

## The Fourth Gospel and Expectations of the Jewish Messiah

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The author of the Gospel of John emphatically stated that the Fourth Gospel was “written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (John 20:31).<sup>1</sup> This gospel actively seeks to present an elevated portrait of the attributes, nature, and character of Jesus through a high Christology that connects him with messianic prophecies. Indeed, John seems to share an objective with the Latter-day Saints’ *Lectures on Faith*, which emphasizes the importance of having “a correct idea of [God’s] character, perfections, and attributes.”<sup>2</sup> Only recently have scholars and students of the Bible begun to move from earlier assumptions that Jews in the Second Temple period had monolithic and rigid prophecies regarding a promised messiah.<sup>3</sup> Instead, the Gospel of John presents a more nuanced messianic view through the conversations that different individuals had with Jesus during his mortal ministry. These characters articulate different opinions concerning the prophesied messiah and

then reach conclusions about Jesus based on their beliefs and assumptions. As a result, the Fourth Gospel presents a disparate picture of contemporary expectations of the coming of the Jewish messiah. While a recognition of the Gospel of John's more nuanced view of the Jewish messiah is not new from a historical perspective,<sup>4</sup> the purposes behind this literary presentation are less certain. Nevertheless, the Fourth Gospel attempts to pave the way for its readers to gain an accurate understanding of Jewish messianic expectations within the historical context of Second Temple Judaism.

Above all, the Fourth Gospel presents an understanding of the Messiah intended to dispel wrong beliefs about the Anointed One who should come. In the process, it provides "a correct idea of the character and attributes" of the Messiah, allowing its readers "to exercise belief in Jesus Christ unto life and salvation."<sup>5</sup> After reviewing some of the texts that established the Jewish messianic expectations presented in the Gospel of John, we will examine the literary and historical context of seventeen occurrences of the term *christos* ("Christ" or "Anointed One") in the Fourth Gospel.<sup>6</sup> By paying special attention to the characters who invoke the term and the literary context in which the term occurs, it becomes clear that the Gospel of John deliberately presents these contrasting interpretations of messianic prophecy to emphasize how misguided expectations were detrimental to belief in Jesus as the Christ. These expectations were the determining factors that led some to accept Jesus as the Messiah and others to reject him. While John's seemingly disparate presentation of messianic expectations appears to create tension in the text, it is intended to aid the readers, both ancient and modern, to "believe that Jesus is the Christ."

## **The Origins of the Jewish Messiah**

For centuries, students of the Bible believed that Second Temple Judaism held a monolithic collection of messianic expectations and prophecies.<sup>7</sup> The discovery of ancient Jewish texts like the Dead Sea

Scrolls have increased our understanding of Jewish tradition and history and has resulted in a more nuanced and complete picture of ancient messianic expectations.<sup>8</sup> While scholars still struggle to reach a consensus concerning the extent to which messianism influenced the formation and beliefs of Jewish communities in the Second Temple period,<sup>9</sup> they widely recognize a body of ancient texts that appear to have served as the foundation for messianic expectations. This body includes texts in the Hebrew Bible (Genesis 49:8–12; Numbers 24:15–19; 2 Samuel 7:12–17; Isaiah 11:1–9; Psalm 89:36–38; Amos 9:11–15; and Jeremiah 23:5–8; 33:15–18) and expansions on biblical traditions in nonbiblical texts (Psalms of Solomon 17–18; 4 Ezra 13; 2 Baruch 72–74; and texts from the Dead Sea Scrolls like 1QM V and 4Q175). Central to these texts is the promised “sudden end of the present age, which they regarded as evil and corrupt, and the inauguration of a new age in which God’s people would see the wicked punished and the world ruled in righteousness.”<sup>10</sup> The sheer number of publications that have attempted to identify the number of messianic figures that were to fulfill the prophesied transformation manifests a current lack of consensus concerning these beliefs.<sup>11</sup> These secondary texts are instructive because they provide firm evidence that the controversy concerning the Messiah is not rooted in the Jewish authoritative texts of the age, but in the interpretations of those texts by various Jewish groups and individuals who adhere to them. When analyzed, these texts provide the basis for messianic expectations among Jews of the Second Temple period.

## Biblical Expectations

A detailed commentary on each of the biblical and nonbiblical passages that provide insight into messianic expectations is not necessary to create a picture of the Jewish messiah.<sup>12</sup> However, an overview of these texts reveals three primary themes that, when interpreted, outline the expected mission of the Messiah in ancient Judaism. These themes of messianism include the lineage of the Messiah, peculiarities

about the Messiah's life/mission, and the Messiah's ability to restore the kingdom of Israel.

The declaration of the Messiah's lineage is the most recognizable and utilized theme from the Hebrew Bible that draws attention to a promised messiah. For instance, 2 Samuel 7:12–16 is a comprehensive and influential declaration of the promised messiah's lineage. Here the Lord proclaims to David through the prophet Nathan, “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, *I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. . . . I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. . . . And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever*” (emphasis added). Jews in this period often interpreted this passage as a messianic promise. In a commentary on this text found among the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, the promise was interpreted and reiterated. The Qumran community declared their interpretation of this figure as “the branch of David who will stand with the Interpreter of the Law, who will sit on the throne in Zion at the end of days” (4Q174 I, 10–13). Biblical scholar Craig A. Evans synthesizes these texts by stating, “The expectation of this David is quite clear: he is to rule and save Israel.”<sup>13</sup>

The lineage of the Messiah becomes a point of interest in many of the biblical messianic texts. As mentioned in 2 Samuel 7, David occupies the predominant position as the forefather of the Messiah. This predominance is reiterated in Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15. Additional ancestors of the Messiah are also mentioned in biblical texts, including Judah (Genesis 49:10), Jacob/Israel (Numbers 24:17), and Jesse (Isaiah 11:1). However, among these, only David is mentioned in the messianic expectations of the Fourth Gospel (see John 7:42).

Specific events or deeds from the Messiah's life comprise the second notable theme found among messianic texts from antiquity. These peculiarities emphasize miscellaneous aspects of the Messiah's life and are interpreted as specific identifying markers of the Messiah to those who were actively looking for him. One such messianic

expectation is found in Psalm 89. "His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven" (Psalm 89:36–37). Some groups concluded that the Messiah, the seed of David, is the one who would live forever.<sup>14</sup> Other ancient interpreters viewed the text of Micah 5 as equally specific. "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel" (Micah 5:2). Commenting on this text, noted linguist Bruce Waltke observes that the specificity of the verse "focuses on the Messiah's origins from David's roots."<sup>15</sup> A final attribute granted to the Messiah is the role of an eternal judge (Isaiah 11:3–4). These specific interpretations, derived from select biblical texts, attempt to identify the Messiah upon his arrival in Israel, prior to his fulfilling the primary purpose of liberating his people.

Recognizable themes from the messianic texts of the Old Testament center on conquest, restoration, and the reestablishment of the kingdom of Israel. The themes of lineage and restoration of the kingdom of Israel frequently are found together in many interpretations of messianism. In Genesis 49, the images of kingship are accompanied with those of gathering: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Genesis 49:10). Furthermore, Balaam declares that among the Israelites, "there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city" (Numbers 24:17–19). Other verses also incorporate these themes. However, a passage from Amos emphasizes the restoration responsibilities of the Messiah. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen . . . and I will build it as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11). The ability not only to lead the people of Israel

but to overthrow their enemies in order to reestablish themselves in the land of their inheritance is reminiscent of the ancient stories of Joshua and David. Regaining political control of their land was most important among some Jewish groups, and their conceptualization of the Messiah hinged directly upon it.<sup>16</sup>

## Nonbiblical Expectations

The foundations for messianic expectations are derived from the texts of the Hebrew Bible. The interpretation of those biblical texts arose from literature that scribes composed in the centuries before and after the meridian of time. The authors of these works of Jewish literature drew upon the same messianic themes as the biblical books did but often expanded their reach and intensity. Such is the case with the preservation of expectations in the Psalms of Solomon. Among other intended outcomes, the messianic figure of this first-century-BC text is expected to be raised up by the Lord, rule over Israel, shatter unjust rulers, “purge Jerusalem from nations that trample her,” destroy lawless nations, gather together the holy people, “thrust out sinners from” the land of Jewish inheritance, and perform the will of God “for the generation that is to come,” even under the rod of discipline (Psalms of Solomon 17:21–18:7). Noted biblical scholar David Levenson observes that this is “the future ideal Davidic king, the Lord’s ‘anointed one’ . . . the figure who will conquer the nations and judge the world.”<sup>17</sup> Further, this king is not noted for his military strength but for the mighty power of his words (Psalms of Solomon 17:26). Expanding upon the traditions of Davidic lineage and great physical strength, some Jewish communities eagerly awaited the arrival of their warrior deliverer.

In the apocalyptic work of 4 Ezra, the Messiah is given further power over the nations of the earth as he “reprove[s] the assembled nations for their ungodliness and will destroy them without effort by the law” (4 Ezra 13:37–38). The term *anointed* is again employed to discuss this promoted figure. Debra Ballentine observes, “The passage

just described within 4 Ezra promote[s] a secondary divine figure who receives endorsement from the primary deity. The primary deity is portrayed as the creator who has made specific preparations for the eschaton, at which time various oppressive and wicked rulers will be rebuked and destroyed.”<sup>18</sup> Ballantine continues, “These texts contain a significant commentary on their contemporary political setting, portraying disfavored governing bodies as oppressive, wicked, and destined for defeat.”<sup>19</sup>

Further expansions concerning the messianic expectations of the Second Temple period are found in the numerous fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In the War Scroll, the Messiah is an idealized priest of Aaron and described as carrying a shield with the names of Israel, Levi, and Aaron inscribed upon it. The children of light are expected to rally behind this divine leader into battle against the children of darkness (1QM V, 1–21; XV). The Community Rule similarly describes an important future prophet and warrior king (1QS IX) who will aid in ushering in the messianic age (1QS<sup>a</sup> II). Noted Dead Sea Scrolls scholar Martin Abegg summarizes the messianic expectations at Qumran, stating, “Clear signs that the messianic picture was not so focused as to conclude that messianic hopes were only or always singular.”<sup>20</sup> This lack of congruency among Jewish parties and groups created the disparate messianic climate in which the author of the Fourth Gospel was writing.

## The Expected Jewish Messiah

In the Gospel of John, individuals appear to accept or reject Jesus based on their interpretations of messianic prophecy. When encountering Jesus, some individuals proclaim him to be the realization of Jewish messianic expectations, others question or oppose this fulfillment, and yet others question the messianic expectations themselves. Each of these encounters forces the questioning individuals or groups to search and wrestle for their own messianic conclusions about Jesus. The Fourth Gospel places these differing opinions at the center of

the narrative's discourse between individuals in discrete situations as representations of various Jewish groups, including Jews, Samaritans, and followers of John the Baptist. The Gospel of John presents and highlights this pluralistic view of messianic expectations as a literary critique on the interpretation of messianic prophecies by those who do not believe in Jesus's messiahship. The Fourth Gospel attempts to dispel incorrect understandings about messianic expectations that can serve as a stumbling block for those who are presented with the message that Jesus is the Christ. The Fourth Gospel clearly emphasizes that those who open themselves to receiving the message that Jesus is the Messiah, adjusting their preconceived messianic expectations if necessary, will believe in him as the Anointed One. Conversely, those who maintain trendy beliefs and expectations about the Messiah will not believe. James Charlesworth's conclusion about messianic expectations provides an interesting observation about Judaism. "I am convinced that the ancient Jew was often intentionally ambiguous. He comprehended that only God knew who would be the Messiah, and what the Messiah would accomplish."<sup>21</sup> There is no other Gospel that allows such ambiguity to be on full display, and nowhere is a presentation of Jesus as the Messiah grander.

### **Jews of Jerusalem (Unyielding Misguided Messianic Expectation)**

The Fourth Gospel makes no attempt to veil the fact that the Jews from Jerusalem, or at least their leaders, are the most unwilling to accept Jesus as the Christ and change their misguided expectations concerning the Messiah. The expression "the Jews" (Greek *hoi Ioudaioi*) occurs frequently in John, often negatively. In these instances, it appears to refer to either the Jewish leadership or a specific group of opponents to Jesus. In the Fourth Gospel, this collective group always engages with Jesus cynically and often from a distance (see John 2:18–20; 5:10–18; 10:24, 31–33). Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf described such groups of inquirers, stating, "Instead of enjoying . . . spiritual



gifts, the cynics content themselves with observing from a distance, sipping from their cups of skepticism, doubt, and disrespect.”<sup>22</sup> Such a literary presentation shows that for one to know that Jesus is the Messiah, one must have an open mind, spend time with him, and not speak of him only with his opponents.

Early in the Gospel’s narrative, this group confronts John the Baptist to interrogate him concerning his work and his understanding of the promised messiah. The Jerusalem Jews question John because he has attracted a following by teaching of the Messiah while not proclaiming their dogmatically held messianic beliefs. As Francis Moloney has concluded, “The representatives of the Jewish world are determined not to move from their criteria [concerning the Messiah].”<sup>23</sup> Exemplifying this determination, “the Jews” inquire of John, “Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?” (John 1:25). This inquiry, and those that preceded it in the text of John 1, asks if John is not only “that Christ,” but “that prophet.” This clear reference to the messianic prophet that should come (see 1QS IX above) is an attempt by the Jewish leaders to catch John in his own messianic expectations. John the Baptist responds to the Jewish leaders with humble recognition of his own activities and, as discussed further below, his pure belief that the Messiah is among them (John 1:26–27). The Fourth Gospel’s presentation of these religious leaders of Jerusalem focuses on their interest to aggressively enforce their own understanding of messianic expectations on others, refusing to learn of “things as they really are” (Jacob 4:13).

The Gospel of John preserves two accounts of the Jewish leaders arrogantly confronting Jesus to question the validity of the claim that he is the Messiah. Their first confrontation occurs in the presence of patrons at the temple in Jerusalem and is centered on the belief that the Messiah would come from an unknown land (John 7:27), a claim that is not in any preserved Jewish texts from antiquity but must have resonated with some of those in the temple since they then sought to take him away (John 7:30). The second

confrontation occurs in the presence of both Jews and Greeks as Jesus triumphantly enters Jerusalem. The confrontation revolves around their interpretation of Psalm 89:36–37 that the Messiah cannot die (John 12:20–36). To these contenders, Jesus’s responses are instructive.

The Fourth Gospel records Jesus’s response to the first confrontation in an interesting way. John records, “Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught,” a suggestion that Jesus is attempting through an elevated voice to garner the attention not only of those mocking him but all present. “Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am *from* him, and he hath sent me” (John 7:28–29; emphasis added). Although this response proves fruitless in persuading the Jerusalem leaders, Jesus’s statement teaches a doctrinal truth related to John’s preexistence Christology (a view emphasizing the premortality of Jesus) that was effective in teaching others, as will be seen below. For John, however, this episode also served as an opportunity for Jesus to proclaim the truth that he did indeed fulfill the messianic expectation of being the Son of God (2 Samuel 2:14) and came from the unknown location of God’s presence. This dualistic language, a type of rhetoric that employs the words of one’s opponent to bear witness of the validity of one’s own stance, is akin to the dualistic use of language used in other texts from antiquity. John Painter attests that like the Dead Sea Scrolls, “the language [of John’s Gospel] reflects the rejection of the rest of Judaism by the community and in exclusive identification of itself with the covenant people of God.”<sup>24</sup> Here, Jesus and his apostles begin to separate themselves more fully from the Jerusalem leadership and formulate their own organization, reinforcing their commitment to their message that Jesus is the Christ.

The second confrontation between Jesus and “the Jews” involves questions regarding Jesus’s teaching about his impending crucifixion (John 12:32). After Jesus foretells his death, the people (including the Jewish leaders) return to their questions regarding prophecies that

the Messiah would endure forever (Psalm 89: 36–37). When Jesus attempted to correct their misguided interpretation concerning the Messiah and even performed miracles as a witness of his messiahship (perhaps as a fulfillment of the words spoken in John 9:31), they “believed not on him” (John 12:37). Though not a successful attempt to bring a correct understanding of the Messiah to the huddled congregation, these events were not fruitless; John later records, “Nevertheless among the chief rulers many believed on him” (John 12:42). These chief rulers, however, fearing they would be expelled from the synagogue, concealed their belief.

This response is nearly identical to that of the parents of the lifelong blind man in John 9. Here, following Jesus’s healing the man of his blindness, the parents are asked by the leaders of the synagogue how their son gained the ability to see. Threatened by excommunication from the synagogue, the parents refuse to confess that Jesus is the Christ (John 9:22). It appears that the Fourth Gospel is emphasizing the cost that one must be willing to pay for truly believing in the Messiah. As *Lectures on Faith* attests, “A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary [to lead] unto life and salvation.”<sup>25</sup> Those who choose to ignore the validity of the Messiah (Jewish opponents of Jesus) or suppress their individual belief in him (chief rulers and blind man’s parents) stand in stark opposition to those who fulfill the Fourth Gospel’s purpose to persuade individuals to accept Jesus’s messiahship. John appears to record these events as an aid to his readers, knowing that belief is an essential component of accepting the Messiah.

As demonstrated above, the author of the Gospel of John is skillfully using the dialogues of the Fourth Gospel to help his readers discern for themselves whether Jesus is the Christ. While the Jews in Jerusalem proved to be unwilling to accept Jesus as the Messiah, they set the stage for others to join in witnessing the validity of Jesus the Christ.

## The Woman at the Well and Temple Patrons in Jerusalem (Willingly Altered Messianic Expectations)

One of the primary stumbling blocks that prevented some of the Jews in Jerusalem from accepting Jesus as the Messiah was their belief that they already knew everything about the Messiah. Lacking the humility to be taught caused them to be blinded to the Messiah who was among them. Akin to the Jews in Jerusalem, John presents others who had misconceptions of the Messiah but who were willing to re-evaluate their understanding to see “things as they really are” (Jacob 4:13). President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008), fifteenth president of the Church, may have been envisioning just such a group of “converts” when he proclaimed, “Let me say that we appreciate the truth in all churches and the good which they do. We say to the people, in effect, you bring with you all the good that you have, and then let us see if we can add to it.”<sup>26</sup> In the Fourth Gospel two such groups fit this category: the temple patrons in Jerusalem who chose to believe in Jesus’s teachings in John 7 and the Samaritan woman in John 4.

As was discussed earlier, the confrontation that Jesus has with the Jerusalem Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles in the temple included another group who remained with Jesus to further evaluate his claim to be the Messiah. Choosing to humble themselves, these individuals further inquired into Jesus’s messiahship as it pertained to his place of origin and the miracles he had performed. Relying upon the messianic text of Micah 5, this group asked why Jesus would consider himself the Messiah if he was from Galilee and not Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). John emphasizes that these discussions prompted a division among those who remained. While some refused to put aside their previously held interpretation of the Messiah’s origins in Bethlehem and joined the Jews in desiring to have him apprehended, *many* proclaimed that he was “the Prophet” and “the Christ” (John 7:40–41).

There may be a host of factors that influenced this group’s declaration, but the narrative seems to place the decision on their desire to

adhere to Jesus's command as a coupling of their messianic expectations from scripture with belief (John 7:38). I have been impressed that the author of the Fourth Gospel does not combat these inquiries with facts, such as "Well, didn't you know that Jesus was born in Bethlehem!" or "What further miracles would you like to see?" Instead, he records that those who proclaimed him as the Christ did so out of belief, not out of the certainty that those who joined the Jews were seeking. Alma's teaching to the Zoramites rings true for these temple patrons as well: "Even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe" (Alma 32:27). It appears that the separating factor between those in Jerusalem who listened to and followed Jesus and those who left was belief.

The Samaritan expectations of the Messiah differed from those of the Jews of that period. While the Jews emphasized the words of the Hebrew Bible, the Samaritans relied heavily upon oral traditions. Unfortunately, records about the messianic expectations of the Samaritans are reliant upon records that postdate the Second Temple period by nearly two hundred years.<sup>27</sup> According to these traditions, Samaritans expected the coming of a figure named *Tabeb*, a descendant of Jacob and a great prophet-teacher, who would come from the east to Mount Gerizim. To prove his messiahship, he would show the staff of Aaron, produce manna, bring the holy tabernacle back to its residence on Mount Gerizim, and aid in making the Hebrew language universal. Eventually, he would die and be buried with Joseph the son of Jacob.<sup>28</sup>

Allusions to the traditions of *Tabeb* are preserved in the dialogue between the Samaritan woman and Jesus in John 4.<sup>29</sup> However, like those in the temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritan woman followed the expression of her understanding of the coming messiah with a listening ear that allowed Jesus to expand her knowledge. It was through this exchange that the woman was truly converted to say, "Come, see a man . . . is not this the Christ" (John 4:29). By choosing to believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Samaritan woman received a personal witness and shared it with her friends and neighbors (John 4:29).

The Fourth Gospel does not attempt to overdramatize the event but shows that while the Samaritan woman and Jesus disagreed at the beginning of their conversation, through an encounter with the Christ, her expectations for the Messiah were changed by belief.

### **John the Baptist, Andrew, and Martha (Spiritually Received Messianic Belief)**

Instead of evaluating the Messiah through reasoning with scriptures and traditions, the Fourth Gospel presents a group of individuals who accept Jesus as the Christ with the spiritual gift of a believing heart (see D&C 46:14). John the Baptist, Andrew, and Martha all make pure proclamations of faith that they believe that Jesus is the Christ that should come, without disputation. This acceptance highlights the Fourth Gospel's incarnation Christology. After spending a day with Jesus, Andrew proclaims, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41). John the Baptist declares to the Jews that he would be one who would bear witness of the Messiah, even in the face of opposition (John 1:20; 3:28). In her extremity following the death of her brother, Martha witnesses her belief that Jesus is the Christ. Her belief comes not after the miracle of the raising of her brother (as it may have for the temple patrons or the Samaritan woman), but prior to it (John 11:27). These characters all manifest the truth taught by President Dallin H. Oaks: "Those who have the gift [to know that Jesus is the Son of God], must give their witness so that those who have the gift to believe on their words can enjoy the benefit of that gift."<sup>30</sup> John the Baptist, Andrew, and Martha share their obtained witness about the Messiah not only with those in their day, but with the later readers of the Fourth Gospel.

### **Realizing the Messiah through the Gospel of John**

Throughout the Gospel of John people converse with one another about the validity of Jesus's claims of being the Messiah. The disparate

presentation of messianic expectations in these conversations provides a fruitful backdrop for studying the author's intent to allow readers to choose for themselves to believe in Jesus as the Christ. The final reference to *christos* in the Fourth Gospel serves as a fitting capstone to our discussion. John's concluding proclamation that "these are written, so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God" (John 20:31 New Revised Standard Version), strategically engages the reader with the ongoing discussions of the Messiah. The Fourth Gospel was not written with the intent to present a portrayal of Jesus's life that convinces the reader of his messiahship through a checklist of scriptural or traditional prophecies. Instead, John desired that the reader would experience and walk with Jesus, like the characters presented throughout the gospel, and come to their own understanding and conclusions that they believe in him as the Christ. Whether they come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah through the gift of a believing heart like John the Baptist, Andrew, and Martha, or they willingly adjust their preconceived messianic expectations like the Samaritan woman or the temple patrons in Jerusalem, the Fourth Gospel is specifically written so that all might "believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God."

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## Notes

1. Latter-day Saints adhere to the traditional belief that the Gospel of John was written by John the Revelator/Beloved. See Richard Neitzel Holzzapfel, Eric D. Huntsman, and Thomas A. Wayment, *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 126. Some scholars suggest that parts or portions of the text were written

- at different times and places. See Urban C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).
2. Robin Scott Jensen, Richard E. Turley Jr., and Riley M. Lorimer, eds., *Revelations and Translations Volume 2: Published Revelations*, vol. 2 of the Revelations and Translations series of *The Joseph Smith Papers*, ed. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2011), 346.
  3. James H. Charlesworth, "Introduction: Messianic Ideas in Early Judaism," in *Qumran-Messianism*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Gerbern S. Oegema (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 2.
  4. William Sanday, *The Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel* (London: Macmillan, 1872), 124.
  5. Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, *Doctrine and Covenants*, 1835, 36, in *JSP*, R2:346.
  6. While there are nineteen references to *christos* in the Gospel of John, two appear as titles attached to the personal name Jesus (John 1:17; 17:3).
  7. Charlesworth, "Introduction: Messianic Ideas in Early Judaism," 2.
  8. John J. Collins, "Jesus, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Qumran-Messianism*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Gerbern S. Oegema (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 100–101.
  9. Collins, "Jesus, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls," 102.
  10. David B. Levenson, "Messianic Movements," in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler (New York: Oxford, 2011), 530.
  11. Richard Baukham, "Messianism according to the Gospel of John," in *Challenging Perspectives of the Gospel of John*, ed. John Lierman (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 35.
  12. For an exhaustive treatment of the biblical texts attributed to messianism, see John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 49–73.
  13. Craig A. Evans, "Are the 'Son' Texts at Qumran Messianic?" in *Qumran-Messianism*, 141.
  14. Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, Sacra Pagina 4 (Collegetown, MN: The Order of St. Benedict, 1998), 355.



15. Bruce K. Waltke, *A Commentary on Micah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), 294.
16. Sook-Young Kim, *The Warrior Messiah in Scripture and Intertestamental Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 9.
17. Levenson, "Messianic Movements," 530–31.
18. Debra Scoggins Ballentine, *The Conflict Myth and Biblical Tradition* (New York: Oxford, 2015), 159.
19. Ballentine, *The Conflict Myth*, 159.
20. Martin Abegg Jr., "The Messiah at Qumran: Are We Still Seeing Double?" *Dead Sea Discoveries* 2 (1995): 122–44.
21. Charlesworth, "Introduction: Messianic Ideas in Early Judaism," 5.
22. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Be Not Afraid, Only Believe," *Ensign*, November 2015, 78.
23. Moloney, *Gospel of John*, 52.
24. John Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah: The History, Literature, and Theology of the Johannine Community* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), 8.
25. Jensen, Turley, and Lorimer, *Doctrine and Covenants, 1835*, 60, in *JSP*, R2:370.
26. Gordon B. Hinckley, meeting, Nairobi, Kenya, 17 February 1998, quoted in "Excerpts from Recent Addresses of President Gordon B. Hinckley," *Ensign*, August 1998, 72.
27. Ferdinand Dexinger, "Reflections on the Relationship between Qumran and Samaritan Messianology," *Qumran-Messianism*, 83.
28. Dexinger, "Relationship between Qumran and Samaritan Messianology," 85.
29. See John 4:19 ("Thou art a prophet"), John 4:20 (worship on Mount Gerizim), and John 4:25 ("I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will teach us all things").
30. Dallin H. Oaks, "Witnesses of Christ," *Ensign*, October 1999, 29.