

The King God's Great Plan

God's Great Plan always included a king to reign over all nations. God would always be King over all creation, but God also knew that people require a ruler in their midst. Therefore, His plan provided for earthly kings and the promise of one eternal King who would begin His rule when He had established a kingdom composed of all nations. God used symbolic language as He revealed the timing and person of this eternal king through the writings of the prophets. Seldom is a specific name used to identify a person as God did the Persian King Cyrus (Isaiah 44:18, 45:1-6). But in the case of the Messiah King, imagery explains who this ruler over all nations would be. Cyrus is an example of the Messiah in that he was both a ruler and savior of God's people. He wrote the decree that released captives from all nations under his control to go back to their native home. The Messiah would release those bound by sin and death, allowing them to follow God's teaching and go to the eternal home in heaven.

Jacob gives the first prophecy of the ruling Messiah to his son Judah. ***"Judah, your brothers shall praise you; Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons shall bow down to you ... The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples"*** (Genesis 49:8-10). Later, when a King ruled over Israel, God promised that King, *"When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever"* (2 Samuel 7:12-13). That promise, made to David of the tribe of Judah, was emphasized by God, ***"Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever"*** (2 Samuel 7:16).

Isaiah describes the King that would rule forever as springing from the roots of Jesse, the father of David. But unlike earthly kings, this one would be filled with the characteristics of God. *"The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist"* (Isaiah 11:1-5).

In addition to saying that this king and promise would endure forever, God told Ezekiel, ***"My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever"*** (Ezekiel 37:24-28). Could God come and live with people? Isaiah prophesied that *"The Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14). **Immanuel** means **God With Us**. Then to Daniel, The Spirit revealed, *"One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed"* (Daniel 7:13-14).

The preceding passages are a small sample of the Old Testament's visions of the Messiah as King. They present the view that the New Testament writers explain. When the time was perfect for the King to come, an angel talked to Mary. Luke tells us of the conversation about the son she would birth. *"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end"* (Luke 1:32-33). In addition, the Hebrew writer ties this man to the promise made through Jacob, *"But of the Son He says, 'your throne, o God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of his kingdom. 'you have*

loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your companions" (Hebrews 1:8-9; Psalm 45:6).

Do you know this Messiah who is not only Prophet and Priest but also The Eternal King?