

clare his generation? And he was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people he was stricken. His death to be by piercing His hands and feet, Psalm 22: 16, *For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have encircled me: they, pierced my hands and my feet.*

*And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn (Zechariah 12: 10).*

2. Messiah must also be resurrected from the dead as predicted by King David, saying, *for thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, neither wilt thou permit thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life. In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thv right hand are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16: 10-11).*

3. As to the time of His coming, Messiah had to come before the Second Temple was destroyed by Titus. The archangel Gabriel made this clear to Daniel when he came to him and gave a revelation as to what would happen and when Messiah would come. Thus Daniel is told, *after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (Daniel 9:26).*

Those commentators who follow Rashi's exegesis that the Hebrew word Moshiah (Messiah) refers to King Agrippa, who died before Titus conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, confirm that this prophecy had to be fulfilled before 70 AD. But it could not be King Agrippa! Surely Gabriel, the archangel, would not refer to him the title Messiah. He was not even of David's seed, but a descendant of the hated Antipater and Herod, a profligate king doing all he could to please the Romans. Only the Lord Jesus is the fulfillment of this prophecy, and He came in the right time and so He will also come again to fulfill the rest of this prophecy.

4. Among Messiah's accomplishments is the winning of the obedience of a large population of non-Jews. Thus, the patriarch Jacob predicted that *"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be"* (Hebrew Amim means nations or Gentiles). *He is to be a Light to the Gentiles* according to Isaiah 49:6,

*And now, saith the LORD who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to Him ... And he said, It is a light thing that thou should be my servant to, raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.*

#### **SOLUTION OF HIS IDENTITY**

These are only a few of the identifying marks of Messiah as described by the prophets and by the patriarchs. There should be no doubt left now in your mind that these were all fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. In the course of the last nineteen centuries, hundreds of thousands of our people have come to believe in His Messiahship because of these and other proofs. Millions of Gentiles turned away from their idols of wood and stone, and from their man-made philosophies and came to trust the God of Israel, our own Jewish Messiah and to believe in our Jewish Scriptures, both Old and New Testament.

Surely this is the time for us to cry out together with His first Jewish followers, saying:

**"WE HAVE FOUND HIM (THE MESSIAH) OF WHOM MOSES IN THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS, DID WRITE, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE SON OF JOSEPH"**  
(John 1 :45).

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by **Rachmiel Frydland**

The annals of history are full of facts and stories of tragedies that came about as a result of mistaken identity.

In the Hebrew Scripture these tragedies begin with the story of Lamech, who tells his wives of a tragic happening, saying:

*Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, harken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt (Gen. 4:23).*

According to traditional interpretations, Lamech went hunting and instead of killing the animal he unintentionally killed his own son. What a tragedy of mistaken identity" Then we have the story of Joseph who, instead of Potiphar's wife the true culprit, suffered incarceration for many years.

## OUR TRAGIC MISTAKE

A Jewish tradition, recorded in the Aramaic has it that for many years Solomon was dethroned as King in Jerusalem and a demon named Ashmadai was ruling in Solomon's disguise, while the true king went from city to city claiming in the words of Ecclesiastes 1:12, "I, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem. In a similar vein came about the popularized story of the prince and the beggar in which the beggar, temporarily in the clothes of the prince, is made prince while the true prince becomes a beggar,

A more recent story has it that Fritz Kreisler, the violinist, was in Hamburg one evening with an hour to spare before taking his boat to London where he was to play the following evening. So he wandered into a music shop. The proprietor asked to see his violin which he carried under his arm. In a moment he disappeared to reappear with two policemen. One laid his hand on Kreisler's shoulder and said, "You are under arrest." "For what?" asked Mr. Kreisler. "You have Fritz Kreisler's violin." "Well, I am Fritz Kreisler." "Come, come," said the policeman, "you cannot pull that on us. Come to the station.

Mr. Kreisler avoided arrest by finding a record of his music in the shop and he begged to be given his violin and then he replayed the music.

There were many serious incidents of such mistaken identity in the history of our people. This was especially the case when Israel asked Aaron to make a golden calf and identified it with the God of Israel, saying, "These are thy gods, (or literally 'This is' thy God') O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 32:4). Five hundred years passed and another great tragedy happened to our people when the physically and mentally attractive Absalom persuaded the people of Israel to follow him and reject his father King David. Again thousands of our people perished because of this mistake. The full story is recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures in 2 Samuel chapters 17, 18.

### MESSIAH'S MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Could a majority of our people also make a mistake in identifying the Messiah? Surely we did make mistakes in this regard.

The story of Simon Bar Kosiba's messianic claims in 135 AD. is well known. For a long time we had only fragmentary knowledge of him based on a few coins and some references to him in the Talmud. Since he was known also as Bar Kochba, some students of history thought this might have been his true surname which had been later changed to Bar Kosiba when the Jewish leaders convinced themselves that he was not the Messiah (for the word Kosiba can be related to the Hebrew root of koseb or kozev which has the meaning of lie, lying or liar). However, with the new archaeological finding in Israel including a number of letters that Simon Bar Kosiba wrote to various commanders, we know for certain that his true name was Simon Bar Kosiba, that is Simon of the city or town of Kosiba. The leaders of Israel, however, were so impressed with his temporary victories over the Romans and with his persecuting of those Jews who believed in Jesus of Nazareth, that even the greatest Jewish rabbinical authority of his day, Rabbi Akiba, applied the Scripture in Numbers 24: 17 to him, where Balaam prophesies that "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall arise out Israel and shall smite the corners of Moab and destroy all the children of Seth."

The Hebrew word for star is Kochab hence the Jewish leaders began to refer to this man as Simon the Star, in Hebrew Aramaic, Shimeon Bar-Kochba. How bitter was their disappointment in him whom they admired even when he boasted that he did not need God's help and that all he wanted from God was that God not help his enemies! Only after his complete defeat did our Jewish leaders realize that his true surname Bar Kosiba should have been a warning to them and their eyes should have been opened to the falseness of his claims. Perhaps the Lord Jesus had him in mind when He warned His followers, saying, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43 Brit Hadasha) .

### COULD WE BE MISTAKEN AGAIN?

Yes, we could be mistaken again, especially if we prefer to follow man's view of Messiah instead of God's view as revealed in His Word. The majority of Jewish Orthodox exegetes follows the views of the great thirteenth-century philosopher Mamonides. His view is that the hallmarks of Messiah are that He is to fight Israel's battles and be victorious, and He is to force the Jews to keep Torah, the Mosaic Law interpreted by the rabbis, the so-called Halacha. In such a case any of the Israeli successful military leaders could claim to be Messiah if only they were more religious.

But, we will not be mistaken if we accept the plain teachings of God's Word and seek there the hallmarks for Messiah. If so, we will find them very clear. Let us just list a few of them:

1. Messiah must fulfill the picture which the prophets drew of Him, This includes: His supernatural birth as predicted in Isaiah 7:14, *therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* His birth in Bethlehem as predicted by Micah in 5:2: *But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee, shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth has been from of old, from everlasting.* His performing of supernatural deeds as foretold in Isaiah 35:5-6, *then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters breakout, and streams in the desert.* His death as atonement for sin as described in Isaiah 53:5-8, *But he was wounded. for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, we have followed every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall de-*