

CHAPTER 3

MESSIAH TO BE THE SEED OF THE WOMAN

The earliest Messianic prophecy in the Bible is found in Genesis 3. The first three chapters of Genesis tell us about the creation of the universe and the earth, the first disobedience of humankind to God's commandments (the Fall), resulting in the curse of sin and death coming into the world.

The prophecy in Genesis 3.14-15 reads:

'So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go; and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. 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." '

This prophecy of redemption was given after Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The cause of this disobedience was the Tempter who promised them 'You shall be like God' if they ate of this fruit. The Tempter appears as the Serpent in Genesis 3 and is identified with Satan who misled humanity and caused separation from God, sin and death to enter the world. The 'seed of the woman' would 'bruise the head of the serpent' which is identified with the Messiah inflicting a fatal wound on the serpent / Satan.

There are Jewish sources which give this scripture a Messianic significance. The Aramaic paraphrase of the Hebrew Scriptures, Targum Jonathan, relates Genesis 3.15 to the Messiah:

'But they will be healed in the footsteps in the days of King Messiah.'

Rabbi David Kimchi gave support to this scripture as a prophecy of Messiah's redemption of mankind. His commentary on this verse recognises that salvation is by the hand of the Messiah:

*'As you went forth for the salvation of your people by the hands of **Messiah**, the Son of David, who would wound Satan, the head, the king and prince of the house of the wicked.'*

‘The Seed of the Woman’ here is seen as one who will bruise the head of the Serpent and in the process the Serpent will ‘bruise His heel.’ This means that the promised Seed will inflict a fatal wound on the Serpent / Satan (bruise his head), while receiving a non-fatal wound himself. Yeshua was wounded for our transgressions when He died on the cross, but it was not a fatal wound as He rose from the dead on the third day. Satan was mortally wounded through Jesus’ death and resurrection, as the way is now open for those who accept salvation through Yeshua the Messiah to be delivered from his power and receive eternal life. Because of this victory which Yeshua won over Satan, his ultimate doom is sealed, when he will be thrown into the lake of fire at the final day of judgement.

There is evidence in Genesis that Eve understood this prophecy to be about a child who would be born to a woman who would bring deliverance, when she said, concerning her first son, Cain, *‘I have acquired a man from the Lord.’* (Genesis 4.1). In fact the Hebrew here does not contain the word ‘from’, so it literally reads:

“I have acquired a man, the Lord.” **” את איש קניתי ”**

The Targum of Palestine elaborates on this verse:

‘And Adam knew his wife and she conceived and brought forth Cain, and she said; ‘I have obtained the man, the Angel of the Lord.’

Commenting on this, the Talmud (Ber. Rab. 23, ed Warsh p. 45b.) says:

‘R. Tanchuma said in the name of R Samuel: ‘Eve had respect to the seed which is coming from another place. And who is this? This is **Messiah the King.**’

Eve was to be disappointed in Cain because he turned out to be of the Evil One and killed his brother Abel. However, when she then gave birth to Seth, she said:

‘God has appointed another seed to me’ (Genesis 4.25)

Midrash Rabba Genesis 23.5 comments on this:

‘She (Eve) hinted at that seed which would arise from another source ... the king Messiah.’

From this point onwards the line of the Seed is traced through the Tenach. It goes from the godly line of Seth through to Noah and his son Shem, then on to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, through Judah to David and his descendants.

Through this ‘Seed of the Woman’ God would bring blessing and redemption to all who receive the salvation He is offering. In Genesis 22.18, we read of God’s promise to Abraham concerning his seed:

‘In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.’

Clearly this ‘seed’ goes beyond Abraham’s son Isaac to a descendant of Abraham who would bring blessing to the whole world, the Messiah.

As we have already seen, the prophet Nathan spoke to King David giving him the promise of his seed:

“And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. ... And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever.” (1 Chronicles 17.11-14)

Again this promise has to go beyond David’s son Solomon and the line of kings that descended from him to a promised seed who would have an eternal house, kingdom and throne. To have an eternal house, kingdom and throne he would have to be an eternal person. This points to the eternal nature of the Messiah.

In normal sexual reproduction, it is the man who provides the seed for the child to be conceived in the womb of the woman. There is a possible hint at something out of the ordinary in the reference to the **seed** of the woman in Genesis 3.15. This ties in with the prophecy of Isaiah 7.14 and the virgin birth, which we mentioned above. The one to be born will be ‘Immanuel’ – God with us. He will come by a miracle (a sign) which will be the conception of the son to a woman who is still a virgin.

Just a little later in his prophecy, Isaiah gives more information about this one to be born:

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

throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” (Isaiah 9.6-7)

This one will be born as a Son, but at the same time His nature will be that of a ‘Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.’ Two of those phrases **אל גבור** ‘el gibbor / Mighty God’ and **אבי עולם** avi olam / Everlasting Father contain the concept of divinity in them so this one to be born is more than a human king reigning, He is divine in nature, Immanuel / God with us . **אל עמנו**

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