

The New Covenant Writings, the Mashiag and Yeshua

The purpose of this paper is to establish the relationship between the Old Covenant and the New, who the prophesied Mashiag¹ is and that this is, and can only be, Yeshua.

It is important to begin by saying that no amount of evidence will be convincing for one who has already made up their mind that Yeshua is not the Mashiag. For a person who is earnest in their search for truth, the evidence speaks for itself.

This paper will explore the following issues:

1. The validity of the Covenant and a new Covenant.
2. The validity of the New Covenant writings.
3. The concept of a Mashiag and a human blood sacrifice.
4. Whether or not Yeshua is this Mashiag.

I. INTRODUCTION

Firstly, we need to establish a fact that must and will change our perspectives on the topics we will discuss.

Most of the people reading this will be people that come out of Church-systems and are searching for truth. It is a wonderful thing, if we do not have a preconceived idea of what this truth is. In their search, many people go from a Theological truth to a Jewish truth; a Greek mindset to a Semitic mindset. Tired of the lies of the Church, people are willing to believe anything others bring to them if it sounds different to what they used to believe. Truth is not only in being different; being different is a starting point, not the path. The complete and unchanged truth is found in the whole and complete Word of God alone, and only there. This truth is not for one nation only but for all created people – for humankind. This is an unchanged fact through all Scripture.

To think that the Words and Covenants of God are for one nation alone, is a self-centred misconception and ignores the thousands of years of history that the Creator God had with His creation, especially with humans. To read the Scriptures in any way other than with the background and purpose that God had in mind for all people will always lead to misconceptions and distortion of the words to fit into “my picture.” The Covenant of God with all humans came before, and is the reason for, the Covenant with Avraham and his descendants.

Forgetting this is the reason for a self-centred and not God-centred belief in the Covenant ... as we see in many Judeo-Christian beliefs today.

I see this misconception as the real reason behind the reasons people give as to why the Jewish nation of today do not believe in Yeshua as the Mashiag.

“The Tanakh was written by and for the Jews, the New Covenant books were not and therefore these books are wrong.” - That is the real mindset and problem we have to deal with. It is a selfish concept because it presupposes that the Jews are the only ones who are qualified to hear God’s Word. The

¹ I use this form of the word that is usually written as (Messiah, Christ, etc) because it is closer in meaning, spelling, and pronunciation to the original word. This original is not exclusively used for the Saviour to come, and is therefore free of the connotations associated with the more popular words for an “anointed one”.

reason they give, that the New Covenant books contradict the Tanakh, is also simply not true. This argument then finds all kinds of queries and questions – like the sacrifices, the teachings of the Church and distortions about Yeshua and His teachings to prove this.

Yeshua upheld and taught the teachings of God’s Scriptures of that time which was the Tanakh. Sha’ul (Paul) quoted the teachings and words of the Tanakh. At the places where it seems that there are differences, these are the New Covenant’s practical application in the pursuit of the Old Covenant commands without the Temple and beyond the Temple. This is a practical Biblical lifestyle that I subscribe to, as do thousands of obedient believers in God’s Word.

And NO – I am in no way anti-Semitic – anti-Jew or against Yisra’el as people or Israel as nation.

I only endeavour to put all of God’s Word in context with His plan with all humans.

Let us begin at the beginning and see what God had in mind for all humans:

The One and Only God created all things in heaven and on earth for His purpose, joy, pleasure and will, and not for the sake of humans.

God created humans to be like Him, as we see in **Genesis 1:26,27**. It is in this that God finds pleasure – to see humans walking in His Character with the authority given to them.

Mat 9:8 When the crowd saw this, they were afraid and brought glory, honour, and worship to God Who gave such an authority to man.

Humans gave this authority to the adversary, falling for the twisted truth that was told to them about what God had said and thereby breaking God’s only prohibitive law and activating the promise of death as punishment for breaking God’s law and destroying the relationship between God and His creation.

Immediately God also provided for the restoration of the relationship and the progressive preparation of humans to accept and receive this restoration. This came in the form of the testing of their trust to enable them to return to the relationship. First, God gave the Promise in **Genesis 3:15** of a Seed that would crush the serpent. After this, many small details and hints about a Saviour to come is scattered throughout history for people to understand. Some, like Noah, Mosheh, Avraham, David, and many others understood, **trusted**, and lived in and by God’s standards and saw, and trusted in, the salvation to come. One thing that happens in the New Covenant writings that demonstrates this continual revelation of the Mashiag, is the incapability of the Student-followers to comprehend the message, just like many people in the Tanakh didn’t grasp God’s message of the salvation to come – until it happened.

Yog 16:12 I still have many things to say to you, but you can not receive it now,
:13 but when He, the Spirit of the Truth, came, He will lead you in the whole truth, because He will not speak from Himself, but all He hears He will say and reveal the future to you.

How do we know the prophetic verses about the Mashiag in the Tanakh refer to the future Mashiag and not just to King David or someone else in Jewish history that “saved” them physically?

Many of the Mashiag-related prophecies were double references which used historical applications to allude to the future Mashiag. While at face value a verse might be a direct reference to Mosheh, king David, or the Jewish people, it was also known by the Jews of antiquity to be a reference to the Mashiag. The early Church fathers also explain this dualism of history as prophecy in their writings. Though critics claim many passages were only considered prophecies after the fact, this allegation is proved incorrect once we investigate Jewish writings in antiquity. The Talmud mentions specific scriptures as Mashiag-related prophecies, verses that were written before the fact – before Mashiag came. The

Gospel of Matityahu (Matthew) often quotes the Tanakh prophecies before writing about the fulfilment in the New Covenant writings. Early apologists also cite Scriptures known to be considered Mashiag-related prophecy. There are many more such instances where scholars, theologians and community leaders confirm that the prophecies we know as Mashiag-related today were seen the same way in antiquity. From our modern point of view the parallels seem far-fetched but they were well known at the time.

“**After the fact**” is an argument that is used by Judaism against many of these prophecies. However, even in Yeshua’s time His followers did not understand what He said when He said it, only after all that He said would happen, happened and after they received the revelation there-of through the Spirit, did they start to realize and understand. In the same way all the prophecies of the Mashiag are now easy for us to see, “**after the fact**”, after it happened. Right through Scripture the Prophecies could be seen by those who had their minds set on “the things above”, set on God and His Plan.

Luk 24:25b "How foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

:26 Did the Mashiag not have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"

:27 Then, beginning with Mosheh and all the prophets, Yeshua explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Although God’s law and standards were written on the hearts of humankind, as seen with Kayin in knowing what the correct standards of sacrifice were and with Noah in knowing which animals were clean and unclean, God took the next step in His undeserved favour towards restoring the relationship and choose a man (Avram) whom He knew would trust Him, to establish a people through him for His purpose. This purpose was to restore all of humankind in a relationship to Him. He established this by making a covenant with Avraham after changing his name. God could make this a single sided promise but decided to make it a two sided covenant. God could have said, “I will be your God and protect and provide for you, do not worry, it does not matter what you do, I will take care of you” and in doing so, He would have forcefully made for Himself “His people.” We know this is not God’s character and therefore He did not do this. This is also not how a covenant works, if He wanted to do this He would have made a promise only and not a covenant. A covenant has two parties, each with responsibilities to reach the purpose.

Humans had to choose to want to restore the relationship with God, but because they did not know how, God created a nation who were tasked to show people from all nations (i.e. humankind) how to live and worship the only true God. That is the reason for the covenant with Avraham. Everyone still must make a choice to be restored with God. The Covenant:

I will be your God = I will protect you, teach you and take care of you.

You must be My people = Listen to and obey my teaching, trust in Me, depend on Me.

Y’ho 23:14 Behold, today I go the way of the whole earth and you know with your whole mind, will and emotion and with your whole spirit **that not one word of all the good words spoken by יהוה, your God, concerning you, stayed unfulfilled**; all is fulfilled unto you, not one word there-of stayed unfulfilled.

:15 It will be that **just as all the good words were fulfilled which יהוה, your God, spoke over you, so will יהוה let all the threats come over you** until He destroys you from this good land which יהוה, your God, gave to you,

:16 if you transgress the covenant that יהוה, your God, commanded you, and serve other gods and bow before them; the wrath of יהוה will burn against you and you will die in the land He has given you.”

If these conditions are met, this covenant will be true forever, but as any covenant goes, if you break this, the covenant is nullified and God will choose another to complete His desire to restore the relationship with all people. God will fulfil this purpose through Avraham’s descendants until the time is ripe for the promise of **Gen 3:15 (the Seed, who is also a descendant of Avraham)** and the restoration of the earth as a Kingdom of God.

That is the reason why Yeshua declared that He came for Yisra’el alone. It was to restore them to be the example, the purpose of their existence in the first place, and therefore He set the Example for them to follow. **But they rejected Him** and their full purpose could not be met. So He choose a people that is not a nation to complete the job, those “from other nations”.

Isa 65:1 I allowed Myself to be sought after by those who did not ask for me; I allowed Myself to be found of those who seek me not; I said, Here am I, here am I, to a nation that has never called on My name.

Therefore those from all nations who become His people through obedience and trust will **again** be the standard and example, first to Yisra’el, because God does not break His promises and choices, as man does, and also to all the nations, as was His plan from the beginning.

Gen 12:3 and I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you **and in you all families of the world will be blessed.”**

Yeshua will not come back until God’s chosen people, as the example of restoration, accepts Him as Mashiag. He came to show and introduce God’s New Covenant after they broke the previous one. He offered them a new Covenant, but they tried to hold on to the Old Covenant which was destroyed by them. This old covenant can therefore, not exist, or be valid, anymore. God kept His part and offered the same terms again through a new Covenant and without accepting this new Covenant, you do not have a covenant with God and cannot restore your relationship with Him. That is why Yeshua is the only way through which one can come to the Father and into a relationship with Him. **Yog 14:6**

This is a package-deal. To be part of the Kingdom of God all of it is needed:

- i. Accept the terms of the Covenant God has with His people since creation and which were given again when the first was broken. Without this you do not have a covenant.
- ii. Live according to God’s unchanging laws and standards.
- iii. Accept His Mashiag as part of His salvation plan for humankind.

Based on this understanding of the covenant we will now look at the Covenant and the various issues surrounding the Mashiag and whether Yeshua fits as Mashiag or not. Throughout, Proofs and Scriptures will be given as part of the discussion. We will look at as many issues as possible, though not in any order but as they become relevant in the discussion. Proving the Mashiag as a sacrifice and that this sacrifice is Yeshua, automatically changes our question on the validity of the New Covenant books and will lead us to the correct understanding of the Covenant. This will be done in as much detail and as broad as possible because of the importance of the topic.

II. THE COVENANT

The Covenant is, as we have established in the previous chapter, the cornerstone of God's Work with humankind. As such, it is important that we start here and understand this covenant before moving on to the discussion on the Mashiach.

A. GOD'S COVENANT WITH HUMANKIND

Let us briefly look at God's plan and covenant with man:

- The only God, יהוה, created all things in heaven and on earth for His purpose, joy, pleasure and will, and not for the sake of humans. This is where His relationship, His covenant with man starts.
- As part of His plan, God created humans to be like Him - **Gen 1:26,27**
- It is in this that God finds pleasure – to see humans walking in His Character with the authority given to them:
- God gave them the authority to rule – to be king over the earth - **Gen 1:26, 28**
- God blessed humans and commanded them to multiply and fill the earth - **Gen 1:28**
- God provided food - **Gen 1:30**
- God blew His Spirit into humans, placing His character and will into them - **Gen 2:7**
- God commanded humans to protect and work the land - **Gen 2:15**
- God gave a prohibiting law as test of human obedience - **Gen 2:17**
- God wanted a relationship covenant with humans, one of Life which is to live God's character and not to disobey.
- Humans gave this authority away by obeying another and moving away from God's plan and standards. This led to a loss of:
- The openness and relationship they had with God - **Gen 3:7,8**
- Life, meaning that they will not live forever in God's presence. - **Gen 2:17**
- God introduced His plan to reconcile with humans - **Gen 3:15:**
- A Man that will again conform to the standards and be the Gate for all to re-enter into a relationship with their creator. – **Yog 10:7**
- Humans just kept on moving away from God's purpose and ignored God's standards that were written on their hearts, until they became evil in their whole being - **Gen 6:5**
- God found one man that was righteous and choose him to continue His plan - **Gen 6:9**
- God then destroyed the rest of mankind although He had a covenant with them and had promised them life - **Gen 6:17**
- He did this because they did not fulfil the purpose of their creation and broke the covenant - **Gen 6:11, 12**
- God promised to establish His covenant with Noah - **Gen 6:18; 9:9**
- Noah was obedient to all God commanded - **Gen 7:5**
- Noah sacrificed clean animals to God showing that the laws and standards were still in him - **Gen 8:20**
- God establishes seasons on the earth, turning the destructive rain into a nourishing blessing - **Gen 8:22**
- God blessed humans again and again commanded them to multiply and fill the earth - **Gen 9:1, 7**
- God appointed humans to rule again, but this time through fear and over a world that was broken and full of death - **Gen 9:2**
- God gave them the right to eat animals, but with standards - **Gen 9:3**
- God added that He would never destroy humankind through water again and gave the rainbow as a sign of this covenant - **Gen 9:11,13**
- As humans multiplied, they again turned against God's plan - **Gen 11:4**

- God never forgot His promise of a Mediator and Saviour and prepared the ground for His coming.
- Again, He chose one man to fulfil His plan, but this time he is to become a nation through which God can fulfil this plan, the same plan as from the beginning, **to turn humankind back to their Creator:**
 - God blessed Avram and promised to make him a great nation - **Gen 12:2**
 - **His task was to be a blessing to mankind, God's original plan - Gen 12:2, 3**
 - God promised him protection - **Gen 12:3, Gen 15:1**
 - Avram built an altar and sacrificed to God, showing His dedication to this God and to the covenant made with him- **Gen 12:7, 8**
 - God promised him a specific territory - **Gen 13:15**
 - God promised Avram many descendants - **Gen 13:16**
 - God showed His ideal priesthood through Malki-Tzedek - **Gen 14:18**
 - God reveals Himself as Protection and Provision - **Gen 15:1**
 - God declared Avram righteous through his blind trust in Him - **Gen 15:6**
 - God made a covenant with Avram over the land He promised him - **Gen 15:18**
 - **God gave conditions for His covenant with Avram, "walk well before me, and be faultless" - Gen 17:1**
 - God will increase his descendants and changed his name accordingly - **Gen 17:1, 5**
 - Again, God confirmed this, calling Avraham the "Father of many Nations", with a spiritual meaning that through his trust, he will be the Father of the trust of all believers, **God's true nation - Gen 17:4**
 - God promises to be a God to Avraham, forever - **Gen 17:7**
 - God gave circumcision as the sign of His covenant with Avraham – the appointment of a nation - **Gen 17:11**
 - God promised that kings will come from his son - **Gen 17:16**
 - God tested Avraham's trust - **Gen 22:1, 2**
- To prepare humankind for the Mashiag, God gave them indicators (prophecies) **Amos 3:7:**
 - of when the perfect time will be when they are ready - **Dan 9; Gen 49:10**
 - of what the Character of the One, who will come as anointed one (Mashiag) to take back the Kingdom as King will be.
- God's conditions stayed the same - **Exod 19:5**
- Humankind again became evil in all their being and forgot God's standards and instructions. God then chose a man to write them down so that nobody has an excuse - **Deut 31:24-26**
- **The law, standards and instructions were given to humankind, but because they created their own worship to strange gods, He gave Yisra'el the task to be the example of how to worship the only God and be prepared for the Kingdom to come - Deut 28:1**
- They did not obey this and when the Mashiag arrived they were not prepared or willing to follow. This meant that He could not establish His Kingdom with obedient children of God through Yisra'el at that time.
- Yeshua completed His task of paying the price for their sins and took away the punishment for sin for anyone who will accept it. This was the first part of His mission - **1 Pet 1:3,4; John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23**
- He then gave a new covenant to anyone **who will conform to the conditions** to be His new people (nation) from all nations to complete the original plan - **Jer 31:31-33**
- He restored the original priesthood in place of the Levitical one that was supposed to be an example - **1 Peter 2:5,9**
- He restored the law in man's being through the coming of His Spirit - **Jer 31:33**
- He confirmed all His promises to those who accept the conditions - **Mat 5:19; 21:43**

- He started to restore His Kingdom and the rules within it for those setting themselves apart - **Heb 10:12, 13**
- He will complete this restoration of the Kingdom when the task of preparation on earth is completed - **Luk 8:1**
- Then the Kingdom will be restored with Yeshua the King as Adam should have been - **1 Kor 15:45**

This is God's covenant with all of humanity and how the Old flows into the New to create a better, stronger, and unbreakable covenant.

B. THE AVRAHAM COVENANT COMPARED TO THE NEW COVENANT.

After everything we have discussed about the covenant, we must now look at the difference between the covenant broken by Yisra'el and Y'hudah (we will call this the Old Covenant) and the New Covenant that came into effect through the mediation of Yeshua.

Please read every sentence very carefully without conclusions, presuppositions or assumptions before the discussion is completed.

What we have shown above is that **God's covenant through all ages was for the sake of all humankind**. This is also the reason people reject the New Covenant, as it includes all nations into God's covenant. The self-centeredness and arrogance of humans derived that God's covenant is only for the benefit of an elect few.

Mosheh was a figure of Yeshua and was appointed to lead the people of the covenant of Father-יהוה and teach them the standards and instructions to keep and obey. These standards were the foundations and were meant to guide people towards the attitudes and character that God wanted from them. However, they did not understand this and had to wait until Yeshua came to be appointed King and leader over them and to give His standards and instructions their full meaning.

The writer of Hebrews calls it יהוה's household.

- Heb 3:1** My set apart brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, carefully consider Yeshua, the Mashiag, whom we openly confess as God's Emissary and non-Levitical High priest,
- :2** He is trustworthy unto Him who appointed Him, just as Mosheh was faithful in the whole of **God's household**,
 - :3** for the honour and glory of this One was counted much more than that of Mosheh, inasmuch as he who built the house has more honour than the house,
 - :4** for every house is built by someone, but He who continually built all things, is God.
 - :5** Mosheh was a servant entrusted with the whole house, as a testimony of those things still to be spoken by Him,
 - :6** but Mashiag as a Son over His house. We are His house if we, with confidence and pride, hold fast onto His good message until the end.

Yeshua is now the appointed King over the people of the covenant of יהוה forever. He is the ruler who sits on the throne of David as promised. Everyone accepting Yeshua as the crucified sin-offering and trusting His resurrection unto forgiveness, conciliation, and absolution, are part of the people of the covenant of יהוה.

This is the true Yisra'el! He who died to the old self and the gods, turned around (came to repentance) and was born again of the Spirit as a new person (rebirth). This person follows a footstep-lifestyle, emulating Yeshua according to Father's standards. They are born from God and can therefore be called a child of God. There is no other way to become a child of God, and thus child of the covenant. That is true for Jew and non-Jew alike, for circumcised and non-circumcised, for man and woman and child, religious and non-religious, for you and me.

People immediately argue that **God's covenant with Avraham is everlasting**, forever. Yes, that is correct, but we must look at it correctly and understand the covenant. The table below should help with this:

Father's side of the covenant	to be God for them: love, protect and setting of the rules and instructions
Humankind's part of the covenant	To be a people: love through obedience to the rules and instructions.

All through Scripture this is the composition of the covenant. BUT...

The people broke the contract through disobedience and serving other gods:

Jer 31:32b "My covenant which they broke, although I was Master over them, says יהוה"

Eze 16:59 "For thus says יהוה-God: I will also do with you as you have done, you who despised My oaths and broke My covenant."

Jer 18:13 Therefore says יהוה: Ask among the nations, who has ever heard such things? The virgin of Yisra'el has done a horrific thing.

:14 Does the green grass vanish from the mountain or the snow leaves L'vanon? Does the cold water that gushes out and runs down, cease from flowing?

:15 Yet **My people** have forgotten Me and have burned incense to worthless gods and have stumbled in their ways, departed from the ancient paths to walk on ways never trodden before.

Mic 3:8 On the other hand I am full of power by the Spirit of יהוה, and with justice and braveness, to declare to Ya'akov his rebellious deeds and to Yisra'el his sin.

Now the picture has changed:

Father's side of the covenant	to be God for them: love, protect and setting of the rules and instructions
Humankind's part of the covenant	Cancelled – invalidated through disobedience and the breaking of their agreement

Father is always faithful, and His part of the covenant stays true. It is the part of the humans which was cancelled and fell away through disobedience. God made a new covenant with humans, but His part of the covenant: love, instructions and standards, **did not change**.

The sign of the covenant and the conditions to enter did, however, change.

Therefore a new covenant was necessary.

Who are children of Avraham and therefore children of the covenant now?

Gal 3:7 Know therefore that they who are of the trust, they are the children of Avraham.

:28 There is neither Jew nor Aramean, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Yeshua Mashiag.

:29 So if you belong to Mashiag, then you are descendants (seed) of Avraham, and his heirs according to the promise.

All people, of all nations; everyone who is born again, is part of the covenant. This is clear from the meaning of the word “Yisra'el”. It means “the mighty rules over”. “Yisra'el” is therefore anyone over whom the Mighty One rules.

Please take note of the second table above. The person who holds unto the Old Covenant does not have a covenant anymore, because it was cancelled, destroyed by disobedience. The dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles has been destroyed and there is only one covenant now and one people of this covenant.

Eph 2:13 But now, through Yeshua Mashiag, you who were far off before were brought close by the blood of Mashiag.

:14 For He is our Peace, He who made both one and destroyed the middle wall of separation between them;

:15 In His physical body He nullified the hatred, which was caused by the opinion of people about instructions of the law so that through His body the two could be created into one new man;

:16 He reconciled the relationship of both, in one body, with God, and by His crucifixion He destroyed the hatred. *Eze 37:16-19*

:17 He came and preached the good message of shalom to you who are far away and to those who are near, *Isa 57:19*

:18 because in Him we both have entrance, through one Spirit to the Father.

:19 You are therefore neither strangers nor foreigners any more, but residents in the city of the Set-apart One, and children of the household of God; *1 Peter 1:17; Heb 11:13-16; Rev 21:2-27*

:20 You are built up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Yeshua Mashiag Himself the Corner-stone of the building: *Ps 118:22-23; 1 Peter 2:4*

:21 In Him the whole building is fashioned and grows into a set apart temple in unity with יהיה *Yeg 37:26-28*

:22 While you also are built for Him as an accommodation for God through the Spirit.

Yeshua said it Himself:

Mat 8:11 And I say unto you, that many will come from the east and west and will sit down with Avraham and Yitz'gak and Ya'akov, in the Kingdom of heaven,

:12 but the children of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Firstly, Yeshua is saying that many from other parts of the world and from other nations, both from Jews and non-Jews, will come and sit with the fathers of the covenant in the Kingdom of heaven, which is the Kingdom of God. Yeshua then says that those who thought they will inherit the Kingdom of God,

because they were born of Avraham's family, i.e. his physical descendants, will be cast into the outer darkness.

Only those, Jew and non-Jew, who are born again through trust in Yeshua as Mashiag are the true Yisra'el.

Tit 2:14 who gave Himself in our place to redeem us from all transgressions of the law and to purify for Himself a new people who is eager in good deeds. **Deut 14:2;**
Eze 11:19; Ps 135:4

The following scripture confirms the salvation of all nations:

1 Cor 12:12 For as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, even though many, are one body; so also in Mashiag,
:13 for all of us are baptized by one Spirit into one body, whether Jews or Aramean, whether bond or free; and we have all received through the one Spirit to drink,

Rom 10:11 For the scripture says: whosoever trusts in Him shall not be ashamed.
:12 In this, He does not discriminate between the Jews and the non-Jews: for יהוה is One for all of them and is precious for all who call upon Him,
:13 for whoever shall call on the Character and Authority of יהוה will have life.

That is יהוה's 'new covenant'. The old covenant is only held onto by those who rejected Yeshua!

We must understand the differences between these two covenants and decide to which covenant we want to submit and under whose authority we stand!

The standards and instructions of יהוה in the old covenant are contained in the Tanakh and are applied by a Levitical priesthood that served in a physical temple built by man.

The standards and instructions of יהוה in the new covenant are contained in the complete Scripture and are applied by a priesthood that is like Malki-Tzedek. They serve in the Temple not build by hands where the Set-Apart Spirit lives, namely in and through the body of all who trust in Yeshua the Mashiag.

1 Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Set-apart Spirit who dwells within you, whom you received from God? You do not belong to yourself.

Eph 2:21 In Him (Yeshua) the whole building is put together and grows into a set-apart temple in unity with יהוה

:22 while you also are built for Him as an accommodation for God through the Spirit!

In the same way as the physical sign of the physical covenant was given to a physical Avraham and his physical descendants (the people of that covenant), now the spiritual sign is given to spiritual descendants of Avraham (the born-again people of the new covenant), with the blood of Yeshua, as remembered in the cup of the communion-feast introduced at Pesagh.

Rebirth is the spiritual circumcision already implied in **Deuteronomy 10:16**.

See also: **Deut 30:6; Yir 9:24,25; Yo'el 2:13; Rom 2:26-29; 3:30; 4:10-12; 1 Kor 7:18,19; Gal 2:3; 5:2-6; Kol 2:11**

Gen 17:11 It shall be a token of the covenant between Me and you: All who are male among you must be circumcised. You shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin.

Acts 7:8 (God gave Avraham) the covenant of circumcision; and then (Avraham) begat Yitz'gak and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Yitz'gak begat Ya'akov; and Ya'akov begat our twelve patriarchs.

1 Cor 11:25 Likewise (He gave) also the cup after supper, and said: “**This cup is the new covenant in my blood**: do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Col 2:11 In Him you are circumcised with a circumcision made not with hands, in laying down the body of the sinful nature by the circumcision of the Mashiag. **Deut 10:16; 30:6; Yir 9:24,25; Yo'el 2:13; Rom 2:26-29; 3:30; 4:10-12; 1 Kor 7:18,19; Gal 2:3; 5:2-6**

In Galatians 4:24 to 31 Sha'ul (Paul) explains that Sarah and Hagar are images of the two ‘factions’. The one is the ‘old’ covenant of the children of Hagar who are in slavery, because they depend on it to be saved and therefore are under the condemnation of the law. The other is the ‘new’ covenant of the children of Sarah who were redeemed by the precious blood of Yeshua (**1 Peter 1:18,19**).

The meaning is confirmed when Sha'ul (Paul) says:

Gal. 5:1 Stand firm therefore in the liberty with which Mashiag has liberated us and be not harnessed again under the yoke of servitude.

On the grounds of our trust in Yeshua, we are thus children of Avraham, his descendants and therefore also his heirs. Avraham is the father of all who trust in Yeshua as the crucified and resurrected Master and King (**Rom. 4:14-16**). He is also the father of the covenant for the uncircumcised who trust in Yeshua as the Mashiag (**Rom. 4:11**).

We are the children of Avraham exclusively on the grounds of the undeserved favour of יהוה through our trust in Yeshua. It is trust that makes us descendants of Avraham. Avraham was declared righteous through trust and, just so we are declared righteous through trust alone **Gen 15:6; Rom 4:9** They who are the people of יהוה today, Yisra'el, are they who accepted the blood sacrifice of Yeshua. They are born again by the Spirit of God, as portrayed in baptism and are obedient to the instructions and standards of יהוה which is engraved on their minds, will and emotions.

This is the new covenant of the Yisra'el of God.

If any group of people should have recognized the Mashiag, it was the Jews. The prophets had given them many detailed and accurate descriptions of the coming Mashiag, suitable for recognizing Him when He came. However, they gave little or no attention to the testimonies of the patriarchs and prophets, preferring to apply their own interpretation to fit their own model and persecuting those who disagreed with it. Instead of looking for Mashiag who would reconcile them to God, they expected a Mashiag who would be a worldly king and who would defend them against their enemies. In the time of the first century, the Jews thought the Mashiag would rise up and defeat the oppressing Romans. They could not understand that the scope of the Mashiag's victory would be far broader than that of a simple national struggle since they were so obsessed with their worldly political status.

III. A MASHIAG AS PROPHESED IN THE TANAKH

One of the surest things in the Tanakh is the promise of a Mashiag, an Anointed One, who will come to restore the Kingdom of God. The consistency in these prophecies will stand as proof of who this Mashiag will be.

Is it possible that these prophecies were written after the birth of Yeshua to prove a Mashiag?

There is simply too much evidence showing the Tanakh writings to be in circulation and used before His birth for this to be possible. One example is the Septuagint, which predates the Masoretic texts by more than 1000 years and were completed by around 135 years before Yeshua and the Peshitta Aramaic Tanakh around the time of Yeshua. The Dead Sea Scrolls are another example, with many scrolls dating back to 250 BC. Other (less reliable) sources include the Talmud, and various ancient authors, which record the knowledge of certain Mashiag-related prophecies around the time of Yeshua. Even if you reject the notion that the content of the Tanakh was first completed and compiled by 430 BC, there is enough evidence to show a time gap of at least 250 years between the last Mashiag-related prophecy and the time of Yeshua. If we accept that Mosheh wrote the Torah in approximately 1400 BC, it means that some prophecies were written up to 1400 years before the life of Yeshua.

The Jews of antiquity were very familiar with the Messianic prophecies, though there was some confusion at the seemingly conflicting prophecies: one prophecy told of a suffering servant while another told of a triumphant and glorious king. Today we know that the Bible speaks of two separate appearances of the Mashiag. His first appearance was one of peace, sacrifice and humility whereas His second coming in the end times will be one of glory, judgment, and reconciliation.

After the end of the Babylonian exile there were many differing views and schools of thought surrounding the Mashiag. Some considered the Mashiag to be a purely natural political leader (albeit more powerful than the Romans) that would form part of the historical lineage of Yisra'elite kings. Others considered the Mashiag to be a supernatural being, or some sort of super angel. Yet another school considered him to be a universal King / Son of God that would appear at the end of history and rule. There were even those who did not expect a Mashiag at all. Seems that none had the 'mind' of the Creator, relying rather on purely human views, ideas and ideologies.

Here are just 2 quotes to show that the expectation for a Mashiag in the time before Yeshua was real:

- *"We have numerous early Jewish sources that portray the Mashiag, variously, as one who will serve as the eschatological high priest (**the Dead Sea Scrolls, the T12P²**), or as the consummate benevolent and all-powerful king (**PssSol 17**). Numerous functions are sometimes attributed to the Mashiag: He will judge the wicked (**PssSol 17, 4Ezra 12, 2Bar 40**), destroy them (**PssSol 17, 4Ezra 12, 2 Bar 72; cf. Is 11**), deliver God's people (**PssSol 17, 4Ezra 12, cf. Zech 9**), and / or reign in a blessed kingdom (**PssSol 17, 18; 2Bar40; cf. Ps. 2**)."* (**Charlesworth, et al 2000**).
- *"The expectation of a king from the Davidic line, which is dormant for much of the postexilic era, resurfaces after the restoration of native, non-Davidic, Jewish kingship in the Hasmonean period (late second to early first centuries BCE). It then reappears in more than one setting. By the first century CE it can fairly be said to be part of the common heritage of Judaism."* from **'The Scepter and the Star' by John Collins, p47 (Collins, 1995)**.

² The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, an apocryphal Jewish writing from the 2nd century AD.

A. THE TWO-FOLD PURPOSE OF THE MASHIAG

The two-fold purpose and nature of the Mashiag is an important concept that will help in our understanding of who the Mashiag is and what His role here on earth is. Although there are many Scriptures that describe the Mashiag as one conquering and ruling the world, i.e. the King, we cannot ignore the many others that describe Him also as a Servant.

As we go through these verses in detail, you as reader will have to decide a few things for yourself:

1. Will there be a Mashiag,
2. If so, what will He be like and what will He do, and
3. Who fulfils all of these standards of the Servant.

B. THE SERVANT IN YESHA'YAHU 52 & 53

We will start with **Yesha'yahu 52:13 to 53:12**, written around 700 BC.

Yes 52:13 Behold, My Servant will be successful; He will be exalted and extolled and be very high.

14 Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

15 So will He purify many nations. Kings will shut their mouths because of Him; For what they had not been told, they will see, And what they had not heard they will understand.

Yes 53:1 My Master, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of יהוה been revealed?

:2 For He grew up before Him as a tender sprout, and like a root from scorched ground. He had no form or majesty; that we would have looked at Him. There is no beauty that we should desire Him.

:3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

:4 Surely He carried our griefs and our sicknesses; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions of the law, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

:6 We all have gone astray like sheep; We each have turned to his own way; but יהוה has laid on Him the unrighteousness of us all.

:7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will describe His anguish? For He was cut off from the land of the living for the transgressions of My people, whose punishment it was.

:9 And they made His grave with the trespassers of the law, yet He was with the rich in His death although He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.

:10 Yet it pleased יהוה to bruise Him, to let Him suffer. He made Himself a trespass offering for eternity to see. He will prolong His days and the pleasure of יהוה will prosper in His hand.

:11 He will see the reward of the anguish of His life and be satisfied by His knowledge, because He is a Servant of many and He will carry their transgressions.

:12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured Himself out unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors of the law, yet He carried the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors of the law.

Below is a short summary of the above that highlights the Mashiach as Servant as well as King. Items in **bold** are highlighted as specific passages that are echoed in the New Covenant writings. The Servant-King has the following characteristics:

He will be successful (52:13)

He will be exalted, extolled and be very high (52:13)

Many will be astonished at Him (52:14)

His visage (appearance) was marred (disfigured) more than any man (52:14)

His form marred more than the sons of men (52:14)

He will purify many nations (52:15)

Kings will shut their mouths because of Him. (52:15)

He shall grow up as a tender sprout (53:2)

He shall grow up as a root from scorched ground (53:2)

He would not be majestic or beautiful (53:2)

He would have no beauty to be desired. (53:2)

He would be despised and rejected by man (53:3)

He would be a man of sorrows (53:3)

He would be acquainted with grief (53:3)

He would be despised rather than esteemed (53:3)

He would bear their griefs/sicknesses (53:4)

He was esteemed stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted (53:4)

He was wounded for their transgressions of the law(53:5)

He was bruised for their iniquities (53:5)

By His stripes/wounds, others were healed (53:5)

יהוה laid on Him the unrighteousness of them all (53:6)

He was oppressed (53:7)

He was afflicted (53:7)

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter (53:7)

As a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. (53:7)

He was taken from prison / confinement and from judgment. (53:8)

He was "cut off" from the land of the living (53:8).

He had great anguish for the transgressions of יהוה's people (53:8).

They made his grave with the trespassers or the law, but with the rich at his death (53:9).

He had done no violence (53:9).

There was no deceit in his mouth (53:9).

It was pleasing to יהוה to bruise Him (53:10).

יהוה let Him suffer (53:10).

He made Himself a trespass offering or offering for sin [Hebr. "Asham"] (53:10)

In order for eternity to see (53:10).

He will prolong His days (53:10)

The pleasure of יהוה will prosper in His hand (53:10)

He will see the reward of the anguish of His life (Dead Sea Scrolls, in 53:11).

And will be satisfied by His knowledge (53:11)

because He is a Servant of many and He will carry their transgressions. (53:11)

יהוה will divide this servant a portion with the great and He will divide the spoil with the strong

because of the next three items (53:12):

He poured out Himself unto death (53:12)

He was numbered with the transgressors of the law (53:12)

He bore the sin of many (53:12)

From this summary it becomes clear what the character of this Servant-King is, and what He will do. This will help us in identifying this person, based on what we know from the Bible.

C. WHO IS THIS SERVANT?

The next question, then, is who is this 'Servant'? There are generally 4 possibilities given:

4. Yisra'el,
5. Y'hudah,
6. Yisra'el and Y'hudah, or
7. the Mashiach.

We will look at each of these in more detail now, and how each qualifies in regard to the characteristics highlighted above.

Yisra'el?

The first possibility is that the servant refers to Yisra'el as nation chosen by God and typified by the United Kingdom under King David and Solomon.

Based on the above information, there are several characteristics of this Servant that prevent it from being Yisra'el:

- a. The Servant will deal "successfully".
- b. By His knowledge, the Servant will "justify many / declare many righteous".
- c. The Servant had "done no violence"
- d. The Servant was "righteous" and did not have any deceit in His mouth.
- e. He Himself, this Servant, was a trespass offering.

Those who deny Yeshua as the Mashiag say that Yisra'el (not Y'hudah) turned from the true faith based on a wrong translation of Hosea 12:1 but ignoring all the verses that confirm that Y'hudah turned away from God as well. Surely, none of the above attributes would accurately fit the description of even their understanding of Yisra'el.

However, there is evidence that at other places the Servant of **Yesha'yahu 53** is Yisra'el.

Let us examine **Yesha'yahu 49** which also speaks of a Servant:

Yes 49:1 "Listen, O islands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar!
יהוה has called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He gave
My name.

:2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; In the shadow of His
hand He has hidden Me, And made Me a sought after arrow; In His quiver He
has hidden Me."

:3 "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, O Yisra'el, In whom I will show
My honour, glory and worship.'

, The Servant spoken of here in **Yesha'yahu 49**, is indeed identified as Yisra'el. Let us keep reading:

:4 I did not say to the descendants of Ya'akov: 'I have laboured in vain, I
have spent my strength for nothing and in vain. Surely my judgement is
before יהוה, And my work before my God.' "

:5 And now says יהוה, Who formed Me from the womb to **be His Servant**, To
bring Ya'akov back to Him, So that Yisra'el may be gathered to Him, for I
shall be honoured in the eyes of יהוה, And My God shall be My strength,

Now we see that though this Servant is Yisra'el, He is bringing Yisra'el back to יהוה. How can Yisra'el bring Yisra'el back?

:6 Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To
raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Yisra'el; I
will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation
to the ends of the earth.' "

Here, this Servant is not only bringing Yisra'el back, He is going to be a light to the Gentiles and even be יהוה's salvation to the ends of the earth! These are all things that line up with prophecies of the coming Mashiag (as will be discussed later). Thus, the Mashiag can also be called Yisra'el, because

the coming Mashiag was going to come from the tribe of Yisra'el and not from a Gentile seed. The coming Mashiag was to be the true, righteous embodiment of Yisra'el and not what it became through disobedience.

Y'hudah?

The next possibility is Y'hudah; the part of the original Kingdom of Yisra'el that was centred around Jerusalem and the Temple after the division of the United Kingdom after Solomon's death. However, this is the least possible of the possibilities.

Yes 53:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who will describe His anguish? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people whose punishment it was.

If the Servant is Y'hudah, then who are יהוה's people in this verse? It cannot be Y'hudah if the Servant is Y'hudah.

Furthermore, let us remember that Yesha'yahu was of the tribe of Y'hudah. With this being the case, who is the "we", "our" and "us"? in the following:

Yes 53:5 But He was wounded for **our** transgressions of the law, He was bruised for **our** iniquities; The chastisement for **our** peace was upon Him, And by His stripes **we** are healed.

For whose transgressions is the Servant wounded in these verses? Whose iniquities? Who is healed by His stripes? According to Yesha'yahu, it is "our" iniquities and transgressions, the chastisement of "our" peace was upon Him and by His stripes "we" are healed. "We" in this instance would be Y'hudah since Yesha'yahu is from the tribe of Y'hudah. So, for instance, when it says "we despised Him" then the "we" would be Y'hudah. This makes it impossible for the Servant of Yesha'yahu 53 to be Y'hudah since the servant is distinguished from Y'hudah. Also, how can Y'hudah be a trespass offering? It does not make any sense.

Y'hudah and Yisra'el?

The question of Y'hudah and Yisra'el being the Servant stems from the national yearning of Y'hudah to be reunited with the rest of Yisra'el, under a king from Y'hudah, reminiscent of the United Kingdom. However, as each of these individually cannot be the servant, these same arguments count against their united identity as Servant.

The Mashiag?

If this Servant of **Yesha'yahu 53** is the Mashiag, other Mashiag-related prophecies must be consistent with this description. This leads to the question, are there any other scriptures in Yesha'yahu that identify the Mashiag as יהוה's "Servant"?

Yes 42:1 Behold My Servant, whom I uphold; My Chosen One, in whom My Life delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him: He will bring forth impartial judgment to the nations.

:2 He will not cry out, nor raise His voice, nor cause his voice to be heard on the street.

:3 A bruised reed He will not break, and the smoking flax He will not quench: He will dilligently bring forth impartial judgment.

This scripture also speaks of a Servant in whom יהוה delights and who will bring forth judgment to the nations. This is consistent with other prophecies that we will be reading, which declare the Mashiag to bring judgment.

If this Servant in **Yesha'yahu 53** is to be identified as the Mashiag, are there other scriptures that mention a suffering "servant" Mashiag as well? Let us examine **Yesha'yahu 50**:

Yes 50:1 Thus says יהוה: "Where is the certificate of your mother's divorce, with which I send her away? Or which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? For your partiality you have been sold, and for your transgressions of the law your mother has been send away.

:2 Why, when I came, was there no man? Why, when I called, was there none to answer? Is My hand so short that I cannot redeem? Or have I no power to deliver? Indeed with My rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness; Their fish stink because there is no water, And die of thirst.

:3 I clothe the heavens with blackness, And I make sackcloth their covering.

:4 The Master יהוה has given Me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to refresh him who is weary with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear the teachings.

:5 The Master יהוה has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient, nor did I turn away.

:6 I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting"

In the above scriptures, we find the same attributes that were applied to the Servant in **Yesha'yahu 53**. He would be rejected even though He has the power to "dry up the sea", "make rivers a wilderness" and "clothe the heavens with blackness" and "sackcloth". Surely this is not an accurate picture of Yisra'el, Y'hudah or any other nation. Since when does Yisra'el or Y'hudah have the power to control the heavens and the earth? Rather, any casual glance into Yesha'yahu and Yirmeyahu will reveal that they declare that Yisra'el and Y'hudah have been rebellious and turned away from יהוה. Thus, this Servant could not be them. The verses above are also consistent with **Yesha'yahu 53**, which states that though the Servant is "extolled, exalted and very high", he will suffer. The Mashiag would willingly "give his back" to those who strike Him, His "cheeks to those who pluck out the beard" and would not "hide His face from shame and spitting."

Yes 50:7 "For The Master יהוה will help Me; Therefore I will not be disgraced; Therefore I have set My face like a flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

:8 He is near who defend Me; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up against each other! Who has a case against Me? Let him come near to Me.

:9 Surely The Master יהוה will help Me; Who is he who will condemn Me? Indeed they will all grow old like a garment; The moth will eat them up.

:10 "Who among you fears יהוה? Who obeys the voice of His Servant? Who walks in darkness and has no light? Let him trust in the name of יהוה and rely upon his God.

:11 Look, all you who kindle a fire, who encircle yourselves with sparks: Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks you have kindled -- This you shall have from My hand: You shall lie down in torment.

The above indicates that one must fear יהוה by obeying the voice of this Servant or they will face torment. Woe to the person who contends with Him! The use of the term "Servant" confirms who is being described here. The Mashiag as person is therefore the only one that truly fits all the possibilities.

IV. IS A HUMAN SACRIFICE ACCEPTABLE?

Human sacrifice is a big issue for those who want to discredit a person as the Mashiag, who was killed as sacrifice for the sins of all humankind. However, if this sacrifice is truly not acceptable to God, then it is impossible for any Mashiag to fulfill the prophecies.

Let us first look at Scripture about the Mashiag to decide what He had to do:

Isa 53:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions of the law, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

:6 We all have gone astray like sheep; We each have turned to his own way; but יהוה has laid on Him the unrighteousness of us all.

:8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will describe His anguish? For He was cut off from the land of the living for the transgressions of My people, whose punishment it was.

:9 And they made His grave with the trespassers of the law, yet He was with the rich in His death although He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.

:10 Yet it pleased יהוה to bruise Him, to let Him suffer. He made Himself a trespass offering for eternity to see. He will prolong His days and the pleasure of יהוה will prosper in His hand.

:11 He will see the reward of the anguish of His life and be satisfied by His knowledge, because He is a Servant of many and He will carry their transgressions.

:12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured Himself out unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors of the law, yet He carried the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors of the law.

The concept of a replacement sacrifice is well known in the Tanakh and accepted as atonement and as payment for the punishment of sin:

Num 8:12 And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks, and you shall offer the one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering to יהוה, to make an atonement for the Levites.

Lev 16:21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send it away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness;

Lev 4:14 When the sin which they have committed against it is known, then the **whole congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin** and bring it before the tabernacle of the congregation.

:15 And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before יהוה and the **bullock shall be killed before יהוה**.

Now let us look at the possibility of a human sacrifice:

Yesha'yahu 53:5, 6, 11 and 12 says exactly this. It is an integral part of what was prophesied about what the Mashiach must come to accomplish.

How can He be the real Mashiach without fulfilling these requirements?

Yesha'yahu 53:9 says He is without sin – therefore He will be accepted according to the law to be a sacrifice.

We will now look at two passages in Scripture where human sacrifice is mentioned: Genesis 22:2 and Judges 11:29-31. We must read carefully and without any assumptions or interpretations. After the verse, we will look at Judaism's own teachings about it to clarify what the Jews themselves believe about human sacrifice.

1. Genesis 22:2

The first passage is Genesis 22:2. Here God orders Avraham to sacrifice Yitz'gac as a burnt offering:

Gen 22:2 And he said, Take now your son, your only son Yitz'gac, whom you love, and go to the land of the Amorites; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which I will tell you.

I read that God will never tempt man. Temptation is when one is asked to sin, something that God will NEVER do, as this is counter-intuitive to His plan and whole being:

James 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither does he tempt any man

God did not think that He was tempting Avraham to do sin in asking him to sacrifice his son as a burnt offering. It does not matter that God knew that He would provide a ram at the last minute, He would never ask someone to sin. Tempting someone to sin is what the satan does.

Avraham, who is a righteous man, did not say: "Sorry, but that is against the law." He took wood and fire, which shows that he knew exactly what to do, and took his son to do what God commanded him.

I also believe that Yitz'gac was old enough (about 12) to run away if he wanted to, meaning that he probably accepted that he was to be sacrificed.

There is absolutely no command against a human sacrifice in Scripture if it fulfilled the conditions of a sacrifice, that of being pure.

However, what about the prohibition in Leviticus?

What about:

Lev 18:21 You shall not give any of your children to offer them to Molech, and so profane the name of your God: I am יהוה.

Lev 20:2 “Say to the people of Israel, Any one of the people of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech shall surely be put to death. The people of the land shall stone him with stones.

:3 I myself will set my face against that man and will cut him off from among his people, because he has given one of his children to Molech, to make my sanctuary unclean and to profane my holy name.

We said we will read carefully exactly what it says. Nobody is allowed to sacrifice (in this case their sons) to Molech (or any other false idol, for that matter). Secondly it speaks about children who are forced and not an adult who, being without sin, make the choice to sacrifice themselves. This is without mentioning that both the Septuagint (LXX) as well as the Aramaic Peshitta Tanakh do not refer to a sacrifice here.

2. Judges 11

The second passage is Judges 11:29-31 where Yiftag foolishly promises to sacrifice the first thing that comes to greet him, and ends up having to sacrifice his daughter.

Judg 11:29 Then the Spirit of יהוה came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead; and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over to the children of Ammon.

:30 And Jephthah vowed a vow to יהוה, and said, If thou wilt surely deliver the children of Ammon into my hands,

:31 Then whosoever comes forth of the door of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon shall be יהוה's, and I will offer him up for a burnt offering.

There are three things to keep in mind when reading this verse:

- Jephthah was filled with the Spirit.
- He made a vow which is binding according to Scripture, for the good or bad. **Num 30:2, Deu 23:23**
- “shall be יהוה's, and I will offer him **up for a burnt offering**” no where is he reprimanded, either now or afterwards. He does not say “separated”, but “burnt offering”.

Judg 11:34 Then Jephthah came to Mizpeh to his house, and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; and she was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter.

:35 And when he saw her, he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you have become today one of those that ruin me; for I have **made a promise to God, and I cannot go back on it.**

From this we see that:

- He does not react like a man who just must give his child to God in His service. To the Yisra'elites that was a privilege.
- He said he cannot go back on his promise of a burnt offering.
- She accepted it, as she was old enough to decide.

Judg 11:39 And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to his vow; and she knew no man.

"...according to his vow" – what was his vow? It was to “offer him up for a **burnt offering**”.

Without any assumptions or interpretation, that is what the Scriptures says and we cannot read more in because it affects our sensibilities.

Lev 27:27 And if it is of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem it according to its valuation, and shall add a fifth part to it; or if it is not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to its valuation.

:28 But every devoted thing that a man shall devote to יהוה of all that he has, both of man and beast and of the field of his inheritance, shall not be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to יהוה.

:29 Every devoted thing which shall be devoted by men shall not be redeemed, but shall surely be put to death.

2 Sam 21:1, 8-9, 14b Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of יהוה. And יהוה answered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites....

:8 The king took the two sons of Rizpah the daughter of Aiah, whom she bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth; and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul ...

:9 And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before יהוה....

:14b ...and after that God was intreated for the land.

From this we see that God sent a famine on David's kingdom for three years because of “Saul, and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.” To appease this ‘blood-guilt’, David had to have two of Saul's sons and five of his grandsons killed and hanged "unto the Lord." After they were killed, God stopped the famine.

The Old Testament stops just short of forbidding human sacrifice, for Yeshua was a voluntary, adult human sacrifice. Clearly his sacrifice was acceptable to God. However, the OT does not prescribe, or require, human sacrifice. All the rules concerning what sorts of offerings were acceptable for various purposes mention only animals, birds, and grain. Humans are never mentioned as an option. In fact, humans in general would not be acceptable as sacrifices, because their sin made them imperfect, and only perfect sacrifices were acceptable, hence only “innocent” animals were used. **Yeshua is therefore the only human who could ever be accepted as a sacrifice.**

3. Rabbinic Teachings

We will now look at what the Jewish Rabbis say about human sacrifice. This will confirm whether they would have understood human sacrifice in the same way as we do now.

Notice that this issue of a human (albeit special) sacrificing His life for other humans at God's sovereign direction is a Tanakh issue FIRST and NOT a 'New Covenant' issue. We simply inherited it from them!

Jewish tradition teaches that the death of the righteous atones for the sins of a generation. But it is time for a reality check: did the Jews of the period see a problem with a righteous person giving their life in this way?

Not at all. In fact, this "substitution motif" was applied to Mosheh (in **Yesha'yahu 53**), to some rabbis, and to the innocent:

- *“The atonement of suffering and death is not limited to the suffering person. The atoning effect extends to all the generation. This is especially the case with such sufferers as cannot either by reason of their righteous life or by their youth possibly have merited the afflictions which have come upon them. **The death of the righteous atones just as well as certain sacrifices.**” [Mechilta, 72b]*
- They also applied the following Scriptural words to Mosheh, *"And he bore the sins of many" (Yes 53:12)*, because he offered himself as an atonement for Yisra'el's sin at the time of the golden calf, being ready to sacrifice his very soul for Yisra'el, when he said, *"And if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book (that is, from the Book of the Living), which thou hast written" (Exod- 32:32).* [Sotah, 14a and Berachoth 32a]
- This readiness to sacrifice oneself for Yisra'el is characteristic of all the great men of Yisra'el, the patriarchs and the Prophets acting in the same way, whilst also some Rabbis would, on certain occasions, exclaim, *"Behold, I am the atonement of Yisra'el"* [Mechilta, 2a; Mishnah Negaim 2.1] (Schechter, 1909, p. 310)

This can also be shown in Jewish Inter-Testamental scriptures, such as the Maccabees, but we will pass over these for brevity.

The religious leaders and Rabbis of the first century declared Simon Bar-Kokhba as Mashiach. He sacrificed his life in murderous raids and war to save Yisra'el from Roman rule. Here they could accept a human sacrifice, because it came close to their selfish desires, but the One who gave His life in love and gentleness could not be accepted as sacrifice as He did not fit their view of national saviour who would restore an independent Theocratic Monarchy, with them as priests informing the king. It is therefore hypocritical to now claim no human sacrifice is accepted when speaking of Yeshua, but accepting the sacrifice of freedom fighters who would further your goals.

For example, it is morally right for an adult to take a substitutionary role:

- by paying the parking ticket for someone
- by paying someone's personal debts
- by getting accidentally hit in trying to break up a fight
- by contracting a highly-contagious fatal disease during caring for someone dying of that disease
- by being killed by a car, after pushing a child out of the street to safety
- by being hit with a sniper's bullet, while attempting to shield a president from gunfire (e.g. Secret Service agents)

We normally do not consider these cases of self-sacrifice to be immoral. Indeed, we typically praise these actions. In the above cases, we have varying degrees of substitution with various levels of certainty of the outcome.

Yog 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

From these passages we can therefore confirm that there is no prohibition or law against a human blood replacement sacrifice in Scripture.

V. YESHUA AS THIS MASHIAG

We will now look at evidence for the case of Yeshua being this Mashiag. There are many prophecies in the Tanakh fulfilled by Yeshua, which we will look at later in this chapter. First: the main issues of the time of the Mashiag will be discussed briefly.

A. THE MASHIAG WILL COME AT A SPECIFIC TIME

We will first address this, because this is one fact we can not get past. If a set, prophesied time passed by and the Mashiag didn't appear, the prophecy cannot be correct and can also not be fulfilled. This is important and can not just be pushed aside – if the time passed, it means there is no Mashiag and without a temple and sacrifices, which God declared He do not desire, there is no salvation. It does not matter how many alternatives the Rabbis give.

The Word of יהוה says, "*Surely יהוה-God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets*" (**Amos 3:7**). That means that in the Tanakh at least twice He must have revealed the timing of the coming of Mashiag.

- iv. The appearance of Mashiag was locked into a fixed time
- v. that fixed time was while the Second Temple was still standing
- vi. the Mashiag had to come from a specific lineage that was only verifiable through the Temple records
- vii. the Mashiag had to die a violent death.

a. Daniel 9

An ancient Rabbinic curse in the Talmud forbids people to read **Daniel 9:24-27**. Why? What are they trying to hide?

‘Rabbi Samuel b. Nachmani said in the name (of) Rabbi Jonathan: ‘Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end.’ (1) Some of our Rabbis, in a further attempt to keep us from Daniel, even state that Daniel was wrong. Alfred Edersheim, a Talmudic scholar who would come to know Messiah said, ‘later Rabbinism, which, naturally enough, could not find its way through the Messianic prophecies of the book, declared that even Daniel was mistaken’ (2) (emphasis added).

Rabbis after the time of Christ have pronounced a curse on anyone who would attempt to calculate the dates of this chapter. - **Talmud Sanhedrin 97b, Soncino ed., p. 659**

A Sage said: "May the curse of heaven fall upon those who calculate the date of the advent of the Messiah, and thus create political and social unrest among the people."

Footnotes to the above:

(1) Sanford R. Howard, L'Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom (Thorsby, AL: Sabbath House, Inc., 1999), p. 209. Sanhedrin 97b, vol. 2, p. 659, Soncino Press. Editorial footnote #6 says, 'i.e., Messiah's advent.'

(2) Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), p. 957. Bereshith Rabba 98 (a midrash or commentary on Genesis). Edersheim lived from 1825 to 1889 C.E.

The 70-week prophecy, the greatest proof of Yeshua as the Messiah, is found in these verses. They predict the time of the Messiah's anointing, putting the issue beyond any doubt.

Let us unravel the prophecy by allowing Scripture to be its own expositor:

Dan 9:25 Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah the King is seven times seven weeks, and sixty-two times seven weeks; the people shall return and build Jerusalem; the streets, and walls will be built again at the appointed times.

:26 After sixty-two times seven weeks, Messiah will be slain and the city will be without a ruler and the holy city will be destroyed together with the coming king and the end thereof will be a mass exile and at the end of the war, desolation will be determined.

:27 And He will confirm the covenant with many for the period of seven and half of seven, then He will cause the sacrifice and gift offerings to cease and upon the horns of the altar the abomination of idolatry; and the abomination will continue until the appointed time; the city will remain desolate.

According to the "Seventy-weeks prophecy of Daniel" it would happen after 490 years from 457 BC, the time of Artaxerxes' first decree to restore Yerushalayim as judicial and executive capital to the nation, when "Mashiag the Prince", "Mashiag Nagid" would present Himself as King in Yerushalayim, the Spirit be poured out as promised in the New Covenant and those accepting it be persecuted.

b. THE SCEPTRE DEPARTS FROM Y'HUDAH

Another time-related prophecy is the Prophecy of Ya'akov about the coming of Shiloh:

Gen 49: 10 "The sceptre shall not depart from Y'hudah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people."

The term "sceptre" refers to their tribal identity and the right to apply and enforce Mosaic Laws and adjudicate capital offenses: jus gladii. It is significant that even during their 70-year Babylonian captivity (606-537 B.C.) the tribes retained their tribal identity. They retained their own logistics, judges, societies and customs. (McDowell, 1979) (**Eze 1:5,8**)

The term "Shiloh" was understood by the early rabbis and Talmudic authorities³ as referring to the Mashiag. (Levey, 1976)

³ (Add MS 21160, 13th Century AD) (Add MS 26878 & Harley MS 5709, 14th Century AD) (Or. 4720, n.d.)

In 6-7 AD, King Herod's son and successor, Herod Archelaus, was dethroned and banished to Vienna, a city in Gaul. Archelaus was the second son of Herod the Great (Josephus, Antiquities 17:13). The older son, Herod Antipater, was murdered by Herod the Great, along with other family members. (It was quipped at the time that it was safer to be a dog in that household than a member of the family!) Archelaus' mother was a Samaritan (1/4 or less of Jewish blood) and was never accepted. After the death of Herod (4 BC), Archelaus had been placed over Judea as "Ethnarch" by Caesar Augustus. Broadly rejected, he was removed in 6-7 AD.

He was replaced by a Roman procurator named Caponius. The legal power of the Sanhedrin was immediately restricted and the adjudication of capital cases was lost. This was normal Roman policy in their governed territories, until the territory was fully Romanized. This transfer of power is mentioned in the Talmud and by Josephus⁴. (Josephus, War of the Jews 2:8 & Or. 4720)

After the death of the procurator Festus, when Albinus was about to succeed him, the high priest Ananias considered it a favourable opportunity to assemble the Sanhedrin. He therefore caused James, the brother of Yeshua, who was called Mashiach, and several others, to appear before this hastily assembled council, and pronounced upon them the sentence of death by stoning. All the wise men and strict observers of the law who were at Jerusalem expressed their disapprobation of this act...Some even went to Albinus himself, who had departed to Alexandria, to bring this breach of the law under his observation, and to inform him that Aranius had acted illegally in assembling the Sanhedrin without the Roman authority. (**Josephus, Antiquities, 20:9**)

This remarkable passage not only mentions Yeshua and His brother James as historical figures, it also underscores that the authority of the Sanhedrin had already been passed to the Romans.

This caused a panic reaction:

When the members of the Sanhedrin found themselves deprived of their right over life and death, they covered their heads with ashes and their bodies with sackcloth, and bemoaned, "Woe unto us for the sceptre has departed from Judah and the Mashiach has not come!" (LeMann, 1886)⁵

They actually thought that the Torah, the Word of God, had failed! They should have known better.

The sceptre had, indeed, been removed from Y'hudah and Shiloh had come as the prophecy said. While the Jews wept in the streets of Yerushalayim, a young son of a carpenter was growing up in Nazareth. He would present Himself as the Mashiach Nagid, Messiah the King, on the very day which had been predicted by the angel Gabriël to Daniel five centuries earlier in **Daniel 9:24-27**. In fact, every detail of His life had been foretold centuries earlier in the Tanakh.

c. Eliyahu must first come

The Jewish religious leaders of Yeshua's day were aware of the 'return of Eliyahu' prophecy. At one time the rabbis had asked Yeshua's disciples to explain how Yeshua could possibly have been the Mashiach when it was obvious that Eliyahu had not returned from heaven yet.

⁴ This transfer of power was recorded by Josephus, War of the Jews 2:8 and in the Jerusalem Talmud, Sanhedrin, folio 24

⁵ Also found in the Babylonian Talmud, Chapter 4, folio 37

The Apostles could not answer this question, so they asked Yeshua:

Mat 14:10 "Why do the Jewish leaders insist Eliyahu must return before the Mashiag comes?"

Yeshua answered by first affirming that this question was valid and that this prophecy indeed was true. He said:

"They are right. Eliyahu must come and set everything in order..."

But then, to everyone's surprise, Yeshua explained:

"In fact, he [Eliyahu] already came, but he was not recognized and was badly mistreated by many... Then the disciples realized he was speaking of Yoganan the Immerser."- **Mat 17:10-13, Mark 9:11-13 – paraphrased**

Clearly, Yeshua thought that this was a valid prophecy. Yeshua agreed that Eliyahu "must return before the Mashiag comes." But then Yeshua claimed that Yoganan the Immerser was the fulfilment of this prophecy. In what way could Yoganan the Immerser be the "return of Eliyahu"? Certainly not literally. This apparent contradiction can be resolved by a statement made at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke where it explains that:

Luke 1:17a and he [Yoganan] will go out before Him in the spirit and power of Eliyahu...

The details of these facts together present some of the strongest evidence that Mashiag has in fact already come. If your Mashiag did not come as prophesied before the destruction of the Temple, he is a false Mashiag or you do not have one.

d. Prophecies fulfilled

We will now look at all the prophecies that refer to a Mashiag and define what his character and circumstances of His coming will be. While it is true that any **ONE** of these could be fulfilled by any person, the chance that **ALL** of them are fulfilled by one person is 1×10^{52} or more. This is exactly what Yeshua did, however, with only using the least amount of prophecies fulfilled by Him. Here is a small sample of the prophecies fulfilled by Yeshua:

Scriptures describing the Coming Mashiag		
The Mashiag Prophecy	Tanakh Record	New Covenant Record
The Mashiag will come at a specific time	Dan 9:25-26	Gal 4:4
Preceded by Forerunner	Yes 40:3; Mal 3:1	Mat 3:3; 11:10; Mark 1:2,3; Luk 1:76; 3:4; 7:27
The Mashiag will be the offspring of a woman (Eve)	Gen 3:1 5	Gal 3:17; Luk 2:6,7

The Mashiag will be a descendant of Abraham	Gen 12:3; 22:18	Mat 1:1; Acts 3:25,26; Gal 3:8,16
Through Avraham everyone on earth will be blessed	Gen 18:18; 22:18; 26:4	Gal 3:8; Heb 6:14
Seed of Yitz'gak	Gen 17:19; 21:12	Rom 9:7; Heb 11:18
Seed of Ya'akov	Num 24:17	Luk 3:23,34
The Mashiag will be a descendant of Judah	Gen 49:10	Mat 1:2; Luk 3:33; Heb 7:14; Rev 5:5
The Mashiag will be a descendant of David	Ps 132:11; Jer 23:5,6; 33:15,16	Luk 1:32,33
The Mashiag will be a born of a virgin	Isa 7:14	Mat 1:18-25; Luk 1:26-35
The Mashiag will be a prophet like Mosheh	Deut 18:15-19	Acts 3:22,23
The Mashiag will be the Son of God	Ps 2:7	Mat 3:17; Mark 1:11; Luk 3:22
The Mashiag will be born in Bethlehem	Mic 5:1,2	Mat 2:1; Luk 2:4-7
Great kings will pay homage and tribute to the Mashiag	Ps 72:10,11	Mat 2:1-11
The Mashiag's first spiritual work will be in Galilee	Isa 9:1-7	Mat 4:12-16
The Mashiag will be accused by false witnesses	Yes 53:7; Ps 35:11	Mat 26:59-63; Mark 14:56,57
The Mashiag will be hated without a cause	Yes 53; Ps 35:19; 69:4,5	John 15:23-25
The Mashiag will make the blind see, the deaf hear, etc.	Isa 35:5-6	Mat 11:3-6; John 11:47
The Mashiag will enter the Temple with authority	Mal 3:1	Mat 21:12; Luk 19:45

The Mashiag will enter Jerusalem riding a donkey	Zec 9:9	Mat 21:1-11; Yog 12:15
The Mashiag will be sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zec 11:12,13	Mat 26:15; Mat 27:3-10; Hand 1:18,19
The Mashiag will be forsaken by His disciples	Zec 13:7	Mat 26:31,56
The Mashiag will be betrayed by a friend	Ps 41:9	John 13:18,21
Money buys potter's field	Zech 11:12-13	Mat 27:9
The Mashiag will be killed	Isa 53:5-9	Mat 27:50; Mark 15:37-39; Luk 23:46; John 19:30
The Mashiag will be beaten, mocked, and spat upon	Isa 50:6	Mat 26:67; 27:26-31
The Mashiag will be pierced through hands and feet	Ps 22:16	Luk 23:33,24:36-39; John 19:18,20:19-20,24-27
The bones of the Mashiag will not be broken	Ps 22:17 and 34:20	John 19:31-33,36
Men Will Gamble for the clothing of the Mashiag	Ps 22:18	Mat 27:35; Mark 15:24; Luk 23:34; John 19:23,24
The Mashiag will be given vinegar and gall to drink	Ps 69:21	Mat 27:34; Mark 15:23; John 19:29,30
The Mashiag will be raised from the dead (resurrected)	Ps 16:10,11	Mat 28:5-9; Mark 16:6; Luk 24:4-7; John 20:11-16; Acts 1:3,2:32
The Mashiag will ascend to heaven and sit at the right hand of God	Ps 110:1	Luk 24:51; Acts 1:9; 2:33-35; 3:20-21; 5:31,32; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20,21; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22
The Mashiag is a "stone the builders rejected" who will become the "head cornerstone"	Ps 118:22,23; Isa 28:16	Mat 21:42,43; Acts 4:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-8

People will hear and not believe the “arm of the LORD”	Isa 53:1	John 12:37,38
The Mashiag will be rejected	Isa 53:3	Mat 27:20-25; Mark 15:8-14; Luk 23:18-23; John 19:14,15
The Mashiag will be silent in front of His accusers	Isa 53:7	Mat 26:62,63 and 27:12-14
The Mashiag will be crucified with criminals	Isa 53:12	Mat 27:38; Mark 15:27; Luk 23:32,33
The Mashiag will be buried with the rich	Isa 53:9	Mat 27:59,60; Mark 15:46; Luk 23:52,53; John 19:38-42
The Mashiag is part of the new and everlasting covenant	Isa 55:3-4; Jer. 31:31-34	Mat 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luk 22:20; Heb. 8:6-13
The Mashiag will be our intercessor	Isa 59:16	Heb 9:15
The “Gospel according to Isa”	Isa 52:13-53:12	Mat, Mark, Luk, John
He is our Sacrifice	Isa 53:5-6	1 Peter 2:24-25
King of Yisra’el	Zech 9:9	Yog 12:13
A heavenly High Priest	Zech 6:12-13	Heb 4:4; 8:1-2
Earth filled with knowledge of the glory of the Lord	Hab 2:14	Rom 11:26; Rev 21:23-26
Promise of the Spirit	Joel 2:28-32	Acts 2:17-21; Rom 10:13

If you do not understand how the prophecies work – please refer to the introductory chapter, specifically the paragraphs on the principle of “After the fact”.

I cannot imagine how a testimony like this can be ignored – Yeshua is the Mashiag, and there can be no one else.

The Jews rejected Yeshua because He failed, in their eyes, to do what **they** expected their Mashiag to do. They expected him to destroy evil as defined by them and all **their** enemies and establish an eternal kingdom with Israel as the **pre-eminent nation** in the world. The prophecies in Yesh’yahu and Psalm 22 describe a suffering Mashiag who would be persecuted and killed, but the Jews chose to focus instead on those prophecies that discuss His glorious victories, not His crucifixion. Israel expected a Mashiag for their own uplifting and salvation and not God’s Mashiag for the restoration of His Kingdom and mankind.

VI. THE REJECTION OF YESHUA AND ADVENT OF JUDAISM TO REPLACE THE NEW COVENANT

Now we turn to the aftermath of the destruction of the Temple and the advent of Judaism as replacement for God's plan.

Having rejected Yeshua as the Mashiach and enduring the subsequent destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, Judaism was faced with a serious dilemma: the Torah, and all its related practices, had emphasized that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." How could there be a continuation of the prescribed sacrifices without an altar and a Temple?

This, and other related issues, resulted in the Council of Jamnia in 90 AD, which began redefining Judaism and led to the formulation of the Talmud (3rd - 6th centuries) and what is known as the Geonic Era (7th - 11th centuries).

'We cannot comply to the law anymore, so we change the law', was what the Jews seemed to say. They had rejected God's Mashiach and endeavoured to, as they had done with His laws earlier, create a religion to replace God's will. New ways of obtaining atonement were found to replace sacrifices. As with all theologies and man-made teachings, this was then justified by altering the meaning of Scripture and interpretations to fit the new teaching.

A. NOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT YESHUA?

Surely the testimony about Him and His good works cannot simply be discarded? This is exactly what Judaism seeks to do, despite the evidence of Yeshua's life. Instead of trying to refute the irrefutable, His actions as prophesied, they attacked His character by spreading lies about Yeshua and twisting His words. However, none of their criticisms stand in the face of the overwhelming historical evidence from non-Biblical (i.e. non-religious) sources, as well as Biblical evidence written long before His birth, that He lived and taught exactly as the New Covenant writings teach:

1. Yeshua, as Mashiach, fulfilled more than 52 direct prophecies from the Tanakh and promised to fulfil all others when the time is right, when He returns.
2. Yeshua as Mashiach who was promised at a certain time in history arrived right on schedule as we saw in the previous chapter.
3. There are many secular historians who lived in the century after the death of Yeshua the Mashiach who confirmed his existence. This places Yeshua and His ministry squarely inside the historic record, something that cannot be disputed by theology.

We will now look at some of these non-biblical , historical sources which prove that Yeshua was a teacher in Judea and some details in the New Covenant writings:

Josephus

Titus Flavius Josephus (37 – c.100 AD), a Jewish historian (and, incidentally, part of the Zealot movement, so he had no cause to praise Yeshua) who did not believe in Yeshua as the Son of God, had this to say about Yeshua:

Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. (**Josephus, Antiquities 18:3, par. 3**)

Tacitus

Cornelius Tacitus was a well-known Roman historian (55-120 AD). In book 15, chapter 44 of his *Annals* he writes:

Christus, the founder of the name [Christianity], had undergone the death penalty in the reign of Tiberius, by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilatus, and the pernicious superstition was checked for a moment, only to break out once more, not merely in Judaea, the home of the disease, but in the capital itself, where all things horrible or shameful in the world collect and find a vogue. (**Tacitus, Annals 15:44**)

Even though he clearly despised Christianity, Tacitus here confirms that, for him as a Roman, Yeshua was known as a real person, whose message spread throughout the Empire, starting in Judea, even to Rome. This passage also confirms various small details in the NC, such as Pontius Pilate's name, the time in which Yeshua lived (Tiberias' reign), as well as confirming that the Faith had spread, as is evident from the NC letters, even to Rome where the believers were habitually imprisoned (even Sha'ul was imprisoned at least twice in Rome).

Pliny the Younger

Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, (61 AD – ca. 112 AD), better known as Pliny the Younger, was a lawyer, author, magistrate of Ancient Rome, as well as governor of the Roman province of Bithynia & Pontus in modern-day Turkey. He wrote many letters to Trajan, detailing his work. Amongst these is a letter (number 96) in which he details his actions against the Christians in his province:

In the meanwhile, the method I have observed towards those who have denounced to me as Christians is this: I interrogated them whether they were Christians; if they confessed it I repeated the question twice again, adding the threat of capital punishment... Those who denied that they were or had been Christians and called upon the gods in the usual formula, reciting the words after me, those who offered incense and wine before your image, which I had given orders to be brought forward for this purpose, together with the statues of the deities - all such I considered should be discharged, especially as they cursed the name of Christ, which, it is said, those who are really Christians cannot be induced to do. (**Pliny the Younger, Epistulae 96**)

This letter also places some of Sha'ul's warnings to the Churches in Asia in perspective, as well as underlining how central Yeshua (the "Christ" / Mashiach) was to the true believers.

Lucian

Lucian of Samosata (Born 115 AD) was a well-known Greek satirist and traveling lecturer. He wrote about Christians and Yeshua in his satirical book, *The Death of Peregrine*:

In some of the Asiatic cities, too, the Christian communities put themselves to the expense of sending deputations, with offers of sympathy, assistance, and legal advice. The activity of these people, in dealing with any matter that affects their community, is something extraordinary; they spare no trouble, no expense. Peregrine, all this time, was making quite an income on the strength of his bondage; money came pouring in. You see, these misguided creatures start with the general conviction that they are immortal for all time, which explains the contempt of death and voluntary self-devotion which are so common among them; and then it was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are

converted, and deny the gods of Greece, and worship the crucified sage, and live after his laws. All this they take quite on trust, with the result that they despise all worldly goods alike, regarding them merely as common property. Now an adroit, unscrupulous fellow, who has seen the world, has only to get among these simple souls, and his fortune is pretty soon made; he plays with them. (**Lucian of Samosata, The Death of Peregrine, par.13**)

This quote, whilst thoroughly mocking early Christians as completely ridiculous, also proves several details from the New Covenant. Firstly, it confirms the caring, helpful, and community-based attitude of the early church as described in the Book of Acts. Christians were brothers, living towards the common good of their community and in keeping with the lifestyle of Yeshua. This is further illustrated by Lucian making mention of how they “live after” the laws of the “crucified sage”, i.e. Yeshua.

Church-Fathers quoting secular historians

We now look at some of the secular writings that are quoted by early church fathers and Christian apologetics. They usually quote from writings that are well attested in other manuscripts, but of which the original text has been lost.

Julius Africanus

Julius Africanus, a 3rd Century Christian writer, quotes the writings of **Tallus** and **Phlegon**, who was a first century non-Christian historian, in his Chronicles:

This darkness Thallus, in the third book of his History, calls, as appears to me without reason, an eclipse of the sun. For the Hebrews celebrate the Passover on the 14th day according to the moon, and the passion of our Saviour falls on the day before the Passover; but an eclipse of the sun takes place only when the moon comes under the sun. And it cannot happen at any other time but in the interval between the first day of the new moon and the last of the old, that is, at their junction: how then should an eclipse be supposed to happen when the moon is almost diametrically opposite the sun? Let that opinion pass however; let it carry the majority with it; and let this portent of the world be deemed an eclipse of the sun, like others a portent only to the eye. Phlegon records that, in the time of Tiberius Cæsar, at full moon, there was a full eclipse of the sun from the sixth hour to the ninth—manifestly that one of which we speak. But what has an eclipse in common with an earthquake, the rending rocks, and the resurrection of the dead, and so great a perturbation throughout the universe? (**Julius Africanus, Chronography Fragment 18**)

From this we can see that secular scholars had noted the supernatural phenomenon that is recorded in the Gospels surrounding the death of Yeshua. An interesting fact, also, is the confirmation of Yeshua’s Passover-crucifixion, albeit he has the time wrong.

Origen

Origen (184-253 AD) was one of the most prolific of the Church Fathers, and held a series of debates with other scholars of the time to prove the New Covenant vs. the old, and to establish Yeshua as the Mashiah of the Old Covenant. He was unfortunately also a Neo-Platonist and introduced much of the philosophical tenets of modern Christianity. In one of his letters, written in answer to attacks on Christianity by another scholar of the time, Celsus, he uses Phlegon (one of Emperor Hadrian’s former slaves) as a source to show that Yeshua foreknew what was going to happen:

However, Phlegon in the thirteenth or fourteenth book, I think, of his Chronicle even grants to Christ foreknowledge of certain future events, although he was muddled and said that some things which really happened to Peter happened to Jesus; and he testified that it turned out in accordance with what Jesus had said. But even he by his remarks about foreknowledge unintentionally, as it were, affirmed that the word of the authors of our doctrines was not lacking in divine power.

(Origen, Contra Celsum, Book II, par. 14)

Another interesting statement made by Origen adds to this study:

Supposing also that *Jesus kept all the Jewish customs, and even took part in their sacrifices*⁶, why does this lend support to the view that *we ought not to believe in him as Son of God?* Jesus is Son of the God who gave the law and the prophets; and we of the church do not leave this out. But, while we have avoided the mythologies of the Jews, yet we are made wise and are educated by mystical contemplation of the law and the prophets. The prophets also do not limit the meaning of their sayings to the obvious history and to the text and letter of the law. For in one place, when about to recount supposed history, they say: 'I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter dark sayings of old. And in another place, when praying about the law because it is obscure and in need of God to make it intelligible, they say in prayer: 'Open my eyes, and I will understand thy wonders out of thy law.

(Origen, Contra Celsum, Book II, par. 6)

This, rather interesting, paragraph proves that, according to the prominent church leader of the time, Yeshua and the law are by no means exclusive and that the study and practice of the law of God was something the church of the time (late second, early third century AD) still pursued and upheld. Origen uses this fact to disprove Celsus' argument that Yeshua, keeping the law, cannot be God's Son.

viii. What about the New Covenant writings (NCw)?

Jews and detractors twist and change them and uphold false teachings as the standard. This is caused by three "problems": The testimony and actions of the Church, a misunderstanding of Sha'ul's teachings and Talmudic lies about Yeshua.

1. The Testimony of the Church

The first problem is that people look at teachings of the modern, Roman Catholic-inspired, church and confuse them with the teachings of the NCw:

1. The NCw teach One God, as the Tanakh does and not a Trinitarian God.
2. The NCw upholds the law of God, as the Tanakh does and does not teach that Yeshua replaced the law.
3. The NCw teaches the same standards for living and personal attitudes as the Tanakh.
4. The NCw is a progressive revelation of all the prophecies and promises of the Tanakh and do not cancel them. Through the Spirit of God we can see the progressive steps of the covenant with humankind as we move forward in the greater revelation of the prophecies.

⁶ In the original, Italics mark where Origen is quoting Celsus' arguments

5. Most Jews today wrongly perceive the last 2,000 years of historical Jewish persecution to be at the hands of so-called “Christians.” From the Crusades, to the Inquisition, to the pogroms in Europe, to Hitler’s Holocaust—Jews ultimately believe that they are being held responsible for the death of Yeshua Mashiag and are being persecuted for that reason. They, therefore, reject Him today.

2. Misunderstanding of Sha’ul’s teachings

The second problem is the misunderstanding of Sha’ul’s teachings. They say he taught that the law was done away with. Let us see if this is true.

Sha’ul, an intellectual, had to go away to Arabia after his conversion to work out, what must have seemed to him, the revolutionary implications of the New Covenant. Only after three years did he come back to Yerushalayim to discuss it with Kefa (**Gal 1:15-18**). As a legal expert God allocated to him the task of explaining it all to the world in his Letters, specifically the Letter to the Romans.

In this letter, he first points out that all have sinned and fallen short of God's requirements under the Law (**Rom 3:1-20**) but by God's grace righteousness is imparted to the repentant on account of their trust (**Rom 3:21-4:25**). We believe that we are saved from the death penalty, which would have been required by the Law, because Yeshua died for us. Thereby He put an end to the legal consequence of sin for those who have faith in His sacrifice (**Rom 5:1-6:23**). We are then released from bondage to our carnal desires by the help of the Set-Apart Spirit within us (**Rom 7 & 8**). All this takes place by the undeserved favour of God, because He knows, and we confess, that we are not able by our own unaided efforts to keep the Law. Hence Sha’ul says: “*By undeserved favour are you saved through trust*” (**Eph. 2:8**).

Under the New Covenant, children of God are enabled to obey the Law, because the Set-Apart Spirit gives them the desire to do so. There is no question of the Law being done away with; on the contrary, it is upheld. Of course born-again children of God are not without sin, but now “*if any man sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Yeshua Mashiag the righteous, and he is the atonement for our sins*” (**I John 2:1**).

Joseph Klausner, a Jewish scholar, said the following:

"There is nothing in the teaching of Paul, not even the most mystical elements in it, that did not come to him from **authentic** Judaism." **From Jesus to Paul By Joseph Klausner, translated from the Hebrew by William F. Stinespring.**

Historically the break between Judaism and the followers of Mashiag happened before Sha'ul's new convictions. Stefanus' death is testimony to the fact. The break did not come because of any disciple or his teaching, but the claim made by Yeshua to be the Mashiag.

Now we will look at how, what is written in the Tanakh, what Yeshua said and what Sha’ul wrote compare. Just a few examples.

	Tanakh	Yeshua	Sha'ul
The Law	<p>Ps 119:97 How do I love Your law; the whole day it is my meditation.</p> <p>Isa 42:21 It pleases יהוה, because of His righteousness, to make the law great, virtuous and praise worthy. Deut 4:2; 12:32;</p> <p>Pro 30:6</p>	<p>Mat 5:17 Do not think that I have come to dismantle the law and the prophets. I did not come to dismantle them, but to completely explain them.</p>	<p>Rom 7:12 The written law therefore is set-apart and the commands are set-apart, righteous, and good.</p> <p>1 Tim 1:8 We know that the written law is good if somebody allows himself to be guided by the written law.</p>
The purpose of the law	<p>Ps 119:105 Your message is a lamp unto my feet and a light for my path.</p>	<p>John 5:39 Investigate the Scriptures, because in them you have an assured expectation that you have eternal life and they testify of Me.</p>	<p>Gal 3:24 The written law was therefore a guide to us unto the Mashiach so that we can be declared innocent through trust,</p>
The place and roll of the law	<p>Jer 31:31 Behold, days are coming,” declares יהוה, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Yisra’el and with the house of Y’hudah, 33 but this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Yisra’el , after those days, says יהוה: I will put my law in them, and I will write it upon their minds, will and emotions; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.</p>	<p>Luk 16:16 The law and prophets were until Yoganan; from that time the Kingdom of God is announced, and everyone presses to enter into it, 17 but it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the law to pass away.</p> <p>Mat 5:18 for it is true what I tell you; until heaven and earth will pass away, not even one yud or one dash of the law will pass away until all of it is fulfilled.</p>	<p>Gal 3:11 that no man is justified by the law before God, is evident: for, as it is written: “The righteous will live by trust,” 12 but the written law did not stem from trust, but, Whosoever shall do the things which is written in it will live in it” Lev 18:5</p>

- Sha'ul is clear: No one is saved by the law but teaches that you must live according to the law. Salvation is not the purpose of the law.

There is no difference between the messages in any part of Scripture.

3. Talmudic Lies

The third problem is that the Jewish leaders spread lies about the NCw and about Yeshua.

Sanhedrin 106a states Yeshua's mother was a whore: "She who was the descendant of princes and governors played the harlot with carpenters." Also in footnote #2 to **Shabbath 104b** of the Soncino edition, it is stated that in the "uncensored" text of the Talmud it is written that Yeshua's mother, "Miriam the hairdresser," had sex with many men.

Another passage from **Sanhedrin 106** gloats over the early age at which Jesus died:

"Hast thou heard how old Balaam (Yeshua) was? He replied: It is not actually stated but since it is written, Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days it follows that he was thirty-three or thirty-four years old."

While apologists for the Talmud tend to deny that it contains any derogatory references to Yeshua the Mashiach, certain Orthodox Jewish organizations do admit that the Talmud not only mentions Yeshua, but disparages him as a sorcerer and a demented sexual deviant. For example, on the website of the Orthodox Jewish Hasidic Lubavitch group in America we find the following statement, complete with Talmudic citations:

The Talmud (Babylonian edition) records other sins of 'Jesus the Nazarene':

He and his disciples practiced sorcery and black magic, led Jews astray into idolatry, and were sponsored by foreign, gentile powers for the purpose of subverting Jewish worship (**Sanhedrin 43a**).

He was sexually immoral, worshipped statues of stone (a brick is mentioned), was cut off from the Jewish people for his wickedness, and refused to repent (**Sanhedrin 107b; Sotah 47a**).

He learned witchcraft in Egypt and, to perform miracles, used procedures that involved cutting his flesh, which is also explicitly banned in the Bible (**Shabbos 104b**).

(<https://www.noahide.com/yeshu.htm>)

What is interesting is that the Jews for Judaism website tries to disprove these accusations against the Talmud by saying that they are made by Christians who do not understand the Talmud. Their Article, "Jesus in the Talmud", offers seemingly compelling evidence to this effect. However, it becomes a lot less compelling when one remembers that the original text quoted above comes from a **Jewish-Hasidic** website, and that these "allegations" are statements made by Jews, with a Jewish understanding of the Talmud.

Below are some other sections that mention Yeshua or Christians in the Talmud:

- **Gittin 57a.** Says Yeshua is in hell, being boiled in "hot excrement."
- **Sanhedrin 43a.** Says Yeshua ("Yeshu" and in Soncino footnote #6, Yeshu "the Nazarene") was executed because he practiced sorcery: "It is taught that on the eve of Passover Yeshua was hung, and forty days before this the proclamation was made: Yeshua is to be stoned to death because he has practiced sorcery and has lured the people to idolatry...He was an enticer and of such thou shalt not pity or condone."
- **Rosh Hashanah 17a.** Christians (minnim) and others who reject the Talmud will go to hell and be punished there for all generations.
- **Sanhedrin 90a.** Those who read the New Testament ("uncanonical books") will have no portion in the world to come.
- **Shabbath 116a.** Jews must destroy the books of the Christians, i.e. the New Testament.

This last point is reported by Dr. Israel Shahak of Hebrew University in his book, Jewish History, Jewish Religion: The Weight of Three Thousand Years. On March 23, 1980, the Israelis burned hundreds of New Testament Bibles in occupied Palestine in an attempt to stem the growth of Christianity. (Shahak, 1997, p. 21)

In this way the Jews are terrorized by their leaders to stay far away from anything Christian, especially New Covenant writings.

VII. JUDAISM'S CLAIM TO SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY OVER THE FAITH

What, then, of the Jews and Judaism? Do we as Children of God not owe a spiritual debt to the rabbis and the ones who seek to keep God's covenant alive? Isn't there some value in learning from them, even if they still try to keep the Old Covenant alive?

No. Yeshua had this to say about the Pharisees, who are the fathers of modern Rabbinic Judaism:

Mat 15:12 Then His disciples came to Him and said: Do you know that the Pharisees, who heard this, were offended?

:13 But He answered and said to them: Every plant that My heavenly Father did not plant, will be uprooted.

:14 Leave them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if the blind lead around the blind, both will fall into a pit. **Mat 16:4; 16:11,12**

Will we, then, heed Yeshua's word and "leave them alone"?

For more detailed information as to why we as children of God cannot follow Rabbinical teachings, I refer any person who has a serious desire for the truth to have a look at the teaching linked below by Johan Kriel of Nuwelied Ministries **Email:** kontak@nuwelied.info

. **Wie Is Jou Rabbi?:** <http://nuwelied.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Okt15Leermeester.pdf>

Also available in English at:

<http://nuwelied.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Jan16WhoIsYourRabbi1.pdf>

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