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The Messiah, The Book of Mormon, and the Dead Sea Scrolls

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THE MESSIAH, THE BOOK OF MORMON, AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

For behold, did not Moses prophesy unto them concerning the coming of the Messiah, and that God should redeem his people? Yea, and even all the prophets who have prophesied ever since the world began—have they not spoken more or less concerning these things? (Mosiah 13:33)

Jews and Christians have long disagreed on the concept of the Messiah. The Hebrew term means “anointed one,” which is what *Christ* means in Greek. In the Old Testament, the term is most often applied to the kings of Israel and Judah.¹ To the Jews, therefore, the Messiah is the king who will restore the kingdom to Israel in the last days. To the Christians, the Messiah is the Son of God, a divine being who came to die to atone for the sins of the world and to bring salvation from death and hell.

The Nephite belief in a Messiah who would bring salvation through his death and resurrection dates from the early sixth century B.C. The plan of redemption was revealed to the prophet Lehi even before he left the Old World (1 Nephi 1:19; 10:4-11). Non-believers have sometimes criticized the Book of Mormon for placing New Testament beliefs in an Old Testament timeframe. The concept of resurrection through the atonement of the Messiah was one of the most prominent teachings of the pre-Christian Nephites (see 1 Nephi 19:7-10; Jarom 1:11; Mosiah 26:2; Alma

¹ 1 Samuel 2:35; 24:6, 10; 26:9, 11, 16, 23; 2 Samuel 1:14, 16; 19:21; 22:51; 23:1; 1 Chronicles 16:22; 2 Chronicles 6:42; Psalm 2:2; 18:50; 20:6; 45:7; 84:9; 89:20, 38, 51; 105:15; Lamentations 4:20; Habakkuk 3:13.

16:19; 21:9; 26:7; 27:28; Helaman 14:15-17).

Typical of Book of Mormon teachings about Christ is the following statement by Jacob:

Wherefore, beloved brethren, be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ, his Only Begotten Son, and ye may obtain a resurrection, according to the power of the resurrection which is in Christ, and be presented as the first-fruits of Christ unto God, having faith, and obtained a good hope of glory in him before he manifesteth himself in the flesh. And now, beloved, marvel not that I tell you these things; for why not speak of the atonement of Christ, and attain to a perfect knowledge of him, as to attain to the knowledge of a resurrection and the world to come? (Jacob 4:11-12)

Modern Christians, following the example of the New Testament, refer to many Old Testament “proof texts” to support their belief that Jesus was and is the Messiah. Most of these are quickly dismissed by Jews and by many Christian Bible scholars on the grounds that the original context of the passages is unrelated to their later use. Only Isaiah 53 has strong support as a prophecy of a savior-messiah to come.² Other Old Testament messianic prophecies cannot be clearly shown to foresee Christ’s atonement.

Some pre-Christian pseudepigrapha suggest a belief in a savior-messiah. But the relevant passages have typically been dismissed as later Christian interpolations. Early Jews and Christians exchanged recriminations about the scriptures. The Jews accused the Christians of adding verbiage to support their belief in Jesus, while some Christians accused the Jews of removing passages favorable to Jesus. The Book of Mormon, while prophetically

² See Abinadi’s use of Isaiah 53 in Mosiah 14-15.

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chastising Christians for their ingratitude toward the Jews for the scriptures (2 Nephi 29:4-6), notes that many “plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb” would be removed from biblical books (1 Nephi 13:32; read verses 29-40).

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The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls near Qumran in the mid-twentieth century brought to light the oldest known copies of Old Testament books³ and unfolded an array of other works, most of them previously unknown.

A messianic scroll from Cave 11, called 11QMelch or 11Q13 by scholars, casts Melchizedek in a divine saving role similar to that given to Jesus in the New Testament. Jesus is compared to Melchizedek in Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1, 10-11, 15, 17, 21. Melchizedek, whose name can mean “legitimate king,” is the archetypal king in the Old Testament and is therefore a fitting symbol of the Messiah.⁴

The Qumran scroll says that Melchizedek “will restore them, and proclaim liberty to them, relieving them [of the burden] of all their iniquities” (see Leviticus 25:10; Isaiah 61:1). It further speaks of the “expiation” (see Leviticus 29:9) and says that Melchizedek “will raise up the holy ones of El (God) for deeds of judgment.” The text identifies him with the God standing in the congregation of God in Psalm 82:1-2 and says that “Melchizedek will exact the ven[geance] of E[P’s] judgments” (see Isaiah 61:2).

The “time for Melchiz[edek]’s year of favor” (see Isaiah 61:2) is termed “the day [of salvation about w]hich [God] spoke

³ Some of the Dead Sea Scrolls were written in the mid-second century B.C., the latest just before A.D. 70.

⁴ In addition to his role as priest-king of Salem in Genesis 14:18-20, Melchizedek is mentioned in one of the “royal” psalms, Psalms 110:4. In the *Doctrine and Covenants*, we learn that Melchizedek’s priesthood is after “the order of the Only Begotten Son” (D&C 76:57; 107:2-4; 124:123).

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[through the mouth of Is]aiah the prophet, who said, [‘How] beautiful on (the) mountains are the feet of the hera[ld of good who proclaims salvatio]n, saying to Zion, “Your God [is king.”]”]” The mountains in this passage from Isaiah 52:7 are said to be the prophets, while “the herald i[s the one an]ointed of the spir[it about] whom Dan[iel] said: [‘ Until an anointed, a prince, (there will be) seven weeks’]” (from Daniel 9:25), while the herald “is the one about whom it is w[ritte]n, when [it says . . .] to comfo[rt the] m[ourners of Zion] to [in]struct them in all the ages of the wo[rld] in truth.”⁵

The latter reference is to Isaiah 61:2-3, the passage that Jesus cited when he proclaimed that he was the Messiah (Luke 4:16-21). It is significant that several references to it appear in the Melchizedek scroll. That scroll also appeals frequently to Leviticus 25 (which refers to the Jubilee) and to Isaiah 52. The interpretation of the mountains of Isaiah 52:7 as the prophets and the herald of good tidings as a Messiah figure is paralleled by Abinadi’s explanation of the same passage in Mosiah 12:20-21; 15:13-24, to which we shall return below.⁶

Other portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are even stronger in their support of the view that a knowledge of a savior-messiah was had in ancient Israel. An Aramaic scroll, 4Q246, is of particular interest because it contains concepts found in the angel Gabriel’s announcement of Christ’s birth in Luke 1 and even parallels some of the language of that chapter (see Table 2).⁷

⁵ For an in-depth study of this and related texts from Qumran, see Paul J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchireša’*, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 10 (Washington: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981). The translation used here is from pages 7-10 of Kobelski’s monograph.

⁶ See also the discussion in Chapter 21, “How Beautiful Upon the Mountains.”

⁷ The translation is from Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated* (2nd ed., Leiden: Brill, 1996), 138.

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Table 2. A Comparison of 4Q246 Column 2 and Luke 1.

4Q246 Column 2	Luke 1
1. He will be called son of God, and they will call him son of the Most High . . .	32. He . . . shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
5. His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all his paths in truth and uprigh[tness].	33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end . . .
6. The earth (will be) in truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease in the earth,	34 . . . that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
7. And all the cities will pay him homage. He is a great God among the gods (?).	
8. . . . His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom.	

Another messianic text that is of particular significance to Book of Mormon studies is 4Q521, also called 4QMessianic Apocalypse. The first portion of the text (which is the most complete) is shown in Table 3 (the column/line numbers have been added for reference).

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Table 3. The Messianic Apocalypse.

- 2.1 [for the hea]vens and the earth will listen to his Messiah,
2.2 [and all] that is in them will not turn away from the holy
precepts.
2.3 Be encouraged, you who are seeking the Lord in his
service! *Blank*
2.4 Will you not, perhaps, encounter the Lord in it all those
who hope in their heart?
2.5 For the Lord will observe the devout, and call the just by
name,
2.6 and upon the poor he will place his spirit, and the faithful
he will renew with his strength.
2.7 For he will honour the devout upon the throne of eternal
royalty,
2.8 freeing prisoners, giving sight to the blind, straightening
out the twisted.
2.9 Ever shall I cling to those who hope. In his mercy he will
jud[ge,]
2.10 and from no-one shall the fruit [of] good [deeds] be
delayed,
2.11 and the Lord will perform marvelous acts such as have not
existed, just as he sa[id]⁸
2.12 for he will heal the badly wounded and will make the dead
live, he will proclaim good news to the meek
2.13 give lavishly [to the need]y, lead the exiled and enrich the
hungry.⁹

Most of the elements found in this text are found in the
messianic passage in Isaiah 61:1-3, where we read of the Spirit,

⁸ The allusion is to Isaiah 48:7.

⁹ Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 394.

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anointing (becoming a messiah or “anointed one”), good tidings, broken heart, liberty for the captives and opening of the prison (all in verse 1), and joy (verse 3). Jesus quoted most of this passage in the synagogue at Nazareth and declared that it was fulfilled in him (Luke 4:16-21).

All of the elements found in the Dead Sea text are also found in the Book of Mormon. For example, the concept of the heavens and the earth listening to (obeying) the Messiah (Messianic Apocalypse 2.1) is reflected in the Book of Mormon title for Christ, “the Father of heaven and of earth” (see, for example, Helaman 14:12; 16:18).¹⁰

The idea of seeking the Lord (Messianic Apocalypse 2.3-4) is found in a number of Bible passages (see Deuteronomy 4:29; Isaiah 55:6; Acts 17:27). Note especially Isaiah 11:10 (cited in 2 Nephi 21:10) and Malachi 3:1 (cited in 3 Nephi 24:1), which seem to refer to the Messiah. Note also Jesus’ statement about seeking and finding (Matthew 7:7-8), which he repeated to the Nephites (3 Nephi 14:7-8). Of particular importance is the admonition of Moroni, “And now, I would commend you to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written” (Ether 12:41). Messianic Apocalypse 2.3-4 ties those who seek the Lord with those “who hope in their heart”. Three passages (3 Nephi 9:20; Moroni 7:43-44; 8:26) promise the Holy Ghost to those who approach God with a broken heart, reminding us of a similar promise in Messianic Apocalypse 2.6. In the latter, we read that the Lord will renew the faithful by his strength. This idea is found in Alma 44:3-4 and Alma 48:15 (see also Alma 50:22).

The freeing of the prisoners (Messianic Apocalypse 2.8) is found in Isaiah 11:9 (cited in 1 Nephi 21:9) and Isaiah 61:1, as noted above. The latter was probably alluded to in Helaman 5:11, where we read of “the tidings of redemption” through the

¹⁰ Other examples are discussed below. Compare the words addressed by Jesus to the Father, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (3 Nephi 13:10; Matthew 5:10).

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Redeemer.

More important, however, is that the Book of Mormon contains a series of discourses and essays in which clusters of these same elements appear. We shall examine each of these, referring to the line in the Qumran text where the same concepts are found.

LEHI'S ADMONITIONS

In his old age, the Book of Mormon prophet Lehi gathered his family to give advice and blessings (2 Nephi 1-4). In 2 Nephi 2, speaking of the "redemption [that] cometh in and through the Holy Messiah" (2 Nephi 2:6), he declared that "the Holy Messiah . . . layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise" (2 Nephi 2:8). Messianic Apocalypse 2.12 says the Messiah will resurrect the dead, while 2.6 speaks of his Spirit.

Lehi noted that the Messiah's "sacrifice for sin" was for "all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (2 Nephi 2:7), reminding us of those who "are seeking the Lord" and "hope in their heart" in Messianic Apocalypse 2.4. A short while later, Lehi seems to have classified himself as one of these when he said, "my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite" (2 Nephi 4:32). Also significant is Lehi's use of the term "holy messiah," which, while it is found nowhere in the Bible, is found in one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, 1Q30.

NEPHI'S TEACHINGS

Nephi wrote of "the things which [his father Lehi] spake by the power of the Holy Ghost, which power he received by faith on the Son of God—and the Son of God was the Messiah who should come—I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself

unto the children of men” (1 Nephi 10:17).

Consequently, Nephi experienced the same vision as his father and wrote of Christ to come in terms similar to those of his father. In the passage just quoted, we note the reference to the Spirit (see 1 Nephi 12:18), as in Messianic Apocalypse 2.6, and to those who “seek him.” This latter is expressed in Messianic Apocalypse 2.3-4 in terms of those who “hope in their heart,” who seek and find the Lord. This idea is found in 1 Nephi 2:19, “Thou hast sought me diligently, with lowliness of heart.”¹¹ The concept is based on Deuteronomy 4:29. As we saw above, the theme of seeking and finding the Lord is of frequent occurrence in the scriptures. In 1 Nephi 10:19, Nephi combined it with mention of the Spirit. In another place (2 Nephi 27:30), Nephi wrote of the meek, the poor, and of rejoicing, all concepts found in the Messianic Apocalypse 2.4, 6, 13.

Nephi wrote that the faithful “shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be” (1 Nephi 13:37). Being “lifted up” typically refers to resurrection, which is found in Messianic Apocalypse 2.12, as here, in connection with glad tidings. There is an allusion to the kingdom in Messianic Apocalypse 2.7.

Other concepts common to Nephi’s writings and the Messianic Apocalypse are the Lord’s strengthening of the obedient (1 Nephi 17:3; Messianic Apocalypse 2.6) and the Messiah’s healing power (2 Nephi 26:9; Messianic Apocalypse 2.8, 12). Nephi is the first Book of Mormon writer to call Christ “the Father of heaven and of earth” (2 Nephi 25:12), a title reminding us that Messianic Apocalypse 2.1 indicates that the Messiah is obeyed in heaven and on earth.

¹¹ Compare “the meek and the poor in heart” in 2 Nephi 28:13.

JACOB'S TEACHINGS

Jacob frequently referred to his father's teachings in his discourses and writings.¹² One of these discourses is found in 2 Nephi 6-10, another in Jacob 2-3.

In his first discourse, Jacob noted that Christ would "die for all men, that all men might become subject unto him" (2 Nephi 9:5). This reminds us of Messianic Apocalypse 2.1, which says that "the heavens and the earth will listen to [obey] his Messiah." Jacob then goes on to speak of the resurrection and the "infinite atonement" (2 Nephi 9:6-7, 12).

Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise. (2 Nephi 9:8)

Like his father Lehi, Jacob made specific mention of the Spirit. At the conclusion of the discourse, he said, "Wherefore, may God raise you from death by the power of the resurrection, and also from everlasting death by the power of the atonement, that ye may be received into the eternal kingdom of God, that ye may praise him through grace divine. Amen" (2 Nephi 10:25). As noted above, an allusion to the kingdom is found in Messianic Apocalypse 2.7.

¹² See the author's article, "The Influence of Lehi's Admonitions on the Teachings of his son Jacob," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/2 (Fall 1994): 34-48.

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In his second discourse, Jacob likewise followed his father's example, speaking of "the pure in heart, and the broken heart" (Jacob 2:10), and dwelling on the resurrection to be brought about by the atonement of Christ (Jacob 4:11-12). After recording that discourse, he wrote more about the resurrection (Jacob 6:9) and, again following his father's lead, spoke of Christ as having "power, both in heaven and in earth; and also, that Christ shall come" (Jacob 7:14).

KING BENJAMIN'S DISCOURSE

One of the most famous discourses in the Book of Mormon is the one delivered by king Benjamin at the temple in Zarahemla (Mosiah 2-6). He announced,

For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases. (Mosiah 3:5)

The miracles enumerated by king Benjamin are essentially the same as those found in Messianic Apocalypse 2.8, 12. Also of significance is the fact that the Messiah "reigneth," evidently in heaven, as in Messianic Apocalypse 2.1 (compare the "throne of eternal royalty" in 2.7). But the parallel becomes even stronger in Mosiah 3:8, where king Benjamin said, "And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary" (Mosiah 3:8; cf. 5:15). This message, he said, brought "great joy" to all those who believed (Mosiah 3:13).

KING BENJAMIN'S DISCOURSE

Some of these concepts were repeated by the people's liturgical words when they asked to receive a forgiveness of sins through "the atoning blood of Christ . . . who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men" (Mosiah 4:2).

These parallels alone suggest that the ideas common to the Messianic Apocalypse and king Benjamin's discourse are more than coincidental. The case becomes stonger as we read that king Benjamin asked his people to "take upon you the name of Christ" (Mosiah 5:8). "Whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ" (Mosiah 5:9). He exhorted his listeners to "hear and know the voice by which ye shall be called, and also, the name by which he shall call you" (Mosiah 5:12). The parallel with Messianic Apocalypse 2.5, in which the Lord calls the just "by name" is striking.

This new name was to be taken into the hearts of Benjamin's audience (Mosiah 5:11-12), which had been "changed through faith on his name" (Mosiah 15:7, 13-14). Here we have a parallel with those "who hope in their heart" and who "encounter the Lord" (Messianic Apocalypse 2.4). Significantly, the concept of the change of heart and of being "called by name" are found in close proximity in both texts.

ABINADI'S MESSAGE

At about the same time that king Benjamin was delivering his message to a very receptive audience in the city of Zarahemla, the Nephites in the land of Nephi were rejecting a similar message from a prophet named Abinadi. After quoting the "suffering servant" messianic prophecy from Isaiah 53 (Mosiah 14), Abinadi

spoke of Christ to come (Mosiah 15).¹³

Like Nephi and king Benjamin, Abinadi termed the Messiah “the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth” (Mosiah 15:4). Coming to earth, he would suffer himself “to be mocked, and scourged, and cast out, and disowned by his people,” and would work “many mighty miracles” (Mosiah 15:5-6).

Nevertheless, “he shall be led, yea, even as Isaiah said, as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Yea, even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain” (Mosiah 15:6-7). This would break “the bands of death” and provide a resurrection for mankind (Mosiah 15:8-9, 20-22, 24-26; 16:7-8).

Abinadi also mentioned the “kingdom of God” (Mosiah 15:11; see Messianic Apocalypse 2.7) and spoke of the “good tidings” mentioned in Isaiah 52:7 and in Messianic Apocalypse 2.12 (Mosiah 15:18).¹⁴

After his death, Abinadi’s message was echoed by Alma the Elder at the Waters of Mormon, where he taught “concerning that which was to come,¹⁵ and also concerning the resurrection of the dead, and the redemption of the people, which was to be brought to pass through the power, and sufferings, and death of Christ, and his resurrection and ascension into heaven” (Mosiah 18:2).

THE TEACHINGS OF ALMA THE YOUNGER

Alma the younger, though rebellious for a time, was greatly influenced by the teachings of his father. In his first

¹³ One of the Dead Sea Scrolls, 4Q183, a small fragmentary text, may have relied on Isaiah 53:5 when it speaks of someone who “atoned for their sins through their sufferings.” See Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 213.

¹⁴ Abinadi’s use of Isaiah 52 in connection with the messianic prophecy in Isaiah 53 teaches us that there is a direct tie between the two.

¹⁵ See Chapter 35, “That Which is to Come,” in this volume, which explains how this term is used of Christ in the Book of Mormon.

THE TEACHINGS OF ALMA THE YOUNGER

recorded major address, he said,

Yea, thus saith the Spirit: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand; yea, the Son of God cometh in his glory, in his might, majesty, power, and dominion. Yea, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, that the Spirit saith: Behold the glory of the King of all the earth; and also the King of heaven shall very soon shine forth among all the children of men. (Alma 5:50; see also 7:9)

The idea of the Messiah as king of heaven and earth (compare Messianic Apocalypse 2.1) was later reflected in the teachings of Alma's missionary companion Amulek, who called him "the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth, and all things which in them are; he is the beginning and the end," who should "come into the world to redeem his people" and to bring about redemption, that they might "rise from the dead" (Alma 11:38-42). Alma had spoken of the joy that comes from knowing of the resurrection to be provided by Christ (Alma 4:14), thus reflecting the ideas in Messianic Apocalypse 2.12. His teachings also parallel the calling of the just by name in Messianic Apocalypse 2.5:

Behold, I say unto you, that the good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ; and if ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd, to the name by which ye are called, behold, ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd. (Alma 5:38)¹⁶

In words similar to Messianic Apocalypse 2.4, Alma spoke to the Zoramites of the "poor in heart" and the "lowly in heart,"

¹⁶ Compare Alma 12:30, 33, which includes an admonishment to "not harden your hearts."

indicating that they are blessed (Alma 32:3-4, 8, 12). He also taught them about the redemption and resurrection to be brought by the Messiah (Alma 33:22).

Some of Alma's choicest comments were reserved for the admonitions delivered to his three sons. He spoke of the resurrection brought by the atonement of Christ (Alma 40:2-3; 41:2) and tied it to the Lord's deliverance of Israel from Egypt and other instances of "bondage and captivity" (Alma 36:28). In this, we are reminded that the primary meaning of *redemption* in Old Testament passages is to deliver from slavery or prison, as in Messianic Apocalypse 2.8 (see Mormon 9:13).¹⁷

Alma also stressed the importance of being "lowly in heart":

Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; teach them to humble themselves and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls. (Alma 37:33-34)

Like Messianic Apocalypse 2.12, Alma spoke of the "glad tidings of salvation" associated with the coming of the Messiah (Alma 39:15-16, 19).

CONCLUSION

It seems unlikely that Jesus would have been so well received by his Jewish disciples had he not conformed to their concept of the Messiah. Some of the recently-released Dead Sea

¹⁷ Book of Mormon prophets, beginning with Lehi, taught that Christ redeems from the chains and captivity of the devil. See 2 Nephi 1:13, 18, 21, 23, 27-29; 3:5; 9:8-10, 12, 19, 26, 45-46.

CONCLUSION

Scrolls show that at least some Jews of that time expected a Messiah who would be a divine savior, performing many miracles and bringing the resurrection. In this context, the pre-Christian teachings of a Messiah found in the Book of Mormon are perfectly reasonable. We can agree with Alma's words addressed to his son Corianton, whose faith was weakening: "Is it not as easy at this time for the Lord to send his angel to declare these glad tidings unto us as unto our children, or as after the time of his coming?" (Alma 39:19).