

# The messianic HOPE

TRACING THE MESSIAH  
IN THE OLD TESTAMENT



# The Messiah in the Old Testament

by Nik Lingle

I believe the messianic thrust of the Old Testament was the *whole* reason the books of the Hebrew Bible were written. In other words, the Hebrews Bible was not written as the national literature of Israel. It probably also was not written to the nation of Israel as such. It was rather written, in my opinion, as the expression of the deep seated messianic hope of a small group of faithful prophets and their followers. (John Sailhamer, "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible")

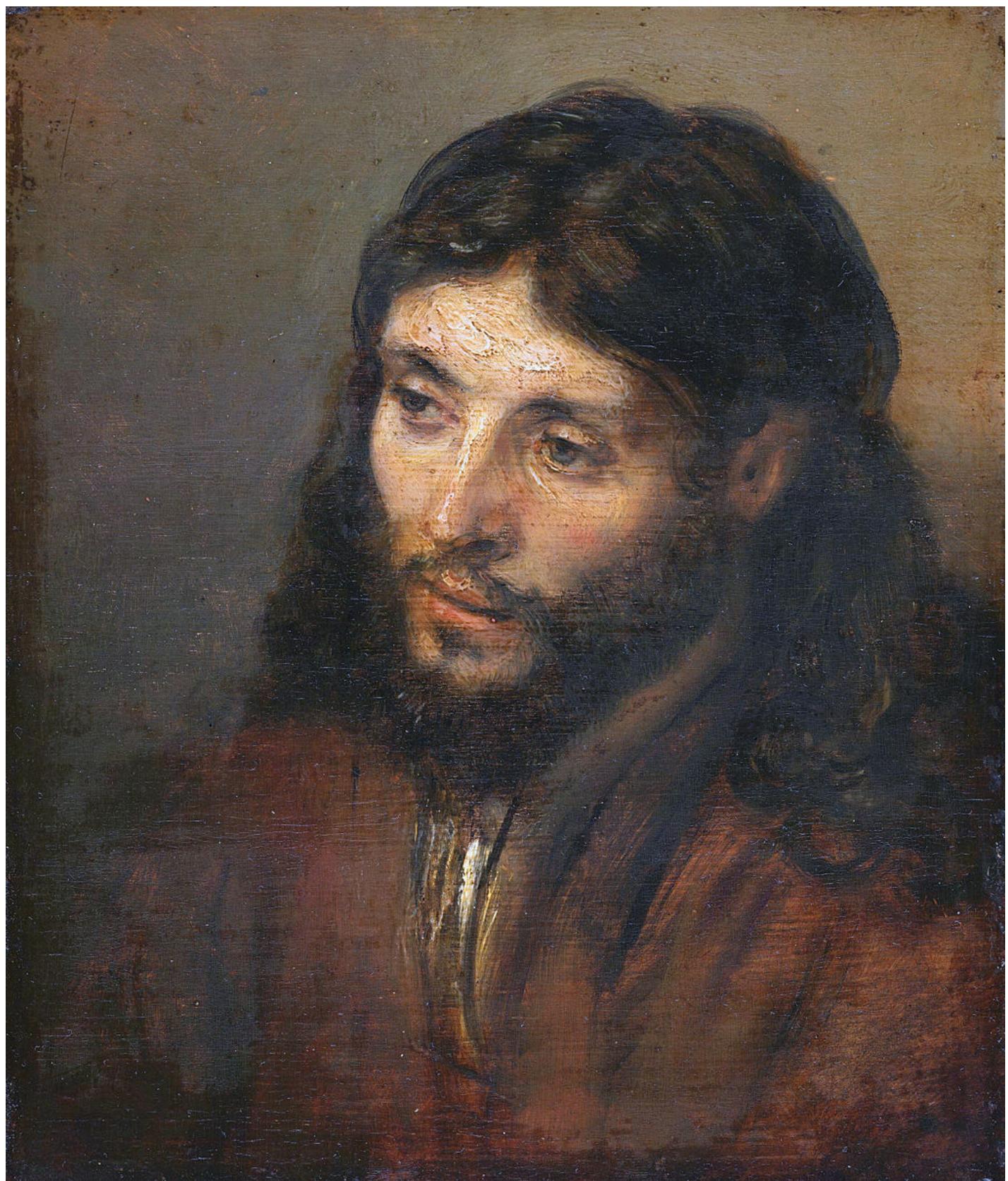
Biblical theology is the best cure for spiritual depression. Sad hearts can be turned into burning hearts by meditating on the messianic theme of the Old Testament. Nothing can dispel gloom or lift us out of despair quite like having the story of the Bible unfolded. (Dr. Iain Campbell, "Why the Old Testament?")

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## Suggested Reading

- *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, Walt Kaiser
- *The Messianic Hope*, Michael Rydelnik
- *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of Old Testament Messianic Texts*, eds. Philip Satterthwaite, Richard Hess, and Gordon Wenham
- "The Divine Messiah in the Old Testament," B. B. Warfield

Rembrandt, "Head of Christ" (1648)



# Lesson 1: The Messiah in the Pentateuch, Part 1

## The Serpent-Crushing Son.

On YouTube, listen to “So Long, Moses” by Andrew Peterson. Consider the lyrics of this song and reflect on how they capture a Jewish sense of longing.

### Begin by reading Genesis 3:1-24.

- Summarize Genesis 3:1-24 in two sentences.

### Now go back and read Genesis 3:15.

- To whom is the LORD God speaking in verses 14 and 15?
- Who did Eve think the serpent was?
- Do God’s words here give any indication as to who the *offspring of the serpent* is?
- Do God’s words give any indication about who the *offspring of the woman* is?
- When Adam and Eve first heard God’s words, how do you think they understood this comment?
- Many people have understood Genesis 3:15 to be both a curse of the serpent as well as a promise of blessing to humanity. In what sense might Genesis 3:15 be a promise of blessing to humanity?
- What does Genesis 3:15 reveal about the character of God (compare with Gen. 3:9)?

## Application.

- Can you think of a time when you have experienced unintended consequences as a result of your sin?
- Can you think of a time that God has shown you undeserved kindness despite your sin?

## Relief From Our Toil

### Begin by reading Genesis 5:1-32.

- What is the significance of this genealogy, especially in light of its placement between the story of Cain and Abel (4:1-26) and the story of man's increasing wickedness (6:1-8)?
- From which of the woman's offspring did Lamech descend (cf. 4:25; 5:3-6)? Why might this be surprising?

### Now go back and read 5:28-30.

- Based on Lamech's declaration about his son, how would you describe Lamech's experience of life? What explanation does Lamech give for his life experience (cf. 3:17-19)?
- The ESV provides this footnote on the word "relief" in verse 29: "*Noah* sounds like the Hebrew for *rest*." Why do you think Lamech chose this name for his son?
- Did Noah succeed in Lamech's hopes for him?

## Promises to Abram

### Begin by reading Genesis 12:1-9.

- How would you describe humanity in Genesis 4-11, preceding the story of Abram? Take these items into consideration: **[1]** the recurring phrase "...and he died" in chapter 5, **[2]** the Lord's thoughts in 6:1-8, **[3]** the actions of Noah and his sons in 9:20-24, **[4]** and the collective attitude of humanity in 11:1-9.
- From which of Noah's sons was Abram a descendant (cf. 11:10ff)? Based on his ancestry, what might we expect out of Abram (cf. 9:25-26)?

**Now go back and read 12:1-3.**

- What is *the* key word in God's promise to Abram (hint: some form of the word occurs five times in vv. 1-3)?
- In Genesis 3:14-19, the serpent, the ground and mankind were all "cursed." How are the promises of 12:1-3 related to the anti-promises of 3:14-19?
- Are God's promises to Abram conditional upon Abram's obedience? Explain your answer.
- What does Genesis 12:1-3 reveal to us about the character of God? How do Gen 3:14-19 and 12:1-3 work together to reveal twin aspects of God's character?

**Extra Homework**

- Look at Appendix A, "Occurrences of *Messiah* in the Hebrew Scriptures." List several observations you have after looking over these references.

## Lesson 2: The Messiah in the Pentateuch, Part 2

### The Scepter of Judah

Begin by reading Genesis 49:1-28.

- How is Jacob/Israel related to Abraham? So far, who are the most prominent men in this lineage?
- According to verse 28, what is Jacob/Israel doing in these verses?

Now go back and read 49:8-10.

- Describe the three statements in verse 8 by putting them into your own words.
- What metaphor is applied to Judah in verse 9? How do you think Judah would have expected this metaphor to be fulfilled?
- What is “the scepter” in verse 10 symbolic of? What is the extent of the promise in verse 10?
- Do you think the promises to Judah are for him only, or do the promises encompass the descendants of Judah as well?
- According to Genesis 49:1, when will these things happen?

## Balaam's Predictions: A Star and a Scepter

Clearly a lot of history has been covered since the blessings of Jacob/Israel in Genesis 49. Think for a moment about all that has occurred in the national history of Israel. They became strong and numerous in Egypt (Exodus 1:7). Then they were forced into slavery by the ruler of Egypt because he feared that Israel might overtake them (Exodus 1:8ff). Then Moses was called by God (Ex. 3:7ff) and the people were delivered by Yahweh in the exodus out of Egypt after being there 430 years (Ex. 12:33ff). They received the Ten Commandments and the Law at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 20-31). At the same time they broke the first and second commandment by making and worshiping a golden calf (Ex 32). Then after spending nearly a full year encamped at Mt. Sinai, Israel finally left Sinai and began their forty-year journey toward the Promised land (though the distance could have been covered in less than two weeks, Deut. 1:2), following the *shekinah* glory, that is, the dwelling glory cloud (Numbers 10:11ff). The remainder of the book of Numbers recounts how along Israel's circuitous journey they encountered a variety of tribal-nation enemies and Moses dealt with internal dissension as well.

It's in this context that we come to Numbers 22, which occurs in the fortieth year of Israel's desert wandering.

On YouTube, listen to "The Book of Numbers" by The Bible Project. This is a six-minute visual overview of the book, which helps to provide context for Balaam's prophecy.

### **Begin by reading Numbers 22:1-6.**

- Who is Balak and what is he feeling? Who is Balaam and for what purpose does Balak summon him?
- What do we learn about the nation of Israel from these verses?

### **Now read Numbers 22:38, 23:11-12, and 24:1-2.**

- Although Balaam is a pagan seer, God can use even a man like this to accomplish his purposes (in fact, God can even use a donkey!).
- Balaam is known for invoking both blessing and cursing. What words does God give Balaam regarding Israel—words of blessing or cursing? Why?

## Now read Numbers 24:10-19.

- What words does God give Balaam regarding Balak—words of blessing or cursing?
- When would these words be fulfilled (24:14)? How does this compare with the timing of Jacob's blessings (49:1)?
- According to verses 15-16, where did Balaam fourth oracle come from?
- According to the first two lines of verse 17, when will the subject of Balaam's vision arrive?
- According to the third and fourth lines of verse 17, what are the two symbols of subject in Balaam's vision? What do these two symbols point to?
- Summarize the accomplishments described in the last two lines of verse 17 as well as verses 18-19. Now try to put yourself in the shoes of an Israelite at the time hearing the report of Balaam's vision. How do you think they would have expected this vision to be fulfilled?

## Cross-references for further reflection.

- 1 Samuel 14:47; 2 Samuel 8:1, 14; Jeremiah 48-49, Joshua 24:9, Judges 11:14-25

## Begin by reading Deuteronomy 18:15-22.

- On YouTube, watch “The Book of Deuteronomy” by The Bible Project. This is a six-minute overview of the book, which gives the context for Moses’ prophecy in Deuteronomy 18.
- This is the sixth and final messianic prediction in the Pentateuch. According to Deut. 1:1-3, when did Moses speak all that is recorded in Deuteronomy to the people?
- According to verses 15 and 18, where would this prophet come from?
- According to verse 18, what is the relationship between this prophet and Moses?
- Turn over to Deut. 34:10-12. What do these verses indicate about the relationship between Moses and the LORD? Based on 18:18-19, describe the relationship between the coming prophet and the LORD.
- The New Testament refers back to Deut. 18 in Peter’s sermon in Acts 3:22 and Stephen’s speech in Acts 7:37. Read these passages to see how they understood Moses’ prediction.

## Review and Apply

- So far we have looked at Genesis 3:15, 5:29, 12:1-3, 49:8-10, Numbers 24:15-19 and Deuteronomy 18:15-22. Historically, this is a lot of ground to cover—hundreds perhaps thousands of years. But at this point in the history of the world and the history of Israel, how would you describe the clarity of God’s promises to bless humanity? Do you think people remember God’s words to the serpent in Genesis 3:15? Which of God’s promises seem most prominent in the minds of his people (Israel)?
- How does the progress of God’s promises display his character?
- How have you been encouraged in considering these truths?

## Lesson 3: The Messiah and the Davidic Monarchy

Before we come to David and the period of Israel's monarchy, we need to remember that there was a long period of anarchy before there was monarchy. The book of Judges provides a sequence of snapshots of life in Israel after the conquest of Canaan but before a king was anointed. This period was punctuated by the rise and fall of various local leaders called "judges" or "deliverers." Israel cyclically experienced oppression from enemies as divine judgment against Israel's sin, especially the growing problem of pagan idol worship. When Israel would cry out to the Lord for help, God gave them these leaders who exercised military might to deliver Israel out from under the oppression of enemies. And so the cycle went: sin, oppression, crying out for deliverance, a deliverer, a time of peace, then return to sin and the cycle starts over.

This period of over four hundred years was characterized by idolatry, chaos in Israel, forgetting God, and the era eventually bottomed out in a civil war within Israel. The refrain of the last five chapters of Judges goes like this: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25). Israel needed not a local temporary deliverer, but a permanent and absolute deliverer.

On YouTube, listen to "Matthew's Begats" by Andrew Peterson. How does this song highlight the building momentum of messianic hope during the monarchy of Israel?

### Begin by reading 1 Samuel 2:1-10.

- Who is praying this prayer and why (1:27-2:1)?
- How would you summarize verses 2-8 in a sentence? How would you describe the "movement" of the lowly and the exalted in these verses?
- How would you summarize verses 9-10 in a sentence?
- The word "anointed" (ESV) in verse 10 is the Hebrew word *messiah*. Why do you think Hannah had this confidence about a king? From what source and on what basis would she have held this belief? (Consider Deuteronomy 17:14-20, Judges 8:22-23, and Judges 21:25.)
- Based on Hannah's prayer, what do you think she envisioned this anointed king doing for Israel?
- Based on what you know of the story of David and the storyline of 1 and 2 Samuel, how does Hannah's prayer function as a thesis statement for the books of 1 and 2 Samuel? (Consider the selection of Saul as king in 1 Sam 9:1-2 in contrast to the selection of David in 1 Sam 16:6-13).

**Now read 2 Samuel 7:1-17.**

- According to verse 1, why did David think it was a good time to begin building a temple? How does this reflect God's kindness to David?
- According to verses 10-11, why was the time not right for the building of the temple (cf. 1 Kings 5:3-6; 1 Chronicles 22:8-10)?
- In what ways does God's promise to David in verses 9-11 parallel God's promise to Abram in Genesis 12:2-7?
- In verse 12, God begins talking about David's "offspring." Is the "offspring" singular or plural (based on surrounding pronouns)? What will this offspring do? How long will his kingdom last? What other descriptions of the "offspring" do you see in this passage (vv. 12-16)?
- Read David's prayer of thanksgiving in 7:18-29. According to this prayer, what motivated God to make these promises to David (especially verses 21-23, 26)?

**Now read 2 Samuel 22:1-4 and 50-51.**

- Hannah's prayer of thanksgiving begins 1 Samuel, and David's prayer of thanksgiving concludes 2 Samuel. These prayers are bookends. How do the themes of this prayer in 22:1-4, 50-51 parallel the themes of Hannah's prayer of thanksgiving in 1 Samuel 2:1-10?
- Who does David understand the Lord's "anointed" to be (22:50-51)?
- Based on the story of David, what did God want from his anointed king? (Consider 1 Sam 15:22-28 and 1 Sam 16:7; 2 Sam 8:15; 1 Kings 2:1-4)
- Based on 1 and 2 Samuel, what does it seem like the people wanted from their anointed king? Consider 1 Samuel 8:19-20.
- When Israel rejected God as their king (1 Samuel 8:7), what was the result for them (vv. 11-18)? What does this teach us about putting our hope in someone or something other than God?

## The Four Stages in Royal Messianism

First, Abraham had been promised that "kings will come from you" (Ge 17:6, 16), and God reaffirmed that same promise to Jacob: "Kings will come from your body" (35:11). In the second stage, the symbols of rule and authority (the "scepter" and "ruler's staff") were given to Judah (49:10); accordingly, this royalty was promised the "obedience of [all] the nations." The third stage speaks of this coming king crushing his enemies, as Balaam predicted of the one he called the "star...out of Jacob" and the "scepter...out of Israel" (Nu 24:17). Now in 1 Samuel 2:10, the fourth stage is reached: the Messiah as the exalted King will be the judge of all the earth.<sup>1</sup>

## The Gift of Gifts<sup>2</sup>

O Source of All Good,  
What shall I render to thee for the gift of gifts,  
thine own dear Son, begotten, not created,  
my Redeemer, proxy, surety, substitute,  
his self-emptying incomprehensible,  
his infinity of love beyond the heart's grasp.

Herein is wonder of wonders:  
he came below to raise me above,  
was born like me that I might become like him.

Herein is love;  
when I cannot rise to him he draws near on wings of grace,  
to raise me to himself.

Herein is power;  
when Deity and humanity were infinitely apart  
he united them in indissoluble unity,  
the uncreated and the created.

Herein is wisdom;  
when I was undone, with no will to return to him,  
and no intellect to devise recovery,  
he came, God incarnate, to save me to the uttermost,  
as man to die my death,  
to shed satisfying blood on my behalf,  
to work out a perfect righteousness for me

O God, take me in spirit to the watchful shepherds,  
and enlarge my mind;  
let me hear good tidings of great joy,  
and hearing, believe, rejoice, praise, adore,  
my conscience bathed in an ocean of repose,  
my eyes uplifted to a reconciled Father;  
place me with ox, ass, camel, goat,  
to look with them upon my Redeemer's face,  
and in him account myself delivered from sin;  
let me with Simeon clasp the new-born child to my heart,  
embrace him with undying faith,  
exulting that he is mine and I am his.  
In him thou hast given me so much that heaven can give no more.

Close your time by listening to one of your favorite worship songs and spending some time in prayer asking God to open your eyes to wonderful things in his word (Ps. 119:18) and yielding yourself to him in complete obedience.

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, 72.

<sup>2</sup> This prayer is taken from *Valley of Vision*, 28.

## Lesson 4: The Messiah in the Songs of Israel (Triumph)

Think back over all the material you've studied so far in Lessons 1-3. What if you were to compose a "job description" for the Messiah at this point? What are the essential tasks that the Messiah is supposed to fulfill?

### The Psalms

This week we will be looking at the hope of the Messiah as it was expressed in the songs of Israel. The national hymnbook was a collection of poetry that developed over time and eventually ended up in the form that we know today as The Psalms. The 150 psalms come from different authors in different settings over a long period of time. At least one psalm was written as early as the time of Moses (15<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C., Ps. 90) while several others seem to have been written after Israel returned to Jerusalem from exile (6<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., Ps. 127, 137). Since the concept of "the messiah" would have been developing over time, the psalms do not bear one consistent idea about the Messiah, but rather express a variety of themes and expectations regarding this coming king.

Many of the psalms are considered *messianic psalms*. While all of the psalms point forward to Jesus in one way or another, there are some psalms that seem especially prophetic about the nature and work of the coming messiah. Not everyone agrees about which psalms function in this way, but we will look at a few of the psalms that are most clearly prophetic of the messiah. The first of these royal psalms comes right at the beginning of the hymnbook, Psalms 2.

#### Begin by reading Psalm 2:1-12.

- On YouTube, listen to "Jesus Shall Reign" by Songs 4 Our Savior (or see *Hymns of Grace*, 120). How does this song reflect the message of Psalm 2.
- This psalm was most likely used in the nation of Israel as a coronation psalm. Summarize the message of this psalm in a single sentence.
- Who are the kings of the earth opposing and why (vv. 1-3)?
- What is God's attitude toward the arrogance and opposition of the nations, peoples and kings of the earth (vv. 4-6)?
- What does the decree of verses 7-9 announce as the outcome of the conflict between the nations and the Son?
- How should the reader respond to the message of this psalm according to verses 10-12? What does it mean to "kiss the Son"?

## New Testament Perspectives on Psalm 2

- What point does the writer of Hebrews make based on this psalm in Hebrews 1:4-5?
- In Acts 4:23-31, after Peter and John are released from their interrogation, they go to their friends, who pray for boldness based on Psalm 2:1-2. Explain how they use these verses in their prayer.
  - According to Acts 4:27, who did they understand the “Anointed” of Psalm 2:2 to be?
  - Based on the example of this prayer in Acts, how could you use Psalm 2 in your own prayers?

For more on Psalm 2, listen to “Who’s Really in Charge?” preached by Tom Mercer on November 30, 2014.

## Begin by reading Psalm 110:1-7.

When the text has “LORD” in small caps, this indicates that the Hebrew word being translated is *Yahweh* (Jehovah), referring to Israel’s personal name for God. However, when “Lord” or “lord” is not in small caps it carries the sense of “master,” showing respect to a superior. The Greek translation of the Old Testament uses the word *adonai* here, which was a term that came to be frequently applied to Jesus much later on.

- Who is the speaker in 110:1? What clues do you see as to the identity of the one to whom he is speaking (cf. Mk. 12:35-37, where Jesus highlights the personal possessive pronoun)?
- What does the scepter of 110:2 seem to indicate or symbolize? Where have you seen the scepter symbolism already in this study?
- What are people of “the Lord” (his army) wearing according to verse 3? What does this suggest about those who follow him (i.e. who normally dresses like this in the Old Testament)?
- Who is the speaker in 110:4b? Again, what clues do you see as to the identity of the one to whom he is speaking?
- What two offices does “my Lord” hold (v. 1 and v. 4)? Who appoints him to these offices?
- Describe ***in your own words*** the successes of “my Lord” as they are given in 110:5-7.
- How do these successes correspond to the promises of Genesis 3:15 and Number 24:16-19? In other words, what is the relationship between these three different passages?
- How do the descriptions and role of the “Lord” in Psalm 110 parallel the descriptions and role of the anointed Son in Psalm 2?

- Based on all your observations so far, how would you synthesize the message of Psalm 110 into a single sentence? One way of developing a summary sentence is to list the key elements of the psalm, and then piece them together into a sentence.
- If you were part of the nation of Israel in exile and oppression under the Babylonian empire, how do you think you would have felt when you sang this song from your hymnal?
- Jesus and the writers of the New Testament cite this psalm more than any other single psalm: Mt. 22:41-45; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 20:41-44; Ac. 2:34-36; Heb. 1:13; 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:11, 15, 17, 21). This psalm is also the source for the references in 1Cor. 15:25; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; 1Pet. 3:22; Heb 8:1; 10:12.

For more on Psalm 110, listen to “The Ruling Son” preached by Tom Mercer on December 21, 2014.

On YouTube, listen to “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” by Sovereign Grace and “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” by Fernando Ortega. What themes of Old Testament expectation do you see in these songs?

## Lesson 5: The Messiah in the Songs of Israel (Suffering)

Begin by reading Psalm 22:1-31.

- Who wrote this psalm? Do you think David intended every line of this psalm to describe his own suffering? Why or why not? Consider this, can you think of a time in David's life when these words were true of him: "they have pierced my hands and feet" (v. 16)?
- What are the burning questions in the mind of *the sufferer* (vv. 1-2)?
- How does *the sufferer* respond to these questions (vv. 3-5)?
- How do "the people" react to *the sufferer* (vv. 6-8)?
- How does God treat *the sufferer* (vv. 9-11)?
- Describe the sufferings experienced by *the sufferer* (vv. 12-18).
- How is the tone of verses 1-21 different from the tone of verses 22-31?
- What groups of people do verses 27-31 talk about? What are these people doing (try to summarize all the various activities in a single word or phrase)? According to verses 22-26, why do the people respond in this way?

### Summarizing Psalm 22

- Now that you have analyzed all the parts, synthesize these parts into a sentence: summarize the message of Psalm 22 in a single sentence. This is not application, not the significance of the psalm, but rather the meaning.
- Think about the relationship of this psalm to a messianic figure (an appointed king). If David as the best king of Israel suffers as he describes in Psalm 22, what might this mean about the future king appointed over Israel? And if much of the suffering described in Psalm 22 transcends David's experience, then could this psalm be considered prophetic of a coming king who is even greater than David, yet who also suffers more intensely than David?
- Psalm 22 is quoted in the New Testament in Mt. 27:35, 46; Mk. 15:34; Jn. 19:24; Heb. 2:12.

On YouTube, listen to "Doxology – My Ransom" by Southern Seminary. Give thanks for the confidence of forgiveness for since because of the wounds of Jesus which paid our ransom.

## Begin by reading Psalm 69:1-36.

- In Psalm 69, as was true with Psalm 22, “the successful interpretation of this psalm hinges on our ability to identify the sufferer at the center of this sad description of woe.”<sup>3</sup> Who wrote Psalm 69? Do you think David wrote these words *primarily* of himself or rather as prophetic of the coming messiah? Consider how verse 5 might influence your answer.
- According to verses 1-5, describe the various miseries of *the sufferer*.
- According to verses 6-12 (especially v.7 and v. 9), why is *the sufferer* experiencing these things?
- According to verses 13-18, what does *the sufferer* request from God?
- In addition to the miseries of verses 1-5, what further misery does *the sufferer* experience in verses 19-21?
- According to verses 22-28, what do the enemies of *the sufferer* receive from God?
- According to verses 30-36, what does *the sufferer* receive from God?

## Summarizing Psalm 69

- In many ways God orchestrated the events of David’s life to prefigure and thus point forward to the true King of Israel. The things that happened to David, the role in which David served, and many of the things that David said were intended by God to sketch an outline of what the Messiah would look like. How does this influence your understanding of the message of Psalm 69?
- Jesus and the writers of the New Testament quote Psalm 69 more than any other psalm except for Psalm 110. Psalm 69 is quoted seven times in the New Testament: Mt. 27:48; Jn. 2:17; 15:25; 19:28, 29; Ac. 1:16-20; Ro. 11:9, 10; 15:3.

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<sup>3</sup> Walter Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, 104.

## Wrapping Up

- Based on what you have seen in Psalms 2, 110, 22, and 69, and knowing that these psalms to some extent point forward to the coming anointed king of Israel, how would you describe the role and features of the Messiah (again, based on these four psalms)?
- How does your description of the Messiah based on these psalms fit with (or not) the “job description” for the Messiah that you gave before studying these psalms (p. 10, based on Lessons 1-3)?
- There are so many varieties of suffering. What kind of suffering are you experiencing this week? How does the fact that Jesus endured suffering bring encouragement to you in the midst of your own difficulties? Why do you think we tend to resent suffering when it was so central to the identity and work of the Messiah?

On YouTube, listen to “Hallelujah, What a Savior” by Shelly Moore Band.

## Historical Books Timeline

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 1406 [or 1220] b.c. | Moses' death; Israel's entry into Canaan under Joshua                       |
| 1375 [or 1210]      | Joshua's death  |
| 1375–1055           | Period of the judges  |
| 1050/42/30–1010     | Saul's reign  |
| 1010–971            | David's reign   |
| 971–931             | Solomon's reign   |
| 931–722             | Divided kingdom (Israel)—19 kings   |
| 722                 | Destruction of Samaria (Israel's capital) by Assyria; Israel's resettlement |
| 931–586             | Divided kingdom (Judah)—19 kings, 1 queen                                   |
| 586                 | Destruction of Jerusalem and temple by Babylon; Judah exiled to Babylon     |
| 586–538             | Judah's exile in Babylon  |
| 561                 | Release of King Jehoiachin from prison in Babylon                           |
| 539                 | Cyrus II of Persia captures Babylon   |
| 538                 | First return of Jews to Jerusalem under Jeshua and Zerubbabel               |
| 516                 | Temple rebuilding completed   |
| 478                 | Esther and Mordecai rise in the Persian court                               |
| 458                 | Ezra's return to Jerusalem from Babylon                                     |
| 445                 | Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem from Babylon                                 |
| 445–???             | Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt  |
| 433                 | Nehemiah's visit to Babylon and return to Jerusalem                         |

\*Source: taken from the *ESV Study Bible*, p. 385.

# Timeline of Prophets

| Activity of the Writing Prophets during the Reigns of the Kings of Israel and Judah |                            |                        |                              |                         |
|---|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Timeline  | King of Judah // Event     | Prophet to Judah       | Prophet to Israel            | King of Israel // Event |
| 780 B.C.  |                            |                        |                              | Jeroboam II (781-753)   |
| 770   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 760   | Uzziah (Azariah) (767-740) |                        | (c. 760) Amos (c. 760) Jonah |                         |
| 750   | Jotham (750-735)           |                        |                              | (c. 755) Hosea          |
| 740   | Ahaz (735-715)             | Micah (c. 742)         | Isaiah (c. 740)              |                         |
| 730   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 720   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 710   | Hezekiah (715-686)         |                        |                              |                         |
| 700   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 680   | Manasseh (686-642)         | Nahum (c. 660-630)     |                              |                         |
| 660   | Amon (642-640)             |                        |                              |                         |
| 640   | Josiah (640-609)           | Zephaniah (c. 640-609) |                              |                         |
| 620   |                            | Habakkuk (c. 640-609)  |                              |                         |
| 600   | Jehoahaz (609)             | (c. 627) Jeremiah      |                              |                         |
|   | Jehoiakim (609-597)        |                        |                              |                         |
|   | Jehoiachin (597)           |                        |                              |                         |
|   | Zedekiah (597-586)         |                        |                              |                         |
|   | Fall of Jerusalem (586)    | Obadiah (after 586)    |                              |                         |
| 580   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 560   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 540   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 520   | 1st return of exile (538)  | Haggai (c. 520)        |                              |                         |
|   | Temple rebuilt (516/515)   | Zechariah (c. 520)     |                              |                         |
| 500   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 480   |                            |                        |                              |                         |
| 460   | 2nd return of exiles (458) | Malachi (c. 460)       |                              |                         |
| 440   | 3rd return of exiles (445) |                        |                              |                         |

Major Prophets

Minor Prophets

Joel is not displayed as the dates are uncertain and estimates range from the 9th to the 4th centuries B.C.

Micah's prophecy was likely directed toward both Judah and Israel.

\*Source: taken from the ESV Study Bible, p. 1232.

## Lesson 6: The Messiah in the Early Prophets

Listen to “So Long, Moses” by Andrew Peterson. What role do the prophets play in the history of Israel?

After David and Solomon died, Israel began disintegrating (1Kings 2:10; 10:41; 12:16ff). The promise of an offspring of the woman, of Abraham, of Judah, of David—this promise seemed discarded. After Solomon died, the kingdom of Israel split into a coalition of ten northern tribes (Israel), and two southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin, referred to simply as Judah). Both the north and the south were plagued by evil kings, constant idolatry and immorality. God sent prophets persistently to both the north and the south to warn the kings and the people to return to the Lord, but all to no avail.

The prophets constantly warned of God’s judgment if the people would not repent of their sin, and yet the prophets also held out hope to the people that the promise would be fulfilled if they would repent of sin and return to the Lord. Throughout the prophets, the concept of the Messiah is developed along the lines of the promise being held out to Israel. So in one sense, the prophets proclaim the Messiah constantly because they keep talking about God’s covenant promises. But there are some passages that highlight this theme more than others. We’ll look at a few of them over the next several weeks.

“The scope of the Messianic doctrine in the prophets is large. In some ways, the only fair treatment of this doctrine is to give an exposition of all sixteen prophets, for it belongs to the warp and woof of all their writings.”<sup>4</sup>

### An Outline of Hosea

*Restoring a Wayward Wife*

1. Cycle Number 1 (1:1-3:5)
  - a. Hosea’s Wife and Children (1:1-2:1): A picture of judgment and mercy
  - b. Israel’s Punishment (2:1-13): Judgment
  - c. The Lord’s Mercy (2:14-23): Mercy
    - i. Hosea Redeems his wife (3:1-5): A picture of the Lord’s mercy
2. Cycle Number 2 (4:1-12:1)
  - a. The Lord’s Controversy with Israel (4:1 – 10:15): Judgment
    - i. The Lord Accuses Israel (4:1-19)
    - ii. Warning of future punishment (5:1-15)
    - iii. Israel and Judah will not return to the Lord
    - iv. Israel will reap the whirlwind
    - v. The Lord will punish Israel
  - b. The Lord’s Love for Israel (11:1-12:1): Mercy
3. Cycle Number 3 (12:2-14:9)
  - a. The Lord’s Indictment against Israel (12:2-13:16): Judgment
  - b. The Lord’s forgiveness for Israel (14:1-9): Mercy

**Begin by reading Hosea 3:1-5.**

- 3:1 has the phrase, “...even as the LORD loves the children of Israel.” From what you know of the story of Hosea and Gomer, how do verses 1-3 reflect the relationship between the LORD and the children of Israel?

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<sup>4</sup> Walter Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, 138.

- Who is speaking in verses 4-5? Note the connecting word “for” at the beginning of verse 4. How is verse 4 related to the previous verses?
- When verse 4 lists all of these things that Israel will live without, what’s the significance of this situation? What blessings does Israel not have since they do not have these things?
- According to verse 5, when will this situation change? What will be the cause of this turning point?
- What is strange about the fact that verse 5 says, “...they shall return and seek...David their king”? What explanation might resolve this oddity? See also Jer. 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25.
- To whom shall the people come in humble fear according to the end of verse 5? What might this indicate about the relationship between “the LORD and David their king”?

#### **Synthesize the message of Hosea 3:1-5.**

- How does this text exhibit both judgment and mercy? In what sequence do they occur?
- If you had to ascribe a title to the Messiah based on verses 4-5, what would it be and why?
- How does this text add to or develop the promise-plan of the Messiah?
- In the life story and the teaching ministry of Hosea, the sequence of 1) sin, 2) punishment, 3) restoration serves to highlight the compassion and covenant faithfulness of God. Hosea 11:8-9 are crucial for understanding the book as a whole:

*How can I give you up, O Ephraim?  
 How can I hand you over, O Israel?  
 How can I make you like Admah?  
 How can I treat you like Zeboiim?  
 My heart recoils within me;  
 My compassion grows warm and tender  
 I will now execute my burning anger;  
 I will not again destroy Ephraim;  
 For I am God and not a man,  
 The holy One in your midst,  
 And I will not come in wrath.*

- How does chapter 3 (especially verses 4-5) highlight the message of Hosea?

## An Outline of Micah

*Sin Punished and Promises Fulfilled*

1. Coming Judgment Pronounced
  - a. Future Destruction of Israel (1:1-16)
  - b. Against Those who Devise Wickedness (2:1-13)
  - c. Against Rulers, Prophets, and Priests of Israel (3:1-12)
2. Future Salvation Promised
  - a. The Lord rules from his mountain (4:1-5)
  - b. The Lord rescues Zion (4:6-13)
  - c. A ruler comes from Bethlehem (5:1-6)
  - d. A remnant will be delivered (5:7-15)
3. The Lord's Indictment and Future Salvation
  - a. Destruction of the wicked and a call to do good (6:9-16)
  - b. The Compassion of God and Future Salvation (7:1-20)

**Begin by reading Micah 5:1-5a.**

- Looking at the outline of Micah above, how does 5:1-4 fit into the overall sequence?
- What is Israel's condition according to verse 1 (cf. 4:9-13)?
- How does the ruler of verses 2-6 reflect many things that were also true of David? List any parallels that you see. For instance, David was from Bethlehem (cf. 1 Sam 16:1), and so is the ruler that Micah speaks about (Ephrathah seems to be simply an alternative name for Bethlehem).
- How do these verses confirm the blessing of Genesis 49:8-12?
- Describe the manner in which this ruler exercises his kingship in verses 3-4. List the various features of his rule.
- In the second half of verse 4 and the first line of verse 5, what are the results of the his rule for "the flock" over which he rules?

- Micah 1:1 tells us that Micah served as a prophet during the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah (southern kingdom). During Hezekiah's reign, Sennacherib king of Assyria besieged Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13ff.), but Hezekiah delivered Jerusalem by remaining faithful to the LORD (2 Kings 19:14-19; 19:32-34). Nonetheless, Isaiah prophesies that God will eventually give Judah into the hands of Babylon in Isaiah 39:5-7. How does Hezekiah respond to Isaiah message in Isa. 39:8 and what might this indicate about Hezekiah?
- How does the king of Micah's prophecy (5:1-5a) stand in contrast to King Hezekiah? How does the outcome of Micah's ruler stand in contrast to the outcome for Israel after Hezekiah?

**Synthesize the message of Micah 5:1-5a.**

- What comfort do you think this promised ruler would have been to the people of Judah in the midst of geopolitical instability all around them? When they heard "And he shall be their peace," what kind of hope would this have cultivated in them?
- What false sources of security do you think the people of Israel would have been tempted to trust in when faced by the threats of Sennacherib king of Assyria and later the Babylonians?
- Summarize the message of Micah 5:1-5a in a single sentence.
- What false sources of security are you tempted to trust in? How does this passage invite you to build your hopes, certainty and sense of identity around this messianic figure?

On YouTube, listen to "Hail to the Lord's Anointed" by Indelible Grace. Give thanks to God as you think of Jesus as the coming king who rules in righteousness with justice and grace.

## Lesson 7: The Messiah in the Middle Prophets

Isaiah's prophetic ministry spanned four decades, from 740 B.C. forward (refer back to the timeline provided on page 19). This means that he was preaching in the southern kingdom of Judah before, during and after the Assyrian onslaught and exile that occurred in the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. At the same time, the Assyrians were invading and besieging the cities of Judah, although God protected Judah from devastation in response to King Hezekiah's prayer. The central section of Isaiah is consumed with the siege of Jerusalem, the fear of Judah, the prayer of Hezekiah, God's deliverance from the Assyrians, and the warning of a future threat from the Babylonians. Nonetheless, God comforts his people by extending the hope of salvation beyond and after the captivity and exile. There would be a renewal and restoration of Israel in "the latter days."

It's at this point in the book of Isaiah that we come across a servant figure. Isaiah 52:13 tells us that this whole section is about "my servant" (the servant of the LORD, *Yahweh*). This servant figure occurs throughout Isaiah's teaching. In fact there are four "servant songs" in the book of Isaiah:

1. The bruised reed: 42:1-4
2. The light for the nations: 49:1-7
3. The obedient, suffering, vindicated son: 50:4-9
4. The man of sorrows: 52:13-53:12

Take time to read through and reflect on each of these songs before beginning this week's study. Our whole lesson this week will focus on the last and most important of these servant songs.

### **Begin by reading Isaiah 52:13-53:12.**

- What does Isaiah 52:13 indicate about the servant: tragedy or triumph? Why is this surprising in light of what follows?
- Now look at the other end of this song, 53:11b-12. Does this indicate tragedy or triumph for the servant? What does the sequence of themes teach us about the role and accomplishments of the LORD'S servant?
- What kind of response comes from the kings and nations in 52:15? How does this parallel the response of kings and nations to the Anointed One in Psalm 2 or in other passages we've looked at in previous weeks?
- In 53:1, Isaiah speaks as representative of Israel. What do these questions seem to indicate about Israel's initial response to the servant?

- What do you think it means in 53:2 that the servant is like a young plant and a root out of dry ground? See Isaiah 6:13 and 11:1. How might this idea be related to the “second David” theme from Hosea 3:4-5?
- List every verse that explicitly mentions the *substitution* of the servant as well as the particular phrases that describe this substitution.

| VERSE | PHRASE |
|-------|--------|
|       |        |

- Isaiah 49:3 identifies the servant as “my servant Israel, in whom I will be glorified.” As you read through Isaiah 52:13-53:12 do you see any indications that this servant might be distinct from the nation of Israel?
- From the passage, what indications are there that this servant may be identified as the messianic figure foretold in other places?
- The servant song of Isaiah 52-53 is alluded to in many places in the New Testament, both by Jesus and others:
  - 52:15 Romans 15:21
  - 53:1 John 12:38; Romans 10:16
  - 53:4 Matthew 8:17; 1 Peter 2:24
  - 53:5 1 Peter 2:24
  - 53:6 1 Peter 2:25
  - 53:7 Acts 8:32-33
  - 53:9 1 Peter 2:22; Revelation 14:5
  - 53:12 Luke 22:37; 1 Peter 2:24
  - There are also many allusions. Here are some that are found in the gospels: Matthew 3:15; 27:57; Mark 9:12; 10:35; Mark 14:24; Luke 11:22.
- What sins are most characteristic in your life (habitual/besetting sins)? What sins in your life are most concealed from others (secret sins)? What sins are you least aware of (unintentional sins)? Pray that God would open your eyes to these blind spots you might not yet see:
  - Job 13:23, “How many are my iniquities and my sins? Make me know my transgression and sin.”
  - Psalm 19:12, “Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults.
  - John 16:8, “And when [the Spirit] comes, he will convict the world concerning sin...”
- Having considered your sinful condition and the sins you commit (or the obedience you *omit*), reflect on all that the Servant of the Lord has borne on your behalf. How does this lead *both* to a weight of guilt and at the same time a freedom from condemnation? See Romans 7:24 and 8:1.
- On YouTube, listen to “Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted” by Fernando Ortega. How does the mood and message of this song arise out of Isaiah 53?

## Lesson 8: The Messiah in the Late Prophets

The book of Daniel can be nicely divided into two sections. The first half of the book (chs. 1-6) is a *collection of stories* from the life of Daniel under the reigns of Babylonian kings Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. The second half of the book (chs. 6-12) is a *collection of visions*. Both the stories and visions have the same overall theme: while human rulers will come and go, God rules over everything forever. It is as Daniel said, “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings” (2:20-21). Nebuchadnezzar himself came to understand this: “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble” (4:37). With this overall theme in mind, we approach Daniel’s vision in chapter 7, which describes four beasts and two figures: the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man.

### Begin by reading Daniel 7:1-28.

- “In the Hebrew Bible the sea symbolizes the chaotic forces that seek to destroy God’s creative order and covenant community.”<sup>5</sup> How does this knowledge help us understand the meaning of the four beasts coming up out of the sea (Dan. 7:3)?
- According to the bystander who interprets the dream for Daniel in verses 15-27, who is the Ancient of Days in the vision? Why is he depicted as wearing white clothing and having white hair?
- Where does the son of man come from? How do his appearance and place of origin differ from the appearance and origin of the four beasts?
- Do you see any hints that the son of man suffers?
- How do the kings and nations respond to the son of man in Daniel 7:14?
- Describe the temporal and geographic extent of the son of man’s kingdom? How does this compare to 2 Samuel 7:9-16 and Psalm 2? Who gives the kingdom to David in 2 Sam 7? Who gives dominion to the son of man in Daniel 7?

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Chisolm, *Handbook on the Prophets*, 306.

**Synthesize the meaning of Daniel 7.**

- How do you see the overall theme of Daniel (mentioned above) exhibited in chapter 7?
- The New Testament cites Daniel 7:13 in several places: Matthew 24:30; 26:64; Mark 13:26; 14:62; Luke 21:27; Revelation 1:7. What do you learn about the Son of Man from these verses?
- Daniel 9:25-27 refer to a coming anointed one, a prince. How do these verses portray both suffering as well as victory?

# An Outline of Zechariah

## *Restoring Zion and Her Leaders*

1. The Lord Calls for Repentance (1:1-6)
2. A Series of Visions
  - a. Visions of God's Mercy
    - i. A Horseman Patrols the Earth (1:7-17)
    - ii. Horns and the Craftsmen (1:18-21)
    - iii. A Man with a Measuring Line (2:1-13)
    - iv. Joshua Clothed with Pure Vestments (3:1-10; cf. Ezra 4-6)
    - v. Golden Lampstand and Olive Trees; Zerubbabel will prevail (4:1-14; cf. Ezra 4-6)
  - b. Visions of God's Judgment
    - i. The Flying Scroll (5:1-4)
    - ii. The Woman Wickedness (5:5-11)
  - c. Visions of God's Mercy
    - i. Four Chariots (6:1-8)
    - ii. The Crown and the Temple (6:9-15)
3. The Lord Calls for Repentance: Render Justice and Mercy (7:1-14)
4. Israel's Future Foretold
  - a. Coming Peace and Prosperity of Zion (8:1-23)
  - b. Judgment on Israel's Enemies (9:1-8)
  - c. Israel's Coming King (9:9-17)
  - d. Restoration of Israel (10:1-12)
  - e. Woe to the Worthless Shepherds (11:1-17)
  - f. The Lord will give Salvation (12:1-9)
  - g. A spirit of grace poured out (12:10-13:1)
  - h. Idols and Uncleanness Removed (13:2-9)
5. The Coming Day of the Lord (14:1-21)

Zechariah was one of the last prophets (only Malachi came after him). Look back at the timeline on page 19 to get a sense of when Zechariah preached and wrote. Despite the difficulty of understanding Zechariah's many visions, the overall direction of his prophecy is clear. This book is a message of hope to Israel—that God has not abandoned them, but will bring judgment to Israel's enemies and will bring restoration to his people. The restoration of Israel is vividly demonstrated by Yahweh's return to Zion. As he dwells in the midst of Jerusalem (Zion), it is transformed into a city of faithfulness, where the remnant of faithful Israel returns to the temple to worship. The Lord responds to their worship by bringing peace, security and agricultural prosperity (8:1-23).

The central message of Zechariah addresses the peace and prosperity of Zion as the Lord establishes his presence there among his people. The temple is the epicenter of the Lord's presence among his people, the center of true worship both for Israel and for the nations. *“This is what the Lord says: ‘I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,’ declares the Lord Almighty”* (Zech. 1:16).

**Begin by reading Zechariah 9:9-10.**

- Chapter 9 has three sections: verses 1-8, verses 9-10, and verses 11-17. What headings or titles would you give to each of these sections?
- What is happening to the enemies of Israel in verses 1-8? How do the events of verses 9-10 correspond to verses 1-8 and to verses 11-17?
- According to verse 10, what will be the extent of this king's peaceful reign? How does this compare to the message of verses 1-8?
- As you read these verses, what kind of leader do you envision and what kind of leader do you think the Jews who read this envisioned? Consider their historical setting (p. 19).
- What parallels do you see between verses 9 and 10 and Genesis 49:10-11?
- According to verse 16, when will these events take place?
- According to verses 16-17, what do these events indicate about God?
- The New Testament passages that rely on Zechariah 9:9-10 are Matthew 21:2-7 and John 12:12-15.

**Begin by reading Zechariah 12:10.**

- In chapter 11, Zechariah acted out a parable in which he played the part of Israel's good shepherd (v. 7) whom they rejected and sent away with the wages they thought he was worth (vv. 12-13). How much did they think he was worth (11:12) and what was this symbolic of (Exodus 21:32)? What happened to this payment (Zech. 11:13)?
- 12:1-9 then provide the words of an individual who comes as a deliverer of Jerusalem, very similar to the king of 9:9-10.
- Then 12:10 continues to spotlight the rejected good shepherd who became the deliverer of Jerusalem. How will Israel react to this person and why?
- When will the promise of 13:1 come to pass (compare with 11:11; 12:3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11)?
- Stop and listen to "There Is a Fountain Filled With Blood" by the Norton Hall Band on YouTube.

**Begin by reading Zechariah 13:1-9. The verse we will focus on here is verse 7.**

- Whose sword is being raised against the shepherd? How does this fit with 12:10?
- Where does the shepherd stand and what do you think this indicates?
- Consider how Jesus understood this verse in Matthew 26:31.

**Review and apply the message of Zechariah.**

- According to all you've looked at in Zechariah, should Israel have expected a suffering Messiah or a conquering and ruling Messiah? Why?
- Consider in what sense Zechariah 12:10 has been fulfilled in your own life. How do you see evidence of this spirit (attitude) in yourself?
- The New Testament quotes Zechariah in many places:
  - 3:2 Jude 9
  - 8:16 Eph. 4:25
  - 9:9 Matt. 21:5; John 12:15
  - 11:13 Matt. 27:9
  - 12:10 John 19:37; Rev. 1:7
  - 13:7 Matt. 26:31; Mark 14:27

**As we conclude this study, take time to explain the shape of the Messianic hope in the Old Testament and how this hope developed over time.**

On YouTube, listen to “Hail to the Lord’s Anointed” by Indelible Grace. Give thanks to God as you think of Jesus as the coming king who rules in righteousness with justice and grace.

## Appendix A, Occurrences of *Messiah* in the Hebrew Scriptures

| ▼ VERSES 39 results in 38 verses (0.26 sec)  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| ESV  | Verses   Aligned   Analysis  |  |
|  BHS/WIVU |  ESV  |  |
| Lev 4:3  | אָם הַכֹּהן הַמְּשִׁיחַ יִהְטֹא לְאַשְׁמַת הַעַם<br>וְהַקָּרֵב עַל חַטֹּאתוֹ אֲשֶׁר חֹטָא פֶּר בְּזִבְבָּקָר<br>תְּמִימָם לִיוֹתָה לְחַטֹּאת:  | if it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, then he shall offer for the sin that he has committed a bull from the herd without blemish to the LORD for a sin offering.   |
| 5  | וְלֹקַח הַכֹּהן הַמְּשִׁיחַ מִזְבֵּחַ הַפְּרִזְבִּיא אֶת־<br>אֶלְאָהֶל מוֹעֵד:   | And the anointed priest shall take some of the blood of the bull and bring it into the tent of meeting,  |
| 16   | וְהַבִּיא הַכֹּהן הַמְּשִׁיחַ מִזְבֵּחַ הַפְּרִזְבִּיא אֶל־אָהֶל<br>מוֹעֵד:  | Then the anointed priest shall bring some of the blood of the bull into the tent of meeting,   |
| 6:15   | וְהַכֹּהן הַמְּשִׁיחַ תְּחִתְיוֹ מִבְּנֵיו יִעַשֶּׂה אַתָּה<br>חֲקָעוֹלָם לִיהְוֹה כָּל־תְּקַטְּרָה:   | The priest from among Aaron's sons, who is anointed to succeed him, shall offer it to the LORD as decreed forever. The whole of it shall be burned.  |
| 1 Sam 2:10   | יְהֹהָ יִתְהַזֵּה מִרְבּוֹ עַל־בְּשָׂמִים יָרַעַם יְהֹהָ<br>יְהֹוָה אֱלֹהֵי־אָרֶץ וַיַּחֲנוּ לְמִלְבָּבוֹ וַיַּרְא קָרְנוֹ<br>מְשִׁיחָה פָּ  | The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed."   |
| 35   | וְהִקְרִמֵּתִי לִי בָּהָן נָאָמָן כִּאֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְבִּי<br>וּבְנֶפֶשִׁי יִשְׁלָחָה וּבְנִזְתִּי לֹא בֵּית נָאָמָן וְהַתְּהִלֵּךְ<br>לִפְנֵי־מְשִׁיחִי כָּל־הַיּוֹםִים:   | And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. And I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before my anointed forever.  |
| 12:3   | הָנָנִי עָנוּ בַּיּוֹנֵד יְהֹהָ וְגַגְד מְשִׁיחָה אֶת־שׂוֹר<br>מִ<br>יְלַקְּחָהִי וְחַמּוֹר מִלְקָחָה וְאֶת־מִם עַשְׁקָתִי<br>אֶת־מִם רָצֹתִי וְמִידָּמִי לְקָחָה כְּפָר וְאַעֲלָם<br>עַנְיָן בָּן וְאַשְׁבֵּךְ לְכָם: | Here I am; testify against me before the LORD and before his anointed. Whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or from whose hand have I taken a bribe to blind my eyes with it? Testify against me and I will restore it to you." |
| 5  | וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלְיָהָם עַד יְהֹהָ בְּכֶם וְעַד מְשִׁיחָה<br>הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי לֹא מִצְאָתֶם בִּנְיִם מִאּוּמָה<br>וַיֹּאמֶר עוֹד:   | And he said to them, "The LORD is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." And they said, "He is witness."   |
| 16:6   | וַיָּהִי בָּזָאת וַיַּרְא אֶת־אֶלְיָהָב וְאֶמְרָא אֶזְקִיבֵּל<br>גַּגְד יְהֹהָ מְשִׁיחָה:  | When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed is before him."  |

24:7 **וַיֹּאמֶר לְאַנְשֵׁיו חִילִילָה לֵי מִיהָה אָמָּעָשָׂה** **אַתְּהַדֵּר הַזֶּה לְאָדָנִי לְמַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה לְשָׁלָחַ** **יְהִי בָּן כִּי־מַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה הוּא:** He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD’s anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD’s anointed.”

11 **הַגָּה הַזֶּם הַזֶּה רָאוּ עִינָּךְ אַת אֲשֶׁר־נִתְנַשֵּׁךְ** **יְהֹוָה הַזֶּם בְּזֶה בְּמִעֵדָה וְאָמַר לְהַרְחֵךְ** **וְתַחַס עַלְיךָ וְאָמַר לְאָשָׁלֵח יָדִי בְּאָדָנִי** **כִּי־מַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה הוּא:** Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you. I said, ‘I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD’s anointed.’

26:9 **וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוד אֶל־אֲבִישָׁי אֶל־תְּשִׁיחְתָּהוּ כִּי מִ** **שָׁלַח יְהוָה בְּמַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה וְנִקְהָה:** But David said to Abishai, “Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD’s anointed and be guiltless?”

11 **חִילִילָה לֵי מִיהָה מַשְׁלֵחַ יְהִי בְּמַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה** **עַתָּה קַח־נָא אַתְּהַחַנְתָּא אֲשֶׁר מְרָאָשָׁוֹ** **וְאַת־צְפָהָת הַמְּפִים וְנִכְלָה לְנוּ:** The LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the LORD’s anointed. But take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go.”

16 **לֹא־טוֹב הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂיתָ חִי־יְהֹוָה כִּי** **בְּנֵי־מֹות אַתָּם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־שִׁמְרָתֶם** **עַל־אֶדְזִים עַל־מַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה וְעַתָּה רָאָה** **אַיִלְחָנִית הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאַת־צְפָהָת הַמְּפִים אֲשֶׁר** **מְרָאָשָׁוֹ:** This thing that you have done is not good. As the LORD lives, you deserve to die, because you have not kept watch over your lord, the LORD’s anointed. And now see where the king’s spear is and the jar of water that was at his head.”

23 **וַיְהִי יָשַׁיב לְאַיִש אֶת־צְדָקָתְךָ וְאֶת־אַמְנָתְךָ** **אֲשֶׁר־נִתְנַךְ יְהֹוָה הַיּוֹם בָּזֶה וְלֹא אֲבִיתִ** **לְשָׁלַח יָדִי בְּמַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה:** The LORD rewards every man for his righteousness and his faithfulness, for the LORD gave you into my hand today, and I would not put out my hand against the LORD’s anointed.

2 Sam 1:14 **וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלְיוֹן דָּוד אֵיךְ לֹא יָרַתָּ לְשָׁלַח יְדֶךָ** **לְשַׁחַת אַת־מַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה:** David said to him, “How is it you were not afraid to put out your hand to destroy the LORD’s anointed?”

16 **וַיֹּאמֶר אֶלְיוֹן דָּוד דָּמֵךְ עַל־רִאשָׁךְ כִּי פִּיךְ** **עֲוֵה בְּךָ לְאָמַר אָנָּכִי מִתְּהִי אַת־מַשִּׁיחַ** **יְהֹוָה: ס** And David said to him, “Your blood be on your head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, ‘I have killed the LORD’s anointed.’”

21 **הַרִּי בְּגִלְבָּעָן אֶל־טַל וְאֶל־מַטָּר עַל־יְכָם וְשָׁעֵן** **תְּרוּמָת בְּשָׁם נְגַעֵל מְגַן גִּבְוֹרִים מְגַן שָׁאָל** **בְּלִי מַשִּׁיחַ בְּשָׁמָן:** “You mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you, nor fields of offerings! For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, the shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.”

19:22 **וַיַּעַן אֲבִישָׁי בֶּן־צְרִיוֹן וַיֹּאמֶר הַתְּחִתָּה זוֹת** **לֹא יָמַת שְׁמַעֵי כִּי קָלַל אַת־מַשִּׁיחַ יְהֹוָה: ס** Abishai the son of Zeruiah answered, “Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, because he cursed the LORD’s anointed?”

22:51 **מְגֹדֵל יְשׁוּעָתָ מִלְכֵו וְעִשְׁתָּחַחַד לְמֶשִׁיחּוּ לְדוֹד וּלְזָרֻעּוּ עַד-עוֹלָם:** Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever."

23:1 **וְאֶלָּה דָּבָרִ דָּד הַאֲחָרִינִים נָאָם דָּד בָּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְנָאָם הַגָּבֵר הַקָּם עַל מֶשִׁיחּ אֶלְ�הִי יַעֲקֹב וְנָעַם זָמְרוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל:** Now these are the last words of David: The oracle of David, the son of Jesse, the oracle of the man who was raised on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, the sweet psalmist of Israel:

Isa 45:1 **בְּהָאָמֵר יְהוָה לְמֶשִׁיחּוּ לְכַבֵּשׁ אֲשֶׁר-הַחֲזֹקִתִּי בַּיּוֹמָנוּ לְרֹדֵל-פְּנֵי גּוֹיִם וְמַתְנִי מַלְכִים אֲפָתֵחַ לְפָתֵחַ לִפְנֵי דָלְתִים שְׁעָרִים לֹא יִסְגַּר:** Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him and to loose the belts of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed:

Hab 3:13 **צָאת לִישְׁעָה עַמְּךָ לִישְׁעָה אֶת-מֶשִׁיחּ מְחַצָּתְךָ רָאשׁ מִבֵּית רְשָׁעָה עָרוֹת יְסֻוד עַד-צְוָאָר סָלָה:** You went out for the salvation of your people, for the salvation of your anointed. You crushed the head of the house of the wicked, laying him bare from thigh to neck. Selah

Ps 2:2 **יִתְּצַבּוּ מֶלֶכִים אָרֶץ וּרְזִוִּים נָסְדוּ-יִחְדָּע עַל-יְהוָה וּלְמֶשִׁיחּוּ:** The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying,

18:51 **מְגֹדֵל יְשׁוּעָתָ מִלְכֵו וְעִשְׁתָּחַחַד לְמֶשִׁיחּוּ לְדוֹד וּלְזָרֻעּוּ עַד-עוֹלָם:** Great salvation he brings to his king, and shows steadfast love to his anointed, to David and his offspring forever.

20:7 **עַתָּה יְדַעַתִּי כִּי הַשְׁׁעָרָה יְהוָה מֶשִׁיחּוּ יַעֲנֶה מִשְׁמֵי קְדַשׁוּ בְּגָבוֹרָתִישׁ עַמְּנִינוּ:** Now I know that the LORD saves his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with the saving might of his right hand.

28:8 **יְהוָה עֹזֶלֶמוּ וּמָעוֹז יְשׁוּעָתְמֶשִׁיחּוּ הַוָּא:** The LORD is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

84:10 **מַגְנִינוּ רָאָה אֱלֹהִים וְהַבְּטָפְנִי מֶשִׁיחּוּ:** Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed!

89:39 **וְאַתָּה זִנְחָתָ וְתִמְאָס הַתְּעִבָּרָת עַם-מֶשִׁיחּוּ:** But now you have cast off and rejected; you are full of wrath against your anointed.

52 **אֲשֶׁר חָרְפּוּ אֶזְבִּיךְ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר חָרְפּוּ עֲקָבוֹת מֶשִׁיחּוּ:** with which your enemies mock, O LORD, with which they mock the footsteps of your anointed.

105:15 **אֶל-תִּגְעַשׂ בְּמֶשִׁיחּי וְלֹבֵבֵי אֶל-תִּרְעֻוּ:** saying, "Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!"

132:10 **בְּעַבוֹר דָּד עֲבָדָךְ אֶל-תִּשְׁבַּפְנֵי מֶשִׁיחּוּ:** For the sake of your servant David, do not turn away the face of your anointed one.

17 **שֶׁם אָצְמִיחּ קְרֻנוּ לְדוֹד עַרְכְּתִי יָרַלְמֶשִׁיחּוּ:** There I will make a horn to sprout for David; I have prepared a lamp for my anointed.

Lam 4:20 רוח אפינו מישיך יהזה נלכד בשחיתותם The breath of our nostrils, the LORD's anointed, was captured in their pits, of whom we said, "Under his shadow we shall live among the nations."

Dan 9:25 ותדע ותשכל מזמיא דבר להשיב לבנות ירושלם עד מישיך נגיד שבעים שבעה Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

26 ואחרי השבעים ששים ושנים יברת מישיך And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. ואין לו והעיר והמלך שחתה עם נגיד הבא And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.

1 Chron 16:22 אל-תגעו במשיחי ובנביאי אל-תרעעו: פ saying, "Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!"

2 Chron 6:42 יהזה אלhim אל-תשיב פני מישיחך זכיה לחסדי דוד עבדך: פ O LORD God, do not turn away the face of your anointed one! Remember your steadfast love for David your servant."

## Appendix B: Messiah Theme as Motif Integrating Entire Scripture

By Nik Lingle

The apostle John records how John the Baptist saw Jesus coming and exclaimed, “Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). Again, John the Baptist saw Jesus walking along and called out in the same way, “Behold the Lamb of God!” This time there were two disciples standing next to him who heard him say this and they immediately began following Jesus, asking him “Rabbi, where are you staying?” Jesus said to them, “Come and see,” and took them to the place. It was about 4:00pm so they stayed with him. But immediately after that interaction, one of those two new followers, named Andrew, rushed to find his brother Simon Peter. As soon as he found Peter, he reported, “We have found the Messiah!” And John the apostle adds the editorial comment, “(which means Christ.)”

The next day Jesus went to Galilee and found Phillip and called to him, “Follow me.” Phillip went and found Nathanael (who was from Bethsaida) and said to him, “Come! We have found the one of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” Nathanael was skeptical at first (“Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”) but upon meeting him, Jesus said he had seen Nathanael sitting under the fig tree. This knowledge seemed supernatural to Nathanael, who immediately declared that Jesus must be the Son of God and King of Israel.

With these stories, John the gospel writer begins his account of the life of Jesus. His transparent purpose is to proclaim the historical Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah of Israel. But where did this hope come from?

The Hebrew word *masiah* is used thirty-nine times in the Hebrew Scriptures, and typically denotes something that has been set aside as designated for sacred use. The Septuagint renders *masiah* with the Greek word *christos*, Christ, which basically means anointed or consecrated. It may refer to objects in the temple used for sacrificial purposes. However, it was often applied to people as well, such as the priests, prophets and kings, who had been called by God and set aside as divine agents or mouthpieces. Walter Kaiser argues that in at least nine of these thirty-nine occurrences, the word seems to have a more technical meaning referring to a coming one who would be set aside as the eternal ruler of God’s people. This hope was as ancient as the story of the Bible itself. Even before there was Messiah language, the concept of an individual set aside for a special redemptive purpose is evident in the Old Testament.

Before we proceed, we should recognize that when looking for the Messiah theme in the Old Testament, we want to look not only for the occurrence of particular *terms* (like “covenant” or “Messiah”), but also to evaluate those passages where the *concept* is clearly present, even though the term itself may not be used.

This hope is first evident in the Garden, when God inserts a promise in the midst of the curse, that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, though he would have his own heel bruised in the process. This word of hope suggested that perhaps the curse could be lifted. Lamech seemed to hope that his son would be this serpent-crushing offspring. He called his son Noah, “Perhaps he will give us relief from the curse.” Noah did indeed bring his people by faith through the flood of judgment and into a new covenant era, but his achievement was short-lived, and the decline of humanity quickly continues into the Tower of Babel.

After that mess comes a brilliant promise to an unexpected figure. The promise has been general and global, but now God brings the promise to a particular person, Abraham. The promise to Abraham seems to build on or emerge from the earlier promise of an eventual deliverer from the curse, because God promises Abraham *blessing*. The promise is really three-fold: posterity (as many as the sands of the sea), land to call your own, and blessing (both to be blessed and to be a blessing). But the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) all recognize that they are sojourners, they never get the land promised to them. In fact, Jacob’s sons end up as slaves leeching off the land of another nation.

At this point God raises up Moses to deliver his people. Moses is called, appointed by God for this special task. He delivers the people through the waters of the exodus, and leads them toward their promised inheritance. But Moses, like the people he leads, is an imperfect man. His sins preclude him from entering into the land of promise. He is not the hoped-for deliverer after all. Joshua leads the people in, and initial conquest goes well, but eventually their zeal and energy wane, and rather than conquering Canaan, the people themselves become Canaanized. They are pressed into the mold of Canaanite religion and adultery and violence. A series of judge-deliverers are temporarily effective, but ultimately ineffective. And Israel is left with no ruler; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. God said to Israel, "I will save you no more" (Judges 10:14).

After a long period of silence, God breaks through by speaking to Samuel (1 Samuel 3). Samuel's mother had consecrated him in hopes that God would give strength to the king of Israel, the Lord's anointed (1 Samuel 2:24). And God tells Eli that he will anoint a priest who will go in and out before him forever. The messiah theme is certainly moving forward at this point.

Samuel quickly becomes well known as a prophet and God calls him to anoint Saul as the first king of Israel. Saul is a dismal failure, but his failed reign gives way to the kingship of David, the friend of God. With David, the messiah theme takes a giant leap forward. David is God's anointed, the model of what a king should be in humility toward God and benevolence toward his people. Yet it is quickly evident that David's failures mean he cannot possibly be the ultimate deliverer. Nevertheless, in what Stephen Dempster calls perhaps the most important chapter in the Bible, God promises to David a son who will sit on the throne forever. God says, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son" (2 Samuel 7). With the decline and disintegration of Israel's monarchy, all hope seems to be lost for a good king who would bring final deliverance for his people, making good on the hope of Genesis 3 and the promise(s) to Abraham. But the hope remains.

The Psalms give further evidence of this same hope, with Psalm 2 in particular predicting that the kings and rulers of the nations would gather and plot against the Lord's anointed. Yet the anointed one would not be destroyed. Hope remains for those who kiss the Son and show him the honor and reverence he deserves. Psalm 110 as well foresees the hope of deliverance, "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" Job also seems to hope in a redeemer who would act as an intermediary. Recognizing that in the midst of his misery, he has no basis on which to appeal to God, Job cries out, "Oh that there were an arbiter [mediator] between us, who might lay his hands on us both" (Job 9:33). This arbiter would be same Redeemer who lives and would stand at the final days upon the earth.

Of course the prophets hold out hope for the people of Israel. Though their preaching is a mixture of judgment and mercy, they consistently point to a time in the last days when the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh (Joel 2) and a ruler from Bethlehem would rule with scepter of Judah (Micah 5). Daniel sees the vision of the Son of Man coming to the Ancient of Days in glory and splendor and receiving from him the rule over all the nations (Daniel 7). This anointed Son of Man was the hope of an exiled and enslaved community.

But the picture of the coming Messiah was not all about deliverance and glory. As far back as Genesis 3:15, and even in Psalm 2, there was the obvious hint of rejection and suffering. This was even clearer in the ministry of Isaiah. Isaiah foresaw an Emmanuel who would take the rule of the nations upon himself. This servant would bring back not only the lost ones of Israel, for that would be too small a thing. Rather he would be raised up as a light for *all* the nations, not just Israel (Isaiah 49). And yet there was another dimension to Isaiah's servant; this would be a suffering servant who would be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, upon him was the punishment that brought us peace and by his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53). He would be despised and rejected, a man of sorrows.

Thus the Messiah would reign in eternal power and glory, and yet he would suffer rejection and ignominy at the hands of ruthless men. Here we have a recognizable version of the Genesis 3 promise of a serpent-crushing son whose heel would be bruised. But the Hebrew Scriptures end with the promise of Messiah unfulfilled. Many candidates; all failed. And so Malachi says, there will be forerunner, a voice making straight the way of the Lord, and then he will come with healing in his wings.

So when Andrew said to Peter, “We have found the Messiah!” and when Philip said to Nathanael, “We have found the one of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote,” and when Nathanael eventually agreed, “Truly, you are the Son of God, the King of Israel,” they had much evidence on which to base their conclusions. Their hope was not theirs alone; it was the hope of all of God’s people before them. In fact, John Sailhamer says, this is why the Hebrew Scriptures were written, as a record of the hope of God’s people of a coming Messiah. This certainly seems to be how Andrew, Philip, and Nathanael were reading their Scriptures.

Jesus understood himself to be the Son of Man who would suffer as the Passover Lamb (Matthew 26:2). Note the pairing of the glorious and the ominous. He understood himself to be the fulfillment of all that was written in the Law and the Prophets (Luke 24). And he believed that after his ascension he would leave behind the Holy Spirit, thus inaugurating Joel’s end days in which the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh (Joel 2).

The author of Hebrews sees Jesus as the fulfillment of Psalm 110, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet” (cf. Heb 1). He also sees Jesus as the fulfillment of Psalm 8, “What is man that you are mindful of him or the Son of Man that you care for him? You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.” The author of Hebrews, having cited Psalm 8, goes on with his preaching from this passage, “Now in putting everything in subjection to him he left nothing outside his control. At present we do not yet see all things in subjection to him but we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death” (Hebrews 2). Here the author of Hebrews understands Jesus to be the crowned ruler of the universe, who nonetheless suffered through death.

And yet the author goes on to explain that Jesus had purposefully passed through death in order to demonstrate solidarity with his brothers and sisters and to bring deliverance for them. Like Noah through the flood, like Moses through the Red Sea, like Joshua through the Jordan. Jesus passes through the flood of God’s wrath. “Since the children therefore share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the Devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not the angels that he helps but he helps the offspring of Abraham” (Hebrews 2:14-18). Jesus is the reigning king of Psalm 8, and the final deliverer from the enemy.

The book of Revelation sees Jesus on throne at the right hand of God (just where Hebrews says he reigns from). He is the Lamb who was slain, and by his blood ransomed people for God from every tribe and tongue and language. Once all these people are inside God’s city, enjoying God’s reign, free from all threats, they sing together, “Worthy is the Lamb!” He is the eternal King of 2 Samuel 7, he vanquishes the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the accuser of the brethren. It could not be any clearer that Revelation’s destruction of the dragon is the fulfillment of the serpent-crushing promise of Genesis 3:15 (cf. Revelation 12:9-11). And the eternal city and kingdom of Revelation 21-22 signifies the lifting of the curse and the return to the paradise-like conditions of the Garden...only infinitely better.

Thus *messiah* is a theme that moves from the beginning to the end of Scripture. The messianic hope is that an anointed prophet/priest/king would be a deliverer for all his people from the ancient curse and ultimate enemy, the Devil, even though this deliverer would only bring about this deliverance by means of his own suffering and death. Thus the deliverer is sacrificial and self-substituting. Praise to God for orchestrating all of human history for the purpose of displaying his redemptive love through his promised Messiah.

## Why The Old Testament?

by Iain Campbell January 1st, 2010

B.B. Warfield famously described the Old Testament as a room “fully furnished but dimly lit.” By that he meant that all the fundamental elements of the gospel were revealed in the Old Testament but awaited the coming of Jesus Christ to bathe that revelation in glorious light. As Jesus walked alongside the Emmaus disciples after the resurrection, He began shining His light on the Scriptures. Who these two were, we do not know; but what they were is evident: “they stood still, looking sad” (Luke 24:17). His diagnosis of their condition was their misinterpretation of the Old Testament and its clear evidence that “the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory” (v. 26).

Jesus’ solution for them was to take them right back to the earliest sacred writings of Holy Scripture — the books of Moses — to highlight the messianic themes of the Pentateuch. The details are not supplied. Did He refer to Genesis 3:15 with its first prediction of a savior of mankind who would deal a deathblow while receiving injury himself? Did He refer to the promise to Noah that God would be the God of Shem’s line (Gen. 9:26)? Or to the promise to Abraham that his offspring would be blessed by God (17:7)? Or to the prediction of Jacob that a son of Judah would wield a royal scepter (49:10)? Or to Balaam’s forecasting of a star that would rise out of Jacob (Num. 24:17)?

We cannot be sure, but — to paraphrase C.H. Spurgeon — this was a remarkable moment in which the best teacher used the best textbook to teach the best lesson. The teacher was the Lord Himself, as He was the lesson. That is always the reality of our gospel learning — the Christ of God opens our eyes to the glory and wonder of His own work. And His textbook was the Old Testament Scriptures — Jesus began with Moses and the prophets and went on to show that He Himself is the meaning of the Old Testament, the key to unlock it, and the one to whom it leads. Not every part of the Old Testament is explicitly messianic, of course, but the Messiah stands behind every theological concept, every word picture, every historical event, every birth and death, every poem and psalm, every aphorism and metaphor, every jot and tittle of our Old Testament.

And as He stands before us in the Old Testament, we realize that it is not just some vague notion of Him that is presented to us, but the specifics of His suffering and His consequent glory. We understand that a host of Old Testament passages do not merely pave the way for the Savior but present to us the particulars of His work as mediator, showing us that there were things He had to suffer and that there was a consequent absolute necessity of His being exalted after His suffering and death. The light may not have been filling the room, but the essential elements were there all the time.

All of which means, for us, at least three things: First, we are not simply New Testament believers. We are whole Bible believers. We read, preach, and meditate on the whole of the inspired Word, because in every part it is our access to the eternal, incarnate, and glorified Word. We come to the Scriptures in every part, as the Greeks came to the feast in John 12, saying “we wish to see Jesus” (v. 21). And bathed in the light of the finished work of Christ, the Old Testament shows us things about Jesus that we might otherwise have missed, as the Psalms (for example, in Psalm 22) tell us what Jesus was thinking on the cross.

Second, understanding the Old Testament is often the key to our understanding the New. The disciples of Emmaus needed to hear exposition and application from a sermon based on a string of Old Testament texts in order that they might better understand the cross. And the New Testament labors the point that what happened in the Old Testament happened for our benefit (1 Cor. 10:11). Can we make sense of Hebrews or Revelation without knowing our Old Testament?

Third, biblical theology is the best cure for spiritual depression. Sad hearts can be turned into burning hearts by meditating on the messianic theme of the Old Testament. Nothing can dispel gloom or lift us out of despair quite like having the story of the Bible unfolded. For that reason, every Bible preacher has a duty to follow the example of the Savior at this point and to direct his hearers along the roads that lead to Jesus. When it comes to opening the understanding (Luke 24:45), Jesus stands alone; but in opening the Scriptures He commits His own prophetic spirit to the preachers of the gospel, and in unfolding the Word of Christ, the hearts of believers are warmed, stirred, and drawn to the Christ of the Word.

What began as a journey to Emmaus ended up as a tour of the furnishings of the Old Testament. And when these two disciples finally recognized Him in their home (Luke 24:31), it was only because first they had been shown the portrait of a suffering and glorified Messiah that had always been hanging amid the rich furniture of the room we call the Old Testament.

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# Fixing the Mind: A Guide to Meditation

## Three Stages of Meditation

John Owen suggests there are three stages of meditation in his work, *The Grace and Duty of Being Spiritually Minded*. Keller calls these stages engaging the mind, inclining the heart and enjoying the Lord. Here is how John Owen describes it:

Three things may be distinguished in the great duty of being spiritually minded.

- 1) The actual exercising of the mind, in its thoughts, meditations, and desires, about things spiritual and heavenly.... They mind them by fixing their thoughts and meditations upon them.
- 2) The inclination, disposition, and frame of the mind, in all its affections, whereby it adheres and cleaves unto spiritual things...from the love and delight...in them and engagement unto them.
- 3) A complacency of mind, from that gust, relish, and savor, which it finds in spiritual things, from their suitableness unto its constitution, inclinations, and desires. There is a salt in spiritual things, whereby they are condited and made savory unto a renewed mind; though to others they are as the white of an egg, that hath no taste or savor in it. In this gust and relish lies the sweetness and satisfaction of spiritual life. Speculative notions about spiritual things, when they are alone, are dry, sapless, and barren. In this gust we taste by experience that God is gracious, and that the love of Christ is better than wine, or whatever else hath the most grateful relish unto a sensual appetite. This is the proper foundation of that joy which is “unspeakable and full of glory.”

## Five Methods for Meditation

1. Read the biblical text slowly, answering four questions as you go
  - a. What does this teach me about God and his character?
  - b. About human nature, character, and behavior?
  - c. About Christ and his salvation?
  - d. About the church, or life in the people of God?
2. Ask application questions of the text
  - a. Any personal examples to emulate or avoid?
  - b. Any commands to obey?
  - c. Any promises to claim?
  - d. Any warnings to heed?
3. Take one verse and emphasize each word, asking what each words uniquely contributes
  - a. For example, “Follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men” (Mark 1:17)
  - b. Follow – we must align our lives
  - c. Me – not just obedience but relationship
  - d. I will – a promise and assurance
  - e. Become – a process, not a single event
4. Paraphrase the verse in your own words
  - a. Verbally and written
  - b. Repeat at various times
5. Memorize the text
  - a. Especially fruitful when combined with one of the other approaches
  - b. Memorizing is “learning by heart”

\* This material is drawn from Tim Keller, *Prayer*, chapter 10.

# A Pattern for Daily Prayer

## ***Morning Prayer (25 minutes)***

### APPROACHING GOD

- Ask him for his presence and help as you read and pray. Choose from one of these scriptural invocations: Psalm 16:8; 27:4, 9-10; 40:16-19; 63:1-3; 84:5-7; 103:1-2; 139:7-10; Isaiah 57:15; Matthew 11:28-30; John 4:23; Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:16-20.

### BIBLE READING AND MEDITATION

- Keep in mind that no one can do all of the following in any one session of meditation and prayer.
- To study the passage: Read it three or four times. Then make a list of everything it says about God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit); list anything that it tells you about yourself; and finally, list any examples to be followed, commands to be obeyed (or things that need to be avoided), and promises to claim. When this is all done, choose the verse and truth that is most striking and helpful to you. Paraphrase the thought or verse in your own words.
- To meditate on the passage: Write down the answers to the following questions:
  - What does this text show me about God for which I should praise or thank him?
  - What does the text show me about my sin that I should confess and repent of? What false attitudes, behavior, emotions, or idols come alive in me whenever I forget this truth?
  - What does the text show me about a need that I have? What do I need to do or become in light of this? How shall I petition God for it?
  - How is Jesus Christ or the grace that I have in him crucial to helping me overcome the sin I have confessed or to answering the need I have?
  - Finally: How would this change my life if I took it seriously—if this truth were fully alive and effective in my inward being? Also, why might God be showing this to me now? What is going on in my life that he would be bringing this to me attention today?

### PRAYER

- Pray each of the meditations—adoration, confession, petition, and thanksgiving for Jesus and his salvation.
- Pray for your needs and pressing concerns.
- Take a final moment just to enjoy him and his presence.

## ***Evening Prayer (15 minutes)***

### APPROACHING GOD

- Ask him for his presence and help as you read and pray.

### BIBLE READING AND MEDITATION

- Read a Psalm, eventually working through the entire Psalter twice a year.

### PRAYER

- Turn the Psalm into a prayer and pray it back to God.
- Think over your day and confess where you sinned or failed to respond as you should have.
- Think over your day and pray for people you met or heard about who have needs or are in difficulty.
- Pray for some of the more urgent and important needs on your heart.

\* This material is drawn from Tim Keller, *Prayer*, chapter 15.