

What Will the Messiah Be Like?

Tracy and I have an Amazon Echo speaker, and whenever we get our Amazon deliveries, the speaker blinks a certain color. I then say, "Alexa, what are my notifications," and then it says, "You have one Amazon package containing the book, '*Suffering*' by Paul Tripp." But a couple weeks ago, I got a notification and I asked what it was. Then "Alexa" responded by saying that it wouldn't share contents of packages until the New Year.

I thought that was a pretty nice feature to not give away presents. And, obviously, during this Christmas season, so many of us are giving and receiving gifts from people. Those gifts are wrapped or hidden in some way. And the surprise is part of the fun. Have you ever received a gift where you looked at it and you spent time trying to figure out what it was? Have you ever given a gift and wrapped it in a certain way in order to confuse the receiver? So, they sit and ponder. They hold the present and look at the different angles. They might shake it and think, "What is this?"

Well, technically, from a Christian perspective, why do we give and receive presents? It's because Jesus is the greatest present that God has given to the world. But when Jesus came to the world, the Jewish people had already been given notifications as to who he is. While Jesus entered this world in much silence, his entrance was prophesied for thousands of years. And, those prophecies also foretold what kind of person he would be.

Yet, many were confused. Even Mary herself is said to have pondered many things in her heart. She knew the Scripture, but she didn't know how all the prophecies came together. So, I want you to imagine with me being a fly on the wall in that animal area and you see Mary and Joseph looking on this tiny infant named Jesus. And, you hear Mary say, "I wonder what he will be like as he grows older."

This is a valid question. Sure, she knows he's the Savior. She knows he's the Messiah. But what does that mean? What will that look like practically in daily life? This is a question I think every parent wonders. We want to know what this little baby will become. Will my child live long? Or will they die young? Will they be rebellious or will they pursue the Lord? Will they be wealthy or poor? Will they have children someday or will they forego that for other valid purposes?

Of course, Mary and Joseph could know for sure that Jesus would not sin. But did Mary know for sure the type of death he was going to die? It doesn't seem she knew for sure, especially when she heard Simon's prophecy at the temple.

So, here's Mary and Joseph around some animals and you see them. Mary puts her finger inside Jesus' hand. She stares at this newborn baby and with eyes of faith, she gazes on and worships her Creator. This is the phenomenal nature of God the Son come in the flesh. When Matthew writes that his name will be Emmanuel, which means "God with us," Matthew is stating something astounding! God, the Creator, the One to whom we owe our eternal allegiance, came as a fragile, weak human being. How can the infinitely Mighty become finite and weak? That's the mystery of Emmanuel.

But wrapped up in this mystery, the Bible tells us what Emmanuel was going to do and be like. While Mary and Joseph could have been confused or lacked understanding on all Jesus would do, we who live after Jesus' life have greater clarity on the Old Testament prophecies and can see how they were applied to Jesus.

This little baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger was the Messiah. And, as Messiah, that means he came to this earth to be what we absolutely needed him to be. We're told he came to save the world. Which, by the way, means that Jesus' coming is actually a declaration of sad news. We are in need of rescue. But his presence also is glorious news. His presence is a declaration that there is good news to come! The Messiah has come! Emmanuel – God with us!

So, this morning, I want to take time to talk on the Old Testament passages that notify us as to what the Messiah was going to be – and therefore, what he was going to be like as he grew up. **What does the Old Testament tell us the Messiah will be like?** With this question, let me pray for us and ask for God's mercy and understanding [Pray for Regan and Mellie Martin, and also Justin Smith at Emmanuel Free Church in Spring Lake.]

Today, I am again not going to be in a specific passage. Instead, I'm going to take different prophecies about what the Messiah will be like. Then I'll be making application for us in the midst of that. While there are many characteristics given in the Old Testament, I've narrowed them down to six. The first characteristic is that the Messiah will be:

1. The Anointed One.

Ok, for those of you who know what Messiah means, you're going to say, "Um, that's obvious!" And you say that because the word "Messiah" simply means "Anointed One." So, the Anointed One will be the Anointed One.

But I want to ensure that I describe this a little more. I think it's safe to say that the most common title of Jesus in the New Testament is "Christ." "Christ" is not Jesus' last name. It's a title. The title means to be the anointed one. But what does that mean? In the Old Testament, there were prophets, priests and kings who were anointed for their specific tasks. So, think of King David, for example, when he was anointed by Samuel. The anointing signified God's blessing on David, stating David is the yet-to-come rightful king.

From an Old Testament perspective, there were many lower-case messiahs. David, Solomon, Elijah, the priests. But from an Old Testament perspective, we're also told that there is only one upper-case Messiah. In Daniel 9, in this tremendously complex and great prophecy, we read this line, "²⁵ **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.**"¹ I'm not going to get into the details of the prophecy today, but I simply want to highlight the phrase "the coming of an anointed one, a prince." People throughout history have studied this passage, Jews and Christians alike, and have come to the conclusion that this is speaking of not merely an anointed one like David or an anointed one like Elisha, but an Anointed One like no other. This is the Anointed One. In verse 24, we're told that his coming will bring atonement for sin, everlasting righteousness, putting an end to sin!

So, as people studied the Old Testament and even the concept of the anointed one, there has been a realization that the lower-case anointed ones are pictures of the upper-case Anointed One. Meaning that the Messiah will be *the* Prophet, Priest and King. And, as such, he accomplishes all we need for salvation!

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Da 9:25.

This tiny package 2,000 years ago, is the greatest gift humanity can ever fathom. The Messiah is *the* Anointed One. Now, let's go on to explain that.

2. The Prophet.

“In Jewish religious thought, the most vivid and formative religious happenings found their focus in the call and ministry of a prophet, through whom God communicated his word to his people.”²

In Deuteronomy, Moses tells the people, ¹⁵“**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—**”³” The Scriptures prophecy that the Messiah will be *the* Prophet. But when we say *the* prophet, what do we mean? Was Jesus going to grow up and simply be a predictor of future events? Well, he certainly spoke of future events, but that's not the primary role of a prophet. The prophets primarily appeared when God's people were in disobedience and facing a crossroad. For example, in Deuteronomy, we find that Moses was the greatest prophet of all time: “And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face” (Deuteronomy 34:10). What words are Moses most known for? Moses definitely spoke of future events, but he was known primarily for bringing law into the people's lives, speaking as God's representative no matter what the cost to himself.

As you think about Jesus being *the* prophet then, what did that mean for what he would become on this earth? While a prophet was anointed by God and blessed, the lifestyle wasn't posh. It was difficult and painful. Jesus, when older, stated that a prophet is not without honor except in his own hometown. Prophets were despised, and Hebrews 11 talks of them being persecuted.

Is this what happened to Jesus? Yes. Peter quotes Deuteronomy, saying, **“The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’ And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel to those who came after him, also proclaimed these days” (Acts 3:22-24).** Peter clearly states that Jesus is the ultimate prophet.

As Mary and Joseph cared for Jesus and held him in their arms, they were holding *the* Prophet who would grow up in the flesh and speak profoundly. This little baby who could only cry or coo would grow up and say things like

- Matthew 5:22 – “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.”
- Matthew 18:3 – “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”
- John 5:14 – “...Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.”

No wonder we have someone speaking to him, “Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet...” (John 4:19). But he's more than that. He's not merely *a* prophet. John 1:14 says that the disciples beheld the glory of God in Jesus. Jesus wasn't merely pointing to God. Jesus, the One full of grace and truth, pointed to himself – and in pointing to himself, he was pointing all to God!

²Elwell, Walter A. ; Comfort, Philip Wesley: *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*. Wheaton, Ill. : Tyndale House Publishers, 2001 (Tyndale Reference Library), S. 1085

³ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Dt 18:15.

So, I agree with one pastor who once wrote that “Jesus is to be understood as the truth-telling, boldly confrontational preacher who attacks our sin, folly, and rebellion by rebuking us and commanding us to repent.”⁴ Jesus’ mission as prophet was to call people to himself!

But in saying all of this, I must add that if you only view Jesus as prophet, you will not find much hope. The reason I say this is because Jesus’ prophetic role primarily tells people to stop doing what they can’t stop doing on their own. How can we sin no more? As prophet, he points people to what they need to do: turn to God. But how can we make ourselves born again? We can’t do this on our own. The role of the prophet emphasizes what we’re doing wrong and how we need to change, but it leaves us asking, “Who’s going to help me to change?” That’s why we can’t stop only at prophet. We must move on and see that he would also grow up as

3. The Priest

In 1 Samuel 2:35, God says, “³⁵ And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. . .”⁵

The priests of the Old Testament continually offered sacrifices for the people’s sins. Each year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the high priest would go behind the veil and take the blood of the animal sacrifice to the holy of holies to make a sacrifice for the people. This was a sign that the people were made right before God – although because the high priest was sinful and the animal was merely a part of creation – this sacrifice wouldn’t be totally sufficient. These sacrifices were meant to point the people to God and his mercy. Hebrews 10:4 says, “For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” The death of the bulls and goats were necessary, but they were necessary symbols.” Sadly, many still believe the sacrifices are necessary. On israelnationalnews.com, I found this that was written by one rabbi: “Until we are able to have a red heifer whose ashes can be used in the torah prescribed purification ceremony, we remain impure.” People still trust in bulls and goats and their own works. But the reality is that the Scriptures tell us that there was going to be a faithful priest to come, who would be perfect! The Messiah is the only one who can be the fully faithful priest.

And this is what the New Testament teaches. Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. He’s the eternal priest. And, as such, he didn’t merely make a sacrifice to God, he was the sacrifice. Hebrews 7 says, “²⁶ **For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily. . .since he did this once for all when he offered up himself.**”⁶

Jesus, being the God-Man paid the ultimate sacrifice and died in the place of sinners! Yes, Mary knew that the Messiah was the Savior. Jesus’ own name speaks to salvation. But as she held this perfectly formed baby, this truly innocent and morally perfect child, could she fathom that “Nails, spears shall pierce him through, The cross he bore for me, for you. Hail, hail the word made flesh, the babe, the Son of Mary.”

This is what he would do because this is what only *the* Priest could do. You can’t save yourself and nor can I rescue myself. Too often, people think that trying harder, being more disciplined, going to church is

⁴ Driscoll, Mark; Breshear, Gary: *Vintage Jesus: Timeless Answers to Timely Questions*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2007, p. 75.

⁵ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 1 Sa 2:35.

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Heb 7:26–27.

going to make them right with God. Others don't think they even need to try to make themselves right with God. But we were created for God, and God has made us responsible in this world which is his! God tells us we are born traitors, and yet God sent his Son in the flesh to take the punishment we deserve. As the Great Priest, Jesus calls you to turn from your sin and trust his sacrifice on the cross to rescue you and reconcile you to God. Will you believe? Will you turn?

As Jesus grew older, he would say priestly things like:

- Luke 19:10 – “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”
- Matthew 11:28 – “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”
- John 14:6 – “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”

Now, after hearing this, let me show how the priestly and prophetic roles practically apply. Let's discover how Jesus being both of these actually ought to encourage us all the more. The Messiah is *the* prophet and *the* priest!

I've already mentioned before: John 5:14 (Sin no more) and Luke 19:10 (the Son of Man came to seek and to save...). But if we see Jesus in both roles, we start to see more clearly. As the prophet, he reveals our sin to us and calls us to repent. And, as the priest, as the psalmist says, Jesus is the lifter of our heads. We fail. We falter. But Jesus comes down to us and knows our frame that we are dust. He sympathizes with our weaknesses and covers us in his robes of righteousness and sets us apart for him. Yes, he points out our sins. And, yes, Jesus' sacrifice is perfect and complete and he mediates on our behalf before the Father. We can stand with hope – not with low-grade guilt trying to pay God back. Instead, Jesus lifts our head and says, “Look to Me.” He gives us hope and rest for the weary and heavy-laden!

This hope comes because of what Jesus accomplished as he grew older. This baby would be pierced. And in taking God's wrath for sin on the cross, Jesus accomplished what was necessary to save us as the Priest. And, on the cross, Jesus cried out, “It is finished.” Then, the temple veil was torn in two, and Jesus' death completely (hear me, completely) satisfied the righteous wrath of the Father that sinners deserve!

This little baby would accomplish great salvation for the world!

4. The King

In 2 Samuel 7, the prophet Nathan speaks God's words to David, saying: ¹²**When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.** ¹³**He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**⁷

You could read this and think that this is speaking of Solomon. Isn't he David's son? Well, true. However, Solomon's kingdom split in two. Solomon is only a partial fulfillment. There is one to come. And this prophecy was understood by the Jewish people as having a greater fulfillment in the Messiah. Even Psalm 132 speaks of this.

⁷ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2 Sa 7:11–13.

So, when we turn to the first page of the New Testament in Matthew 1, we are shown a lineage that highlights King David. Matthew then emphasizes that Jesus comes from the lineage of David through adoption from Joseph. Therefore, Jesus is the *Son of David*. And, in Luke 1:32-33, the angel Gabriel says to Mary, **“³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”**⁸

Now, at this point, you could say, “Why does it matter that the Messiah would be *the* King?” Well, God’s king was anointed by God to rule over God’s people in all aspects of their lives. The king of the nation was commanded to write out all the laws of God so that they would be in his mind and this king was commanded to be pure before the people, be an example, but primarily the king was to be obeyed and he was to truly protect the people. Unlike the role of a prophet, the role of king was a desired status because of the power joined to it. And, if the King was great, then it would be to the benefit of *all* – including prophets and priests. Throughout Scriptures, we find that Jesus is the ultimate King and Ruler over all of creation.

- Isaiah 9:7 – “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom....”
- Matthew 10:7 – “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
- Mark 1:15 – “...the kingdom of God is at hand....”

Even though the status of king was desired among people, in the scenario with Jesus, people didn’t like him because he didn’t come in normal fashion. He wasn’t coming with pomp and circumstance. He was coming in humility. He came as prophet and godly priest. Therefore, many people revealed their hearts. They didn’t want a King who actually loved God. They were sinners. Yet, in coming the way he did, he was calling people to trust in him and believe that he is the King even though he didn’t look like it. Think of it. The One who came to Rule, came as a dependent child. The One who came to be worshipped, came without much notice. The One who came to care for us, decided he needed to be cared for by an earthly mother. What kind of King do you want? Do you want a King who doesn’t care about relating to his subjects? Or, do you want a King who actually cares for you and will enter into your chaos? This is what Jesus did. And, he didn’t have to! But he became flesh to show the immensity of God’s love and grace.

Maybe this is a little bit of a side note, but I think this is important to recognize. Another word closely related to “King” is “Lord.” He is King over the spiritual and physical world! Colossians 2:15, Paul says that God the Father put rulers and authorities to open shame because of Christ’s sacrifice! First Corinthians 15:25ff speaks of Jesus by saying, **“²⁵ For He [Jesus] must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy *that will be destroyed is death.* ²⁷ For ‘He [the Father] has put all things under His feet.’”**⁹

Do you believe these things? Jesus’ entrance into the world was a statement to the world that he came to reign! My fear is that people often live as though Jesus does not reign now. We look over our lives and see issues around us. We fear the state of America. Sometimes Christians begin to cower in fear over all the pains we experience and we can begin to speak as though Satan has won out. Satan is not King! He hasn’t defeated Jesus! When Jesus came into the world as a baby, he declared war. And the war’s decisive victory came when Jesus grew up, resisted Satan’s temptations, died on the cross and

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Lk 1:32–33.

⁹ [The New King James Version](#) (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 1 Co 15:25–27.

rose from the dead! Yes, this world still has chaos in it, but just because people disobey King Jesus, doesn't mean that Jesus doesn't reign. Jesus, the God-Man rules and reigns today over all, and is more powerful than anyone or anything else!

Now, let's put prophet, priest and King together. What if you only saw Jesus as Prophet and Priest? You might believe in the "everything goes" motto of many Christian. Meaning, Jesus has the right to point things out in your life, but he'll forgive you anyway. This is a mentality that really excuses sin. It's minus Christ's Lordship and totally negates the fact that Jesus came as the one who conquers sin by his grace. Many people in this camp either have a false assurance of their salvation or they tend towards licentiousness in their walk. They think that they can live life apart from the Word, prayer and fellowship without any real question as to whether or not they're Christians. People who fall in this camp, according to one pastor, "...don't see Jesus ruling over them, but rather coming alongside them to help them to achieve their objectives. He is only allowed to [rule them] when he is invited."¹⁰

Did you hear that word "invite"? This is a word that permeates many of our gospel presentations. We talk about inviting Jesus into our lives – as if he needs us. The word invite assumes that we're the one in charge. But Scripturally, we read of God inviting sinners to a banquet, not sinners inviting God to our banquet. Honestly, I think there's too much confusion with that phrase, and I don't think it helps us to understand faith. Faith is me going to him on his terms and resting on him and throwing my ways and my ideas and my control out of the window! Listen, Jesus isn't only prophet and priest who is some divine therapist – telling you how you're to live, but isn't going to judge you because he will forgive everything. Instead, because Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King – He calls to himself and also empowers us to obey! In addition, he judges!

So, think back to the day Jesus was born. As King and Lord (and he was always the eternal God before he was born), this little baby was also the Creator and Master. The One who spoke the world into existence can now only coo in the arms of his creation, Mary. But this was the pathway to rescuing sinners who rebelled against God, our King. Jesus came into the chaos of this sinful world, and then at the end of his life, he conquered. Now, all who trust in Jesus will follow in their King Jesus' footsteps. We will make it through the chaos and conquer as well! And, someday, the Bible says that our King will provide us with an eternal kingdom of eternal peace, with no sin.

This is why it's such good news that our prophet and priest Jesus is also our King Jesus. As King, he secures perfection and gives us a future home in which to live with God forever and ever!

So, my question for you this morning is, **can you rejoice in the fact that Jesus came in the flesh as the Messiah – the prophet, the priest, the King? The Old Testament Scriptures summon you to "kiss the Son." Meaning, turn to him in humility. Even in the Christmas story itself, we find that Gentile magi and shepherds came to worship Jesus. A weak woman and an older man in the Temple worshipped Jesus, at his birth. Will you worship him? Will you adore him? He's worthy!**

The tiny baby in the manger with a fragile body held all sovereign control! He truly is Emmanuel, God with us!

¹⁰ Driscoll, Mark; Breshear, Gary: *Vintage Jesus: Timeless Answers to Timely Questions*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2007, p. 83.