

Jesus as the Promised One

Luke wants to identify Jesus as the one who fulfills the expectations of Jewish faith based on many different passages in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Messiah: The psalms and other writings speak of a promised Messiah or ideal king who will restore the fortunes of Israel (e.g., Ps. 89; cf. 2 Sam. 7:5–16). According to Luke, this is Jesus (9:20).

Son of Man: The book of Daniel describes the coming of a heavenly figure called the “Son of Man” (Dan. 7:13–14 [NRSV: human being]). Again, Luke says that this is Jesus (22:69; cf. Acts 7:56).

Prophet Like Moses: The book of Deuteronomy records a promise that God will raise up a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:15). Luke’s Gospel identifies Jesus as the one God has sent to lead a new exodus (9:31 [NRSV: departure]), and the book of Acts explicitly identifies Jesus as the prophet like Moses promised in Deuteronomy (Acts 3:22; 7:37).

Servant of the Lord: The prophet Isaiah speaks of a suffering Servant of the Lord, through whom God will establish justice (Isa. 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–11; 52:13–53:12). Luke identifies this figure with Jesus (22:37, referring to Isa. 53:12; cf. Acts 8:30–35).

Returned Elijah: The book of Malachi predicts that the prophet Elijah will return before the day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5). Luke does

not explicitly identify Jesus as the returned Elijah, but he omits a story from Mark's Gospel that identifies John the Baptist as that figure (Mark 9:11–13), and he adds two stories that present Jesus doing things that Elijah was famous for doing: raising a widow's son (7:11–17; cf. 1 Kings 17:17–24) and ascending into heaven (24:50–51; cf. 2 Kings 2:9–12).

Jesus Is All of These—and More

Most readers of the Jewish Scriptures traditionally had assumed that these various figures were different individuals, not one person. The focusing of all of these traditions onto a single individual appears to have been an innovation of the Christian faith. Luke himself was not the prime innovator, but his writings offer what may be the best example of such a comprehensive approach to Christology. Jesus fulfills things written in *all* of the Scriptures (24:27; cf. 24:44).