

Jesus in the Old Testament: Shadows, Prophecies and Revelations

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Abstract

Despite the coming of Jesus and the existence of the Gospels, Orthodox Judaism still awaits the coming of the great person who will bear the titles, the Messiah, the Prophet, the King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Servant of Lord and the High Priest. Christianity however proclaims that these shadows, prophecies and revelations about the Messiah, the Prophet, the King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Servant of the Lord and the High Priest already have their full manifestations in the person of Jesus Christ. Using biblical theology method with thorough application of the word studies, this work surveys Jesus in the Old Testament with special concentration on his shadows, prophecies and revelations and how such frameworks witnessed fulfillment in the Gospels and the entire New Testament. Jesus came and lived as a fulfillment of the Old Testament shadows, prophecies and revelations with perfect rendition on his dominant teaching on the Kingdom, the priesthood, and the office of the prophet in the entire Jewish framework. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the High Priest, the Servant, Son of man and the Son of God predicted in the Old Testament.

Key words: Jesus, Old Testament, Gospels, Revelations, Prophecies, Messiah, Kingdom

Introduction

There are numerous shadows, prophecies and revelations of Jesus in the Old Testament. A number of these shadows, prophecies and revelations prefigured Jesus as the promised Messiah, a prophet like Moses, a King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the servant of the Lord as well as a high priest among many depictions. The Messiah, to a traditional Jew, is foreshadowed as a prophet greater than Moses and as a King greater than Saul, David and Solomon. The Jews anticipated the coming of a great King who will be an instrument by which the Kingdom of God will be firmly established in Israel and the entire world. The shadows, prophecies and revelations of Jesus in the Old Testament also predicted the coming of a great leader who will conquer evil and every form of disaster, consequently, bring the final triumph of evil.

Such a leader was also foretold by some of the prophets, as one who will bring about the reign of peace, justice, righteous and prosperity in the world. The leader is to be a great figure predicted to be identified not just as the Son of Man, but also as the Son of God, the servant of the Lord and as the High Priest who will bring about the total reconciliation between God and the entire human race.

Orthodox Judaism still awaits the coming of this great figure that will bear the titles; the Messiah, the Prophet, the King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Servant of Lord and the High Priest. Christianity however proclaims that these shadows, prophecies and revelations about

the Messiah, the Prophet, the King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Servant of the Lord and the High Priest already have their full manifestations in the person of Jesus Christ.

It is in this light that this work examines the identity of Jesus in the Old Testament and how the shadows, prophecies and revelations find their fulfillment in him during his earthly ministry. It also examines the revelation of Jesus and the concept of the kingdom, before merging the shadows and the revelations of Jesus as they find their fulfillment in the New Testament.

The Shadows and Prophecies of Jesus

In examining the shadows and prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament and their fulfillment in the New Testament, the following titles will be examined – Jesus as the Messiah, the Prophet like Moses, the Great King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Servant of the Lord and the High Priest.

1. Jesus as the Messiah

N. T. Wright expresses the Jewish hope for the Messiah, in his book, *The Original Jesus: The Life and Vision of a Revolutionary*, by stating that in days of Jesus, “Israel was in deep trouble because the people were living under the oppressive and exploitative rule of the pagan Romans with heavily compromised local politicians.” Wright maintains that the Jews were not just after a change in political leadership but that they had a much bigger vision, they were hoping and praying that at last the God of Israel would come and set the people free, and bringing in time of peace and justice (27-28). The Messiah according to the Old Testament prophecies was to establish the reign of peace and justice (Psalms 72:7). According to the *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, peace would be the prominent feature of the Messianic times (Mic. 4:2-12, Zech. 9:10). Nations shall not learn war anymore (Isa 2:4), animals shall live together in peace (Isa. 11:6-7, Ezek. 34:25). The Messiah himself is to be called the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6).

The term Messiah designates the “anointed one,” the redeemer who is spoken of by the prophets of the Old Testament as one whose mission is to bring salvation to Israel and the whole world. In the Old Testament, the term “anointed one,” from which the English words “Messiah” (Hebrew *Mashi'ach* or *masiah*) and “Christ” (Greek *christos*) were derived from, was applied to kings, priests and prophets. Such figures were anointed with oil, water and or the Spirit of God, as a means of consecrating them for their particular missions (Hahn 604).

Scott Hahn further opines that alongside these historical figures, there emerged in Israel the hope of a future king, an eschatological “anointed one,” who would restore the kingdom of Israel and usher the Messianic reign of deliverance from sin, exile and death. This hope, according to Hahn, was particularly pronounced after the death of Solomon, the division of the kingdom of Israel in (930 B.C.E), the scattering of the ten tribes of Israel and the Assyrian Exile (722 B.C.E), the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple and the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C.E). After this time, Hahn maintains that there was “none to sit upon the throne of David” (Jeremiah 36:30) and the hope grew that God would one day send a king and Redeemer, the Messiah. Orthodox Judaism still awaits the coming Messiah, Christianity on the other hand proclaims that the Messiah has already come in the person Jesus who is the true Priest, Prophet and King (Hahn 605).

In Jewish thought, Thomas Nelson posits that the Messiah would be the king of the Jews, a political leader who would defeat their enemies of the Israelites and bring in a golden era of peace and prosperity. In Christian thought, Thomas Nelson further maintains that the term Messiah refers to Jesus’ role as a spiritual deliverer, setting His people free from sin and death. In Old Testament times, Thomas Nelson states that part of the ritual of commissioning a person for a special task was to anoint him with oil (Nelson n. p.).

In the Old Testament, Nelson states that the word “Messiah” was used more than 30 times to describe kings (2 Sam. 1:14, 16), priests (Lev. 4:3, 5, 16), the Patriarchs (Ps 105:15), and even the Persian King Cyrus (Isa 45:1). He also posits that the word was also used in connection with King David, who became the model of the Messianic king who would come at the end of the age (2 Sam. 22:51; Ps 2:2). During the time of Daniel in the Sixth Century B.C.E the term, Messiah was also used as an actual title of a king who will come in the future (Dan 9:25-26). Still, as the Jewish people struggled against their political enemies, the Messiah came to be thought of as a political and a military ruler (Nelson .p).

Jesus was first called the Christ because his earliest generations of followers believed that he was indeed the true messiah, the anointed one sent by God and long-awaited by God’s salvation-hungry chosen people (Ekstrom 157). Jesus, according to Berkhof was appointed to his office as Christ, which points to the reality of the first thing symbolized in his anointing that took place when he was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), and at the time of his baptism (Matthew 3:16; Mark 10:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32; 3:34). The anointing with the Holy Spirit, for Berkhof, served to qualify him and his great task (313).

2. Jesus a Prophet Like Moses

The greatest of all the prophets was Moses, who gave the law (Torah). Later prophets such as Elijah and Isaiah were not lawgivers but commentators on the Law, who exhorted the people to be faithful to the Torah. These exhortations reached their pinnacle during periods of captivity, where secular kings who ruled over the chosen people of God, forced them to violate their faith, morals and the dictates of their consciences. Before the Maccabean Revolt, the Israelites were also oppressed and compelled to swear by a foreign king and his gods (Ocariz et al 279).

Prophecy consequently was not necessarily a vision of the future, but an exhortation to obey the Torah and teach it, so as to avoid the wrath of God. Prophets were largely called and commissioned by God, and then sent to the people to re-awaken religious fervor. Jesus, according to Ocariz, fulfilled the law and the prophets as indeed he is the very font of divine revelation itself. Jesus is, then, the prophet. He is the envoy sent by the Father to bring the word of God to men and women. His teaching, therefore, had divine authority; the Father himself requires people to listen to the word of Jesus (cf. Mt. 17:5) (147).

Jesus, Ocariz states, is more than a prophet; he is the Master, that is, he who teaches on his own authority (Matthew 7:29). Thus, he is acknowledged and called “Master” by his disciples, and he accepted this title. He tells the apostles: “You call me teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am” (John 13:13). This personal authority with which Jesus teaches, which the evangelists themselves bear witness to, made them “surprised to see him teaching everywhere and at all times, teaching in a manner and with an authority previously unknown.” Jesus’ teaching authority, Ocariz affirms, comes very strongly in the words; “I tell you” (Matt 5:22; John 8:51). And when Jesus quotes passages from the Old Testament, he does not only expound on the teaching in the light of the sacred text, but he also explains the sacred text in the light of himself in a particular way (147).

The authority of Jesus to teach beyond that of the prophets, even beyond Moses, who gave the Law, is by virtue of the fact that Jesus is not a mere commentator and exhorter, but the very source of the law itself through his oneness with God. Indeed, when in Exodus 20 it says, “Then God spoke all these words” and he gave the Ten Commandments, it was Jesus who spoke those words to Moses. Moses gave the Jewish people what God had given him. When Jesus speaks, God himself spoke because Jesus is God by the fact of their Trinitarian relationship (Ocariz et al 148).

Philips Ricks, writing on Jesus in the Old Testament, maintains that the Pharisees like to talk about how great Moses was, but Jesus pointed out how Moses believed in him. Jesus said: "There is one who accuses you; Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed in Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me" (John 5:45-46). Moses wrote about Jesus in Deuteronomy 18, when he spoke of a prophet who will come just like him: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers - it is to him you shall listen" (Dt. 18:15). Ricks maintains that Jesus was this prophet. And when Jesus went "up on the mountain" to give his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1), he was completing the teaching of the Ten Commandments that Moses gave on Mount Sinai (www.monergism.com/jesus-old-testament).

3. Jesus as the Great King

The three great Kings of the Hebrew Scriptures are Saul, David and Solomon. Initially, God did not want to give his people a king, as only he is their king. But ceding to their request to be led, and to be kept as one, God gave kings to his people. This history shows how each king succumbed to infidelity (Hahn 604).

King Saul was rejected by God because of his disobedience, arrogance and for rejection of the word of God (1 Sam. 14:22-26) (www.enterthebillbe.org). King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, and then murdered her husband, Uriah, the Hittite, to hide his infidelity (2 Sam 11, 12:1-5) while King Solomon married many foreign wives who turned his mind away from God (1 Kings 9:15-23, 11:1-13, 12:1-20) (Izuchukwu 24). After the death of Solomon and the division of the Kingdom of Israel into Judah in the South and Israel in the North as well as the Assyrian exile in 722 B.C., the hope for a political leader consequently grew with the hope that one day God will send a king that will redeem his people (Hahn 604).

The Book of 2 Kings 24:1-17, 25:1-17 speaks of the Babylonian captivity (approx. 597-538 B.C.), in which the Jews were sent into exile from their lands, the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and the people fell subject to the rule of the Babylonian King, Nebuchadnezzar. During this time, Jews were tempted to renounce their God for the gods of the Babylonians. Those who renounced the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were rewarded, and received, great bounty from the table of the secular king. The secular king sought to replace the God's law, with secular laws. These laws were no longer grounded in the supreme authority of God, but were founded upon the supreme authority of the secular King. It was for this reasons that the Jews sought a strong political Messiah who would lead them to the freedom they desired, where the kingdom and their religious practice would go hand-in-hand (Ocariz 143). As a consequence, to these degrading events in the life of the Israelites, the prophet Jeremiah opines "there is no one to sit on the throne of David" (Jer. 36:30).

The Jews at the time of Jesus also hoped for a strong political leader to reunite them, and restore the kingdoms of Judah in the South, and Israel in the North. The zealots, in particular, sought to use violence in order to liberate the Jewish people from foreign ruler. Jesus Christ, already drawing on the imagery of the Good Shepherd from the Hebrew Scriptures (Isaiah 4:9-11, Palms 78:52, Mal. 2:12-13 and Jeremiah 3:15), comes not merely to replace secular government, but most importantly to provide the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth, a kingdom that is in union with the Celestial Kingdom (Ocariz 143).

Jesus is a king. But the pertinent question to ask is, what type of king is Jesus? When the Magi from the East came to Jerusalem, they asked; "where is the one born king of the Jews..." (Matt. 2:2). Nathanael declared to Jesus, "Rabbi ... you are the King of Israel" (John 1:49). During his triumphant entry to Jerusalem, the disciples joyfully praised God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen, "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord" (Luke 19:38). When Pilate asked Jesus if he was the King of the Jews, Jesus replied "Yes, it is you who

say” (Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3). Jesus was hailed by the soldiers who flogged and twisted crown of thorns on him. They exclaimed, “Hail, King of the Jews!” (Matt 27:29; Mark 15:18; John 19:3). Jesus is a king, but he is not a human king, because he withdrew and went into hiding when the Jewish people intended to make him a king by force after he feed them with fish and loaves of bread (John 6:15). He spoke to Pilate, the Roman Governor during his trial as thus: “My kingdom is not of this world...” (John 18:36).

After his death on the cross, a charge written against him reads “... THE KING OF THE JEWS” (Matt. 27:37; Luke 23:38; John 19:19). When Pilate inquired further if Jesus were the king of the Jews, Jesus affirmed that he is a king and he was born for this, and for this reason he came into the world (John 18:36-37). Jesus as the son of Man speaks of himself as a King who will judge the entire nations of the world (Matt 25:31-32). He also said as a king, He will tell the righteous, the blessed of his father, come inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:31-32). In the book of Revelations, Jesus is referred to as the King of kings (Rev 17:11, 1 and 19:16).

4. Jesus as the Son of God

Raymond Brown is of the view that the word “Son in relation to God is ambiguous.”The title Son of God, for Brown, means divine filiations in the proper sense of having one’s origin from God so that one has God’s own nature. The idea of the Son of God also connotes a special relationship to God (Brown 80). Tyler states that, “the first formal announcement of God’s mind on the subject, Son of God, was when the prophet Nathan declared that David’s son will also be God’s son, and that the throne of his son’s kingdom will be established forever” (2 Sam 7:14-16) (Tyler, McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia).

Psalms 2 speaks of the king that God has installed in Zion, and then said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father” (Psalm 2:6-7). In Psalm 45, he is addressed formally as God, whose throne should be forever and ever, while in Isaiah 7:14, it is said in the house of David, a virgin will conceive and bear a son who shall be called Immanuel (God with us), and again, Isaiah 9:6 states that the child to be given will be called “Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”In Micah 5:2, the Prophet stated that out of Bethlehem will come out, one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times (Tyler, McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia).

In the New Testament, the virginal conception and the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke agree that Jesus is the Son of God in a unique manner. The affirmation of Jesus’ divine Sonship was also testified by God the Father at the baptism and transfiguration (Mark 1:11; Matthew 3:17; Luke 3:22). Berkhof points out that the name “Son of God is applied to Jesus in four different senses, which are not always kept distinct in scripture but are sometimes combined:

- a) **In the Messianic Sense:** Jesus the Messiah, according to Berkhof, could be called Son of God, in the sense of being God’s heir and representative (Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32; Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35).
- b) **In the Trinitarian Sense:** The name is sometimes used to denote the essential deity of Christ. As such, it points to a pre-existent Sonship, which absolutely transcends the human life of Christ and his official calling as Savior (Matthew 11:27; 14:28-33; 16:16).
- c) **In the Naturistic Sense:** Jesus is also called the Son of God by virtue of his supernatural birth (Luke 1:35; cf. Matthew 1:18-24; John 1:13).
- d) **In the Ethico-Religious Sense:** It is in this sense that the name “Sons” or “Children of God” is applied to believers in the New Testament. It is possible that we have an example of the application of the name “Son of God” to Jesus in that ethico-religious sense in Matthew 17:24-27 (Berkhof314-315).

The following feature prominently about Jesus as the Son of God is stated in the New Testament. Mark began his gospel by stating, the gospel about Jesus, the Son of God (Mark 1:1). The angel Gabriel told Mary that the holy one she will bear will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). After the baptism of Jesus, John the Baptist testified that Jesus is the Son of God (John 1:34). Nathanael declared Jesus as the Son of God (John 1:49). The two demon possessed men in the region of Gaderenes referred to Jesus as the Son of God (Matt. 8:29). The disciples in the boat worshipped Jesus and said, he is truly the Son of God (Matt. 14:33). Martha and Lazarus' sister, also testified that she believes, Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 19:7). Caiaphas the high Priest, during the trial of Jesus, charged him under oath to tell them if he was the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is to come. Jesus testified before the Sanhedrin that he is the Son of God (Matt 27:54). The Jewish Authority in the days of Jesus put him to death because he testified he was the Son of God (John 19:7). John attested that he wrote his gospel so that believers may believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (John 20:31, 1 John 5:13).

Saul (Paul) immediately after his conversion preached Jesus as the Son of God. He further preached Jesus, the Son of God to Silas and Timothy (2 Cor. 1:19). He testifies that he lives by faith in the Son of God (Gal. 2:20). The Son of God according to John appeared to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). John further states that the Son of God lives in anyone who acknowledges Jesus as the Son of God (1 John 4:15) and that the person who does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:12).

5. Jesus as Son of Man

In the Old Testament, the title the "Son of Man" is found in Psalm 8:4 and Daniel 7:13, and frequently in the prophecy of Ezekiel. It is also found in the Apocrypha, Enoch 46 and 62, and II Esdras 13. The dependence of the New Testament usage of it on the passage in Daniel is now quite generally admitted, though in that prophecy, it is merely a descriptive phrase, and not yet a title (Berkhof 313).

The Prophet Daniel writing about the Son of Man opines that in a night vision, he saw one like the Son of Man coming within the clouds of heaven (Dan. 7:14). In another vision, he saw the Son of Man approaching him, and he was terrified and fell before him. Then the Son of Man, therefore, spoke to him to understand that the "visions" he saw "concerns the time of the end" (Dan. 8:17).

There is, in modern times, a massive disagreement about whether this was a title in Jesus' time, what it may have meant, and whether Jesus used it of himself. It may be a consolation to know that there are traces of ancient puzzle in the words addressed to Jesus in John 12:34, "How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Just who is the Son of Man?" The Gospel usage of this title for Jesus present statistics that are dramatically different from the statistics discussed in relation to the "Messiah" and "the Son of God" (Brown 89).

Raymond Brown opines that the acceptance or usage of these titles during Jesus' lifetime is difficult to discern even from the surface evidence of the Gospels, in part because of their infrequency; but "The Son of Man" appears some 80 times in the Gospels and in all but 2 partially debatable instances (Mark 2:10; John 12:34) clearly as self-designations by Jesus (90).

Jesus during his public ministry referred to himself very often as the Son of Man: He speaks of himself as the Son of Man who has authority on earth to forgive sins (Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24) and also as being the Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5). He also said that as the Son of Man, he did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45). As the Son of Man, he said, one day he will send out his angels to weed out of his kingdom everything that cause sin and all who do evil (Matt. 13:41).

As the Son of Man, he is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels to reward each person according to what he or she has done (Matt. 16:127). As the Son of Man, he also spoke of how he will suffer, be rejected and killed (Matt. 17:12; Mark 9:12; Mark 10:33; Luke 9:22, 44 and Luke 24:7; Matt. 20:18-19), but will be raised from the dead (Matt 17:9. Mark 8:31. Mark 9:9, 31). He said as the Son of Man, he will go as it is written of him but woe to him who betrays him (Matt. 26:24; Mark 14:21).

Again, Jesus speaks of himself, as the Son of Man, who will appear in the cloud of the sky, with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30-31; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27). And as the Son of Man, he will be sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One (Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:22). He said, he will come at an hour no one expects (Matt. 24:24; Luke 12:40). Stephen before his ignominious death saw the Son of Man, standing at the right hand of God (Act 7:56). John in his vision also saw someone "Like the Son of Man", dressed in a robe reaching down his feet (Rev. 1:13) with a crown of gold on his head and a sickle in his hand (Rev. 14:14).

6. Jesus as Servant of the Lord

The connection between servant concept in the Old and New Testaments particularly, Servant Songs in Isaiah and the passion and death of Jesus has been a matter of active debate among the New Testament scholars over the years. The term 'servant' is linked with the institution of slavery in the Old Testament. The slave was an individual who was deprived of all personal rights even identity and was owned by his master. However, it is obvious to presume that the servant of the Lord has at least few features of the slave in terms of obedience, absolute surrender and willingness to suffer. *Ebed YHWH* is the term used to describe the servant of the Lord in the Old Testament (David 96-97).

Joy David asserts that in the Old Testament, the coming Messiah is to be qualified as servant in many occasions (Ezekiel 34:23f; Zechariah 3:8; Ezra 7:28; 13:32). And that in Isaiah 42:1-4 God asks his servant to hold the responsibility of liberating his people from all the bondages, while describing the designation, the task of the servant given to (42:1) which are: to bring forth justice to the nation (42:1c), to bring justice in truth (42:3c) and to established justice in the earth (42:4b). Joy David further stresses that the Old Testament contains many lamentations, which are part of mediation (Moses, Elijah, Jeremiah) and in spite of grievous assaults on the servant, the servant is confident that this is the will of God and with the constant hope that the Lord God helps. In Isaiah, the servant bears the sins of other people (Isa. 53), he was despised and rejected (53:3), he was wounded for our transgressions (53:5), he was cut out of the land of the living (53:8) (101).

The second half of the Isaiah, according to T. D Alexander, contains several passages that focus on a 'servant' who displays royal characteristics. Taking the punishment due to others, the 'servant' plays a vital role in restoring humanity to a right relationship with God. The servant's actions are viewed as benefiting all the nations of the earth (Isaiah 42:1-4; 45:1-8; 52:13-53:12) (107). These passages emphasize the servant's role in atoning for the sin of others by making 'his life a guilt offering'. Such an event offers hope to those who have gone astray. This, however, does not mean that each wicked person is automatically forgiven. The wider context, according to Alexander, suggests that the wicked must 'forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts' (Isa. 55:6; cf. 1:19-20). Nevertheless, by offering himself up in place of others, the servant fulfills a vital and necessary role, essential for the restoration of harmony between God and humanity. The picture of the future king suffering for the sins of others introduces a major new dimension into the Bible's portrait of the Messiah (112).

7. Jesus the Highest Priest

-The whole idea of Priesthood came during the days of Moses with Aaron as the first ordained priest, although it is believed that Cain and Abel started the practice (Tambiyi 21-22; Tambiyi *African Church* 17). It was the High Priest alone who was permitted to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, on the great Day of Atonement. The High Priest would wear his gorgeous priestly vestments, he would enter the temple before all the people, and then, laying them aside and assuming only his linen garments in secret, he entered the holy of holies alone, and made expiation, sprinkling the blood of the sin offering on the mercy seat, and offering up incense (Leviticus 16). This continued until the Babylonian captivity and the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem.

After the Babylonian Exile, a decisive action took place to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem as a sign of the reaffirmation of national and religious identity for ancient Judaism. This meant a rebirth of the supremacy of the priesthood, and it appeared that during this period, it was clearly established that only those who were considered to be the descendants of Aaron could serve in the priesthood. The priesthood seemed to have reached its zenith during the Hasmonean period (ca. 165 B.C. - 60 B.C.) when it could be legitimately categorized as a part of the Jewish aristocracy with far-reaching influence and position in society (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, n. p).

In the late Maccabean era, the priests were members in a number of the parties and sects within Judaism. It would seem that the priests were substantial parts of the leadership of the Sadducees, and their membership in the Sanhedrin made them influential powers in both civic and religious matters. Priests also were part of the leadership in the separatist sect of the Essenes. With destruction of the Jerusalem temple in A.D. 70, the priesthood lost its main religious base in society; in their role as teachers, the priests were replaced by the Pharisees and the rabbis in the synagogues (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, n. p).

Gideon Y. Tambiyi opines in his book, *Priesthood and African Christian Thoughts*, that the priesthood took a strange form from the usual nature of the priesthood which was a common practice of those days as it has suffered during the Greco-Roman period. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Priesthood. Jesus' linkage to the priesthood, according to Tambiyi, is prophesied in Psalm 110:4 and fulfilled in the Gospels and exposed in the books of Hebrews (176). The office, dress, and ministration of the high priest were typical of the priesthood of Jesus (Hebrews 4:14; 7:25; 9:12), (*Easton's Bible Dictionary* n. p.).

Jesus became a merciful High Priest in the service of God and that he would make atonement for sins (Heb. 2:17). As a High Priest, he has gone through the heavens (Heb. 4:14) and he is able to sympathize with us in our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15). It was God who said to him, "You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 5:6, 10, 7:11, 17 and 21) in fulfillment of the prophecy in Psalm 110:4. As a priest, he offered sacrifice for sins and he sits at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven (Heb. 7:26, 10:12).

The Revelations of Jesus and the Kingdom

Consequent from the Old Testament Messianic prophecies, the Israelites expected the reign of a future King who will establish the Kingdom of God among his people. The concept of this Kingdom in the New Testament, Mwochet and Lillo opine, goes back to the covenant promises God made to Abraham and David. To Abraham, God said; "Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations will be blessed" (Gen. 22:17-18). And to David, God said, "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever and your throne will be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:16) (29-30).

In a similar vein, Timothy Palmer upholds that the prophet Amos expected a time in the future when the fallen tent of David will be restored, when the Lord himself will repair its broken

palaces and build it as it used to be. The Lord himself, speaking through the prophet Amos, promised to bring back his exiled people (Amos 9:11). The Prophet Isaiah also looked forward to a time in the last days when the Temple of the Lord will be established as the highest Mountains and all nations will stream to it (Isa. 2:2). He also prophesied the reign of a ruler who will judge between nations and will settle disputes for many people (2:4). Isaiah the prophet therefore declared that: "there will be peace and nations will not lift up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more" (Isa. 2:4). The prophet Isaiah also expected a time when a descendant of David would rule in justice and righteous and the result will be peace (Isa. 11:1-9). "The ruler," according to Isaiah, "will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth" (Isa. 11:12) (14).

The prophet Jeremiah stated that the days are coming when the Lord will raise up a righteous branch, a king who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the Land (Jer. 23:5). Jeremiah proclaimed further that; in the days of the king, Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell in safety. He stated that the name of the king will be called will be: "The Lord our Righteousness" (Jer. 23:6). The Prophet Ezekiel also speaks of, "the covenant of peace the Lord will establish among his people." The Lord himself promised to put his sanctuary among them forever (Ezek. 37:26). The Lord also promised, through Prophet Ezekiel that his dwelling will be with his people forever, and he will be their God they will be his people (Ezek. 37:37). Then the nations will know that he the Lord has made Israel Holy when his sanctuary is among them forever (Ezek. 37:38) (Palmer 14).

Still writing on the Kingdom of God, the Prophet Zechariah also declared; "... see your king comes to you; righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zech. 9:9). The king, according to Zechariah, will proclaim peace to the nations. And his rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth (9:10). Zechariah further stated that the Lord will be king over the whole earth (Zech. 14:9).

Kevin Conner, in the same vein, pens that the kings of Israel and Judah, though imperfect in character and deeds, shadowed the Lord Jesus Christ who will be the King of Kings and the Lord of lords. The mystery of the incarnation, according to Conner, affirms the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant which the promised Messiah, the King, will be the ultimate ruler of the kingdom of Israel and the entire world (Ps. 89, 2, 45, 72, 110 and 2 Sam. 7:8-17). Conner states that the Gospel of Matthew, particularly, presents Jesus as this King (167).

Scott Hahn says that given the frustrated hopes for a restored Davidic kingdom in Israel, that it is not surprising for both Matthew and Luke to begin their gospels by stressing Jesus' Davidic lineage (Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:27 and 32). Both Matthew and Luke, according to Hahn, present Jesus as the Royal Son of David, who will restore the Davidic kingdom and the covenant (509). Hahn further maintains that Matthew relates that at the birth of Jesus, wise men came from the East to seek out the Christ Child (Matt. 2), whereas David's greatest heir, Solomon, only received this honor at the height of his carrier (1 King 4:34). Likewise Luke, Hahn maintains that Gabriel announces the concept of Christ to Mary (Luke 1:31-37) his words are taken almost verbatim from the key Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 7:8-17), especially verses 13-16 (509).

Mark 1:14-15 states, "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God and saying, 'the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the Gospel'". Joseph Ratzinger maintains that these words of Mark, the Evangelist, describe the beginning of Jesus' public activity and at the same time specify the essential content of his preaching (46). Matthew too, Ratzinger further stresses, sums up Jesus' activity in Galilee in similar terms: "And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom and healing every infirmity among the people" Matt. 4:24). The core content of the Gospel, Ratzinger writes, 'The Kingdom of God is at hand.' This announcement for Ratzinger is the core of Jesus' words and works (47).

Similarly, Daniel Harrington in his book, *Jesus: The Historical Portrait*, upholds that the kingdom of God was the central theme in the preaching of both John the Baptist and Jesus. Harrington further states that in the context of the first Century Judaism, the "kingdom of God" referred to God's future display of power and judgment and the final establishment of God's rule over all creation (25).

Mwolchet and Lillo state that the Jewish writing of the early first century A.D. are full of expectations that the Jewish Messiah would come and fulfill the Old Testament prophecies about him (31). In addition, Hahn states that Jesus longest recorded sermon focus on the kingdom (Matt. 5-7, Luke 6:20-49) and that the major of Jesus' parables teach about different aspects of the kingdom (Matt. 13:1-51). More so, Jesus' miracles particularly the exorcisms are signs that the kingdom of God is near or at hand (Matt. 12:28). At the Last Supper, he shares the kingdom with the Apostles by appointing them positions of authority within it (Luke 22:29-30) (509).

Timothy Palmer posits that the kingdom began in a quiet way. It was like a mustard seed a man planted which took years to grow (Matt. 13:31-32). It is also like yeast which a woman used for baking but took time to rise (Matt. 13:33). It is also like a seed sown in a field which took a whole season to grow (Matt. 13:24-30) (16-17). Jesus preaching on the Kingdom of God reveals, first and famous, that the kingdom is a future kingdom. Secondly, a future-present kingdom while the third, is a present kingdom.

As a future kingdom, Jesus, according to Harrington, shared in the hopes of his Jewish contemporaries by affirming: Repent and believe the Gospel for the kingdom of God is near (Matt. 4:17), in the Lord's prayer, there is a wish for the kingdom to come; "thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10; Luke 11:2). The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast show that the kingdom's small beginnings in the present will produce great results in the future, as symbolized by the large mustard bush and the abundance of bread (28). The twin parables of the hidden treasure and the precious pearl stress the extraordinary significance and value of the coming kingdom, and as such required total commitment (Matt. 13:44-46). The parables of the wheat and the weeds (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) and the fishing net (Matt. 13:47-50) indicate that the full coming of the kingdom will be accompanied by a divine judgment which the King of the kingdom will separate the good from the bad and give them appropriate rewards and punishments (Harrington 28). In the future the blessed ones of his Father will inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34). People will come from East, West, North and South to take their places and feast in the kingdom of his Father (Mark 13:29) (Palmer 17).

Following the Kingdom as a future-present kingdom, Harrington affirms that; the parables of the Kingdom look to the future but they also have a present dimension. He opines that the Kingdom is present now, even if in a small way, in the mustard seed, the yeast, the hidden treasure and the pearl. Something important, according to Harrington, the Kingdom is going on now, at the present moment and will be fully realized in time to come (27). This therefore implies that the mustard seed is growing into a bush, the yeast is expanding the flour, the treasure and the pearl are present realities insofar as they can be found, handled and enjoyed here and now.

Jesus also reveals that the Kingdom is a present kingdom by defending himself when he was accused of casting out demons by the prince of demons when he said: "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you" (Luke 11:20: Matt. 12:28) (Harrington 29). When John the Baptist was in prison and he heard reports about Jesus' ministry, he sent his disciples to ask him, if he is the one who is to come or should they expect another (Matt. 11:5; Luke 7:22). Jesus sent message back to John the Baptizer saying to his disciples, go and tell John what you see: the blind people are seeing, the lame people are walking, the lepers are being cleansed and the dead are being raised. Jesus further teaches that since the days of John till now the kingdom of God has suffered violence. The central idea here

Harington opines is that from John to Jesus, the kingdom of God has been the object of violent opposition (29). In a discourse with the Pharisees who asked him when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus told them: “the kingdom of God is among you” (Luke 17:21).

Merging Shadows and Revelations

During the New Testament times, the Jewish people expected that the Messiah would come soon to perform signs (John 7:31) and to deliver them, after which he would live and rule forever (John 12:34). During this time, some of them thought that John the Baptist was the Messiah (John 1:20). Others supposed that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem (John 7:42). Most people, on the other hand, expected the Messiah to be a political leader, a king who would defeat the Romans and provide for their physical needs (Nelson n. p).

According to the Gospel of John, a woman of Samaria said to Jesus, “I know that Messiah is coming.” Jesus replied, “I who speak to you am he” (John 4:25-26). In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus never directly referred to himself as the Messiah, except privately to his disciples, then he said that publicly during his crucifixion (Matt 26:63-64; Mark 14:61-62; Luke 22:67-70). He did accept the title and function of the Messiah privately among his disciples (Matt 16:16-17). He constantly avoided being called “Messiah” in public (Mark 8:29-30). This secret act, according to Thomas Nelson, is known as Jesus’ “messianic secret.” Nelson states that Jesus was the Messiah, but he did not want it known publicly for the reason that his kingdom spiritual and not a political kingdom (John 18:36). Nelson further asserts that, if Jesus had used the title “Messiah,” the people of his time would have thought he was a political king, but that Jesus understood that the Messiah, “God’s Anointed One,” was to be the Suffering Servant (Isa 52:13-53:12) (Nelson n. p).

The Watch Tower Bible and Tract states that the Old Testament Bible prophecies about Jesus were fulfilled in amazingly accurate and detailed manner. A few prophecies that foretold events related to the Jesus’ birth and childhood. The prophet Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David (Isaiah 9:7). Jesus was indeed born in David’s line (Matthew 1:1, 6-17). Prophet Micah foretold that this child would eventually become a ruler and that he would be born in “Bethlehem Ephrathah” (Micah 5:2). At the time of Jesus’ birth, there were two towns in Israel that were named Bethlehem. One was situated near Nazareth in the northern region of the country, and the other, near Jerusalem in Judah. Bethlehem near Jerusalem was formerly called Ephrathah. Jesus was born in that town, exactly as the prophecy foretold (Matthew 2:1). Another Bible prophecy foretold that the Son of God would be called “out of Egypt.” The child Jesus was taken into Egypt. He was brought back after the death of Herod, thus fulfilling the prophecy (Hosea 11:1; Matt. 2:15) (www.Jesus_Christ_The_Promised_Messiah_Bible_Teach).

Jesus, according to C. H. Dodd, discouraged attempts on the part of others to accord him the title, Messiah, even though he may not always have been in a position to silence them. Dodd maintains that there are two instances “only he appears somewhat doubtfully, to have accepted it”. The first occasion, according to Dodd, as described in the synoptic gospels was when Jesus was with his closet followers outside the boundaries of Jewish Palestine known as Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples to tell him who people thought he was. It was Peter who replied, “You are the Messiah” – Jesus therefore gave strict orders to his disciples not to tell anyone about this secret. When Jesus was brought up for examination before the High Priest, he was asked point blank: “Are you the Messiah?” According to Mark, he replied without ambiguity, “I am”. According to Matthew, the reply was “the words are yours” (literally, you have said it). In Luke, Dodd says that Jesus retorts, “If I tell you, you will not believe me.” John, according to Dodd, does not describe the scene before the High Priest, but there seem to be

echoes of it in a passage where Jesus is publicly challenged similar to those of Luke: "If you are the Messiah say it plainly," Jesus replied, "I have told you but you do not believe" (99-100).

Jesus in fulfilling the Old Testament shadows and prophecies about him, present himself as a prophet greater than Moses. Since Moses himself wrote about him (John 5:46) and also prophesied about him (Deut. 18:15). Jesus fulfills his role as a prophet greater than Moses when he went up on the mountain to give the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1). Philip Ricks opines that in doing this, Jesus was completing the teaching of the Ten Commandments that Moses gave on Mount Sinai.

As a king, when Jesus was born, the Magi from the East came to Jerusalem and asked where the king of the Jews was born (Matt. 2:2) when they discovered where he was born, they worshipped him and offered him gifts of gold, incense and myrrh (Matt. 2:11). At the beginning of his public ministry, Nathanael declared him as the King of Israel (John 1:49) while at the triumphant entry to Jerusalem, the disciples and all the people declared him the King who comes in the name of the Lord (Luke 19:38). Jesus affirmed before Pilate that he is a King (Matt. 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3), and that he was born for this (Kingship), and for this reason (the kingship) he came into the world (John 18:36-37). As a king, Jesus said he will come on the last day to judge the entire nations of the world (Matt. 25:31-32).

Jesus was declared as the son of God in many occasions in the New Testament in fulfillment of the shadows and prophecies written about him in the Old Testament. The following persons referred to Jesus as the Son of God: Mark (Mark 1:1), the Angel Gabriel (Luke 1:35), John the Baptist (John 1:34), Nathanael (John 1:49), the two demon possessed men (Matt. 8:28-29), the disciples (Matt. 14:33), Martha (John 19:7) and Jesus himself testified he was the Son of God (John 19:7).

Jesus referred to himself very often as the Son of Man: who has authority to forgive sins (Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24) and as the Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. 12:8; Mark 2:28; Luke 6:5). As the Son of Man, he affirmed that he did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45) as such he spoke of how he will suffer, be rejected and killed (Matt. 17:12; Mark 9:12; Mark 10:33; Luke 9:22, 44 and Luke 24:7; Matt. 20:18-19), but will be raised from the dead (Matt. 17:9; Mark 8:31; Mark 9:9, 31). And as the Son of Man, he also spoke of how he will appear in the cloud of the sky, with power and great glory (Matt. 24:30-31; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27) at an hour no one expects (Matt. 24:24; Luke 12:40). As the Son of Man, Jesus sits at the right hand of the Mighty One (Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; Luke 22:22).

Jesus as Servant of the Lord took upon himself the punishment (Matt. 27:27-42; Mark 15:16-32; Luke 23:26-43; John 19:17-27) due to his followers in fulfillment of the prophecies of Isaiah on the suffering servant (Isa. 53:1-12). As the Servant of the Lord, he has come into the world not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). And then, as a High Priest, he makes atonement for sins (Heb. 2:17), he is able to sympathize with us in our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15) he offered sacrifice for sins and he sits at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven (Heb. 7:26, 10:12).

One sees an overly total blend between the shadows of Jesus in the Old Testament and its fulfillment in the New Testament, particularly the Gospels. Jesus came and lived as a fulfillment of the Old Testament shadows, prophecies and revelations with perfect rendition on his dominant teaching on the Kingdom, the priesthood, and the office of the prophet in the entire Jewish framework. Jesus is the Christ, the messiah, the High Priest, the Servant, Son of man and the Son of God predicted in the Old Testament.

Conclusion

The prophecies, shadows and revelations of Jesus in the Old Testament were accurately fulfilled from his birth to his death on the cross. The shadows and prophecies about Jesus reveals that he is truly the promised Messiah, the prophet greater than Moses, the King, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the servant of the Lord and High Priest. Jesus was the Messiah and the long awaited Jewish great King who was instrumental in bringing the reign of the Kingdom of God into the world. He was the great leader the Old Testament prophets foretold that would bring about the reign of peace, justice, righteous and prosperity in the world. He is the same great figure prefigured and identified as the Son of Man, the Son of God, the servant of the Lord and the High Priest who will bring about total reconciliation between God and the entire human race. The shadows and prophecies of Jesus reveal that on the last day he will come again to be the judge of people of all nations. He will then defeat evil and every form of catastrophe on the surface of earth into to establish the kingdom of God. Such understanding of Jesus would erase the dichotomy associated to the person and ministry of Jesus by the people of his days and the modern historical Jesus research scholars.

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