

The hope of those such as Simeon and Anna was based upon promises given by God in the Old Testament, running from beginning to end, of deliverance from evil and a hope for something better than the fallen world which surrounds us.

1. ***From Adam to Abraham***

- a. The enemy would be crushed by a human, though coming from a woman and himself being bruised (Genesis 3:15).
- b. A message of the judgment of the wicked was present from the time of Adam onward (cf. Jude 14-15).
- c. The righteous yearned for their deliverance and looked forward to the future when they would see God with their own eyes (cf. Job 19:25-27).

2. ***The Patriarchs: Abraham (ca. 2100 B.C.), Isaac and Jacob***

- a. All peoples will be blessed through the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 22:15-18; 26:1-5; 28:13-15).
- b. A ruler would come out of Judah, and the obedience of the nations is his (Genesis 49:10; cf. Hebrews 7:14; Revelation 5:5).

3. ***Moses and the time of the Exodus (ca. 1445 B.C.)***

- a. God would raise up a prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15; cf. Acts 3:22; 7:37).
- b. A star will rise out of Jacob, a scepter out of Israel (Numbers 24:17; cf. Isaiah 15-16; 21:11-12; Jer 48; 49:7-11; Obadiah 15, 18, 21)).
- c. God gave pictures to prepare people for the Christ, shadows whose substance is Christ (Exodus 25-31; Leviticus 1-7; 16; cf. John 5:46; Colossians 2:17).

4. ***The establishment of the kingdom in David (ca. 1010 B.C.)***

- a. The house of David, his own offspring, will be established forever (2 Samuel 7:11-16).
- b. The throne of his son will be established forever (1 Chronicles 17:12, 14).
- c. This promise to David is regularly repeated, e.g., by Hosea (755-710 B.C.; Hosea 3:5), Isaiah (11:1), and Jeremiah (23:5), and affirmed of Jesus in the New Testament (cf. Rev 22:16). The virgin birth brings both together, though Solomon's line was cursed (Jeremiah 22:30).
- d. Certain of the Psalms of David speak of the Messiah, affirming Him as David's descendant (Ps 132:11), pointing to His deity (Ps 110) and describing his humiliation (Ps 22).

5. ***The time of the prophets***

God sent to both Israel and Judah prophets to call them back to following the Lord. Their message was often a message of judgment upon evil, but frequently with a message of hope. There would be a remnant who believed and there would be deliverance in the future.

- a. *Obadiah* (850-840): points to the day of the Lord when there would be judgment on evil and deliverance for Jerusalem.
- b. *Joel* (835-796): a sustained treatment of the Day of the Lord, a time of wrath and judgment, but also of hope (cf. 2:32-33).
- c. *Amos* (763-755): addresses the apostasy of the nation but includes a promise of God that David's "tent" would be restored.
- d. *Micah* (735-710): proclaims God's judgment on evil doers, but not without a promise of deliverance (cf. chapters 4-5), even pointing out the birthplace of the Messiah (5:2) and telling of the future security (5:4-5).
- e. *Isaiah* (ca. 740-680): teaches much about the Messiah and future blessing including that Messiah would be called Immanuel and be born of a virgin (7:14), appear in the land of Galilee (9:1-7), and suffer humiliation (53). Isaiah reports that there would be a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord (40:3ff), that Messiah would be anointed with the Holy Spirit (Isa 11:2; 42:1 61:1), that He would be meek and gentle (Isa 42:1-3), and do miracles (Isa 35:5,6).
- f. *Zephaniah* (635-625): writes concerning the day of the Lord but offers hope for the faithful remnant.
- g. *Jeremiah* (627-570): prophesies that the Lord "will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely" (23:5) and that the children in Bethlehem would be slain (31:15).
- h. *Daniel* (605-536): describes God's rule over Israel and the nations, defining the triumph of God's kingdom over all earthly kingdoms and the title "Son of Man". Significantly Daniel gives us the timing for the appearing of the Messiah (Daniel 9:24-27), 483 years after the decree issued by the Persian king, Artaxerxes I to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, i.e., ca 26/27 A.D., the approximate date of the public baptism of Jesus.
- i. *Ezekiel* (593-570): points to the Davidic kingship of the Messiah (34:23; 37:24), speaks much of judgment, but offers hope for a secure and blessed remnant (28:25-26; 34:25-31); gives amazing details for a future temple, worship and division of the land (ch. 40-48).
- j. *Haggai* (520 BC): encouraged the rebuilding of God's temple, but also looked forward to the future glory of the Messianic period, referring to Messiah as the "Desire of All Nations" (Hag 2:7).
- k. *Zechariah* (520-470): Messianic and focuses on the coming glory of Jesus Christ, but also items concerning the first coming such as his entrance on a donkey and reign of peace (9:9-10), his betrayal for 30 pieces of silver (11:12), his being pierced (12:10) and being deserted by friends (13:7). He concludes (ch. 14) with the judgment and blessing of the day of the Lord.
- l. *Malachi* (437-417): predicts the Lord would send His messenger to prepare the way (3:1) as well as the coming of Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord (4:5).

The Christ has come but first to serve and suffer. He is coming again with power and glory. Believers should heed John, that "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure." (1 John 3:2-3 NIV)