

An explicit reference to the advent of this God-appointed King occurs in the ninth chapter of the book of Isaiah,¹ where the prophet announces the birth of a child who should sit as a Prince of Peace upon the throne of David, to establish the theocratic kingdom, and to uphold it with justice and righteousness. Such was to be the character of the ideal person who was expected in the future.

Nothing is here said of the time when the promised prince should appear and publicly manifest himself as the peaceful ruler of God's people, so that in one sense prophecy is indefinite; but from this period the prophetic ministry fostered in the minds of the Israelites the hope of a future Messiah, and unfolded to the faith of the Israelites the fundamental principles of the spiritual kingdom which he was to establish on the earth.

The Old Testament references to this exalted personage are of a general or, better, an official nature, because, during the period of the canonical prophets, the conception of the Messiah had

¹ Verses 6, 7.