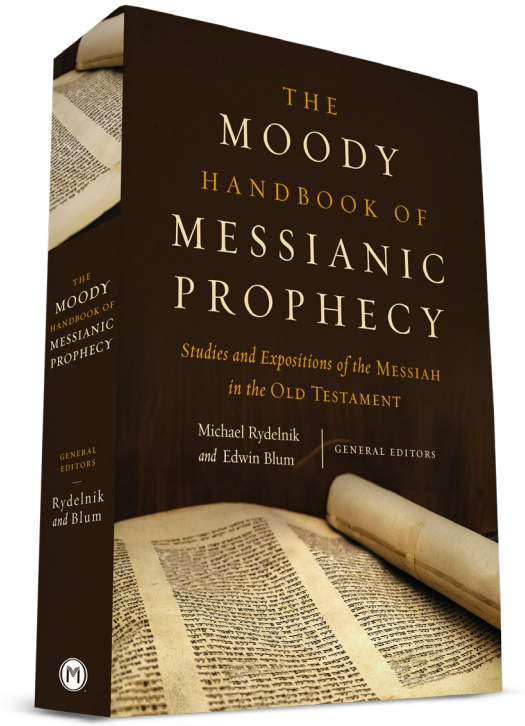


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# Contents

# The Messiah and His Titles

MICHAEL A. RYDELNIK

This is a book about the Messiah in the Old Testament. Although it has become accepted in critical scholarship that the term "Messiah" has no technical usages in the OT and that the concept of a messianic deliverer did not develop until the second century BC,[1] this book has taken a decidedly different direction. It affirms, along with many outstanding biblical scholars, that there indeed was a clearly intended messianic message in the Hebrew Bible.[2]

But where should this study of OT messianism begin? It seems necessary, before addressing any other subject or passage, to be clear about the subject—to understand what is meant about the Messiah. Therefore, this article will address two foundational elements of this entire study. First, it will seek to develop a biblical, theological definition of the word "Messiah." Then, it will examine some (though not all) of the other titles the OT uses for this individual.

## THE MEANING OF THE MESSIAH

At the outset, it is imperative to define the term "Messiah" as it is used throughout this entire book. So this section will examine a number of biblical ideas and passages that describe the Messiah, and then it will articulate a biblical, theological definition derived from that examination.

### A Biblical Description of the Messiah

The Messiah is described in the Bible beginning with the word "Messiah" or "Anointed One," and then in a variety of other ways. All of the following provide a portrait of the future messianic figure.

*A Consecrated Person.* The Hebrew root of the word "Messiah" is the verb

*mashach,* meaning "to rub or smear." For example, it is used of rubbing oil on a shield (Isa 21:5) or smearing paint on a wall (Jer 22:14). The verb is also used of smearing oil or anointing objects used in worship such as an altar (Gn 31:13), the tent of meeting (Ex 30:26), and the tabernacle and all that is in it (Ex 40:9-11). These texts indicate that the purpose of this anointing was to consecrate or set apart these items for use in worshiping God. The adjectival noun form of the word is used 39 times in the OT and exclusively with living beings. The noun and verb are both used of people, such as the anointed priest (Lv 4:3), anointing a king (2Sm 2:4; 5:3), or anointing a prophet (1Kg 19:16). It indicates that all these were consecrated to serve God. Even a pagan king (Cyrus) is called "anointed" because, in His providence, God consecrated (set apart) Cyrus to serve in bringing the people of Israel and Judah back from captivity (Isa 45:1).

With regard to the technical use of the term "Messiah" or "Anointed One" to refer to an eschatological Deliverer, it is commonly understood to be somewhat rare in the OT. Most will acknowledge that Dan 9:25-26 ("until *Messiah* the Prince;" "The *Messiah* will be cut off") and Ps 2:2 ("the LORD and His *Anointed One*") use the term "*Mashiach*" to refer to this end-of-days Redeemer. W. C. Kaiser, Jr. indicates six additional OT uses of the technical sense of Messiah (1Sm 2:10,35; Ps 20:6; 28:8; 84:9; Hab 3:13).[3] Some additional technical usages are 2Sm 22:51; 23:1; and Ps 89:51. Thus, in the narrow sense, the word "Messiah" is referring to an individual, uniquely consecrated to the service of God. However, since other passages of the OT reveal more about this figure, the definition of the term must go beyond this narrow definition.

*A King from the Line of David.* In addition to being consecrated to God's service, the Messiah is viewed as a royal figure. This first becomes apparent in Gn 49:10, where the scepter and the ruler's staff are promised to the royal descendant of Judah, "He whose right it is."[4] This is developed further in the Davidic covenant, where David is promised a seed or offspring, a royal heir of his house, who would have an eternal house, kingdom, and throne (2Sm 7:12-16). Isaiah also promised a divine child who would rule over a vast dominion and "reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom" (Isa 9:6-7 [5-6]). According to Isaiah, this King will be established "in the tent of David" (Isa 16:5). Amos anticipated the fall of the Davidic house and foresaw this King coming when God restores "the fallen booth of David" (Am 9:11-12). These passages, and in particular the Davidic covenant, reveal that the future Redeemer will be a royal figure, a King from the line of David.

*The Servant of the Lord.* Although the Scriptures present the future Redeemer as a King, the prophet Isaiah also depicts Him as the Servant of the Lord. This is His title in the Servant Songs of Isaiah (Isa 42:1-13; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13–53:12). As God's unique Servant, "He will bring justice to the nations" (42:1) and restore Israel to

the Lord (49:5-6). The Servant will also serve God by obeying Him despite a violent attack and shaming (50:6-7). The Servant's ultimate work would be to provide a substitutionary sacrifice to pay for the sins of Israel (53:4-6).

Isaiah also links his description of the Servant with the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. God will make "an everlasting covenant" with the Servant, in accordance with "the promises assured to David" (Isa 55:3). This association with the Davidic covenant fits with the promise that the Servant will be a covenant (mediator) for Israel (42:6; 49:8). Additionally, J. A. Motyer has identified various links between the royal figure of a Redeemer in Isaiah's book of Immanuel (Isa 7-12) and the Servant of the Lord in the Servant Songs. For example, both the Servant and the King are endowed with the Spirit (42:1; 11:2), both bring about justice for the nations (42:3; 11:4) and both establish righteousness (9:7; 11:5; 53:11). It is insufficient to see the Redeemer as a mere Servant; He will be a Royal Servant of the Lord.[5]

*An Eschatological Deliverer.* When Jacob gave his oracle of the tribes of Israel, he declared what would take place "in the days to come" (Gn 49:1), using a phrase that literally translates "in the end of days" (*be'acharit hayamim*). Then, he promised a scepter that will arise from Judah, who would be the rightful King ("whose right it is") and whom the peoples (not just Israel) would obey (49:10). The point is that this early prediction of the Messiah identifies Him as an eschatological figure.

Similarly, in the prediction of a ruler in Balaam's fourth oracle (Nm 24:17-19), the seer declares that he is describing events that will take place "in the future" (Nm 24:14). Just as in Gn 49:1, the Hebrew literally says "in the end of days." Balaam goes on to describe the King as both a "star" and a "ruler" who will arise "but not now . . . but not near," indicating that this King would come in the distant future.

Nearly a thousand years later, Jeremiah prophesied that the Lord would raise up a King, "a Righteous Branch of David" (Jer 23:5-6). To introduce this ruler, the prophet declared, "The days are coming," using this phrase commonly used to announce eschatological events (cf. Jer 16:14; 30:3; 31:31). In a further prediction of the coming of this Righteous Branch, the prophet declared He will arise "in those days and at that time" (Jer 33:15), also indicating an end-of-days coming of the King. In both Jer 23:5-6 and 33:15, the prophet predicted that in the day when this King came, "Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will dwell in safety." Not only would the King Messiah come at the end of days, but He also will be the great Deliverer of His people, "The Redeemer [who] will come to Zion" (Isa 59:20).

*A Redeemer from Sin.* Although the OT emphasizes the Messiah as a royal deliverer, there is evidence that He was also to be a Redeemer from sin. The most significant passage that shows the Messiah in this way is the fourth Servant Song, Isa 52:13–53:12. One of the main concepts found there is that the Servant was to be a substitutionary sacrifice for sin. The prophet puts the description of the Servant in

the mouth of Israel, at a time when the nation will have finally come to believe in Him. They confess that they have gone astray but the "the LORD has punished Him for the iniquity of us all" (Isa 53:5-6). They declare that He was killed, "cut off from the land of the living . . . struck because of [the] people's rebellion" (53:8). As such, the Servant became a "restitution offering" (*'asham*), the same word used for the restitution offering in Lv 5:14–6:7. Not only would He die, but the song hints at His resurrection, saying God "will prolong His days" (53:10). The outcome of the Servant's death and resurrection will be that He "will justify many, and He will carry their iniquities" (53:11). This summary of the fourth Servant Song details one of the most crucial features of the Messiah—He would provide redemption from sin.

*A Perfect Ruler.* One final aspect of the Messiah in Scripture is that He is always depicted as a perfect ruler who will establish a kingdom of peace, justice, and righteousness. An example of this expectation is in Isa 9:7, where the promised King is described as ruling from the throne of David over a vast kingdom of peace (*shalom*), having established it "with justice and righteousness from now on and forever." Just two chapters later, the same King is described as one who will "judge the poor righteously and execute justice for the oppressed of the land" (Isa 11:4). There will be such peace that "the wolf will live with the lamb" (11:6), and His influence will be so great that "the land will be as full of the knowledge of the LORD as the sea is filled with water" (11:9).

This expectation of the King is not limited to Isaiah—Jeremiah also anticipates that the Lord will "raise up a Righteous Branch of David. He will reign wisely as king and administer justice and righteousness in the land" (Jer 23:5; cf. 33:15). Similarly, the calendar of redemption as described in Dan 9:24-27 will culminate with the Messiah "bring[ing] in everlasting righteousness." The psalmist also depicts the future Messianic King as establishing this perfect kingdom, promising that "He will judge[6] Your people with righteousness and Your afflicted ones with justice" (Ps 72:2). At that time, the people will experience peace[7] and righteousness (72:3), and the King will "vindicate the afflicted among the people, help the poor, and crush the oppressor" (72:4). This is no ordinary king from the line of David within the boundaries of the Davidic kingdom. He will "rule from sea to sea and from the Euphrates to the ends of the earth" (72:8).

### A Theological Definition of the Messiah

Based on the above description, it is possible to give a theological definition of the term. *The Messiah is the eschatological, royal, Servant of the Lord, springing from the Davidic dynasty, who is consecrated by God to provide redemption from sin, bring deliverance for Israel, rule the world, and establish a kingdom of peace, justice, and*

*righteousness.* Therefore, when speaking of OT messianic prophecy, it is this King that the Hebrew Bible foretells, through both prophetic prediction and pattern.

## THE TITLES OF THE MESSIAH

Beyond the above description and definition of the Messiah, there are numerous titles used throughout the OT for this eschatological King. Many of them will be highlighted in the articles in this book. Nevertheless, what follows is a brief summary of some of the most important titles, beyond the word "Messiah" itself. However, this is by no means to be taken as a comprehensive list.[8]

### The Son of God

In Ps 2, David uses two words for the Lord's Son, *ben* (2:7) and *bar* (2:12). The Lord says of the Anointed One (Messiah, 2:2), "You are My Son; today I have become Your Father" (2:7). The last phrase is literally translated, "Today I have begotten You." The term "begotten" refers to coronation. It is describing the day the King is declared the Son of God and thus begotten. Even those who understand the psalm to refer to David, and not the Messiah, realize that David was a grown man when he was declared the son and begotten. Therefore, they conclude that begotten must refer not to his birth but to his coronation as king, or his enthronement. When spoken of the Messiah, it is describing the eternal Son taking His throne and does not imply that He is a created being. Allen Ross writes, "This is also a figure of speech (an implied comparison), assuming a comparison between the coronation of the king and the idea of begetting a son. Since 'today' the king is designated God's son, today is also his begetting, his coronation. He was already grown, even if a youth, but was being crowned as king, that is, the 'today' on which he is 'being begotten.' . . . The psalm in its context of a coronation decree is therefore used properly for the exaltation and coronation of Jesus."[9] Therefore, the title "Son of God" indicates the deity of the Messiah and the term "begotten" refers to His exaltation and coronation.

### The Son of Man

The title "Son of Man" is Jesus' favorite self-identification and is commonly understood to refer to His full humanity. However, in the interpretation of this title from its OT background, it is more likely an expression of deity. It appears in Dan 7:13-14 in the midst of the vision of the Ancient of Days. In this scene, "thrones were set in place" (7:9) with one obviously for the Ancient of Days. But for whom was the second throne? None other than the other figure present, "One like a son of man" (7:13). This One also is deity, but He appears to be fully human ("like a son of man").[10]

As the Divine Son of Man, He is granted all power and authority: "He was given authority to rule, and glory, and a kingdom; so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed" (7:14). Therefore, when the High Priest asked Jesus to state plainly if He was "the Messiah, the Son of God" and Jesus responded by citing Dan 7:13-14 in Matthew's Gospel, "'But I tell you, in the future you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven'" (Mt 26:64), this was taken as Jesus affirming His full deity. The High Priest tore his garments and declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy (26:65). He clearly understood the title "Son of Man" to mean full deity and not mere humanity. The title "Son of Man" is an OT expression for the divine Messiah.

### The Son of David

The Messiah was understood to be one who would come from the line of David. It is because of the Davidic covenant that the future King was called the son of David. There God states, "I will raise up after you your descendant (lit. "seed"), who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom" (2Sm 7:12). The Latter Prophets keep reminding their hearers of this promise. Isaiah called the Messiah "a shoot . . . from the stump of Jesse" (David's father, Isa 11:1), and Jeremiah identified Him as "a righteous Branch of David" (Jer 23:5; 33:15). Jeremiah and other prophets, when depicting the King Messiah's reign, merely called Him "David," although they actually were referring to David's greatest Son (Jer 30:9; Ezk 34:23-24; Hos 3:4-5). According to P. J. and E. Achaemenes, the coming of the son of David is the only hope of Israel at the end of the books of 1 and 2 Kings, when Israel is in captivity: "The authors of this history are telling a defeated and exiled Israel that a descendant of David still lives. God yet preserves alive the bearer of the promise of David, and thus there is still hope that the expected Messiah will come. As long as the seed of David is preserved, Israel has a hope for the future." The son of David is the true hope of Israel.

### The Teacher

The Messiah is called "the Teacher of Righteousness" (Jl 2:23a) in some translations and the Teacher who will guide Israel, saying, "This is the way, walk in it" (Isa 30:20-21). In both passages, the Messianic Teacher will not only guide to truth but also provide for Israel, giving them rain and crops (Jl 2:23b; Isa 30:23).[11]

### The Servant of the Lord

In Isaiah, Israel is depicted as a failed servant, spiritually deaf and blind (Isa 42:19). Regardless, the nation remains a chosen servant, just incapable of fulfilling its commission (43:10; 44:1). God promises never to forget His servant Israel (44:21),

but what will He do to restore the nation? In His kindness, God promises the mysterious Servant of the Lord, who will be successful (in contrast to Israel's failure). He "will act wisely" (52:13), a metonymy for "He will succeed." God's ideal and perfect Servant "will bring Jacob back to Him" (49:5) and restore "the protected ones of Israel" (49:6). The Servant of the Lord will achieve this by being "cut off from the land of the living . . . because of my people's [Israel's] rebellion" (53:8). But the Lord declares it is insufficient for the messianic Servant of the Lord to merely restore Israel. Therefore, God promises, "I will also make you a light for the nations, to be my salvation to the ends of the earth" (49:6). Israel was called to be a nation of priests (Ex 19:6), mediating the truth of the one true God to the nations. Although the servant nation failed, the messianic Servant of the Lord will succeed.

### The Prophet Like Moses

God promised that He would one day raise up for Israel a Prophet like Moses (Dt 18:15-19). Although all the prophets were like Moses in that they spoke for God, the Torah itself indicates what was unique about Moses' prophetic office—He spoke to God directly (lit. mouth to mouth; Nm 12:6-8). Therefore, the expectation was that one day, God would send the Prophet like Moses who would also speak directly with God. Many years later, at the time of the close of the canon of Scripture,[12] when the epilogue was placed at the end of the Pentateuch, the inspired addendum reminded Israel that after all these years, "No prophet [had] arisen again in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Dt 34:10). So the key message at the time when the canon of the OT was closing was to keep looking for the Messiah, the Prophet like Moses.

### Immanuel

In Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah predicts the virgin birth of the Messiah.[13] The passage says that the virgin mother of the Messiah will give Him the title, "Immanuel." This indicates that God would be with the nation of Judah in a special way through the birth of this boy. Moreover, the title suggests that this boy will be deity, "God with us." In Isa 8:8, Isaiah confirms that he intended this as a divine title, saying that the Assyrian army will conquer Judah "and its spreading streams will fill your entire land, Immanuel!" Here the child Immanuel is identified as deity because the land of Israel is seen as actually belonging to Him. Additionally, in the next great vision of the King Messiah, Isaiah uses a variety of divine titles to describe Him (see below).

### Wonderful Counselor

In Isa 9:6, the King Messiah is given four glorious dual throne titles, each reflecting His deity.[14] In the first one, the word "Wonder" stands in epexegetical construct

to Counselor; Hence, the child is "a wonder of a counselor" or more simply, "Wonderful Counselor." The term "wonder" is used exclusively of the acts of God on behalf of His people and the judgment of their enemies (Cf. Ex 3:20; 15:11; 34:10; Jos 3:5; Neh 9:17; 1Ch 16:12; Ps 40:5 [MT 40:6]; Isa 25:1; 29:14). This wondrous nature of God is especially evident in Jdg 13:15-21, where the name of the Angel of the Lord is "wonderful" (13:18) meaning beyond comprehension. Then the Angel does a "wonderful thing" (13:19) and ascends in the flame of Manoah's sacrifice. Additionally, the word Counselor reflects a uniquely divine attribute. For example, God needs no counselor (Isa 40:13), and the Messiah has the Spirit of counsel upon Him (Isa 11:2). Ultimately, Isaiah uses both of these titles together to describe the Lord, indicating that God alone is wonderful in counsel (Isa 28:29).

### Mighty God

Some have tried to assert that this phrase in Isa 9:6, commonly translated "Mighty God" (*'el Gibbor*) should be understood as "mighty warrior." However, the title is used consistently of deity (Dt 10:17; Ps 24:8; Jer 32:18; Neh 9:32). In fact, in the nearest context it is used of God (Isa 10:21). Although *gibbor* can mean "hero," and *'el* can mean "great," whenever these two words are used together, they refer to deity. Thus, the born child and the given son, is no less than God Himself.

### Father of Eternity

This title in Isa 9:6, commonly translated "eternal Father," indicates the divine eternality of the Messiah. The word translated "eternity" does not merely mean a long time, but rather it refers to "forever." This is supported by the very next verse that speaks of His reign never ending. Some have misunderstood this name as a declaration that the child is God the Father. Rather, it is stating that He is the Father of forever, a phrase that means He is the Creator of time or Author of eternity. Thus, the child is identified with the divine Creator whose first act was to create time.

### Prince of Peace

The word "prince" used in Isa 9:6 does not necessarily mean "the son of the king." Rather it means "ruler" or "leader" (Isa 3:14). Here it indicates one who will be the Ruler of Peace. According to Isaiah, Messiah will establish peace between humanity and God (Isa 53:5), and His reign will institute universal peace (Isa 2:4; 11:6-9) for all humanity.

### The Branch of the Lord

The title "the Branch" is used for the Messiah repeatedly in the OT (Isa 4:2; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zch 3:8; 6:12). The root word means sprout, growth, or branch. A Phoenician

inscription (third century BC) uses the phrase "Tsemach Tsedek" for the rightful heir to the throne. When used this way it refers to a son or scion of a king.[15] David used the verb (*tsamach*) in his last words when reflecting on his hope for the Messiah based on the Davidic covenant: "He has not (yet) made it *grow*?" (2Sm 23:5, author's translation).[16] Isaiah 4:2 states that the Branch of the Lord will be glorious in His kingdom. This statement views the Messiah as the Son of Yahweh, and the verses that follow describe the cleansing of Israel, similarly described in Zch 3:8-10, a passage that also uses the messianic title "the Branch." In Jer 23:5-6 and 33:15-16, "the Branch" is the righteous son of David who will save Judah and Israel and execute justice. His deity is recognized by His other title "The Lord [Yahweh] Our Righteousness." Jeremiah 33:19-26 goes on to assure readers of the coming of the Branch because of God's faithfulness to His covenants. In Zch 6:12, "the Branch" is the rightful king who unites the priesthood and the monarchy.

### The Lord (Yahweh) our Righteousness

Having already called the Messiah the "Righteous Branch" (Jer 23:5), Jeremiah also uses another messianic title, "Yahweh Our Righteousness" (Jer 23:6). It is most likely that the thought here is not to be construed as a divine epithet because the same title is used of the city of Jerusalem in Jer 33:16. Thus, it should be understood to mean "Yahweh is Our Righteousness." However, it should not be considered a mere theophoric title without divine significance because theophoric titles generally use the shortened form of God's name, "Yah." This is seen in the names like Jeremiah (Yah Exalts) or Elijah (My God is Yah). Only messianic titles use the full name of God, "Yahweh." This indicates that in some unique way, like the Angel of Yahweh (Ex 3:1-6; Jdg 13:1-23), the Messiah is identified as God Himself.

### The One Shepherd

In Ps 80:1, God Himself is called the Shepherd of Israel. This makes the messianic title "One Shepherd" even more significant. In Ezk 34, after rebuking the false shepherds of Israel, God promises to restore the nation at the end of days. At that time, God will regather the people from all the lands in which they have been scattered (Ezk 34:13). Then, God will appoint "a single shepherd" (lit. "One Shepherd") over them, called "My servant David" (Ezk 34:23). Under the care of the One Shepherd, "Yahweh will be their [Israel's] God" (Ezk 34:24). Ezekiel repeats the same promise in 37:24, looking at the day when Israel is restored to their land and to their God, under the care of the One Shepherd.[17]

While the above references refer to the One Shepherd when He will establish the messianic kingdom, Zechariah uses the term "Shepherd" to describe a much different situation. In speaking of the death of the Messiah, He writes, "Sword, awake

against My shepherd . . . Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered" (Zch 13:7). Seemingly before the Messiah ever begins to shepherd the people of Israel, He must be struck and Israel will be scattered. Then God will one day regather them under that Shepherd, and they will know the Lord.

### The Light to the Nations

In the Servant Songs, God promises that the Servant will restore Israel to their God (Isa 49:5-6). But these same songs indicate that the Servant's ministry will go beyond Israel to the whole world. Thus, He will establish justice on earth, and the islands will wait for His instruction (Isa 42:4). Not only will the Servant be a new covenant mediator for the people of Israel, but He will also be "a light for the nations." In Isa 49:6, God tells His Servant that the task of restoring Israel is insufficient for One so great as He, promising "I will also make you a light for the nations, to be My salvation to the ends of the earth." The Servant of the Lord is not just the Messiah of Israel but also the Messiah of the whole world.

## CONCLUSION

Much more could be written about the Messiah's OT titles, and much more has been written in the other articles in this *Handbook*. The purpose of this article has been to explain what the word "Messiah" means. The understanding of this OT figure should not be limited just to those passages that use the specific word "Messiah." Therefore, to develop and present a comprehensive biblical, theological definition of the term Messiah, the other key attributes of this biblical person were examined. Then, some of the other titles used for Him were surveyed. Based on this description, definition, and other titles, this *Handbook* uses an expansive approach to the issue of messianic prophecy. Under the heading of messianic, virtually all the predictions about this glorious individual, whatever the title, are examined—to make it possible for readers to see, as Jesus said, that everything written about [Him] in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled" (Lk 24:44).

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1. J. Becker influenced many with his view that no messianic figure from the Davidic house is discernible in Jewish thought until the second century BC (*Messianic Expectation in the Old Testament*, trans. D. E. Green [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977], 79).

2. See W. C. Kaiser, Jr. *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995); also, J. H. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 153–54; W. Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1998), 1–35.

3. Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament*.
4. The MT takes this as a proper noun, Shiloh.
5. J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 13.
6. Many translations understand these verbs in Ps 72 as if they have a jussive force and so translate them as if they are a prayer or request (e.g. "may He rule"). It is better to understand them as a simple imperfect (as the NET Bible does), anticipating the Messiah and His kingdom.
7. The HCSB renders *shalom* (peace) as "prosperity."
8. Approximately 65 titles have been identified as messianic.
9. Allen Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms: Volume I* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2011), 208.
10. Of course, the Messiah Jesus is indeed fully God and fully man, a fact foretold in Isa 9:6 and affirmed in the NT, especially Phl 2:6-9. Yet this text is describing Him as deity who looks like humanity.
11. For this alternative translation of Jl 2:23 and the linkage of these two passages, see the article "The Teacher of Righteousness" in this *Handbook*.
12. For a defense of seeing Dt 33–34 being added to the Pentateuch near the end of the canonical period by a biblical writer from the time of Ezra, or even Ezra himself, see Michael Rydelnik, *The Messianic Hope: Is the Hebrew Bible Really Messianic?* (Nashville: B&H Publishers, 2010), 60–65. There it demonstrates that the passage is clearly post-Mosaic since it includes Moses' death and burial. It uses postexilic terms like "man of God" to speak of Moses (Dt 33:1), does not remember where Moses was buried, and assumes it has been a long time since Moses' ministry, long past the time of Joshua.
13. For a defense of interpreting Isa 7:14 as a direct messianic prophecy, see the article "The Virgin Birth in Prophecy" in this *Handbook*.
14. Some have maintained that these are merely theophoric names, a long title that contains the name of God but which does not indicate that the bearer of the name is deity. They often will compare these titles in Isa 9:6 grammatically to the long title in 8:3, "Maher-shalal-hash-baz" ("Swift is the booty, fast is the prey"). Then the title is translated "A Wonderful Counselor is the Mighty God, The Eternal Father is the Prince of Peace." In response, the name in 8:3 ("Maher-shalal-hash-baz") is dependent on the same words being used in 8:1. Second, the title in 8:3 is not parallel syntactically to 9:6 because all the words in 9:6 are substantives that do not have subjects and predicates. Moreover, titles such as used in 9:6 frequently reflect the nature of the person who is named (e.g. 2Sm 12:24-25; Isa 1:26; Hos 1:10).
15. W. C. Kaiser, Jr., "Tsemach" in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1980), 769.
16. See the article "David's Last Words" in this *Handbook*.
17. Ecclesiastes 12:11 also uses the term "One Shepherd" as the One who was the source of the divinely inspired wisdom of Ecclesiastes. See the article "Messianism in Ecclesiastes" in this Handbook.

# Messiah and the Hebrew Bible[1]

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In a book review for the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, Walt Kaiser has made a strong plea for the importance of the question concerning the Messiah and the Hebrew Bible. The question, says Kaiser, "could be a defining moment for evangelical scholarship and ultimately for the Church's view of the way we regard Scripture."[2] According to Kaiser, the question ultimately comes down to whether the NT interpretation of an OT text is, in fact, the meaning intended by the OT author. Kaiser states, "if it is not in the OT text, who cares how ingenious later writers are in their ability to reload the OT text with truths that it never claimed or revealed in the first place? The issue is more than hermeneutics," says Kaiser. The issue is that of "the authority and content of revelation itself!"[3]

Another evangelical OT scholar, Gordon McConville, has also stressed the importance of the Messiah in the OT. McConville says, "If the Old Testament is *the* problem of Christian theology . . . [then] the Messiah is at the heart of that problem."[4] McConville goes on to say that "the validity of a Christian understanding of the Old Testament must depend in the last analysis on [the] cogency of the argument that the Old Testament is messianic."[5]

These are strong statements. And they come from two respected biblical scholars. I believe they accurately reflect the current state of mind of evangelical scholarship. If liberalism once defined itself as a quest for the *historical* Jesus, evangelicalism may well be in the process of defining itself as a quest for the *biblical* Jesus. I believe this question lies at the heart of much of the current evangelical discussion about biblical theology.

## EVANGELICAL VIEWS OF THE MESSIAH AND THE HEBREW BIBLE

Evangelical views of messianic prophecy can be traced to the work of two early 19th century OT scholars, Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (1802–1869) and Johann Christian Konrad von Hofmann (1810–1877). The views of these two men still set the agenda for much of evangelical biblical scholarship. In many respects, their views were similar. Both were influenced greatly by the Berlin revivals in the early 19th century. For both, the last word on the meaning of messianic prophecy in the OT was that of Jesus and the NT. Both believed fulfilled prophecy offered essential support for the truth of the gospel. Both also believed that in giving us messianic prophecy, God had intervened in a real way in human history. He had made known His will and purpose. Messianic prophecy was thus not a product of a human yearning for a better life, but the result of a "supernatural" revelation.

In spite of these basic similarities, each man offered a fundamentally different set of answers to essential questions.

***Hengstenberg.*** Hengstenberg's understanding of messianic prophecy was shaped by two primary concerns: (1) his own experience of conversion, which was sudden and undeniable; and (2) his desire to use his spiritual experience as a basis for the defense of the Bible. For Hengstenberg, God's work in the world was accomplished by means of specific divine interventions. These were miraculous events within the arena of ordinary history. The incarnation was a prime example. It marked a new beginning for God's relationship with the world. In the incarnation, the Word had become part of the world. Israel's history was a record of the many and diverse instances of that intervention. Although Israel's history was a part of ordinary human history, it was also, like his own conversion, punctuated with miraculous exceptions.

That a prophet could foresee the exact name of the future Persian king Cyrus (e.g. Isa 45:1) was an exception to ordinary history, but such an exception was to be expected given the divine origin of the prophetic Word. When God stepped into the flow of human history, His actions were direct and clear to anyone who witnessed them. They were, in fact, so self-evident that they could be used as proof of the truth of the gospel.

As Hengstenberg saw it, God's acts in history had an immediate but short-range effect on the rest of history. As miracles, they did not become part of the rest of history. They were historical, but not part of history. They were, in fact, exceptions to history and as such were clear signs of God's activity. God's acts in history were like our stepping into the current of a river. Our feet may make a splash, but there are no ripples made in the river. The ripples are lost in the flow of the river. Hengstenberg's own conversion was a divine splash whose ripples were quickly

dissolved by the flow of time. There was nothing left for the historian to fix upon and to draw conclusions from. It was a "super"-natural (miraculous) event lost within the course of ordinary history.

For Hengstenberg, the divine revelation of messianic prophecy consisted of similar kinds of miraculous events. In this way, his entire understanding of messianic prophecy came to be shaped by his own conversion experience. As Hengstenberg understood it, the prophets of old were given sudden, miraculous, panoramic visions of the whole of the messianic future. Those visions were like flashes of supernatural light and insight. Often, they came so suddenly and faded so quickly the prophet could record only a small portion of the vision. One is reminded of flashbulbs from the 1950s which left one momentarily stunned and unable to see anything but a large blue dot that faded slowly from one's eyes. The prophet hurriedly recorded the vision as it faded from his sight.

Hengstenberg believed the prophetic visions came so quickly that in some cases, new visions would appear to the prophet in the midst of other visions. The prophet would have to stop recording one vision to pick up his description of another. What the prophet was ultimately able to record were only bits and pieces of the visions he had seen. Hence, for Hengstenberg, to discover Messiah in the OT meant gathering all the bits and pieces of the one grand vision and piecing them back together. It was as if the prophetic books were large scrapbooks containing scattered fragments of once-whole Rembrandts and Michelangelos. A single verse in the Bible might contain fragmented pieces of several visions. Only the trained eye could spot a piece of both a Rembrandt and a Michelangelo and in the same verse. Only one who knew the whole vision could piece the fragments together.

In finding and piecing together such splintered visions, the NT was indispensable. It was like the picture on the cover of a jigsaw puzzle. For Hengstenberg, little or nothing was left to the prophet. He merely recorded the visionary fragments from which the student of prophecy must piece together the whole.

Given these assumptions about the nature of prophecy (which were novel and unusual in Hengstenberg's day), it is not hard to understand the approach he took to the Messiah in the OT. Following Hengstenberg through the Hebrew Bible is like following a trained geologist through the Black Hills. We watch him pick up a stone here and a rock there and tell us they were once part of a great prehistoric mountain range. Hengstenberg can point to a fragment here and a text there and reconstruct for us the great messianic mountain range that once inhabited the prophet's mind. Without knowing the whole scope of messianic prophecy as Hengstenberg, we have to follow him and take his word about the messianic parts of a verse.

Though few evangelicals today openly adopt Hengstenberg's approach, his

legacy continues to influence the contemporary discussion. That legacy, as I understand it, consists of three commonly held assumptions:

—*Assumption 1*: The meaning of any one messianic prophecy is not immediately transparent. There is a need for some kind of translation of what is *said* in the OT into what is *seen* in the NT. For Hengstenberg it meant a "spiritual" interpretation—looking to the NT for clues to the OT's meaning. Another word for this is typology. In any event, for Hengstenberg, the NT held the key to the meaning of the OT.

—*Assumption 2*: The messianic meaning of the OT consists of the predictive nature of its prophecy. To be messianic, the OT must accurately *predict* the historical events in the life of Jesus. We thus judge the messianic intent of the OT by indexing it to the picture of Jesus in the Gospels. Once again, the NT holds the key to the meaning of the OT.

—*Assumption 3*: The value of the messianic prophecies in the OT is largely apologetic. To the extent that an OT passage proves to be messianic and thus predictive of the life of Jesus, it shows that Christianity, or the gospel, is true. This is the argument from prophecy. In actual fact, this legacy goes back to the apologists in the early church. It is to Hengstenberg, however, that the credit must go for reviving this concern. In saying this is one of the legacies of Hengstenberg, I am not saying it remains, at present, a productive use of messianic prophecy. Hengstenberg did not convince many, even among his own evangelical colleagues.[6]

***von Hofmann.*** Whereas Hengstenberg had focused his attention on piecing together the messianic prophecies in the text of Scripture, von Hofmann looked beyond the text to the historical events they recorded. According to von Hofmann, it was not the text of Scripture that was messianic; it was history itself that was messianic. It was not Israel's historical writings that were messianic, but the history that Israel itself experienced. That history was a "living picture" of the coming Messiah. It was a *vaticinium reale*,[7] a "material prophecy" consisting of the actual events. Von Hofmann believed the events of Israel's history were an "inspired" messianic picture—just as he believed the Bible was an "inspired text."

To be sure, the Hebrew Bible functions as our primary means of "seeing" the picture in history, but the *messianic* picture itself and the means of "seeing" that picture were found by looking beyond the Scriptures to Israel's history as *history*. The full messianic picture can only be seen as one observes Israel's history unfold itself into the first century and the life of Christ. The history becomes clearer, and the picture more focused, as it moves closer to the coming of the Redeemer. Because it was truly God at work in this history, Israel's history was unlike any other. It was a "holy history." God Himself had caused it. God was not merely working *in* history, history *was God at work*. Von Hofmann believed that just as God can be seen by a

botanist in every leaf of a tree, so God can be seen by the historian in every moment of Israel's history. For von Hofmann, in fact, there was not a moment in all of world history in which something divine does not dwell.[8] History is God working out His will in the world. In Israel's history, God was, as it were, submerging Himself into history, making it increasingly more sacred and increasingly more messianic. Ultimately Israel's sacred history culminated in God's final act stepping into history, that is, the incarnation.

For von Hofmann, God did not momentarily step in and out of history, as Hengstenberg had envisioned. In Israel's history, God was increasingly immersing Himself in the world. The incarnation of Christ was thus not a unique and new beginning, but a final stage in a long process of God's becoming a part of the world. The boundaries of world history had already been permanently breached by a real divine presence with Israel. God, in effect, had carved out a "sacred history" (*Heilsgeschichte*) in the midst of His work in the world (*Weltgeschichte*).

With such a view of the Bible and history it is not hard to see how everything in the Hebrew Bible could ultimately be about the Messiah. It does not initially have to look messianic for it to be an early stage of a developing prophecy. To quote von Hofmann: "It is a long way between the death of an animal whose skin covered [man's] nakedness, and the death of the Son of God whose righteousness covers [man's] sin. Yet these are like the beginning and the end of the same journey."[9]

It is thus also not hard to see how, in von Hofmann's approach, everything in the Bible could be understood in strictly historical terms. Only the one who understands history as moving toward Christ can understand the messianic element in the Hebrew Bible. The meaning of Israel's history is messianic only when one sees God's messianic intentions behind the actual events of that history. The task of understanding the OT as messianic lies in recognizing the divine patterns in these early events and pointing to how they replay themselves throughout the remainder of Israel's history. History's meaning thus becomes typological and finds its ultimate meaning only with the coming of the antitype. The mere historical similarity between the exodus and our Lord's sojourn to Egypt in Mt 2 constitutes for von Hoffman a "material prophecy" of the coming Messiah. Once again, in such an approach, the NT holds the key to the meaning of the OT.

In such a context, the meaning of biblical words and terms, such as "the anointed one" or "the king," spoken at a certain moment in Israel's history, transcended the meaning of those words when understood solely within the context of the rest of history. Behind *all* events in Israel's "holy history" lay the mind of God and His will. Every word spoken within Israel's history had thus a horizontal (historical) range of meaning as well as a vertical (messianic) one. Within Israel's salvation history, not only were biblical words fraught with divine intentionality,

but so were the historical events that constituted that history. God was the author of both. His will and intention lay behind both. While David might have referred to *himself* as "the anointed one" in Ps 18, the real event that lay behind Ps 18 carried with it the potential of being understood by the historian as part of a prophetic history. Proof of this comes when the historian views Ps 18 from the perspective of its NT fulfillment.

To appreciate the legacy of von Hofmann, one must know something of how evangelicals viewed "history" before his time. Before von Hofmann there was a fundamental distinction between how evangelicals viewed biblical history and how it was viewed by biblical critics. Biblical history, as critical scholarship had come to view it, was an understanding of the history of Israel within the context of what we might call "ancient analogies." By that I mean that Israel's history was not viewed on its own terms but as part of the history of other ancient peoples. The Bible played an increasingly minor role in reconstructing its own history.

For evangelicals before von Hofmann, biblical history meant simply that history which could be read off the pages of the Bible. Before von Hoffman, evangelical biblical scholars had a largely *realistic* historical understanding of the Bible. What they read in the Bible was what they understood to have happened. If the Bible said the Nile turned to blood, they took that to mean the Nile River turned to "*real* blood." Von Hofmann marks the turning point of evangelical biblical scholarship away from such a realistic view of history. Even C. F. Keil, the most conservative evangelical OT scholar of his day, was willing to concede that "the changing of the water into blood is to be interpreted . . . not as a chemical change into real blood, but as a change in the colour, which caused it to assume the appearance of blood."[10] Note that von Hofmann did not alter the newly developing critical attitude toward Israel's history. He accepted it as such, though he practiced it conservatively and was even willing to render it the status of divine revelation. Nevertheless, with von Hofmann, the holy history that progressively revealed the coming Messiah was no longer merely the history we read in the Bible. Revelatory prophetic history (*Heilsgeschichte*) must be reconstructed and augmented from our knowledge of the ancient world.

A second, and important, legacy of von Hofmann is that OT messianic prophecy could no longer be viewed apologetically. Having assigned the meaning of the OT to a history that finds its meaning in the events of the NT, one could no longer speak of fulfillment in terms of verification or validation. It was the fulfillment that validated the earlier history, not the other way around. Von Hofmann was thus quick to jettison the notion that OT messianic prophecy could be used in any way to defend the truth of Christianity. With von Hofmann it was *history* that validated Christianity, not the *miracle* of fulfilled prophecy.

Von Hofmann's legacy among modern evangelical approaches to the OT is felt at many levels. Nowhere is it more tangible than in the study of messianic prophecy. My purpose is not to critique modern evangelical approaches for their dependence on von Hofmann. I have tried to do this elsewhere.[11] My purpose now, as I stated earlier, is to seek an alternative to the approaches of both von Hofmann and Hengstenberg.

Before moving on to that part of the article, let me briefly summarize what, I think, these two evangelical views have in common. Though quite different in detail, both Hengstenberg and von Hofmann share important evangelical assumptions about the Messiah in the OT. Here I have listed three:

—*Assumption 1*: Both men (Hengstenberg and von Hofmann) understood messianic prophecy as a genuine (supernatural) "vision" of the future. Prophecy was a "history of the future."

—*Assumption 2*: Both men saw the NT as the primary guide for understanding OT messianic prophecy. Without a NT picture of Jesus, we could not truly understand the OT. The NT serves as a kind of searchlight cast back over the OT. Without that light from the NT, the OT messianic vision is at best hazy and uncertain.

—*Assumption 3*: For both Hengstenberg and von Hofmann, the messianic vision of the OT is not presented in a straightforward, holistic manner. The messianic picture is scattered in bits and pieces throughout the OT.

As stated above, Hengstenberg explained this as a function of the rapidity of the visions. The visions came so quickly, the prophets simply could not record them fast enough. The prophetic books were like large scrapbooks containing scattered fragments. To be sure, the prophets saw the whole picture, but they recorded only a small portion of what they had seen. Only one who knew the whole vision (from the NT) could piece the fragments together.

## A RESPONSE TO HENGSTENBERG AND VON HOFFMAN

I want to make it clear that I believe there is much truth in these three assumptions. Nevertheless, I still believe there is room for more work in each of these areas. As a summary of what lies ahead in this paper, I would like to add my own response to each of these three points.

—*Response 1*: Prophecy is not just a "history *of* the future." It is also a "history *for* the future." It is not merely a description of the destination of Israel's history, it is also a road map that explains how to get there.

—*Response 2*: The NT is not so much a *guide* to understanding the OT as it is the *goal* of understanding the OT. Unless we understand the OT picture of the Messiah,

we will not understand the NT picture of Jesus. The OT, not the NT, is the messianic searchlight.

—*Response 3*: For Hengstenberg (and von Hofmann) viewing the messianic vision in the OT was like looking into a huge mirror that had been shattered into a thousand pieces. Hengstenberg believed that to see the Messiah in the OT, we must look at the NT picture of Jesus as it is reflected through the pieces of this shattered mirror. What remains of the OT messianic picture is now only small bits and pieces scattered throughout the OT.

Now, I think most of us would agree with Hengstenberg on this point— at least in part. That is certainly the impression one gets from reading the OT prophets. I would like to suggest, however, that these bits and pieces (of the messianic vision) are not *randomly* scattered, as Hengstenberg believed. There is a recognizable pattern. They follow an order. A good number of them, for example, fall along what we might call the "compositional seams" of the OT books, the transitional comments the biblical authors use to tie their texts together.

Some of these bits and pieces of prophetic visions also fall along the "seams" of the OT as a whole, what is called the Tanakh.[12] What I am suggesting is that the shape of the Hebrew Bible as a whole is a meaningful context for viewing the scattered bits and pieces of prophetic visions. Rather than a shattered mirror, I think a better image of the OT is a stained-glass window. To be sure, it is made of fragmented pieces of glass, but like a stained-glass window, each piece belongs with the others and plays a crucial part in the picture of the whole.

If these initial observations are valid, I believe they suggest new possibilities for viewing the Messiah in the OT. If there is an order and pattern to the distribution of messianic texts, then we should ask: what is the meaning that lies behind the order?

Let me briefly outline what taking such an approach might entail. There are many ways to look at the messianic stained-glass window in the Hebrew Bible. The approach I have in mind begins by looking at the Hebrew Bible in the shape we find it just at the threshold of the coming of Christ. It looks at the OT's last word about itself, at how the OT was understood by those who gave it its final shape. Here I have in mind the Tanakh: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. To be sure, there were and are other shapes to the Hebrew Bible, but judging from texts such as Lk 24:44, the Tanakh is the form of the OT with which Jesus and the NT authors were most familiar.

Viewed from this perspective, the OT has all the appearance of being a single work with a single purpose. It is connected by literary seams linking Dt 34 and Jos 1 and similar seams linking Mal 3 and Ps 1. These passages fall together in the order of books in the Tanakh. There are also clear links within these individual parts and

a distinct compositional strategy that goes from the first word in the Hebrew Bible (*bereshit*) to the last (*veyā'al*). If we follow along the lines of these compositional seams, I believe, we will find the Tanakh to be motivated primarily by a hope in the soon coming of the promised messiah. It is that perspective on the OT that, I believe, gives us the best view of what the OT authors believed about the Messiah. It is also that perspective that shows most clearly the literary and theological dependency of the NT on the OT.

## A PROPOSAL FOR UNDERSTANDING THE MESSIAH IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

In the remainder of this article, I would like to describe what I think is a possible approach to understanding the Messiah in the Hebrew Bible. I can only describe it in outline. I am not going to try to argue a case for it.[13] I am not going to try to convince you of it. My goal is simply to explain to you what I think is a plausible approach for understanding Jesus in light of the teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures. I will attempt to describe this approach with the help of three basic propositions: (1) the nature of OT messianic prophecy consists of both prediction and identification; (2) the OT messianic vision is a fragmented vision that becomes increasingly more cohesive as one moves toward the final stages of the formation of the Hebrew Bible; and (3) the Hebrew Bible is both text and commentary.

### Proposition #1: Prophecy as Prediction and Identification

The central element of the approach I have in mind lies in an attempt to clarify the question of predictive messianic prophecy. There is, of course, prophetic prediction in the OT. Prediction is a major apologetic theme, for example, in passages such as Isa 41. There are also other important features to the notion of prophetic fulfillment. To highlight those features, I would suggest that alongside terms such as "fulfillment" we also use the terms "identification" and "exposition." The OT not only *predicts* the coming of a Messiah; it also *describes* and *identifies* that Messiah.

Here is an important difference from Hengstenberg and von Hofmann's idea of prophecy as a "history of the future." As we said above, messianic visions in the OT are not only visions *of* the future, they are also visions *for* the future. They *explain* the future as well as *reveal* it. The amazing thing about OT prophecy is not only that the prophets foresaw what would happen. That, as Hengstenberg rightly held, was miraculous. But equally amazing was that, when it came, the future the prophets foresaw (and here I have in mind the NT) actually followed the plan the prophets had laid out for it. When the future came at a specific time and place, there were

people waiting for it. There were those, like Simeon and Anna, who understood it in terms of the OT prophetic vision. In other words, the prophet's vision was such that it preserved and carried with it a people who both understood the prophets and were there waiting for the fulfillment of their vision. By falling in line with that vision, the NT writers show that they accepted the OT as pre-interpreted, and they also were in fundamental agreement with its interpretation. That interpretation, we can see, began long before the time of its fulfillment. Already within the OT itself we can discover clear signs of an ongoing process of inter-biblical, or (I would prefer to say) intertextual interpretation.

In the Pentateuch, for example, the Messiah is a prophetic priest-king like Moses, who will reign over God's kingdom, bring salvation to Israel and the nations, and fulfill God's covenants. As I understand it, this messianic vision is part of the compositional strategy of the whole of the Pentateuch. In the Prophets and Writings, we find a full and detailed *exposition* of the Pentateuch's messianism. It is in that exposition that the OT messianic hope is extended and deepened to the very point at which we find it in the NT. Thus, the last word in the Hebrew Bible is as messianic as any passage in the NT. I have in mind, of course, texts such as the vision of the Son of Man in Dan 7. That vision, and the book of Daniel as a whole, is equal to any messianic Christology in the NT.

To be clear, what I am describing is often viewed in terms of a process of "re-interpretation." Earlier, nonmessianic sections of the OT are re-interpreted by later authors and subsequently understood as messianic. That is very far from what I have in mind. What I have in mind is that when the OT reads and interprets itself, as is happening in Dan 7, it does so by drawing on the real, historical intent of the other OT authors. There is no need to speak of a re-interpretation of texts. I think, for example, it is possible to show that the Pentateuch is already thoroughly messianic and that the rest of the OT understands this and expands on it by way of textual commentary and exposition.

There is a direct link, in other words, between the beginning of the OT and the end of the OT, as well as the end of the OT and the beginning of the NT. From a literary perspective, there is no intertestamental gap between the Testaments. The last word in the Hebrew Bible can also be understood as the first word in the NT. It is a verb without a subject (*veyā'al*, 2Chr 36:23, lit., "let him go up"). Its subject could very well be taken from the first chapter of Matthew in the NT. It is a call for the coming of that one "whose God is with him," and who is to build the Temple in Jerusalem. In Chronicles (and the postexilic prophets) this one is the messianic (priestly) son of David. Matthew's Gospel, which follows immediately after this last word, begins like Chronicles, with a genealogy identifying Jesus as the Christ (Messiah), the son of David, who is Immanuel, "God with us."

So what I am suggesting is that the Hebrew Bible, when viewed in its final historical context (on the eve of the Christian era), is already messianic in a NT sense. When the NT says that the OT is fulfilled in Jesus, it means that we can identify Jesus as the Messiah because He fits the picture of the Messiah in the OT. The *proof* that the Gospel is true (and I believe there is a proof here) lies not only in an accurate *prediction*, but also in an accurate *identification* of Jesus with the one promised by the Law and the Prophets. To say it another way, it is only when we have identified Jesus as the OT Messiah that we can speak of verification of OT prophecy by prediction. Thus, the messianic thrust of the NT is not merely an argument that the OT is true prophecy. It also includes the argument that Jesus is the true Messiah.

Let me return for a moment to the metaphor of the NT as a "messianic searchlight." Here, I believe, a shift in focus is necessary. As I would see it, it is not the NT, but the OT, that is the "messianic searchlight."[14] It is only when the OT casts its light onto the pages of the NT that we see the meaning of the life of Jesus.[15] In such an approach, the OT (without the NT) is *not* understood as "inadequate and incomplete," as Eichrodt once described it.[16] The messianism of the OT is fully developed and is the context from which we must *identify* Jesus as the promised Messiah.

### Proposition #2: The OT Messianic Vision Moving toward Greater Cohesiveness

The OT messianic vision is a fragmented vision that becomes increasingly more cohesive as one moves toward the final stages of the formation of the Hebrew Bible. The second point I want to make is taken from Hengstenberg's notion of a shattered vision. No one who has read the prophets will want to disagree with Hengstenberg that the messianic vision of these books lies before us in bits and pieces. As Calvin once said, "Those who have carefully . . . perused the Prophets will agree with me in thinking that their discourses have not always been arranged in a regular order."[17]

Hengstenberg proposed to piece this fractured vision together by looking at the picture that emerges from the NT. I propose reading the fragmented prophetic visions, not in light of the NT, but in light of the picture that emerges from within the OT itself. There is, I believe, a coherent picture behind the composition of the prophetic books and the Pentateuch. The pieces fit into that picture. I also believe it can be shown that if we follow the order of the Hebrew Bible—the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (Tanakh)—the messianic picture becomes increasingly more transparent. That is because later biblical texts focus on and provide interpretation for earlier biblical texts. By "later" I do not mean chronologically late. I mean, rather, the stage at which the biblical author is at work making a book. As far as we can tell, most biblical authors, such as the authors of Kings and Chronicles, worked with existing written texts. They organized and presented those texts so

that their narratives gave meaning and sense to the events they recorded. The question of *how* they did this leads to my next proposition—the Hebrew Bible as text and commentary.

### Proposition #3: The Hebrew Bible as Both Text and Commentary

If we ask what possible intertextual relationship lies between the compositional shape of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Writings of the Hebrew Bible, I would suggest it is akin to that of text and commentary. The Prophets and the Writings are not intent on giving us a *new* vision for the future. Their aim is to help us understand the messianic vision that has already been laid down in the Pentateuch and repeated in their own writings. God told the prophet Habakkuk, for example, to "write the vision" and also "to explain it" (Hab 2:2, author's translation, cf. Dt 1:5). Like Habakkuk, the prophets wrote their vision along with its explanation. As Abraham Joshua Heschel put it, the interpretation of prophecy is already "an exegesis of an exegesis."[18] Our task is not to explain the prophetic vision, but to explain the prophets' own explanation of their vision. The aim of the authors of the Prophets and the Writings was to provide a full and detailed textual commentary on the messianic vision that begins in the Pentateuch and is carried along through the rest of the Bible.

Like a stained-glass window, the Prophets and the Writings give us the important bits and pieces of the prophets' vision. I have in mind something like the way Isa 63:1-6 draws a glimmer of light from the poem in Gn 3:15 and passes it on to Dan 7 through the prism of Gn 49. From there on it passes through the NT on its way to the vision of the "rider on the white horse" in Rev 19. Isaiah takes as his starting point the picture of the king who, in Gn 49, "washes his clothes in the blood of grapes." He then builds that picture into one of a mighty warrior treading in the wine presses of divine wrath. In doing so, Isaiah consciously links Gn 49 to the first messianic poem in the Pentateuch, Gn 3:15. Isaiah has thus linked two strategically important *poems* in the Pentateuch (Gn 3 and Gn 49). In doing so, he shows that he is reading the Pentateuch along its compositional seams. As in a stained-glass window, the light he draws from the Pentateuch is given color and texture as it passes through the remainder of the OT. But also like a stained-glass window, these points of light converge into the larger picture.

Here, let me reiterate the point I made earlier. The line of thought reflected in Isaiah and Daniel and the book of Revelation is, I believe, the same as the historical intention of the Pentateuch itself.

When Ps 72 says of the Davidic king, "All the nations will be blessed in him,"[19] it draws directly from the eschatology of the Pentateuch in Gn 12:3. When the same

psalm says of the king's enemies, may they "lick the dust" (Ps 72:9b), it holds its vision up to a piece of light coming from Gn 3.[20]

In the same way, when speaking of the eschatological future, Hosea says, "Out of Egypt I called My son." In doing so, Hosea draws directly from the poetic vision of Balaam in the Pentateuch (Nm 24). Also, by focusing on the poetic texts, Hosea shows he is reading the Pentateuch along its compositional seams.[21] In the Numbers passage, Israel's messianic future (in Nm 24) is viewed in terms of their glorious past, that is, the exodus (in Nm 23).[22] The compositional strategy *within the Pentateuch itself* has thus linked the exodus with the messianic future. Hosea draws his own messianic hope from just those passages. Both Hosea and the Pentateuch see the fulfillment of their visions in terms of the same eschatological future, that is, "the last days" (*be'acharit hayyāmiym,* Hos 3:5; Nm 24:14). Hosea's messianic vision is thus cast as a commentary on the Pentateuch's own messianic eschatology. Matthew's application of the Hosea passage to Jesus suggests he has properly read both the Pentateuch and its commentary in Hosea.

Here we can take another example from the Immanuel prophecy in Isa 7:14. It is an all-too-common practice to look *beyond* the book of Isaiah and *beyond* the words of Isa 7 to the historically reconstructed social location of those words. When we do that, it becomes very difficult to see the kind of prophecy of a virgin birth that Matthew saw. But, if we look at the passage within the compositional unity of the book of Isaiah, quite another view emerges. According to v. 15, for example, when Immanuel is born, "he shall eat curds and honey until he knows to reject the evil and choose the good" (author's translation).

As the author of the book of Isaiah saw it, v. 15 is as much a part of the sign given to Ahaz as v. 14. The sign is not only that the virgin is pregnant with a son, but also that when the son is born, he (and thus Israel as a whole) will be eating "curds and honey." According to the description of the destruction of Judah in the following verses (Isa 7:17-25), they will be eating "curds and honey," because the land will have been ruined first by the Assyrians (v.17), then by the Babylonians (chap. 39), and finally by others after that (chaps. 41–66). Within the whole of the book of Isaiah, the birth of the young Immanuel is located long *after* the ruin of the northern and southern kingdoms.

The 19th-century critic Bernhard Duhm was so struck by the implications of v. 15 that he could only image it was a late "messianic gloss"[23] to vv. 14 and 16. Though I believe Duhm rightly understood the sense of v. 15, his notion that it was a late gloss is rendered unlikely by the presence of the verse in the Qumran Isaiah manuscript. No one here would dispute that the ultimate focus of the book of Isaiah is far beyond the exile, that is, long after the time of Isaiah and Ahaz. According to v. 15, the sign is for that distant future. Isaiah, of course, had a message for Ahaz, but

that message was about something that was to happen in the "last days." Among other things, the rest of the book of Isaiah is intended as an exegesis of the prophet's tersely recorded vision in 7:14-15. Here we must understand not only the vision, but also the prophet's exegesis of that vision as it plays out in the remainder of the book.

### Summary

I hope by now I have made clear enough a general idea of one possible approach to the Messiah and the Hebrew Bible. There are many questions raised by this approach. One important question has to do with the notion of the "final shape" of the Bible. This is largely uncharted waters for most of us evangelicals. It is, of course, an idea that has been around in OT studies since the time of Wellhausen and earlier. Let me be clear that I am not suggesting we abandon the long-established evangelical concern for the meaning of the "original authors." Far from it.

What I am suggesting is that by not paying close attention to the whole of the Hebrew Bible as we now have it, we are neglecting some important "original authors." Who was it, for example, who wrote of the death of Moses and tells us that a prophet like Moses never arose again in Israel? He was an inspired biblical author of the same stature and importance as any other. His contribution to the meaning of the Pentateuch cannot be overestimated. His brief comments at the close of the book tell us in no uncertain terms that the prophet that Moses spoke of in Dt 18 was not any of the later prophets of Israel. There was still a prophet yet to come. In other words, the author who gave us the "final" ending of the Pentateuch understands the words of Moses in Dt 18 exactly as they were understood by the NT authors. That prophet, like Moses, was the expected Messiah—and He had not yet come. I am suggesting we pay just as close attention to that biblical author, and his colleagues, as we do to the better-known OT authors. Is an inspired author any less important because we do not know his name?

### A Test Case: Is the Pentateuch Messianic?

So, is the Pentateuch messianic? If so, how? In what follows, I want to lay out the main lines of argument which, I believe, support the view that the Pentateuch was written primarily as a presentation of a future messianic hope centered in the tribe of Judah and grounded both in creation and covenant.[24]

a. *The Pentateuch is a single book with a single purpose.* First, the whole of the Pentateuch (from Genesis to Deuteronomy) was intended to be read as a single book with a distinct purpose, focus, and message. That is to say, the Pentateuch had an author, and its author had a purpose in writing this great literary work. The Pentateuch is about something. What this means is that the whole of the Pentateuch has a definite shape and structure. It is not haphazardly thrown together. It is not

merely a diary of events. It is not a hodgepodge of early documents. To me this has been the most beguiling feature of the Documentary Hypothesis—its complete disregard of and disdain for the text as we now have it. The Pentateuch is surely going somewhere, and its author has taken great pains to guide us along that route. There is a single literary strategy that runs through the whole of the Pentateuch.

Several lines of argument, I believe, show us that the Pentateuch is a unity and has a single, intentional structure.

(1) The Pentateuch recounts a single story that begins with the creation of the world and the preparation of the land, and ends with the postponement of the possession of that land. A central theme of the Pentateuch is the land.

(2) The large blocks of narrative (primeval history, patriarchs, exodus, wilderness, conquest) are linked by a single theme—that is, faith. Someone, namely its author, has linked all the events in Israel's early history to the theme of faith.[25]

(3) The arrangement of major, homogeneous poetic texts in Gn 49, Nm 24, and Dt 32 suggests the Pentateuch's narratives are linked by the single messianic theme that recurs in these poems. In this regard, the Pentateuch is like a Hollywood musical. As in a musical, the story is both interrupted and developed by the songs (poems). Also, like in a musical, the songs (poems) are not randomly thrown into the story. The songs (poems) carry the central theme of the story. They are the primary means for developing what the narratives are about. A careful attention to the songs (poems) enables us to see what the Pentateuch is about.[26]

(4) A fourth element in the shaping of the Pentateuch is the way the various collections of laws have been purposefully arranged within the narratives. What Wellhausen and others maintained were remnants of earlier law codes, I believe, can be shown to follow a carefully laid-out textual strategy. At its center lies the account of the golden calf. That story shows that something has gone fundamentally wrong. It is only near the end of the book, in Dt 30, that we come to the author's answer—that is, the circumcised heart and the promise of a new covenant.[27] The message of the Pentateuch lies not in its textual *strata* but in its textual *strategy*.

b. *The message of the Pentateuch.* Having established that the Pentateuch has a shape and a central message, I want to develop briefly what I believe that central message to be. My point is to show how the central message is linked to the actual textual strategies of its composition. It is not enough to point to broad themes and ideas. There is no end to that. What must be shown is *how those broad themes and ideas are specifically tied to the compositional shape of the Pentateuch.*

Here I want to list what I take to be the central components of the compositional themes of the Pentateuch. I want also to discuss briefly how those themes are tied to the compositional strategy of the Pentateuch.

(1) *Component #1: The prophetic critique of Israel's faith.* As we mentioned

earlier, the single story of the Pentateuch takes us from God's creation and preparation of the land to Israel's failure in the wilderness and postponed possession of the land. Neither Moses (Nm 20:12) nor the people (Nm 14:11) have the faith that would bring them into the land. The overall strategy reflected in the Pentateuch, in other words, is anything but optimistic about Israel's immediate future. They have at best a rocky future. In one of the final compositional seams linking the poems to the Pentateuch (Dt 31:29), Moses on his death bed tells Israel, "I know that after my death you will become completely corrupt and turn from the path I have commanded you." One can already hear in these words the distant voice of the prophets.[28] Exile is on the way. The future is at risk. There is at this time little room for hope among God's people.

Nevertheless, as in the prophetic books, there is also a message of hope to be found in the Pentateuch. As in the prophets, it is a message centered on a coming king. It is that king who is the center of focus of the poems in the Pentateuch. Each major (and minor) poem in the Pentateuch centers on His coming. He is the king who will arise from the house of Judah. He will rule over the nations, and He will restore God's good land to all of humanity. The Pentateuch leaves little doubt about when this king will come. He will come "in the last days" (*be'acharit hayyāmiym*).

The prophetic critique of Israel's lack of faith leads to the second element of the message of the Pentateuch.

(2) *Component #2: The centrality of faith as the way that is pleasing to God.* The unified "faith theme" in the Pentateuch stresses the role of faith and obedience from the heart that lies at the center of the prophetic notion of the new covenant (Jer 31; Ezk 36). According to the logic of the Pentateuch's own narrative, Israel failed to obey their covenant with God at Sinai (Ex 32). Nevertheless, a future blessing still awaits them. That blessing is tied to Israel's faith, not their obedience to the law. How else can you explain Gn 26:5 which tells us, very clearly, I believe, that Abraham's *faith* amounted to (not resulted in, but amounted to) his keeping God's statues, commandments, and laws? Abraham could not have kept the Sinai Law, which had not been given until the time of Moses. Abraham lived a life of faith and that *was* his keeping the law. This emphasis on the role of faith, so clearly NT in its outlook, is not found randomly throughout the Pentateuch. It lies along the compositional seams that tie together the whole of the book.

(3) *Component #3: The promise of a coming eschatological king.* As we have suggested above, the central theme of each of the major poems in the Pentateuch is the promise of a coming "king." As an introduction to each of those poems we find the phrase "in the last days." This is terminology that is paralleled closely in the messianic eschatology of the prophets. It can hardly be accidental that each of these poems that stress the coming of the king is set in the context of "the last days."

In the Masoretic Text, this king is said to conquer and rule over the kingdom of Agag (Nm 24:7). That has led to the identification of this king (in the MT) with David, who conquered Agag.[29] Rashi, for example, says of this king "this is David" (*zeh Dāviyd*). But that is only in the MT. In all other ancient texts *an*d versions,[30] this king is said to conquer and rule over the kingdom of Gog. This can only be the Gog of Ezk 38, the only other Scriptural reference to this Gog.[31] Ezekiel himself acknowledges he knows of Gog from earlier Scripture (Ezk 38:17).[32] According to Nm 24:24, this king will come after the defeat of Assyria and Babylon, and the rise of the Kittim. This can hardly be David. There is, thus, in the textual history of the Pentateuch a running debate over the identity of this king. The MT sees the historical David as the focus of these prophecies. The earlier and more widely represented texts (including Ezekiel's own copy of the Pentateuch) identify the king with an eschatological Redeemer who will defeat Gog.

c. *The Pentateuch and the prophets.* What is most striking when looking at these features of the composition of the Pentateuch is how similar its themes are to the central themes of Israel's later prophetic literature. By that I mean its messianic focus on a future new covenant in which God will give a new heart to those who trust in His Word. At the center of that focus is the coming king who will defeat Israel's enemies and establish a perfect kingdom.

To be sure, the Pentateuch is about the Mosaic covenant and the law given at Sinai. But what it tells us about the law is much the same as what Paul says in Gal 3. The law did not produce a living faith in Israel's heart. There was nothing inherently wrong with the law, nevertheless, Israel failed to keep it. God thus gave Israel a hope for the future and laws to hold them until that future should come. The Pentateuch is therefore a commentary on the laws of Sinai Covenant. It, like the prophetic books, looks for something better. That "something better" is a "new covenant" that includes both Jews and Gentiles and has as its centerpiece a royal, that is, messianic, Redeemer.

## The Messiah in the Details

The ultimate task is, of course, to show the messianic intent in all the many details of the narratives and poetry of the Pentateuch—even in the arrangement and composition of the laws themselves. Here one has to ask, What is the relationship of the details in the Pentateuch to the overall themes we have briefly outlined? This, I believe, is just why the prophets (and psalmists) have given us their inspired "commentaries" on the Pentateuch. Their commentaries are in many ways similar to the stained-glass window we mentioned earlier. By means of fragmentary bits and pieces of their vision, they capture the light cast by the Pentateuch and focus it not only on the needs of their own day, but also on their hope for the future.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, first, as evangelicals, our approach to the question of the Messiah in the OT has generally been to read the NT back into the Old. I am suggesting we can also move in the other direction. The OT sheds a lot of light on the events of the NT. Our primary objective should be to read the NT in light of the Old, rather than the OT in light of the New.

Second, as evangelicals, we have spent a good deal of our time looking at the earliest stages of the biblical history for the answer to the meaning of the OT. We have paid a good deal of attention to how Eve may have understood Gn 3:15. As important as that is, I am suggesting we also ask how Moses and the inspired biblical authors understood Gn 3:15. There is little to go on to discover how Eve might have understood God's first promise. There is, however, much to go on if we read Gn 3:15 from the perspective of Moses and onto the final shape of the Pentateuch, that is, the last eight verses in Deuteronomy that take us far beyond the death of Moses.

Third, the more closely we examine the final shape of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), the clearer it becomes that its shape and structure are not accidental. There are clear signs of intelligent life behind its formation. If that is so, we should be asking, What is the theological message behind this shape? My answer to that question is that it is strongly messianic. I do not mean by that that the earlier forms of the Bible are not also messianic. What I mean is that in the later stages of the formation of the Hebrew Bible its authors were primarily concerned with making more explicit the messianic hope that was already explicit in the earliest texts. This is what I call "text and commentary." In other words, the later stages in the formation of the Hebrew Bible treat the earlier stages much as the NT treats the OT. They build on and develop the messianic vision that is already present in the earlier texts.

I heard someone recently describe the lens of an old lighthouse along the New England coastline. It was a lighthouse used long before the discovery of electricity. Its light source was a single candle. The lens of its light consisted of thousands of triangular surfaces. Each surface focused and refracted a small portion of the original candlelight. The result was a beam of light that was cast 20 miles out to sea. The original light was just a small candle. As it passed through the lens it became a bright beacon of light. This is not unlike the Hebrew Bible. As the original messianic candlelight passes through, first the Pentateuch, and then the rest of the Tanakh, it becomes a bright light that shines on the NT. Unfortunately, we have become accustomed to holding only the candle (Gn 3:15) up to the NT—instead of reading the NT in the light cast by the lens of the whole of the Tanakh.

Several years ago, I taught a course which I entitled "The Use of the OT in the

OT." It was a course on how later biblical authors (like Ezra and Nehemiah, or the prophets) understood the Pentateuch. Every time I offered the course, the registrar would change the title in the class schedule to "The Use of the OT in the NT." This happened every time I taught the course. You could see that the registrar always assumed I had made a typo. The phrase "Use of the OT in the OT" was meaningless to him. Nowadays, however, it is not meaningless. This question is being asked by many today. It is the question I have been trying to clarify in this article. How do the OT writers understand the early messianism of OT books like the Pentateuch?

In the end, I believe Walt Kaiser is right. The question of the Messiah and the Hebrew Bible "could be a defining moment for evangelical scholarship and ultimately for the Church's view of the way we regard Scripture." Dr. Kaiser, I believe, is also right in insisting that the question is ultimately whether the NT interpretation of an OT text is in fact the meaning intended by the OT author.

I also believe Gordon McConville is right: "The validity of a Christian understanding of the Old Testament must depend in the last analysis on [the] cogency of the argument that the Old Testament *is* messianic." Whether or not you are convinced of the cogency of the argument I have outlined, I hope I have at least provided a sense of what possibilities lie open to us today.

Let me conclude with a bold, but sincere, claim: What I have tried to suggest is that it can be argued that the books of the OT are messianic in the full NT sense of the word. The OT is the *light* that points the way to the NT. The NT is not only to cast its light back on the Old, but more important, the light of the OT is to be cast on the New. The books of the OT were written as the embodiment of a real, messianic hope—a hope in a future miraculous work of God in sending a promised Redeemer. This was not an afterthought in the Hebrew Bible. This was not the work of final redactors.

I believe the messianic thrust of the OT was the *whole* reason the books of the Hebrew Bible were written. In other words, the Hebrew Bible was not written as the national literature of Israel. It probably also was not written to the nation of Israel as such. Rather, it was written, in my opinion, as the expression of the deep-seated messianic hope of a small group of faithful prophets and their followers.

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1. This article is adapted from John H. Sailhamer "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44 (2001), 5–23.

2. *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 42/1 (1999), 99–102.

3. Ibid., 101.

4. *The Lord's Anointed: Interpretation of the Old Testament Messianic Texts* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 2.

5. Ibid., 17.
6. His popularity among evangelicals in English translation was probably primarily due to his strong stand on Reformed orthodoxy and his sustained attack on biblical criticism.
7. Franz Delitzsch, *Die Biblisch Prophetische Theologie* (Leipzig: Gebauersche Buchhandlung, 1845), 175.
8. J. Chr. K. von Hofmann, *Weissagung und Erfullung im Alten und im Neuen Testamente*, vol. 1 (Nordlingen C H Beck'sche Buchhandlung, 1841), 7.
9. Idem, *Interpreting the Bible* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1959), 137.
10. C. F. Keil, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 478.
11. John H. Sailhamer, *Introduction to Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 36–85.
12. The Tanakh is the name given to the Hebrew Bible within Judaism. It is an abbreviation of the three parts of Scripture: the "*T*orah," the "*N*evi'im," and the "*K*etubim." The Hebrew Bible has a different shape from our English OT. The individual books are the same, but the order is different.
13. I have attempted this in the following articles: "Biblical Theology and the Composition of the Hebrew Bible," Papers from the Wheaton College Theology Conference (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, forthcoming); *Introduction to Old Testament Theology*, 197–252; *The Pentateuch As Narrative* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 1–79; *The NIV Compact Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); *How We Got the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 38–42; "Creation, Genesis 1–11, and the Canon," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 10 (2000), 89–106; "A Wisdom Composition of the Pentateuch?" *The Way of Wisdom*, ed. J. I. Packer and Sven K. Soderlund (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 15–35; "Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:1," *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001), 87–96.
14. Cf. 2Pt 1:19—the "prophetic word" is "a lamp shining in a dismal place."
15. As is said in the Gospel of John, "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of His disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God" (Jn 20:30-31). The signs Jesus performed are like road signs that reflect in the headlights of the OT.
16. Walter Eichrodt, *Old Testament Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 26.
17. John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* (Grand Rapids: Baker, reprint 1979), xxxii.
18. Abraham Heschel, *The Prophets: An Introduction* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), xiv.
19. Ps 72:17.
20. Just as in Isa 65:25b, "the serpent's food will be dust!"
21. Sailhamer, "Creation, Genesis 1–11, and the Canon," 89–106; idem, "A Wisdom Composition of the Pentateuch?" 15–35.
22. Idem, "Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15."
23. Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaia ubersetzt und erklart* (HKAT; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892), 54.
24. Let me quickly add that I am not raising the question of whether the Pentateuch "points to" Jesus and the NT. To say the Pentateuch is about the Messiah is not yet to say it is about Jesus. Those are two separate and equally important questions. We must first ask whether the Pentateuch is about the Messiah and then ask whether Jesus is the Messiah. The Pentateuch (and the rest of the Hebrew Bible) tells us there will be a Messiah. The NT tells us that Jesus is the Messiah spoken of in the Hebrew Bible. It does so by identifying Jesus as the one about whom the Hebrew Bible speaks. This means that, in my opinion, there is an important apologetic value to the identity of Jesus as the OT Messiah. By identifying Jesus as the OT Messiah, the NT claims that Jesus is the true Messiah.
25. Sailhamer, "The Mosaic Law and the Theology of the Pentateuch," *Westminister Theological Journal* 53 (1991), 241–261; Hans-Christoph Schmitt, "Redaktion des Pentateuch im Geiste der Prophetie," *Vetus Testamentum* 32 (1982), 170–189.
26. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 35–37.
27. Ibid., 46–59.
28. This, to me, is the major weakness of the approach of double or multiple fulfillment. The Torah itself does not see the immediate events in the life of Israel as a positive fulfillment (cf. Dt 31:29).
29. Cf. 1Sm 15:8; 2Sm 1:1.
30. Cf. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX, Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion.
31. The Gog in 1Chr 5:4 is one of the sons of Reuben.
32. "This is what the Lord GOD says: Are you the one I spoke about in former times through My servants, the prophets of Israel, who for years prophesied in those times that I would bring you against them?"

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