



CONTEXT FOR THE CHRIST EVENT:

Messianism IV: Israel

HOW COULD ISRAEL (= “ruling with God”¹), as God’s Chosen People, come to regard itself as the promised messiah? The answer is found in the ancient prophets:

... but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law [Torah] in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord . . . — Jeremiah 31:33, 34.

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh . . . — Ezekiel 11:19.

This answer is further confirmed in the Pauline Epistles — if Paul’s statements can be transposed from “gospel believers” back to the Chosen People themselves:

... forasmuch as ye are . . . written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.
— 2 Corinthians 3:3.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. — 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.

Israel saw itself as the manifestation of God, the expression of God, the presence of God.

Indwelling Torah

If the Torah and the Spirit of God dwell in the hearts of the Chosen People, they are in fact anointed by God as his messiah.^{2, 3} Israel therefore saw itself

as the manifestation of God, the expression of God, the presence of God.⁴⁻⁷ Since the Torah became God incarnate, the Chosen People constituted the anointed prophet, priest, king/ruler and divine temple. Their anticipated dominion embraced all the earth and the heavenly realm itself. Israel thus attained the authority of self-existence, of command, possession and power, and of life/death over mankind.

It should not be surprising that Israel repeatedly questioned the authenticity of individual messianic claimants, firmly resisted the domination of imperial powers, and repeatedly revolted against imperial Rome:

1. First Revolt (66-70 CE), against the rule of Roman emperors, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius and Vespasian
2. Revolt of the Diasporan Jews in Egypt and Cyrene (115-117 CE), against Emperor Trajan
3. Final Revolt (132-135 CE), under Emperor Hadrian

It was in the context of the consequent defeats, expulsions and evident rejection of Israel that Christianity appropriated Israel's messianic roles. It was in this setting that Christianity claimed to *supersede* the Chosen People and to assume the messianic offices, the realm and the authority of Israel.⁸ The misappropriation of messianism by Christianity must now be traced to its origins.

Endnotes

1. See "Israel," in Robert Young, *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Co., 1955).
2. See "Ointments," at ccat.sas.upenn.edu/humm/Topics/SongOfSongs/ointment.html#SSMR1.
3. See "Midrash Song of Songs," at www.sacred-texts.com/jud/tmm/tmm13.htm.
4. Julie Parker, "The Main Event," retrieved from www.messianichome.org.
5. See Ismar Schorsch, "Torah Commentary," at postrockcountry.com/Torah/Torah17.htm.
6. "Since Yahweh himself is the Torah, it must be as unknowable as God is" (Harold Bloom, *Jesus and Yahweh: The Names Divine* [New York: Riverhead Books, 2005], pp. 210, 211).
7. "Torah is the Great Name of Yahweh himself, unifying his tripartite consciousness of being, and indeed constituting his body" (*Ibid.*, p. 219).
8. See Wikipedia, "Supersessionism," at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supersessionism.