

Handout for "The Jewish Jesus Lesson Part 3"

It is very interesting that Jesus instructed his twelve disciples not to enter into the road of the Gentiles or go even into the cities of the Samaritans, but to only go to the people of Israel.

Dr. David Flusser pointed out that Jesus and the Essenes shared the same adversaries, Romans, Sadducees, Pharisees, and Zealots. Jesus taught that evil could be overcome with good, just as the Essenes had taught before him.

Jesus, along with John the Baptist and the Essenes, also practiced ritual immersion (baptism). Jesus was part and parcel of the world of the Jewish Sages. He was no ignorant peasant, and his acquaintance with the Torah and the Mishnah (Oral Law) was considerable.

Many of the Jews living in the late Second Temple Period were expecting the arrival of the promised savior and deliverer of the Jewish people – the Mashiach. The Hebrew word "mashiach" means "anointed" and the Mashiach was understood to be "The Anointed One."

They believed the mashiach would be well-versed in Jewish law, and observant of its commandments. He was expected to be a charismatic leader, inspiring others to follow his example.

Some believed he would also be a great military figure who would win battles and free the Jews of the domination of foreigners and then establish a Torah-based kingdom in Israel. The Anointed One would be a great judge, who makes righteous decisions.

Above all, the mashiach would be a fully normal human being, not a god, demi-god, or other supernatural being.

Jesus wasn't the only candidate for being the Messiah. Between 4 BCE and 100 CE there were six other "Messianic" movements in Israel: Judas, son of Ezekias; Simon, a slave of King Herod; Anthronges, a shepherd; Menahem, a descendent of Judas of Galilee; John of Gischala, and Simon bar Giona.

The mashiach was above all supposed to drive foreign domination from the land and restore Israel to the glorious state of the kingdom of David. The fact that the foreign invaders crucified Jesus obviously removed him from the list of expected mashiachs for most Jews.

A common assumption among people is that "Christ" is the last name of Jesus.

"Jesus the Christ" because "Jesus Christ" as time passed.

Christ is a transliteration of the Greek word *christos* into English. The Greek word *christos*, a form of the Greek verb *chrío* that means "to pour," is a translation of the Hebrew word *mashiach*, from which we get the word "Messiah." Both words, "Christ" and "mashiach", mean "anointed" (i.e., the anointing oil was poured onto their heads). "Jesus the Christ" means "Jesus the Anointed One".

"Son of God" meant something very different to gentiles with polytheistic cultures than it did for monotheistic Jews. In the Gentile world, gods had sons and daughters. Some gods even had sex with human females to produce their children.

The "Son of God" for the Jews was the title of the King of Israel. He received it at the time he was anointed king in the coronation ceremony.

The question that would dominate the Jesus Movement for decades after the Romans crucified him was this -- "When did Jesus become the Son of God?"