

Interview with Jerry Pollock, author of *Messiah Interviews: Belonging to God*

Today, Tyler R. Tichelaar of Reader Views is pleased to interview Jerry Pollock, who is here to talk about his new book "Messiah Interviews: Belonging to God."

Jerry Pollock is the author of seventy-five scientific publications. His background includes both a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in Pharmacy from the University of Toronto, a Ph.D. in Biophysics from the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel, and Postdoctoral training in Microbiology at the New York University School of Medicine. Dr. Pollock is currently Professor Emeritus in the Oral Biology and Pathology Department in the School of Dental Medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook on Long Island. Jerry's first writer of the arts book, "Divinely Inspired: Spiritual Awakening of a Soul," was a spiritual memoir originally published in 2003. The second edition of "Divinely Inspired" will be reissued in Paperback on Jan. 1, 2009. His 'not so fictional' novel, "Messiah Interviews: Belonging to God," due out also on Jan. 1, 2009, is Jerry's way of giving back to the Creator.

Historically, Jerry was born in Toronto. Jerry's childhood, teenage, and young adult years were emotionally ravaged in an unloving, non-nurturing environment. Despite an unyielding anxiety and a neurotic repression of feelings, he succeeded in academics.

The beginnings of Jerry's interest in scientific research and a Canadian scholarship to study abroad caused him to leave Toronto in 1966 for Israel. Jerry completed his Ph.D. in Biophysics in 1969 at the Weizmann Institute of Science. After finishing his doctorate, he left Toronto for the United States. He wound up as a Postdoctoral Fellow and subsequently as an Assistant Professor of Microbiology at the New York University School of Medicine. In 1973, he moved to Long Island to join the faculty of the Oral Biology & Pathology Department of the School of Dental Medicine at Stony Brook University. In 1982, Jerry was promoted to full professor, and in 1983 Jerry married Marcia. In 1990, he became an American citizen, but the following year Jerry suffered his first bout of Bipolar Disorder at age 50. In 1995, the Manic Depression forced him to take a five year long term disability from Stony Brook, but he returned in August of 2000 once again to take up his professorial duties. In July 2006, Jerry retired and became Professor Emeritus. As stated, Jerry has published seventy-five articles in peer reviewed scientific journals and books, and at one time held seven U.S. Patents. Unusual miraculous events of Divine intervention, described in both Divinely Inspired and Messiah Interviews, have led Jerry to a spiritual awakening and freedom from Bipolar Disorder. Today, Jerry is seeking inner peace by living each day with spiritual meaning in the Image of his Creator. Jerry is married to Marcia, his bashert or destined one. They reside in Florida.

Tyler: Welcome, Jerry. I'm happy to have you join me today. To begin, will you explain the title of "Messiah Interviews" and the basic premise of the book?

Jerry: I'm very glad to share this interview with you, Tyler. By way of introduction to answer your first question, I shall borrow a wonderful quote from a fellow author, Jack Miles, in his book, "God a Biography." "We have been living with God for centuries. Before meeting Him, absolutely everyone, has heard of Him. Of whom else can that

claim be made?” I would humbly suggest an “almost as much answer” to the author’s question—the “Messiah.” The Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament as many know it as, suggests that before Creation, God knew the name of the Messiah. Therefore, only God knows the true identity of the Messiah and He isn’t telling, at least not yet. I say this respectfully to the Christian world, who believe that Jesus is the Messiah. And he may well be.

In the “Messiah Interviews”, I write from a Jewish perspective where the answer to the identity of the Messiah is uncertain after thousands of years of searching and yearning. In my book, I took the liberty of assigning a “potentially to be” Messiah to the two main characters, Yinnon and Yoseph. I dared go even further by having one of the protagonists, Yoseph, be interviewed to be the Messiah by famous biblical characters—the angel Gabriel, Methuselah, Chanoch, Seth, King David, Moses, Jacob, Abraham, and the Hebrew prophet Isaiah.

The interviews take place in the Third Temple in Heaven and in the future Third Temple on Earth. The Third Temple and the Messiah are intimately connected in God’s plan for humankind at the End of Days. I had fun writing the “Messiah Interviews” because it afforded me the opportunity to delve into my own imperfections as well as empower readers or listeners to use their free will to decide if they wished to improve their characters in this lifetime in order to be admitted to a futuristic Messianic world, a second Garden of Eden. If you read the Hebrew Bible, thirteen Hebrew prophets over centuries of biblical time spoke about and prophesied the destiny of a coming Messiah, Third Temple, and Messianic Age. The Hebrew Bible also talks about seven shepherds or princes, Methuselah, Chanoch, Seth, King David, Moses, Jacob, and Abraham, who will assist and stand by the Messiah’s side in the End Times.

One more point before I get off of my soap box. The purpose of writing the “Messiah Interviews” was also to make the Bible come alive, while at the same time allowing readers or listeners what I hope is an informative peek into the inseparable relationship of biblical history, our modern world, and the coming Messianic Age of God and His miracles. The End Times are really about an incredible Age of God and they are about Hope and not Armageddon. King Messiah will help God to make the Messianic Age a reality because God has always desired this world and our future destined world to be a covenant venture between Him and humankind. My apologies, Tyler. My wife always tells me I’m long winded.

Tyler: Before we go further, Jerry, will you clarify for our Christian readers what you mean by the Hebrew Bible—how does it differ from the Christian one, other than the obvious difference that it does not contain the New Testament?

Jerry: Well for starters, there is a difference between the Hebrew Bible and the adopted term of Christianity, the Old Testament. In the Hebrew Bible, the Books of the Prophets precede the Books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ruth etc. In the Old Testament, the Books of the Prophets are moved after the Books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ruth etc. One explanation given for the change in sequencing is that it permits an easier transition to the New Testament whose focus is on Jesus, who ‘himself’ is considered a great Prophet. When Christians speak about God, they see Him through the Trinity. In the New Testament, Jesus is the Way and represents connection to and salvation in God. In the Hebrew Bible, the ‘stature’ of their greatest Prophet, Moses is toned down because connection to God is direct whether you are in a synagogue or talking to God while taking a walk.

Jews consider Christianity more of a faith based religion, like Islam, and this comes out in the writings of the New Testament. Please, I am not aligning Christianity with Islam by this statement. Judaism has the Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament, written by Moses while he was up on Mount Sinai communicating with God. In Orthodox Judaism, God dictates the Torah to Moses. In Conservative Judaism, the Prophets canonize the entire Hebrew Bible and in Reform Judaism, the Bible is written by ordinary but wise men who lived at the time. The Torah came in the wilderness of Sinai even before the State of Israel was formed. The Ten Commandments are the core of the Torah. Everyone that I have ever talked with, including my wife Marcia, believe that Judaism is a religion and it is. However, my personal belief is that the Ten Commandments represent the spirituality of humankind. I believe we would long ago have faced our Armageddon without the Ten Commandments, but we can’t rerun the experiment and do a double blind scientific study. The New Testament follows the basic tenets of the Ten Commandments. Radical Islam claims the Ten Commandments are a curse on the Jews. Well this opens up a lot of doors, like murder of innocent people.

While Moses was up on Mount Sinai, he also was instructed in the Oral Law or Oral Torah, which was passed down orally from teacher to student through generations of Jews, until it was written down in the Mishnah and the Talmud and elsewhere. Then came the great sage and biblical scholar, Maimonides, who deciphered out 613 Commandments from the Torah that he represented as brief statements of Law. The Mishnah and Talmud are not just one book but are composed of multiple volumes and they explain these brief Moses written Torah Laws in depth. Think of the 613 Commandments as the placement of the silverware, napkins, plates, candles, flowers on a banquet size dinner table for many guests. The Mishnah is the dinner table explaining what each item is and how it is to be used in our civilized world. However, there would be chaos for guests at the meal unless there was some kind of arrangement order on the table. That’s where the Talmud comes in. It brings order and further insight into the detailed explanations of the Mishnah. One could write a treatise on what a fork is.

Why is all this important? Because I wanted your readers to understand that there are differences among Jews just as there are among Christians. Orthodox Judaism follows the 613 Commandments and many Orthodox Jews feel that you can't be a Jew unless you do so, even though half of the 613 apply only to the laws of the Temple. From the writings of the New Testament, you would not get any impression of division among Christians, but we all know they exist. In Catholicism, Jesus is the Son of God. The religion of Judaism I believe was laid down and enforced by these 613 Commandments of the Oral Torah or Oral Law. The spirituality of Judaism, the Ten Commandments, was incorporated into the religion of Judaism. When the First and Second Temples were lost in ancient days, the Prophets disappeared along with God, and they were replaced by Rabbis. The Rabbis felt that now that God had returned to be the God of Heaven and no longer actively the God of Heaven and Earth, the religion of Judaism would be the way for people to reach a God whom they never met. Judaism is a religion of commandments, laws, and statutes. It is not a faith based religion. So much so that only about 30 % of Jews believe in God. In Christianity and Islam, we are closer to 90 %.

Some of my ramblings are discussed in the "Messiah Interviews." With the focus of the book being on the End of Days, we see that the apocalyptic ending to the world follows similar but not identical forecasts in both the New and Old Testaments. In the New Testament, it is Jesus that returns to battle the antichrist and save humankind. Jesus is the Messiah. In the Old Testament, there is no antichrist although I personally believe in such a satanic human being. The name Jesus is not found in the Hebrew Bible and the Messiah must be a descendant of the Tribe of Judah and the lineage of King David. There is some confusion among scholars whether Jesus is from the Tribe of Judah. It depends upon whether you believe he was born in Bethlehem or in around the hills of Nazareth. No disrespect intended. Also, in the Hebrew Bible, the lineage of King David stops at the seventh son of Elvenai, Anani. In the New Testament, Jesus is shown to be a descendant of Anani with approximately 300 years between the two.

I don't want to simplify here. There are many differences between the two bibles in terms of the End of Days and the Messiah. See the Gospels and the Book of Revelations and compare to the writings of the Hebrew Bible. It was impossible for me to put all of this in the book. I'm giving your reader more details here, but remember we all have opinions. I will put out one important suggestion to your readers. Be open. A biblical commentator said the following. 'Even the most objective people have blind spots where their beliefs are concerned.' I do but when I do, I now stop and think. Hey wait a minute, I say. Let me at least read or listen to this opposing thought or opinion and then I'll junk it. Just kidding.

Tyler: Jerry, will you define the "Messiah Interviews" for us? Is it fiction or non-fiction, spiritual, religious, fantasy etc.?

Jerry: The book officially is classified as fiction, but it is actually a blend of fiction and nonfiction where Yoseph the main character and narrator is actually me. The interviews that Yoseph has with biblical characters are a figment of my imagination. However, Joseph's responses are what I have gleaned over ten years of climbing God's spiritual ladder. I'm still climbing as we speak, and falling down as I proceed up. Improving your character is like the game I played as a child, "Snakes and Ladders." As a metaphor, you climb or ascend the spiritual ladder when you make good moral choices and behave in a Holy manner, and you descend with the snake when you make bad or evil moral choices. Kind of like Eve in the Garden of Eden being enticed by Satan the talking snake or serpent.

In the game, it's a random toss of the dice to land on either the ladder going up or the snake going down, but in life, it's not random. It's free will and the choices you make will determine your future. God holds you accountable for acting on your decisions and what's in your heart. There is no end of the game in spirituality because God created the human race as imperfect. We keep striving. He offers us tests in life to allow us to improve our character. The brass ring is admittance into the Messianic Age. My Tai Chi teacher speaks about the Indian Sanskrit term, sat sung, which means a meeting or gathering of truth in order to find chit, your soul consciousness, and then be able to live in anand, in bliss. The "Messiah Interviews" is classified as a spiritual or religious fiction although I like to think it is much more than this. I consider the book spiritual not religious because I've always considered the Ten Commandments as the spirituality core of the Jewish religion or any religion or non-faith.

The "Messiah Interviews" is about Divine morality, not human morality. It's hard for me to answer simple questions with simple answers. I am a professor and this is the way I taught students. I wanted to stimulate them to think and not just be automatons who study the materials to pass examinations.

Tyler: Tell us about the main character, why he is interviewed, and why he might make a good Messiah?

Jerry: The main character is totally flawed, but at least he realizes it. There are some in this world who don't. He is a sinner but over and over again, he becomes a repentant sinner to crawl up the spiritual ladder. His time in the womb, birth, infant, toddler, child, youth, adult, are times of suffering from anxiety, panic, migraines, repressed rage, shame, inferiority, ugliness, rejection, and clinical depression. However, he becomes a feeling human being in the process. From regression and discovery of an unwanted pregnancy to childhood and adulthood neurosis, research scientist and University professor, Primal Therapy to lift his neurosis, Bipolar Disorder and suicide

attempts to help him find compassion for the parts of society we like to ignore and abandon, and unusual and miraculous Divine Providence intervention into his life, Yoseph has charted his way through life, realizing after 66 years of his 67 that all of his life's experience are actually a preparation for a higher purpose.

More often than not, we don't know how to connect the dots. If we are fortunate to discover our spiritual missions, we realize that all of our experiences are essential to the final goal. Yoseph at first thinks that he has found his mission—to bring awareness to God's Third Temple and the Messianic Age. And so he succeeds in obtaining a 501 (c) (3) tax exempt nonprofit corporation, the Shechinah Third Temple, Inc. *Shechinah* in Hebrew means Divine Presence. It is tempting on my part to conclude that this is what brought Yoseph to the attention of God, and through God the choice to be interviewed to be the Messiah. However, more likely God has this in mind even while Yoseph is in his mother's womb. Tyler, I don't want to spoil the storyline for your readers or listeners. I'll just say that unusual spiritual experiences of Yoseph and his best friend Yinnon lead him to believe that he has been chosen on high possibly to be the Messiah. He definitely knows that he and his family are connected somehow, so he actively pursues greatness when given the opportunity to be interviewed in Heaven.

At first, his own neurotic ego spurs him on to become the Messiah. When confronted by the biblical interviewers who can read his mind, he reluctantly admits this because they will see through any lies. As the interviews proceed, he realizes that he wants to become the Messiah as much for God as he does for himself. In orthodox Jewish *chassidic* terms, Joseph becomes a *benoni*, the intermediate man, who is not perfectly righteous but is nevertheless righteous. He cannot eliminate his evil inclination, but he can and continues to subdue it as much as he possibly can.

Noteworthy, God chooses individuals with troubled pasts, because their pasts humble them and you need humility to lead. A leader without spirituality inspires but a spiritual leader empowers. In the "Messiah Interviews," the biblical characters are quick to point out Yoseph's faults. However, Yoseph sometimes respectfully and sometimes disrespectfully turns the tables and points out their faults. It all makes for interesting and fun exchanges and demonstrates human characteristics and emotions. Whew! There I go again babbling along. I was like this in the writing of the "Messiah Interviews."

Tyler: Jerry, you mentioned previously that Yoseph is a fictional version of yourself. What is fictionalized and what parts of Yoseph do you compare to yourself?

Jerry: I knew that this statement you cite was going to get me in trouble. Very perceptive of you Tyler. I need to emphasize that I am writing a fictional novel. The problem is that it's 'not so fictional' as I share many of the same traits with Yoseph. Let's be clear to your readers, Yoseph is a fantasy. However, I have to admit that it would be interesting to be Yoseph answering all the probing questions of the Messiah Interviews in real life today. Fortunately, I can do this in the book but of course not in real life. God will determine the identity of the Messiah at the proper time. One more fantasy. My middle initial, 'J', stands for Joseph. Yoseph did have some unusual spiritual experiences. I believe your readers will find them fascinating. I probably have not answered your question but I don't want to spoil your readers' fun. In the end, they can decide on Yoseph and the storyline. I believe every writer shares a part of himself in his characters. It makes for more interesting reading.

Tyler: I understand several biblical personalities are interviewed in the book. While most of them are personalities from the Bible I'm familiar with, I am not familiar with Chanoch. Will you explain who this is?

Jerry: Chanoch is one of the seven shepherds destined to accompany the Messiah at the End of Days. You might say they are advisors to the Messiah. He is the father of Methuselah and the son of Yered. He was 365 years old when God took him alive from this earth to heaven. Sometimes, biblical humans have more than one name. I'm not sure but he may also go by the name Enoch.

Tyler: Yes, in the Christian Bible, Methuselah's father is Enoch. He is barely mentioned in the Bible other than to say God took him alive from this earth to heaven but I understand Jewish traditions typically embellish or have more information about many biblical characters beyond what is in the bible. Will you tell us more about these traditions surrounding people from the bible, especially Enoch?

Jerry: The stories in the Bible reflect what's going to happen in the future. Jacob and the speckled cows is also telling us about the science of Genetics coming in the twentieth century. In the Seven Days of Creation, the animal species prepares us for the science of Microbiology thousands of years later. The wars that are fought in the Bible are forecasts of who are our enemies today and in the future. The characters in the Bible are really you and I and everyone else. God made humans to be imperfect and I am just beginning to accept myself for who I am. If you don't accept yourself with all your imperfections, you'll never love yourself. And if you never love yourself, you'll never be able to love someone else or feel compassion. The same intellectual and emotional character traits are in us, as were depicted in our biblical figures. We cannot perform miracles, but it is prophesied in the Hebrew Bible that God will once again.

To answer your question Tyler. The traditions surrounding people from the bible were appropriately different for the times, but in their essence they are really not different at all. The horse and the car are distinctly different but they both get people to where they want to go. Belief or non-belief in God is still with us. We still have good and bad leaders and good and bad humans. The Israelites could not follow the Ten Commandments and neither can we. Yes, we have progressed dramatically with technology, but spiritually we progress inch by inch. The Hebrew Bible set civilized countries to be Nations of Laws and we are for the most part, although the laws are not perfect. Yes, we stoned people back then. Now, terrorists decapitate them. Back then we couldn't keep our penis in our pockets and today it's still the same.

As regard to Chanoch or Enoch, not much is written about him. I try to explore his significance in the "Messiah Interviews" but in all honesty, I was grasping to explain why God took him alive like he did with Elijah. I believe in part that God was showing us His mastery of the world and something I just thought of now is that Enoch's story foretells of another story in Christianity. Jesus was taken to heaven. They were either shepherds or hunters back in ancient times. I suspect Enoch was a shepherd and a nomad who migrated from place to place in the countryside moving his tent and his flocks. The flock had to have water and food. Whether he was in the Holy Land or north in Mesopotamia where Abraham was born is not known. The bible doesn't tell us. I wish I could tell you more. Every human being is important and has a role to play in this world. We don't always know what that role is but we can discover it if we so desire.

Tyler: Will you explain why you chose some of the other biblical personalities such as Seth and Methusaleh who are also less well known?

Jerry: I didn't have a choice. They are the seven shepherds that sages refer to as being right there with the Messiah at the End of Days. I do agree with you that Seth and maybe Methuselah are less well known. However, don't be fooled by that. God has a purpose for each of us even if it's in a future Messianic Age. I'm smiling now because great individuals like Moses are only famous because God made them famous.

Tyler: Very good point, Jerry. Methuselah isn't well known except for his longevity, and of course, the entire human race is descended from Seth, son of Adam. But tell us more about the seven shepherds—is that in the Hebrew bible? How does the Jewish tradition differ from the Christian tradition of the end times as depicted in the book of Revelation?

Jerry: You can't let celebrity status run away with your mind. These were ordinary men who rose to their potential. God saw the greatness in them and they all add meaning to our present world. The Chabad Lubavitch Orthodox Rebbe, Rabbi Schneerson, said something profound about people and their spiritual missions. 'All that add, they add to God.' Some like Moses rose to greatness like Jesus. Abraham and Jacob, who are Patriarchs, are indelibly linked to the Covenant between God and man. King David was the first of the monarchy to be a true king who dedicated himself to his subjects despite his own flaws. Abraham was the father of three monotheistic religions. We are talking about giants among men. The giants though were simple men who rose to a Higher Calling. There is a lot of wisdom in the Mishnah, Talmud, Gemara, the Midrash folklore, The Aggadah stories, and from historians like Josephus who lived at the time and wrote about the people and events in the Bible. Buried in all of this wisdom are the Seven Shepherds and their role at the End of Days. They are not actually written about directly in the Bible but there are different ways that one studies the writings of the Bible. There are direct simple interpretations, holy interpretations, metaphorical interpretations, and hidden interpretations of the same exact passages. The Seven Shepherds have arisen out of all of this, just as it is not so commonly known that God had seven things in place before Creation. One of the seven was the name of the Messiah. And several names of the Messiah have been proposed by human sages and biblical interpreters these past 6000 years.

As to the Book of Revelations and the Hebrew Bible, there are similarities and differences to the End Times. I read Revelations about ten years ago when I was doing the Research for my first book, "Divinely Inspired: Spiritual Awakening of a Soul." Besides the obvious Messiah difference, the wars fought and there scenarios with or without the antichrist are different. They both however predict unimaginable devastation and death and then bliss. Fire and brimstone and then out of the darkness into the light, God's Light. For a discussion, see the Abraham chapter in the "Messiah Interviews." I felt this was important to talk about, so it's included in the book. One additional point about the Hebrew Bible. The Messianic Age could also come in a peaceful harmonious way if humankind could get its act together. The Jews would have to come together for this to happen. This is spelled out in limited fashion in the Hebrew Bible. You kind of need to read where the Creator is going. Nowhere does it say that you should improve your character. That's because God gave us His gift of free will. The onus is on us. It's like the Fifth Commandment. Honor your parents. What frustrates Yoseph, is that parents should honor their children, and this is not said in the bible. I agree with Yoseph but maybe it's implied in all the writings. If you want to see the similarities of the Book of Revelations to the Hebrew Bible, read the Book of Daniel.

Tyler: What are some of the requirements set out in the interviews for admission into Heaven?

Jerry: This is us an area of great controversy as to who will enter the Messianic Age. In the Hebrew Bible, two scenarios of the Messianic Age timeline are given. We as human beings can enter in a peaceful way if we are ready or we can enter at God's appointed time. The latter is an apocalyptic ending with terrible destruction and loss of human life. I personally believe that it is the same individuals in either case who will enter. In the New Testament, only the apocalyptic ending is given because Jesus needs to return to be the Messiah.

In the "Messiah Interviews" I lay out the admission requirements. It's a good thing that the Seven Shepherds got me to lower the bar; otherwise, I might not make it. I hope I do make it. I'm not sure. We are accountable to God. God is the ultimate judge of our moral acts. He knows what's in your heart. That's what it means when we say God is Omniscient or all knowing. What's amazing is that even the righteous Daniel (see the Book of Daniel or you can read about it in the "Messiah Interviews") is told to go and rest (die) and arise to his lot at the End of Days. No one, not even the most righteous from what we know of them, is a sure bet to enter the Garden of Eden. Not only the people living today will be judged by God. Everyone, no matter what his or her faith, will be accountable and those who warrant entrance to the Messianic Age will be resurrected. This is clear in the Hebrew Bible.

It's better not to disclose the details of my own personal assessment of admission to the Messianic era, so that people can discover this for themselves when they read the book. Of special note, people of bad moral character will also be judged. All those baddies of past history will be resurrected to face their Maker. Only they will not be going to the Garden of Eden. They will be punished terribly in Gehinnom, the Hebrew word for hell. What goes around comes around. God gives us a lifetime to improve our character so it's never too soon or too late to start.

Tyler: Would you give us an example of some of the important interview questions asked Yoseph and the other interviewees for the role of Messiah?

Jerry: I'm biased. There are so many. It will be fun for the reader to think about how they would answer the questions when they read the book. Here is a bombshell from King David coming after the exhaustive interviews with the Angel Gabriel, Methuselah, Chanoch, and Seth. In the parentheses, I inserted my thoughts looking back now because of your question. These thoughts are not in the book.

"My son, Solomon used to say, 'There is nothing new under the sun' Yoseph, you speak eloquently; however, what I'm hearing from you is not original. I've heard it all before. Show me something that makes you distinctly suitable to be the Messiah. Your Divine miracles are not extraordinary {Jerry, I thought they were for Yoseph} nor do they provide definitive evidence that they are connected to your asserted mission of seeking this divine role {Jerry, not definitive but suggestive for Yoseph}. Your character qualities and intelligence are fairly good, but they are not exceptional {Jerry, very true}. Your knowledge of biblical history is adequate, though you are not a Torah scholar. You write well, yet so do a whole lot of others who could easily match your skills and qualify to be the Messiah. Your spiritual words have not been matched by spiritual deeds in life. And finally, and most important, the Ancient One has never asked you to be the Messiah. You have sought this esteemed position on your own. Your comments."

I did answer this question but it really got me thinking when I made up the question for the book. By the way, I made up all questions for the book. There is a Kaballah saying, "The answer is there before the question." I emphasize that my answers may be very different from yours and they are not the gospel. Everyone is entitled to his opinion.

Tyler: In referring to the Messiah, does Jesus Christ have any role in the book, or are you writing solely from a Jewish rather than Christian point of view?

Jerry: "Messiah Interviews" are written from a Jewish perspective. Jesus does come up in the book because he could be the Messiah as stated above. Many but not all of the scriptures that I interpret in the "*Messiah Interviews*" could suggest this special human being to be chosen by God. See the Prophet Isaiah chapter in the book. I make one important point that I think about for the Soul. I believe the soul is passed down through the ages to different bodies where I believe it keeps getting refined. The Messiah, whoever he or she is, will therefore be carrying the character traits of all those past souls, good or bad. If Jesus does not turn out to be the Messiah, I say to Christians that Jesus' person and essence may be inside the Soul of the Messiah. I know it's in Yoseph. I personally do not judge people by their religion. It's what's in their hearts that counts.

Tyler: Jerry, will you explain for us what the Jewish concept of Messiah is? What the Jewish people expect in their Messiah? When Jesus lived, the Jewish people rejected him, and largely, it is believed because they viewed Messiah as the future king of Israel who would free them from Roman rule? But that may well be my own viewpoint from being raised in a Christian culture? How in ancient times was the Messiah envisioned and how has that understanding of what is a Messiah changed, if at all, over the centuries?

Jerry: As far as Jesus is concerned, there was also a concern among the rabbis at the time that Jesus was preaching different concepts and was not following the Laws of the Torah. The rabbis as I described above were

going in a different direction, building the religion of Judaism. The Laws however were often corrupted, and Jesus was preaching about this as well. At the time Jesus lived, he was not the Son of God, but he was a charismatic Prophet with great oratorical skills. I love the ‘Sermon on the Mount.’ I don’t know whether people at the time felt Jesus would free them from Roman Rule, but Jesus certainly had a populist message to offer.

The thoughts about the Jewish Messiah, or for that matter the Christian Messiah, really haven’t changed over the centuries. There have been false messiahs in Judaism. There is a lot written about the requirements for the job of being the Messiah, but there is little about what the Messiah would actually do at the End of days or even beforehand. Some people believe he will oversee the building of the Third Temple. Others do not. In the “Messiah Interviews,” I propose that the Messiah may help identify which of the Twelve Tribes Jews belong to at the End of Days. In the End Times, the Land of Israel will be apportioned among the Twelve Tribes. This is what will unify Judaism, not necessarily the Rabbis. We shall return to the Spirituality of Judaism. To emphasize, the Messianic Age is about the Age of God and not the Age of the Messiah. That may be a difference with Christianity which puts more emphasis on Jesus.

Tyler: Jerry, I understand you term yourself as a man of science but in “Messiah Interviews” you blend science with religious beliefs. Will you explain how the two of them do not need to be in disagreement?

Jerry: I am and always will be a scientist. I also unshakably believe in God. I experienced Divine miracles and they have changed me forever. See the “Messiah Interviews” but also see my spiritual memoir, “Divinely Inspired: Spiritual Awakening of a Soul” for details of many of the experiences. Tyler, may I add that both books will come out on Jan. 1, 2009 and that eBooks are now available. I want the message of the “Messiah Interviews” to get out there, so forgive me if I just gave a sales plug. In my not so humble opinion, there is no conflict between Science and Religion in terms of Creation and Evolution. This is however one major area of conflict between the two. The other is explaining God’s miracles. Well science cannot explain miracles. Neither can miracles explain science. God especially set it up this way. He gave us free will and ironically this free will permits us to choose or not choose to believe in Him. I write about this in both Titles (significantly more in “Divinely Inspired”) describing the Creator as the Master Scientist responsible for both Evolution and Creation.

The anthropologist Ian Tattersall wrote that human beings have great mental associative capacities but that when something or someone is not part of what we understand or know, we cannot identify with that person or concept. Migraine headaches are an example. People who have migraines know, but those who don’t really cannot know. Take this up a notch and apply it to God. You have to have faith to believe in God. Scientists are logical people and their intelligent minds do not allow them to believe in a Supreme Being, especially when other rational explanations within the Laws of Nature are available to them, as in the Theory of Evolution. They need concrete proof. You have to abandon your intelligence to believe in God. Divine Providence works outside and beyond the Laws of Nature, the natural order of things.

Tyler: What do you hope will be the response of readers to “Messiah Interviews”?

Jerry: I hope that they will love the book of course and tell their friends and acquaintances about the “Messiah Interviews.” I hope readers will see that the “Messiah Interviews” offers a message of hope. Life is a gift but it’s not all that easy to live in these times. God knew all of this and gave us a failsafe plan, the Messianic Age. I believe this is His ultimate purpose for creating the world. You need to know imperfection to experience perfection just like love and hate. If anyone wishes to contact me, they can email me at jerryapollock@bellsouth.net or thirdtemple@bellsouth.net

Tyler: Jerry, I understand you are president of Shechinah Third Temple organization. Will you tell us more about the organization?

Jerry: We are a nonprofit organization of which I am President. We do raise funds and donations are tax exempt. Over the centuries, many have tried to calculate the End Times but only God knows. He told only two people. The Patriarch Jacob was on his deathbed about to tell his twelve sons (the Twelve Tribes of Israel) the End Time, but God confused his mind. Daniel knew but God told Daniel to obscure the matter and seal the book, meaning the Book of Daniel would be written and canonized as a part of the Hebrew Bible without disclosure of Daniel’s secret. Reading the information on the website will make reading of the “Messiah Interviews” even more meaningful.

Tyler: Thank you for joining me today, Jerry. Before we go, will you tell our readers about your website and what additional information they may find there about “Messiah Interviews: Belonging to God”?

Jerry: Please visit my website at www.shechinahthirdtemple.org or alternatively www.thirdtempleinfo.com The website is being updated and will soon include the books. There is information on biblical history, the future Third Temple on earth, and the Messiah and Messianic Age. As I mentioned, we will soon have our two Titles on the

website with links where the books can be purchased. “The Messiah Interviews” and “Divinely Inspired: Spiritual Awakening of a Soul” are listed on Amazon and Barnes and Noble.com

Tyler: Thank you, Jerry. It’s been a very informative interview and I learned quite a bit about Jewish history as well as how you have imaginatively incorporated it into fiction. I wish you much success with “Messiah Interviews.”

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