

LESSON 09

Foundations Curriculum

Jesus, the Expected Messiah

By Manoel Rocha

Introduction

Jesus, the Expected Messiah

In this ninth lesson, we will discuss the meaning of the word “Messiah,” relating it to practices found in the Old Testament. In certain situations, God set apart specific people for a particular service, and they were then anointed for that purpose. This work served as a backdrop that culminated, further along in history, in Jesus — the Messiah awaited by the Jewish people.

1) How to Define the Meaning of “Messiah”

God anointed many men who carried the title of Messiah. But He always had one particular One in mind: how did this come about?

The word Messiah comes from Hebrew and means “The Anointed One” — someone who received an anointing with oil on the head. Whenever God chose a person or an object for a specific service, He would command that person or object to be anointed with oil. Throughout history, God the Creator anointed priests, prophets, judges, and kings.

Many of these individuals became true models of men whom God used with great power in history. They were recognized and deeply respected by the people. They recognized that God Himself had chosen them, and they could see that God was with them.

God spoke directly to the person. He gave them wisdom. He protected them, delivered their enemies into their hands. In short, God was with them.

Over time, the term “anointed” came to refer to a person chosen (raised up or sent) by God — someone sent by Him to save His people in times of difficulty. Messiah thus became a word that inspired hope of salvation. The title was given to the one whom God would send to save and lead His people.

We can define Messiah as:

Someone sent or raised up by God to save and govern His people, with clear manifestations that God was at work through him.

Although God anointed many who bore this title, He always had one particular One in mind: the Anointed One — the Messiah. The One who would be the Savior of humanity!

“For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV)

2) God Points to the Messiah from the Beginning

In which moments is this recorded in biblical history?

1. The Fall:

“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)

2. Abraham:

“Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.””

Genesis 12:1–3 (NKJV)

3. Moses:

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,”

Deuteronomy 18:15 (NKJV)

4. David:

“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

2 Samuel 7:12–13 (NKJV)

God determines the path to the arrival of the Messiah:

ABRAHAM	A MAN
MOSES	A PEOPLE
DAVID	A NATION

3) Israel Rejects Jesus as the Messiah

Why did Israel reject Jesus as the Messiah? A brief historical context

From Abraham to Jesus:

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

Matthew 1:1 (NKJV)

The birth and life of Jesus: the Jewish people were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah. There was a great deal of prophetic evidence from His very birth that He was the Messiah.

“Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name

Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

Luke 1:30–33 (NKJV)

“Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:10–11 (NKJV)

But what the Jewish people truly wanted to see was a visible display of power and glory, as they had witnessed, for example, through Moses. They were waiting to see clear evidence that God was with Jesus. They wanted to see the signs He performed.

Some situations that took place:

The triumphal entry into Jerusalem: Jesus is acclaimed as the Messiah. Hosanna! When the moment of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem arrived, why did the people spread garments and branches along the road? Because the people cried aloud: “Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Hosanna in the highest!”

Matthew 21:9 (NKJV)

The people were already convinced that He was the Messiah. The word “Hosanna” means “Deliver us!” “Save us!”

The long-awaited salvation had come! The throne of David would finally be restored.

Jesus’s decision to go to the temple: the Jews did not understand and were frustrated:

When Jesus, instead of going to the palace to dethrone the king of Judea, chose to go to the temple, this created confusion and doubt in the minds of the Jewish people. Rather than confronting the governor of the day, as Moses had done in his time, He went to confront the religious leaders of Israel. This caused deep disappointment among the Jews who were watching.

And shortly afterward, Jesus was arrested. Imagine the frustration the Jewish people experienced at that!

It was easy for them to call for Barabbas to be released and for Jesus to be crucified. In their view, Jesus was already defeated. Their expectations had been utterly shattered.

The arrest, the suffering, and the condemnation: the Jews chose Barabbas:

His death and burial put an end to whatever hope they still held. Even among His own disciples there was unbelief that Jesus was truly the Messiah.

An example of this is the conversation between the two disciples on the road to Emmaus:

“And He said to them, “What things?” So they said to Him, “The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.”

Luke 24:19–21 (NKJV)

What did the Jewish people fail to see?

First: The Messiah would come through the Jewish people, but not only for the Jewish people.

He would be the Savior of all nations, peoples, and tribes of the entire earth, according to the promise made to Abraham: “in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” The nations of the earth would be blessed because the Savior would come out of Israel. Israel would bless all nations through the Messiah!

Second: The work would be accomplished in two stages.

The people would be saved not merely from the domination and subjugation of the Roman Empire, which imposed inequality of rights and heavy taxes, but from the empire of darkness. The first stage was to be accomplished through His death, burial, descent into the depths of the earth, resurrection, and exaltation, when He would then return to the heavens to sit at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

The second and final stage will take place at the consummation of the Messiah’s work. It will be accomplished at His return: the restoration of the throne of David, the complete destruction of His enemies, the judgment of the living and the dead, and the establishment of His eternal kingdom.

The significance of the resurrection:

The resurrection of Jesus rekindled the hope of His disciples that the reign of David would be reestablished. When Jesus rose from the dead — before being lifted up to the heavens, as He was saying farewell to His disciples — they asked: “...Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6)

The apostle Peter, in Acts 2, proclaimed:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Acts 2:36 (NKJV)

Also proclaimed in Acts 3:

“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’ To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”

Acts 3:19–26 (NKJV)

4) The Gospel of John

What did John record regarding faith?

John was the last apostle to die. He witnessed and personally lived through the persecution the church faced. He saw the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and many other things. He certainly saw many brothers and sisters abandoning their faith in Jesus — many no doubt gave up because they no longer believed that Jesus was the Messiah.

This is what led John to write his gospel.

The Gospel of John was written for the church, to encourage it. It was written with the purpose of strengthening the brothers and sisters to remain firm in their faith in Jesus, so that they would continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. John himself states this in the gospel:

“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

John 20:30–31 (NKJV)

Today, we are in the midst of that period — between the first and second coming of the Messiah. As Peter said, the heavens must receive Him for a time, but He will return to complete the work He began as the Savior of the human race!

CONCLUSION

In this ninth lesson of the Foundations Curriculum, we learned about the meaning of the term “Messiah” and how it relates to Christ from the Old Testament onward. We were given a historical timeline that allowed us to understand the process of struggle, bondage, and hope among the people awaiting the Messiah who would be sent (Jesus). Jesus was then received and recognized by the Jewish people as the Messiah sent by God to save them — yet they did not understand that His work would be accomplished in two stages, and the approach Jesus took generated frustration and unbelief, even among those who believed in Him (some of His own disciples).

CONSIDER CAREFULLY

- 01** When was the Messiah first announced?
- 02** What was the greatest difficulty the Jewish people faced in recognizing that Jesus is the Messiah?
- 03** Do you perceive — and can you demonstrate from the Scriptures — that all of biblical history points to the coming of the Messiah, with Jesus as the central figure?

“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV)

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contato@fundamentos.me | fundamentos.me