

**Genesis 49:9** - Judah is a young lion;<sup>1</sup> from the prey, my son, you have always been successful. He stooped down, he lying down as a lion and as an old lion, who dares rouse him up?<sup>2</sup>

**v. 10** - The scepter [ a symbol of rulership ] shall not depart from Judah [ there is an interregnum on the throne of Judah between the capture of Zedekiah in 586 B.C. and the 2d Advent of Messiah ], nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh [ שִׁלֹה (Shiloh): peacemaker ] comes [ 2d Advent of Messiah/Christ ]. Unto Him shall the regathering of the people be [ Israelites regathered into the “Promised Land” ].

**v. 11** - Binding His foal unto the vine and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine; He washes his garments in wine, and His robes in the blood of grapes. [ Idioms for the tremendous prosperity to be enjoyed in the millennial kingdom. ]

**v. 12** - His eyes shall be darkened with wine, and His teeth white with milk. [ Further idioms for prosperity. ]

28. Over the course of 49 chapters in Genesis, we have followed the divine counterattack against Lucifer’s lie to Ishah in Eden.
29. Through procreation, **Adam** and Eve will begin the bloodline of Messiah with the birth of **Seth** who will sire the Adamic Line down to **Shem**. (Genesis 5:3–32)
30. Shem’s son **Arphaxad** will father the Semitic Line that runs down to Abram whose name is changed to **Abraham**. (Genesis 11:10–30)
31. Abraham will narrow the Messianic bloodline to the Jewish Line through **Isaac/Israel**, which will be narrowed further and finally to the House of David. (1 Chronicles 1:34; 2:3–15)

<sup>1</sup> This is a reference to great power, vigor, and ability. It is one of the titles of Jesus Christ which is recorded in Revelation 5:5, “... behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David ...”

<sup>2</sup> Prophetic of the fifth cycle of discipline inflicted on the Southern Kingdom of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. and continuing to the Second Advent of Messiah/Christ.

# Is Jesus the Messiah?

## Christmas

December 28, 2014

### Tribe of Judah, House of David

1. With the death of Jacob/Israel, our search for the identity of the Messiah will be confined to one tribe. The leadership of the Israelites is now confined to the tribe of Judah.
2. In his deathbed blessing to each of his twelve sons, Jacob gives a character study of each. Reuben is the firstborn and under normal circumstances would, through the system of primogeniture, have been the one designated to command the leadership tribe.
3. Instead, the wisdom of Jacob selected the forth-born, Judah, to lead the Israelites. To get the politics of this decision, imagine a family containing twelve male siblings and their father on his deathbed selects the fourth in line to have authority over the other eleven.
4. In addition, there are some key words in Jacob's comments to Judah that have messianic overtones. **(1)** In verse 49:9, Jacob addresses Judah as a lion, an animal assigned in Scripture with several leadership attributes,<sup>3</sup> **(2)** The word "Shiloh" is significant which carries the idea of universal peace which Messiah will institute following His Second Advent, and **(3)** the sentence "Unto Him shall the regathering of the people be." It is the Messiah that will call the people into the "Promised Land."

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<sup>3</sup> "Lion. Figurative. The strength (Judges 14:18), courage (2 Samuel 14:10), and ferocity (Genesis 49:9; Numbers 24:9), of the lion was proverbial. Hence the lion was symbolical of Israel (Numbers 24:9), of the Tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:9); of Christ (Revelation 5:5)" (Merrill F. Unger, "Lion," in *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 3d ed. [Chicago: Moody Press, 1966], 662).

5. Additional commentary about the lion and scepter is found in Moses' Book of Numbers. Moses quotes Balaam's prophecies regarding the millennial kingdom beginning with the Lord's deliverance of the Israelites at the Second Advent in:

**Numbers 24:9** - "He crouches, he lies down as a lion, and as a lion, who dares rouse him? Blessed is everyone who blesses you, and cursed is everyone who curses you."

6. The Messiah's leadership is demonstrated by reference to the scepter in:

**Numbers 25:17** - "I see Him [ **Messiah/Christ** ], but not now; I behold Him, but not near [ **First Advent** ]; a star shall come forth from Jacob [ **reference to the virgin birth** ], a scepter shall rise from Israel [ **2d Advent** ], and shall crush through the forehead of Moab, and tear down all the sons of Sheth."

7. This is a powerful prophecy of the Messiah/Christ's return to deliver Israel made even more dramatic since it came from the lips of an unbeliever named Balaam:

Balaam, a heathen diviner who lived at P  thor, which is said, in Deuteronomy 23:4, to have been a city of Mesopotamia. Although doubtless belonging to the Midianites, he possessed some knowledge of the true God. The Israelites having encamped in the plain of Moab (B.C. 1401), Balak, the king of Moab, entered into a league with the Midianites against them, and sent messages to Balaam with "the rewards of divination in their hands" (Numbers 22:5ff). Balaam seems to have had some misgivings as to the lawfulness of their request, for he invited them to remain over night, that he might know how God would regard it. These misgivings were confirmed by the express prohibition of God upon his journey.<sup>4</sup>

8. Balaam's prophecy was divinely precise as all legitimate prophecies must be and serves as a divinely designed confirmation of the inerrancy of Scripture:

<sup>4</sup> Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, 119.

The theme of this verse is Israel has a coming deliverer. This keenly debated verse has been debased by some, devalued by others, and allegorized by still others. For our part, in agreement with many in the early church and in early Judaism, we believe this text speaks unmistakably of the coming of the Messiah. That this prophecy should come from one who was unworthy makes the prophecy all the more dramatic and startling.

Indeed, that Balaam, who was none of God's, could speak of the coming of the Messiah, who is all of God, is a fascinating aspect of the biblical doctrine of inerrancy. The truth of the Scripture could never be dependent on the worthiness of the writer or the personal piety of the speaker. Else we would have gradations in inspiration and shadings in trustworthiness. I say this reverently but strongly; the words of Balaam the pagan mantic, *when he was speaking under the control of the Holy Spirit of God*, were as sure as the words of the Savior Jesus in a red-letter edition of the New Testament. Balaam was unworthy of the words that passed through his lips, even as others were unworthy of the role they played in the salvation history of the Bible. But the words were not compromised; it was the Spirit who gave him utterance.<sup>5</sup>

9. Again prophecy emerges, this time from a heathen that professes the future arrival of Messiah/Christ imputed with authority and power to restore Israel and fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant of the promised kingdom.
10. But we still have the duty of identifying the specific person that holds the title of Messiah/Christ. This brings us to the initial monarch of Israel, the lion of the tribe of Judah: King David.
11. David is the recipient of another in the series of unconditional covenants issued by the Lord. This one is the Davidic Covenant found in:

**2 Samuel 7:12** - And it shall come to pass, when your days have been fulfilled [ **the physical death of David** ], and you will lie down [ **burial awaiting the resurrection** ] with your fathers, that I will cause to raise up your seed after you [ **Jesus the Messiah/Christ** ], who shall come forth from your body. Therefore, I will cause to be established His kingdom [ **the millennial reign of Christ** ].

<sup>5</sup> Ronald B. Allen, "Numbers," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, gen. ed. Frank E. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 2:909.

**2 Samuel 7:16** - “Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”

12. Among the hallowed patriarchs of Israel, David ranks among the most highly revered including Moses, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. David was considered the most admired among all the kings of Israel.