

Jesus in the Old Testament

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 October 2006

Preacher: Bob Mendelsohn

[0 : 00] Shalom. I'll speak in English. This story might be familiar to most of you, but to others it's not.

This was a strange story that Bill just well read for us. A story that takes place on Resurrection Sunday, some call it Easter. It happened about 2,000 years ago, and Cleopas and his friend, maybe Mrs. Cleopas, had not seen the videotape.

So they didn't know what was going on with this story about Jesus. And they were so depressed. After all, they said, we thought he was the one who was going to redeem Israel.

When you hear redeem Israel from Jewish sources, it has nothing to do with spiritual forgiveness and cleansing of sin. That's not what it's about. It's about, in those days, bumping Rome out of Jerusalem, we don't want to take over the whole Roman Empire.

We just wanted them out of our turf. Let us have Israel. Let us have the temple. And let us have clean worship. That's really what redeem Israel meant. When I was a kid, redeem Israel meant get the Russians.

[1 : 17] There were two enemies when I was a child in the Americas in the 50s and 60s. It was Russia and Russia. It's real easy when life is binary.

And that is because we had the Cold War going on, and there were the Russians, and they were bad, and we were the Americans, and we were good. And then there were three million Russian Jews in the former Soviet Union who were not allowed to practice their Judaism, weren't allowed to leave.

And so I remember as an 11-year-old placarding, walking around, save free Soviet Jewry. Redeem Israel had a very serious political connotation for me.

Another item there in that text we've just read is it says, and besides all this, it's already the third day since these things happened. You've got to know Jewish custom to understand that.

According to Jewish legend, the spirit of a man hovers over the corpse for three days, and on the fourth day, it departs. So you're kind of dyingly dead after the third day.

[2 : 26] Maybe that helps you understand why Jesus waited a couple days before he went to go heal Lazarus, till he was for sure the fourth day. And why the Apostle Peter quoted that odd text in Psalm 16 on resurrection, I'm sorry, on Pentecost, as he says, you will not allow your Holy One to see corruption.

Now you and I know that decay begins in the human corpse immediately upon death. We begin to decompose. But according to Jewish sources, no, you don't until the fourth day.

In 1994, in Brooklyn, a rabbi died. This is not news. There are 500,000 Jews in Brooklyn. Surely a rabbi will die every few weeks, okay?

Well, this rabbi was pretty significant. His name was Menachem Schneerson of blessed memory. He was the Lubavitcher Rebbe. His picture is still, like you have the queen up on the libraries and the schools, the Lubavitcher Rebbe is still pictured at Jewish delis and Jewish schools.

He was over 90 years old. And in his 80s, some of his followers began to call him the Messiah, touted him as the Messiah, a charge he never denied.

[3 : 49] So in 94, when he died, immediately tens of thousands of his followers gathered in Brooklyn, near his home, from Australia, from Israel, from South Africa, from all over the globe.

And they were there for the first day, and they were there for the second day, and they were there for the third day. And then they started leaving after the fourth day began. Because you won't allow your Holy One to see corruption.

Anyway, besides all this, Cleopas says, it's already the third day. It's 1159. It's too late. And then some women, you know how, you know women are, well, they don't call them old husbands' tales.

I'll let it seep back to you. So some women came up with some fanciful division of angels, who said he was alive, but we sent two of our best detectives.

They went to suss it out, Peter and John. They came back and said, well, but they didn't find Jesus. And Jesus said, Cleopas, friend, sit down. We're going to have a Bible class.

[4 : 59] And beginning with Moses, meaning the five books of Moses, meaning the Torah or the Pentateuch, and all the prophets, he explained the things concerning himself in all the scriptures.

Wow, would that be a Bible class to be part of? You'd take notes on that one, wouldn't you? I mean, that'd be good. Now, what texts would Jesus have used that day?

As he's explaining all the scriptures to them. Now, there was a list called the Testimonia that was extant. The Essenes had it. That might have been what he would have used.

Well, let's just keep our finger here, or some paper, and flip back to Genesis chapter 3. We're going to do a quick search of some three different passages in the Older Testament.

One from each of the three sections of Jewish Bible called Torah, Nevi'em, Ketuvim, Torah, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, Tanakh, as the acronym. And while you're turning there, let me ask, do you ever do jigsaw puzzles?

[5 : 59] Why? All right, well, you do, and I guess you find them pleasurable. Let me tell you that I've got other things to do. So, but if you do it right, you open the box, and you dump it out, and you put all the pieces facing up, and then, from what I understand, you're supposed to take the box top, and put it away.

Then, put the pieces together, and watch a picture emerge. That's the way you're supposed to do it. You do it however you want. I'm going to ask you to do, tonight, what I ask Jewish folks to do, on Carlisle Street, and in Bondi Junction, and all across this country, all across the world.

I'm going to ask you to do the same thing I ask them to do. Put the box top of what you already believe about the Messiah, on the bookshelf. Let's look at the pieces of biblical puzzle, and watch a picture emerge.

Is that fair enough? Let's do that. Genesis chapter 3, the first words of the evangel, the proto-evangelion, for you Ridley students.

Genesis, and for everyone, Genesis 3.15, this is the story of Adam and Eve. It's in the garden, and God is there, and the serpent is there, whom we later discover is satanic, and there's some real play going on, and God curses the serpent, and in the middle of the curse on the serpent, he says this, in verse 15, I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, he'll bruise you on the head, and you'll bruise him on the heel.

[7 : 35] Three puzzle pieces. Number one, the Messiah will be the seed of the woman. You say, Bob, this doesn't exactly take detective work.

Everybody is born from a woman. Not in Judaism. Abraham beget Isaac. Thank you, Sarah. Isaac beget Jacob.

Where was Rebecca? You with me? I'm Reuven ben Eliahu. That's my Hebrew name. I'm the son of my father. My mother's not listed. He's not listed. So, genealogically, that's a surprise, that he'd be the seed of the woman.

And biologically, you know, it takes a man and a woman. So, it'd be their seed, but it isn't. It's her seed. Already, we have a surprise. First lesson.

Messiah will be the son of a woman only. It doesn't say virgin birth, but it anticipates it. Secondly, Messiah will crush the head of the serpent.

[8 : 38] Now, that makes sense to me as a Jew, that the Messiah will beat up on the bad guys. Conquest, that's the picture there. Head, I'm sorry, foot on the head, like St. George and the drag, you know, the smashing.

I claim this land for king so and so. Put your foot down. Romans 16 and 20 says, the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet soon. And did you see the movie, The Passion of the Christ?

Some did. Some didn't. I understand. And the way Gibson did it, which I thought was brilliant, having the Satan androgen figure slither out like a snake in the garden of Gethsemane.

And Jesus smashes the head of that thing. It's a conflated story of the two gardens, but I like it. It's drama. Conquest. And the third puzzle piece, well, it's a little surprising.

You shall bruise him on the heel. Wait a minute. Messiahs don't get wounded. Do they? Messiah, pained in his heel?

[9 : 40] Now, if I'd read the Jewish sources, I mean the stuff on the shelves when I grew up, I would have seen a whole business of suffering Messiah. I would have seen a whole context for understanding that, but I didn't read that stuff.

I just listened to what the rabbis taught me, which was the popular understanding. And Messiahs didn't get wounded, according to the rabbis today. Well, do we have enough from our text to know who it is?

No. Let's flip to Micah, chapter 5. Use the helps at the front, called Table of Contents. It's not cheating. It's a help.

If you're too embarrassed, go to Matthew and turn left. Micah, the prophet, Jewish prophet. We're only reading Jewish stuff here tonight.

The whole Bible's written by Jews. Micah, chapter 5. We see this great prophecy. You might recognize some of it from Christmas songs.

[10 : 42] Now, muster yourselves in troops, O daughter of troops. They've laid siege against us. With a rod, they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek. But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah.

From you, one will go forth for me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity. Some of your versions say from ancient times.

Three more puzzle pieces. Let's be honest. Number one is a repeat of the last. With a rod, they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek. Again, he's wounded.

Now, not just in his heel. Now, he's beaten in his face. From top to bottom, our Messiah is going to be beaten. If I'd read the sources, yes, I would have seen that.

But I didn't. Secondly, birthplace of Messiah, Bethlehem. Well, that makes sense. You've sung the song, O Little Town of Laurenceville.

[11 : 42] Yeah, you've sung, no, Bethlehem, O Little Town of Bethlehem. And it makes sense, and it sounds so serene, like Jesus was born on the third floor of Myers, under a Christmas tree with fairy floss.

But it, yeah, see, that's not true. But Bethlehem was a nowhere town, or we say in Yiddish, Yennevelt. It's a place that, it's not, it's like backside of, you wouldn't want to go there.

Too little, it says, to be among the thousands of the where's where of Israel. Not even listed, Bethlehem, a little nothing town. Remember another conflated story of Christmas.

Remember when the Magi, in Matthew 2, came from the east, looking for the king of the Jews?

Boy, think about that. What are Gentile kings doing, looking for the king of the Jews?

Where'd they even hear about that? Daniel, Esther, depositing biblical data, among the Gentiles?

That's a whole missiological thing, you'll have to invite me back for, another time.

[12 : 48] But they came to, where'd they come, when they were following the star? Where do kings get born? Capital cities.

You know, Sydney, Melbourne, we fight over it. Oslo, Jerusalem. That's where he was born, Jerusalem, right? Wrong. They came to Jerusalem, because that's where the capital is, and the boy said, check out back, he's born in Bethlehem, and they quote this text.

A surprise to the Magi, a surprise to everyone. Third puzzle piece, even more of a surprise. His goings forth are, the Hebrew is, Makedem, meaning from the east.

But it's not geographical east, it's chronological east. Now, what happens in the east, is the sun rises. So, it's from before the sun rose, which means like yesterday.

But it's not just yesterday, it's from eternity past, that's our language for it. Whoever this is, born in Bethlehem, he always was. Always was.

[13 : 53] The only being I know, as a Jew, who always was, is God. God is born in Bethlehem? How does that work?

Michael Card sang, eternity stepped into time, that we might understand. Maybe that helps you. Do we have enough data yet, from these two texts, to know conclusively?

No, not yet. Honestly, we don't. Let's flip back a few pages, back towards Genesis, but Daniel chapter 9, just a few pages back. While you're turning there, let me tell you, I used to be a high school mathematics teacher.

I'm not telling you that, to solicit tutoring lessons, for your HSC, sitting this year, but simply to say this, numbers don't bother me.

However, in a congregation of this size, numbers will bother some of you. Don't worry. There's a lot of numbers in here, but we'll all be on the same page, at the end of this little pericope.

[14:56] No, we'll be done with this little section. Hang in there. Beginning at verse 24 of Daniel 9, we read this, seventy sevens, or seventy weeks.

The Hebrew is a variant of the word week, so it's seventy units of seven, or four hundred ninety somethings. And that's too confusing, we're just going to approximate five hundred somethings. Okay? Just keep the number in your head. I'm not tossing out the precision of the Bible. I'm just helping you without a blackboard. Okay? Seventy sevens have been decreed for your people in your holy city to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place.

What's the most holy place for Jews? Jerusalem, that's right. And more specifically? The temple in Jerusalem. That's when this took place. It was during one of the temple periods.

Verse 25. So you are to know and discern, this means, don't miss it folks, that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.

[16:13] That's easy. Sixty-nine weeks, or 483 somethings. It will be built again with plaza and moat even in times of distress.

Then after the sixty-two weeks, the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

This is commonly called the second temple period. It's in history, it's in archaeology, we're used to that phrase, second temple period.

That's the period that Daniel is describing here. The time from the issuing of a decree which took place mid-fifth century B.C., 444 B.C., for you keeping score.

You want to round it to 450? It's okay by me tonight. Until, what's the end time? Well, I'll get to that in a moment. Let's do three more puzzle pieces.

[17:09] Number one, Messiah will die. No wonder the Lubavitchers were not surprised when the Rebbe Menachem Schneerson died in Brooklyn those twelve years ago.

Messiah will die. They'd read the sources. Messiah will die. Maimonides said that back in the 13th century, that the Messiah will die and then his son or grandson will take over. Why didn't I ever read that?

Messiah will die. That's what cut off means. It doesn't mean cut off from his allowance. He's going to be cut off from the land of the living. Messiah will die.

Wow. That's shocking. Then it tells us when. That's this whole business of these numbers. And if it's about 500 things during a 520 year period, I'm guessing that this is years.

That's what most commentators tell us. The issuing of a decree, 444 B.C. And when was the people of the prince to come destroying the city and the sanctuary?

[18:15] When did Titus level Rome? I'm sorry, level Jerusalem. A.D. 70. That's right. About 520 years after that decree. So we've got a kind of general info here on numbers.

Now if you want the precision, you can go to the website, Jews for Jesus, and you can type in Daniel's prophecy and you'll be shocked. It'll fall out, this date will fall out on a Friday in March, 30 A.D.

That's precision. But even if you get all boggled up and your pocket abacus doesn't work, here's what you do. You simply look and say it's near the end.

It's 6970. It's almost at the end of the second temple period. Temple's destroyed in A.D. 70. So it's at least first century and near towards 70.

Does that make sense? I'm so sorry. I apologize for the numbering. I didn't write it. Do you know the rabbis disallow students reading this?

[19:21] This one little section? Yeah. Until you're 30. You know, when I was a kid, I was the third of three children, so I always got hand-me-down everything.

Everything. So I'd ask my father, so when will I get like a new bicycle? He'd say, yeah, when the Messiah comes. So I really did look forward to the Messiah coming.

He'd beat up Russia. And I'd get a bicycle. That'd be cool. But the third puzzle piece kind of goes against that here. It's found in verse 24. The purpose of the death of Messiah.

Here's what it says. To finish the transgression. To make an end of sin. To make atonement for iniquity. The purpose of the death of Messiah was not to give me a bicycle, but to forgive me my sins.

And to forgive you your sins. Now let's take a look at our puzzle. We've got a Messiah who's a son, who's born of a woman, not of man and woman. Who's born in a city or a village or a little hamlet, really, called Bethlehem.

[20 : 31] But he wasn't born so much as came to be because he always was. But there he was, born. And then he was beaten and he was wounded from top to bottom.

And he even dies. And he dies before the second temple is destroyed near the end of that time. First century for sure. And he dies to forgive us our sins. Any candidates?

Honestly, we've only looked at three Bible passages. Imagine if we added all the rest that we could. What Jesus must have given to Cleopas. I think there's no other answer but Yeshua.

Jesus. I think he's the only one the Bible clearly, I think clearly, demonstrates as I've just put some pieces together. You with me? So, turn back to Luke because you figure, look, if Brother Bob can get through you and you kind of get it somewhat, Jesus, who was a much better teacher, don't you reckon?

Jesus would have made it really clear to Cleopas and friend. I'm guessing that. Well, and you would guess that. So, let's see what really happened. In verse number 28, as we continue the reading of Luke 24, as they approached the village where they were going, he acted as though he were going further.

[21 : 52] But they urged him, saying, no, no, stick around, it's time for tea. Day's nearly over. So, he went in to have eat. You know, he had not eaten since Thursday night. Right?

He had his last supper. He hasn't eaten since then. He's been beaten and wounded and buried and he's kind of... So then, verse 30, when he reclined at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it.

That is not this. This is communion. What we're reading here in the text is simply the way Jews begin meals. You break bread and eat.

Breaking of bread doesn't mean communion in the New Testament. It means eating together.

That's how Jews start their meals. It says, then he offered it to them in verse 31, then their eyes were opened and they recognized him and he vanished from their sight.

Now, that's got to be spooky. You know, they're walking along, depressed, moping on their way back to Emmaus and Jesus rocks up alongside them. Where'd he come from? And now, they're just having tea and he breaks the bread.

[22 : 58] Maybe they see the nail prints in his hand. I don't know how he revealed it. But now, then their eyes are opened and then, he's gone. Spooky. Wait a minute.

In verse 31, it says, then their eyes were opened. Which tells you what happened before that then. Their eyes were closed. That's right. In verse 16, their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. In verse 31, their eyes are opened. While Jesus is teaching them, they didn't get it. Isn't that encouraging to you? It's encouraging to me.

I read the Bible so often and say, huh? What? I don't get it. I really don't. I mean, there are some things I think I get, but really, I'm still clueless. I've only been a believer 35 years.

There's a lot more to go. A lot more to go. So Jesus teaching Cleopas and Cleopas doesn't get it until God reveals it to him.

[24 : 00] And flip towards after they eat a little something, finally he gets to eat in verse 42. They give him a piece of broiled fish. He's so hungry. 44, he says that the Tanakh all points to me.

And in 45, then he opened their minds to understand the scripture. Wow, now Peter gets it. Now Andrew gets it. Now Nathaniel gets it. You say, well now Bob, this whole missionary thing is called into question, isn't it?

Because here you are, you go traveling around, you go telling Jews they need Jesus, you tell everybody, you tell Buddhists and Taoists and atheists and Muslims and everybody, you tell everybody that they need to accept Jesus.

But really, really it's not, I mean, come on, one, it's multicultural here in Australia, whatever that might mean. And, which means, hey, you can do anything unless I don't like it.

And then, and then really, after all, God's the one who has to open eyes. So why are you bothering people? And you are bothering people.

[25 : 05] Why? Just let God do it since God's the one who does it. Isn't that the intent of those passages? Let's keep reading. So in verse 46, it says, and this is in red, so it's the words of Yeshua, thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in his name beginning at Jerusalem to all nations.

If you believe in 46 in the death of Christ, if you believe in 46 in the resurrection of Christ on the third day, you have to believe in 47 in the proclamation of the name of Christ. That and isn't just kind of slipped in. It's there. Here's, let me put it to you really simply. God wants you to do the mouth thing. He'll do the eye thing.

You do the mouth. He doesn't do mouths. He doesn't preach from heaven. He uses you and me. Which is really dangerous, isn't it?

That he puts so much of himself in us that he says, I tell you what, if you don't do it, it's not getting done. That's faith. That's scary. That's intimidating.

[26 : 21] It's awe-inspiring. It's compelling. God wants us to do the mouth thing. Aren't you glad somebody told me about Jesus some 35 years ago?

I sure am. I'm so glad I got to talk to Peter on Friday in Launceston. And he's come to faith in Yeshua.

Other people had talked to him on the way. And I was just there as a midwife to catch him when he was born again. Look, we do the mouth thing.

If you have teenagers or you are one, you know nobody can convince a teenager of anything. You can't make that. You can't do the eye thing. God alone can do the eye thing.

Amen? Wow, that sounded almost Baptist. God alone can do the eye thing. and you have to do the mouth thing.

[27 : 20] He's called us to preach and go into all the nations. And I've been privileged to be able to travel all over the globe not only representing Jews for Jesus but representing Jesus.

And it's fun to go to places like Malaysia and rock up on somebody who's a Muslim and say, hey, you know, we were both wrong. I love to identify with people.

Hey, you're wrong and I was wrong. We were both wrong about Jesus. He's really the Savior who died for us. Would you take this white card you received? It's fallen out of your notice sheet any number of times.

Bend over one more time. Pick it up, please. And let's do a tradition. This is called the tradition of the tearing of the involvement card together on the count of three. Just bend it back and forth on that perforation and then on the count of three we're going to tear it.

Ready? Achat, Eshtayim, Shalosh, Arba, Chamesh. You have to brush up on your Hebrew. Go ahead and start filling out the larger card if you would.

[28 : 21] The smaller card is for you to hold on to. It's got our email website and for you listening on tape it's got our address of P.O. Box 925 up in Sydney, 2001. But here you can fill out the larger card and drop it into the offering and we'll be glad to send you our newsletter which comes out of Sydney every, oh I don't know, every couple months.

We're trying to increase the times that it comes out but there's just too much doing so we can't have time writing about what we're doing. It's a great problem. It's a great problem.

So fill that out as much as you can. Name in all your details. On the back there's four categories one of which you are. Whether you're Jewish or not whether you're for Jesus or not you'll figure out which one you are and tick the right box.

If you are Jewish and you're here tonight or listening on tape I'm so happy you're here. Pondering these issues which for so many have been dismissed. It was dismissed in my life by default.

I didn't have an opportunity to consider Jesus and certainly not on Yom Kippur. A night to ponder our own failures our own sins and God's awesome promise of forgiveness.

[29 : 33] In the Jewish calendar there are certain requirements certain stipulations. You can see it I'll just give you the references read it later after the service.

Leviticus 16 17 and 23 tells us an awful lot of what God required for the Jewish people on Yom Kippur none of which we do today.

Let me tell you the three things and then I'll give you a website to go look up and have a read later. They are a mediator they are the blood of the covenant and the transference of sins by laying on our hands on the animal.

None of us in the Jewish world today do any of those three things therefore we can't be sure to get in on the promise that God extended. If you don't do things the way God said how can you be sure you're going to get what God promised?

If you ask most Jewish people in Caulfield and everywhere else around the city here in Doncaster tomorrow night at the end of Yom Kippur do you feel forgiven of your sins?

[30 : 40] 99% will say I don't know or I hope so or wouldn't it be nice or I don't believe in sin or I don't believe there's a God or whatever it is that they'll respond there'll be a question mark at the end of the one word phrase forgiven but if you ask a Jew like me who believes in Jesus are you forgiven?

man will erase that question mark and put an exclamation mark forgiven hallelujah because God has done awesome things for us in the beloved Jesus. Hey up the back is a table with all kinds of good resources I hope you'll avail yourself of them this is a particularly marvelous DVD and video called Survivor Stories the number one excuse Jewish people use here in Melbourne about not coming to faith is the Holocaust this is seven people answering that question where was God they're all survivors of the Holocaust and they're all alive and they are all now believers in Jesus this is powerful this is not one answer but it's seven answers to that question and you don't want to miss it and I want to get it on the ABC or SBS or something we've got it somebody help me somebody helped a boy figure out how to do that and then do you like Jewish gospel music you know what I'm talking about when I say that some do it's like

Fiddler on the Roof meets Darlene it it this is great stuff your toes will be tapping on the eastern freeway sitting in traffic yeah no it's beautiful beautiful stuff lively the whole band and the whole choir singing along violins clarinets you'll want to get some of that great music from Jews for Jesus there's some free literature up the back including some of the gospel tracks like we handed out at the MCG yesterday yep I was out there got off the plane from Lonnie and went right to the MCG and put on a Jews for Jesus t-shirt were any of you there did you see me did you take the track well fine that's alright we handed them all out and it was a great time great time to share the gospel that's what we try to do so thanks for letting me come Paul I'm sorry you're not here tonight thanks Rod Lisa for running things tonight in a fine way and making me feel at home

I appreciate that I appreciate all of you listen tonight you can be sure of the Bible being true you know we looked at we looked at a few texts and the Bible's clarity is unmistakable I think we can count on this book throughout our days I think it can tell us a lot more it told us about who the Messiah was going to be it'll tell us how to live our lives and how to get along with one another you can count on this book and the God who wrote the book and if you're a Jewish person you're here tonight you filled out that card you've dropped you'll drop that into the offering as it comes by please don't give money to Jews for Jesus if you're not a Christian we didn't invite you here to pay for your seat we invited you here to listen and learn along with us so if you're not a believer just fill out the card drop it into the basket or plate and indicate who you are to us and let God give you a gift tonight his only son Jesus the Messiah if you are a believer

I hope you'll give generously to us please don't give money to Jews for Jesus that belongs here in the parish make sure you're contributing well to the work of the parish the plant the personnel the programs all the stuff that goes on here if you have extra I hope you do I hope you have a lot extra and you can support a faith mission like ours just put the amount on the front of the card and we'll be glad to receipt you and thank you I'm glad we have a God we can count on aren't you?

[34 : 35] he's true he's faithful he wants us to follow him the website by the way for those who want to look up all that information on Yom Kippur is just Jews for Jesus all spelled out .org .au and you'll find it under sermons on Yom Kippur it's pretty easy to find or just ask me later and I'll write it all down for you God bless you and thanks so much .

...

...