

FAQ

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)

J.K. McKee

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.net

Frequently Asked Questions

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES

© 2021, 2024 John Kimball McKee

All rights reserved. With the exception of quotations for academic purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced without prior permission of the publisher.

Cover Image: nullplus via Istockphoto

ISBN 979-8317009786 (paperback)

ASIN B09F1MWGB7 (eBook)

Published by Messianic Apologetics, a division of Outreach Israel Ministries

P.O. Box 516

McKinney, Texas 75070

(407) 933-2002

outreachisrael.net / outreachisrael.blog

messianicapologetics.net / messianicapologetics.blog

Fair Use Notice: This publication contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We make use of this material as a matter of teaching, scholarship, research, and commentary. We believe in good faith that this constitutes a “fair use” of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law, and is in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. For more information go to: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/17/107>

Outreach Israel Ministries is a non-profit 501(c)3. All prices listed on the publications of Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics are suggested donations.

Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

- ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998)
CJSB: *Complete Jewish Study Bible* (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: *English Standard Version* (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: *Greek New Testament*
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: *Holman Christian Standard Bible* (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: *New Jerusalem Bible-Koren* (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: *King James Version*
Lattimore: *The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore* (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: *Septuagint*
m. Mishnah
MT: *Masoretic Text*
NASB: *New American Standard Bible* (1977)
NASU: *New American Standard Update* (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: *New English Bible* (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: *New International Version* (1984)
NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)
NJSB: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)
NKJV: *New King James Version* (1982)
NRSV: *New Revised Standard Version* (1989)
NLT: *New Living Translation* (1996)
NT: *New Testament*
OT: *Old Testament*
REB: *Revised English Bible* (1989)
RSV: *Revised Standard Version* (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: *Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version* (2014)
TNIV: *Today's New International Version* (2005)
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: *United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition*
v(s). *verse(s)*
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: *Latin Vulgate*
YLT: *Young's Literal Translation* (1862/1898)
WMB: *World Messianic Bible* (2020)

Daniel 3:25

I have heard it said that Yeshua was present with the three men in the fiery furnace. To what degree might this be true?

The three Jews: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego were thrown into the fiery furnace for not worshipping the golden statue King Nebuchadnezzar had erected. So serious was the fire, and so obstinate were they to his demand, that the crematory was heated seven times more than normal (Daniel 3:19). The three faithful Jews were bound so that they could not escape (Daniel 3:21), and as they were thrown in, some of the soldiers guarding them were actually killed by flames coming forth from the incenerator (Daniel 3:23). As they were cast into the fire, King Nebuchadnezzar made some startling observations.

“Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he said to his high officials, ‘Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?’ They replied to the king, ‘Certainly, O king.’ He said, ‘Look! I see four men loosed *and* walking *about* in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of *the* gods!’” (Daniel 3:24-25, NASU).

It is not difficult at all to see how a supernatural being saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego from certain doom in the furnace. Jewish Bible translations render Daniel 3:25 with either “the fourth looks like a divine being” (NJPS) or “the appearance of the fourth [one] is like an angel’s” (ATS). But what was specifically meant by the Aramaic clause *l’var-Elahin*? The Septuagint translators could not agree, with one LXX version rendering it *angelou Theou* or “angel of God,” and then another with *huiō Theou* or “son of God.”

Older English translations like the KJV employ “Son of God,” and hence various interpreters have concluded that not just any supernatural being was present with the three faithful Jews in the fiery furnace—but that it was a pre-Incarnate manifestation of Yeshua the Messiah. Most modern English translations today render *l’var-Elahin* in Daniel 3:25 as “like a son of the gods” (i.e., RSV, NASU, NIV, HCSB) or “the appearance of a god” (NRSV). It is often translated this way not necessarily to discount Yeshua as the Son of God, but rather to consider the vantage point of the person who made this declaration: the pagan King Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar would have thought of any supernatural being as just another deity, because it is not until the narrative of Daniel 4 when he had his significant encounter with the One True God.

When he saw Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego saved from the fiery furnace, Nebuchadnezzar would have had no comprehension of a Messiah to come, or any Savior/Redeemer figure prophesied to rescue Israel as seen in the Tanach. King Nebuchadnezzar was simply a person in history who witnessed God’s deliverance in action. Based on his statements, it is not incorrect to conclude that this *bar-Elahin* was in fact a pre-Incarnate manifestation of *the Son of God*, Yeshua the Messiah. Yet when this took place, the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, armed with nothing more than his pagan theology or mythology, would not have understood this.