

If you were to describe Jesus to your friends, what words would you choose to use? What picture would they draw in their minds using your description?

Would your description more reflect someone they would “like” or someone they would “revere”?

What are the dangers of leaning too far in either direction?

Dangers of Likeability: Familiarity breeds contempt

Danger of putting ourselves equal with Jesus

We might like Jesus, but not revere Jesus.

Temptation to not take him too seriously

Temptation to not obey his commands with fear and trembling

Temptation to not turn to him as the ultimate solution for any issue

Temptation not to surrender our lives fully to his leading

We might underestimate his authority and the authority he has given us.

Etc.

Dangers of Reverence: Jesus is out of reach – untouchable - distant

Jesus cannot relate to our problems

I am an inconvenience to Jesus

I must keep impressing Jesus – meeting his expectations or he will be angry

God doesn't really love me – he uses me

He doesn't really relate to my everyday life.

Etc.

The Promised Messiah

It was prophesied consistently through the Old Testament that one day a messiah would come to redeem and reconcile people fully to God.

What does each of the following passages reveal about the Old Testament promise of a coming messiah? Underline each description.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 (NLT)

“For the time is coming,” says the Lord, “when I will raise up a righteous descendant from King David’s line. He will be a King who rules with wisdom. He will do what is just and right throughout the land. ⁶ And this will be his name: ‘The Lord Is Our Righteousness.’ In that day Judah will be saved, and Israel will live in safety.

He will be called: The Lord is Our Righteousness

Description: He will be righteous and just
He will be a descendent of David
He will be a king

What is the significance of this prophecy?

The title given to the coming messiah indicates that he will be a righteous king who, in some way, will transfer his righteousness to us. He will bring salvation to the people of God.

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NLT)

For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the Lord of Heaven’s Armies will make this happen!

He will be called:

Wonderful
Counselor
Mighty God
Everlasting Father
Prince of Peace

Description: He will be born as a normal child
He will be a just ruler of the people
His reign will be eternal
He leads the army of heaven
He is given the various titles of God

What is the significance of this prophecy?

This is no ordinary ruler; it is God himself who will be born as a child.
His government is not a normal government, but one that rules in both heaven and on earth.
Peace is achieved only when he is in control.

Isaiah 11:1-10 (NIV)

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. ² The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord-- ³ and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴ but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. ⁶ The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷ The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. ⁹ They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰ In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

Description: He will be a descendent of Jesse (the father of king David)
He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, giving him wisdom, understanding, and power.
He will judge the earth in fairness.
He will be righteous and faithful
Under his reign, creation will turn back to peace as in the Garden of Eden.
Through him people will fully know God

What is the significance of this prophecy?

Under the fulfilled reign of the Messiah, creation will be restored to God's original design and everyone will experience peace and joy.

Based on these passages, describe what you believe Old Testament Jews would have been anticipating with regard to the promised Messiah?

They would be expecting a man who would:

Be a descendent of David
Become a powerful king over Israel
Be righteous and just
Defeat all his enemies and establish peace on earth

Did Jesus fulfill all these expectations?

Discuss.

How are we to understand these prophecies in light of Jesus' life and ministry?

Discuss.

There are more prophecies which relate to the character and role of the Messiah.

In the following passage, underline the ideas that contrast with the “mighty, righteous king” motif.

Isaiah 53:1-12 (NIV)

Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? ² He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. ³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. ⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. ⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. ¹¹ After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

How could the above sets of passages possibly come together – the Righteous King and the Suffering Servant?

The type of nation God desires is a holy nation where he rules as king in the lives of the people. **It would be meaningless to set up an earthly kingdom if everyone in their hearts were still sinfully rebellious against the king.**

Before there could be a “people of God”, the barrier of sin had to first be removed, forgiveness granted and new life restored to its citizens. The only way to do this was to first die to pay the penalty for the sin of everyone in the world.

Once death and sin were defeated on the cross, people could turn back to God and declare Jesus as their lord/king. Now it was possible for a spiritual kingdom to be created which, in turn, paved the way for an earthly kingdom to be established.

Without first coming as a Suffering Servant, there could be no possibility for a Righteous King in the lives of mankind.

When is Jesus going to appear fully, as the Righteous King?

There are different theological opinions on how this all plays out in the future.

The goal is not to get into a heated debate on this topic, but simply to stress the truth that he is going to return as an earthly king sometime in the future, and we need to be prepared.

We devote a whole study to the return of Christ at the end of this series.

Which description do you most relate to, the Suffering Servant or the Righteous King? Why?

How might embracing a deeper understanding of both dynamics affect your life?

The Israelites focused on their expectation of a Righteous King and as a result, many misunderstood Jesus' role as the Suffering Servant.

What are some ways you may have limited your perspective of Jesus?

What are some ways you could gain a greater balance in your perspective of Jesus?

- Read the gospels, honing in on the side of Jesus you have not necessarily seen before.
- Read more of the prophecies that give vivid descriptions of Jesus' dual role.
- Pray to Jesus, acknowledging his greater role in your life. Ask him to show how you might be limiting his role in your life.
- Etc.

HOMEWORK:

Additional Passages that focus on Jesus' dual roles.

Righteous King:

Daniel 7:13-14
Ezekiel 38:17-23
Revelation 1:12-18
Revelation 19:11-16

Suffering Servant:

Isaiah 49:1-7
Isaiah 50:4-9