

Paul on Jesus/Yeshua and the High Priesthood

If ever there was an apostle who could illustrate in words the identity of Jesus Christ/Yeshua HaMaschiach it was Paul of Tarsus. Let's look today at His Letter to the Hebrews. There were two basic identifiable groups who joined the apostles of Jesus:

Acts 6.1 : "In those days when the number of disciples was increasing (=God was adding disciples to the apostles' circle of believers), the Grecian Jews (=Greek-speaking Jews or Hellenistic Jews) among them complained against the Hebraic Jews....." (=on the whole Judean Jews who were speaking Aramaic).

These two branches were interacting with one another and they must then have understood their respective vernaculars, be it Greek or Aramaic (=Judean Hebrew at the time). Greek strongly impacted on Palestine since Alexander the Great's expansion of Greek dominion, however, Aramaic was also, since Old Testament times widely in use.

Now, Paul's Letter to the Hebrews has a specific history which cannot be dealt with here in-depth but it is today accepted that this apostle was definitely the author of the Letter to the Hebrews which was written in Greek, however, some again claiming that it was originally written in Aramaic and then translated by either Luke or Timothy in Greek. It seems that the Greek version was widely read, being then the reason for its Greek origin.

Jesus, the Pauline High-Priest and the Holy Spirit manifestation

In the Old Testament the High-Priest acted as intermediary between God and His People. In the New Testament Jesus/Yeshua is now holding this office in the heavens, i.e. since the Son's resurrection (Rom. 1.4). But let us see how the learned Apostle Paul portrays Jesus/Yeshua's High Priesthood for us:

Heb. 7.11: "If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come - one in the order of Melchizedek (=King of Righteousness), not in the order of Aaron"?

[Note : Paul firstly tells the "Hebrews" who were very clearly in need of sound doctrine concerning Jesus/Yeshua, that the Old Testament Priesthood was falling short and it was indeed on the Levitical priesthood that the law was hinging (=The priesthood had to see to it that the law and all its prescriptions be preserved and kept in place the proper, received way = as God had given it to Moses)].

Paul then for a very good reason asks this crucial question: "Why was it necessary for God to send another High Priest?" - to replace the Old Testament High Priest, however, not as in the Old Testament in accordance with the Order of Aaron but in the New Testament (New Covenantal) tradition in the Order of Melchizedek?

A New Order of the Priesthood was then introduced by Jesus/Yeshua, Son of the Living God who was resurrected as Son of God (Rom. 1.4) and who ascended on High as Son of the Living God (Jn 20.17; Acts 1). The Apostle Peter, who was well acquainted with Paul's knowledge on the Jewish law, declared on Pentecost Day - about fifty days after Jesus/Yeshua's resurrection - the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room (Acts 2.33): "Exalted to the right hand of God (=as High Priest), he (Jesus/Yeshua) has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (=the Holy Spirit or strictly speaking the Spirit of the Holy One (see Mr 1.24).

The Gift of the Holy Spirit was then experienced by the Apostles and their disciples (Acts of Luke) - coinciding with Jesus/Yeshua the Messiah's (1) resurrection and, (2) His exaltation - in a very definite, experiential way just as those who believed their word and who then also professed Jesus/Yeshua as Messiah and High Priest would have received it too. However, the initial baptism with the Holy Spirit was unique in its manifestation and we can take it that it was a very important historical day on the Jewish Christian calendar for the promised Holy Spirit was then introduced as the "Power from on High" bringing about definite results (Acts 1.8), something the believers would have needed in order to boost their faith in a RISEN Messiah.

The outpouring of God's Spirit happened in a very definite, perceivable way and it manifested spontaneously, i.e. without the laying on of hands (Compare Acts 2 with Acts 19).

It is recorded in Luke's Acts that in the house of Cornelius, a similar baptism with the Spirit of God was later experienced, and other baptisms have clearly also followed, i.e. including those believers who had joined the apostles and conforming to their message (Acts 19). Keep in mind that the High Priest of old was the one in charge of the spiritual affairs of the Temple, i.e. within the Jewish theocratic society - having a bearing again on Jesus/Yeshua as having been appointed by God to rule the New Testament House of God, i.e. after His resurrection (Heb 3). Note further that the believers who responded on the word of the Apostles, believed the Scriptures and therefore its fulfilment in Jesus the Messiah/Yeshua HaMaschiach. And they of course saw many miracles taking place in Yeshua/Jesus' Name.

The baptism with the Holy Spirit was clearly not a once-off event but it was a necessary, ongoing supernatural experience very appropriately described in the NT apostolic letters as the "Power of God" making the disciples spiritually strong (Acts 1.8; 1 Tim. 3.5; 1 Thes. 5.19-20). This experience is therefore linked to Jesus/Yeshua's resurrection, proving that He is indeed risen and no more entombed in the grave (God raised Jesus/Yeshua by the power of the Holy Spirit from the dead and an empty tomb was discovered by the first visitors where He was buried - the stone was rolled away according to the Gospel eyewitnesses). Shortly after Jesus/Yeshua's resurrection, the Holy Spirit was poured out in a very spectacular way in Jerusalem (Joel 2.28+; Acts 2; Isa. 28.11)

Paul who had a remarkable encounter with the risen Jesus on Damascus Road, makes a bold statement in Rom. 1.4, proving his faith in a risen Jesus/Yeshua. None of the testimonies of so-called discovered "graves" of Jesus/Yeshua was ever proven credible.

[Note: there is no real evidence then for this type of attempt to keep Jesus/Yeshua forever dead and entombed. It is propagated though, to this day, by Jesus/Yeshua's enemies that He is dead and therefore not risen and more than one site was also in the past named for his (permanent) burial and proving indeed that we must believe the apostles for they were, as John rightly states in his pastoral letters, the eyewitnesses whose testimony must be believed].

The High Priesthood transferred by God to Jesus/Yeshua

Jesus/Yeshua first and foremost had to be officiated as High Priest by God the Father (installed on high in this capacity), acting as the "Perfect Mediator" (= High Priest) between God the Father and man (1 Tim. 2.5), i.e. as that very Holy One who receives our prayers and supplications and who intercedes for us with the Father 24/7 (Heb. 4) - raised to this illustrious position on high, i.e. after his ascension, and established forever at the Father's right hand as eternal High Priest and intercessor for the believers (Heb. 4, 7, 10; Acts 4.12).

[Note: The Angel of the Covenant, the pre-existent Christ, was that very One who received the prayers of God's People in Old Testament times - (see R. Cohen's Concise translated Talmud on the Angel of the Covenant and the Shekhina =the glory of God) also Rev. 8.3. We must pray, asking God for insight (wisdom) to understand the symbolic meaning of the Scriptures - for example, the four living creatures have a bearing on Jesus/Yeshua and before reacting too hastily, watch (if you can follow Afrikaans) to Arie's video presentation on the vlog concerning the four living creatures, also used as depictions/motifs for the four Gospels (all four "living creatures" then also having a bearing on Jesus/Yeshua made flesh. There is, however, some who see the four living creatures as the four archangels but it seems that Ezek.1.5 corresponds with Rev. 4.7-9)].

Once Jesus/Yeshua had ascended on high (His High Priesthood having been established on high) - Paul is clear in his Letter to the Hebrews that Jesus ascended on high appearing before His Father (Heb. 6.19-20; Heb. 9.24) - then only could the Holy Spirit, resting upon the risen Son, also sent by the Son of God (Acts 2.33), be poured out as the ultimate supernatural "vehicle" establishing faith in hearts. The testimony of (about) Jesus is then indeed based on faith and without faith we can never please God (Paul). Keep in mind that Moses transferred the Spirit He was endowed with on the Elders - i.e. on God's instruction - but under the New

Covenant endowment with the Spirit was "generalised" - the blood-washed (the saved) now sharing therein.

Why the Son of God could indeed have filled the office of High Priest since His resurrection is because He was the only one who could have satisfied the strict prescriptions of the law - He was therefore nailed fourfold to the Cross as God's unblemished Passover Lamb, fulfilling all the prescriptions of the law in one complete act of redemption and whilst "wearing" the nails in His hands and in His feet, representing the four-cornered tsitsit, i.e. the hyacinth-blue cords attached to each corner (Num. 15.37-40) proving in this capacity that He had indeed brought full redemption for all mankind - a scenario graphically portrayed for us by the prophet Isaiah, revealing God's plan of salvation this way to us (Isa. 53).

Those who cannot and do not want to see the fulfilment of Isa. 53 in and through Jesus/Yeshua on the Cross are hardening their hearts deliberately for this is indeed a true prophetic word coming from a faithful Jewish prophet of God, Isaiah, who, according to legend, has suffered horrendous martyrdom for the sake of establishing Truth via the prophetic word and it is indeed this prophet who also testified of the Angel of Presence, on the whole appearing to the true prophets of God (Isa 63.9)

Now, we should know by now that this Angelic heavenly messenger who delivered Israel from the slavery of Pharaoh, is none other than the pre-existent Jesus/Yeshua (Prov. 8.22; Ex. 23.20+; Jos. 5.14; Ex 3 - Moses' encounter with the same One in the bramblebush; Jn 17.5; Jn 1).*

One man then had to die for the safe-keeping (the survival) of the people!

The crucifixion of the Son of God was then indeed the fulfilment of the strict prescriptions of the law and "one man" (=the Perfect High Priest) therefore, ironically, had to die for the people and for their spiritual welfare, i.e. with reference to Caiaphas' prophecy and when Jesus/Yeshua was sent to the Cross with this thought conveyed to the Judeans.

The compassionate High Priest

The New Testament (the New Covenantal) High Priest very obviously went one step further than the Old Testament Aaronite High Priesthood, i.e. Jesus/Yeshua gave Himself completely up as a "whole burnt offering unto God, His Father". He was prepared to be fully "consumed" for the sake of the unsaved and in one sacrifice of love, i.e. on God's chosen altar, i.e. on the Cross, the Son of God sealed the New and Better Covenant with His own blood. The zeal for the House of God literally consumed Jesus/Yeshua (to see this text in context, read Jn 2.17; also Ps. 39.8; Heb. 10.5; Isa. 53).

Three qualities stand out in the man Jesus/Yeshua's profile:

(1) He regarded Deut. 6.4 (the Shema) as salient, unquestionable Truth ("Hear, o Israel, the Lord your God, the Lord is one); (2) He loved God, His Father unconditionally; and (3) He loved His fellows the same way, all three proviso's required by the Law, proving His complete and absolute obedience to God His Father - in accordance with the Law (Mark 12.32-33).

One outstanding characteristic of Jesus/Yeshua was His faith in God proving on the Cross His deep trust in and complete submission to God His Father, His blameless conduct on the Cross, and even under extreme duress setting the perfect example of loving and trusting God His Father (the Most High) above all, including His fellows - No greater love can there ever be than dying for one's friends (Jesus). On the Cross He was radiating, in His pain and suffering, the love and compassion of God, still thinking of his friends and foes and understanding/forgiving their faults and failures: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do!" No wonder Paul extols his High Priesthood so poignantly in Heb. 4.14-16!

Jesus/Yeshua therefore did not only talk of the law, He lived the law proving his committed love for God His Father also Truth even to the point of death! He was then indeed fulfilling the prescriptions of the law requiring unfeigned love for God and one's fellows - because He was speaking Truth AND living Truth His life was daily threatened by those who so easily opted for a "form of godliness".

The scapegoat and the High Priesthood of old

The Old Testament High Priest was assigned by God to transfer, once in a year, the sins of the people onto the scapegoat, sending it off to die in the wilderness as a sign of the terrible results of sin. The scapegoat was therefore acting as substitute for the chosen people's sins. Now, we should be able to see a connection between Jesus/Yeshua, acting as God's chosen, righteous, unblemished sacrificial Lamb who died for one and all - also something that took place outside the camp (Paul) and so that those who want to come and drink of the waters of life - offered by the Redeemer - can to this day, come and partake freely thereof (Isa. 55)!

Considering the aforesaid with an open mind, we should then have no difficulty grasping the complete fulfilment of the law in and through the crucified Jesus/Yeshua, seeing Him on the Cross, "adorned" with the nails in His hands and in His feet, His Body fastened to the four-cornered Roman altar is indeed a graphic demonstration of His divine love for God His Father also His love and compassion for all mankind - "I have come to do Thy will, o, God!" (Ps 39; 1 Jn 3.16)!

The Gospels are also testifying of His unfeigned obedience and subjection unto God His Father. Yet He did not, in a masochistic way, hand Himself over to be crucified (a lie that was brought in against Him and expressed in one of the apostate apocryphal Gospels, the Gospel of Judas). He was sent to the Cross and as the Gospel writers rightly testify of Him, He was arrested, seemingly something that was planned by the ex-High Priest, Annas (Caiaphas' father-in-law). If we are honest, He was "scapegoated" for sins He did not commit! False witnesses were also, contrary to the Law of Moses, brought in against the blameless Christ/Maschiach. However, Isa. 53 had to be fulfilled in Him for this was God's will for His Son's putting on flesh (Phil. 2).

However, it is indeed not strange that Jesus/Yeshua's coming in the flesh is so enigmatic for the Jews. We must grasp salvation in and through Yeshua in faith - this is something we acquire through the Power of the Holy Spirit (Paul).

Yeshua/Jesus indeed came as bridge between the Old Covenant and all its rituals, i.e. on the one hand, and then the New Covenantal Order on the other, and so that He could lead those who believe in Him into the revealed Path of Truth (Jn 14.6) and of course as that very One who was made flesh (who put on flesh) for a specific purpose, bringing lasting redemption to sinful man.

That One who was carrying His people on His wings in the desert, and whose Presence was so mightily revealed to the ancient Israelites in the pillar of fire and in the cloud by day, was indeed that very One with whom Moses had his unique encounter in the bramble bush- Jesus stated in the Gospels that nobody can see God and live and this God also told Moses. No wonder Jesus/Yeshua said: "Before Abraham I am" (I was - He was then indeed Israel's King and Messiah revealed in the flesh)! Can we see a connection between Ex. 3 and Jn. 8.58?

He was therefore also that very One who acted as God's divine angelic appointee appearing above the mercy-seat when the Aaronite High Priest(!) entered the Holy of Holies (consult discussions on this vlog concerning this matter). No wonder God had placed such a high onus, dictating absolute faithfulness and untarnished adherence to the Law upon the shoulders of the High Priesthood! ("Faithfulness" comes through imprinting whereas "faith" again comes through supernatural experience and therefore instilled within those believing in the New Testament message mainly by having had an experience - sometimes referred to as epiphany or illumination confirming that Jesus/Yeshua is alive - or generally speaking, instilled within us by the reality and Power of the Holy Spirit making an impact on our minds in diverse ways. Faith is then profoundly a fruit of Jesus' coming in the flesh at the fullness of times).

In retrospect, let's consider this question: Didn't He, Jesus/Yeshua, indeed fulfil all the prescriptions of the Law and doesn't Isa. 53 portray for us the bruised, rejected Son of God on the Cross? Now, Isaiah rightly does not mention the Cross per se but it is clear from his book (Chapter 53) that the Servant of God was intensely subjected to severe abuse, not so?

However, Jesus/Yeshua had to come in the flesh (He had to be born as a human) in order to fulfil the Law (Math. 5.17; Isa. 9.6) acting as God's chosen, perfect, unblemished Lamb on the altar (=the place of sacrifice) - and clearly "... coming at the fullness of times" (Gal. 4) as, by the time Jesus/Yeshua was due to be born in Bethlehem, the High Priesthood was not Aaronite anymore! And "perfection" carrying strict and specified, divinely designed connotations in the Scriptures, was then not to be linked to this high theocratic office anymore.

It is then no wonder that God had to fulfil his implicit promise to Abraham, namely that His own Son was going to be sacrificed in future, i.e. in God's appointed time (=the manner in which God had always revealed His purpose, i.e. in accordance with a specific divine time-line) for Abraham's posterity, also for the many nations that had come from his lineage!

Should we then be honest with ourselves and God, we will acknowledge that the life of Abraham's son (the son of God's promise) has a strong resemblance with the life of God's own Son (also the promised Son, Isa. 9.6), There is also a remarkable resemblance between Abraham's son on the altar (yet not sacrificed) and the Son of God on the Roman altar (who died on the altar) and then more specifically between the Angel of the Lord intervening (=One specific angelic being and therefore not meaning the angels at random) and Jesus/Yeshua made flesh. Wasn't it indeed the pre-existent Christ who alone could work eternal Salvation?

Paul's necessary "change of the law" and its prescriptions in relation to the "fullness of times" - the Melchizedek Order and Jesus/Yeshua

Jesus/Yeshua came in the fullness of times (!) not in the Order of Aaron, but in the Order of Melchizedek (=King of Righteousness) for the "fullness of times" dictated/required this radical change, i.e. from "Aaronite" to "Melchizedek".

Paul therefore declares this strange (enigmatic) change, i.e. for the election of the High Priesthood, in relation to the New Covenantal Order (=of Melchizedek and therefore not of Aaron any longer), i.e. as having been transferred from the tribe of Levi to the tribe of Judah - meaning at the "fullness of times".

There is an idea in Judaism that a change affecting the priesthood can be permitted should circumstances require it, however, this will entail a separate discussion. (Consult Paul's Letter to the Hebrews (7.12) as well as Arie Blomerus' article on the Seventy Sevens of Daniel the Prophet = concerning the fullness of times on this website: See Christian Jewish Studies and then scroll to Biblical Studies).

The "fullness" of times then indeed necessitated the election of a new (spiritual!) High Priest as the High Priesthood had by then lost its deep spiritual and divinely appointed meaning. And should we remain focused, we will see that Jesus/Yeshua acting as God's (!) chosen, elect, super-unique New Covenantal High Priest, came exactly at the right time to save sinners - those who constantly trespassed the strict prescriptions of the law and who then were walking in shame and guilt, fearing death and condemnation all the time - or even clean forgetting about God's commandments (1 Tim. 1.15)! Jesus/Yeshua therefore entered the veil (figuratively pointing to the highest heavens and entering the Holy of Holies) in accordance with the Order of Melchizedek (Heb. 6.20).

Where the High Priesthood could not function without the Temple theocracy - it was then indeed brought to an end in 70 A.D. with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem - it was fulfilled in Jesus/Yeshua's coming in the flesh "at the fullness of times" giving us all the more reason to accept that God Himself had sent His Son at the right time into the world to sustain faith in the true and living God of the Old Testament but only now revealed in and through His Son's coming in the flesh (Phil 2).

God then, at exactly the right time, intervened sending His Son to work Salvation on a Cross and to work redemption for all nations. Besides, Jesus/Yeshua was a Jew, born under the law (Gal. 4). He was then the right and perfect successor to the High Priesthood, only since that time spiritualized. Therefore we now see the High

Priesthood fulfilled in and through the risen Son of God, sharing the Throne of His Father on high, working in us through the Power of His Spirit and so that we can be perfected in Him (Heb. 4; Heb. 7.25).

The change in priesthood (indeed its transformation) finding expression in the Pauline Letter to the Hebrews (7.12), i.e. as something necessary and which God the Father had to wedge in at a specific point in time (=the fullness of times), applies then to Jesus/Yeshua as Messianic descendant of the lineage of David (=Judah) over against the tribe that of necessity had to undergo change, namely the Levitical tribe from which the Old Testament priesthood (the Aaronites) had sprung forth. (Levi's ruling spiritual power was then exchanged for Judah's) and this exchange took place via the Cross of Calvary, at the "fullness of times"!

Jesus is from the royal tribe of Judah!

I will later, in greater detail, address the conception and birth of Jesus/Yeshua as the idea still persists that He was conceived out of wedlock, He was in other words an illegitimate child for the majority of His people (who could even be regarded as a mamzer, a child from an adulterous relationship) and He could therefore not lay claim to the tribe of Judah unless Joseph had married Miriam, and acknowledging Him as his son - a message that of course does not agree with His real identity and which would indeed be enigmatic for the average Jew.

[Note those who are interested in this subject matter, can consult an article written by me, "On the Divinity of Jesus" (on the same website quoted previously)].

Now, we can gather from Matthew that Joseph did marry the pregnant Miriam but that the marriage was not consummated until after Jesus/Yeshua's birth - another enigmatic idea for many, however, God does work in strange ways to accomplish His divine purpose with man and his salvation - and Miriam was of course also from the lineage of David (=Judah).

Strangely Jesus/Yeshua was often called a "bastard (illegitimate) child" regardless of his real background history and such slander would of course have been used against Him and His followers. How could a child conceived this "sinful" way, lay claim to the (Pauline) High Priesthood? - isn't this the type of accusation brought in by Jesus/Yeshua's enemies especially in the past, i.e. from His own people? And this is once again where grasping in and by faith comes in for the virgin did indeed fall pregnant (Isa 7.14, something again unique to the real, one and only, authentic, divinely chosen Messiah).

[Note: I think debating on what is meant with "young woman" in comparison with the original text has already been thoroughly thrashed out in the past and it is therefore not dealt with here again].

This specific issue, however, calls for a separate discussion as the whole tribe of Judah and his posterity then also comes into play and especially the history of Judah and Tamar. Why condone the one's history and not the other's?

The High Priest acting as Mediator

In accordance with the Old Testament Covenantal Order, the High Priest (=Ruler of God's House) acted as mediator between the People and their God for their sins and trespasses. No wonder Paul of Tarsus, with the wisdom God had given him, stated in His Letter to the Hebrews that Jesus/Yeshua was appointed by God His Father in this very capacity, i.e. after His resurrection (Heb.3).

The Kings in ancient Israel were of course elected from the tribe of Judah (=the Southern Kingdom hinging on the Temple theocracy and pertaining to the Davidic lineage). Jesus/Yeshua then, and indeed as was the case with the mythical Melchizedek to whom Abraham had brought sacrifices of wine and bread (!), fulfilled, i.e. at the fullness of times, a two-fold office:

(1) As Levitical High Priest bringing His complete (perfect/unblemished) blood sacrifice timely (Isa 53; Heb. 4 - He was without sin), i.e. as that very One of old who received the sacrificial (animal) blood brought into the Holy of Holies by the High Priests of old (at Yom Kippur), and

(2) as King of RIGHTEOUSNESS - He said to Samuel: "It is not you they are rejecting today but me!", i.e. their real King ! (=when the Israelites insisted on having a King of their own).

The very One who spoke to Samuel was indeed that One who had led them out of Egypt - projecting Himself as their Deliverer (Messiah) also their King.

He was also that very One appointed from ancient times over Israel as their God and as their King (Ps. 2; Ex. 3)! And it is against this message that the nations, including the majority of the Jews, are still so fiercely contending (Ps 2)! Note that Jesus/Yeshua was given omnipotence by God His Father after His resurrection (Math. 28.20), also proving once again to us that He, the Son, regardless of His dominion and status bestowed upon Him by God His Father, acknowledged God His Father's greater authority!

[NOTE : Carefully consider Jesus/Yeshua's contention with the Jews on his identity, and especially with reference to his argument with the leadership of the Jews concerning "gods" and "lesser gods" for Moses was also as (like) God to Aaron (Ex. 4.16 : "He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God (or a god) to him". Moses was then acting with great authority (like God) but He was not God. Jesus in almost the same manner, although He was so much higher than Moses (Paul to the Hebrews) was never making Himself God and He clearly said this to the Jews (Jn 10.33-38). He was then indeed the Son of God who put on flesh (1 Jn 4; Phil. 2) yet clothed by God His Father (!) after His resurrection with divinity, however, not as a second/rival God - but still retaining his identity and office as Son of God for He was resurrected as such by God His Father (Math. 28.20; Rom. 1.4; carefully contemplate Paul's Phil. 2 teaching: "He did not regard it as robbery..." (he did not steal his status given to Him by His Father) "... to be equal to God (His Father)].

We should therefore see an excellent correlation between the Old Testament pre-existent Christ, i.e. in relation to His Father (God Most High, the "uncaused" One, i.e. that One having had no beginning nor end) over against His Son who was brought forth by God Most High and who then indeed had a beginning - He was brought forth at a certain point in time in the supernatural sphere by God Almighty we call "Father" (Jn 7, 8, 9, 10).

[Note : Prayerfully consider Jesus/Yeshua's explication before the Jewish leadership on His own identity and that of His Father (Jn 10. 22+; compare this textual reference with Jn 14 - Jesus reveals to the sceptical Thomas His unity with His Father and which thought again correlates well with Paul's Col. 1.15 statement, namely that Jesus/Yeshua is the exact image (likeness) of the unseen God].

Now, keeping the aforementioned in mind, Jesus/Yeshua was then indeed the pre-existent "King of Israel" and for this cause Pilate, a Gentile (!) rightly yet unwittingly, conformed to God's will, i.e. when he publically made known his verdict on Jesus/Yeshua trial and execution, displaying it on the Cross - note that nobody had advised Pilate to do so!

"King of the Jews" was then for a definite divine purpose written in Aramaic (Judean Hebrew), Greek and in Latin and so that all who were looking upon the crucified Lamb of God, sticking out their tongues in defiance of His message and while He was fulfilling His divine role of the Suffering Servant of God (Isa 53) , could at least read (see) who He indeed was! This act of Pilate was therefore far from coincidental as is often propagated.

The resurrection of Jesus introducing radical changes in worship also in the history of man

Thank God for the resurrection of Jesus/Yeshua, indeed brought about in a supernatural, divine way for had it not been for this public show of God Almighty's Power, we would have had nothing of real spiritual substance and the Jewish nation, the People of God still to this day (see Paul's stance on this issue in Rom. 11)

would also hardly have had anything left for their High Priesthood would have gone from bad to worse (consult Deut 28). A militant Messiah was expected, but God instead had wedged in His Suffering Servant "in the fullness of times" to first and foremost bring about a heart change and so that obedience to the ethical/moral prescriptions of the law could be internalized by the Power of His Spirit and so that true worship could be re-established - with reference to the written laws on the tables of hearts of man, his conscience being awakened now by the power vested in the shed blood of the Lamb (Heb. 4; Isa 53; Heb. 9.14). Jesus then rightly stated in Math. 5.17 that He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it!

We can indeed sense definite changes in the history of the world from 70 A.D. onwards, and when the Jews had lost their land to the mighty Romans. They could of course never re-establish themselves as a unified nation again - having their own allocated land - up until 1948 and Jesus/Yeshua very clearly was not the cause of their great tragedy (=the loss of their land in 70 A.D.)!

[What the Jewish nation did, however, do, and this nobody can deny, was to call the blood of Jesus/Yeshua upon themselves ("Let His blood come upon us and upon our children!", that was at His trial - this is then clearly like an oath, something that always came with a heavy price]

The "fullness of times" had then indeed arrived with the birth of Jesus/Yeshua. During that time the specially anointed of God, the one and only real Messiah ("Anointed" in Hebrew = also meaning "Christos" in Greek) was harshly rooted out/rejected by His very own People ("Not you they have rejected, Samuel, but me!") - indeed a fulfilment of Daniel's prophetic word.

Thousands of Jews have accepted Jesus/Yeshua throughout the ages

Throughout the centuries, thousands of Jews and Gentiles have accepted Him as Messiah. And this then proves to us that the Messiah, the Righteous Ruler (Isa 9.6), had indeed come for a special spiritual purpose, i.e. (1) as Suffering Servant, however, (2) when He will come again (!), i.e. in accordance with Christian literature yet also mentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures as the "Messianic" age, He will take up His status as Warrior of Old (= as Deliverer, Ex. 23.20+; Dan. 12) and (3) thereafter He will reveal Himself just as Joseph did to his brothers, as that very One with the scars in His hands (Zech. 13.6)*.

Pray for Divine Wisdom when it comes to understanding the Scriptures the proper way

In His final revelation, He will open the eyes of His People (like Joseph of old had done with His brothers who had sold him) and then He will in its full splendour wear his multi-coloured coat for the nations (!) will then come to pay homage to Him as (Messianic) King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

The Messiah born the usual way?

Let's come back to the expectation of the Jews, i.e. concerning their "true" Messiah and who will then be born the usual way. No mere human being, born of biological parents, i.e. the normal way, will ever be able to bring about true deliverance (spiritually and otherwise) as God Almighty is the only one who can do the impossible. Surely, we know the situation of current Israel. It is through the Prophets' word that we can see the great Deliverer of Israel and we will therefore have to approach their prophetic word not in arrogance and with a self-seeking spirit, but we must do so with utmost reverence, always praying for divine wisdom and so that the proper declaration of the Scriptures can take root among the Jewish nation, and on a much larger scale - believing that the Most High is ALMIGHTY and that He is therefore able to accomplish the impossible.

God the Father vindicated His Son after His death on a Cross

Just as God the Father had vindicated His Son in and through His resurrection by sending the spectacular outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room (during the Festival of Shavuot), proving that Jesus/Yeshua is risen, likewise He will vindicate His Son's true identity at the end of times (God always works in seasons and in

accordance with times = His appointed times).

It would be good to again read Joel's prophetic word, depicted as the "Day of the Lord", i.e. as heading of the relevant text, however, also brought by Peter on Pentecost day as such. and which is then a very special Day of the Lord (day of appointment by God) something that had indeed coincided with the outpouring of the Spirit and which happening was declared as such by the Apostle Peter, the Jew - the Holy Spirit outpouring in Jerusalem was indeed unique in the history of Israel for it crowned the resurrection of Jesus/Yeshua the Redeemer (Acts 2, also Joel 2.28-29), and in the same spectacular way God the Father will vindicate His Son as Messiah of Israel at the end of days.

Jesus indeed came to fulfil the Law as God's chosen High Priest

His sacrifice on Calvary was, like the priesthood of old, also enveloped in the spilling of blood (Isa 53), however, applying on the Cross His own precious blood as eternal sacrifice unto God His Father for the sins of the whole world (Jn 3.16; Heb. 9.14).

Jesus/Yeshua was therefore indeed sent for a specific purpose by the Father, namely to bring about renewal of mind and to transform man's approach to worship for the better, binding him since the death of God's Suffering Servant (Isa 53) in a new and definite way to God most High and leading him since into a much deeper spiritual reality (consult again discussions on the tsitsit and the fulfilment of the law). Also read Phil. 2; Jn 1; Gal. 4.

Jesus/Yeshua therefore had to undergo the crucifixion and we all then indeed sent Jesus/Yeshua to the Cross! - in his crucifixion he wore the four-cornered tsitsit, bringing the ultimate, perfect, unblemished sacrifice, i.e. as Son of God, (see the video on this vlog, The Purpose of the Cross) -

Jesus/Yeshua is indeed our Melchizedek, King of Righteousness!

He is indeed our High Priest, mediating on high for us human beings who are constantly in need of a mighty Saviour (Deliverer = Messiah) (1 Tim. 2.5; Heb. 4). Man is vulnerable and we are then always in need a higher force of reality to protect us and to guide us in a world lying in the grip of satan/wickedness (Paul and John's epistle refer to this type of depiction).

Thank God then for this Messiah whose anointing does not speak of man's election - note Paul's depiction of Melchizedek as one without father or mother or specific human registers or lineage and which depiction clearly correlates with Jesus/Yeshua's identity (Joseph was indeed not his biological father who had given Him His Name but His Name was given to Him by His heavenly Father who also has no birth record here on earth, nor was Mary in the true sense of the word his mother for she was only that pure vessel who carried the conceived child and whom God had chosen to bring forth the holy child, separated by God since his conception by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1.35).

All human deliverers of ancient Israel eventually proved that they too had feet of clay - they fell short in one or other way even if just having been subjected to death and therefore relying on a (future) resurrection, but this Jesus/Yeshua was raised from the dead by that very One who had sent Him into the world to save sinners (who were continually trespassing the strict prescriptions of the Law, loosing their divinely directed goal,) giving the Jews, in His own words, the sign of Jonah to go by (Heb. 5.7; 1 Tim. 1.15).

No wonder the nations are raging against God's Anointed King (His Son - Ps 2), trying to this day to nullify the resurrection of the blameless Son of God (Rom. 1.4) and which was something that was not only (1) proclaimed by eyewitnesses (the Apostles) but (2) which was also affirmed by the spectacular outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), and (3) miraculous deeds done in the Name of Yeshua, and, (4) also marked by the spectacular number of followers of Jesus/Yeshua, i.e. multiplying in a remarkable way within a fairly short period of time, reaching far beyond the borders of Jerusalem and (5) still growing in numbers to this day!

Let's therefore keep on praying that God will bless the Jewish nation opening their eyes to accept Yeshua as risen Maschiah just as the the learned Jew, Shaul of Tarsus, had longed in his day and age to see fulfilled (Rom. 11)! God has a wonderful future in store for the Jews in and through their Messiah who will reveal Himself to them all the more! May God bless them through our prayers! The Righteous One shall reign in Jerusalem in God's appointed time! Let's also ask God to heal the deep-seated hurting done to the Jewish nation by so-called "Christians"! They are "God's People" and Jesus/Yeshua loves them!

*There is a notable difference concerning Zech. 13.6 in, e.g. the Good News Bible (7th Imp. 1981), based on the Hebrew Bible (Biblia Hebraica), the source of some of the Old Testament translations. Marginal notes were sometimes applied/added to the main text and which could then have had a major affect on the declaration of the Scriptures - i.e. with reference to "...the wounds on your chest". The Jerusalem Bible (=Koren publishers Jerusalem) which is an excellent, trustworthy text - thorough comparisons were made - refers to "the wounds in your hands", applying the same wording then, i.e. in accordance with a source I have also consulted, "Die Bybel in Afrikaans", 4de uitgawe, 1957). Not only comparisons between the diverse translations of the Bible but also the dating of the original text, also the copies made of the originals are therefore of importance to us, e.g. Biblia Hebraica in comparison with the Stuttgartensia and the Leningradensis MSS.

As far as I can remember the Leningradensis OT also omits the "wounds between the hands" but I am open to correction - apparently a later translation based on the Hebrew Bible. Now this specific issue is often debated but what I want to briefly state is that there was a definite change in attitude on the Jewish side after 135. A.D. (the Bar Kochba revolt) and when a definite breach between the Jewish Christians and mainline Jewry had fallen in place. Persecutions against the Jews in general also comes all the more stronger to the fore from 150 A.D. onwards. which clearly elicited and increased negativity against Jesus/Yeshua, especially also thinking, in later ages, of the cruel Holocaust which of course has its own particular circumstantial background and history.

However, the early Christians were also persecuted by the Jews which again proves that there were reciprocal feelings and actions between the two camps and there are then always two sides to a story. Tampering with the text can also not be ruled out, also relating to the New Testament MSS. The original text (the autographs) are not available anymore, cancelling out sound comparisons with the earliest text (not meaning, however, the available copied MSS at our disposal). However, it is not as though the whole of the text is at stake, but specific and crucial texts, relating to Jesus/Yeshua as scripturally proven Messiah, could have been "adapted" when copies were made, and of course depending on how thoroughly or not "overwritings" were done, e.g. the Zech. 13.6 text.

This is of course an area where expert (!) textual knowledge is required but comparisons between existing translations (and especially keeping their dating and origin in mind) can indeed be made by those interested. I think we can then rightly ask: "Why do the translations differ so much, e.g "chest" in stead of "hands" as this discrepancy in the diverse translations indeed affects the text (And "hand" pertains also to the palm of the hand whereas "pulse" rather forms part of the lower arm. Hand also points to God's judgments which seems to also link with "government" (also something pertaining to Messiah (Isa 9.6). It is no wonder that Peter states in Acts 10.42 that God (the Father) had appointed Jesus/Yeshua as Judge, and John's statement in his synoptic Gospel also agrees with Peter's (5.22).

Fact is, there was an enormous onslaught from the Jewish side against Jesus/Yeshua and traces thereof can be detected in, e.g. the Babylonian Talmud. This whole issue then calls for in-depth discussion, i.e. including the OT textual traditions rendered to us.

Jesus/Yeshua showed his hands to Thomas after his resurrection and it is clearly stated in the Gospels that He was nailed to the Cross, and which depiction corresponds well with Thomas' experience, also those servants of God I know of and who have had visions of the risen Jesus/Yeshua.

Jesus/Yeshua was indeed and naturally rejected by the majority of Jews especially after their terrible onslaught from the Gentiles (Christianity) which is often generalized in stead of being specific about the perpetrators of the persecutions against the Jews throughout the centuries. Conversions (proselytising) had always been a threat

on both sides of the camp (Jew and Christian) and with all the strict measures that were taken against the Jews, i.e. after 135 A.D, ill-feelings would indeed have intensified, and then not only coming from the Jewish side but also from the Gentiles (the "Christians" consisting of great diversity).

But tampering with the text (changing the text or adapting the text) is then indeed not to be ruled out. Crucifixions were also done in diverse ways and there were indeed thousands of crucifixions - done in diverse ways - up until 70 A.D. But according to general Christian tradition, Jesus/Yeshua's hands and feet were nailed to the Cross.

Quotations from Thompson's Chain-Ref Bible, NIV - second improved edition (1984).

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Note added on 2015/01/23

The Jews' history after 70 A.D. also affecting their particular High Priesthood since about 191 BCE could not be dealt with here. What was mainly addressed is that, by the time Jesus/Yeshua was born, the High Priesthood had undergone drastic changes.

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