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Shabbetai Zevi – Jewish Messiah –

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Lead: In 1665 Shabbetai Zevi, ('shabatite say ve), a Jewish rabbi from Smyrna on the western coast of present-day Turkey, claimed to be the long anticipated messiah. The explosive devotion he inspired was made possible because the way had been prepared.

Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Of the three great religions which look back to Abraham as founder, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, two have

powerful messianic traditions. The Messiah is that person whose arrival will restore harmony to the universe lost at the time of the Fall and affect reconciliation between God and man. Christians believe that Jesus was the promised messiah and that his death and resurrection and imminent return will signify the end of human history.

Within Judaism there also is a powerful messianic expectation as well. The eminent Rabbi Maimonides (mai 'mon edees) or Moses Ben Maimon, in his 12th century formulation of the basic principles of Judaism, includes

messianic expectation as vital to the Jewish faith. The believer asserts, “I believe with perfect faith the coming of the Messiah, and, though he tarry, I will wait daily for his coming.”

Since the destruction of Jerusalem in the first century, there have been numerous messianic eruptions or movements often associated with times of persecution and peril for Jews. In the modern era, nothing eclipses the Nazi holocaust, but in the 17th century numerous Jewish communities in Eastern Poland, Russia and the Ukraine were virtually wiped out by a horrendous pogrom initiated

by a Cossack nationalist, Bogdan Chmielnicki (Bog ‘dan Khmel ‘nitski). Next time: Chmeil the Wicked.

Research assistance by Samuel Abrash, in Richmond Virginia, this is Dan Roberts.

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