

The Messiah and the New Covenant

I. The Messiah

A. Pre-Davidic Covenant

1. Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-8; 22:14-18

In the first passage God promised Abraham that He would make him into a great nation, give him multiple descendents, and bless the world through his seed. In the second passage God promises that He would establish a kingdom through Abraham and Sarah, and kings would come from her womb. In the third passage God makes the covenant with Abraham unconditional and reiterates His promises. This lays the foundation for what will be developed in the monarchial period.

2. Genesis 49:8-10

In Jacob's oracle, Judah is granted dominion over the Hebrew people and will remain in that line until "Shiloh" comes. From the context this Hebrew word must refer to a person. The interpretation of "until he comes whose it is" is supported by Ezekiel 21:27 and the Greek version.

"The prophecy holds out the promise that the divinely intended king will come from Judah. He will have universal dominion over people; they will be obedient to him. He will also bring in an age of paradisiacal splendor and abundance, signified by the vine and the grapes and the wine (the water to wine at Cana is the harbinger of this—it was a "sign" that the Messianic age was upon them)." (Allen Ross.)

3. Numbers 24:17-19

Balaam, a pagan diviner, predicted that "a star out of Jacob" and "a scepter out of Israel" would rise up one day to rule over Israel and destroy all their enemies. The Jews understood this ruler to be the messiah. Yet he was not to come until the "latter days" (v. 14).

4. Deuteronomy 18:15-19

The Lord says that He would raise up a prophet like Moses who led the people of Israel. In its immediate context it does not speak of the messiah, yet there was never a prophet like Moses that came after him (Deut. 34:10). Moses was a prophet that spoke for the Lord but he also was the authority in the theocracy. So this passage ultimately calls for someone who would, like Moses, be the theocratic administrator of the covenant community—a lawgiver and leader.

5. 1 Samuel 2:10

There was no king in Israel at this time, so Hannah is looking forward to when the ideal king will be ruling. This is the first time "his anointed" occurs; it refers to the messiah, and universal dominion is predicted.

B. The Davidic King

1. 2 Samuel 7:10-16

The Davidic Covenant builds upon the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants that God had already established. God states that He would make Israel into a great kingdom where the people would be safe and sinners would not afflict them any more. God would also

establish David's line as the eternally ruling dynasty: David's throne would be established forever, the right to rule would never be removed, and David's son would build the temple. The prophecy connects the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of David together forever.

2. Amos 9:11-12 — reestablishing of the kingdom
3. Hosea 3:4-5 — reestablishing of the kingdom
4. Micah 5:1-6 — the kingdom will be everlasting and absolute
5. Isaiah 7:14 — virgin birth of one named Immanuel
6. Isaiah 9:6-7 — absolute ruler
7. Isaiah 11:1-6 — absolute ruler
8. Isaiah 32:1-20 — peace of the kingdom
9. Isaiah 33:17-24 — absolute ruler
10. Isaiah 40:1-11 — absolute ruler and everlasting kingdom
11. Isaiah 61:1-2 — ruler concerned with the needy and poor
12. Jeremiah 23:1-8 — righteous and peaceful ruler
13. Jeremiah 33:14-26 — righteous and peaceful ruler
14. Ezekiel 34:11-31 — everlasting kingdom
15. Ezekiel 45:7-16; 46:2-18 — will lead them in pure worship
16. Daniel 2:35-36, 44-45 — the kingdom that will succeed all others
17. Daniel 7:9-14 — unique to all others kings
18. Daniel 9:24-27 — unique and absolute ruler
19. Zechariah 3:8-10 — removal of sin
20. Zechariah 9:9-10 — dominion
21. Zechariah 14:4-7 — the lord will mount the Mount of Olives
22. 1 Chronicles 17:7-15 — absolute ruler

C. Prophet and Priest

1. Deuteronomy 18:15-19

This passage states that one will come who will be a prophet and ruler like Moses: the Messiah.

2. Psalm 110

This Psalm is unique because it prophesies a Royal Priest. This combines the office of king and priest into one person—an idea that is before its time. David also refers to this king as his Lord, which puts this king into a much greater class than David and all the kings that will follow.

3. Zechariah 6:9-15

This prophecy shows that the Messiah is both a Priest and a King. He will unite those two offices in Himself and will vindicate all the Old Testament prophecies. The earlier night vision of the prophet in which he saw two olive trees also represents these two offices.

D. The Servant Songs

1. Isaiah 42:1-7

Yahweh introduces His servant. The stress in this introductory poem is on the character, method and mission of the servant of Yahweh. The servant is divinely chosen, called, anointed, equipped and commissioned. The Lord sustains him who is to be a prophet, priest and teacher.

2. Isaiah 49:1-12

Here the servant is seen as a prophet addressing his call and commission for the restoration of Israel and the redemption of all mankind.

3. Isaiah 50:4-11

Here the suffering of the servant appears for the first time in these poems. He experiences unbroken fellowship with God. The desire of his heart is to do the will of God. In spite of suffering and his people rejecting him, he will remain unfaltering in His faith in God.

4. Isaiah 52:13-53:12

These Servant Songs reach a climax in this last poem. Isaiah sees him wounded, bruised, chastised, pierced, plagued and cursed for our sins. The Lord provides this perfect substitute as an atonement that results in full redemption of the guilty sinner.

5. Though David and Israel are called servants in Isaiah, these passages cannot refer to them; instead, they find fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ. The "Servant" must be divine and be a human being at the same time; He must suffer for sin and die for man's sin, yet be Israel's true King; He must deliver the people of God from darkness.

6. Other suffering servant passages are Daniel 9:26, where the anointed one is cut off, and Zechariah 12:10-14, which states the one that they pierced. Other indirect prophecies are Psalm 2; 16; 22; 40; 41:9; 69; 118.

E. The Sign of the Messiah

1. Gen. 27:28; Deut. 7:12-14; 33:26-29; 2 Kings 18:32; Psalm 104:13-15; Prov. 3:9-10 show that the ancient people saw an abundance of wine and grain as a sign of God's blessing upon them.

2. Genesis 49:11 states that the ideal king will come from the tribe of Judah and the abundance of wine will be the sign of His coming.

II. The Glory of the Lord

A. Departure

1. In Ezekiel 1:1-28 Ezekiel sees a vision of the Lord on a wheeled throne surrounded by Cherubim. This is the image of the Lord that Ezekiel will see as the Lord speaks to him throughout the book.

2. In Ezekiel 10:15-11:25 Ezekiel receives a vision of the glory of the Lord departing the temple. Ezekiel sees the glory of the Lord lift off His throne within the Holy of Holies and then move to the threshold of the temple. Next He moves to the east gate and sits

upon the wheeled throne and the Cherubim. From there the glory of the Lord moves up the Mount of Olives, symbolizing His departure from the temple.

3. In this passage the Lord states that he has left and Jerusalem will fall because His people have abandoned him. However, at the end He states that one-day He will return to give His people a new and living heart and to establish a new covenant with them.

B. Return

1. In Ezekiel 40:1-42:20 Ezekiel is given a vision of the blueprints for the rebuilding of the future temple in the Promised Land. In 43:1-12 Ezekiel sees the future return of the Lord coming from the east and entering into the temple where His glory will dwell forever. This is the culmination of the new covenant, for the Lord's glory is now with the people once again.
2. The problem with this passage is that scriptures do not record this happening at all after the completion of the second temple in 515 BC. Throughout Exodus and Numbers the glory of the Lord is with the people over the tabernacle in the pillar of cloud and smoke. Likewise in 1 Kings 8:10-11 the glory of the Lord enters Solomon's temple at its dedication. Yet this is not seen with the second temple. Even at the time of Christ there is no mention of the glory of the Lord having returned to the temple. This means that this vision still has a future fulfillment sometime after Christ's ministry.

III. The New Covenant

A. The Nature

1. Joel 2:18-32

Verses 18-27 show that the people of Israel have responded to the Lord positively, and so His zeal for His land was rekindled and He states that He will restore them physically. Verses 28-32 state that after this the Lord will pour out *His* Spirit on all classes of people without distinction. In the past the Spirit was given to a select few, primarily prophets. This future outpouring will mark the beginning of a new era and the fulfillment of Moses' wish in Num. 11:29. In conjunction with this there will be ominous signs in the heavens and on the earth.

2. Hosea 2:14-20

The Lord states that He will lure Israel back to them and restore them as a nation, and He will give them significance and security once again. With this the people will have a renewed relationship with the Lord, the past forgotten.

3. Isaiah 55:1-13

The Lord calls His people back to them and promises that unlike the Mosaic covenant He will make an eternal covenant with them like He did with David (Isa. 55:3). Likewise, this covenant would include nations that were not previously known to the Mosaic covenant.

4. Jeremiah 31:31-34

The Lord states that He will make a new covenant with His people that will not be like the Mosaic covenant. It will differ from the Mosaic covenant not in its demands but in its effectiveness. The Mosaic covenant demanded obedience through regulations but it

had no power to make the people obey (Deut. 7:12). This new covenant will have the same demands, but this time they will be written on the people's hearts and minds rather than on stone tablets. The people will automatically know the Lord and therefore have the capacity and desire to obey the Lord.

5. Ezekiel 11:17-25

The Lord states here that He will one day remove their dead and unresponsive heart ("hearts of stone") and put into them a living heart of responsiveness ("heart of flesh"). Likewise He will put into them one heart and a new spirit that will unite them all. With their inner nature transformed the people will desire to serve the Lord.

6. Ezekiel 39:25-29

The Lord promises to bring His people back, show them compassion, and pour out *His* Spirit on them. They will repent of their sinful ways and dedicate themselves to Him.

7. Zechariah 12:10-13:9

The Lord states that He will pour out a spirit of grace upon the kingship and the people so that they will look to Him the one they have wounded through their sinful rebellion. The Lord states that He will cleanse His people and there will be such devotion from them that the parents of a false prophet will be willing to kill their son in obedience to the Lord.

B. The Sign

1. Isa. 25:6; 36:17; 55:1; Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13-14 show that the day that the Lord returns to His people and restores them is connected to an abundance of wine in the land.
2. Joel 2:19, 24 show that an abundance of wine in the land is the sign of the new covenant that the Lord will make with His people. Jeremiah 31:12 states that the Lord will bring fresh wine to the land when he restores His people. Later, verse 29 states, "when that time comes," referring to the previous verses, He will establish His new covenant.
3. The fact that the Messiah and the new covenant share the same sign of an abundance of wine in the land links the coming of the Messiah and the initiation of the new covenant to the same event.

IV. Messianic Expectations

A. Postexilic Views

1. It was not until the postexilic times that hope for and ideas of the messiah began to be more developed among the Jews. However, it must be noted that Judaism did not have a single view of messianic hope, though the regal Davidic figure is predominant.
2. Although Pss. Sol. 17-18 states that the future political ruler (messiah) is to be a spiritual leader, many Jews did not simply want spiritual renewal; they wanted their nation back and the freedom to rule themselves.
3. The most dominant theme that shows up in Jewish writings is that the messiah would come and judge or destroy the wicked, deliver God's people, and reign in a blessed kingdom (Pss. Sol. 17-18; 4 Ezra 12; 2 Baruch 40). They saw the messiah as a military leader who would rid them of all their enemies and make them the dominant nation.

4. Throughout the Jewish writings of this period the idea of God's kingdom being established on earth is a much more dominant theme than the individual figure that would usher it in.
5. There are a few writings from the Qumran communities, drawing from Isa. 52-53 (4Q541 (4Q Aaron A)), that seem to have references to a suffering Messiah.
6. The Qumran community had expectations of a priestly and royal Messiah – two distinct offices and persons. Some writings suggest that the Messiah would be both a priest and a king.

B. Son of Man

1. There are references in 1 Enoch to “*the* Son of Man,” which is significant, for it shows that the Jews saw the term as a title rather than a saying, most likely as a result of the Daniel 7 passage. In 1 Enoch the “Son of Man” is equated with the Messiah (1 Enoch 48:10; 52:4).
2. From 1 Enoch one can see that the “Son of Man” refers to an individual and not a group. The Son of Man is also identified as the Messiah and that he is seen as preexistent (1 Enoch 48:3; 4 Ezra 13:26; 7:28).

Bibliography

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