

Finding Messiah in Unexpected Places

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The Teacher of Righteousness

Joel 2:23

- The Biblical Context
- The Interpretive History
- The Intertextual Interpretation
- The Intertextual Interpretation

The Biblical Context

- The Historical Locust Plague in Israel 1:1-20
- The Eschatological Day of the Lord 2:1-32
- The Eschatological Judgment of the Nations
3:1-16
- The Eschatological Restoration of Jerusalem
Joel 3:17-21

The Biblical Context

- Some have argued that it is difficult to see how the “Teacher of Righteousness” translation would fit in context.
- However, it is located in the section about the eschatological restoration and blessing of Israel in the Messianic Age – what could be more appropriate?

The Interpretive History

- KJV – “former rain moderately”
- Most English Versions – “early rain for your vindication”
- LXX – “food for righteousness”
- Symmachus, Vulgate, Targums – “Teacher of Righteousness”
- Rashi, Ali, Abarbanel – Teacher of Righteousness

The Interpretive History

- A Few Modern Versions (God's Word, Young's Literal, New American) – “The Teacher of Righteousness”
- A Few Interpreters (Keil, Pusey, Laetsch, Kaiser) – The Teacher of Righteousness

The Intextual Interpretation

- The Normal Meaning of “Moreh” is Teacher
 - Used 7 Times (2Kg 17:28; 2Ch 15:3; Jb 36:22; Isa 30:20, 2 times, Hab 2:18-19)
 - Allegedly used twice to mean “rain”
 - Psalm 84:6 – Disputed, to mean “rain,” text must be amended to be “pools.”
 - Joel 2:23b – May be a play on words or more likely, a copyist error (dittography); 34 MT manuscripts read Yoreh (rain)

The Intextual Interpretation

- The use of the article with Moreh would more likely be used with the word “teacher” than the word “rain” (*yoreh* or *malqosh*).
- Taking Moreh as teacher avoids redundancy.

The Intextual Interpretation

- The word “righteousness” only has a moral/ethical sense and is appropriate for a teacher, not rain.
- The Teacher will bring the blessings of the Messianic Age.

The Intertextual Examination – Isaiah 30:19-26

- God promises to send an eschatological Teacher to guide Israel.
 - The noun “teacher” (*moreykha*) is plural.
 - The verb “hide Himself” (*yikanef*) is singular.
 - The noun is possibly a plural of majesty.
 - When a suffix begins with a consonant, the form can change to look like a plural but remain singular. (GKC)
- God promises to send prosperity and ***rain*** in the messianic age.

David's Last Words

2 Samuel 23:1-5

- The Intertextual Interpretation
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The Intertextual Interpretation

- David's Favorite Subject 23:1
 - The song is called an “oracle” (*ne'um*)
 - Usually in construct with Yahweh
 - Only connected to a person in 4 places in the Hebrew Bible (Num 24:3-4, 15-16; Prov 30:1)
 - The song appears to be about David (in the MT)
 - In the variant reading (LXX) it is about the Messiah.

2 Samuel 23:1

MT

עַל־

“on high”

LXX

עַל־

“concerning”

2 Samuel 23:1

MT

These are the last words
of David;
The oracle of David the
son of Jesse,
And the oracle of the man
raised up *on high*,
The *anointed* of the God
of Jacob,
And the delightful one of
the songs of Israel.

LXX

These are the last words
of David;
The oracle of David the
son of Jesse,
And the oracle of the man
raised up *concerning*
The *Messiah (Anointed)*
of the God of Jacob,
And the Delightful One of
the songs of Israel.

The Intertextual Interpretation

- David's Prophetic Role 23:2-3a
 - David claims divine inspiration.
 - The fourfold declaration seems to indicate that he is introducing an exalted person.

So remarkable an introduction must be followed by no ordinary prophecy. If the prophecy should bear on nothing more remarkable than some earthly successor of David, all this preliminary glorification would be singularly out of place. It would be like a great procession of heralds and flourishing of trumpets in an earthly kingdom to announce some event of the most ordinary kind, the repeal of a tax or the appointment of an officer.

W.G. Blaikie

The Intertextual Interpretation

- David's Righteous King 23:3b-4
 - Glorious description does not refer to David but the Messiah.
 - The terms used are found in other messianic passages.

The Intertextual Interpretation

- David's Messianic Hope 23:5
 - David and his house are unrighteous and unworthy.
 - David's hope is derived from God's gracious covenant.
 - God's promises guarantee David's salvation, although the fulfillment had not yet come to pass.

The Intertextual Confirmations

- Intertextual References in the Old Testament
 - Rule (v.3b) – Ruler over Israel. Micah 5:4
 - Just, Righteous (v.3b) – Righteous King Isa 9:7; 11:4; Jer 23:5; 33:15, Zech 9:9
 - Fear of God (v.3b) – Fear of God Isa 11:2
 - Morning Light (v.4) – light out of darkness Isa 9:2, sun of righteousness Mal 4:2
 - Rain on sprouting grass (v.4) – rain on cut grass Psalm 72:6

The Intertextual Confirmations

- Intertextual reference in the New Testament
 - The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me (v.2) – David was a prophet. Acts 2:30
 - For He has established an everlasting covenant (v.5) – God had sworn an oath to him to seat one of his descendants on his throne. Acts 2:30
 - Concerning the Messiah, the Delightful One of the songs of Israel (v.1) – he spoke concerning the resurrection of the Messiah Acts 2:31