

The Comings of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Scriptures

The Earliest Prophecies of a Coming Savior:

The promise of a coming Savior is a prominent theme of the Old Testament. The first hint of this Savior was probably when the Lord God sentenced Satan for beguiling Eve. The woman's Seed was to bruise his head even as he would bruise her Seed's heel (**Genesis 3:15**). A similar hint was given to Abraham, when the Lord told him that all the peoples of the earth would be blessed through him (**Genesis 12:3**). Acts 3:25 confirms that God was referring to the Messiah, or "Coming One" in this passage.

Perhaps the first direct promise of a coming One was made when Jacob blessed his son, Judah:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. **Genesis 49:10**

Shiloh kind of means, "Whose it is." It implies a yearning, like, "May He be Whose it is."

A similar prophetic reference to the coming One was made by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15-19

The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear... **Deuteronomy 18:15**

Although most of these promises were made specifically to Israel, the Gentiles, or "Nations" were often mentioned as beneficiaries of them as well.

Definitive Prophecies of the Coming Savior:

There are literally hundreds of prophecies of the coming One in the Old Testament. As it was written (From the Exodus at about 1500 years B.C. to the Malachi about 400 or more years B.C.), two distinct lines of prophecy about the Coming One developed. He was to be a glorious Messiah who was to deliver Israel from their anti-semitic oppressors by ruling the world in righteousness and peace; and He was to be a suffering Messiah who would deliver sinful mankind from the ravages and judgment of sin by dying for their sins.

Prophecies of a Glorious Messiah:

He would be both the son of David and the Son of God:

Jeremiah 23:5-6

⁵ "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Zechariah 14:16-17

¹⁶ And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain.

Psalms 2:7-9

⁷ "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. ⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end,

More details of the Messiah:

His Birth:

Isaiah 7:14

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (*God with us*).

Micah 5:2

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

His Life:

Isaiah 35:4-6

⁴ Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. ⁶ Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing.

Zechariah 9:9

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

His Death:

Daniel 9:25-26

²⁵ Know therefore and understand

That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;

Prophecies of a Suffering Messiah:

The Messianic Psalms prophesy His sufferings, sometimes in minute detail:

Psalms 22:15-18

¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.

¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me.

They pierced My hands and My feet;

¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Psalms 69:19-21

¹⁹ You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries are all before You.

²⁰ Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness;

I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none.

²¹ They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Some of the Prophets even explain the reason for His sufferings:

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows;

Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities;

The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

The difference between Christ's comings as the suffering Messiah and the glorious Messiah:

The Long and Short of it is that the Messiah came, just as was prophesied of Him. The virgin birth made Him the Son of God as well as the son of David. He was born in Bethlehem. He performed the miracles that proved who He was. His crucifixion fulfilled the prophesies of the suffering Messiah to the letter. God declared how He was to come, and that's the way He came. But even though performed all the miracles and rode into Jerusalem on the prescribed donkey, the Jews rejected the Lord Jesus Christ as their king because they wanted a glorious Messiah without having to acknowledge that they needed the suffering Messiah who was willing take their sins on Himself and die as their substitute.

The question I want to propose to you today is, "Do you think that God didn't know that His earthly people would reject His Son as their Messiah when He made all those promises of a glorious Messiah to them?" You know he knew exactly what would happen, and He sent the Lord to them anyway. Did He make promises He had no intention of fulfilling then? Of course He didn't. We submit to you this morning that God will fulfill every promise that He ever made to Israel in His own good time. **While He was here on the earth as the suffering Messiah the Lord Himself referred to His coming as the glorious Messiah as a future event:**

Matthew 25:31-33

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.

The Apostle Paul addresses this issue in Romans chapters 9 through 11.

Romans 11:1-2

¹ I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ^{2a} God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. God has not discarded Israel because they crucified the Lord. Rather, as the Lord Himself said, that the Messiah would not be revealed to them again until they are ready to accept Him as their Messiah.

Luke 13:34-35

³⁴ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁵ See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!

Paul shows that this was part of God's plan all along by quoting Isaiah 29:10:

Romans 11:8 (From Isaiah 29:10)

"God has given them a spirit of stupor,
Eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear..."

It is also part of God's plan to awaken the Jews so they will recognize who the suffering Messiah was:

Zechariah 12:10-11

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

But until God sees fit to judge the Gentiles and re-awaken the Jews, Christianity is mostly a Gentile thing

Romans 11:25-26

²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ^{26a} And so all Israel will be saved...

And even now there is a remnant of believing Jews who are a part of the church

Romans 11:5

⁵ Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

So, how does the Church fit into all of this?

When the Lord asked the Apostles who they thought He was, Peter answered:

Matthew 16:16

"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

And Jesus responded:

Matthew 16:17-18

^{17b} "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it..."

Christ was going to build something new.

If the church was simply to be the remnant of faithful Jews, Christ would not have had to build it. A faithful remnant of the Jews had been around for some 1500 years.

Acts chapter 2 records the establishment of the church

Acts 2:1-4

¹ When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Peter explained that this was what had been promised by the prophet Joel

Acts 2:17-21

¹⁷ 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. ²⁰ The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

²¹ And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'

But if you read Joel's prophecy, this does not qualify for the complete fulfillment of Joel's prophesy. Besides the fact that the sun was not darkened and the moon turned into blood, Joel goes on to say:

Joel 3:1-2

¹ "For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, ² I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there On account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations..."

These things just didn't happen then, so I take it that it was kind of like the Lord saying that some of the apostles would not see death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom just before the transfiguration. They indeed saw Him in the glory the kingdom would afford Him, but that sight was but a fast-forwarded glimpse of what He would be like in His kingdom glory, which actually has not come to earth yet 2000 years after that.

The Lord put the kingdom in the proper perspective for the church age in **Luke 17:20-21:**

^{20b} "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; ²¹ nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

I believe what happen at Pentecost, besides that glimpse to the future, was that the individual believers in Christ were baptized into one body, and that body was the Church, the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13

¹³ For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

And Joel's prophecy surely was partially fulfilled, for the Lord poured out His Spirit on the early church, and surely blessed them with the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and miracles. It was also a partial instigation of the new covenant promised to Israel in Jeremiah's day:

Jeremiah 31:33-34

³³ This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Christians of this age are indwelt by the Holy Spirit which leads us into all truth

1 John 2:20

²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

It almost seems to me that the Lord could not deny the spiritual blessings of the kingdom to the godly remnant of the Jews that had accepted Him as their Messiah, so He gave them to the church, which has the kingdom of Heaven within them.

The Lord's coming for The Church:

In the upper room ministry, just before He was crucified, the Lord began telling those who would be the nucleus of the church that He was going up to heaven, and that He would come and get them so they would be there with Him

John 14:1-4

¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."

Notice the difference between His promise to the church and the remaining part of his promise to Israel:

He is coming back to Israel to set up His world-wide kingdom there

He is coming to the church to take them back to heaven to be with Himself

This is important because there is a significant movement within the church that thinks the church's mission is to get the world ready for Christ to come and set up his kingdom.

John 17:24

²⁴ "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words

Can you understand why that is commonly called, "The Rapture?"

It's not that we aren't anxious to see the Lord glorified on the earth. Perhaps both are in Titus 2

Titus 2:13-14 ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous of good works.