



Foreshadows of Messiah

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Foreshadows of Messiah

Adam

Adam was the head of the human race and in the Scriptures, he is compared and contrasted with Messiah. Do humans sin because they are sinful, or are they sinful because they sin? Adam sinned and the consequences were catastrophic and the repercussions of that continue today. In his famous prayer of repentance King David readily acknowledged that he was brought forth in iniquity and in sin his mother conceived him (Psalm 51:5). Multitudes of seemingly unanswered questions concerning the character of the Creator fail to recognise that the world was created perfectly, and it was humans that rebelled against God and the result is a broken world. In stark contrast, Messiah is sinless, can forgive sin and heal a broken world.

Death through Adam and Life through Messiah

Although through Adam, sin entered the world and consequently death through sin, there was always hope because Messiah is able to forgive sin and bring life. God made a covenant with Adam including the promise of a Redeemer who is the second Man and the last Adam. Messiah would suffer, though would triumph over Satan. "Her Seed" refers to Messiah.

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel (Genesis 3:15)."

Adam is a type or forerunner of Messiah. David Stern notes that Adam prefigured the One to come, namely Yeshua (Jesus) and that there are major differences between the two men which are explained through *kal v'chomer* arguments¹ (in other words what applies in a less important instance will certainly apply in a more important one). Through Adam's offense many people died but by the grace of God through Messiah, grace abounded to many. The offense resulted in condemnation for everyone but the free gift which Messiah offers resulted in justification (Romans 5:15-16). Furthermore through one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

The Resurrection of the Dead

One Corinthians 15 is known as the “resurrection chapter”. Paul encourages the reader that Messiah died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, was buried, that He rose again the third day and was seen by Cephas and then by the disciples. He continues explaining how the resurrection of Messiah relates to our resurrection.

Paul describes the body as sown in corruption though raised in incorruption, sown in dishonour and raised in glory and sown in weakness and raised in power. The natural precedes the spiritual as the natural body will be raised as a spiritual body. He helps us to make sense of that by citing Genesis 2:7 and contrasting that with Messiah. “And so it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being.” The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45).

“

The first man Adam became a living being.
The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit

1 Corinthians 15:45

”

Why is Messiah referred to as the last Adam? Messiah brings salvation and no one compares with Him or is needed to complete or add to His finished work since He restores that which Adam lost. The name Adam appropriately means “man, earth, red, dust”. Adam was the first man made from dust and everyone that has ever lived also bears the image of Adam or dust. But those trusting in Messiah will bear the image of the heavenly Man and enjoy life eternal with Him and will be free from condemnation and judgement.

From Adam to Moses

God gave us the Torah through Moses and the law is like a mirror which shows us exactly how we have sinned. Why was the law added? The law was added so that the offense might abound, though where sin abounded, grace abounded much more (Romans 5:20).

Nevertheless we have already considered a plan of redemption in the Adamic Covenant which was set in place immediately following Adam's sin. Genealogies in Scripture are important and if we look at the family line from Adam to Noah and consider what their respective names mean, it is evident that there was a plan for Messiah to bring peace and restore Adam's transgression from the outset.

Hebrew	English
Adam	Man
Seth	Appointed
Enosh	Mortal
Kenan	Sorrow
Mahalel	The Blessed God
Jared	Shall come down
Enoch	Teaching
Methuselah	His death shall bring
Lamech	The despairing
Noah	Rest

Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring the despairing rest.²

1. David Stern Jewish New Testament Commentary (Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc, 1992; Clarksville), p358-359
2. Chuck Missler The Gospel in Genesis A Hidden Message February 1st, 1996 <https://www.khouse.org/articles/1996/44/>

Foreshadows of Messiah

Abel

Abel was a forerunner of Messiah since he was a shepherd who was counted as a righteous prophet (Luke 8:50-51). He was also slain despite his innocence and was obedient unto God. Yeshua (Jesus) is the good Shepherd, the Shepherd of our souls (John 10:11; 1 Peter 2:25) and the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). Abel foreshadows Messiah who in addition to being the Prophet like Moses, was sinless and obedient unto the Father's will, even unto death. Through His sacrifice Messiah made atonement for sin.

Abel the Shepherd

The Jewish historian Josephus who was captured by the Romans at Masada notes that Cain signified acquisition whilst Abel signified sorrow.¹ Isaiah 53:3 describes the Messiah as a Man of sorrows, frequently acquainted with grief. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth (Isaiah 53:7).

Remember that Abel was by occupation a shepherd. Jesus not only described Himself as the good Shepherd but explained that the good Shepherd gives His life for his sheep (John 10:11). He is described in Revelation 5:6 as "the lamb who was slain." Hebrews 12:24 ties those two thoughts together perfectly as "Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than Abel."

The Sacrifice and Blood of Abel

Abel brought an offering of the firstborn of his flock and of the fat whilst Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground. The Lord respected Abel and his offering though He did not respect Cain and his offering. Abel's offering and death are a picture of the redeeming work of Messiah. Noticeably many of the patriarchs were shepherds and David is a tremendous example of one trusting God whilst tending his sheep and was subsequently exalted to the throne. He epitomised the role of the shepherd-king. Furthermore, he offered his people protection, provided for their needs, led by example and was the forerunner of his greater Son.²

The theme continues throughout Scripture where sin offerings were provided whereby blood was sprinkled on the ground. Abel offered a lamb from his own flock, but the lamb of God offered Himself to make atonement for sin. Interestingly, Abel offered the firstborn of his flock and the fat which is a practise that would long afterward be incorporated into the Mosaic law of the peace offering, “all the fat is the Lord’s” (Leviticus 3:16).³

Ferguson writes, “This is the first mention of blood in Scripture and how tragic that it must be a brother’s blood, shed in hatred! Blood shed cries to God for vengeance. Cain has given his brother’s blood to the ground to drink, but even from the ground it cries for justice, for it was the blood of righteous Abel” (Matthew 23:35)...How reassuring to read of One whose blood “speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Hebrews 12:24).⁴

Abel’s Blood Speaks from the Ground

Leviticus 17:11 tells us that it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul. Abel was the first to offer a blood sacrifice and that was prior to the giving of the law through Moses. Abel’s blood was described as “speaking from the ground” (Genesis 4:10). Blood is the only means of atonement and peace with God. However Messiah has provided His blood that can bring someone to the presence of God, and it is only through His blood that it is possible to have the means to be accepted by and to approach God.⁵ Moreover, while Abel’s blood speaks continually on earth, Messiah’s blood speaks continually from Heaven.⁶

Abel’s blood spoke from the earth and cried for justice, while Messiah’s blood speaks from heaven and announces mercy for sinners. Abel’s blood rightly aroused feelings of guilt for Cain and drove him to despair, but Messiah’s blood frees us from guilt and has enabled access into God’s presence.⁷

1. William Whiston (Translation) & Paul Maier (Commentary) *The New Complete Works of Josephus Jewish Antiquities* 1:52
2. J.W. Ferguson Ritchie *Old Testament Commentaries Genesis What the Bible Teaches* (John Ritchie Ltd, 2000; Kilmarnock), p49
3. Henry Morris *The Genesis Record* (Baker Book House, 1976; Grand Rapids), p137
4. J.W. Ferguson), p51
5. Arnold G. Fructenbaum *Ariel’s Bible Commentary The Messianic Jewish Epistles Hebrews-James-I & II Peter-Jude Exposition from a Messianic Jewish Perspective* (Ariel Ministries, 2005; Tustin), p183
6. *Ibid*, 183
7. Warren W. Wiersbe *A New Testament Study-Hebrews Be Confident Live by faith, not by sight* (Victor, 2004; Eastbourne), p143

Foreshadows of Messiah

Noah

The example of Noah, especially in connection with the ark, is a foreshadowing, or type of Messiah. This applies with reference to deliverance and protection that the ark provided as the only means of salvation. We will see that the date that the ark rested coincided with several other key events in Israel's history and a particularly vital one, the resurrection of Yeshua (Jesus). Lamech called his son "Noah," meaning "rest" or "comfort" that Noah would bring and that also foreshadows the greater rest that Messiah brings. The Scriptures also use the experience of Noah to warn us to be alert for the coming of Messiah (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27).

Please note that over the ages, volumes have been written on this subject some of which are useful and others merely speculative. The same is true on internet searches. Some articles are helpful, whilst others are inaccurate; and it always pays dividends to consider the quality, reliability and credibility of the source examined. Therefore we will look at Scripture to comment on Scripture, draw from reliable sources and also examine a few clear examples rather than attempt to tease out similarities that are arbitrary.

The Ark as a Picture of Salvation

The only means of being saved from the flood was to enter through the door of the ark. Jesus said that He is the door and the way, the truth, and the life (John 10:7; 14:6). This was God's object lesson: the ark was not built to save people in the flood but to save the world from it.¹ In Noah's time the earth was corrupt and full of violence. The ark was an act of grace which Noah and his family went into as a place of safety. Similarly we must go to Messiah and trust in Him for salvation and to be spared from judgement.

The ark rested on the 17th of Nisan. This is the same date that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea (Numbers 33:1-8) and ate the first fruits of the Promised Land (Joshua 5:10-12). More amazingly, Jesus rose on the 17th of Nisan (Luke 24:1-8).

The World Condemned

Hebrews 11:7 reads, "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." How and why would Noah condemn the world? Not as a judge but as a witness and advocate, through a plea and testimony, by his teaching, through his obedient example in which his faith was exercised.²

Noah's faith uncovered the unbelief of others and furthermore, Jesus used that event to warn people to be ready for His return (Matthew 24:36-42) since in Noah's time people lived normal lives and completely ignored his witness. Until Noah's time it had never rained and there had never been a flood, so Noah is an example of someone demonstrating faith through obedience and his righteousness came from his faith, God's imputed righteousness to Him.³

As in the Days of Noah

In Matthew 24, Jesus' disciples asked Him what would be the sign of His coming, and the end of the age? Jesus provided many details and also warned that no one knows the day and the hour and to be ready. Matthew 24:36-42 reads "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming."

In the same way that when Noah entered the ark with his family and were delivered from the ark, no one expected there to be a flood since until that point there had never been a flood. The people were caught unawares, seemingly oblivious of the ensuing calamity and simply going about their business. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that everyone goes to the Lord for salvation, recognising that only He can save them from their sin and that He is coming again. We must be ready for when he returns.

Come to the Lord for Rest

In the first article about Adam we saw the promise of a Redeemer through the names of the patriarchs from Adam (Man) to Noah (Rest). Man (is) appointed mortal sorrow; (but) the blessed God shall come down teaching (that) His death shall bring the despairing rest. Noah was used by God to provide protection for God's people, rest⁴ and comfort.

“
Come unto Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28

”

Noah is a forerunner of One far greater who brings everlasting rest. Jesus the Messiah said, “Come unto Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28). Today if you can hear his voice do not harden your hearts. Turn to Messiah and trust in Him and He will give you rest that remains for the people of God.



1. J.B. Nicolson 1 Peter What the Bible Teaches (John Ritchie Ltd; 2003; Kilmarnock), p98
2. John Owen Hebrews Edited by Alister McGrath & J. I. Packer The Crossway Classic Commentaries (Crossway Books, 1998; Wheaton), p222
3. Arnold Fructenbaum Ariel's Bible Commentary The Messianic Jewish Epistles Hebrews, James, I & II Peter, Jude (Ariel Ministries, 2005; Tustin), p153
4. Chuck Missler The Gospel in Genesis A Hidden Message February 1st, 1996 <https://www.khouse.org/articles/1996/44/>

Foreshadows of Messiah

Melchizedek

Melchizedek is one of the most mysterious and intriguing characters in the Bible. He seems to fade into the background as quickly as he emerges in Genesis 14:18-20 to bless Abram and God Most High and receive a tithe from Abram after the battle. There is an even briefer reference in a messianic psalm, "The Lord has sworn and will not relent, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110:4). He is referred to again in Hebrews chapters 5 and 6, though in Hebrews chapter 7 the writer provides an extensive midrash on how Melchizedek foreshadows Messiah.

The author of Hebrews translates the name "Melchizedek" to mean "king of righteousness" and in addition he was the king of Salem, meaning "king of peace." This points our attention towards the Sar Shalom, the Prince of Peace who judges in righteousness. Salem also refers to Jerusalem which is where Messiah will reign in His Messianic kingdom.

Unusually, this great king is also a priest and one who came before the Levitical order of priests. Kings and priests served distinct functions and were separated. If that was not a striking foreshadow of the Messiah, the writer continues further saying, "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually" (Hebrews 7:3).

Adam did not have a genealogy since God created him from the dust, but he did have a beginning and ending of days. However, Yeshua's origins are from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:2) and He delivered Daniel's three friends in the fiery furnace and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God (Daniel 3:25). Speaking of Jesus as Cohen Gadol, High Priest, the writer to the Hebrews quotes Psalm 110:4 no less than three times, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:6; 7:17, 21).

Melchizedek was greater than Abraham since Abraham gave him a tenth of his spoils and Melchizedek blessed him. The writer to the Hebrews explains that beyond all contradiction, the lesser is blessed by the better (Hebrews 7:7).

Unsurprisingly numerous attempts have been made throughout the centuries to identify who Melchizedek was. Many Jewish commentaries and the Targum Jonathan and Targum Onkelos also state that Melchizedek was Shem the son of Noah. Other interpreters conclude that Melchizedek was a type of Messiah or the preincarnate Messiah Himself. Whilst a case may be presented to attempt to establish the latter, Hebrews 7 focuses primarily on how Melchizedek foreshadows Messiah and what that means for the believer.

Messiah is a better High Priest

Unlike other high priests, Yeshua was made High Priest with an oath "The Lord has sworn and will not relent, you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." Messiah represents a new and permanent priesthood. If blood makes atonement for the soul (Leviticus 17:11) how can atonement be made without a sacrifice? Yeshua has no need to continually offer sin offerings since He gave Himself to make atonement for our sin and reconcile us to God. Though Jesus never sinned he became a sin-offering that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

In the Levitical Order many priests were prevented by death from continuing though Messiah continues forever and He has an unchangeable priesthood. This has massive implications for intercession, approaching God, power to expiate and atone for sin. This is only possible through the Messiah who is both King and Priest and who has neither beginning of days nor end of life and who remains a priest continually.

"Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever" (Hebrews 7:25-28).

Foreshadows of Messiah

Isaac

God tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice his only son Isaac on the altar at Moriah. It is astounding that Abraham complied considering the enormity of what was asked of him. In that context and at that time, how would you or I have responded? It reveals the depth and true nature of his faith in God. It is vital to consider not just the measure to which Abraham loved God but to explore the reasons why he was willing to obey God's command. That will help us to unlock the greatest meaning in this chapter and how we should respond to that in faith.

Firstly, for Abraham to do this, it not only meant the sacrifice of his only son Isaac, but the immediate termination of the Abrahamic covenant. Ishmael had been blessed and would be the father of twelve princes (Genesis 17:20), yet God would establish the everlasting covenant through Isaac (Genesis 17:19). To make matters even more difficult, at Sarah's request and after hearing from God, Abraham sanctioned Sarah's request, so Hagar and Ishmael departed from them in the previous chapter. Abraham knew that God was faithful, and God keeps His covenants so therefore God would somehow maintain that covenant.

If God did not honour His covenants, then He would not be the God who is faithful to keep His covenants. How could Abraham trust God and how could we then trust Him? Hebrews 11:17-19 comments on this passage and explains what Abraham understood and deduced before he bound Isaac.

"By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense" (Hebrews 11:17-19).

Therefore God recognised that Abraham was able to resurrect Isaac since God is faithful to honour His promises. Nonetheless consider Abraham's faith in that there were no cases of people being resurrected at that time in world history.¹

Isaac is a type of Yeshua

This momentous event is a foreshadowing of another even more pivotal event that occurred around two thousand years later. Abraham was told to go with Isaac to Moriah. It was remarkable that Isaac went willingly and did not struggle nor remonstrate. Isaac carried the wood which would be placed on the altar and he was to be made an offering. Isaac was a young man whilst Abraham was of a great age. Discerning and thoughtful commentators recognise that Isaac was most probably in the prime of his youth and note that he could have fled though he did not.

Two thousand years later Yeshua, the son of Abraham (Matthew 1:1) would go up to Moriah in Jerusalem and He went willingly, though He knew the awful suffering He would have to endure and that He would be temporarily separated from His Father who He had enjoyed uninterrupted fellowship with from eternity past. That is something we struggle to comprehend considering we are finite beings. Moriah means 'seen by God'.² The Lord foresaw the binding of Isaac and the sacrifice of His only begotten Son. Yeshua bore his own cross on that dreadful journey until He was helped by Simon of Cyrene to carry it the final distance since he had been fatigued, whipped and beaten so horrendously before He was nailed to it. Jesus was around thirty-three years of age—a young man like Isaac. He gave Himself as a sin offering to atone for the sins of the world.

Though He had done no wrong and was perfect in every way and sinless, Jesus died so that those who repent and trust in Him may be made righteous and be reconciled to God.

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

“

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us,
that we might become the righteousness of God in Him

2 Corinthians 5:21

”

The Lamb of God who Takes Away the Sin of the World

Abraham stretched his hand and took the knife to slay his son but then the Angel of the Lord called him not to lay a hand on the lad or do anything to him. He knew that Abraham feared God and a ram was caught in a thicket by its horns and was offered instead of his son.

Isaiah foretold the suffering Servant who was silent before His accusers and who was led as a lamb to the slaughter and cut off for the transgressions of God's people. What wrong had the suffering Servant ever done? What lies had He ever spoken? Like the ram He was offered as a substitute for many. Truly we are the sheep that have wandered astray in need of a Shepherd.

“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked—But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth” (Isaiah 53:6-9).

Who is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world? John 1:29 tells us clearly that it is Yeshua. Who is the Good Shepherd that lays down His life for the sheep? John again shows us that it is Yeshua (John 10:11). Who is the Chief Shepherd? Peter again explains that it is Yeshua (1 Peter 5:4).

Jesus is the first and the last who knows the end from the beginning. He sees everything and has a perfect plan throughout the ages. He is the Lamb of God, the Messiah, the perfect substitute and keeps His covenants and remembers His promises. The questions remain: Are you trusting in the lamb that was slain? Do you know the Good Shepherd? Is He the Chief Shepherd of your soul?

1. William MacDonald Believer's Bible Commentary (Thomas Nelson, 1995; Nashville), p59
2. George Williams Williams' Complete Bible Commentary (Kregel, 1994; Grand Rapids), p27

Foreshadows of Messiah

Joseph

The life of Joseph is such an incredible foreshadowing of Messiah including an astonishing number of noticeable similarities, that for the sake of brevity, it is not possible to list even half of the parallels in their respective lives here. Therefore, we will only in outline look at Joseph as a shepherd, his relationship with his brothers, his betrayal and the false accusations against him, his promotion in Egypt and the reconciliation and recognition with his brothers.

Joseph's story commences with him feeding the flock since he was a shepherd. Yeshua described Himself as the good shepherd who gives Himself for His sheep who know Him and hear His voice (John 10:7-30). He is also the great shepherd of our souls and came to seek and save that which was lost and goes after the lost sheep (1 Peter 2:25).

In Genesis 37:3, "Israel loved Joseph more than all his children." Jesus is God's only begotten Son in whom He was well pleased (Matthew 3:17). In Joseph's dreams his brother's sheaves bowed down to him and the sun, moon and stars bowed down to him too. His family finally came to him in humility when they were reunited in Egypt. Like Joseph, Yeshua was humbled and then exalted. As the hymn writer Charles Wesley explained, "Our God contracted to a span, incomprehensibly made man" and "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those in earth and of those under the earth." (Philippians 2:10)

Joseph Sold and Betrayed

As we trace the story of Joseph's life, he is sold by his brothers for twenty pieces of silver. Yeshua was also betrayed by one of the twelve disciples, Judas Iscariot, and sold for thirty pieces of silver.

Preceding that event Joseph was stripped and thrown into a pit whilst his brothers sat down to have a meal. At the scene of the crucifixion Jesus was stripped before they gambled for His clothes and sitting down, they kept watch over him.

The Midianites then took Joseph to Egypt. In Matthew Chapter 2 Joseph is warned in a dream to take the child and His mother to Egypt.

When Pharaoh's officer purchased Joseph as a slave from the Midianites, he observed that "the Lord made all he did prosper in his hand" (Genesis 39:3). In Isaiah 53, the remarkable chapter that speaks of Messiah making atonement for the nations, it is also prophesied concerning the Messiah, "And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." Furthermore, in that chapter, Messiah is innocent, yet he suffers to bring salvation for others.

Joseph Falsely Accused

Like Yeshua, Joseph was falsely accused and faced persecution though he lived an upright life. When Pharaoh esteemed Joseph because of his ability to interpret dreams, Joseph remarked, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace" (Genesis 41:16). This can be compared with Yeshua's words, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what he sees the Father do." In John 15:5, Jesus said He is the True Vine and 'without me you can do nothing.' Critical events occurred in Joseph's and Yeshua's life when they were thirty years of age such as Joseph's royal position in Egypt and Yeshua's formal ministry (Genesis 41:46; c.f. Luke 3:23).

Joseph Provides Bread

Before the famine occurred in Egypt and the surrounding nations, God gave Joseph wisdom and time to prepare. Joseph made provisions for seven years and people from all over the earth came to buy grain. This explains why Joseph needed to be in Egypt at that time although the things that he endured up until that point must have been a mystery.

Yeshua is the Bread of Life and whoever comes to Him will never hunger or thirst (John 6:35). On two separate occasions, Jesus fed the five thousand and the four thousand demonstrating that it wasn't a one-time miraculous event, but He is continually able to provide for our needs. Messiah was supposed to be able to perform miracles (c.f. Isaiah 35:4-6). Similarly, Joseph opened all the storehouses providing bread for his brothers, Egypt and many others.

Joseph is Recognised

Joseph's brothers were also forced to purchase grain from him, without being aware of his true identity. After testing his brothers with a series of intriguing trials, Joseph finally makes himself known to them: "I am Joseph your brother who sold you into Egypt." (Genesis 45:4).

Following the resurrection it took a while for the disciples to recognise who He was, "then their eyes were opened and they knew Him." (Luke 24:31). His brothers were troubled at his presence when Joseph appeared to them.

Zechariah 12:10-14 speaks of a great mourning concerning the house of David and Jerusalem as they recognise the One they pierced. It is worthwhile reading through the whole chapter to gain the context. One day many Jewish people will recognise that Messiah has come and is coming again and the Messiah they are waiting for has already come. He is Yeshua Messiah and He is coming again (c.f. Zech. 12:10-14; John 19:37; Rev. 1:7). The question is, will you be ready when He comes? Have you turned to Him, and are you trusting in Him?



Foreshadows of Messiah

Moses Deuteronomy 18:15-22

The context of this prophecy is referred to in verse 16 and 17. Moses had been given the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone and the heads of the tribes and elders requested that Moses mediate between themselves and God, because they were afraid of God's presence when they heard the voice from the midst of the darkness and the mountain burned with fire (Deut. 5:23-27). God determined they had spoken rightly and later in this passage promised to raise another Prophet like Moses.

In addition, the preceding verses designate clear instructions concerning the avoidance of wicked customs relating to false religious practises that were not appointed for them. Instruction is then given in verses 15-22 to 'hear' the Prophet like Moses and how to discern whether a prophet was in fact speaking a word in His name.

It is important to recognise that the Prophet would be from their midst (geographical region) and from their brethren (Israelite). This immediately precludes the view that the Prophet could be a non-Israelite prophet.

Jewish Commentary on a Prophet like Moses

Some Jewish commentaries state that this text relates to the 'office of a prophet' or to Joshua and the other prophets, but not to Messiah. If we take the context of the passage as a whole we are certainly given clear guidelines for determining a genuine from a false prophet and these verses apply to both of those former points. Nevertheless Deuteronomy 34:9-10 greatly affirms Moses inauguration of Joshua though distinguishes Moses from Joshua and other prophets: "But since then there has not been arisen a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face" (Deut. 34:10). Numbers 12:6-8 is another passage differentiating Moses from the other prophets and speaking with him only face to face. Therefore these verses are also applicable to a specific prophet like Moses as the plain sense of the text designates.

In Maimonides thirteen articles of faith, two concern the prophecy of Moses as the chief of the prophets and that the same law in our possession was the one given to Moses (7, 8) and another one mentions the willingness to wait for the coming of the Messiah

(12). Maimonides (Rambam) stated, “from Moses to Moses there was none like Moses” though Michael Brown affirms that in the true spirit of the Tanakh (Old Testament), “from Moses to the Messiah, there was none like Moses”.

Interestingly Rabbi Levi Ben Gershon (RALBAG) interpreted Deuteronomy 18:15-22 with reference to the Messiah and even connected that passage with Isaiah 52:13: “A Prophet from the midst of thee.” In fact the Messiah is such a prophet as stated in the Midrash of the verse, “Behold My Servant shall prosper (Isaiah 52:13). Moses by the miracles by which he wrought, brought a single nation to the worship of God, but the Messiah will draw all peoples to the worship of God.”

Anticipating and Identifying a Prophet like Moses

The Brit Hadasha (New Testament), especially in the Gospel of John and Acts reveals that the disciples were initially anticipating and later identified a prophet like Moses. In John 1:21, John the Baptist was asked by the priests and Levites from Jerusalem whether he was Elijah. When John stated that he wasn't, they asked him whether he was the Prophet to which he responded, “no”. It is a reasonable inference to assume that question relates to Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 (Moses is representative of the law and Elijah the prophets) and that is also why some Bibles cross-reference that text in the margin.

Also in the same chapter Philip associated Yeshua (Jesus) particularly with Moses in addition to the other prophets and upon finding Nathanael he said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote - Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” (John 1:45).

After Yeshua had fed the five thousand, those who witnessed that event stated, “This is truly the Prophet who is come into this world (John 6:14).” Again when Jesus spoke concerning the Holy Spirit, many who heard Him said, “Truly this is the Prophet” (John 7:40).

Both Peter and Stephen unmistakably relate the Messiah as being raised up as the prophet like Moses and quote Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19 in the respective texts (Acts 3:22-26; 7:37-43).

How is the Prophet like Moses?

Sometimes we state that someone takes after another when we refer to their character, mannerism or appearance. In terms of the life and ministry of Moses and Yeshua there are remarkable and profound similarities. Ada Habershon was a fine author and personal friend of Charles Spurgeon and in the second appendix of 'The Study of the Types' lists over sixty parallels between Moses and Jesus. For the sake of brevity, a score or so shall be included here.

From birth, both Moses and Yeshua were spared from death as a baby at the hands of Pharaoh and Herod respectively, as commands had been issued to slaughter the very young Hebrew males (Exod. 1:22; Matt. 2:16). Both came out from Egypt (Heb. 11:27; Matt. 2:15). Scripture states they were known as God's servant (Psalm 105:26; Matt. 12:18), chosen (Psalm 106:23; Isa. 42:1), prophet (Deut.18:15-19; John 6:14), priest (Psalm 99:6; Heb. 7:24), judge (Exod. 18:13; John 5:27), shepherd (Exod. 3:1; John 10:11), leader (Isa. 63:12; 55:4), mediator (Exod. 33:8-9; 1 Tim. 2:5), intercessor (Num. 21:7; Rom. 8:34), deliverer (Acts 7:35; Rom. 11:26) and ruler (Acts 7:35; Micah 5:2).

Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter and thus refused a kingdom whilst Jesus refused the kingdoms of this world which the devil showed him (Heb. 11:24; Matt. 4:8-10).

Moses said "Let my people go" (Exod. 9:13). Yeshua proclaims liberty to the captives (Isa. 61:1).

The magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God" (Exod. 8:19). Yeshua said, "If I with the finger of God cast out devils" (Luke 11:20).

Moses stretched out his hand and the Lord caused the sea to go back (Exod. 14:21). The disciples were amazed when Jesus calmed the storm that even the winds and the waves obeyed Him (Matt. 8:27).

The people were almost ready to stone Moses (Exod. 17:4). Then they took up stones to cast at Him (Jesus) (John 8:59).

The man Moses was very meek (Num. 12:3). Jesus is meek and lowly in heart (Matt. 11:29).

Moses appointed twelve, one from each tribe (Deut. 1:23). The Lord ordained twelve disciples (Mark 3:14).

Moses gathered seventy men of the elders of the people (Num.11:16). The Lord appointed another seventy also (Luke 10:1).

The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came through Yeshua Messiah (John 1:17).

Moses had the heavenly manna that sustained life, but Yeshua gave bread that gives life (John 6:31-32).

Moses was forty days in the mount and neither ate bread nor drank water (Exod. 34:28). Yeshua was forty days in the wilderness and fasted for forty days and forty nights (Matt. 4:1-2).

Moses was present at the first Passover (Heb. 11:28). Yeshua, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us (1 Cor. 5:7).

The Transfiguration – Yeshua and Moses

In the Torah Moses face shone, but Yeshua (Jesus) was transfigured on the mountain (Matthew 17:2)! Moses was also present at the transfiguration, identifying him with the greater Prophet. If we cannot gaze at the sun in its brilliance, light and heat, how can we possibly behold the glory of God?

In connection with Deuteronomy 18:15,19, a voice came out of the cloud saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him” (Matt. 17:5). The instruction to ‘hear Him’ was the original and appropriate response commanded in the Deuteronomy passage (18:15,19). ‘Hear’ in both references refers to hearing intelligently, giving attention, obedience and consideration.¹ It implies more than listening and requires a response. Moses wore a veil over his face, though we need to have the veil removed from our hearts to see and believe in the Prophet like Moses.

1. Hebrew-Greek Key Word Study Bible (AMG Publishers, Chattanooga; 1991), p1670

Foreshadows of Messiah

A foreshadow or type is a representation by one thing of another. So how do the lives and experiences of Adam, Abel, Noah, Melchizedek, Isaac, Joseph, and Moses foreshadow Messiah? We know who the first Adam was, but who is the last Adam and why? Biblical names often reveal much about their character, but what is the significance of the names in the lineage of Adam to Noah? How does the blood of Abel still speak? What miraculous event occurred on the same date that the ark rested on the 17th Nisan? Who is a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek? What greater event did the binding of Isaac foreshadow? How does the life of Joseph resemble that of Messiah and who is the prophet like Moses?

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