

Class 7a
The Gospels:
Biographies of Jesus
Part I



Outline

- Introductory questions
- "Messiah"/"Christ"
- Orientation to Jesus & the New Testament
- What are "gospels"?

Introductory Questions

- What is a gospel?
- Why does Carter think they're like biographies?
- Why does Carter think they were written around or after 70 C.E.?
- Who are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John?
- Were any of them eyewitnesses to Jesus' life?

Messiah

Vision of the Son of Man

¹³ As I watched in the night visions,
I saw one like a human being
coming with the clouds of heaven.
And he came to the Ancient One
and was presented before him.

¹⁴ To him was given dominion
and glory and kingship,
that all peoples, nations, and languages
should serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not pass away,
and his kingship is one
that shall never be destroyed.

^{12:13} ...[At] that time your people shall be delivered, every
one whose name shall be found written in the book. ¹⁴ And
many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall
awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and
everlasting contempt.



The Evolution of the Messiah

Definition

- "anointed one"
- Originally, a promise written in the Deuteronomistic history to King David that there would always be a descendent on his throne

The Evolution of the Messiah

Foundational Text: 2 Samuel 7:1-17

The prophet Samuel speaking to King David

^{11b} "Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹² When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me. When he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod such as mortals use, with blows inflicted by human beings. ¹⁵ But I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever."

The Evolution of the Messiah The Babylonian Catastrophe: Messiah Redefined

Students of the prophet Isaiah, in exile in Babylon, reconstruct the "object" of messiah by applying it to the Persian king



The Evolution of the Messiah The Babylonian Catastrophe: Messiah Redefined

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⁴⁵² Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus,
whose right hand I have grasped
to subdue nations before him
and strip kings of their robes,
to open doors before him—
and the gates shall not be closed:
² I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
³ I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

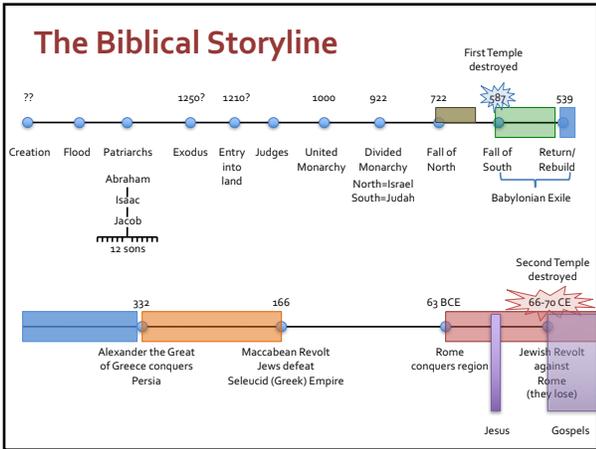
⁴ For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not know me.
⁵ I am the Lord, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
⁶ so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
I am the Lord, and there is no other.
⁷ I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the Lord do all these things.

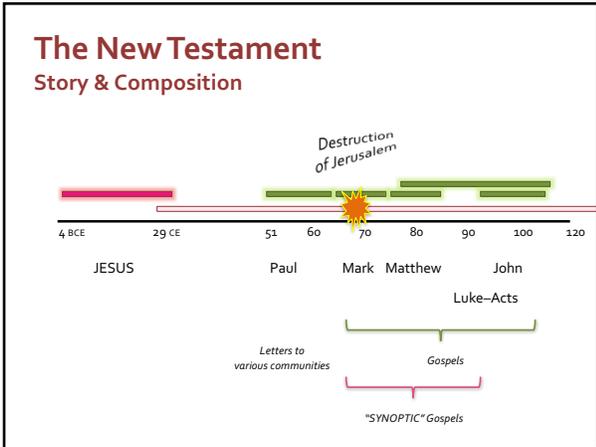
Seven Models of the Messiah

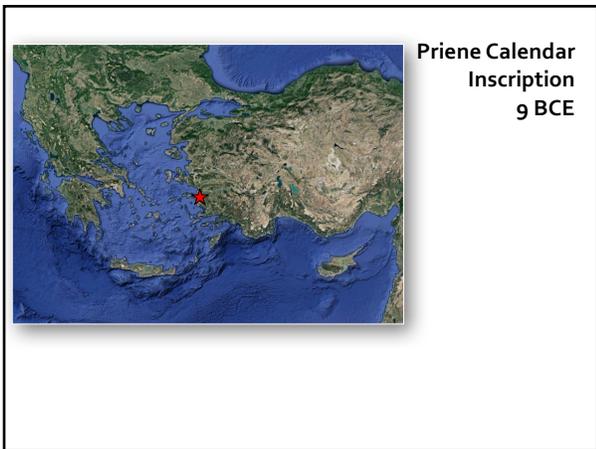
- king (like David)
- priest (like Melchizedek)
- prophet (like Moses)
- heavenly agent (from Bk of Daniel)
- suffering servant (Isa 53)

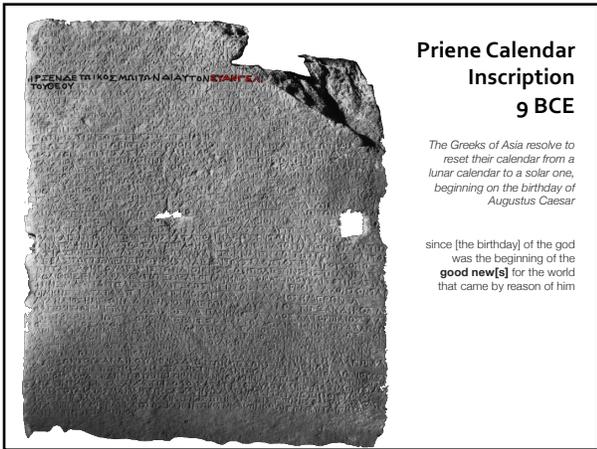
- new Adam (Gen 1-3)
- Logos (Word) of God (Gen 1)

Other Jewish groups
expected messiahs
like these









**Priene Calendar
Inscription
9 BCE**

*The Greeks of Asia resolve to
reset their calendar from a
lunar calendar to a solar one,
beginning on the birthday of
Augustus Caesar*

since [the birthday] of the god
was the beginning of the
good new[s] for the world
that came by reason of him

ROME: FROM REPUBLIC TO EMPIRE



POMPEY
63 BCE



JULIUS CAESAR
49-44 BCE



OCTAVIAN, aka CAESAR AUGUSTUS
27 BCE-14 CE
