

The Doctrine of the Messiah

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These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If we acknowledge our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1John 1:9). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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Preface: So far, this is the Doctrine of the Messiah of the Early Hebrew People. This doctrine was first found in Lesson #14 of the **Exodus Study** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). In every era of nation Israel, there was more and more revealed about the Messiah. In this study, I have confined myself to the Torah.

We should know that Jesus was descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (like all Hebrews), and He specifically came from the tribe of Judah (which eventually became the ruling tribe—but it was not so recognized by Moses during this time period).

As we study this, we should bear in mind that the Scriptures reveal God and His plan progressively. Someone who has read and understood the book of Genesis understands a great deal of information; but if that same person reads and understands Job, then he knows a great deal more.

The ESV; capitalized is used below, unless otherwise noted.

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1. The prophecy of the Messiah goes all the way back to Gen. 3:15. God is speaking to the serpent, after the fall of Adam) “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your

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offspring and her offspring [lit., seed]; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

- 1) It is a very odd thing indeed to speak of the seed of the woman, as it is only the seed of the men which was recognized (which is planted in the woman).
 - 2) God here speaks of the serpent's seed and of the woman's seed—both references are quite extraordinary.
 - 3) Messiah would be born of the woman alone—which is not something that anyone in that era would have fully understood. Despite the hundreds of prophecies found in the Old Testament, let me suggest that the Hebrew understanding of Messiah was always somewhat murky.
 - 4) The woman's Seed would bruise (crush) the head of the serpent (a deadly blow); and the serpent would bruise the heel of the woman's Seed (not a deadly blow).
 - 5) In that era, they would have known the Messiah would be the woman's seed (whatever that means) and that He would crush the serpent who tempted the woman.
 - 6) Today, we understand this as the final conflict between Jesus and Satan.
2. Abraham has an encounter with Melchizedek after defeating an alliance of kings. Gen. 14:18–20 **And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.** Melchizedek is not the Messiah; but he is typical of Messiah. At this time, I honestly do not know if this was well understood or even slightly understood among the Hebrew people or Hebrew theologians. It is my opinion that we today understand that Melchizedek is a type of Christ; then, this would not have been understood.
3. There are many prophecies about Abraham and his seed. I believe that some of these prophecies may be seen in two ways (or have, if you will, a double fulfillment).
- 1) God tells Abraham that He would give this Land of Promise to his seed. Quite obviously, this refers to Abraham's descendants, who would live on this land for many centuries; but, ultimately, Jesus Christ, the Seed of Abraham, would rule over this land from Jerusalem. Gen. 12:7 13:15 15:18
 - 2) God's covenant is made with Abraham's descendants; but we may also read the same passages and understand this to be a specific descendant of Abraham's—namely, the Messiah. Gen. 17:19
 - 3) It is also clear that, many references to Abraham's seed specifically refer to his descendants. God said that He would make Abraham's seed as the dust of the earth or as the stars of the sky—that clearly refers to Abraham's descendants and not to Messiah. Gen. 13:16 15:5 16:10 35:12
 - 4) Abraham's seed would be a stranger in a strange land, referring to the descendants of Abraham living in Egypt. Gen. 15:13 32:12
 - 5) There are many times that related pronouns which are in the plural but referring back to the word *seed* are clearly a reference to Abraham's descendants. Gen. 17:8–9
 - 6) Paul makes an interesting argument in Gal. 3:16 **But the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his Seed (it does not say, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," which is Christ).** *Genesis 3:15; 21:12; 22:18, Rom. 9:6; Heb. 11:18 (LitV).*
 - (1) All of these passages have *seed* in the singular.
 - (2) Some of those passages clearly refer to the Hebrew people.
 - (3) However, Paul's point is, there are times when this refers to Christ (the Messiah).
4. Abraham met with God and 3 angels prior to the birth of his son Isaac. I doubt that a Theophany was understood to be the Messiah. Gen. 18

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5. There are similar promises made to Isaac and to Jacob concerning their seed:
 - 1) There are times when a passage may be interpreted in two ways. Gen. 24:7, 60 26:3 28:13
 - 2) And there are passages where this clearly refers to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: Gen. 26:4 28:14
6. Jacob made the marvelous prophecy/end-of-life blessing of/to his sons, which included these words directed to Judah: **“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawmaker from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and the obedience of the peoples to him [or, Him].”** (Gen 49:10)
 - 1) Judah, who is not the firstborn, would become the ruling tribe of Israel; and this rulership would not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes. Many understand Shiloh to be a reference to the Messiah.
 - 2) Shîylôh (שִׁילֹה) [pronounced *shee-LOW*] means, *he whose it is, that which belongs to him; tranquility* (meanings uncertain); transliterated *Shiloh*; possibly a reference to Messiah. Strong’s #7886 BDB #1010.
 - 3) The people would be obedient to Judah (to whom this blessing is addressed) and also to Shiloh.
 - 4) A brilliant theologian in that era would have understood from this that Judah would become the ruling tribe and that Messiah would come from his tribe.
7. Interestingly enough, even though there are numerous mentions of Abraham and his seed; we do not find any similar references to Moses (we *never* hear about Moses and his seed). Abraham is the father of the Hebrew people; Moses is the father of the Hebrew nation. The Messiah will not be descended from Moses.
8. In what we find in these passages in Genesis is not enough information to support Moses choosing the Messiah (as we understand the Messiah) over the treasures of Egypt, as we find stated in Heb. 11:26.
9. Job, on the other hand, provides a rather complex view of Messiah, in the most amazing chapter Job 19:
 - 1) Job speaks of the harm brought against him by God: **“God has put me in the wrong and closed his net about me. Behold, I cry out, 'Violence!' but I am not answered; I call for help, but there is no justice. He has walled up my way, so that I cannot pass, and he has set darkness upon my paths. He has stripped from me my glory and taken the crown from my head...He has kindled his wrath against me and counts me as his adversary...He has put my brothers far from me, and those who knew me are wholly...All my intimate friends abhor me, and those whom I loved have turned against me. estranged from me...Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! Why do you, like God, pursue me? Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?”** (Job 19:6–9, 11, 13, 19, 21–22)
 - 2) In that description, Job is describing himself, and the pain and suffering that he has endured. However, you could go back and capitalize each and every *Me*, and it is Jesus Christ, Jesus the Messiah, describing His Own pain, where God the Father has laid upon Him, God the Son, the penalty for our sins.
 - 3) And after all of that, Job makes the wonderful proclamation: **“For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me!”** (Job 19:25–27)
 - 4) His Redeemer is the Lord, Who will stand upon the earth. The Redeemer pays for him; the

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Redeemer purchases Job!

- 5) Given Job's age in the book of Job, and that there is no mention of the Law; it is reasonable to suggest that Job lived around the time of Abraham, give or take a generation or two.
10. Moses also speaks of the Messiah (this is future from our narrative):
 - 1) Even though the slain lamb for each family during the Passover speaks of Jesus, the people of Israel would not have understood this. Exodus 12
 - 2) The most famous testimony that Moses gave of Messiah is found in Deut. 18:15–16 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to Him you shall listen—just as you desired of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' " (Exodus 20:19)
 - 3) Moses does *not* prophesy about his seed; but about a *prophet* like himself.
 - 4) God's prophecies of Messiah for Eve (Adam's woman) and for Abraham are all about the word *seed*; but Messiah will not be from Moses' seed (Moses is a Levite; Jesus is from the tribe of Judah). Jesus will be raised up from among Moses' brothers.
 - 5) As an aside, it is remarkable that the people of Moses could not listen directly to the words of God (see Exodus 20:18–19); but they will hear the words of Jesus (some will accept those words and some will not). You may recall that He often spoke in parables in order to be heard.
11. Balaam's testimony to Balak was of the Messiah—something that Moses was somehow aware of (as this is recorded by Moses). Num. 24:15b–17 "The saying of Balaam the son of Beor, and the saying of the man whose eyes are opened; the saying of him who hears the bulls of God, and he knowing the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, yet with open eyes: I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not near. A star marches out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel and shall dash the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of tumult."
12. Even though Moses did understand that God would raise up the Messiah (Moses called Him, *a prophet like me*); I think that we need to adjust our interpretation of what the author of Hebrews is saying (Heb 11:26 **He [Moses] considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward.**). I don't necessarily think that Moses was thinking about the Messiah at this point in time and chose Him over the wealth of Egypt. I think *Hebrews* is saying that Moses eventually chose God over a high political position in Egypt. A series of events and a series of decisions made by Moses led him to the point of choosing God over a high position in Egypt.
13. Perhaps we should understand this as also meaning, the author of Hebrews is saying that Messiah is God.

We must certainly bear in mind that what I have pulled together here still rests, to some degree, on hindsight. I would suggest that even Moses did not have half this amount of insight on Messiah.

I realize that this was a long way to explain an interpretation; but, unless there was more information about Messiah that Moses knew, but is not found in Genesis (or Job); then I believe the more general interpretation which I expressed is the accurate view.

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