

Another Prophet Like Moses Deuteronomy 18:15-19, John 5:39-47

Today, let me share with you the greatest story of all, a tale which spans our entire Bible; the story of God's promised Messiah who was destined from the beginning of time, to save God's lost children and one day restore all of God's creation.

This story begins in the book of Genesis with the creation and fall of our first parents thus alienating humanity from the One who had designed us to live in fellowship with Him. At that time God promised the serpent – the angelic being who instigated the rebellion – that one day the woman's "**seed would crush his head**," thus undoing the damage and restoring humanity back into fellowship with God where we were always intended to be.

The story finally comes to completion at the very end of the book of Revelation – the very last book in our Bible, where we are given a vision of the newly restored heavens and Earth and we hear Jesus proclaiming,

Let everyone who is thirsty come.

*Let anyone who wishes take
the water of life as a gift*

Rev. 22:13-15

I point out these two terminal points to remind you that our entire Bible is primarily about the unfolding of God's plan to crush the serpent and restore His lost children back into His fellowship with Him. Everything that happens in between is basically there to move that plan forward; even over a very long period of time.

First, because *the Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind [had become] great in all the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually*, there was a necessary start over with Noah ^{Genesis 6:5}. Righteous Noah and his family, having found grace in the eyes of the Lord, was saved to preserve both humanity and God's promise for a future time.

Then, after countless thousands of years, God next singled out Abraham's family to sire a unique nation whose heir would one day "**bless the entire world**." With the passing of another 400 years, Abraham's family had indeed grown into a nation, but one that was enslaved and needing once again to be taught about God and His promises made to Adam, Noah and Abraham. Which brings us to **Moses**, a Hebrew slave child raised to be an Egyptian prince, who became both the liberator of Israel and a mighty prophet of God. Though there were prophets of God before him (Enoch, Noah, etc.), and many more prophets of God after him (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel), Moses is

undeniably the greatest prophet who has ever lived, until that second promised prophet like Himself – comes along. Numbers 12:6-8.

Thus, when Moses told the people that one day God would raise up another prophet, he wasn't referring to the many future prophets who would only hear from God in dreams and visions, but to that one particular prophet who would once again like Moses, speak with God "face-to face." Here then is another clue to that one particular, very special person God would eventually send into our world.

Thus, through the progressing stories of the Bible, a picture of this future savior begins to develop; one whom the Jews would call the **Messiah**, "the anointed one."

- He would be the serpent crushing seed of the woman.
- He would be Abraham's world-blessing heir.
- He would be the rising star and scepter coming out of Jacob to crush the enemies of Israel.
- He would be another prophet like Moses, who speaks with God face to face.
- He would be the heir of David's throne.
- The prophet Isaiah painted the fullest picture of this Messiah: He would be known as Emanuel (God with us). In His time He would wear many other titles such as Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. But first He must come as "**the Arm of the Lord**." In this role, He would be God's suffering servant, rejected by the person, who like a lamb led to slaughter silently carries their sins to His own death. Isaiah 9:6, 53:1
- Later, the prophet Daniel would see Him as "**the son of Man**" standing before the Ancient of Days to be given an everlasting dominion and kingship over all peoples, nations and languages" Daniel 7:13-14. It was this apparent disconnect between Daniel's vision of the everlasting king and Isaiah's vision of the suffering servant, which would later cause the people of Jesus' day, in their desire for a victorious king, to reject Him as their suffering servant.
- There are as many as 44 various prophecies spread throughout the Hebrew Bible, specifically describing the person and work of this coming Messiah, from His birthplace even to the manner and place of His death.
- Finally, Malachi, the last prophet in the Old Testament proclaimed that before the end, God would once again send Elijah – a voice calling out in the wilderness – to prepare the way for the coming Great and Terrible Day of the Lord Isaiah 40:3-5, Malachi 4:5-6.

After which God and all His prophets went silent for another 400 years. Until one day, God's angel appeared to the priest Zechariah declaring that he and his wife Elizabeth, would now in their old age miraculously birth a sacred son who "*with the spirit and power of Elijah*," would prepare the way for the coming Messiah Luke 1:17. They were to

name him John. Six months later, that angel appeared again, this time to a virgin named Mary and Joseph her betrothed, telling them that their son would be God's son. They were to name Him Jesus.

Thirty more years lapse, giving the boys a chance to grow to manhood. Until John the Baptist bursts on the scene, a fiery wilderness preacher calling all to repent and prepare for the coming Day of the Lord. The people were ready, they knew the prophecies, they were looking. So, they asked John if he was the **Messiah**, he said "no." Then, they asked if he was **Elijah**, again he said "no;" though Jesus later affirmed that John had indeed filled Elijah's role Matthew 11:14. Finally they asked if he was "**The Prophet**", Moses' promised replacement, again John said "no," which confused and frustrated them mightily. But he warned them that the Messiah was indeed standing undiscovered in their midst.

The very next day when John saw Jesus walking towards him, he declared "***here is the lamb of God, here is the one I was talking about who ranks ahead of me because He was before me; ... here is the Son of God.***" John 1:29-34

So began Jesus' ministry. He gathered disciples and followers. He preached in the synagogues, healing the sick and casting out demons. The people were astounded, because *unlike the other scribes, He both taught and cast out demons "as one having authority."* Mark 1:21. His miracles also convinced them, so forgetting the suffering servant part of the story, they tried to make Him king. But as is always the case, this story would only unfold according to God's plan and God's timing; before Jesus could become God's everlasting king, He had to finish the tasks required of God's suffering servant.

Here then was the one person in all of Biblical history who met all of God's prophetic promises. By His powerful teaching and working of miracles, over and over Jesus proved that He was the Messiah, He was "*God with us.*" But true to Isaiah's prophecy, those in power would neither accept His claims, nor His miracles, which as He knew would lead them to plotting and fulfilling His prophesied death.

Near the end of His ministry, Jesus challenged His opponents.

<p>You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf ... Moses wrote about me.</p>

'You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that testify on my behalf. Yet you refuse to come to me to have life... Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for He wrote about me. John 5:39-47

Here finally after countless thousands of years stood Eve's seed, Abraham's world blessing son, David's heir, Daniel's everlasting king, Moses' long promised prophet like himself... you know the rest of His story. The night before His arrest and death, Jesus broke bread and shared drink with His disciples, declaring these to be the symbols of a NEW covenant He was establishing with all who need only come to Him in faith.

This new covenant would be unlike the old covenant Moses had made with the people, based on obedience to the law which the people promised but failed to obey. Instead, this new covenant would be based on grace and fulfilled by His own broken body and shed blood. As the Apostle Paul explains,

since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, [made] effective through faith. Romans 3:23-24

Rising from the grave to prove His promises true, Jesus then ordered all His followers – including you and me – out into the world to share this good news of salvation offered to all. He also promised to go with us in spirit until the very end of age, when we will finally see Him – as prophesied – standing and proclaiming

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And so this story which was begun in time immemorial with the promise of the serpent crushing seed is still not over. But, this is not a never ending story. The Great and terrible Day of the Lord is still to come, when Jesus next returns, no longer as the suffering servant, but as God's everlasting king, having dominion over all peoples, nations and languages. Who knows when the end will come? It could be thousands

more years, or it could be tomorrow; there are no prophecies still to be fulfilled. Scripture says that *God is being patient with us not wanting any to perish* 2 Peter 3:9. .

Thus the most important question that remains to be asked is what part will you play in this story? What relationship do you have with God's long promised Messiah?

Are you back with the people of Israel, still striving yet failing to be justified by keeping the law?

Or are you among the Scribes and Pharisees still refusing to believe that Jesus was Moses' God sent replacement. Long ago God warned that *anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable*
Deuteronomy 18:18-19

Or are you among those storied farmers too busy with their own labors, out in their own fields, to accept the King's invitation to His banquet.

OR are you among those who have been redeemed; those whom Jesus prayed for that final fateful night, who through the shared stories of His faithful followers would hear and accept by faith God's salvation offered to all by His promised Messiah.

AS I said, this story is not over yet.

There is still time for you to decide what role you will play in this greatest of all stories. But there is only one ending that will get you to "happily ever after;" Jesus is calling, *Whosoever will may come*. Don't neglect the king's invitation.

Let's pray about this.