) is used metaphorically (God is the father, human beings are his children), and this usage continued in postbiblical Jewish literature. The Jewish people in general could be called "sons of God," and the singular "son of God" could be applied to individuals who were especially close to God.

(Sanders, E. P.: Encyclopedia Britannica, *St Paul the Apostle: Christology*.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Paul-the-Apostle/Theological-views>

(accessed 8 August 2020)

SUMMARY

ANOINTED POSITIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In Jewish OT interpretation, only the high priest and the king were anointed

In the OT two office-bearers are expressly described as *māšīaḥ* i.e., as anointed (with oil): the high priest (the one responsible for the official cult) and the king. In both cases the anointing, corresponding to its character as a legal act, was essential for the conferring of the authority connected with the office and for the resulting responsibility before God. However, in Jewish OT interpretation only the figure of the king was reckoned as messianic in the sense of specific messianic expectation. (Verbrugge, 610)

David's descendants were Yahweh's anointed without requiring symbolic anointing by a priest

The descendants of David were regarded as his successors to the throne (2 Sam. 7), as Yahweh's anointed, without having in every instance been symbolically anointed by a prophet. Anointing by Yahweh is sometimes coupled with the gift of the Spirit and Yahweh's special protection (e.g., 1 Sam. 16:13; 24:6-11; 26:9-23). Thus, the anointed one stood in direct contact with God and was regarded as inviolate. The high priest was also anointed (Exod. 29:7), as were other priests (40:15). (Verbrugge, 613)

SUMMARY

THE JEWS DID NOT USE "THE MESSIAH" AS A NOUN

The term "the Messiah" does not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament)

The term "the Messiah" simply does not appear in the Hebrew Scriptures (or Old Testament). ... The very conservative New Testament specialist [the late] Professor George Eldon Ladd states, without qualification, that "the simple term 'the Messiah' does not occur in the Old Testament at all" – Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, p. 136. (Charlesworth (1992), 11)

The Old Testament does not contain a programmed mission for "the Messiah"

Matthew does not represent a putative¹ Jewish viewpoint, and the Old Testament does not contain a programmed mission for "the Messiah". (Charlesworth (1992), 4)

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Early Jewish literature, however, cannot be mined to produce anything like a checklist of what the Messiah shall do. (Charlesworth (1992), 6)

Neither "Messiah" nor "Christ" is used as a noun in the Old Testament Apocrypha

The noun "Messiah" or "Christ" does not appear in the thirteen books in the Old Testament Apocrypha. (Charlesworth (1992), 16)

SUMMARY

¹ PUTATIVE: (1) *commonly accepted or supposed*; (2) *assumed to exist or to have existed*. (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/putative> accessed 7 August 2020)

OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES DID NOT PREDICT A FUTURE APOCALYPTIC “MESSIAH”

Some important Old Testament passages were implicitly messianic but they do not predict an apocalyptic, eschatological “Messiah”

The Hebrew Scriptures (or Old Testament) certainly do contain some extremely important passages that were implicitly messianic, such as Psalm 2, 2 Samuel 7, Isaiah 7, 9 and 11, Zechariah 9, and Dan 9:26. These passages may be defined as “messianic” so long as this adjective is not used to denote the prediction of an apocalyptic, eschatological “Messiah.” (Charlesworth (1992), 11-12)

In Deutero-Isaiah, the servant is explicitly identified as Israel but in 1 Enoch the servant is an individual

The dependence of the Similitudes on 2 [Deutero]-Isaiah is undoubted, but, as with Daniel 7, the author has reinterpreted his biblical base. In 2 Isaiah the servant is, of course, explicitly identified as Israel (41:8; 44:1; 49:3, etc.), but in 1 Enoch the titles of the servant are applied to an individual. (Vanderkam in Charlesworth (1992), 190)

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The theme of a *suffering* servant in Isaiah does not form part of [1 Enoch’s] appropriation of motifs from the biblical source. In the Similitudes, the chosen one/son of man does not suffer. Rather, the focus there is upon his exaltation and his extraordinary status at the end of time. In these two respects—messianic understanding of the servant and separation of suffering from him—the Similitudes offer a precedent for the treatment of the servant found in Targum Jonathan. (Vanderkam in Charlesworth (1992), 190)

Many scholars do not see the four Servant Songs of Isaiah connected with a future Saviour king

It is difficult to give a precise answer to the question whether not the Servant Songs (Isa. 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12) refer to a kingly figure as Messiah. Many scholars are not inclined to allow here an essential connection with the expectation of a future Savior king. (Verbrugge, 611)

SUMMARY

THE SEPTUAGINT AMENDED THE CONCEPT OF “MESSIAH”

The Septuagint (LXX) does not have a uniform messianism

In questions of theology such as messianism, one cannot treat the LXX as a unified entity. Each relevant text should be studied on its own. At the present stage of the investigation we may conclude that the LXX certainly does not display a uniform picture of a developing royal messianism. (Lust, 26)

The Septuagint gave the messianic connotation a different nuance

Neither should one overlook those texts in which the messianic connotation has been weakened or given a different nuance by the LXX. Among the latter, several series can be distinguished.

The first series is characterised by a “collectivising” interpretation. Isa 42,1 offers a good example. The Hebrew original allows or even suggests the identification of the Servant Messiah as an individual: “Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights” (RSV). The LXX definitely opts in favour of a collective interpretation: “Jacob is my servant, I will help him; Israel is my chosen, my soul has accepted him”. A similar “collectivising” tendency may be identified in Isa 4,2; 49,1-

6; Micah 5,2; Ps 89,4. It converges with a trend traceable in some post-exilic Hebrew texts.

The second series, partly coinciding with the first, exhibits another remarkable shift in accent. Where the Hebrew underlines the role of the royal saviour, the LXX draws attention to God as the one who sends the saviour. The best example here is Isa 9,5-6 (9,6-7 RSV). ...

Third, in some passages in the LXX, the eschatological outlook is replaced by an actualising tendency. Dan 9,25-26 may serve as an example here. In v. 26 of the LXX, it is suggested that the anointed one is the contemporaneous high priest Onias III, murdered in 171 BCE. The emphasis here is on the present and not on the remote messianic future as it is in the Hebrew. (Lust, 11-12)

The Septuagint often obscures possible references to an individual royal Messiah

When the Septuagint deviates from the Masoretic Text it often obscures possible references to an individual royal Messiah. A fine example can be found in Isa 9,5(6).

The Hebrew text reads: “For to us a child is born, a son given to us; and the government is upon his shoulders; and his name is called Wonderful Counsellor, *Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*”.

The Septuagint reads: “For to us a child is born, *and* a son given to us whose government is upon his shoulders; and his name is called *Messenger of “Great Counsel”*. *For I will bring peace...*”. The Hebrew text ascribes a number of titles to the new-born crown prince that can be interpreted as divine names. In order to avoid any suggestion that the new-born prince should be seen as a god, the translation inserted the word “messenger”. The names that follow thus no longer apply to the human crown prince and expected saviour, but rather to the God of whom he is the messenger. (Lust, 217)

Scholars disagree regarding the degree to which messianic expectation can be detected in the Septuagint (LXX)

Messianism and the Septuagint. Scholars disagree regarding the degree to which messianic expectation can be detected in the Greek translation. We must appreciate the diversity that characterized early Judaism, and distinctions need to be made between texts viewed as messianic prior to the Christian era and texts that were appropriated by the NT writers in reference to Jesus. (Jobes, 326)

Messianic readings are not prominent in the Greek LXX

Although one might expect messianism to be present in the LXX, it is in fact not a prominent element, especially in comparison with the messianic themes in the Semitic Palestinian texts of the same period. (Jobes, 341)

SUMMARY

LATE IN THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD, JEWS CREATED A FUTURE “MESSIAH”

Probably in the Hellenistic period, Jews came to use *māšîah* (Greek: *christos*) to designate God’s future agent to restore Israel

In postexilic OT texts one finds the hope for a renewed (Davidic) monarchy, often pictured with grandiose dimensions and qualities (e.g., Hag 2:20-23; Zech 9:9-10; 12:7-13:1). Out of this hope, but probably not until sometime in the Hellenistic period (after 331 B.C.), Jews came to use *māšîah* (and the Greek equivalent, *christos*) as a

designation for a future agent (“messiah”) to be sent by God, usually to restore Israel’s independence and righteousness. (Reid, 141)

“The Messiah” appears with unusual frequency and urgency especially from the first Century B.C.E. to 135 C.E.

The noun, term, or title “the Messiah” appears rarely in the literature of Early Judaism or from roughly 250 B.C.E. to 200 C.E. But it is also true that in the whole history of Israel and Pre-Rabbinic Judaism “the Messiah” appears with unusual frequency and urgency only during this period, especially from the first Century B.C.E. to 135 C.E. (Charlesworth (1992), 12)

Jewish messianology developed out of the crisis and hope in the second Century B.C.E.

Jewish messianology developed out of the crisis and hope of the nonmessianic Maccabean wars of the second Century B.C.E. (Charlesworth (1992), 3)

***Psalms of Solomon* tied the restoration of Israel to a descendant of David as “the Lord’s anointed one”**

In the *Psalms of Solomon* (late first century B.C.), however, hope for the restoration of Israel is tied to God’s raising up a descendant of David as “the Lord’s anointed one” (*christos kyriou*, Pss. Sol. 17:32; 18:7), and the messianism here is of a purely royal variety. (Reid, 142)

The corruption of the Hasmonean “kings” apparently stimulated a messianology that portrayed a Messiah who was not a king (*PssSol 17*)

Psalms of Solomon 17 seems to contain a polemic against the Hasmonean dynasty, which in its final years became decadent and in which the rulers, beginning with Aristobulus I (104-103) claimed the title of “king” (see *PssSol 17:5-6*). Hence the corruption of the Hasmonean “kings” apparently stimulated a messianology that portrayed a Messiah who was not a king. (Charlesworth (1992), 22)

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Jewish messianology exploded into the history of ideas in the early first Century B.C.E., and not earlier, because of the degeneration in the Hasmonean dynasty and the claim of the final ruling Hasmoneans, especially Alexander Jannaeus, to be “the king,” (Charlesworth (1992), 35)

There is no clear development of the messianic expectation until the times of the Maccabees and Hasmoneans

The OT does not appear to exhibit any clear development of the messianic expectation. ... It is not until the Hel[enistic] period that this is overtaken by a sharp materialization of the concept in the direction of the expectation of an ideal eschatological Jewish national ruler who would nonetheless transcend national frontiers. It seems that the details, at least in part, were taken from the picture of the Maccabees and Hasmoneans and introduced into the older expectation oriented toward the memory of David. We see this most clearly in *Psalms of Solomon*.² 17:21-40; 18:3-9. (Verbrugge, 611)

The earliest explicit use of the term "Messiah" or "Christ" technically is in the first Century B.C.E.

According to the texts collected into the Pseudepigrapha, the earliest explicit use of the *terminus technicus*—“Messiah” or “Christ”—is the first Century B.C.E. in the *Psalms of Solomon* and in the book of the *Parables of Enoch*. Prior to that time, the

² On Messianism and the Psalms of Solomon, see: **Embry**, Brad. *The Psalms of Solomon and the New Testament: Intertextuality and the Need for a Re-Evaluation*. St John’s College, University of Durham. [Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha, 13.2 (2002) 99-136] ISSN 0951-8207

Jews had not experienced the horrifying corruption by Hasmonean "kings" and did not fear the Romans. ... In the second Century B.C.E. most Jews considered the Hasmoneans the agents of God and the Romans their allies and friends." The successes of the early Hasmoneans or Maccabees left no vacuum in which to yearn for the coming of a Messiah. (Charlesworth (1992), 24)

“The Anointed One” (“Messiah”) at Daniel 9 referred to the anointed high priest Onias III

One key passage shows how, almost by accident, particular historical individuals gained a new significance in the universal scheme:

“From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’... After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Daniel 9:25–26, NIV).

The Anointed One is, literally, a messiah, and he will be put to death. Not surprisingly, later believers have found here a ringing prophecy of the Crucifixion; the King James Bible even uses the words “Messiah, the Prince.” But the author of Daniel had no such messianic intentions. Rather, his retroactive prophecy concerns an individual who was a significant player in the affairs of his own time, but who today is recalled only by the very narrow band of specialists in that era. The reference is to the former high priest Onias III, who was murdered in 170 as a result of court intrigues.

Because he had served as high priest, Onias was “anointed,” the word translated as “messiah,” so that the allusive passages describing his murder receive eschatological significance. This was by no means the only instance in which a sordid sectarian conflict was projected into cosmic affairs and remembered in that context for millennia afterward. (Jenkins, Philip. *Crucible of Faith: The Ancient Revolution That Made Our Modern Religious World*, 121)

SUMMARY

THE JEWS HAD VARIOUS UNDERSTANDINGS OF “THE MESSIAH”

Numerous early Jewish sources provide various portrayals of the Messiah

We have numerous early Jewish sources that portray the Messiah, variously, as one who will serve as the eschatological high priest (the Dead Sea Scrolls, the T12P), or as the consummate benevolent and all-powerful king (PssSol 17). Numerous functions are sometimes attributed to the Messiah: He will judge the wicked (PssSol 17, 4Ezra 12, 2Bar 40), destroy them (PssSol 17, 18; 4Ezra 12, 2Bar 72; c f Isa 11), deliver God’s people (PssSol 17, 4Ezra 12; c f Zech 9), and/or reign in a blessed kingdom (PssSol 17, 18; 2Bar 40; c f Ps 2).

The Messiah is not portrayed in Early Judaism as a miracle worker

Jesus’ actions were decidedly not those often associated with the Messiah. He certainly performed miracles, as we know assuredly from studying the Evangelists’ sources, Josephus, and Rabbinics; but the Messiah is not portrayed in Early Judaism as a miracle worker (even though he does perform wonders in 4Ezra 13). (Charlesworth (1992), 8)

No evidence that Jews in Jesus’ time expected the Messiah would suffer

We still have no evidence that Jews during the time of Jesus considered that God’s Messiah would come and suffer. (Charlesworth (1992), 8)

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha contain some of the most impressive and significant records of Jewish messianism

Today we know at least fifty-two documents under the category of the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha. In this collection we do indeed find some of the most impressive and significant records of Jewish messianism. (Charlesworth (1992), 16)

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The four early Jewish documents in the Pseudepigrapha contain the word “Messiah.” In chronological order they are the *Psalms of Solomon*, the *Parables of Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch*. These four documents date from 50 B.C.E. to 100 C.E., were composed by Palestinian Jews in a Semitic language, and are preserved in a Semitic language. The last three are apocalypses. (Charlesworth (1992), 19)

We are left with uncertain, and perhaps fluid, Messianic traditions

Messianic ideas were not necessarily Davidic. ... The Enoch group tended to link the Messiah with Enoch, and the Samaritans believed the Taheb was to be seen in terms of Moses. Psalm 2 preserves another record of the tradition that the Lord’s anointed (2:2), obviously seen in some early Jewish circles as the Messiah, is to be the son of God (2:7); but the connection of this future ideal king (2:6) with David is not made explicit. We are left with uncertain, and perhaps fluid, traditions. (Charlesworth (1992), 20)

Not all Jews expected the Messiah to be a military figure (*Psalms of Solomon 17; 2 Baruch 72*)

Did not most Jews assume the Messiah was to be a militant warrior? This conclusion is assumed by many perhaps most, New Testament specialists. They frequently argue that Jesus did not declare himself to be the Messiah because he would have been mistaken as a political and military leader. Explicit support for this bewitching view that Jews were expecting a militant Messiah is found among the early Jewish Pseudepigrapha only in *2 Baruch 72*. According to this section of *2 Baruch*, the Messiah will slay Israel’s enemies with the sword (*2 Bar 72:6*). In many other passages the stress is on the nonmilitary means of the Messiah. Both [*Psalms of Solomon*] 17:21-33 (*Footnote: The Messiah in PssSol 17 is a political figure and he does have some military functions; but most important for understanding the messianology of this psalm is 17:33—“he (the Messiah) will not rely on horse and rider and bow, /Nor will he build up hope in a multitude for a day of war.” I [Charlesworth] am convinced that this psalm was written against the belief that the Messiah will be a militant warrior. In that sense, of course, it may be taken as evidence for the existence of such a view. Was this view popular in the late or middle of the first Century B.C.E.?*) and *4 Ezra 13:4-11* emphasize that the Messiah will not rely on a sword, horse, or other military weapons. He will conquer not with a weapon in his hand but with what streams forth from his mouth, the word”: “Undergird him with the strength . . . to destroy the unlawful nations with the word of his mouth” (*PssSol 17:22-24*). (Charlesworth (1992), 20)

***Psalms of Solomon* was written before 70 C.E.**

M. de Jonge writes: “The *PssSol* do not describe historical events, but reflect them. They are clearly against the Hasmoneans. ... Psalm 8 clearly describes Pompey’s entry into Jerusalem in 63 BC, together with the events leading up to and following it (verses 15-21; cp. 17:7-14). ...

James C. VanderKam writes: “The date of the *Psalms of Solomon* cannot be determined precisely. The major clues come from Psalms 2, 8, and 17. ... They speak of native leaders who were not legitimate rulers. ... These appear to be the Hasmoneans. God raised up against them a foreign conqueror, who was welcomed to Jerusalem by some but who still had to take the city by force. He entered the temple

but later met his death in Egypt, where his body was left unburied on the beach. ... As nothing is said about the destruction of the temple, it is likely that the *Psalms of Solomon* were written before 70 CE.” (*An Introduction to Early Judaism*, p. 129)
<http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com/psalmssolomon.html> (accessed 8 August 2020)

Inconsistencies regarding the Messiah

According to 2 Baruch 30, the righteous alone will arise with the advent of the Messiah. According to 4 Ezra 7:28-29, however, both the righteous and the unrighteous will be resurrected only after the Messiah dies. (Charlesworth (1992), 23)

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Will the Messiah not establish a permanent and peaceful kingdom? This idea may have been once connected with early Jewish interpretations of Isaiah 7, 9, and 11, and Isaiah 42-45; it seems to be found in PssSol 17:21-32. In contrast to this idea, the apocalypses present us with two mutually exclusive ideas. According to 2 Baruch 36-40 and 4 Ezra 7, the kingdom of the Messiah will be finite; his kingdom will be part of the limited messianic age that precedes the eschaton. According to 1 Enoch 38 and 48-52, and 2 Baruch 73 and 74, however, his kingdom will be eschatological and eternal. (Charlesworth (1992), 23)

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Is the Messiah going to be a human? According to 2 Baruch, the Messiah seems to be a terrestrial king who shall embody all the dreams attributed to the kings of ancient Israel. According to 4 Ezra 12:31-34, the Messiah "will arise from the posterity of David." But according to 4 Ezra 13:3-14:9, he is depicted as a man who ascends out of the sea: *hominem qui ascenderit de mari*. Obviously we have seen contradictory traditions preserved by the authors of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch. (Charlesworth (1992), 23-24)

The Pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls show that there was no coherent early messianology

The complexity of messianic ideas, the lack of a coherent messianology among the documents in the Pseudepigrapha and among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the frequent contradictory messianic predictions prohibit anything approximating coherency in early Jewish messianology. ... It is impossible to define, and difficult to describe the messianology of the early Jews. (Charlesworth (1992), 27, 31)

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There is no discernible development in messianic beliefs from the first Century B.C.E. to the first Century C.E. Some Jewish writings in the first Century C.E. before 70—namely Pseudo-Philo and the Testament of Moses—show little interest in messianology and seem even to be antimessianic. The traditions in 4 Ezra, 2 Baruch, and the New Testament documents preserve a totally different picture. (Charlesworth (1992), 32)

SUMMARY

QUMRAN DOCUMENTS ON “THE MESSIAH(S)”

Most of the Qumran documents do not contain the noun "Messiah"

We now have well over 170 documents that probably were created, written, or redacted at Qumran. Most of them do not contain the noun "Messiah." Often omission this is startling, if the Qumran Community was a messianic group. ...

In addition to the Psalter’s 150 Psalms of David, other Davidic psalms were found, and some of these were intentionally written as Davidic Pseudepigrapha. Not one of

them is messianic. None of the Pesharim contains messianic exegesis. The Isaiah Peshier 1 (4Q161) makes only a frustratingly brief reference to the Branch of David which shall arise at the end of days. The Temple Scroll, which may have been brought to Qumran from elsewhere and edited in a final form in the scriptorium, does not contain one reference to the "Messiah." The fact seems strange in a document that is characterized by a tendency to subordinate the king to the priest.

Statistically we must admit that messianology was not a major concern of this [Qumran] Community, at least not in its early history. (Charlesworth (1992), 25)

While the Pharisees and the Qumran community, looked to idealized "anointed" figures, the Jewish peasantry recognised *kings*

While the two principal groups which left literary remains, the Pharisees and the Qumran community, looked to idealized "anointed" figures with either scribal features or primarily ceremonial functions, the Jewish peasantry at the time of Jesus produced *several concrete movements led by* figures recognized as *kings*, movements and leaders who actually ruled certain areas of the country for a time. (Horsley, 472)

The Qumran community expected two messiahs

In the Qumran texts, for example (150 B.C. – A.D. 70's), we find what appears to be an expectation of two "anointed" figures who would preside over the elect in the future: a "messiah of Israel" (probably a royal figure) and a "messiah of Aaron" (a priestly figure). (Reid, 142)

The earliest Qumran documents with an eschatological messianic figure date to the period 100 – 50 B.C.E.

We should seriously contemplate the possibility that the earliest phases of the Qumran Community were not messianic. (*Footnote: Caquot astutely observes that the early Maccabean crisis did not cause Jews to look for the Coming of the Messiah. I am in full agreement with Caquot that messianology developed in the Qumran Community after John Hyrcanus.*) ...

If we are seeking to discern the first use of "Messiah" to designate an eschatological figure in Jewish theology, these [Qumran] documents point us only to the first Century and probably to the period 100-50 B.C.E. (Charlesworth (1992), 27)

SUMMARY

THE SIMILITUDES (1 ENOCH 37-71)

Dating *The Similitudes* (1 Enoch 37-71) to before 40 C.E.

The *Similitudes* parallel the picture of early Christian eschatology as it appears to have prevailed shortly before Paul developed the new emphases in his letters to the Thessalonians. The stage of eschatological development reflected in the *Similitudes* is therefore highly compatible with that which the main line of Christian eschatology had probably reached in the late 40s A.D. A correspondingly early date is therefore indicated for the *Similitudes*. (Mearns, 369)

1 *Enoch* depicted the messianic, elect, "son of man" in exalted terms

1 *Enoch* conveys still another image, in which the messianic figure ("the elect one," "the son of man") is pictured in quite exalted terms in heavenly glory and seems to be identified as Enoch (cf. Gen. 5:21-14). (Reid, 142)

***The Similitudes* provide Daniel's "son of man" title with a completely new concept**

The demonstrable connections with the book of Daniel and the manner of the borrowing and revision of the Danielic material show that in the transition from

Daniel to the son of man concept of the Similitudes one is dealing with a process of interpretation, with an interpretation of the Danielic figure of the son of man. ... The Similitudes fill the son of man title with a completely new concept (new interpretation) and thereby constitute their own completely new son of man tradition. (Vanderkam in Charlesworth (1992), 190)

SUMMARY

PAUL AND THE EARLY JESUS MOVEMENT

Paul and the Gospels are not reliable resources for earlier Messianic beliefs

The gospels and Paul must not be read as if they are reliable sources for pre-70 Jewish beliefs in the Messiah. (Charlesworth (1992), 35)

In the early Palestinian Jesus Movement, “Christ” was a proper name

In the early Palestinian Jesus Movement, according to Acts 3:20, and in Paul’s letters, “Christ” is a proper name for Jesus of Nazareth. In the gospels it is a proper name or title (Mt 1:1, Mk 1:1, Lk 2:11, Jn 1:17). (Charlesworth (1992), 12)

SUMMARY

THE MESSIANIC STATUS OF JESUS AFTER PAUL’S DEATH

The messianic status of Jesus was not a matter of concern until the generation following Paul’s career

The earliest surviving Christian literature, the genuine letters of Paul (written over a fifteen-year period, 49 – 64 C.E.) do not suggest either directly or indirectly that the messianic status of Jesus was a matter of particular concern during Paul’s career. ... On the whole, the Gospels and Acts, written during the generation following the death of Paul, show a vital concern with the problem of Jesus' messianic Status. This is peculiar since one would expect that the period during which the issue of Jesus' messiahship would be most prominent and controversial would be the years immediately following the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, the period when Christianity was a group within early Judaism. Aside from the Gospels and Acts, the messianic status of Jesus does not come up for serious discussion again until second-century apologists, such as Justin Martyr, engage in Jewish-Christian dialogue. Why do the Gospels and Acts, written ca. 70-100 C.E., exhibit a seemingly anachronistic concern with the problem of Jesus' messianic Status? (Aune, in Charlesworth (1992), 406)

Some ask how well Paul connected the term *christos* to an understanding of Jesus as “Messiah,”

Close examination of *christos* in Paul’s letters shows that he uses the term almost as a name, or as part of the name for Jesus, and not characteristically as a title. ... This has led some to ask whether or how well Paul connected the term *christos* to an understanding of Jesus as “Messiah,” and to what degree *christos* was for Paul, like a name, simply a way of referring to Jesus. (Reid, 143)

Careful study of the Jewish and Greek background does not explain the frequency and manner in which Paul used the term *Christos*. (Reid, 153)

The Gospels were composed after Paul and several decades after the beginning of the Christian movement

The Gospels are commonly dated approximately A.D. 65-100, several decades after the beginning of the Christian movement. ... The undisputed letters of Paul are generally dated approximately A.D. 50-60. ... The Pauline corpus whose authorship

is disputed or widely doubted among scholars (often called deutero-Pauline letters: Eph, Col, 2 Thess, 1 Tim, 2 Tim, Titus). (Reid, 142, 143)

In Mark, Jesus does not proclaim he is the Messiah; he does not accept Peter's confession; and he orders that it be kept secret

Mark, and surely Matthew, believed that Jesus should be recognized as the Messiah. The problem arises with the recognition that Jesus, according to Mark, does not proclaim that he is the Messiah, does not accept Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi, and repeatedly orders those who comprehend who he is to keep this understanding secret. (Charlesworth (1992), 33)

Mark does not openly declare that Jesus is the Messiah

The problem was caused, of course, by Mark's own social setting and theology; but certainly more must be said to comprehend the complexities involved. To a certain extent the problem appeared because Mark was working with some nonmessianic Jesus traditions. The problem, however, arose primarily because the Jesus traditions were swept forward by Jews who fervently claimed that he was the Messiah but had to struggle against a Jewish background that did not specify what such a declaration meant, and also—and more importantly—did not allow for a crucified "Messiah" and cautioned against any human declaration that a man was, or had been, the Messiah. (Charlesworth (1992), 33)

In Mark, Jesus' vision of his messianic role was not that of a Davidic, royal figure with military intentions

The notion that Jesus could not possibly have seen himself in messianic terms rests to some degree on the assumption that "messiah" carried a single meaning, having to do with a Davidic, royal figure with military intentions. With such a figure, it is widely thought, Jesus cannot be compared, and he could not have thought of himself in this fashion. But the diversity evident in ancient Jewish messianic speculations suggests that Jesus may have rejected this or that form of messianic speculation while understanding his mission in the light of his own definition of messiahship. Therefore Jesus could have ordered silence about the use of the Messiah/Christ title among his disciples because the term did not itself communicate clearly his vision of his task and was subject to what he considered severe misunderstandings. In light of this, the command to silence in Mark 8:30 can be as plausibly authentic a saying as Jesus' rebuke of Peter in Mark 8:33. (Reid, 145)

Mark: Apparently none of the pre-Christian definitions of *christos* prepared anyone to understand Jesus' mission

Jesus' command in Mark 8:30 is to say nothing about him to others; it is not a rejection of the term *christos* outright. Yet Mark 8:30-33 indicates a reserve about the term, and the reason seems to be that none of the pre-Christian definitions of *christos* prepare one to understand Jesus' mission, as is shown by Peter's reaction to Jesus' prediction of his suffering. (Reid, 145)

Mark: How can messiah be David' Son if the Messiah is his Lord?

The point of Mark 12:35-37 is to indicate the inadequacy of "Son of David" as the category for understanding who the Christ is, for David calls him "Lord". (Reid, 146)

While Jesus was teaching in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David? David himself, by the Holy Spirit, declared,

‘The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
until I put your enemies under your feet.”‘

David himself calls him Lord; so how can he be his son?" And the large crowd was listening to him with delight. (Mark 12:35-37, NRSV)

John's Gospel displays the redefinition and tension over *christos* in early Christianity

The profound redefinition of messiahship in early Christianity and the tension with Jewish messianic traditions is nowhere more evident than in John. Of the nineteen occurrences of *christos* in John, only two are formulaic ("Jesus Christ," Jn 1:17; 17:3). In all other occurrences *christos* is used as a title and Jewish messianic expectations are either mentioned or alluded to. ...

John 20:31 reflects the claims that Jesus is the Messiah and that this Messiah is much more exalted than Jewish messianic speculations characteristically allowed. (Reid, 150)

The connection between *christos* and Jesus' suffering in 1 Peter indicates his crucifixion was seen as a messianic event

1 Peter uses the term [*christos*] twenty-two times, often in connection with the theme of suffering. ... This connection between the term *christos* and suffering probably reflects the early Christian emphasis mentioned earlier—Jesus' crucifixion was a messianic event. (Reid, 144)

Revelation includes *christos* as a messianic title

In Revelation, along with more formulaic uses of *christos* ("Jesus Christ," e.g., Rev 1:1-2, 5), there are interesting passages where the term is used as a title, "messiah" (e.g., Rev 11:15, "our Lord and his Christ"; Rev 12:10, "the authority of his Christ"). These passages portray the eschatological triumph of God in terms drawn from Jewish messianic expectation and thus confirm the continuing awareness in Christian circles of the late first century A.D. that "Christ" is a messianic designation (Reid, 144)

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In 1 John 2:22 and 1 John 5:1, the confession that Jesus is "the Christ" reflects the messianic claim. (Reid, 144)

Messianology does not easily flow into Christology

These are complex issues; they help us grasp that messianology does not easily flow into christology. (Charlesworth (1992), 33)

Terms as "messiah" and "son of David" are remarkably infrequent prior to the end of the first century A.D.

Recent investigations of such terms as "messiah" and "son of David" in texts contemporary with Jesus and the NT writings have shown that they are remarkably infrequent prior to the end of the first century A.D. There seems to be a consensus emerging that there was no consistent concept of 'the anointed one' at the time of Jesus. Recent analyses have thus demonstrated that contemporary Jewish messianology is a rather weak foundation from which to explain early Christian Christology. (Horsley, 471)

The New Testament makes little of the matter concerning the Davidic Messiah

In his *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament*, the former Dean of York, Alan Richardson, presents an insight that is worth quoting:

It is truly astonishing, in view of the weight of OT prophecy concerning the Davidic Messiah, how little the NT makes of the matter. The evangelists represent Jesus as the new Moses, the new Joshua, the new Elijah, and so on; but there is perhaps only one *pericope* in the tradition which sets forth Jesus as the new David, viz. the Walking through the Cornfields on the Sabbath (Mark 2.23 - 28). (A Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (London, 1958), p. 126

The OT passages that Richardson has in mind as referring both to David and the Messiah refer clearly only to David. (Charlesworth (1992), 8)

SUMMARY

MESSAGES ATTRIBUTED TO JESUS

No saying of Jesus mentions the Messiah-king who is to crush the enemies of the People

Rudolf Bultmann cogently and perceptively warned against the imposition of a messianic message onto the sayings of Jesus:

No saying of Jesus mentions the Messiah-king who is to crush the enemies of the People ... Jesus' message is connected with the hope of other circles. ...

Bultmann's insight is profound and needs to be stressed. The sayings of Jesus, both those which are authentic and those which were attributed to him, do not contain speculations on or prophecies concerning the coming of a Messiah who will conquer the Gentiles, namely the Romans. (Charlesworth (1992), 5)

Jesus' message was not messianic

Jesus' message was certainly apocalyptic and eschatological; but it was not messianic. (Charlesworth (1992), 5)

Jesus never proclaimed himself to be the Messiah

Jesus never proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. He apparently rejected Peter's confession, that he (Jesus) was the Christ, as satanic, because he did not wish for his mission and message to be judged according to human concepts of the Messiah. – R. H. Fuller points out that Mk 8:27-33 is composed of Marcan redaction and early tradition. He concludes that Jesus' rebuke to Peter—"Get behind me, Satan"—originally followed Peter's confession, "You are the Christ." Fuller concludes: "Jesus rejects Messiahship as a merely human and even diabolical temptation." See Fuller, *The Foundations of New Testament Christology* (New York, 1965), p. 109 (Charlesworth (1992), 12)

Jesus conformed to none of the traditional "Son of David" messianic descriptions

It is true that Jesus did not refer to himself in any clear form as Messiah. The most he permitted was for people to attribute to him messianic titles like "Son of David" (Mk. 10:47-48), without adopting an attitude of agreement or of denial toward them. ... Therefore, the picture of Jesus in the Gospels suggests that he conformed to none of the traditional messianic descriptions. (Verbrugge, 612)

Jesus did not accept himself as a political saviour-king

[Jesus] called in question by his person any notion of himself as a political savior-king and did not allow his own followers to address him as such. Even an event like Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi (Matt. 16:13-23; Mk. 8:27-33; Lk. 9:18-22), if one accepts its historical reliability, does not take us fundamentally beyond this conclusion. (Verbrugge, 612)

SUMMARY

OTHER TITLES OF HONOUR ATTRIBUTED TO JESUS

When it proclaimed salvation in Christ, the NT made use of other titles of honour

In Jesus as the Christ “all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (Col. 2:9) for the salvation ... Yet to express all of this in a single title like Messiah or Christ is not sufficient. Thus, when the NT kerygma expounds the salvation bound up in Christ, it makes use of other titles of honor, which emphasize the side of Jesus’ person or work on which the particular title depends—titles such as Son of God, Lord, Savior, and mediator. (Verbrugge, 612)

Hebrews 1 refers to Jesus’ anointing at his ceremonial enthronement

Hebrews 1:9 does not refer to Jesus’ baptism but to the ceremonial enthronement in heaven (cf. 1:3-4). (Verbrugge, 613)

[The Son] is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. ... “God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” (Hebrews 1:3-4, 9, NRSV)

Jesus’ message focused on the coming of God’s Kingdom, not the kingdom of the Messiah

Jesus’ sayings reveal that his message was not about the coming of the Messiah. His preaching focused on the coming of God’s Kingdom, not the kingdom of the Messiah. (Charlesworth (1992), 12)

Proclamations and teachings in the earliest Jesus communities are evidence of what the earliest “Christians” created

The proclamations and teachings in the earliest Jesus communities in Palestine may reflect the use of something like a list of testimonies about the Messiah; but these do not prove that Jews had a common messianology. They are evidence of what the earliest “Christians” created. (Charlesworth (1992), 6)

The old “Christian” tradition claimed that Jesus would fulfil the messianic prophecies when he returns in the future as the Christ

Jesus’ earliest followers were obviously pressed to prove their claim that he was the expected Messiah. Their efforts are evident in the remnants of the old tradition that Jesus would fulfil the messianic prophecies in the future, when he returns as the Christ (see Acts 2:36 and Rom 1:4), in the pneumatic exegesis of originally nonmessianic prophecies and psalms (viz. Pss 22 and 110). (Charlesworth (1992), 6-7)

Jesus was not celebrated by his earliest followers as “a” or “the” new David

The NT writings do not elevate Jesus as a type of David. Jesus was not celebrated by his earliest followers as “a” or “the” new David. And despite the movement of “Christ” from title to proper name, the confessions preserved in the NT writings celebrate Jesus as “Lord,” or “Son.”

Conspicuously absent among the kerygmata³ and creeds is the confession that Jesus is the long-awaited Christ. The only true exception is Mark’s account of Peter’s confession.

³ Kerygmata: The preaching or proclamation of the Christian gospel.
(<https://www.lexico.com/definition/kerygma> accessed 8 August 2020)

Even if Mark accurately records Peter's words, we have no way of discerning what Peter meant by "Christ." Even if we knew exactly what he meant, we still would not be able to perceive what Jesus was thinking, since scholars throughout the world have come to agree that, according to Mark, Jesus did not simply accept Peter's claim that he was the Messiah (contrary to Matthew's Version). If Jesus had accepted the declaration he was the Messiah, then we would be able to explain how his earliest followers came to this startling conclusion.

If he did not accept the claim, as now seems obvious after years of scholars' sensitive and historical study of Mark and the Jewish literature contemporaneous with him, then we are faced with the problem of why and how his followers concluded that the title "the Messiah" was appropriate for him. Research on such issues leads not to easy answers but to perplexing questions. (Charlesworth (1992), 9)

SUMMARY

4 EZRA AND 2 BARUCH

4 Ezra and 2 Baruch written about 100 C.E.

The pseudonymous apocalypses of 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch were a literary response to the military defeat of the Jews in 70 CE. They were probably composed around three decades after the war, and presented the Jews of the time with new revelatory content. (<http://www.insula.com.au/ahrel/ezra.html> accessed 10 August 2020)

4 Ezra was written about 100 C.E.

Because it was written about the same time as the book of Revelation, 4 Ezra is one of the more important apocalyptic books. The Jewish apocalypse (chapters 3-14) was probably written about A.D. 100 based on the opening verse which states the book was written thirty years after Jerusalem was destroyed. This verse claims to be the words of the main character in the story, Ezra, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Since the book discusses the problem of the fall of Jerusalem it is applicable to either A.D. 70 or 135.

Metzger finds it unlikely a Jewish book would find popularity in the post-Bar Kokhba world, so probably the central section was not written after even A.D. 120 (*OTP* 1:520). Charles 2:552 concurs with this date, although he tries to separate various sources in the text in order to date them earlier. Michael Stone dates the book to the last decade of the first century, see "Esdras, Second Book of," in *ABD* 2:611-614).

The Christian framework was added in the second half of the third century. Collins states there is a "consensus" the Jewish apocalypse was written in Palestine at the end of the first century while Metzger takes the reference to Babylon in 3:1 as Rome; the book is therefore the product of Diaspora Jews (*Apocalyptic Imagination*, 196).

<https://readingacts.com/2016/08/23/a-christian-introduction-to-4-ezra/> (accessed 9 August 2020)

The death of the Messiah in 4 Ezra 7:29 simply marks the end of a set period

The reference to the death of the Messiah in 4 Ezra 7:29 is not a Christian interpolation into this Jewish apocalypse. But the death of the Messiah here is not efficacious and is clearly distinct from the Christian affirmation about Jesus. According to 4 Ezra 7, the Messiah's death serves to mark the end of a set period of time and history. (Charlesworth (1992), 8)

The judgment commences only after the Messiah dies (4 Ezra 7; 2 Baruch 40)

Will the Messiah not be the eschatological judge? Leaving aside the Problems with associating the messianic age with the eschatological age, which are sometimes distinguished, as in 4 Ezra, let me [Charlesworth] point out that no coherency exists here either. He shall be a judge according to most of the texts, namely *PssSol* 17:21-33, 4 *Ezra* 12:31-34, and 2 *Bar* 40:1-2. But according to 4 *Ezra* 7:31-44 and 7:113-14, judgment commences only after the Messiah dies. (Charlesworth (1992), 22)

The Messiah does not bring in a new age (4 Ezra 7)

Shall the Messiah not inaugurate a new age? This dimension seems clear from Psalms of Solomon 17. But according to 4 *Ezra* 7, the Messiah does not begin a new age, he simply seems sandwiched between two eras, following one and dying before the next begins. His death has no efficacious dimensions. (*Footnote: See the excellent study by M. E. Stone: "The Concept of the Messiah in IV Ezra," in Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Coodenough, ed. J. Neusner (Studies in the History of Religions: Supplements to Sumen 14: Leiden, 1970), pp. 295-312. (Charlesworth (1992), 22)*

SUMMARY