

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S2E12

Title - False Messiahs And False Hope

Description - From the Maccabean revolt (167 BC) to the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 by the Romans, other men rose up and claimed to be the Messiah, the long awaited savior of Israel. But something else happened long before this in Jewish history that was more significant. In today's episode we'll look at these events to see how they set the stage for John the Baptist to proclaim the true coming Messiah.

When we read the NT we just assume that the 5 Jewish groups have always been around in Judaism. But this isn't the case.

1. Zealots
2. Essenes
3. Sadducees
4. Pharisees
5. Herodians

Pop Quiz: Who did Herod the Great leave his kingdom to? His 3 sons: Phillip, Antipas,

These 5 groups come about as a result of the Maccabean revolt, because there's now a working temple in Jerusalem.

In this time there were many who rose up and claimed to be the Messiah. "Messiah" - anointed one, set apart one. Could be one of three offices/roles: Prophet, Priest, King.

Some thought the Messiah would be a military leader who would come in with force and take over and conquer their enemies.

To claim someone is the Messiah was both a political statement and an act of war against Rome.

So 100 years before Jesus and 100 years after Jesus there were 10-12 who arose and claimed to be the Messiah.

Before Jesus, a man named Hezekiah arose and then was killed. Next Simon, who was a slave to Herod, arose and tried to raid the royal treasury. He too was killed.

Over and over we see these false "Messiahs" come, claim to be someone, gather a following and then try to attack, but are killed and their movement fizzles out.

There's two examples given in Acts 5:36-37, where Gamaliel addresses the Sanhedrin.

Acts 5:36-37

36 Some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody, and a group of about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, and all his followers were dispersed and came to nothing. 37 After this man, Judas the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and attracted a following. He also perished, and all his followers were scattered.

But there were three big things that happened in Jewish history before the Maccabean revolt.

Three huge things that helped set the stage for this longing / searching for a messiah and the presence of God.

God said he was going to be with his people and manifest a special presence there with them. Yes, he's God, so He's everywhere all at once, but He chose to manifest himself in a special way there to the people.

Because of the sin of the people, in 591 BC, the Lord removes His Presence, His glory, from the temple. Shortly after that, the people will be conquered and exiled into Babylon in 586 BC

Ezekiel 10:18-19

18 Then the glory of the Lord moved away from the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. 19 The cherubim lifted their wings and ascended from the earth right before my eyes; the wheels were beside them as they went. The glory of the God of Israel was above them, and it stopped at the entrance to the eastern gate of the Lord's house.

Without the power and the presence of God, you're doomed.

Moses knew this, as he pleaded with God that if his presence wasn't going to move, then neither would Moses. Moses didn't want to move or go without God's presence.

Rabbit trail: Why did the presence depart through the eastern gate? In Revelation Jesus is supposed to return and touch down on the Mount of Olives, and then proceed to the city of Jerusalem and enter back into the city via the Eastern Gate.

When the Muslims took Jerusalem they sealed the Eastern Gate with 14-16 feet of concrete, and made the hillside in front of the gate a cemetery. What can a holy man not touch? A dead body. Would make you unclean to touch a body or a tomb.



The Eastern Gate to the Temple Mount, also called the Golden Gate.

When someone is out of the will of God, they normally are moving west to east. To return to God, you move east to west.

Psalm 103:12

¹²As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Next time we'll talk about the place of God being removed from the people.