

The Jewish Messiah (Edited by Alon Gildoni, The Jewish Agency for Israel 5768)

"I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah, and though he may tarry, still I await him every day."
אני מאמין באמונה שלימה בביאת המשיח, ואף על פי שיתמהמה, עם כל זה אחכה לו בכל יום שיבוא.
Ani Ma'amin Be'emuna Shleima Be'vi'at Ha'Mashiach, Ve'af Al Pi she yit'ma'ha'm'eha yim kol ze a'cha'ke Lo
B'chol yom sh'eYavo. (According to Thirteen Principles of Faith)

The 13 Articles of Faith

The great codifier of Torah law and Jewish philosophy, Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon ("Mamonides" also known as "The Rambam"), compiled what he refers to as the *Shloshah Asar Ikkarim*, the "Thirteen Fundamental Principles" of the Jewish faith, as derived from the Torah. Maimonides refers to these thirteen principles of faith as "the fundamental truths of our religion and its very foundations." The Thirteen Principles of Jewish faith are as follows:

1. Extolled and praised be the living God, He exists, but His existence is not bounded by time.
2. He is One, but His unity is unparalleled; He is incomprehensible, and His unity is endless.
3. He has no material form, He is incorporeal, and His holiness is not comparable to aught.
4. He existed prior to every creation, He is the first, but without any period of commencement.
5. Behold! He is the Lord of the universe, and all creation manifest his omnipotence and dominion.
6. The inspiration of His prophecy did He bestow on men of His peculiar and glorious people.
7. Never arose in Israel a prophet, who, like Moses, did behold the glorious similitude of God.
8. The law of truth hath God given to His people, by means of His prophet (Moses) "the faithful of His house".
9. God will never alter His law, or ever change it for any other.
10. He perceives and knows our most hidden secrets, and foresees the end of all things at their very beginning.
11. He rewards the pious man according to His work, and retributes evil to the wicked, according to His misdeeds.
12. At the end of days He will send our Messiah to redeem those who wait with hope His final salvation.
13. The dead will God in His great mercy resuscitate: praised be His glorious name for evermore!

These are the Thirteen Principles of our faith, they are the foundation of the decree of God and His law.

Yig-dal Elo-him chai ve-yish-ta-bach
Nim-tсах ve-en nget el me-tsi-uto.
Echad ve-en ya-chid ke-yi-chu-do.
Neglam ve-gam en sof le-ach-du-to.
En lo de-mut ha-guf ve-eno guf
Lo na-gna-roch elav ke-du-shato.
Kad-mon le chol da-bar asher nib-rah
Ri-shon ve-en reshit le-re-shi-to.
Hinno Adon gno-lam le-chol not-sar
Yo-reh ge-du-la-to u-mal-chu-to.
She-fang nebuato ne-ta-no el
An-she se-gu-lato ve-tif-arto.
Lo kam be-yis-ra-el ke-mo-she ngod,
Na-bi u-mab-bit el te-mu-na-to.
To-rat emet natan le-nga-mo El
Ngal yad ne-bi-o ne-eman bei-to
Lo ya-cha-lif ha-El ve-lo ya-mir,
Da-to le-ngo-la-min le-zu-la-to.
Tso-feh ve-yo-de-ang se-ta-renu
Mab-bit le-sof da-bar be-kad-mu-to.
Go-mel le-ish cha-sid ke-mif-gna-lo
No-ten le-ra-shang rang ke-rish-gna-to.
Yish-lach le-kets ya-mim me-shi-che-nu
Lif-dot mechake-kets ye-shu-gna-to.
Me-tim ye-cha-ye El be-rob chas-do
Ba-ruch gna-de gnad shem te-hil-la-to.
El-leh she-losh gnes-reh le-gnik-karim
Hinnam ye-sod dat El ve-to-ra-to.

Jeremiah Chapter 23

ה הנה ימים באים נאם-יהוה, והקמתי לדוד צמח צדיק; ומלך מלך והשכיל, ועשה משפט וצדקה בארץ.

5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous shoot, and he shall reign as king and prosper, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

ו בגמיו תנשע יהודה, וישראל ישכון לבטח; וזה שמו אשר-יקראו, יהוה צדקנו.

6 In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, The LORD is our righteousness.

ז לכן הנה-ימים באים, נאם-יהוה; ולא-יאמרו עוד חי-יהוה, אשר העלה את-בני ישראל מארץ מצרים.

7 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say: 'As the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt';

ח כי אם-חי-יהוה, אשר העלה ואשר הביא את-זרע בית ישראל מארץ צפונה, ומכל הארצות, אשר הדחתים שם; וישבו, על-אדמתם.

8 but: 'As the LORD liveth, that brought up and that led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them'; and they shall dwell in their own land.

Isaiah Chapter 2

ב וְהָיָה בְאַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים, נִכּוֹן יִהְיֶה הַר יְהוָה-בֵּית-יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים, וְנִשְׂאָ, מִגְּבְעוֹת; וְנִהְרָוּ אֵלָיו, כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם.

2 And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established as the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

ג וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים, וְאָמְרוּ לְכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל-הַר-יְהוָה אֶל-בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, וְיָרִינוּ מִדְּרָכָיו, וְנִלְכְּהָ בְּאַרְחֹתָיו: כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה, וּדְבַר-יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם.

3 And many peoples shall go and say: 'Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

ד וְשִׁפְט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם, וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים; וְכָתְתוּ חַרְבוֹתָם לְאֵתִים, וְחַנְיֹתוֹתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמֹרוֹת--לֹא-יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי חֶרֶב, וְלֹא-יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה. {פ}

4 And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah Chapter 11

א וַיֵּצֵא חֹטֵר, מִגֹּזֵעַ יֵשׁוּ; וְנֹצֵר, מִשְׁרָשְׁיוֹ יִפְרֹחַ.

1 And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a twig shall grow forth out of his roots.

ב וְנָחָה עָלָיו, רוּחַ יְהוָה--רוּחַ חֲכָמָה וְבִינָה, רוּחַ עֲצָה וְגִבּוּרָה, רוּחַ דַּעַת, וְיִרְאֵת יְהוָה.

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

ג וְהָרִיחוּ, בִּירְאֵת יְהוָה; וְלֹא-לְמַרְאֵה עֵינָיו יִשְׁפּוֹט, וְלֹא-לְמִשְׁמַע אָזְנוֹ יוֹכִיחַ.

3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears;

ד וְשִׁפְט בְּצִדְקַת דְּלִים, וְהוֹכִיחַ בְּמִישׁוֹר לַעֲנוּי-אָרֶץ; וְהִכֶּה אֶרֶץ בְּשִׁבְט פִּי, וּבְרוּחַ שְׁפָתָיו יִמִּית רָשָׁע.

4 But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the land; and he shall smite the land with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

ה וְהָיָה צִדְקָה, אֲזוּר מִתְּנָיִ; וְהֶאֱמוּנָה, אֲזוּר מִלְּצִיּוֹ.

5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

ו וְגַר זֵאֵב עִם-כֶּבֶשׂ, וְנִמְר עִם-גְּדִי יִרְבֹּץ; וְעִגְל וְכִפְרִי וּמִרְיָא יִחְדּוּ, וְנֹעַר קִטָּן נִהַג בָּם.

6 And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

ז וּפְרָה וְדִב תִּרְעֶינָה, יִחְדּוּ יִרְבְּצוּ יְלָדֵיהֶן; וְאַרְיֵה, כִּבְקָר יֹאכַל-תֵּבֶן.

7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

ח וְשֹׁעֲשֵׂע יוֹנֵק, עַל-חֵר פִּתּוֹ; וְעַל מְאוּרַת צְפַעוֹנִי, גָּמוּל יָדוֹ הִדָּה.

8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den.

ט לֹא-יָרְעוּ וְלֹא-יִשְׁחִיתוּ, בְּכֹל-הַר קְדְשִׁי: כִּי-מִלְּאֵה הָאָרֶץ, דַּעַה אֶת-יְהוָה, כְּמַיִם, לְיָם מְכֻסִּים.

9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

י וְהָיָה, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, שָׂרָשׁ יֵשׁוּ אֲשֶׁר עָמַד לְנֶס עַמִּים, אֵלָיו גּוֹיִם יִדְרְשׁוּ; וְהָיְתָה מְנַחְתּוֹ, כְּבוֹד. {פ}

10 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign of the peoples, unto him shall the nations seek; and his resting-place shall be glorious.

יא וְהָיָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, יוֹסִיף אֲדָנִי שְׁנֵית יָדוֹ, לְקָנוֹת, אֶת-שָׂר עַמּוֹ--אֲשֶׁר יִשְׂאָר מֵאַשּׁוּר וּמִמִּצְרַיִם וּמִפַּתְרוֹס וּמִכּוּשׁ, וּמִעִילָם וּמִשִּׁנְעָר וּמִחֻמָּת, וּמֵאֲנִי, הַיָּם.

11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people, that shall remain from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

יב וְנִשָּׂא נֶס לְגוֹיִם, וְאַסַּף נְדָחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל; וְיִבְרָצוּ, וְיִהְיֶה יִשְׂרָאֵל, מֵאַרְבַּע כְּנֻפּוֹת הָאָרֶץ.

12 And He will set up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the dispersed of Israel, and gather together the scattered of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Jeremiah Chapter 33

יד הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים, נְאֻם-יְהוָה; וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת-הַדְּבָר הַטּוֹב, אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל-בֵּית הַיְהוּדָה.

14 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and concerning the house of Judah.

טו בְּיָמִים הָהֵם וּבְעֵת הַהִיא, אֶצְמִיחַ לְדָוִד צֶמַח צְדָקָה; וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט וְצְדָקָה, בְּאֶרֶץ.

15 In those days, and at that time, will I cause a shoot of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

טז בְּיָמִים הָהֵם תִּנְשָׂע יְהוּדָה, וִירוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּחן לְבָטָח; וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא-לָהּ, יְהוָה צְדָקָנוּ. {ס}

16 In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby she shall be called, the LORD is our righteousness.

Hosea Chapter 3

ד כִּי יָמִים רַבִּים, יָשְׁבוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל--אִין מֶלֶךְ וְאִין שָׂר, וְאִין זָבַח וְאִין מִצְבֵּה, וְאִין אִפֹּד, וְתִרְפִּים.

4 For the children of Israel shall sit solitary many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim;

ה אַחֲרָי, יָשְׁבוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וּבִקְשׂוּ אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם, וְאֶת דָּוִד מֶלֶכָם; וּפָחַדוּ אֶל-יְהוָה וְאֶל-טוֹבוֹ, בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים. {פ}

5 afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall come trembling unto the LORD and to His goodness in the end of days.

Zechariah Chapter 14

ט וְהָיָה יְהוָה לְמֶלֶךְ, עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ; בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, יְהִי יְהוָה אֶחָד--וְשֵׁמוֹ אֶחָד.

9 And the LORD shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall the LORD be One, and His name one.

Zephaniah Chapter 3

יג שְׂאֲרֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא-יַעֲשׂוּ עֲוֹלָה, וְלֹא-יִדְבְּרוּ כָזָב, וְלֹא-יִמְצָא בְּפִיהֶם, לְשׁוֹן תְּרֻמִּית: כִּי-הִמָּה יִרְעוּ וְיִכְבְּזוּ, וְאִין מִחְרִיד. {פ}

13 The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. {P}

The Messianic Idea in Judaism

Belief in the eventual coming of the Mashiach is a basic and fundamental part of traditional Judaism. It is part of Rambam's (Maimonides) 13 Principles of Faith (Yigdal), the minimum requirements of Jewish belief. In the Shemoneh Esrei prayer (The Amidah/Silent devotion), recited three times daily, we pray for all of the elements of the coming of the Mashiach: ingathering of the exiles; restoration of the religious courts of justice; an end of wickedness, sin and heresy; reward to the righteous; rebuilding of Jerusalem; restoration of the line of King David; and restoration of Temple service.

Modern scholars suggest that the messianic concept was introduced later in the history of Judaism, during the age of the prophets. They note that the messianic concept is not mentioned anywhere in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible).

However, traditional Judaism maintains that the messianic idea has always been a part of Judaism. The Mashiach is not mentioned explicitly in the Torah, because the Torah was written in terms that all people could understand, and the abstract concept of a distant, spiritual, future reward was beyond the comprehension of some people. However, the Torah contains several references to "the End of Days" (acharit ha-yamim), which is the time of the Mashiach; thus, the concept of Mashiach was known in the most ancient times.

The term "Mashiach" literally means "the anointed one," and refers to the ancient practice of anointing kings with oil when they took the throne. The Mashiach is the one who will be anointed as king in the End of Days.

The word "Mashiach" does not mean "savior." The notion of an innocent, divine or semi-divine being who will sacrifice himself to save us from the consequences of our own sins is a purely Christian concept that has no basis in Jewish thought. Unfortunately, this Christian concept has become so deeply ingrained in the English word "messiah" that this English word can no longer be used to refer to the Jewish concept. The word "Mashiach" will be used throughout this page.

The Mashiach

The Mashiach will be a great political leader descended from King David (Jeremiah 23:5). The Mashiach is often referred to as "Mashiach ben David" (Mashiach, son of David). He will be well-versed in Jewish law, and observant of its commandments (Isaiah 11:2-5). He will be a charismatic leader, inspiring others to follow his example. He will be a great military leader, who will win battles for Israel. He will be a great judge, who makes righteous decisions (Jeremiah 33:15). But above all, he will be a human being, not a god, demi-god or other supernatural being.

It has been said that in every generation, a person is born with the potential to be the Mashiach. If the time is right for the messianic age within that person's lifetime, then that person will be the Mashiach. But if that person dies before he completes the mission of the Mashiach, then that person is not the Mashiach.

When Will the Mashiach Come?

It is believed that the Mashiach will come in a time when he is most needed (because the world is so sinful), or in a time when he is most deserved (because the world is so good). For example, each of the following has been suggested as the time when the Mashiach will come:

- if Israel repented a single day;
- if Israel observed a single Shabbat properly;
- if Israel observed two Shabbats in a row properly;
- in a generation that is totally innocent or totally guilty;
- in a generation that loses hope;
- in a generation where children are totally disrespectful towards their parents and elders;

What Will the Mashiach Do?

Before the time of the Mashiach, there shall be war and suffering (Ezekiel 38:16)

טו וְעָלִיתָ עַל-עַמֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּעָנָן לְכַסּוֹת
הָאָרֶץ; בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים תִּהְיֶה, וְהִבְאוֹתִיךָ
עַל-אֲרָצִי, לְמַעַן דַּעַת הַגּוֹיִם אֹתִי בְהִקְדָּשִׁי בְּךָ
לְעֵינֵיהֶם, גּוֹג.

16 and thou shalt come up against My people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the end of days, and I will bring thee against My land, that the nations may know Me, when I shall be sanctified through thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

The Mashiach will bring about the political and spiritual redemption of the Jewish people by bringing us back to Israel and restoring Jerusalem (Isaiah 11:11-12; Jeremiah 23:8; 30:3; Hosea 3:4-5). He will establish a government in Israel that will be the center of all world government, both for Jews and gentiles (Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:10; 42:1). He will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem and re-establish its worship (Jeremiah 33:18). He will restore the religious court system of Israel and establish Jewish law as the law of the land (Jeremiah 33:15).

Olam Ha-Ba: The Messianic Age

The world after the messiah comes is often referred to in Jewish literature as Olam Ha-Ba (oh-LAHM hah-BAH), the World to Come. This term can cause some confusion, because it is also used to refer to a spiritual afterlife. In English, we commonly use the term "messianic age" to refer specifically to the time of the messiah.

Olam Ha-Ba will be characterized by the peaceful co-existence of all people ([Isaiah 2:4](#)). Hatred, intolerance and war will cease to exist. Some authorities suggest that the laws of nature will change, so that predatory beasts will no longer seek prey and agriculture will bring forth supernatural abundance ([Isaiah 11:6-11:9](#)). Others, however, say that these statements are merely an allegory for peace and prosperity.

All of the Jewish people will return from their exile among the nations to their home in Israel ([Isaiah 11:11-12](#); [Jeremiah 23:8](#); [30:3](#); [Hosea 3:4-5](#)). The law of the Jubilee will be reinstated.

In the Olam Ha-Ba, the whole world will recognize the Jewish G-d as the only true G-d, and the Jewish religion as the only true religion ([Isaiah 2:3](#); [11:10](#); [Micah 4:2-3](#); [Zechariah 14:9](#)). There will be no murder, robbery, competition or jealousy. There will be no sin ([Zephaniah 3:13](#)). Sacrifices will continue to be brought in the Temple, but these will be limited to thanksgiving offerings, because there will be no further need for expiatory offerings.

Why Don't Jews Believe in Jesus?

by Rabbi Shraga Simmons

For 2,000 years, Jews have rejected the Christian idea of

It is important to understand why Jews don't believe in Jesus. The purpose is not to disparage other religions, but rather to clarify the Jewish position. The more data that's available, the better-informed choices people can make about their spiritual path.

Jews do not accept Jesus as the messiah because:

- 1) Jesus did not fulfill the messianic prophecies.
- 2) Jesus did not embody the personal qualifications of the Messiah.
- 3) Biblical verses "referring" to Jesus are mistranslations.
- 4) Jewish belief is based on national revelation.

At the end of this article, we will examine these additional topics:

- 5) Christianity contradicts Jewish theology
- 6) Jews and Gentiles
- 7) Bringing the Messiah

1) JESUS DID NOT FULFILL THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

What is the Messiah supposed to accomplish? The Bible says that he will:

A. Build the Third Temple ([Ezekiel 37:26-28](#)).

כד ועבדי דוד מלך עליהם, ורועה אחד יהיה להם; ובמשפטי ילכו, וחקותי ישמרו ועשו אותם. **24** And My servant David shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in Mine ordinances, and observe My statutes, and do them.

כה וישבו על-הארץ, אשר נתתי לעבדי לייעקב, אשר ישבו-בה, אבותיכם; וישבו עליה המה ובניהם ובני בניהם, עד-עולם, ודוד עבדי, נשיא להם לעולם. **25** And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and David My servant shall be their prince for ever.

- כו** וְכָרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית שְׁלוֹם, בְּרִית עוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אוֹתָם; וְיִתְּתִים וְהִרְבִּיתִי אוֹתָם, וְנִתְּתִי אֶת-מִקְדְּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם לְעוֹלָם.
- 26** Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them--it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will establish them, and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for ever.
- כז** וְהָיָה מִשְׁכְּנִי עֲלֵיהֶם, וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים; וְהָמָּה, יִהְיוּ-לִי לְעָם.
- 27** My dwelling-place also shall be over them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
- כח** וְיָדְעוּ, הַגּוֹיִם, כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה, מִקְדֵּשׁ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל--בְּהִיּוֹת מִקְדְּשִׁי בְּתוֹכָם, לְעוֹלָם. {פ}
- 28** And the nations shall know that I am the LORD that sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever.' {P}

B. Gather all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isaiah 11:11-12; Jeremiah 23:8; 30:3; Hosea 3:4-5)

C. Usher in an era of world peace, and end all hatred, oppression, suffering and disease. As it says: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall man learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)

D. Spread universal knowledge of the God of Israel, which will unite humanity as one. As it says: "God will be King over all the world - on that day, God will be One and His Name will be One" (Zechariah 14:9).

The historical fact is that Jesus fulfilled none of these messianic prophecies.

Christians counter that Jesus will fulfill these in the Second Coming, but Jewish sources show that the Messiah will fulfill the prophecies outright, and no concept of a second coming exists.

2) JESUS DID NOT EMBODY THE PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF MESSIAH

A. MESSIAH AS PROPHET

Jesus was not a prophet. Prophecy can only exist in Israel when the land is inhabited by a majority of world Jewry. During the time of Ezra (circa 300 BCE), when the majority of Jews refused to move from Babylon to Israel, prophecy ended upon the death of the last prophets -- Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. Jesus appeared on the scene approximately 350 years after prophecy had ended.

B. DESCENDENT OF DAVID

The Messiah must be descended on his father's side from King David (see Genesis 49:10 and Isaiah 11:1). According to the Christian belief that Jesus was the product of a virgin birth, he had no father - and thus could not have possibly fulfilled the messianic requirement of being descended on his father's side from King David (Mashiach Ben David)

C. TORAH OBSERVANCE

The Messiah will lead the Jewish people to full Torah observance. The Torah states that all mitzvot (commandments) remain binding forever, and anyone coming to change the Torah is immediately identified as a false prophet. (Deut. 13:1-4)

- א** אֵת כָּל-הַדְּבָר, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֲתָם--אִתּוֹ תִשְׁמְרוּ, לַעֲשׂוֹת: לֹא-תִסֹּף עָלַי, וְלֹא תִגְרַע מִמֶּנּוּ. {פ}
- 1** All this word which I command you, that shall ye observe to do; thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. {P}
- ב** כִּי-יִקוּם בְּקִרְבְּךָ נָבִיא, אוֹ חֹלֵם חֲלוֹם; וְנָתַן אֱלֹהִים אוֹת, אוֹ מוֹפֵת.
- 2** If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams--and he give thee a sign or a wonder,
- ג** וְבָא הָאוֹת וְהַמוֹפֵת, אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר אֱלֹהִים לְאָמֹר: נִלְכָּה אֲחֵרֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָדַעְתֶּם--וְנָעַבְדֶּם.
- 3** and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spoke unto thee--saying: 'Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them';
- ד** לֹא תִשְׁמַע, אֶל-דְּבָרֵי הַנְּבִיא הַהוּא, אוֹ אֶל-חֹלֵם הַחֲלוֹם, הַהוּא: כִּי מִנְסָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, אֲתָכֶם, לְדַעַת הַיִּשְׁכֶּם אֶהְיֶים אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, בְּכֹל-לִבְבְּכֶם וּבְכֹל-נַפְשְׁכֶם.
- 4** thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God putteth you to proof, to know whether ye do love the LORD your God with all your

Throughout the New Testament, Jesus contradicts the Torah and states that its commandments are no longer applicable. For example, John 9:14 records that Jesus made a paste in violation of Shabbat, which caused the Pharisees to say (verse 16), "He does not observe Shabbat!"

3) MISTRANSLATED VERSES "REFERRING" TO JESUS

Biblical verses can only be understood by studying the original Hebrew text - which reveals many discrepancies in the Christian translation.

A. VIRGIN BIRTH The Christian idea of a virgin birth is derived from the verse in Isaiah 7:14 describing an "alma" as giving birth. The word "alma" has always meant a young woman, but Christian theologians came centuries later and translated it as "virgin." This accords Jesus' birth with the first century pagan idea of mortals being impregnated by gods.

יְלֶדֶת אַלְמָה יֵלֶד לָךְ וְקָרָאתָ שְׁמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל.

Traditional JPS translation:

14 Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign: behold, the young woman shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

King James Bible:

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

B. CRUCIFIXION The verse in Psalms 22:17 reads: "Like a lion, they are at my hands and feet." The Hebrew word ka-ari (like a lion) is grammatically similar to the word "gouged." Thus Christianity reads the verse as a reference to crucifixion: "They pierced my hands and feet."

זֵי כִי סָבְבוּנִי, כְּלָבִים: עֲדַת מְרָעִים, הַקִּיפּוּנִי; כְּאַרְיֵ, יְדֵי וְרַגְלֵי.

Traditional JPS translation:

17 For dogs have encompassed me; a company of evil-doers have inclosed me; like a lion, they are at my hands and my feet.

King James Bible:

For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

C. SUFFERING SERVANT Christianity claims that Isaiah chapter 53 refers to Jesus, as the "suffering servant." In actuality, Isaiah 53 directly follows the theme of chapter 52, describing the exile and redemption of the Jewish people. The prophecies are written in the singular form because the Jews ("Israel") are regarded as one unit. The Torah is filled with examples of the Jewish nation referred to with a singular pronoun.

Ironically, Isaiah's prophecies of persecution refer in part to the 11th century when Jews were tortured and killed by Crusaders who acted in the name of Jesus.

From where did these mistranslations stem? St. Gregory, 4th century Bishop of Nanzanzus, wrote: **"A little jargon is all that is necessary to impose on the people. The less they comprehend, the more they admire."**

4) JEWISH BELIEF IS BASED SOLELY ON NATIONAL REVELATION

Of the 15,000 religions in human history, only Judaism bases its belief on national revelation -- i.e. God speaking to the entire nation. If God is going to start a religion, it makes sense He'll tell everyone, not just one person.

Judaism, unique among all of the world's major religions, does not rely on "claims of miracles" as the basis for its religion. In fact, the Bible says that God sometimes grants the power of "miracles" to charlatans, in order to test Jewish loyalty to the Torah (Deut. 13:4).

Maimonides states (*Foundations of Torah*, ch. 8): *The Jews did not believe in Moses, our teacher, because of the miracles he performed. Whenever anyone's belief is based on seeing miracles, he has lingering doubts, because it is possible the miracles were performed through magic or sorcery. All of the miracles performed by Moses in the desert were because they were necessary, and not as proof of his prophecy.*

What then was the basis of [Jewish] belief? The Revelation at Mount Sinai, which we saw with our own eyes and heard with our own ears, not dependent on the testimony of others... as it says, "Face to face, God spoke with you..." The Torah also states: "God did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us -- who are all here alive today." (Deut. 5:3)

Judaism is not miracles. It is the personal eyewitness experience of every man, woman and child, standing at Mount Sinai 3,300 years ago.

5) CHRISTIANITY CONTRADICTS JEWISH THEOLOGY

The following theological points apply primarily to the Roman Catholic Church, the largest Christian denomination.

A. GOD AS THREE?

The Catholic idea of Trinity breaks God into three separate beings: The Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19).

Contrast this to the Shema, the basis of Jewish belief: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is ONE" (Deut. 6:4). Jews declare the Shema every day, while writing it on doorposts (Mezuzah), and binding it to the hand and head (Tefillin). This statement of God's One-ness is the first words a Jewish child is taught to say, and the last words uttered before a Jew dies.

In Jewish law, worship of a three-part god is considered idolatry - one of the three cardinal sins that a Jew should rather give up his life than transgress. This explains why during the Inquisitions and throughout history, Jews gave up their lives rather than convert.

B. MAN AS GOD?

Roman Catholics believe that God came down to earth in human form, as Jesus said: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30).

Maimonides devotes most of the "Guide for the Perplexed" to the fundamental idea that God is incorporeal, meaning that He assumes no physical form. God is Eternal, above time. He is Infinite, beyond space. He cannot be born, and cannot die. Saying that God assumes human form makes God small, diminishing both His unity and His divinity. As the Torah says: "God is not a mortal" (Numbers 23:19).

Judaism says that the Messiah will be born of human parents, and possess normal physical attributes like other people. He will not be a demi-god, and will not possess supernatural qualities. In fact, an individual is alive in every generation with the capacity to step into the role of the Messiah. (see Maimonides - Laws of Kings 11:3)

C. INTERMEDIARY FOR PRAYER?

The Catholic belief is that prayer must be directed through an intermediary - i.e. confessing one's sins to a priest. Jesus himself is an intermediary, as Jesus said: "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." (John 14:6)

In Judaism, prayer is a totally private matter, between each individual and God. As the Bible says: "God is near to all who call unto Him" (Psalms 145:18). Further, the Ten Commandments state: "You shall have no other gods BEFORE ME," meaning that it is forbidden to set up a mediator between God and man.

D. INVOLVEMENT IN THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Catholic doctrine often treats the physical world as an evil to be avoided. Mary, the holiest woman, is portrayed as a virgin. Priests and nuns are celibate. And monasteries are in remote, secluded locations.

By contrast, Judaism believes that God created the physical world not to frustrate us, but for our pleasure. Jewish spirituality comes through grappling with the mundane world in a way that uplifts and elevates. Sex in the proper context is one of the holiest acts we can perform.

The Talmud says if a person has the opportunity to taste a new fruit and refuses to do so, he will have to account for that in the World to Come. Jewish rabbinical schools teach how to live amidst the bustle of commercial activity. Jews don't retreat from life, we elevate it.

6) JEWS AND GENTILES

Judaism does not demand that everyone convert to the religion. The Torah of Moses is a truth for all humanity, whether Jewish or not. King Solomon asked God to heed the prayers of non-Jews who come to the Holy Temple (Kings I 8:41-43). The prophet Isaiah refers to the Temple as a "House for all nations."

The Temple service during Sukkot featured 70 bull offerings, corresponding to the 70 nations of the world. The Talmud says that if the Romans would have realized how much benefit they were getting from the Temple, they'd never have destroyed it.

Jews have never actively sought converts to Judaism because the Torah prescribes a righteous path for gentiles to follow, known as the "Seven Laws of Noah." Maimonides explains that any human being who faithfully observes these basic moral laws earns a proper place in heaven.

The Seven Laws of Noah:

1. **Prohibition of Idolatry:** There is only one God. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
2. **Prohibition of Murder:** You shall not murder.
3. **Prohibition of Theft:** You shall not steal.
4. **Prohibition of Sexual Promiscuity:** You shall not commit adultery.
5. **Prohibition of Blasphemy:** Revere God and do not blaspheme.
6. **Prohibition of Cruelty to Animals:** Do not eat flesh taken from an animal while it is still alive.
7. **Requirement to have just Laws:** You shall set up an effective judiciary to fairly judge observance of the preceding six laws.

7) BRINGING THE MESSIAH

Maimonides states that the popularity of Christianity (and Islam) is part of God's plan to spread the ideals of Torah throughout the world. This moves society closer to a perfected state of morality and toward a greater understanding of God. All this is in preparation for the Messianic age.

Indeed, the world is in desperate need of Messianic redemption. War and pollution threaten our planet; ego and confusion erode family life. To the extent we are aware of the problems of society, is the extent we will yearn for redemption. As the Talmud says, one of the first questions a Jew is asked on Judgment Day is: "Did you yearn for the arrival of the Messiah?"

How can we hasten the coming of the Messiah? The best way is to love all humanity generously, to keep the mitzvot of the Torah (as best we can), and to encourage others to do so as well.

Despite the gloom, the world does seem headed toward redemption. One apparent sign is that the Jewish people have returned to the Land of Israel and made it bloom again. Additionally, a major movement is afoot of young Jews returning to Torah tradition.

The Messiah can come at any moment, and it all depends on our actions. God is ready when we are. For as King David says: "Redemption will come today -- if you hearken to His voice."

