

# **Unlocking the Messianic Prophecies**

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## **Acknowledgements**

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## Introduction

It was after the fall, when the outlook for Adam and Eve seemed bleak that the first Messianic promise was given (Genesis 3:15). Eve was promised that one her descendants would destroy the serpent (Satan). More details were added over time, how he would smite the wicked and all nations would be blessed through him. He would usher in a reign of peace, happiness and safety when nature will be changed, harmful animals will become tame, and people would live forever. The ultimate goal of the Deliverer is to save the lost and restore the earth to its Edenic state.

David is a type of the Messiah, his early life when he was persecuted prefigures the sufferings of the Messiah before receiving his kingdom.

The Messiah brings the light of salvation and God's law to the Gentiles. Habakkuk describes his hidden power as glory emanating from the wounds in his side. He is also called the Suffering Servant who is rejected and despised by men; he dies for the people and makes intercession for them (Isaiah 53). Later he sees the travail of his soul and is satisfied; many would be eternally saved by his sacrifice.

Often neglected is his role as a priest, and how he would suddenly come to his temple.

The basis of his divinity is given in the Hebrew Bible, and how it was prophesied that he would rise from the dead and ascend to the right hand of God. It is there that he performs his role as High Priest in the heavenly temple before returning to earth in glory to deliver his people.

The fulfilment of these prophecies is covered in the last chapter.

Not everyone is guaranteed a place in his kingdom unless they put their faith in the Messiah and obey God's holy laws. It is vitally important to understand who the Messiah is and believe in him while the door of mercy is still open.

## **The Promised Deliverer**

**“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”** (Genesis 3:15)

After the fall, Adam and Eve faced a bleak future. They had possessed happiness and could have lived forever in Eden had they not disobeyed God’s command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Garden was a place of peace and beauty, surrounded by lofty trees, flowers, tame animals, rivers and pure air. There were also many precious stones to look at. They had the pleasant task of looking after the Garden and enjoying communion with God (Genesis 1-3).

But now they had forfeited their right to Eden and to life itself. Yet God did not leave them without hope. There was a way back but it would be through one of Eve’s descendants. Although evil had entered the world, yet there would be a conflict between the children of light and darkness, between those who followed God and those who followed Satan. Finally the promised one would destroy the serpent (Satan) although in the process he would be wounded in the heel.

**“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”** (Genesis 4:3-5)

Shortly after the fall the sacrificial service was instituted by God. In Genesis 4 we have the story of Cain and Abel making offerings to the Lord. Abel's blood offering was accepted, but Cain's was not because there was no blood sacrifice. The principle of vicarious sacrifice is at work, an innocent life is taken in exchange for the guilty. Cain's offering showed he felt no repentance for sin, hence his offering could not be accepted.

We are given more details about the meaning of the sacrificial service from the life of Abraham.

**“And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”** (Genesis 22:2)

From this experience, Abraham was given special insight into God's plan of salvation. At the last minute God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son and provided a ram for the burnt offering (vss. 12-14).

Hence, the Deliverer to come would be God's Son as prefigured by Isaac. In the fulfilment God would provide the sacrifice to pay the price of sin and redeem man from eternal death.

Just as Isaac willingly submitted to the divine plan, so the Son of God would willingly offer His life. This plan showed the great love of God for man, for what person would

be willing to sacrifice their own innocent son to save a law breaker condemned to death.

**“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”** (Genesis 22:18)

The promise of the coming Deliverer was repeated to Abraham, the Deliverer would be descended from him and all nations would be blessed through the promised child. This showed God’s plan of salvation encompassed the whole world; those willing to repent of their sins and accept His offer of grace through the sacrifice of His Son could be restored to Eden and inherit eternal life.

At the time of the Exodus, more information was given regarding the coming Deliverer. Moses said he would be a prophet like himself:

**“The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;”** (Deuteronomy 18:15)

The Deliverer would be a figure like Moses, a person who prophesied, taught the people to obey God’s laws, interceded when they sinned, and delivered them from their enemies.

When Balaam, a renegade prophet tried to secure a sum of money from Israel’s enemies by cursing Israel, he was constrained by God to prophesy and bless Israel and spoke of the coming Deliverer:

**“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.”** (Numbers 24:17)

The reference to a sceptre suggests that the Deliverer would be a king who would smite the enemies of God’s people. This reference to a sceptre or rod of power is one that often occurs in the Messianic prophecies. Just as Moses had a shepherd’s rod which became a rod of power and was used to smite the Egyptians, so the Deliverer would have a rod of power but this time to smite the nations, showing he would be greater than Moses.

This prophecy gives us a picture of the Deliverer coming as a judge to rescue his people and judge the impenitent nations. Although all nations could be blessed through Him if they repented, not all nations and individuals would choose to accept Him and serve God.

God wants to save everyone but each person individually has to make his or her choice whether to accept God’s plan of salvation and keep His holy law, or to live a life without God and break His holy laws. God’s laws were given for our benefit and happiness, and by keeping them we show our loyalty to God.

Hannah prophesied of the Messiah (anointed one) and how he would smite the adversaries of the Lord:

**“The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed (Messiah).”** (1 Samuel 2:10)

In this verse a new term is given to the Deliverer, he is called the anointed or Messiah<sup>1</sup>. The term Messiah could be applied to a king, prophet or priest who had been chosen and anointed by God for his office<sup>2</sup> (Exodus 30:30; 2 Samuel 5:3; 1 Samuel 24:6; 1 Kings 19:16). In the case of David his anointing to become king by the prophet Samuel led to the Spirit of God coming upon him (1 Samuel 16:13). The oil of anointing was therefore symbolic of the Holy Spirit giving power to enable the anointed one to fulfil his mission.

Sometimes a Messiah would deliver God’s people from their enemies as David and Cyrus did, but the Deliverer to come was the universal or ultimate Messiah who would deliver the people, destroy the evil nations and Satan and restore God’s people to lost Eden. The Messianic Age to come is described by many of the later prophets, which I will refer to in the next chapter – “the messianic kingdom”.

Although the Messiah would be exalted, Hannah’s prayer is set in the context of the humble and poor being raised up by God. Hence we get the first glimpse of another side to the Messiah, his humble beginnings:

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<sup>1</sup> Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 2* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978) p. 462

<sup>2</sup> Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 5* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978) p. 277

**“The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD’S, and he hath set the world upon them.”** (1 Samuel 2:7-8)

Next, the promise of the Deliverer was repeated to David, he would be descended from David and have an everlasting kingdom:

**“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.”** (2 Samuel 7:12-13)

This prophecy has a dual application, applying in part to Solomon but ultimately to the Messiah who would have an eternal kingdom. This type of dual prophecy is also found in the promise to Abraham which was partially fulfilled in Isaac but ultimately in the Messiah. It is clear that Solomon did not have an everlasting kingdom; this would be fulfilled by the Messiah.

## The Messianic Kingdom

Isaiah the prophet calls the Messiah the Branch, a term which is also used by Jeremiah and Zechariah (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15; Zechariah 3:8; 6:12). The Spirit of the Lord rests upon the Messiah and hence He is anointed by God's Spirit (Isaiah 11:2). He righteously judges the poor, smites the wicked with the rod of his mouth and slays the wicked with the breath of his lips (Isaiah 11:4). He is a righteous king, to whom the Gentiles would seek (Isaiah 11:10). Hence he would bring a blessing to all nations.

We can see clearly how many aspects of the Branch are Messianic: being anointed by the Spirit, smiting the wicked with a rod of power and being a blessing to the Gentiles.

The Messianic Age would be characterised by the fact that animals would be tame: the wolf would lie down with the lamb, the leopard with the kid, and the calf and the lion; the little child would play next to hole of the asp (Isaiah 11:6-8). This was a step toward the restoration of Eden. Eventually the knowledge of God would be universal as the waters that cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9).

The Messiah is described as a righteous king like David.

**“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell**

**safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”** (Jeremiah 23:5)

The Messiah would save his people, execute justice and bring in an era of peace (see also Jeremiah 33:15-16). The people of earth need such a king to rescue mankind from its evil ways, and deliver those who are oppressed. Only the Messiah has the keys that can solve the problems of mankind and bring an end to sin, suffering and death. We should pray for his coming, because it will usher in God’s kingdom.

Micah records a number of details regarding the coming King (Micah 5), he would:

- a) be ruler of Israel, a king (vs. 2)
- b) be great unto the ends of the earth (vs. 4)
- c) bring peace and deliverance from Israel’s enemies (vss. 5-6)
- d) be a blessing to many people (vs. 7)
- e) destroy the unrepentant nations (vss. 8-9, 15)
- f) the people would no longer trust in human power or idols (vss. 10-14)
- g) be born in Bethlehem although he existed from everlasting (vs. 2)

h) be struck on the cheek (vs. 1)

It is interesting to note the Messianic elements of this prophecy, a righteous king who delivers the people and brings in an era of peace. Yet he would be struck on the cheek, a sign of his initial suffering.

In various symbolic visions Zechariah was given glimpses of the Messianic kingdom. These promises were conditional on the future obedience and zeal of Israel. There are many references to the Messiah and the Messianic age, and the glorious future promised to Israel:

a. Many nations (Gentiles) would be joined to the Lord (Zechariah 2:11), they would help build the temple (6:15), and would seek the Lord and pray to Him (8:20-22).

b. The Branch who is God's servant, a king and priest, would build the temple (3:8; 6:12-13).

c. There would be an era of peace when Jerusalem would be restored as a city of truth (8:3), there would be happiness and longevity (8:4-8), she would no more be oppressed but victorious over her enemies (9:8; 10:4-5; 12:2-8), there would be plenty of food (9:17), however only a purified remnant of the people would remain (13:8-9).

d. The King would come on a colt to Jerusalem, lowly and bringing salvation (9:9), His dominion would be universal (9:10), yet the people would mourn for the one they had pierced (12:10-14), He would be wounded in His hands (13:6), and open a

fountain for sin to cleanse the people (13:1), the true Shepherd would be rejected for 30 pieces of silver (11:7-14).

e. Jerusalem would be attacked but the Messiah would return (14:3), His feet parting the Mount of Olives (14:4); those who fought against Jerusalem would be smitten by a plague (14:12), the remaining nations would either serve the Lord or be struck with drought (14:16-17).

These prophecies were conditional on a spiritual revival in Israel. Such offers of blessing depended on true spiritual worship and obedience (see Jeremiah 18:7-10). Sadly this revival did not happen, Malachi records that the people descended into a ritualised form of worship which was not acceptable to God, and Isaiah 59 speaks of the corruption existing among God's people before the Messiah appeared. Therefore these prophecies will be fulfilled in a different way to spiritual Israel, those who keep God's holy law, and who love God and trust in the Messiah.

The Messianic era would bring long life and eventually eternal life for the righteous (Daniel 12:1-2). All suffering and cruelty would end (Isaiah 11:6-9). Death itself would be swallowed up (Hosea 13:14). This certainly is a great hope and consolation for those who serve God. Some have died as martyrs while in the service of God, but God has not forgotten them, their names are written in the Book of Life. Malachi says God is keeping a book of remembrance for those who truly love Him (Malachi 3:16-18).

A big part of the Messianic kingdom was the ingathering of the Gentiles who would turn to God. This was to fulfil the promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through the Messiah.

Isaiah also calls the Messiah God's servant, a term associated with the Branch (Zechariah 3:8). He would have God's Spirit and bring judgement to the Gentiles who would wait for his law. He would open the eyes of the blind, set free the prisoners and give light to those in darkness; he would be a light for the Gentiles. He would also be gentle, not breaking a bruised reed nor quenching a smoking flax (Isaiah 42:1-7).

During the Messianic era the Gentiles would receive God's law and becoming a part of God's everlasting covenant. Those who had lived in darkness would be set free and receive the light and knowledge of God's law:

**“The isles shall wait for his law (torah) ... and give thee for a covenant for the people, a light for the Gentiles”** (Isaiah 42:4, 6). The prophet further says, **“the Gentiles shall come to thy light”** (Isaiah 60:3)

The Gentiles would keep the Sabbath holy. They would recognise that God is their Creator and take hold of the promises of salvation. Zechariah agreed that many nations would be joined to the Lord (Zechariah 2:11), and Isaiah prophesied:

**“So the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant;”** (Isaiah 56:6).

Israel was to be given **“for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth”** (Isaiah 49:6), showing that salvation would be open to all people who would receive it. Israel was to be a beacon of light shining in the world so all nations could be saved.

According to the conditional prophecies given to Israel, the strangers would receive an equal inheritance (Ezekiel 47:22-23) and some would even become priests (Isaiah 66:21). The temple would be a place of prayer for all nations (Isaiah 56:7). Spiritual Israel made up of Jews and Gentiles who believe in the Messiah, has now become the light to the nations.

The ministry that the Messiah would perform is spoken of by Isaiah:

**“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;”** (Isaiah 61:1)

The liberty that the Messiah would bring would initially be spiritual, releasing the captives from the prison of sin and disease, and giving the good tidings of salvation to the lost.

But eventually there would be a literal deliverance from the enemies of Israel who oppressed them, at that time the Messiah would come in glory as spoken by the prophet Habakkuk<sup>3</sup>.

Beholding the Messiah in His glory the prophet said: **“He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of His power.”** (Habakkuk 3:4)

In the wounds of the Messiah are the hidden glory and power of salvation.

When He returns in glory, there will be pestilence on earth (Habakkuk 3:5), the mountains will be scattered (vs. 6), He will come as a warrior to save His people (vs. 9-11), even the sun and moon will stand still (vs. 11), and He will destroy the wicked (vs. 12).

The prophecies of the glorious Messianic kingdom will all come to pass when the time is right. Habakkuk was told to wait for the fulfilment of the prophecy:

**“For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.**

**Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.”** (Habakkuk 2:3-4)

Until that time we should not underestimate the hidden glory of the kingdom of grace, the power of the Messiah to save sinners. Man looks for earthly glory, but the

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<sup>3</sup> Francis D. Nichol, *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 4* (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978) p. 1057; and Ellen White, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, Conflict of the Ages, Volume 5* (Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911) p. 674

Messiah brings a spiritual revival first that is far greater than mere political power or materialism. Only those who partake of the spiritual kingdom of grace will also receive the literal kingdom.

Those who wait until all the prophecies are fulfilled before they believe will never enter the Messianic kingdom. Amos spoke of the time when there would be a famine for the word of God; people would search from east to west but not find it (Amos 8:11-2). Joel spoke of multitudes being in the valley of decision (Joel 3:14), when the Messiah returns probation has already closed for the wicked.

Abraham believed in God's promises even before they were fulfilled, so we are called to trust in the Messianic prophecies and believe in the Messiah. At the appointed time, as Habakkuk says, the vision will be fulfilled. The righteous must live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4), without faith they cannot be counted as righteous before God. Abraham believed in God and it was counted to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:6).

## The Suffering Servant

David is a type of the Messiah; both suffer but eventually become king, receive the kingdom and are victorious over their enemies. However, the Messiah's kingdom and his victory over the forces of evil are far greater than David's.

Many of the prophets spoke of David being king in the Messianic era, which is a reference to the Messiah (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 37:24; Isaiah 55:3-4). Hosea also states that Israel would seek David their king in the latter days (Hosea 3:4-5).

As David suffered and was persecuted by Saul before becoming king, so the Messiah was to be rejected at first. A hint of this is seen in Hannah's prayer and Micah's reference to the judge of Israel being struck on the cheek.

In Isaiah 53 the Suffering Servant is brought to view; He suffers vicariously for the sins of the people (verse 5); it pleased the Lord to make Him a guilt offering (verse 10); He justifies the people and bears their iniquities; He poured out his life unto death; He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors (verse 11).

In these verses we have a picture of the Messiah giving His life as a vicarious guilt offering to save the transgressors. He does this voluntarily, He suffers silently and did not open his mouth when afflicted (verse 7). He did not have any deceit in His mouth (vs. 9) which shows that he was without sin; therefore He did not die for his own sins.

The concept of vicarious atonement is found in the heart of the ritual system in Leviticus. This is the mysterious paradox, a sinner comes to the sanctuary, lays his hands on the sacrifice, confesses his sin, and goes away innocent while the innocent one dies in his place (Leviticus 4:29; 5:5-6). The laying on of hands is a symbol of transference (Leviticus 24:14; Numbers 27:18; 8:10). When a Jewish father wanted to give a blessing to his children he would lay his hands on them and pronounce the blessing<sup>4</sup>.

This paradox of the vicarious atonement is found in Isaiah 53 where an innocent one (no deceit in his mouth vs. 9) dies as a guilt offering (vs. 10) for the sins of the people to make intercession for them and bear their iniquities (vss. 1-12).

The prophet Daniel makes it clear that the Messiah would be cut off, but not for himself (Hebrew: yiqqareth mashiach we-eyn lo). This would bring an end to sacrifices and offerings (Daniel 9:25-27). Daniel even points to the very year when this would take place (see my first book, "Exploring the Heavenly Sanctuary" for more details on the 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9<sup>5</sup>).

Joseph is another type of the Messiah, mistreated by jealous brothers and sold as a slave; nevertheless God made him ruler of Egypt and saviour of many people during the famine. So the Messiah would be rejected by jealous leaders, betrayed to death, but God would raise Him to life to become the king of Israel and the Saviour of the world.

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<sup>4</sup> Ellen White, *The Acts of the Apostles, Conflict of the Ages Series, Volume 4* (Pacific Press Publishing Association 1911) p. 162; for more details on the meaning of the sacrificial service see Marc Rasell, *Exploring the Heavenly Sanctuary* (AuthorHouse, 2009) chapter 6 "Garbage Collection"

<sup>5</sup> *Exploring the Heavenly Sanctuary*, chapter 10 "Biblical Mathematics"

This reversal of fortune mirrors Hannah's prayer that God exalts the humble; it is also found in the life of David and Joseph. The Messiah's kingdom is one of humility and meekness not of arrogance, the meek will inherit the earth (Psalm 37:11).

In the Psalms we get further evidence of the rejection and suffering of the Messiah.

Because David is a type of the Messiah, many of the Psalms are prophetic.

In Psalm 69 we are told that the Messiah would:

Vs. 8 be rejected by men

Vs. 9 be zealous for God's temple

Vs. 20 that no one took pity on Him

Vs. 21 be offered gall and vinegar to drink

The rejection of the Messiah is stated by Isaiah in these words:

**"Who hath believed our report"** (Isaiah 53:1)

**"He was despised and rejected of men"** (Isaiah 53:3)

The mockery the Messiah endured while on the cross is expressed by these words:

**"All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord"** (Psalm 22:7-8)

Isaiah also records that he would be spat upon (Isaiah 50:6), and the Psalms state that he would be betrayed by one who ate with him (Psalm 41:9).

Nevertheless, the rejected Messiah has become the foundation of the Jewish system of salvation. When the first temple was built one of the stones was rejected because it did not fit in. It lay rejected for many years until a search was made for a cornerstone. This strange stone was then found to be a perfect match and as it had weathered the elements without cracking was deemed suitable<sup>6</sup>:

**“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner.”**

(Psalm 118:22)

It was prophesied that the Messiah would be the Rock which caused many to stumble in Israel:

**“And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. “ (Isaiah 8:14-15)**

The figure of a Rock points to the divinity of the Messiah which will be discussed in the chapter “the divine messiah”. The term “Rock” is applied to the Lord in Deuteronomy 32. During the wilderness wanderings a rock was struck and water gushed out for the people (Exodus 17:6), prefiguring the Messiah who would be struck, thus giving the people life giving water.

Those who choose believe in the Messiah will not be disappointed:

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<sup>6</sup> Ellen White, The Desire of Ages, Conflict of the Ages Series, Volume 3 (Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898) pp. 597-8

**“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”** (Isaiah 28:16)

The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the people would not understand the mission of the Messiah. The people expected him to deliver them immediately from their enemies, but did not perceive that he had to die first to deliver them from their sins:

**“Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not”** (Isaiah 6:9-10)

One of the reasons for the rejection of the Messiah was a misunderstanding of the Messianic prophecies which tended to focus on the literal kingdom and material benefits but missed the rejection and death of the Messiah and the spiritual side of the prophecies which called for spiritual renewal and repentance of sin.

In Psalm 22:16-17 we are told that his hands and feet would be pierced (vs. 16 LXX), and that none of his bones would be broken. This matches Zechariah 13:6 which says that he would be wounded in the hands in the house of his friends.

That none of His bones would be broken was prefigured in the Passover sacrifice which forbade the bones from being broken (Exodus 12:46). The Passover sacrifice by which the people were delivered from death and slavery was a type of the Messiah who would die to save the people from slavery to sin and eternal death.

Zechariah said that the people would mourn for the one they had pierced (Zechariah 12:10-14); He would open a fountain to cleanse the people from sin (Zechariah 13:1); and the true Shepherd would be rejected for 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:7-14).

How true it is that the Messiah's death opened a fountain for sin. By being pierced, He died as a guilt offering, not for Himself but to provide salvation for us.

That the Messiah is the new once for all sacrifice is spoken of in Psalm 40:6-8. The Messiah was willing to come to earth to die for us:

**“Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”** (Psalm 40:6-8)

There are lessons about the Messiah to be found in various parts of the Mosaic Law. When a person accidentally killed someone, the next of kin known as the avenger of blood could pursue and kill him, unless he fled to a city of refuge. If he reached the city of refuge and it was decided he was not a murderer, he could abide safely in the city provided he remained there until the death of the high priest. The city of refuge was a type of Christ where the sinner can flee for mercy and where he must abide to escape eternal death<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen N. Haskell, *The Cross and Its Shadow* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1914) pp. 258-265

In the Levitical law only a near kinsman (Hebrew “goel”) could redeem someone sold into slavery (Leviticus 25:48-49). So those who commit sin are slaves to sin and can only be redeemed by a near kinsman (the Messiah) who is not Himself enslaved to sin.

In the year of Jubilee people were set free from slavery and all ancestral land had to be returned to their original owners. So at the Messiah’s coming in glory the righteous dead are released from their graves, they are raised to eternal life and will inherit the earth made new<sup>8</sup>. Then will be fulfilled Isaiah 26:19, **“thy dead men shall live...the earth shall cast out the dead”**.

Job said he knew that his redeemer (goel) lives, and even after death in his flesh he would see God (Job 19:25-26). He had the hope that even though he would die, one day his Redeemer would rescue him from death and he would see God.

Under the laws of inheritance a stranger could not redeem land that had been sold, only a near kinsman (goel) could do that (Ruth 2:20). So only a man could redeem us, not an angel or other being so that we can inherit the new earth (Isaiah 65:22-23). The Messiah redeems us from sin and death as our near kinsman; he has paid the ransom price for our salvation. He is also our city of refuge to deliver us from eternal death.

Chapters omitted from the preview:

**The Priestly Messiah**  
**The Divine Messiah**  
**The Resurrection of the Messiah**  
**The Fulfilment**

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<sup>8</sup> The Cross and Its Shadow pp. 247-257

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