

***What the
Sages of Israel
knew about
the Messiah***

The term *Messiah*

The term *messiah* is an Anglicisation of the Latin word *messias*, which is a transliteration of the Greek *messias*, a translation of the Aramaic *meshiha*, which is in turn a translation of the Hebrew term *mashiach*, which is usually found in the expression *HaMelekh HaMashiach*—literally: “the King Messiah” and idiomatically “the Anointed King.”

Scripture and the Messiah

There was an ancient understanding that, at a deeper level of understanding, all of Scripture is focused towards Messianic redemption.

Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 99a

All the prophets prophesied only about the *Yemot haMashiach*—the days of the Messiah.

Sovereignty and Song

In the *Artscroll Tehillim* series, Volume I (Psalms 1–30), the rabbis write that Adam had Sovereignty and Song before his fall:

Of all the mighty wonders which Elohim had created, the greatest wonder is man. For man is nothing less than a microcosm, a miniature world, composed of all the elements found in the entirety of creation.

An echo of the fearless lion roars forth from every human heart, together with the gentle bleating of the timid lamb. A strong, tough vein of iron runs through the fabric of man, interwoven with a strand of soft, pliable reed. Animal, vegetable, mineral—all the kingdoms are represented within man. But there is more—side by side with the material elements of the earth, there resides within man a lofty intellect and a holy spirit, the stuff of heaven. Surely this all-encompassing man is no less than a tiny universe.

And what is the purpose of the universe? The Psalmist proclaims:

Tehillim 19:2

HaShamayim mesap'rim kevod El u'ma'aseh yadayv maggid—The heavens declare the glory of El and the expanse of the sky tells of his handiwork.

All the world is a choir resounding with joyous song. In *pereq shirah*, “The Chapter of Song,” the sages describe the songs which every creature sings to the Creator. Every creature, from the mighty sun to the lowly ant, from the little songbird to the croaking frog, sings one or more verses of Scripture as its song of praise to Elohim. The earth declares that it and its fullness belong to Him. The stars proclaim that Elohim alone made the heavenly host. The horse declares that just as it looks to its master, so must all look to YHWH.

What is the underlying message of these songs? Simply this: YHWH's praise is sung when each and every part of creation performs its assigned task without

deviation. Every creature acting out its ordained role is a fine, precision instrument. Together they form a cosmic orchestra.

However, an assemblage of the finest virtuosos does not yet make a symphonic orchestra. They need a skilled conductor to harmonise the multitude of tones into a thing of exquisite beauty. If each musician improvises without regard to the fused outcome, the result would not be music, but noise.

Elohim placed Adam on the podium and appointed him conductor and choirmaster of the universe. The diverse elements of creation are bidden to obey his baton. Adam, who was composed of all these diverse elements, was provided with a score to follow and instructions on how to use each element of creation in its proper time and place.

So said the Psalmist of the mission of man: “You gave him dominion over the works of Your hands, You placed everything under his feet” (Psalm 8:7). Man's dominion is not merely privilege—it is an obligation. It required balancing, adjusting, guiding, and coaxing all of the world's divergent forces into a sublime symphony of service to the Almighty. The *Midrash* describes the talents with which Adam was endowed for the sake of accomplishing his mission as [...] *sovereignty and song*.

Adam was created on the sixth day, on the eve of the first Sabbath...

It is not adequate merely to say that Adam dwelled in Paradise; we would be more accurate to say that Paradise dwelled inside of him. He was blessed with the inner joy of security and self-assurance...The inclination for evil did not exist inside him...only one inclination urged him on—a good and positive one. No trace of friction or struggle existed inside Adam because he was a perfect and harmonious blend...

Rambam ([commentary on] Genesis 2:9) comments: “Before the sin Adam truly resembled the heavens and their hosts who are described as [...] ‘*Creatures of truth, whose achievement is truth and undeviating from their appointed mission*’ (Sanhedrin 42a).”

The fall of Adam

In the *Artscroll Tehillim* series, Volume I (Psalms 1 – 30), the rabbis describe the fall of Adam:

Not only did [Adam] fall; he dragged the entire universe down with him...

However, Adam's life was not free of trial and challenge. Although no evil impulse was found within him—there most assuredly existed a threat from without. The external inclination towards evil was personified by the *nachash*—serpent.

Certainly Adam was inclined only towards good...Elohim said one thing; the serpent, another! Adam heard the word of Elohim with his ears:

Genesis 2:17

For on the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.

But the serpent, the adroit master of persuasion, presented an appealing argument. He reinforced his words with powerful evidence clearly visible to the eyes. 'Seeing is believing'—a vision is more convincing than a voice.

Genesis 3:6

And the woman **saw** that the tree was good for food and an enticement for the **eyes**.

...The eyes of Adam were led astray by external 'appearances' which seemed to be 'good and enticing'...

[Before he fell, Adam's] intellectual scope was [immense] and unhampered by distortion. But sin clouded his vision and brought him to the gates of death.

Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that appears straight before a man, yet its end is the ways of death.

Adam changed profoundly after he erred. [Before he fell], not the slightest trace of evil resided within him. However, by eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam took the enemy into himself and thereby made evil an integral part of his makeup. His inner harmony was disrupted, his entire being was shattered into two rival camps.

Now Adam's life became a bitter conflict, an endless struggle between good and evil, truth and falsehood. No longer could he trust himself. He hesitated. He stumbled. He fluctuated between going up and coming down, success and failure. No longer was man reliable and consistent like the never-ending forces of nature. No longer was he '*A creature of truth whose achievement is truth, not deviating from the path set for his appointed mission.*'

To the extent that Adam's self-mastery vanished, he forfeited his *malkhut*—'sovereignty' over the world. The universal *shirah*—'song' he had conducted was interrupted—all but silenced.

The Man the Son of Peretz

The ancient rabbis found clear proof in Scripture that Adam was *diminished* when he sinned. The Hebrew letter *Y* (*wav*), the sixth letter in the Hebrew alphabet, represents man, because Adam was created (at the very end of) the sixth day. In Genesis 2:4, the Hebrew word *toldot* (genealogy, account, history) is spelled with two letters *wav*:

This is the *ʾlldʾt* of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When YHWH Elohim made the earth and the heavens...

Note that the above text precedes the fall of man, which is described in Genesis 3. In the rest of the *Tanakh*, *toldot* is spelled with one *wav* only (as *ʾldot* or *toldt*), or with no *wavvim* at all (i.e. as *toldot*). This modified spelling, with a diminished number of *wavvim*, is found in:

Genesis 5:1; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10, 27; 25:12-13, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2
Exodus 6:16; 6:19; 28:10

Numbers 1:20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42; 3:1
1 Chronicles 1:29; 5:7; 7:2, 4, 9; 8:28; 9:9, 34; 26:31.

The modified spelling does not affect the meaning or pronunciation of the word. However, the sages realised that it did allude to something very significant. Every word, every letter in the *Torah* is significant. The presence of *Torah* codes is but one indication of the irrefutable radical inspiration of Scripture. YHWH does not misspell. So why did He change the spelling of the word *toldot* after man sinned? To find such a pattern in Scripture is said to be the greatest fear and greatest joy of a rabbi. In *Me'am Lo'es—The Torah Anthology* (Kaplan, 1979:277), the answer of the rabbinic sages to this changed spelling, is given. The sages stated that the deeper significance (*sod*) of the diminishing of the number of *wavvim* in the word *toldot*, is that man was radically *diminished* when Adam sinned.

There is only one exception to the above rule: In

Rut 4:18

This, then, is the *tYdYt* of Peretz: Peretz was the father of Chetzron...

the word *toldot* is spelled with two *wavvim*, just as in Bereshith 2:4, i.e. in exactly the same way that it was spelled before man sinned. The rabbis found this very significant. It must have meaning, because YHWH is the primary Author of Scripture, and He does not misspell. They taught that the Messiah would be the Agent in restoring the *tzadeqim* (righteous) to the undiminished, immortal state that Adam had before he sinned, and that the *Mashiach* would be a descendant of Peretz. In *The Torah Anthology*, Vol. 1 (Kaplan, 1979:277), we read:

Our sages explained that if Adam had not sinned, he would have been immortal. If he had acted properly, Elohim would have found a way to safeguard him even from accidents and dangers. But when he sinned, this caused him to become mortal...

[After man sinned] Death is actually a benefit [because one stops sinning at death and is not indefinitely locked into a sinful state]...

...For this reason the *Torah* says earlier, "These are the offspring (*toldot*) of heaven and earth" (Genesis 2:4), with the word (*tol'dot*) spelled out completely, the letter Wav doubled. In all other places, one of these letters Wav is lacking [either the first or the second, or both]. The only places where it is spelled out in full are here (Genesis 2:4) and in the verse, "These are the offspring (*toldot*) of Peretz..." (Ruth 4:18).

This teaches that when Elohim created the world, there would have been no need for death, if only man had acted properly. It was only after Adam sinned that the Angel [Messenger] of Death was given authority in the world. As a result, the offspring (*toldot*) of man are diminished, and this is alluded to by the fact that the word itself is diminished. But with the coming of the Messiah, who is a descendant of David, who in turn stems from Peretz, then, "Death will be swallowed up forever" (Yeshayahu 25:8). The offspring (*toldot*) of man will then be complete again, and for this reason the genealogy of Peretz is the second place where this word is spelled out in full.

The above analysis explains why one of the rabbinic terms for the *Mashiach* is **ha-ish ben-Peretz**—“the Man the Son of Peretz.” This name for the Messiah is used in the song, *Lechah Dodi* (“Come, my Beloved”) that is sung during Kabbalat Shabbat—i.e. on the day of the week that is a picture of the Messianic kingdom to come. The name Peretz means, “[he who made] the breach.”

Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel

In the *Artscroll Tehillim* series, Volume I, the rabbis give us a glimpse of the king of Israel being a *corporate personality* (p. xxxvi-xxxviii):

The Heart of the Nation

The king is the heart of his subjects. He embodies within himself their goals and aspirations. He sets their values and standards.

The king's slightest action sends shock-waves rippling through the ranks. If the king ascends, all rise. If the king strays, all are lost!

Eicha Rabbasi 2:7

A harp was suspended over King David's bed. At midnight, a north wind would blow through it, causing it to play. When David heard the music he would arise and engage in *Torah* study. When the people of Israel heard David's voice studying *Torah*, they said, 'If David the king of Israel is studying *Torah*, certainly we, too, must do so.' Immediately, they engaged themselves in *Torah*.

...The king wields the sceptre with which he controls the conduct of great masses of people. Temporal monarchs can dictate only the external behaviour of their subjects, but only the **king of Israel** possesses the unique ability to influence the innermost feelings of his people, for he is nothing less than their **collective heart**.

Rambam, Hilchos Melachim 3:6

The *Torah* was concerned lest the king's heart be distracted as it says, “So that his heart shall not be turned away” (Deuteronomy 17:17). For the heart of the king is the collective heart of the entire congregation (*eidah*) of Israel. Therefore the *Torah* exhorted the king more than all others to concentrate his heart on *Torah* study, “all the days of his life.”

It was this sense of obligation to the people which especially motivated David to seek *Mesillat Yesharim*—the Path of the Upright. He possessed an unprecedented opportunity. If he could make his heart upright, he could make upright the hearts of the masses.

David could not tolerate the slightest flaw in his own character because he realised the effect it would have on the people. In his efforts at purification and perfection, David strove to model himself after the righteous patriarchs.

Avodah Zarah 25a

What is the *sefer ha-yashar*, “The Book of the Upright”? This is the book of Avraham, Yitzchaq and Ya'aqov [the Book of Genesis] who are called *yesharim* “upright.”

Rambam states that the Patriarchs constantly concentrated on Elohim without distraction or interruption. The Almighty was before their eyes as they grazed their sheep and as they tilled their soil.

Rambam, A Guide for the Perplexed 3:15

The purpose of all their efforts was to promulgate the Name of Elohim in the world and to make upright the hearts of men so that they should come to love Him...their closeness to the Almighty was such that His Name became known to the world in connection with theirs—“the Elohim of Avraham, Yitzchaq and Ya'aqov.”

David, too, sought to achieve this level of uninterrupted concentration in the Almighty's service. It was in this vein that he said,

Psalm 16:8

I have set YHWH before me always, because He is at my right hand, I shall not falter.

I do not turn my thoughts away from Elohim; He is like my right hand which I do not forget even for a moment...Therefore I shall not be moved, I shall not fall.

The king of Israel was seen as the collective heart of his subjects. He embodies within himself their goals and aspirations. He sets their values and standards. If the king ascends, all rise. If the king strays, all are lost!

Melekh ha-Mashiach—the Anointed King—should, accordingly, be understood as a *corporate personality*—his subjects are “in” him, and he, the representative one, represents the represented many.

The king of Yisra'el as Saviour

Every king of Israel was seen as a deliverer, a saviour. Psalm 72 expresses this particularly strongly.

Psalm 72

¹Endow the king with your justice, O Elohim, the royal son with your righteousness.

²He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.

⁴He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.

⁵He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

⁶He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

⁷In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.

¹²For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no-one to help.

¹³He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death.

¹⁴He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.

¹⁵Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given to him. May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long.

¹⁶Let corn abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway. Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the field.

¹⁷May his name endure for ever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.

In its historical fulfillment, kings such as Sh^elomo are in focus in this Telilah; its greater fulfilment is in the Messiah.

Melekh ha-Mashiach — the Anointed King — should, accordingly, be understood as a *saviour* of his subjects.

The King of Israel as adopted son of Elohim

The term “ben-Elohim” i.e. “son of Elohim” is a synonym for “king of Israel.” In the following prophecy given through Natan the prophet, YHWH promised everlasting kingship to the House of David, and sonship of YHWH to the Kings of Yisra'el.

2 Samuel 7:4-16

⁴That night the word of YHWH came to Nathan, saying:

¹²When your days [of king David] are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom.

¹³He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

¹⁴**I will be his father, and he shall be my son.** When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men.

¹⁵But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall endure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.

Since the time of Shlomo, who is in the primary prophetic focus here, every king of Israel was seen as an *adopted son of Elohim*. This is repeated three times in the book of Chronicles:

1 Chronicles 17:13

I will be his [Shlomo's] **father**, and he will be **my son**. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor.

1 Chronicles 22:10

He [Shlomo] is the one who will build a house for my Name. He will be **my son**, and I will be his **father**. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.'

1 Chronicles 28:6

He said to me, 'Shlomo your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be **my son**, and I will be his **father**.

One of the themes of the coronation of the kings of Israel and Yahudah was *Divine adoption*: the king became an adopted *son of Elohim*. This adoption of the king of Israel into a filial relationship with YHWH, is seen in the following royal coronation psalm.

Tehillim 2

¹Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

²The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against YHWH and against his Mashiach.

³"Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."

⁴The One enthroned in heaven laughs; Adonai scoffs at them. ⁵Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, ⁶"I have installed my King on Tziyon, my set-apart hill."

⁷I will proclaim the *choq* (coronation-decree) of YHWH: He said to me, "You are **my son**; today I have become your Father." ⁸Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. ⁹You will rule them with an iron sceptre; you will dash them to pieces like pottery..."

One of the titles, then, of *Melekh ha-Mashiach*—the Anointed King—is “ben-Elohim”—“son of the Most High”—a synonym for “king of Yisra'el.” On the day of the coronation of the king, the Father : Son relationship is established; the king of Israel is shown to all the world as *ben-Elohim*.

Go'el and Go'el ha-dam: Kinsman-Redeemer and Avenging Kinsman-Redeemer

The article *GO'EL* from the 1903 edition of the Jewish Encyclopedia states:

Next of kin, and, hence, redeemer. Owing to the solidarity of the family and the clan in ancient Israel, any duty which a man could not perform by himself had to be taken up by his next of kin. Any rights possessed by a man which lapsed through his inability to perform the duties attached to such rights, could be and should be resumed by the next of kin. This applied especially to parcels of land which any Israelite found it necessary to sell. This his *go'el*, or kinsman, had to redeem (Leviticus 25:25). From the leading case of Yirmeyahu's purchase of

his cousin Hananeel's property in Anathoth (Yirmeyahu 32:8-12) it would appear that in later Israel at any rate this injunction was taken to mean that a kinsman had the right of pre-emption. Similarly, in the Book of Ruth the next of kin was called up to purchase a parcel of land formerly belonging to Elimelech (Ruth 4:3). It would appear from the same example that another duty of the *go'el* was to raise offspring for his kinsman if he happened to die without any (Ruth 4:5). This would seem to be an extension of the principle of levirate marriage; hence the procedure of *halizah* was gone through in the case of Naomi's *go'el*, just as if he had been her brother-in-law. The relative nearness of kin is not very definitely determined in the Old Testament. The brother appears to be the nearest of all, after whom comes the uncle or uncle's son (Leviticus 25:49).

Another duty of the *go'el* was to redeem his kinsman from slavery if sold to a stranger or sojourner (Leviticus 25:47-55). In both cases much depended upon the nearness or remoteness of the year of Yovel (Jubilee), which would automatically release either the land or the person of the kinsman from subjection to another.

As the *go'el* had his duties, so he had his privileges and compensation. If an injured man had claim to damages and died before they were paid to him, his *go'el* would have the right to them (Leviticus 6:1-7). The whole conception of the *go'el* was based on the solidarity of the interests of the tribe and the nation with those of Elohim, and accordingly the notion of the *go'el* became spiritualised as applied to the relations between Elohim and Israel. Elohim was regarded as the *go'el* of Israel, and as having redeemed him from the bondage of Egypt (Exodus 6:6, 15:13). This conception is especially emphasised in Yeshayahu 40-66.

However, the chief of the *go'el* duties toward his kinsman was that of **avenging** him if he should happen to be slain by someone outside the clan or tribe. Indeed, it is the only expedient method by which any check could be put upon the tendency to do injury to strangers. Here again to the family of the murderer, and the death of one member of a family would generally result in a vendetta. It would appear that this custom was usual in early Israel, for the crimes of a man were visited upon his family (Yehoshua 7:24; II Kings 9:26); but at a very early stage the Jewish code made an advance upon most Semitic codes, including that of Hammurabi, by distinguishing between homicide and murder (Exodus 21:13-14). It was in order to determine whether a case of manslaughter was accidental or deliberate that the cities of refuge were instituted (Deuteronomy 19; Numbers 35). In a case where the elders of the city of refuge were satisfied that the homicide was intentional, the murderer was handed over to the blood-avenger ("*go'el ha-dam*") to take vengeance on him. Even if it was decided that it was a case of unintentional homicide, the man who committed the deed had to keep within the bounds of the city of refuge till the death of the high priest, as the *go'el* could kill the one who committed the homicide with impunity, if he found him trespassing beyond the bounds (Numbers 35:26-27).

In the legislations [of other nations] the principle of commuting the penalty by paying an amount of money as a fine, grew...[the amount of money that had to be paid] varied according to the rank of the person. Such a method [of paying

a fine] was distinctly prohibited in the Israelite code (Numbers 35:31). It would appear that the custom of the **blood-avenger** still existed in the time of David, as the woman of Tekoah refers to it in her appeal to the king (II Samuel 14:11)...

The Messiah is not only the redeemer who pays the price that we can not pay, to restore us into covenant and blessing; He is also the **Go'el ha-dam**, the **blood-avenger**, coming to save the faithful remnant and take vengeance on his enemies:

Yeshayahu 26:20-27:1 (NIV)

²⁰Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by.

²¹See, YHWH is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the earth for their sins. **The earth will disclose the blood shed upon her**; she will conceal her slain no longer.

^{27:1}In that day¹, YHWH will **punish** with his sword, his fierce, great and powerful sword, Liv'yatan the gliding serpent, Liv'yatan the coiling serpent; He will slay the *tannin* of the sea.

Yeshayahu 63:1-6 (NIV)

¹Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained **crimson**? Who is this, robed in splendour, striding forward in the greatness of his strength? "It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save."

²Why are your garments **red**, like those of one treading the winepress?

³"I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no-one was with me. I trampled them in my **anger** and trod them down in my **wrath**; their **blood** spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing.

⁴For the day of **vengeance** was in my heart, and the year of my **redemption** has come.

⁵I looked, but there was no-one to help, I was appalled that no-one gave support; so my own **arm** worked salvation for me, and my own **wrath** sustained me.

⁶**I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."**

Devarim 32:43

Rejoice, O nations, with His people, for he will **avenge the blood** of His servants; He will take vengeance on His enemies and make atonement for His land and people.

Tehillim 79:10

Why should the nations say, "Where is their Elohim?" Before our eyes, make known among the nations that you **avenge the outpoured blood** of your servants.

¹ Some modern translations render this as "on that day." *Yom YHWH* is a 1000 year day, and not a single 24-hour day.

Revelation 6:10

They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Adonai YHWH, *qadosh* and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and **avenge our blood?**”

The Seed of the Woman

In Genesis 3:15 we find the promise of a Redeemer for mankind given to Adam and Chawwah after their temptation and fall into sin. After the sin of Adam and Chawwah we read that YHWH placed a curse on *nachash* and promised that the “seed of the woman” would ultimately bruise the head of *nachash* (i.e. Satan).

Genesis 3:14-15

So YHWH Elohim said to the *nachash*: 'Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

In this passage we see the beginning of the battle between good and evil on planet earth, between the seed of the woman and Satan's seed, culminating in the ultimate conflict between the Messiah and Satan. The ancient rabbis clearly understood that this battle was between the Messiah, the seed of the woman, and the usurper, Satan. In the ancient commentary on Genesis 3:15, the Targum Yerushalayim states (*The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation; The Messianic Exegesis of the Targum*, Samson H. Levy (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion, 1974), p. 2.):

And it shall be that when the sons of the woman study the *Torah* diligently and obey it's injunctions, they will direct themselves to smite you (*nachash*; Satan) on the head and slay you; but when the sons of the woman forsake the commandments of the *Torah* and do not obey it's injunctions, you will direct yourself to bite them on the heel and afflict them. However, there will be a remedy for the sons of the woman, but for you, *nachash*, there will be no remedy. They shall make peace with one another in the end, in the very end of days, in the days of the King Messiah.

In this Targum we see that the prophecy in Genesis 3:15 was believed to be a reference to the Messiah and his people who diligently follow the *Torah*. According to this passage it would be the Messiah who would provide the “remedy” for mankind. That is, he was to provide the remedy for man's sin. He would reconcile man back to his Creator. YHWH's plan of restoration involves the redemptive work of the Messiah. In the Talmud and other ancient rabbinical literature, the Messiah is referred to as “*The Holy One of Israel*,” “*The Redeemer of Israel*,” “*The Righteous One*” and by many other exalted titles. In these references of the Messiah there is the emphasis on his character (being pure from sin), and on the work of redemption that would be accomplished through his life. As we look further at the mission and work of the Messiah it will become apparent that his major mission, his major accomplishment was to be the reconciliation of mankind back to his Creator.

The Yoted

The Messianic prophecy in Genesis 3:15 states that the Messiah would crush the head of *nachash*. There are several foreshadowing prophetic pictures of this in Scripture. In Shofetim (Judges) 4 and 5 we read the account of how Devorah and Baraq defeated Sisera and his armed forces. Sisera is a picture of the False messiah and Satan. The name Devorah means bee (a bringer of sweetness) and is closely related to the term *devar*—word. Devorah also means congregation. The woman Devorah was married to Lappidoth—“the Torch.” In other words, the Congregation who is married to the Man who is the Torch—the Light of the World—will overcome the enemy. Baraq means lightning. From Chavaquq 3:3-4 and Mattatياهو 24:27 we know that the *Kavod* of YHWH will radiate throughout the heavens like lightning that flashes from the east to the west when King Messiah comes in the *kavod* of HaShem. It follows that both Devorah and Baraq are foreshadowing, instructive Torah-pictures of the Messiah and his people. The Messiah's work involves the defeated of the satan, the crushing of satan's seed—the resha'im and, specifically, the False messiah.

Ya'el, the woman who killed Sisera after Baraq had defeated his armed forces, used a *yoted*—a tent peg—to crush his head:

Shovetim (Judges) 4:21-22 (NIV)

But Ya'el, Heber's wife, picked up a tent peg [*yoted*] and a hammer and went quietly to Sisera while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg [*yoted*] through his temple into the ground, and he died.

Baraq came by in pursuit of Sisera, and Ya'el went out to meet him. “Come,” she said, “I will show you the man you're looking for.” So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera with the tent peg [*yoted*] through his temple—dead.

This is repeated in

Shovetim 5:26

Her hand reached for the tent peg [*yoted*], her right hand [*yad*] for the workman's hammer. She struck Sisera, she **crushed his head**, she shattered and pierced his temple.

When we investigate the use of the word *yoted* in Scripture, it becomes clear that it is a very significant term. It was used in the construction of the *Mishkan* (tabernacle):

Exodus 27:19

All the other articles used in the service of the tabernacle, whatever their function, including all the tent pegs [*yoted*] for it and those for the courtyard, are to be of bronze.

Exodus 38:20

All the tent pegs [*yoted*] of the tabernacle and of the surrounding courtyard were bronze.

In the *HaQodesh* (Set-apart Place) of the *Mishkan* (tabernacle), five vertical wooden posts were used. The central post was called the *yoted*. Pegs, (*yotedim*) were also driven into this central post of the *HaQodesh* of the *Mishkan*, and the specific *kellim*

(vessels and jars used in the *avodot* (services of YHWH)) were hung on the smaller *yotedim* which were in turn driven into the large *yoted*.

In Yeshayahu 22:15-24, judgement is pronounced over an evil man who is a picture of Satan and the False messiah. A promise is given that authority and esteem, and the keys to the house of David, will be given to a righteous man, who is evidently a *tafnit* of the Messiah:

Yeshayahu 22:15-24 (NIV)

¹⁵This is what *Adonai YHWH Tzva'ot*, says: "Go, say to this steward, to Shevna who is in charge of the palace:

¹⁶'What are you doing here and who gave you permission to cut out a grave for yourself here, hewing your grave on the height and chiselling your resting place in the rock?'

¹⁷"Beware, YHWH is about to take firm hold of you and hurl you away, O you mighty man.

¹⁸He will roll you up tightly like a ball and throw you into a large country. There you will die and there your splendid chariots will remain—you disgrace to your master's house!

¹⁹I will depose you from your office, and you will be ousted from your position.

²⁰"**In that day** I will summon my servant, Eliakim son of Hilkiyah.

²¹I will clothe him with your robe and fasten your sash around him and hand your authority over to him. He will be a father to those who live in Yerushalayim and to the house of Yahudah.

²²**I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no-one can shut, and what he shuts no-one can open².**

²³**I will drive him like a peg [*yoted*] into a firm place;** he will be a seat of honour for the house of his father.

²⁴**All the esteem of his family will hang on him:** its offspring and offshoots—all its lesser vessels [*kellim*], from the bowls to all the jars.

Note the use of the telltale expression "In that day" in verse 20. This expression makes it clear that this prophecy will have an eschatological fulfilment in the Day of YHWH. The prophecy is directed at Shevna—a name which means: to grow vigorously, like a weed. It is clear that Shevna is a picture of evil leaders such as the False messiah and the False Prophet, while the righteous man to whom the authority and esteem and the keys to the house of David will be given, who is metaphorically called the central post of the Tabernacle, is a prophetic picture of the Messiah—see Revelation #.

The *yoted* also figures prominently in

Yeshayahu 33:20

²⁰Look upon Tziyon, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Yerushalayim, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes [*yotedim*] will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.

²This is a key to understanding Mattatياهو 16:19 and Revelation 3:7 in the Ketuvim of the Netzarim.

and in

Yeshayahu 54:2

²“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes [*yoted*].

as well as in

Z'kharyah 10:4

⁴From Yahudah will come the **cornerstone**, from him the **central post** (*yoted*), from him the battle-bow, from him every **ruler**.

It is clear that the *yoted*, who crushed the head of the enemy, is a prophetic picture of the Messiah, who will crush the head of *nachash* (Satan) and the seed of *nachash*—specifically Armilus, the False messiah of the *acharit-yamim*.

The *Tzemach*

Yeshayahu 4:2

In that day the ***Tzemach*** (Branch) of YHWH will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and esteem of the survivors in Israel.

Yirmeyahu 23:5

Behold, the days come, saith YHWH, that I will raise unto David a righteous ***Tzemach*** (Branch), and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute *mishpat* and *tzadeqah* (judgment and justice) in the earth.

Yirmeyahu 33:15

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the ***Tzemach*** Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute *mishpat* (right-ruling; judgment) and *tzadeqah* (righteousness) in the land.

Z'kharyah 3:8-10

⁸Listen, O high priest **Yehoshua** and your associates seated before you, who are **men symbolic of things to come**: I am going to bring forth **my servant, the *Tzemach*** (Branch).

⁹See, the stone I have set in front of Yehoshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,' says YHWH Tzva'ot, 'and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.

¹⁰In that day each of you will invite his neighbour to sit under his vine and fig-tree,' declares YHWH Tzva'ot."

Zekharyahu 6:9-13

⁹And the word of YHWH came unto me, saying,

¹⁰ Take of [them of] the captivity, [even] of Heldai, of Tobiyah, and of Jedaiyah, which are come from Bavel, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiyah the son of Zephaniyah;

¹¹Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set [them] upon the head of Yehoshua the son of Yehosedech, the high priest;

¹²And speak unto him, saying, Thus says YHWH Tzva'ot, saying, **Behold the man whose name is *Tzemach*** (the Branch); and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of THWH.

¹³He shall build the temple of YHWH; and he shall bear the esteem, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

The Artscroll *Rosh HaShanah Machzor* (1985: 32) states,

Zekharyah 6:12 teaches that the Messiah's name will be ***Tzemach***—literally, the sprouting or flourishing of a plant...the ultimate salvation of Israel is possible only through the Davidic Messiah.

The Qumran texts also document that the term *Tzemach* was anciently understood to be a Messianic title.

4QFlor (Florilegium, 4Q174) fragments 1-3, column I, v10ff: [2 Samuel 7:12-14 cited]

'YHWH declares to you that he will build you a house. I will raise up your seed after you and establish the throne of this kingdom for ever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me'...This refers to the ***tzemach*** (branch) of David who will arise with the Interpreter of the *Torah* who will rise up in Tziyon in the last days, as it is written [Amos 9:11] 'I will raise up the *sukkah* (hut) of David which has fallen'...This refers to the 'hut of David which has fallen' who will arise to save Israel..."

4Q252 fragment 1, column 5) [on Genesis 49:10]

A sovereign shall not be removed from the tribe of Yahudah. While Israel has the dominion, there will not lack someone who sits on the throne of David. For the staff is the covenant of royalty, the thousands of Israel are the feet. Until the **Messiah** of justice comes, the ***tzemach*** (branch) of David. For to him and to his descendants has been given the covenant of royalty over his people for all everlasting generations...

The sevenfold gifting of King Messiah

Yeshayahu 11:1-4 is understood messianically in Zohar 2:172b as well as in Talmud Bavli and Tractate Shabbat 93b.

The Messiah's actions will be in keeping with His nature and anointing, which is beautifully described in Yeshayahu 11—the great passage about the sevenfold anointing of the Mashiach:

Yeshayahu 11:1-5

¹A *choter* (shoot) will come up from the stump of Yishai; from his roots a *netzer* (branch) will bear fruit.

²The Ruach (Spirit; breath; anointing; power) of YHWH will rest on him—

- (1) the ruach of *chokhmah* (wisdom)
- (2) and of *binah* (understanding),
- (3) the ruach of *etzah* (counsel)
- (4) and of *giburah* (power; might),
- (5) the ruach of *da'at* (knowledge)
- (6) and of the *yirat* (fear of) YHWH, ³and he will delight in the *yirat* YHWH.
- (7) He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴but with *tzedekah* (righteousness) he will judge the needy, with *mishpat* (right-ruling; 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 *ha-rasha* (the *wicked one*.)

In Hebrew, the last word in the above citation, *wicked*, is a *singular* noun, and should be translated “wicked one.” It was anciently understood to be a term for the eschatological False messiah, *Armilus*, the ruler of the revived Roman Empire of the end-of-days, who will reject the yoke of the *Torah*. Targum Yonathan as well as 2 Thessalonians 2 testifies that this was the ancient understanding of the sages of Yisra'el.

Metatron

Jewish tradition teaches that Metatron is the name of the *malakh* (messenger, “angel”) spoken of in Exodus 23:21, where YHWH states: “My name is in him,” so that Metatron bears the Tetragrammaton, “YHWH” (Jewish Encyclopedia, 1912, Vol. 8, p. 519). Even though he bears the ineffable Name, the rabbis stated (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin 38b) that Metatron may not be worshiped — they taught that YHWH commanded, “Exchange Me not for him.” The sages taught that Metatron is the prince of the world, a teacher of the *Torah* and a power in heaven. The *Zohar* (a mystical cabalistic work) states that Metatron is the “Son of Man” who is only slightly lower than YHWH (after Psalm 8:6). Some rabbis also identified Metatron as the *Malakh ha-Panim* or “Messenger of the Presence,” spoken of in Yeshayahu 63:9. The term “metatron” means “guide.” In rabbinic tradition then, Metatron is the unique *malakh* (messenger) of the Presence, who bears the Tetragrammaton, YHWH, and guided the Children of Yisra'el through the wilderness to the promised land. In the pseudepigraphic book of *Enoch*, Metatron is called the “most excellent of the heavenly host” and “the guide to all the treasures of my Elohim.” In some rabbinic works, he is called “Metatron Messiah” i.e. the “Anointed Metatron.” A specific ancient prayer said on *Yom Kippur* by ancient Messianic Jewish believers is directed to the Almighty, “*ad-iad Yeshu Metatron*” — through Yeshua Metatron.

Hebrew commentaries on Yeshayahu 63:9, where the *Malakh* YHWH is called the *Malakh ha-Panim* — the Messenger of the Face / Presence — say that the title “*malakh ha-panim*” means “Prince of the Countenance” (*Sar ha-Panim*).

The Jewish prayer book (Siddur haShalem) contains a remarkable prayer which speaks of the Prince of the Countenance. This prayer is said on *Yom Teruah* when the shofar is sounded:

May it be thy will that the blast from this shofar should carry to the tabernacle of Elohim...through Yeshua the Prince of the Countenance and the Prince Metatron, and may your favour be our part. Be thou blessed, Master of favour.

In Bereshith 32:29-30, Ya'aqov wrestled with a certain “man” from whom he asked a blessing. Ya'aqov named the place Peni'el, meaning “face of El.” The Midrash Rabbah comments on this, saying that Ya'aqov “saw the face of El in the *Shekhinah*.”

It is important to keep in mind that aggadic rabbinic teachings about Metatron are often of a characteristic playful, speculative nature.

Melekh ha-Mashiach suddenly comes to His Miqdash

Radak (Rabbi Dawid Kimchi) says of Malakhi 3:1, “He who will suddenly come to His Miqdash” is the King Messiah, and He is Adonai-b^erit (My Master of the Covenant).

The Renewed Covenant

YHWH promised a renewed covenant with the House of Israel and Yahudah by mouth of the prophet Yirmeyahu:

Yirmeyahu 31:31-34

“Behold, the days are coming,” declares YHWH, “when I will make a *B'rit Chadashah* (renewed covenant) with the house of **Israel** and with the house of **Yahudah**. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Mitzrayim, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares YHWH.

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares YHWH:

❶ **“I will put my *Torah* in their minds and write it on their hearts.**

❷ I will be their Elohim, and they will be my people (*ammi*).

❸ No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know YHWH,' because **they will all know me**, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares YHWH.

❹ **“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”**

The *Torah* (instruction, teaching) of YHWH is perfect and will endure. The terms of the Covenant given to them through Mosheh, is that Israel is the *am qadosh* (set-apart people) of YHWH, who should observe *Torah* faithfully. Blessings for obeying the *Torah*, and curses for disobeying it, was given (cf. Devarim 28). At that time, however, man was just an empty shell of the image of Elohim, so that *Torah* was to him an *external checklist*. Man, with his fallen nature, had to study *Torah*, watch his step, live

up to its standards, and endure punishment as a nation and individual whenever *Torah* was transgressed without repentance. Fallen man, largely emptied of the Ruach (Breath; Spirit; Power; anointing) of YHWH and consequent ignorance and evil inclination, was at fault. The Renewed Covenant changes this *relation* between *Torah* and man, not by altering *Torah*, but by changing man. When the fullness of the redemption to the *Malkut Shamayim* (Kingdom of Elohim) is imparted to the *tzadeqim* with the coming of the Messiah, our natures will be radically changed. We will know as we are known. We will have *da'at* (knowledge), *chochmah* (wisdom) and *binah* (understanding). Satan will be bound and we will be sealed against the possibility of sin. In other words, the relationship, “*Torah* as learned external checklist” will be replaced with a new relationship: “*Torah-observance* as the human nature of the redeemed.”

This new relation between Israel and *Torah* which the New Covenant brings, is best explained by using the term BIOS. A computer's BIOS is its Basic Input-Output System, and controls its most fundamental level of operation. The New Covenant changes the relation “*Torah* as learned checklist” to “*Torah* as BIOS.” A crucial truth is that the fault lay with man's fallen nature, his emptiness and evil inclination, and not with the *Torah*. YHWH saw that there was no man who could keep *Torah*. He was appalled by the depth of our fallenness, our emptiness. So his own Arm (*Zeroah*) worked salvation (*yeshu'ah*) for Him, and his own righteousness (*tzadeqah*) sustained Him (Yeshayahu 59). Under the New Covenant, the *Torah* stands firm, while man's fallen nature is done away with, and knowledge and observance of *Torah* becomes regenerated, transformed man's new nature.

Note that the *B'rit Chadashah* is made with Beit Yisra'el and Beit Yahudah (the House of Israel and the House of Judah). Not with Gentile nations, but with Israel. So how can a Gentile have any part in the *B'rit Chadashah*? Only by being grafted into Israel, as the metaphor of the olive tree teaches us (Romans 11). Note that Romans 11 warns those Gentiles who boast against the branches that were cut off, that they themselves may be cut off too.

The mediating prophet like Mosheh

When Mosheh brought the people of Israel up to Mount Sinai like a bride to the bridegroom (Exodus 19), they were terrified of the display of the awesome power and majesty of YHWH, and implored Mosheh to be their mediator, to represent them before Elohim, to be their advocate and intercessor, and to speak the *Devar* of YHWH to them. In Devarim 5:24-28 we read (NIV):

²⁴And you said, “YHWH our Elohim has shown us his *kavod* and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a man can live even if Elohim speaks with him.

²⁵But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of YHWH our Elohim any longer.

²⁶For what mortal man has ever heard the voice of the living Elohim speaking out of fire, as we have, and survived?

²⁷Go near and listen to all that YHWH our Elohim says. Then tell us whatever YHWH our Elohim tells you. We will listen and obey.”

²⁸YHWH heard you when you spoke to me and YHWH said to me, “I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good.

This account is also given in Shemot 20:19 (NIV):

...and [the people of Israel] said to Mosheh, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have Elohim speak to us or we will die.”

In Devarim (Deuteronomy) 18:15-19, YHWH promises the people that another prophet like Mosheh will come forth from their nation — he would be one of their brothers, i.e. a Jewish man:

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 18:15-19 (NIV)

¹⁵YHWH your Elohim will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.

¹⁶For this is what you asked of YHWH your Elohim at Horev on the day of the assembly [*Yom Kahal*, i.e. the first *Shavuot*, on Sivan 6] when you said, “Let us not hear the voice of YHWH our Elohim nor see this great fire any more, or we will die.”

¹⁷YHWH said to me: “What they say is good.

¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

¹⁹If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account...”

This promise had prefigurative historical fulfillments in the person of Yehoshua (Mosheh's successor) and the later prophets. However, it ultimately pointed to the *Mashiach*. Every prophet of Israel was called a *mashiach* because he was empowered by the *Ruach* to speak forth the *Devar* of YHWH; every prophet of Israel prophesied about the *Mashiach*, and was a foreshadowing type of Him. Whoever hears the *devarim* (words) of this Prophet shall live, but whoever rejects his words, shall die. Here the *Torah* clearly establishes that man needs a mediator who is his advocate with YHWH, and that a Jewish man would one day come to Israel as the Prophet of whom Mosheh was a foreshadowing *tafnit* (picture or type). Mosheh, the First redeemer, is a picture of The Prophet, the Messiah, the Redeemer.

Qohelet Rabbah 1:9 links the Messiah to Mosheh and the king of Z'kharyah 9:9:

Qohelet Rabbah 1:9

Like the first *go'el* (redeemer), so is the last *go'el* (redeemer). Just as it is said of the first redeemer, “And Mosheh took his wife and sons and put them on a donkey” (Exodus 4:20), so it is said of the last *go'el* (redeemer), “Gentle and riding on a donkey” (Z'kharyah 9:9).

Scholars date the origin of this interpretation, attributed to Rabbi Yitzchaq, in the Late Second Temple Period (Yerushalayim Perspective, November 1987). Deuteronomy

18:15 is also understood messianically in *Midrash Tanhuma* (published by KTAV, 1989, pp. 166-167).

Name and Attributes of the Messiah

In *Lamentations Rabba*, Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said that the name of the Messiah is YHWH.

Lamentations Rabba 1:51

What is the name of King Messiah? Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said: YHWH is his name, for it is written, *I will raise for David a tzemach of righteousness ... In his days Y'hudah shall be saved... And this is the name whereby he shall be called: YHWH Tzidkenu (YHWH our Righteousness) (Yirmeyahu 23:5-6).*...”

Viewed superficially, this looks like a statement that the Messiah *is* YHWH. That this was neither the aim nor the understanding of the sages, is clear from the following quotation from the Talmud:

Babylonian Talmud, Order Nashim, Tractate Baba Bathra 75b:

Rabbi Sh'muel bar Nahmani said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: “Three are called by the name of HaQadosh, baruch hu (the Set-Apart One, blessed be He), and they are: the righteous, the Messiah and Yerushalayim.”

This statement by the sages is based on (*inter alia*) Yirmeyahu 23:5-6 and 33:15-16.

In a 1st century C.E. Rabbinic work, *The Apocalypse of Avraham*, the ancient understanding that the messiah will have all the attributes of the Almighty, is stated (quoted in Patai, (1979: 96)):

Then I will sound the *shofar* from the sky, and will send my Elect One [i.e. the Messiah], having in him all my power, and one *midah* (measure) of **all my middot** (measures, i.e. attributes), and he shall summon my despised people from the nations, and I will burn with fire those who have insulted them and who have ruled over them in the *Olam HaZeh* (the present Age).

And I will give those who have covered them with mockery to the scorn of the *Athid Lavo* (the coming Age; literally: “the future to come”); and I have prepared them to be food for the fire of *Gey Hinnom*...

The Son of Man

In late Second Temple period Judaism, the title *Son of Man* was a well recognised title for the **Messiah**.

Let us study some references to the *Son of Man* from 1 Chanoch (Enoch), an apocalyptic work dating from before the Common Era. It presents us with a valuable window on the concepts, understandings and expectations about the Messiah held in *Yisra'el*, 2000 years ago.

1 Enoch 46:1ff

At that place, I saw the One to whom belongs the time before time³.
And his head was white like wool,
and there was with him another one,
whose face was like that of a human being.
His countenance was full of grace
like that of one among the set-apart messengers [angels].

And I asked the messenger [angel] who went with me and showed me all the hidden things about that **Son of Man**:

Who is he and whence is he, and why did he go with the Head of Days?

And he answered and said to me:

This is the **Son of Man** who has righteousness,
With whom righteousness dwells,
And who reveals all the treasures of the crowns,
For the Master of the Spirits has chosen him...

...this **Son of Man** whom you have seen
is the One who would remove the kings
and the mighty ones from their comfortable seats
and the strong ones from their thrones...

1 Enoch 48:2-6

At that hour, that **Son of Man** was given a name,
in the presence of the Master of the Spirits, the Before-time;
even before the creation of the sun and the moon,
before the creation of the stars,
he was given a name in the presence of the Master of the Spirits.

He [the **Son of Man**] will become a staff for the righteous ones
whereon to lean, to stand and not to fall⁴,
He is the light of the gentiles⁵
and he will become the hope of those who are the troubled of heart.

All those who dwell upon the earth shall bow
and bend the knee before him in reverence⁶;
they shall esteem, bless, and sing the Name of the Master of the Spirits.

For this purpose he became the Chosen One;
he was concealed in the presence of the Master of the Spirits
prior to the creation of the world, and for eternity.

And he has revealed the wisdom of the Master of the Spirits
to the righteous and set-apart ones,
for he has preserved the portion of the righteous
because they have hated and despised this world of oppression

³ Called "Ancient of Days" in Dani'el 7.

⁴ Yeshayahu 42:3a.

⁵ Yeshayahu 49:6.

⁶ Yeshayahu 45:23.

[together with] all its ways of life and its habits
and it is his good pleasure that they have life.

...For they (the wicked kings and potentates) have denied
the Master of the Spirits and His **Messiah**.

1 Enoch 51:3

...the Elect One will sit on the throne...

1 Enoch 52:4

And he said to me, 'All these things which you have seen happen by the
authority of His **Messiah** so that he may give orders and be praised upon the
earth.'

1 Enoch 62:5-9

...and birthpains shall seize them when they see that **Son of Man** sitting on the
throne of his *kavod* (esteem)...

From the beginning the **Son of Man** was hidden,
And the Most High has preserved him in the presence of his power;
Then He revealed him to the set-apart and elect ones.

And the congregation of the elect and the set-apart shall be sown,
And all the elect shall stand before him **in thát day [baYom ha-hu]**.
And all the kings and the mighty and the exalted and the rulers of the earth
Shall fall down before him on their faces,
and acclaim and pay homage to
and set their hope upon the **Son of Man**,
and petition him and ask for mercy at his hands.

1 Enoch 62:14

The Master of the Spirits will abide over them;
they shall eat and rest and rise with that **Son of Man** forever and ever...

1 Enoch 69:29

Thenceforth nothing that is corruptible shall be found;
for that **Son of Man** has appeared
and has seated himself upon the throne of his *kavod*;
and all evil shall disappear from before his face;
he shall go and tell to that **Son of Man**,
and he shall be strong before the Master of the Spirits.

1 Enoch 105:2

Until I [the Ancient of Days of verse 1] and **my Son** are united with them forever
in the upright paths in their lifetime...

If we read these passages alongside Dani'el 7:13-14, these quotations from 1 Enoch
show that the ancient understanding of the term *Son of Man* included the following
important elements:

- In 1 Enoch, the **Messiah** is called the *ben-Adam* (**Son of Man**). He is depicted as a pre-existent heavenly being who is resplendent and majestic, has a divine nature, has been given all dominion, and sits on his throne of esteem passing judgement upon all human and spiritual beings. He has the bodily appearance of a human being and the *kavod* (radiance; esteem) like that of the set-apart messengers (“holy angels”);
- Righteousness dwells with the **Son of Man**;
- The **Son of Man** shall be a staff for the righteous, on which to lean, to stand and not to fall; He shall be a light for all the nations, and hope for the troubled of heart.
- The **Son of Man** is the chosen Covenant Partner of the Almighty who will rule for Him;
- The **Son of Man** was hidden in heaven and then revealed to mankind in *Yom YHWH* (the Day of YHWH). At his revelation, the wicked will be in birthpain-like agony, while the set-apart and elect will rejoice.
- The **Son of Man** pre-existed with the Almighty from before creation.
- The task of the **Son of Man** is to sow the congregation of the elect and set-apart ones, to bring righteousness to the earth, to destroy evil.
- The **Son of Man** is the appointed judge of the world, with authority to pardon and condemn;
- The **Son of Man** is **King Messiah** who will judge and rule the world with righteousness.
- The **Son of Man** is the Son of Elohim—a coronation-title of the kings of Yisra'el, signifying Divine adoption.

Why has modern Judaism lost much of the ancient understanding of the *transcendence* of the **Messiah**? In the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, page 626 we read the answer:

The official teachings of the Pharisees, after the rise of Christianity, tried...to negate all that was superhuman in the popular conception of the **Messiah**.

In other words, the teachings on the non-transcendent messiah found in modern Rabbinic Judaism is a embittered reaction against Christianity, and differs radically from the Messianic expectations in Judaism 2000 years ago.

Midrash Numbers Rabbah also mentions identifies the Messiah with the ben-Adam of Dani'el 7.

Numbers Rabbah 13:14 [on Numbers 7:13]

...He offered the dish and the basin as symbols of the kings of the House of David who would in time to come spring from him and who would reign supreme on sea and on land, kings like Solomon and **King Messiah**...How do we know the same of the **King Messiah**? Because it is written 'He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River unto the ends of the earth'. How do we know that he will hold sway on land?

Because it is written, 'All kings shall prostrate themselves before him; all nations shall serve him' and it also says, 'Behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a **Son of Man**...and there was given unto him dominion...that all the peoples...should serve him', etc...since the nations brought gifts to Solomon and will in time to come bring similarly to the **King Messiah**...

(Midrash Rabbah — Numbers, Volume 2, translated by Judah J. Slotki (Freedman and Simon, general editors), Soncino: 1983; pages 526-529.)

In Tractate Sanhedrin 98a of the Talmud Bavli, the manner in which the Messiah will come, is said to depend on the condition of Yisra'el.

Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 98a

Rabbi Alexandrai said: Rabbi Jehoshua ben Levi contrasted Dani'el 7:13...and Z'kharyah 9:9...If the Israelites are deserving, he [**Messiah**] will come with the clouds of heaven; if they are not deserving, poor and riding on a donkey...

In the Talmud Yerushalmi, it is said that the dead will be resurrected when the Messiah comes:

Talmud Yerushalmi, Ketubot 12:3

...the dead will first come to life in the time of the **Messiah**

The Second Adam

In one of the most beautiful chapters in all of Scripture, we read about the coronation of the Son of Adam:

Dani'el 7:13

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a **bar enash**, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

Bar enash is the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew **ben Adam** — **Son of man**.

Baldwin (1978: 143) comments on Dani'el 7:13:

To this man — *bar enash, ben Adam, the Son of Adam, the **Son of Man*** — was given **dominion (cf. Genesis 1:26) and esteem and a kingdom**. This second allusion to Genesis 1:26 indicates an enlarged status for humanity, greater than what it received at first, in the person of the representative “man.” All peoples, nations and languages...will serve this man...the new ruler of the earth...

Joyce Baldwin correctly links the transfer of dominion and esteem to the *Ben-Adam*, to Genesis 1:26.

Genesis 1:26

Then Elohim said, “Let us make **man in our image, in our likeness**, and let them **rule** over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, **over all the earth**, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

There is an intimate relationship between Genesis 1:26 and Dani'el 7:13. After his creation in the fulness of the *tselem* (image) and *damuth* (likeness) of Elohim, a mandate to rule was given to Adam. He was to rule in a covenant of faithful obedience and stewardship to the Almighty. The first Adam, however, failed, and was diminished to the shell of the image of Elohim. He transgressed and his nature became a sin-nature. Although mankind retained the responsibility of stewardship and the privilege of rulership of the earth, our lives are not only marked by success and joy, but also by failure, agony, falling short, guilt, mortality, sickness and—finally—death. Unredeemed mankind is just a pithy *zekher* (remembrance) of Adam's original standing and state. In view of the solidarity of the human race, Adam's failure, and his being diminished, radically affects all of us. He is the corporate representative of unredeemed humanity. In Adam, we are all trapped inside a genealogical “pyramid of death.” The *ben-Adam* of Dani'el 7:13 is He who is all and more than the first Adam was supposed to be. He is a corporate personality, the representative One with whom the redeemed enter into legal and mystical union; they are *in Him*. He is the Redeemer and also represents the redeemed remnant of mankind, the new mankind. In Him, the redeemed are transferred from the darkness of the genealogical “pyramid of death,” to light and life, not by our merit, but the grace of the Father and the faithfulness of the Messianic Redeemer. In Dani'el 7 we see how the rulership is given to the Second Adam, now the representative head of the renewed mankind—who are collectively called the *qadishei Elyonin* (the set-apart ones of the Supreme One)—the set-apart ones of the Most High. (Note: Dani'el 7 falls inside the Aramaic portion of the book of Dani'el, and used the term *qaddishei Elyonin* for the set-apart ones of Elohim.) The *qadishei Elyonin* (the set-apart ones of the Supreme One) receive the kingdom and become the subjects of the new representative Man, the Second Adam, the Anointed King. Baldwin (1978: 150) states:

...the day is coming when the reigns of government will for ever be in the hands of a man worthy of the name: man as Elohim, at creation, intended him to be.

Theologians of a historical-critical persuasion, argue that the purpose of the book of Dani'el was to bolster the national hope of Israel during and after the time of Antiochus IV “Epiphanes,” so that the transfer of power to the *ben-Adam* is nothing more than a statement of a vague expectation that the humbled people of Israel will eventually triumph and receive the power. In the face of such assertions, Joyce Baldwin (1978: 150) reacts as follows:

Despite assertions to the contrary, this [the transfer of dominion and esteem to the *bar-Enash*] is not a reference to the expected transfer of power to the hitherto humbled people of Israel...

She continues by giving the responsible exegesis of the nature of the **Son of Man** (1978: 151):

...the one like a **son of man** [is] *representative* of the set-apart ones of the Most High. In [Dani'el 7] verse 13 he appears as an individual figure; the...priests [of Israel],...had a representative role [among other roles] (Exodus 19:6; cf. Exodus 28:1), so the idea of [corporate, representative personality] was familiar [in ancient Israel], and Jews of a later period thought of the **Son of Man** in Dani'el 7:13 as an individual figure.

Equally representative [as a corporate personality, i.e. one who represents many in himself] but closer to the context of Dani'el 7, is the figure of the king; implicit in that he is given a kingdom, though the One who bestows it is ultimately the king *par excellence*. Psalm 80, addressed to the Shepherd of Israel who is enthroned between the *keruvim*, is a prayer for the vine Israel, now ravaged by enemies. Hope is set upon...

^{14b} ...the vineyard your right hand has planted

¹⁵ And the ***tzemach*** [branch; son] You made strong for Yourself...

¹⁷ Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand⁷,
upon the **son of man**
You made strong for Yourself.

Baldwin concludes her analysis of the term *bar enash* in the words (1978: 154)

...thus in the Gospels, "**Son of Man**" implies majesty, as in Dani'el 7.

In other words, *Son of Adam* is a term for the eschatological Anointed King, the corporate representative of the redeemed, regenerated humanity—the Yisra'el of Elohim and the Gentile *tzadeqim* grafted into the covenant nation of Yisra'el. To Him will be given dominion and a kingdom and esteem; He is the *Zeroah* (Arm of) YHWH who will rule for Him:

Yeshayahu 40:10

Adonai YHWH comes in power and His *Zeroah* (Arm) will rule for Him.

He is the *Right Hand* of YHWH who has done valiantly; He is the Gate through which the *tzadeqim* (i.e. the righteous) will enter into the Kingdom:

Tehillim 118:15, 16, 20

¹⁵ Shouts of joy and victory resound in the tents of the righteous:
"YHWH's **right hand** has done mighty things!

¹⁶ YHWH's **right hand** is lifted high;
YHWH's **right hand** has done mighty things!"

²⁰ This is the **gate** of YHWH through which the righteous may enter.

Titles of the Messiah

The term *messiah* means "anointed, empowered one." The Messiah is sent forth by YHWH as the Anointed One who would accomplish the redemption of His covenant people.

Every king, prophet and high priest of Israel was called *a* messiah. The anointed prophets spoke the *Devar* (Word) of YHWH to his people, served as his instrument to work *nissim* (miracles) and interceded on behalf of the people. The high priest served YHWH in the services of the *Beit HaMiqdash* (Temple), representing the people before YHWH in services that taught that without the shedding of *blood*, there is no remission

⁷ That is, the place of honour and rulership — see Psalm 110:1.

of sins. The king of Yisra'el had to rule with justice, as good shepherds who applied the principles of YHWH's kingship on earth. The king was anointed as the one chosen by YHWH to represent His rulership in Israel and to bear witness to His esteem before the nations. These three offices were pictures of the *Messiah*, who is *the* Prophet, *the* High Priest and *the* King. In Messiah's early ministry, the emphasis is on the prophet who speaks the *Devar* and the high priest who actively interposed his own shed blood between YHWH and the sinner as a *kapparah* (atoning covering) for sins. At present, the emphasis in the work of the Messiah is on the role of the interceding High Priest. In His coming as reigning sovereign, the emphasis will be on His role as King. Yet He will always stand in all three these offices.

Some prophetic terms for the Messiah are summarised in Table 1. We leave it to the reader to extend the list and fill in additional references.

Table 1: Some prophetic titles of the Messiah

Prophetic Title	Reference
The Coming One	Malachi 3:1 & Z'kharyah 9:9
The Elect One	Yeshayahu 42:1
Adon	Tehillim 110:1
Son of Man	Dani'el 7:13
The Son	Tehillim 2
Immanu'el	Yeshayahu 7-8
The Branch (<i>Tzemach</i>)	Yirmeyahu 23:5b
The Banner (<i>Nes</i>)	Yeshayahu 11:10; 18:3
The Capstone	Tehillim 118:22
The Green Tree	Rabbinic title (Yechezq'el 20:47)
Seed of the Woman	Genesis 3:15
The <i>Alef</i> and the <i>Tav</i>	Z'kharyah 12:10; Genesis 1:1
The Man the Son of Peretz	Rabbinic title (Ruth 4:18)
Son of the Clouds	Rabbinic title (Dani'el 7:13)
The Messenger of YHWH	Genesis 22; Exodus 3; ...
The Messenger of the Presence	Yeshayahu 63:9
The Arm of YHWH	Yeshayahu 40-66
The <i>Yoted</i>	
The Shield (Magen)	Psalms 84:9; Yeshayahu 21:5b
The Lion of the tribe of Yahudah	Genesis 49; Revelation 4-5
The <i>Go'el</i> (Redeemer)	(many)
The <i>Eved</i> (Servant) of YHWH	Yeshayahu 42-53
The Rock	(many)
The Prophet	Devarim 18
The Good Shepherd	Genesis 49; Z'kharyah 11 & 13
The Teacher of Righteousness ⁸	Yo'el 2:23
The Sun of Righteousness ⁹	Genesis 1:14-18; Malachi 4:2
The Light of the World	Genesis 1:14-18; Yeshayahu 9:2
Shiloh	Genesis 49:10b
Shiloach	Yeshayahu 8:6
Wonderful Counsellor Mighty El Father of Time Prince of Peace	Yeshayahu 9:6

⁸ *Moreh Tzadakah.*

⁹ *Shemesh Tzadakah.*

In Table 2 we have listed some of the names that ancient Jewish sages ascribed to the Messiah.

Table 2:

Some names ascribed to King Messiah in ancient rabbinic sources. (Lamentations Rabba, Midrash Mishle, S. Buber's note to Midrash Mishle, Targum to 1 Chronicles. Quoted in Patai (1979: 21-23, 81-83)).

Name of Messiah	Meaning of the name
YHWH	Personal Name of the Almighty
Yinnon	To continue forever
Tzemach	Shoot, Branch
Pele	Miracle
Yo'etz	Counsellor, advisor
Mashiach	The Anointed One
El	Mighty One before whom we tremble
Gibor	Mighty Hero
Avi'Ad Shalom	Everlasting Father of Peace
Tzidqenu	Our Justice/Righteousness
Menachem	Comforter
[My servant] David	(cf. Yechezq'el 34:23 & 37:24)
Shiloh	Him to whom the right belongs
Hanina	Favour
Nehira	Light
bar-Nifle	Son of the Clouds
Anani	He of the clouds
The Green Tree	Yechezq'el 20:45-49; Luke 23:31
ben-Adam	Son of Man
ben-David	Son of David
ben-Yosef	Son of Joseph
ben-Elohim	Son of Elohim
haNavi	The Prophet
haMoreh	The Teacher

We now look at a number of Messianic titles and important terms.

Magen

Shield. A term for the Messiah. Psalm 84:9 says,

“Behold, O Elohim, our Magen (Shield),
and look upon the face of your Mashiach.”

This verse is in the style of Hebrew parallelism—saying the same thing twice, in different words. Note that the parallelism links the *Magen* with the *Mashiach*. If we do *remez* with

Yeshayahu 21:5b

Arise you princes, anoint the magen...

at the interpretative level of the *sod* (deeper meaning), reading it in its context, we may read the text as an intimation that the princes (i.e. believers, who have all been made royalty by the covenantal love of the Father and the faithfulness of the Son) will be resurrected (“arise”) to witness the coronation of King Messiah (“anoint the magen”) shortly before the annihilation of eschatological Babylon in *Yom YHWH*. This annihilation will precipitate the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach*

Yirmeyahu 51:7

Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of YHWH, which made all the earth drunk. The nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations are insane.

catapulting the False messiah into office at an emergency summit meeting held in Europe (Revelation 17), where 10 extraordinary plenipotentiaries will hand over the reigns of government to Armilus.

Menachem

Comforter. The *Ruach HaQodesh* manifesting as comforter, as interceding advocate, of the individual and the covenant people. Greek: Parakletos. Also a title for the Messiah, the Comforter of Yisra'el.

Menuchah

Rest. The rest that the *tzadeqim* will enter into when King Messiah comes, of which we now have the firstfruits in our hearts.

Acharit yamim

The end of days. The days are pictured as an army marching past. The *reshith ha-yamim* is that part that has already passed, while the *acharit ha-yamim* is the portion of days that is still approaching. Events said to happen *ba'ha-acharit ha-yamim* (in the end of days) often had one or even more partial, prefigurative fulfillments in history, which serves as a *tavnit* or pattern that foreshadows events that will happen in *Yom YHWH*.

The other Hebrew term for eschatology is *'Iqqvot haMashiach*—Footsteps of the Messiah. Scriptural history is a carefully woven prophetic *tavnit* (pattern) that teaches — to those who have ears to hear — the Footsteps of the Messiah.

Qetz yamim

The end of days.

ad-et qetz = “until the time of the end.”

Ge'ulah shelemah

The complete redemption, in the *acharit-yamim*, to be established by Almighty YHWH by the hand of His Messiah. The eschatological messianic redemption.

Green Tree

One of the more difficult sayings of Yahushua is:

Luke 23:31

For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?

The Aramaic literally reads:

That if in a green tree they do these things, what will happen in the dry?

Not in Hebrew and Aramaic the “b-” preposition can mean “in” but idiomatically it can also mean “with” meaning “to” In this case the passage is best rendered:

That if with a green tree they do these things, what will happen with the dry?

In the Semitic the passage is a clear allusion to Yechezq'el 20:45-21:17, where the *green tree* is a metaphor for the *righteous* while the *dry tree* symbolises the *wicked*, who will be burned up when judgement falls.

In summary: Alluding to Yechezq'el 20:45-21:17, Yahushua uses a *kol v'khomer* statement to say:

If they do this with a righteous one,
What will happen to the wicked?

or:

If they do this with me,
What will happen to them?

Luke 23:26-31 and Yechezq'el 20:45-21:17 are parallel passages; Yahushua the Messiah is the Word become flesh, and the density of His references to the Word, i.e. the Hebrew Scriptures, is astounding. He did not speak His own words, but the words of His Father in Heaven. Almost every sentence that He spoke contains references to the *Tanakh* — the *referential density* of the dialogue is exceptionally high.

'Iqqvot haMashiach

“Footsteps of the Messiah.” A Hebrew term for the time of the coming of Mashiach. The term *'Iqqvot haMashiach* is derived from

Tehillim 89:50-51

Remember, Adonai, how your servant has been mocked, how I bear in my heart the taunts of all the nations, the taunts with which your enemies have mocked, O YHWH, with which they have mocked **the footsteps of your Mashiach.**

The suffering Servant: The Ancient Jewish Interpretation of Yeshayahu 52-53

In Yeshayahu 42-53 there are four magnificent prophetic songs about the Servant (Eved) of YHWH. The fourth prophetic song about the Eved (Servant) of YHWH forms the climax to the four Servant songs.

The fourth and climatic Servant Song, Yeshayahu 52:13 to 53:12, has been interpreted in Messianic terms by a wide variety of Jewish commentators over a long period of time. Though other interpretations have also been offered, the messianic interpretation has a long history in Rabbinic interpretation of Scripture, as the following references will show. This refutes the claim, often heard in modern Judaism, that these passages only deal with the nation of Israel, and not with the calling, the anointing, and the sufferings of the Messiah as well.

The present-day, non-messianic interpretation of Yeshayahu 52-53 is a relatively recent and forced, apologetic invention dating from the 14th century, when Jews suffered very cruelly at the hands of paganised European Christianity — “the religion of Edom.” The modern non-messianic interpretation of the *Eved* prophecy in Yeshayahu 52-53 also gained in popularity within the Reform Movement in Judaism, which started in Germany in the 17th century.

The view that Yeshayahu 52-53 deals with the messiah, and not with the servant nation Israel, was almost universal, until Rashi (Rabbi Solomon Yizchaki, 1040-1105) applied it to the Jewish nation. Rashi's view, although received by Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, and others, was rejected as unsatisfactory by many others, one of whom (R. Mosheh Kohen Ibn Crispin, of Cordova, and afterwards Toledo, fourteenth century, who says rightly, of those who for controversial reasons applied this prophecy to Israel, that “the doors of literal interpretation of this chapter were shut in their face, and that they wearied themselves to find the entrance, having forsaken the knowledge of our teachers, and inclined after the stubbornness of their own hearts and of their own opinions.” According to Ibn Crispin, the interpretation adopted by Rashi “distorts the passage from its natural meaning”, and that in truth “it was given of Elohim as a description of the Messiah, whereby, when any should claim to be the Messiah, to judge by the resemblance or non-resemblance to it whether he were the Messiah or not.” Rashi, at an earlier period of his life—when he wrote his Commentary on the Talmud—actually followed the older interpretation, which applied Yeshayahu 53 to the Messiah, but he very probably wrote his Commentary on the Tanakh (in which the new interpretation is first introduced) after the second Crusade, when the hideous massacres of Jews in Spire, Worms, Mainz, Cologne by the wild profligate swarm which gathered, after the first Crusaders were gone, might well have occasioned it.

Here follows important rabbinic commentaries on the *Servant* prophecy of Yeshayahu 52-53.

Quotation 1:

The ancient Aramaic paraphrase of the Prophets, *Targum Jonathan*, renders Yeshayahu 52:13 as:

Behold, My Servant the Messiah shall prosper.

Reference: *Targum Jonathan* to Yeshayahu 52:13, various editions (such as Samson H. Levey, *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation; the Messianic Exegesis of the Targum*. Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1974, p. 63).

The above shows that this entire prophecy was understood messianically at the time the Targum was written.

Quotation 2:

The Midrash Tanchuma states: “This is the King Messiah who is high and lifted up, and very exalted, more exalted than Avraham, elevated above Mosheh, higher than the ministering angels.”

Quotation 3:

There is a remarkable passage in the very old book *Pesikta*, cited in the treatise *Abkath Rokhel*, and reprinted in *Hulsii Theologia Judaica*, where this passage occurs, p. 309:

When Elohim created the world, He stretched out His hand under the throne of His kavod, and brought forth the being of the Messiah. He said to him: 'Will you heal and redeem My sons after 6000 years?' He answered him, 'I will.' Then Elohim said to him: 'Will you then also bear the punishment in order to blot out their sins, as it is written, “But he bore our diseases” (Yeshayahu 53:4). And the Messiah answered Him; 'I will joyfully bear them' (cf. Zohar, 2:212a).

Rabbi Moses Haddarshan states:

Immediately the Messiah, out of love, took upon himself all those plagues and sufferings, as it is written in Yeshayahu 53, 'He was abused and oppressed.' "

Quotation 4:

In the Rabboth, a commentary, Yeshayahu 53:5 is quoted, and referred to the sufferings of the Messiah. In the Midrash Tehillim, an allegorical commentary on the Psalms, printed at Venice in 1546, it is said at Psalms 2:7:

The things of King Messiah are announced in the prophets, e.g., in the passage Yeshayahu 52:13 and 42:1, in the Ketuvim, e.g., Ps 60 and Dani'el 7:13.

Quotation 5:

Rav Asher Soloff states that the life of Yosef, as well as Yeshayahu 53, was understood as alluding to the Messiah in the early cycle of synagogue readings:

We know that messianic homilies based on Yoseph's career (his saving role preceded by suffering), and using Yeshayahu 53 as the prophetic portion, were preached in certain old synagogues which used the triennial cycle...

Reference: Rav Asher Soloff, *The Fifty Third Chapter of Yeshayahu According to the Jewish Commentators, to the Sixteenth Century* (Ph.D. Thesis, Drew University, 1967), p. 146.

Quotation 6:

Jacob Mann concurs:

The addition of Yeshayahu 53.4-5 [to the cycle of synagogue readings] was evidently of a Messianic purport by reason of the theory of a suffering Messiah. The earlier part of [the Haftarah] (Yeshayahu 52.7ff.) dealt with the redemption of Israel, and in this connection the tribulations of the Messiah were briefly alluded to by the recital of the above two verses.

Reference: Jacob Mann, *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue* (New York: Ktav, 1971, © 1940), p. 298.

Quotation 7:

The Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin 98b, states:

The Rabbis said: His name [i.e. the name of the Messiah] is “the leper scholar,” as it is written, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him a leper, smitten of Elohim, and afflicted.” [Yeshayahu 53:4].

Reference: Soncino Talmud edition.

Quotation 8:

Ruth Rabbah 5:6 reads:

The fifth interpretation [of Ruth 2:14] makes it refer to the Messiah. Come hither: approach to royal state. And eat of the *bread* refers to the bread of royalty; and *dip thy morsel in the vinegar* refers to his sufferings, as it is said, “But he was wounded because of our transgressions” (Yeshayahu 53:5).

Reference: Soncino Midrash Rabbah (vol. 8, p. 64).

Quotation 9:

The Karaite, *Yefeth ben Ali* (10th century), states:

As to myself, I am inclined, with Benjamin of Nehawend, to regard it as alluding to the **Messiah**, and as opening with a description of his condition in exile, from the time of his birth to his accession to the throne: for the prophet begins by speaking of his being seated in a position of great honour, and then goes back to relate all that will happen to him during the captivity. He thus gives us to understand two things: In the first instance, that **the Messiah will only reach his highest degree of honour after long and severe trials**; and secondly, that these trials will be sent upon him as a kind of sign, so that, if he finds himself under the yoke of misfortunes whilst remaining pure in his actions, he may know that he is the desired one...

Reference: S. R. Driver & A. Neubauer (editors). 1969. *The Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah According to the Jewish Interpreters* (2 volumes; New York: Ktav), pp. 19-20. The English translations used here are taken from volume 2. The original texts are in volume 1. Cf. Soloff, pp. 107-09.

Quotation 10:

Another statement from Yefeth ben Ali:

By the words “**surely he hath carried our sicknesses,**” they mean that the **pains and sickness which he fell into were merited by them, but that he**

bore them instead...And here I think it necessary to pause for a few moments, in order to explain why **Elohim caused these sicknesses to attach themselves to the Messiah for the sake of Israel...**The nation deserved from Elohim greater punishment than that which actually came upon them, but not being strong enough to bear it...Elohim appoints his servant to carry their sins, and by doing so lighten their punishment in order that Israel might not be completely exterminated.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, pp. 23 ff.; Soloff pp. 108-109.

Quotation 11:

Yet another statement from *Yefeth ben Ali*:

“And Adonai laid on him the iniquity of us all.” The prophet does not...mean iniquity, but **punishment for iniquity**, as in the passage, “Be sure your sin will find you out” (Numbers 32:23).

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 26; Soloff p. 109.

Quotation 12:

Lekach Tov (an 11th century midrash):

“And let his [Israel's] kingdom be exalted,” in the days of **the Messiah**, of whom it is said, “**Behold my servant shall prosper; he will be high and exalted, and lofty exceedingly.**”

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 36.

Quotation 13:

Maimonides, Letter to Yemen (12th century):

What is to be **the manner of Messiah's advent**, and where will be the place of his appearance?...

And Yeshayahu speaks similarly of the time when he will appear...He came up as a sprout before him, and as a root out of the dry earth, etc. But the unique phenomenon attending his manifestation is, that all the kings of the earth will be thrown into terror at the fame of him—their kingdoms will be in consternation, and they themselves will be devising whether to oppose him with arms, or to adopt some different course, confessing, in fact, their inability to contend with him or ignore his presence, and so confounded at the wonders which they will see him work, that they will lay their hands upon their mouth; in the words of Yeshayahu, when describing the manner in which the kings will hearken to him, “**At him kings will shut their mouth; for that which had not been told them have they seen, and that which they had not heard they have perceived.**”

Reference: Driver and Neubauer vol. 1: p. 322. Also: Abraham S. Halkin, ed., *Igeret Teman* (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1952). See Soloff pp. 127-128.

Quotation 14:

Zohar 2:212a (a medieval Jewish mystical work):

There is in the Garden of Eden a palace named the Palace of the Sons of Sickness. This palace the **Messiah** enters, and He summons **every pain and every chastisement of Israel. All of these come and rest upon Him.** And **had He not thus lightened them upon Himself, there had been no man able to bear Israel's chastisements for the transgressions of the Torah; as it is written, "Surely our sicknesses he has carried."**

Reference: Cited in Driver and Neubauer, pp. 14-15 from section "va-yiqqahel". Translation from Frydland, Rachmiel, *What the Rabbis Know About the Messiah*, (Cincinnati: Messianic Literature Outreach, 1991), p. 56, n. 27. Note that this section is (deliberately) omitted, i.e. censored from the Soncino edition of the Talmud, to *hide* it from readers not fluent in Hebrew.

Quotation 15:

Nachmanides (Rabbi Mosheh ben Nachman, 13th century):

And **by his stripes we were healed**—because the stripes by which he is vexed and distressed will heal us; **Elohim will pardon us for his righteousness, and we shall be healed both from our own transgressions and from the iniquities of our fathers.**

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 78.

Quotation 16:

Yalkut ii: 571 (13th century):

The **King Messiah**...is greater than the patriarchs, as it is said, "**My servant shall be high, and lifted up, and lofty exceedingly**"—he will be higher than Abraham,...lifted up above Mosheh,...loftier than the ministering angels.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 9. The same passage is found in *Midrash Tanhuma to Genesis* (perhaps 9th century), edited by John T. Townsend (Hoboken, New Jersey: Ktav, 1989), p. 166.

Quotation 17:

Yalkut ii.620 (13th century), in regard to Psalm 2:6:

...I have drawn him out of the **chastisements**...The chastisements are divided into three parts: one for David and the fathers, one for our own generation, and one for the **King Messiah**; and this is that which is written, "**He was wounded for our transgressions,**" etc.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 10.

Quotation 18:

Bereisheet Rabbah 2:4

R. Shim'on ben Jaqish explained: 'And the spirit of Elohim hovered over the face of the water' (Gen1:2)—this is the spirit of King Messiah, as it is written, 'And the spirit of the YHWH will rest upon him.' (Yeshayahu 11:2).

Pes. Rab. ed. Friedmann, p.152b

You find that at the beginning of the creation of the world King Messiah was born.

Quotation 19:

Pes. Rab. 162a

When the Son of David comes they will bring iron beams and put them upon his neck until his body bends and he cries and weeps, and he says: 'How much can my strength suffer? How much my spirit and soul? And how much my limbs? Am I not but flesh and blood?'

Quotation 20:

Pes. Rab. ch. 36

"You have suffered because of the sins of our children, and cruel punishments have come upon you... you were put to ridicule and held in contempt by the nations of the world because of Israel... All this because of the sins of our children... great sufferings have come upon you on their account. And Elohim says to him, 'Be you the judge over these peoples, and do to them whatever your soul wishes... all of them will die from the breath of your lips.' "

Quotation 21:

Mid. Konen, BhM, 2:29

"Eliyahu... says to the Messiah: 'Endure the sufferings and the sentence of your Master who makes you suffer because of the sin of Israel.' And thus it is written: 'He was wounded because of our transgressions.' (Yeshayahu 53:5)— until the time of the end comes."

Professor Raphael Patai, *The Messiah Texts*:

When the death of the Messiah became an established tenet in Talmudic times, this was felt to be irreconcilable with the belief in the Messiah as the Redeemer who would usher in the blissful millennium of the Messianic age. The dilemma was solved by splitting the person of the Messiah in two.

The development of the two-Messiah doctrine also had to do with a messianic parallel to Moses, who died before entering the Promised Land.

Testament of Judah, 24

A man shall arise from my seed; like unto the sun of righteousness, walking with the sons of man in meekness, and no sin shall be found in him. And he shall pour upon you the spirit of grace, and you shall walk in his commandments... a rod of righteousness to the nations, to judge and save all that call upon YHWH.

Quotation 22:

Maimonides on Yeshayahu 53

Maimonides (writes to Jacob Alfajumi):

It is said about Him (the Messiah), 'And his delight will be in the fear of YHWH' (Yeshayahu 11:3). He grew up before him as a tender plant and as

a root out of a dry ground: he has no form nor comeliness: and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

And likewise said Yeshayahu that He (the Messiah) would appear without acknowledging a father or mother: 'He grew up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground etc.' He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Quotation 23:

Zohar (Part II, fol. 212a and Part III, fol. 218a, Amsterdam edition):

When Israel was in the Holy Land, they had their sufferings and afflictions removed from them by their prayers and sacrifices; but now the Messiah removes them from the children of the world. When the Holy One, blessed be He, wishes the recovery of the children of the world, He afflicts one righteous person from their midst, and for His sake all are healed. How is this known? It is written, 'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities... and by his stripes we are healed' (Yeshayahu 53:5).

Quotation 24:

About Yeshayahu 53:4-6, Midrash *Pesikta Rabbati* 36 (editor: M. Friedmann) states:

And the Holy One made an agreement with [the Messiah] and said to him, "The sins of those which are forgiven for your sake will cause you to be put under an iron yoke, and they will make you like this calf whose eyes are dim, and they will choke your spirit under the yoke, and on account of their sins your tongue shall cleave to your mouth. Are you willing to do this?"...

But [the Messiah] said to Him: "Sovereign of the world, with the gladness of my soul and the joy of my heart I take it upon me, on condition that not one of Israel shall perish and not only in my days, but also those who are hid in the dust; and not only should the dead of my own time be saved, but all the dead from the dead from the first man until now; also the unborn and those whom thou hast intended to create. Thus I agree, and on this condition I will take it upon myself."

Reference: *Pesikta Rabbati* (editor: M. Friedmann). This portion of the Midrash, called the *Haggadah*, was compiled in the 9th century and is based on writings from Talmudic times, i.e. 200 BCE – 400 CE.

Quotation 25:

Rabbi Mosheh Kohen ibn Crispin (14th century):

This Parashah [passage of Scripture] the commentators agree in explaining of the Captivity of Israel, although the singular number is used in it throughout...As there is no cause constraining us to do so, why should we here interpret the word collectively, and thereby distort the passage from its natural sense?...As then it seemed to me that the doors of the literal interpretation of the Parashah were shut in their face, and that "they wearied themselves to find the entrance," having forsaken the knowledge of our Teachers, and inclined after the "stubbornness of their own hearts," and of their own opinion, **I am pleased to interpret it, in accordance with the teaching of our Rabbis, [as**

pertaining to] **the King Messiah**, and will be careful, so far as I am able, to **adhere to the literal sense**.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, pp. 99-100.

Quotation 26:

Another comment from R. Mosheh Kohen ibn Crispin

If his soul makes itself into a trespass-offering, implying that his soul will treat itself as guilty, and so receive punishment for our trespasses and transgressions.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 112.

Quotation 27:

Rabbi Sh'lomoh Astruc (14th century):

My servant shall prosper, or be truly intelligent, because by intelligence man is really man—it is intelligence which makes a man what he is. And the prophet calls the King Messiah my servant, speaking as one who sent him. Or he may call the whole people my servant, as he says above my people (lii. 6): when he speaks of the people, the King Messiah is included in it; and when he speaks of the King Messiah, the people is comprehended with him. What he says then is, that **my servant the King Messiah will prosper**.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 129.

Quotation 28:

In his commentary on Yeshayahu 53:5, Rabbi Elijah de Vidas (16th century), wrote:

But he was wounded, etc....meaning that since the **Messiah bears our iniquities** which produce the effect of His being bruised, it follows that **whosoever will not admit that the Messiah thus suffers for our iniquities, must endure and suffer for them himself**.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 331.

Quotation 29:

Rabbi Mosheh Alshekh (El-Sheikh) of Sefad (16th century):

I may remark, then, that **our Rabbis with one voice accept and affirm the opinion that the prophet [Yeshayahu] is speaking of the King Messiah**, and we ourselves also adhere to the same view.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 258.

Quotation 30:

Concerning the suffering servant of Yeshayahu 42, 49, 50, 52, 53, Raphael Patai writes,

The Aggada, the Talmudic legend, unhesitatingly identifies him with the Messiah, and understands especially the descriptions of his sufferings as referring to Messiah ben Joseph.

Patai considers Daniel 9:24-27 messianic, including the death of the Messiah:

It is quite probable that the concept of the suffering Messiah, fully developed in the Talmud, the Midrash, and the Zohar, has its origin in the biblical prophecies about the suffering servant.

Patai also lists Yeshayahu 9:6-7, 11:1-12, Daniel 7:13-14, and Zech 9:9-10 as messianic passages.

Quotation 31:

Rabbi Mosheh Alschech, in *Hulsii Theologia Judaica*, pp. 321 ff., comments:

Upon the testimony of tradition, our old rabbis have unanimously admitted that king Messiah is here the subject of discourse. We, in harmony with them, conclude that king David, i.e., the Messiah, must be considered as the subject of this prophecy—a view which is indeed quite obvious.

Comparatively few Jews (i.e., those who didn't take the "servant-as-Israel" view) believed that the passage referred to a person other than the Messiah. The kabbalistic Jews still largely held to the messianic interpretation of the passage.

Quotation 32:

Herz Homberg (18th – 19th century):

The fact is, that it refers to the **King Messiah**, who will come in the latter days, when it will be Adonai's good pleasure to redeem Israel from among the different nations of the earth...**Whatever he underwent was in consequence of their own transgression, Adonai having chosen him to be a trespass-offering**, like the scapegoat which bore all the iniquities of the house of Israel.

Reference: Driver and Neubauer, p. 400-401.

Quotation 33:

Rabbi Naphtali Ben Asher (ca. 1650 YM) said,

I will not proceed to explain these verses of our own Messiah, who Elohim willing will come speedily in our days. I am surprised that Rashi (a famous Jewish commentator on Scripture) and Rabbi David Kimchi (Radak) have not, with the Targums (Talmudic commentaries), applied Yeshayahu 53 to the Messiah likewise.

Quotation 34:

The *Musaf* (additional) service for the Day of Atonement, *Philips Machzor*:

We are shrunk up in our misery even until now;
Our Rock has not come nigh to us;
Messiah our righteousness departed from us:
horror hath seized us,
and we have none to justify us.
**He hath borne the yoke of our iniquities,
and our transgression,
and is wounded because of our transgression.
He beareth our sins on his shoulder,**

that he may find pardon for our iniquities.

We shall be healed by his wound,
at the time that HaShem will create him [the Messiah] as a new creature.

O bring him up from the circle of the earth [i.e. heaven]!
Raise him up from Seir,
to assemble us the second time on Mount Lebanon,
by the hand of Yinnon!

Reference: A.T. Philips, *Machzor Leyom Kippur/Prayer Book for the Day of Atonement*, with English Translation; Revised and Enlarged Edition (New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1931), p. 239. The passage can also be found in, e.g., the 1937 edition of this Machzor as well as in Driver and Neubauer, p. 399.

The author, according to Zunz, was Eleazer ben Kalir, who lived in the ninth century. Yinnon, as will be seen, was one of the names given by the Rabbis to the Messiah, and is derived from Psalm 72:17, which the Talmud renders, “Before the sun was, his name. . .” a rendering and expression which implies a belief in the pre-existence of at least the name of the Messiah, and perhaps of the Messiah himself.

The other passage is also from the Machsor (Liturgy for the Festival Services), and will be found among the prayers on the Feast of Passover. It is as follows:

Flee, my beloved, until the end of the vision shall speak; hasten, and the shadows shall take their flight hence; high and exalted and lofty shall be the despised one; he shall be prudent in judgement, and shall sprinkle many! Lay bare thine arm! Cry out and say, “The voice of my beloved; behold he cometh!”

(David Levy, the English translator of the Machsor, says in a note that this verse referred to “the true Messiah”.)

Ben-Elohim: Son of the Most High

Son of Elohim, i.e. ben-Elohim, is a term in Royal Messianism. Every King of Israel was an *adopted* ben-Elohim. Coronation entailed *divine adoption* as *son* of the Most High. There was a unique filial relationship between the King of Yisra'el and YHWH. YHWH imparted his Ruach — his breath, his anointing power — to the King, to endow him with wisdom, understanding, power. In the ideal of kingship in ancient Israel, the empowerment with the Ruach of YHWH enabled the king to rule in the Fear of YHWH, with Mishpat — justice, perfect government, and in the triumph of victory.

The term ben-Elohim for King Messiah is found in many ancient Jewish texts. It expresses the theology of Royal Messianism. (In its original setting, this term has *nothing* to do with virgin birth doctrines, etc.)

Jewish Apocrypha

2 Esdras 7:26-30

For indeed the time will come...Everyone who has been delivered from the evils that I have foretold shall see my wonders. For **my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those who are with him...**

2 Esdras 12:31-34

...this is the **Messiah** whom the **Most High has kept until the end of days**, who will arise from the seed of **David**, and will come and speak with them. He will denounce them for their iniquity and for their wickedness, and will display before them their contemptuous dealings. For first he will bring them alive before his judgement seat, and when he has reproved them, then he will destroy them. But in mercy he will set free the remnant of my people, those who have been saved...

2 Esdras 13:3-32

“As I kept looking, the wind made something like the figure of a man come up ...And I saw that this **man flew with the clouds of heaven...**”

“This is the interpretation of the vision: As for your seeing a **man** come up...this is **he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages**, who will himself **deliver his creation...**”

“...When these things take place and the signs occur that I showed you before, then **my Son will be revealed**, whom you saw as a man coming up...”

2 Esdras 13:36-37

“But he shall stand on the top of Mount Tziyon. And Tziyon shall come and be made manifest to all people, prepared and built, as you saw the mountain carved out without hands. Then he, **my Son**, will reprove the assembled nations for their crookedness...”

2 Esdras 13:52

He said to me, “Just as no one can explore or know what is in the depths of the sea, so no one on earth can see **my Son** or those who are with him, except in the time of his day.”

2 Esdras 14:9

For you shall be taken up from among humankind, and henceforth you shall live with **my Son** and with those who are like you, until the times are ended.

The messianic figure in this book is described as of Davidic origin, pre-existent, the **Son of Man**, the Elect One, the son of the Almighty, and a second Mosheh.

Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls also testify that the **Messiah** was anciently called the *Son of the Most High*:

4Q Aramaic Apocalypse (4Q246), column II

He will be called the **Son of Elohim**, and they will call him the **son of the Most High**...His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom...The earth will be in truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease in the earth, and all the cities will pay him homage. He is a great mighty one among the mighty ones...His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom...

The Pierced One: Jewish Messianic Interpretations of Z'kharyah 12:10

In Z'kharyah 12:9-14 we read that the Israelites will look up to Him whom they have pierced and will bitterly grieve for Him, like one mourns at the death of a firstborn son:

Z'kharyah 12:9-14:

⁹In **thát day** [*ba'Yom ha-hu*] I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Yerushalayim.

¹⁰ “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim a spirit of grace and supplication. **They will look on Me, whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.**

¹¹In **thát day** [*ba'Yom ha-hu*] the weeping in Yerushalayim will be great, like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. ¹²The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves: the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan and their wives, ¹³the clan of the house of Levi and their wives, the clan of Shimei and their wives, ¹⁴and all the rest of the clans and their wives.

Babylonian Talmud, Sukkah 52a

And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart [Z'kharyah 12:12]...What is the cause of the mourning?

The rabbis differed on this point. One explained:

b. Sukkah 52

The cause is the slaying of **Mashiach ben-Yosef**—**Messiah** the son of Yoseph—it is well with him who explains that the cause is the slaying of **Messiah** the son of Yoseph, since that well agrees with the Scriptural verse, “And they shall look upon me because they have thrust him through, and they shall mourn for him as one mourns for his only son”...

Rashi, a well-known 11th century rabbi, commented as follows on Tractate Sukkah 52a of the Talmud (cited in A. M'Caul, *Rabbi David Kimchi's Commentary Upon the Prophecies of Z'kharyah*, (London: James Duncan, 1837), p. 161.):

The words, “The land shall mourn,” are found in the prophecy of Z'kharyah, and he prophesies of the future, that they shall mourn on account of **Messiah**, the son of Yosef, who shall be slain...

Mosheh Alshekh (16th century) interpreted Z'kharyah 12:10 as follows (cited in M'Caul (1837: 163):

I will do yet a third thing, and that is, that “they shall look unto me,” for they shall lift up their eyes unto me in perfect repentance, when they see him whom they pierced, that is **Messiah**, the son of Yosef; for our rabbis, of blessed memory, have said that he will take upon himself **all the guilt of Israel**, and shall then be slain...to make an atonement, in such a manner, that it shall be accounted as if Israel had pierced him, for on account of their sin he has died; and therefore, in order that it may be reckoned to them as a perfect atonement, they will repent, and look to the blessed One, saying that there is none beside Him to forgive those that mourn on account of him who died for their sin: this is the meaning of “They shall look upon me.”

Messiah in the Apocrypha

In the foregoing presentation, we have quoted many writings of ancient Jewish sages. These quotations prove that the ancient sages understood clearly that the **Messiah** would be a pre-existent heavenly being, sent forth by YHWH as a man — the transcendent Son of YHWH, the *Go'el* who bore the guilt of our transgressions in his substitutionary death to pay the price for our redemption.

In this section, we shall present more proofs of the knowledge about the Coming One that once existed widely within Judaism.

The *Psalms of Solomon* present a detailed portrait of the coming Davidic **Messiah**. He is called “their king, the Son of David,” “their king...the “King Messiah” (i.e. “Anointed Sovereign”) who would be “made powerful by Elohim in the *Ruach HaQodesh*”, would be the “king of Israel,” “the **Messiah** of Elohim who will reign.”

2 Baruch (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 30:1

And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance of the **Mashiach** (Anointed One) has been fulfilled and he returns with esteem, that then **all who sleep in hope of him will rise.**

2 Baruch(Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 39:7

And it will happen when the time of its fulfillment is approaching in which it will fall, that at that time **the dominion of my Mashiach** which is like the fountain and the vine, will be revealed...

2 Baruch (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 40:1f

And they will carry him [the last wicked king] onto Mount Tzion, and my **Messiah** will convict him of all his wicked deeds and will assemble and show him all the works of his armies. And after these things he [my **Messiah**] will kill him [the last wicked king] and protect the rest of my people who will be found in

the place that I have chosen. And his dominion will last forever until the world of corruption has ended and until the times which have been mentioned before have been fulfilled.

2 Baruch (Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 72:2

After the signs have come of which I have spoken to you before, when the nations are moved and the time of my **Messiah** comes, he will call all nations, and some of them he will spare, and others he will kill...

Testament of Levi 18:2ff

And then YHWH will raise up a new priest to whom all the words of YHWH will be revealed. He shall effect the judgement of truth over the earth for many days. And his star shall rise in heaven like a king...This one will shine forth like the sun in the earth...The heavens shall rejoice in his days and the earth shall be glad; the clouds will be filled with joy and the knowledge of YHWH will be poured out on the earth like the water of the seas...And the *kavod* (radiance; esteem) of the Most High shall burst forth upon him. And the spirit of understanding and setting-apart shall rest upon him...In his priesthood, sin will cease and...men shall find rest in him...And he shall open the gates of paradise...he will grant to the *tzadeqim* to eat of the tree of life...

The tradition of *two Messiahs* — Mashiach Ben David the king, and the priestly Messiah — show up in many places in the *Testaments* and in the *Qumran* documents.

Testament of Yahudah 24

“And after this there shall arise for you a Star from Ya'aqov in peace: And a man shall arise from my posterity like the Sun of Righteousness, walking with the sons of men in gentleness and righteousness, and in him will be found no sin. And the heavens will be opened upon him to pour out the spirit as a blessing of the Set-Apart Father. And he will pour the spirit of grace on you. And you shall be sons in truth, and you will walk in his first and final decrees. This is the *Choter* (Shoot)¹⁰ of Elohim Most High; this is fountain for the life of all humanity. Then he will illumine the sceptre of my kingdom, and from your root shall arise the Shoot, and through it will arise the rod of righteousness for the nations, to judge and to save all that call on YHWH.

This is a wonderful mosaic of eschatological expectations involving:

- Numbers 24:17
- Malakhi 4:2
- Psalm 45:4 (LXX)
- Yeshayahu 53:9
- Yeshayahu 11:2
- Yeshayahu 61:11
- Joel 3:1

and all the “branch” or “shoot” passages — Yeshayahu 11; Yirmeyahu 23:5; 33:15 and Z'kharyah 3:8; 6:12.

¹⁰ Yeshayahu 11:1.

Messiah in the Targumim (periphrastic translations)

Genesis 35:21 (Targum Pseudo-Yonathan)

And Ya'aqov moved on, and pitched his tent onward to Migdal Eder — the tower of Eder, the place whence the **King Messiah** is destined to reveal himself at the end of days.

Genesis 49:1 (Targum Pseudo-Yonathan)

As soon as the Time of the End when the **King Messiah** would arrive was revealed to him...

Genesis 49:1 (fragment)

For he was revealing to them all that was going to occur at the very end, the time of the **Messiah**.

Genesis 49:10-12 (Targum Onkelos)

The transmission of dominion shall not cease from the house of Yahudah, nor the scribe from his children's children, forever, until the **Messiah** comes, to whom the Kingdom belongs, and whom nations will obey.

Genesis 49:10-12 (Targum Pseudo-Yonathan)

Kings and rulers shall not cease from the house of Yahudah, nor scribes who teach the *Torah* from his seed, until the time when the **King Messiah** shall come, the youngest of his sons, and because of him nations shall melt away...How beautiful is the **King Messiah** who is destined to arise from the house of Yahudah...How beautiful are the eyes of **King Messiah**, as pure wine!

Numbers 11:26 (fragment)

At the end, the very end of days, Gog and Magog and their armies shall go up against Yerushalayim, but they shall fall by the hand of the **King Messiah**.

Numbers 24:17-24 (Targum Onkelos)

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but he is not near; when a king shall arise out of Ya'aqov and be anointed the **Messiah** out of Israel.

Numbers 24:17-24 (Targum Pseudo-Yonathan)

...but when a mighty king of the house of Ya'aqov shall reign, and shall be anointed **Messiah**, wielding the mighty sceptre of Israel...[the Gentile nations shall rise] to wage war against Israel, in the days of the **King Messiah**...but those nations shall fall by the hand of the **King Messiah**...

1 Samuel 2:7-10

He shall give strength to His king, and shall make great the kingdom of His **Messiah**.

1 Samuel 2:35

I will raise up before Me a trustworthy priest, who shall minister according to My word and My will, and I will establish for him an enduring reign and he shall serve my **Messiah** all the days.

2 Samuel 23:1-5

...Said David, the son of Yishai, said the man who was anointed to the Messianic Kingship by the Memra (Word) of the Elohim of Ya'aqov...Elohim spoke to me...and He decided to appoint for me a king, he is the **Messiah**, who is destined to arise and rule in the fear of YHWH...

Yeshayahu 4:1-6

At that time the **Messiah** of YHWH shall be a joy and an honour...

Yeshayahu 9:5-6

The Prophet announced to the house of David:
'A boychild has been born unto us,
a son has been given unto us,
who has taken the *Torah* upon himself to guard it;
and his name has been called by the One
who gives wonderful counsel,
the Mighty Elohim,
He who lives forever;
'**Messiah**', in whose day peace shall abound for us.

Yeshayahu 10:24-27

...and the nations shall be shattered before the **Messiah**.

Yeshayahu 11:1-16

And a king shall come forth from the sons of Yishai,
and the **Messiah** shall be anointed
from among his children's children.

And upon him shall rest the spirit of divine prophecy,
the spirit of wisdom and sagacity,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and fear of YHWH.

...In the days of Israel's **Messiah**, peace shall abound in the land;
the wolf shall dwell with the lamb...

Yeshayahu 14:29-30

...for the **Messiah** shall come forth from the descendants of Yishai...

Yeshayahu 16:1-5

They shall send tribute to the mighty **Messiah** of Israel...Then the **Messiah** of Israel shall establish his throne in goodness, and shall occupy it in truth, in the city of David, judging, demanding justice and doing righteousness.

Yeshayahu 28:5-6

At that time the **Messiah** of YHWH of Hosts shall be a crown of joy...

Yeshayahu 42:1-9

Behold, My servant, the **Messiah**, whom I bring near,
My chosen one, in whom my Memra (Word) takes delight;
I will place My *Ruach HaQodesh* upon him,
and he shall reveal My *Torah* to the nations...

Yeshayahu 43:10

'You are My witnesses before Me', says YHWH,
'and My servant is the **Messiah**, whom I have chosen...

Yeshayahu 52:13-53:12

Behold, My servant the **Messiah** shall prosper;
he shall be exalted and great and very powerful...
It is the will of YHWH to purify and to acquit as innocent the remnant of his
people,
to cleanse their beings of sin,
so that they may see the kingdom of their **Messiah**...

Yirmeyahu 23:1-8

'Behold, days are coming,' says YHWH,
'when I will raise up for David a righteous **Messiah**,
and he shall reign as king...

Yirmeyahu 30:8-11

But they shall worship YHWH their Elohim
and obey the **Messiah**,
the son of David, their king,
whom I will raise up for them...

Yirmeyahu 30:21

Their king shall be anointed from them,
and their **Messiah** shall be revealed from among themselves...

Yirmeyahu 33:12-26

...the people shall yet rehearse the words of the **Messiah**...
In those days and at that time,
I will raise up for David a righteous **Messiah**...

Yechezq'el 17:22-24

Thus says YHWH Elohim,
'I Myself will bring near a child from the dynasty of the house of David, which is
likened to the tall cedar, and I will raise him up from this children's children; I

will anoint him and establish him by My Memra like a high and exalted mountain.

Yechezq'el 34:20-31

I will set up over them one leader who shall provide for them, My servant David...

Yechezq'el 37:21-28

And my servant David shall be king over them; and they shall all have one leader; and they shall walk in My laws and shall keep my statutes and observe them...and David my servant shall be their king forever...

Hoshea 3:3-5

After that the children of Israel shall repent and seek the worship of YHWH their Elohim, and they shall obey the **Messiah**, the son of David, their king, and he shall direct them to the worship of YHWH...

Hoshea 14:5-8

They shall be gathered in from their Dispersion, shall live in the shade of the **Messiah**...

Michah 4:8

And you, O **Messiah** of Israel, who have been hidden away from the sins of the congregation of Tziyon, the kingdom is destined to come to you...

Michah 5:1-3

And you, O Bethlehem Efratah, you who were too small to be numbered among the thousands of the house of Yahudah, from you shall come forth before Me the **Messiah**, to exercise dominion over Israel, he whose name was mentioned from before, from the days of creation.

Chavaqquq 3:17-18

...which Thou shalt perform for Thy **Messiah** and for the remnant of Thy people...

Z'kharyah 3:8

Behold, I bring My servant, the **Messiah**, who is to be revealed.

Zekharyahu 4:7

For He shall reveal His **Messiah**, whose name was called from the beginning, and he shall have dominion over all the kingdoms.

Zekharyahu 6:12-13

Behold the man whose name is '**The Messiah.**' He is destined to be revealed and to be anointed, and he shall build the Temple of YHWH...

Zekharyahu 10:4

Out of him comes his king, out of him comes His **Messiah**...

Tehillim 18:28-32

...Thou shalt perform for Thy **Messiah**...

Psalm 21:1-8

O YHWH, the **King Messiah** shall be happy in Thy strength...for the **King Messiah** trusts in YHWH...

Psalm 45:7-18

Your beauty, O **King Messiah**, surpasses that of ordinary men...

Psalm 61:7-9 [ET 6-8]

Days in addition to the days of the World-to-Come are the days of the **King Messiah**...and on the day that the **King Messiah** is anointed king.

Psalm 72:1-20

O Elohim, give the **King Messiah** the laws of Thy justice, and Thy righteousness to the son of King David...

Psalm 80:15-18 [ET 14-17]

And the stock which Thy right hand planted and upon the **King Messiah** who Thou hast made strong for Thyself...

Psalm 89:51-52

...they have scoffed at the delay of the footsteps of Thy **Messiah**, O YHWH

Psalm 132:10-18

...there I will make sprout an esteemed king for the house of David; I have prepared a lamp for My **Messiah**...

Song of Songs 1:8

...until I send the **King Messiah**...

Song of Songs 1:17

...in the days of the **King Messiah**...

Song of Songs 7:12-14

...And when it shall be the will of YHWH to deliver His people from the Dispersion, He shall say to the **King Messiah**:...

Song of Songs 8:1-4

And at that time the **King Messiah** will be revealed to the congregation of Israel...I will conduct you, O **King Messiah**...The **King Messiah** will say: ...

Ruth 1:1

...from the day on which the world was created until the coming of the **King Messiah**, by which to chastise those who dwell on the earth...

Ruth 3:15

...David, Dani'el and his companions, and the **King Messiah**...

Lamentations 2:22

May You proclaim liberty to Your people on the house of Israel by the hand of the **King Messiah**...

Lamentations 4:22

...you shall be delivered by the hands of the **King Messiah**...

Qohelet 1:11

...that are to follow among the generations that shall be during the days of the **King Messiah**.

Qohelet 7:24

"...and of the day of death and of the day when the **King Messiah** will come who can find it out by his wisdom?

Let us summarise the portrait of the **Messiah** in the Targumim:

The **Messiah** will be the active deliverer of Israel. He will be of Davidic lineage. Eliyahu haNavi (the prophet Eliyah) will herald his coming. A world conflict will rage at the time of the coming of the Messiah. This will result in the annihilation of the enemies of Israel at the time of the Messianic advent; the enemies of Israel will be shattered by Messianic intervention. The **Messiah** will bring an end to the wandering of Israel, and the people of Israel will be gathered in from their Galut/Dispersion to their own land; the Northern Kingdom will be re-united with Yahudah. The drama of the Exodus from Egypt will be re-enacted. The dead will be resurrected. The **Messiah** will live for ever. He will restore the *Beit HaMiqdash* and rebuild Yerushalayim, which will enjoy divine protection for itself and its inhabitants. He will have sovereignty over all the world and make the *Torah* the universal law of mankind, with the ideal of education being realised to the full. The **Messiah** will have the gift of prophecy, as well as intercessory power to seek forgiveness of sin, but he will punish the unrepenting wicked of his people, as well as of the nations, and have the power to cast them into Gey Hinnom. There will be a moral regeneration of Israel and of mankind. The **Messiah** will be a righteous judge, dispensing justice and equity, the champion of the poor and the oppressed, the personification of social justice. He will reward the righteous, who will surround him and forever enjoy the fulness of the Kingdom. The essence of the **Messiah** will be faith in

Elohim; and he will vindicate that faith, and the faithfulness of Israel, in the eyes of all the world.

The False messiah of the end of days — Armilus

It has been taught that Rabbi Nechemyah said, “In the generation of Messiah's coming,...the Roman Empire will be converted to heresy”... This supports Rabbi Yitzchak, who said, “The Son of David will not come until the whole world is converted to the beliefs of the heretics.”

[Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin 97a.]

Ancient rabbis and sages wrote extensively about the *False messiah* of the last days — they identified sections in the *Tanakh* that portray his latter-day rise in the West. In *Targum Yonathan*, the Anti-Messiah of the *acharit-yamim* is called *Armilus* in Yeshayahu 11:4. *Armilus* is a Hebraic term for Romulus, the legendary founder of the city of *Rome*. The implication is that this self-exalting individual will arise from within the revived Roman Empire of the last days. Whereas the Hebrew text of Yeshayahu 11:4 reads,

Yeshayahu 11:4

...but with righteousness he [Messiah the son of David] 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.

the ancient Aramaic paraphrase in *Targum Yonathan*, (Patai, 1979: 156),

...and with the speech of his lips he [Messiah] will slay the wicked *Armilus*.

shows that the ancient understanding was that the evil dictator of the last days that will be slain by Messiah the son of David, would (initially) rule the revived Roman Empire.

When Sha'ul states in 2 Thessalonians 2 that the true Messiah will slay the *man of lawlessness* (i.e. the Antichrist) by the “breath of his mouth,” he is not quoting from the Hebrew *Tanakh*, but from the Targum:

2 Thessalonians 2:1-10:

¹Concerning the coming of Adon¹¹ Yahushua HaMashiach and our being gathered¹² to him, we ask you, brothers, ²not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the Day of YHWH has already come.

³Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the [great departure] occurs *proton* [first in the sequence of events] and **the man of lawlessness** is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

¹¹ That is, *our Master*.

¹² Hebrew: *osef*.

⁴He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called Elohim or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in Elohim's temple, proclaiming himself to be Elohim.

⁵Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?

⁶And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time.

⁷For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

⁸And then **the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Master Yahushua will overthrow with the breath of his mouth** and destroy by the splendour of his coming.

⁹The coming of **the lawless one** will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ¹⁰and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

In the article *Antichrist*, the *Jewish Encyclopedia* (Vol. I: 627) states that the name used for the Antichrist in this passage is of rabbinic origin:

The *lawless one* (2 Thessalonians 2:8) is none other than *Belial*—whom Paul mentions in another place as the opponent of the Messiah (2 Corinthians 6:15)—a name interpreted by the rabbis as compounded of *beth-lamed-yod* (*without*) and *ayin-wav-lamed* (*yoke*): “*without yoke*,” so that Belial is the one who will *not accept the yoke of the Torah*...

In the post-Talmudic Midrash (± 8th century YM), *Pirqei-ha-Mashiach*, the False messiah is termed,

Satan Armilus, whom the Gentiles call Antichrist...

In *Midrash Azeret haSh'vatim* (circa 466 YM), the connection that the sages saw between the Rome and Armilus, is stated explicitly (Patai, 1979: 157):

And after all this, Satan will descend and go to Rome...[there he will have sexual relations with a famous stone statue of a magnificently beautiful woman. She will become pregnant and] give birth to Armilus... And he [Armilus] will issue evil decrees against Yisra'el, and men of good deeds will cease while men of plunder will multiply. If Yisra'el is worthy, Messiah ben David will sprout up in Upper Galilee and will go to Yerushalayim...

The Midrash goes on to say that the stone statue of the woman then becomes the chief of all idolatry in the world.

Satan's sexual relations with a statue of a beautiful woman should be interpreted in a midrashic sense, and certainly not literally. It is a metaphor for the eschatological eruption of a idolatrous religious system based in Rome—a religious system which exalts a female idol of breathtaking beauty. Satan will manage to infiltrate this system, impregnate it spiritually and use it for his own purposes to set up his anointed evil ruler over the earth at the end of days.

How can this come about? Conservative Roman Catholic theologians and scholars are concerned about the infiltration of the Roman Catholic Church by agents of Satan. Ernesto Cienfuegos, in *La Voz de Aztlan*, reported in Los Angeles, Alta, California – 10 May 2002 – ACN:

The contemporary state of apostasy in the Catholic Church was accurately predicted by the renowned Jesuit Priest, Father Malachi Martin, in his 1996 book, *Windswept House: A Vatican Novel*. On page 492 of his book, Fr. Martin writes,

Suddenly it became unarguable that now during this papacy, the Roman Catholic organization carried a permanent presence of clerics who worshipped Satan and liked it; of bishops and priests who sodomized boys and each other; of nuns who performed the “Black Rites” of Wicca, and who lived in lesbian relationships... every day, including Sundays and Holy Days, acts of heresy and blasphemy and outrage and indifference were committed and permitted at holy Altars by men who had been called to be priests. Sacrilegious actions and rites were not only performed on Christ’s Altars, but had the connivance or at least the tacit permission of certain Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops...

Fr. Malachi Martin wrote this several years ago, and today we are barely hearing in the news about Catholic priests being arrested for raping altar boys inside the confessionals and about Cardinals, such as Boston’s Law and Los Angeles’ Mahoney, covering up the crimes.

An eminent theologian and expert in the Catholic Church, Fr. Malachi Martin, writes that the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church is a precondition for the End of Days as we presently know it, and for the second coming of Jesus Christ. Fr. Malachi Martin, a Vatican insider, studied Theology at Louvain where he received doctorates in Semitic Languages, Archeology and Oriental History. He also studied at Oxford and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and served as Professor at the Vatican’s Pontifical Biblical Institute. Fr. Malachi Martin was, in addition, a world-recognized “Exorcist” and an expert in combating Satan and the practitioners of Demonology. He was also an expert in the Dead Sea Scrolls. He served in the Vatican from 1958 to 1964 where he was a close associate of the renowned Jesuit Cardinal Augustin Bea and Pope John XXIII. Fr. Malachi Martin passed away on July 27, 1999.

Fr. Malachi Martin had for a long time maintained that Satanists had infiltrated the Vatican. Just before his death, Fr. Martin said that soon after the installation of Pope Paul VI in 1963, Vatican Satanists clandestinely installed “Lucifer” in a secret ceremony called “The Enthronement of the Fallen Archangel Lucifer.” The ceremony was conducted at the St. Paul’s Chapel located within the Vatican. Pope Paul VI later wrote that “the smoke of Satan has entered the Sanctuary.” Fr. Malachi Martin said that the incidence of Satanic pedophilia and its rites and practices was already documented among certain bishops and priests as widely dispersed as Turin, in Italy, and South Carolina, in the United States. He emphasized, “The systematic organizational links of the network, that had been established between certain clerical homosexual groups and Satanist covens, had inordinate power and influence.”

When we read the news headlines today concerning the evil acts of numerous Catholic priests and even bishops against children, we can not help think about what Fr. Malachi Martin prophesied six years ago. Fr. Martin also said that the “Third Secret of Fatima” concerned the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church. He said that the essential message seems to be about Satanists lurking in the shadows, from the heart of the Vatican down to the local parishes, manipulating events and putting great effort to subvert the Roman Catholic Church. He said that these Satanists are in league with Zionists and what he called the “Universal Assembly”, a Masonic group of Western plutocrats and the Illuminati.

Fr. Malachi Martin also spoke about a shadowy evil character he described as the “Cardinal of Century-City” who bears a strange similarity to Cardinal Roger Mahoney of Los(t) Angeles. Presently, there is a growing tide of people calling for his resignation due to the Archdiocese's cover-up of Satanic homosexual pedophile crimes against children.

And where does Pope John Paul II stand in all of this? Pope John Paul II has stated that we are definitely in the end times. He said that “the signs are clear.” The Pope has expressed concerns that his successor will be “the final pope” and the “anti-pope.” The anti-pope is a person who will betray true Catholicism and Christianity as part of a pact with satan and a future world government.

In two 12th century aggadic rabbinic works, *T'fillat Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai*¹³, Bhm 4:124-126 (Patai, 1979: 157-159), and the apocalyptic midrash *Otot haMashiach*¹⁴ (Patai, 1979: 314) Armilus' strategy, his blasphemous claims and his persecution of all who remains faithful to the Set-Apart One of Yisra'el, are vividly portrayed. The parts of these rabbinic works that we will quote are very similar. To avoid duplication, we have removed the mythical elements and have edited these two descriptions into a single account:

...His name is Armilus the Satan [i.e. the misleader, adversary & accuser]. This is the one the gentiles of the world call the Antichrist. And Armilus will go to Rome and say to them: “I am your Christ, I am your god!” And he will mislead them and they will immediately believe in him, and make him their king. And all the subjects of the Roman Empire will gather and come to him and join themselves to him. And he will go and conquer and announce to all the countries and cities, saying, “Bring me my holy book which I gave you!” And the nations of the world will come and bring the book... and Armilus will say to them: “This is the book which I gave you.” And he tells the nations of the world: “Believe in me. I am your god, I am your christ and your god.” And instantly they believe in him...

[Armilus will call for a delegation of Yisra'el to meet with him. He will say to them:] “Bring me your *Torah* and testify to me that I am god.” Yisra'el will read to Armilus from the *Torah*: “Anochi HaShem your Elohim and you shall have no other gods before Me”—Exodus 20:2-3. And Armilus will say: “This *Torah* of yours is emptiness and nothingness; come and testify to me that I am god.” [Yisra'el refuses. Armilus responds by proclaiming:] “I shall not let go of you

¹³ That is, *the prayer of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai*.

¹⁴ That is, *Signs of the Messiah*.

[i.e. will not stop forcing and persecuting you] until you believe that I am god in the same manner in which the gentile nations (*goyim*) of the world believe in me.”

...And the wrath of Armilus is kindled, and he gathers all the armies of the nations of the world, and makes war against the children of Yisra'el, and he slays of Yisra'el a thousand thousands... And those who are left of Yisra'el will flee to the desert of the nations... In that hour all the nations of the world will expel Yisra'el from their countries... And it will be a suffering for Yisra'el the like of which has not been ever since the world exists and to that time...

...And Michael the great Prince will arise... [Yisra'el will say to the nations:] “This is the Redemption for which we have been waiting, for the Messiah has been slain.”

Michael will arise and blow the shofar three times... Messiah the son of David will be revealed... the full Redemption has come...

...And Armilus will hear that a king arose for Yisra'el, and he will gather all the armies of all the nations of the world, and they will come to King Messiah and to Yisra'el. And the Set-apart One, blessed be He, will fight for Yisra'el and say to the Messiah: “Sit at my right hand.” And the Messiah will say to Yisra'el: “Gather together and stand and see the salvation of HaShem.”... And the Set-apart One, blessed be He, fights Armilus and his armies, as it is written, “Then shall HaShem go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fights in the day of battle” (Zekharyahu 14:3)... Instantly the wicked Armilus will die, and all the armies of the wicked Roman Empire which destroyed the House of our Elohim and exiled us from our land...

May that time and that period be near!

Armilus' rise in the West is portrayed in *Ma'ase Dani'el*, a 10th century YM midrash (quoted in Patai (1979: 162-164)):

And another king, Armilus, will arise in the *Machrev*—the West—more wicked and evil than anyone who preceded him... He will capture the West. And many wicked men...will gather around him from the whole earth, and will tell him that he is the Messiah, and this rumour will spread all over the world. And the whole earth will submit to him, and he will slay those who do not submit...And the people will have to bear and suffer much trouble, and the Children of Yisra'el more than all the others...Armilus will say, “I am the Messiah, your king and your prince.”

...Then all Yisra'el...will...go to the desert...and clothe themselves with sackcloth, and sit down on the earth and call upon Elohim...And Armilus will become angry and will command that they be killed...And the Children of Yisra'el will flee with their wives and children, together they will go to the desert, and will raise their voices in weeping and mourning, and will sit on the earth, and will cry to Elohim...And HaShem, His Name be blessed, will appear from heaven...the banner of Messiah ben David will fly high...

The fact that the False messiah will rule the revived Roman Empire, before invading Yisra'el and setting up his headquarters there, after the plagues described in the book of Revelation have turned Europe into a wasteland, makes Rome the most likely capital

city of the False Prophet — the powerful, miracle-working religious leader who will be a false Eliyahu, will proclaim that *Armilus* is the “Christ and God,” and will enforce his worship with cruel measures (Revelation 13).

The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV (1912: 423-424) summarises the rabbinic and early Christian expectations of the eschatological role that an evil man from the tribe of Dan would play in the time of the coming of the Messiah:

Dan plays a major role in rabbinic tradition. Owing to the fact that his name, as the name of a tribe, is connected with the blasphemer (Wayyiqra 24:11) and with the idolatry of northern Yisra'el (Judges 18:30; 1 Kings 12:29; Amos 8:4), while Shimshon, the Judge of the tribe of Dan, proved faithless to his nazirate (Judges 13:2), Dan came to be regarded as the black sheep of the house of Jacob. His hatred of Joseph, because he brought to his father ill reports against the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, induced him to plot against Joseph's life, and he advised the brothers to deceive their father by telling that they had found the coat of Joseph dipped in blood. (Testament of the Patriarchs, Zevulun 4; Dan 1; Gad 1)...

[The rabbis found the account of] Jacob's blessing of Dan, in which he is compared to a serpent (Genesis 49: 16-18) [very telling], and the serpent is said to have been made the emblem of the tribe on its standard.

But Dan became the very type of evil-doing. He was placed to the north (Numbers 2:25), this being the region of darkness and evil (Yirmeyahu 1:14), because of his idolatry, which wrapped the world in darkness. Still further goes a tradition which identifies the serpent (Genesis 49:17) and the lion (Deuteronomy 33:22) with Belial¹⁵...Early Church Fathers (Irenæus, Hippolytus and others) have a tradition, which can only be of Jewish origin, that the Antichrist comes from the tribe of Dan, and based it upon Yirmeyahu 8:16: “The snorting of his [the enemy's] horses was heard from Dan”—a verse referred also in Genesis Rabbah xliii in reference to Dan's idolatry...(“Antichrist”...)... (“*De Christo et Antichristo*”). Irenæus remarks that Dan is, in view of this...not in the Apocalypse (Revelation 7:5-7) among the 144 000 saved ones of the twelve tribes. Nor is the omission of Dan in 1 Chronicles 4 *et. seq.* unintentional. Bousset, who has a special chapter devoted to the [expectation of the] Dan Antichrist...believes that the connection of Dan with Belial in the *Testament of the Patriarchs*, Dan 5, points to the same [ancient Jewish] tradition.

The same article in the *Jewish Encyclopedia* also relates an Arab tradition about a “liar-messiah” who will mislead many until he is slain by Mashiach ben-David.

Midrash fragment *Marmorstein*, *REJ* 52 (quoted in Patai (1979: 162)) states that Armilus will go to the town of *Emmaus* in the country where his fathers were born and set up his throne there.

An ancient Jewish source quoted in Patai (1979: 102) makes mention of a *false prophet* that would arise in the *acharit-yamim* (end-of-days):

¹⁵ The rabbis interpreted the name Belial as denoting one who has cast off the yoke of *Torah*, i.e. as a lawlessness one — see page 0.

Thirdly, up will rise another man who will announce that he was sent by Elohim... And with his preachings he will cause many nations to go astray, and will seduce even more. But that which he will prophesy to the nations will come upon his own head...

Leviathan. A seven-headed, gigantic, twisted serpent that dwells in the sea. *Liv'yatan* was a well-known character in ancient Middle-eastern literature. In Ugaritic literature this monster is called Lotan. YHWH uses this well-known symbol to give graphic prophecies about Satan, the False messiah (Antichrist) and his evil empire.

The word *liv'yatan* is derived from a root meaning “to coil” and “to twist.”

The *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1912, Vol. VIII, p. 37-39 states:

The leviathan is prominent in haggadic literature in connection with the advent of the Messiah. Referring to Job 41:6, “and the pious ones shall make a banquet of it,” Rabbi Yohanan says that in the time of the resurrection a banquet will be given by Elohim to the righteous, at which the flesh of the leviathan will be served...Elohim will divide the monster with his sword...

These haggadot concerning the leviathan are interpreted as allegories by [practically all Jewish] commentators...

In the...literature the “piercing leviathan” and the “crooked leviathan” are interpreted as referring to Satan Sama'el [the celestial prince over Rome]..., while...others consider the expressions to be allusions to the destruction of the powers which are hostile to the Jews...The haggadic sayings obtained a hold on the imaginations of the poets, who introduced allusions to the banquet of leviathan into the liturgy.

The *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 11, p. 90 states:

In the Scriptures, [leviathan] is used interchangeably with several other sea-monsters—*tanin* (“dragon”), *rahav*, and *yam* (“sea”)—all of whom are represented as supernatural enemies of Elohim.

Messiah comes when the Roman Empire is converted to heresy

The laws of the *tzara'ath* skin affliction is given in Leviticus 13 – 14. A rather unusual pronouncement is found in

Leviticus 13:12-13

¹²And if *tzara'ath* breaks out all over the skin, and the *tzara'ath* covers all the skin of the one who has the sore, from his head to his foot, wherever the priest looks, ¹³then the priest shall consider; and indeed if the *tzara'ath* has covered all his body, he shall pronounce him clean who has the sore. It has all turned white. He is clean.

Why is a person whose entire body is covered with the signs of the *tzara'ath* skin affliction, pronounced *tahor*, i.e. clean? Two talmudic Rabbis saw this unexpected

ruling as an intimation that Mashiach will come at a time when Yisra'el is severely oppressed because the Roman Empire will, at the end of days, be converted to heresy.

Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin 97a

It has been taught that Rabbi Nechemyah said, "In the generation of Messiah's coming,...the kingdom [i.e. the Roman Empire] will be converted to heresy"... This supports Rabbi Yitzchak, who said, "The Son of David will not come until the whole world is converted to the beliefs of the heretics."

Revelation 13 indeed instructs us that, indeed says that, at the time of Messiah's coming the whole world will be in the grip of a terrible heresy and false worship, that will entail the cruel persecution of the faithful remnant:

Revelation 13

³...And all the world marveled and followed the beast.

⁴So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"

⁵And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.

⁶Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against Elohim, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

⁷It was granted to him to make war with the *qadoshim* and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

⁸All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The world becomes whole only at the time of King Messiah

Sages saw hints at the brokenness and the deficiency of the world in texts such as

Bereshith 1:2

The earth was *tohu* (formless, desolate) and *bohu* (void, empty) and darkness covered the face of the deep. And the *Ruach* (breath, Spirit, wind) of Elohim (the Mighty One) was moving on the face of the waters.

In midrashic interpretations, the brokenness and deficiency of the world finds expression in human history, in the development of 4 great empires, each of which presents a world view irreconcilable with the iconoclastic exclusiveness and Oneness of Almighty YHWH. Consider the midrash on Bereshith 1:2 by Rabbi Shimon ben Lakhish.

Bereshith Rabba 2:5

'The world was formless' is a reference to Babylonia... 'Void' refers to Media... 'Darkness' refers to Greece, who darkened the vision of the Yahudim with their decrees... 'The deep waters' refers to Rome, whose eventual downfall

is as inscrutable as the deep...‘Elohim's hovering Spirit’ refers to the Spirit of the Messiah.

Thus the world becomes whole only at the time of *Melekh haMashiach*—King Messiah.

Conclusions

For at least 2500 years, the messianic expectation has been integral to Judaism. Prior to reactionary developments against Christianity, the Messiah was understood to have pre-existed with YHWH and to have a transcendent nature. He would voluntarily have himself humiliated as a suffering servant who would accomplish redemptive atonement for sins by suffering in the place of sinners.

The Birthpains of the Messianic Age — The *Chevlei Shel Mashiach*

Many ancient sages saw in the Scriptures that the coming of the Messianic King, to establish his kingdom, would be preceded by a time of immense suffering. During this time, *Tziyon* would travail as though in birthpains, when a faithful remnant of Yisra'el is born into the Messianic age. They used two terms to describe the sufferings that would accompany the coming of King Messiah. The term *Chevlo Shel Mashiach* was used to describe the travail of the Messiah, while the term *Chevlei Shel Mashiach* was used to refer to the travail of Yisra'el being born into the Messianic Kingdom.

The main prophecies that describe the days of the coming of the Messiah with the picture of the pangs of childbirth, are summarised in Table 0.3. (The list is not exhaustive.)

Table 3: Prophecies about the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach* — the Birthpains that will come upon the earth at the threshold of the Messianic Age.

Book	Verses
Genesis	3:16; 35:16-20; 38:27-28; 48:3
2 Kings	19:3
Psalms	48:3-6
Yeshayahu	13:8; 21:3; 23:4; 26:17; 37:3; 42: 14; 54:1; 66:7-9
Yirmeyahu	4:31; 6:24; 13:21; 22:23; 30:6; 31:8; 48:41; 49:22-24; 50:43
Hoshea	9:11-12; 13:13
Mikha	4:9-10; 5:3
Mattithyahu	24:8
Mark	13:8
Yochanan	16:21-24
1 Thessalonians	5:3
Revelation	12:2

In Scripture, the intense suffering, agony and distress during this time is likened to a woman that goes into labour, suffers excruciating pain, but is overjoyed at the very end, because she had given birth, had brought forth wondrous new life — Messiah has come to earth, to rule as the Arm of YHWH! Once labour begins, a woman can not turn back the clock; she has to go through the entire process and experience intense suffering before she can experience the joy of having a baby. Accordingly, the Hebrew term for this time of tribulation when Yisra'el would travail when it is born into the Messiah and His kingdom, is the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach* — the *Birthpains of the Messiah*.

Let us review one example of the rabbinic teachings on the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach*. , 5757 (7 & 8 February 1997). In the *Ohr Somayach* commentary on Yeshayahu 66:1-24, the *Haftorah* reading for *Parashat Mishpatim*, on *Shabbat-Rosh Chodesh*, for the week ending 1 Adar I, the sage(s) teach on Scripture's use of the metaphor of childbirth in relation to the coming of the Messiah:

...The prophets speak in many places about the coming of Mashiach in terms of childbirth. Someone who is ignorant of the process of childbirth and sees for the first time a woman in labour would be convinced that she is about to die. And the closer the actual moment of the birth, the stronger that impression would become. And then, within a couple of minutes, seeming tragedy has turned into the greatest joy. A new life has entered the world. This is the way Mashiach will come. The worse things become, the more painful the birth pangs, the nearer is his coming. Until, like a mother who has delivered, all the tears and pain will be forgotten in the great joy of a new life.

Dani'el 9:24–27: A prophecy about the coming of the Messiah

Dani'el 9:24–27

²⁴Seventy sevens (*shavu'im shivim*) are decreed upon your people (*al amkha*) and your set-apart city (*ir qadshekha*), ¹ to finish the transgression (*ha-pesha*), ² to make an end of sins (*chata'at*), ³ to make reconciliation for iniquity (*awon*), ⁴ to bring in everlasting righteousness (*tzedeq olamim*), ⁵ to seal up vision and prophecy (*chazon w-navi*), ⁶ and to anoint the Most Set-apart (*qodesh qodashim*).

²⁵Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the *davar* (word) to restore and build Yerushalayim until **Messiah the Prince** (*mashiach nagid*), there shall be seven sevens and sixty-two sevens [i.e. a total of 7 + 62 = 69 sevens]; the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.

²⁶And after the sixty-two sevens, **Messiah shall be cut off** (*yikaret mashiach*), **but not for Himself** (*w-ein lo*); and the people of **the prince who is to come** (*am nagid ha-ba*) shall destroy the city and the *ha-qodesh* (set-apart place). The end of it shall be with a flood¹⁶, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.

²⁷*W'higbir*¹⁷ *b^erit la-rabim*—Then **he** shall forge a strong covenant with many; with the great ones for one seven (*shavuah echad*); but in the middle of the seven **he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering** (*zevach u-minchah*). *W-al k^enaf shiqutzim m^eshomem*—And the **mute abominations** will be upon a wing until extermination as decreed will pour down upon the mute abomination (*al-shomem*).

A Talmudic rabbi stated that “the time for the coming of the Messiah has passed, but Messiah did not come.” When is this time? Who is the Messiah? We shall show that the above Messianic prophecy in Dani'el 9 *pinpoints the day on which the Messiah would come to Yisra'el as a Prince, a royal ruler. This prophecy leaves no doubt as to the person of the Messiah.*

We have proof from ancient Jewish sources that, 2000 years ago, Dani'el 9:25-26 was understood to be a revelation about the coming of the Messiah. An important Qumran text from Cave 11 — *11Q13Mech* — says about the *Mashiach*:

The *mashiach* (anointed one) of the Spirit concerning whom Dani'el said, 'until an anointed one, a prince...'

(Reference: Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, page 501.)

How would the Messiah come? The *Tanakh* tells of two comings: Messiah would come as a suffering servant in humbleness and then in splendour to judge and rule. The prophet Zekharyahu described the entry of the Messianic king into Yerushalayim in

¹⁶“Flood” is a Hebraism (Hebrew idiom) for an overwhelmingly strong army at war.

¹⁷The root *gbr* — gimmel-beth-resh — denotes might and strength.

Zekharyahu 9:9

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Tziyon!
Shout, Daughter of Yerushalayim!
Look! Your King comes to you,
righteous and having salvation [Hebrew: *yeshu'ah*],
riding humbly on a *donkey*,
on a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden.

Midrash Genesis Rabba 98:9 identifies this as a prophecy about King Messiah. In other words, the ancient sages of Yisra'el saw Zekharyah 9:9 as a messianic prophecy.

The Hebrew word translated as *seven* in Dani'el 9:24-27 is *shavuah*, and here signifies *septets* or *year weeks*, i.e. periods of 7 years each. Whereas we in our culture group years in decades, the Yisra'elites grouped years and days in *sevens*, seven being the number of YHWH. According to this prophecy,

$$(7 + 62) \times 7 = 483 \text{ years}$$

would elapse between two specific dates:

- First date: The day Yahudim who were in captivity in Bavel were officially permitted to return to Yerushalayim to rebuild the city. The countdown would begin on this date.
- Final date: The day the Messiah would be revealed as a Prince, a ruler. Jewish Davidic kings entered the city of Yerushalayim riding on the back of a colt. The countdown should stop on this date.

Just after the 69 sevens had elapsed, Dani'el 9:26 states, *mashiach yikaret w'ein lo*—“Messiah shall be cut off but not to him.” The Hebrew word translated as *cut off* in Dani'el 9:26 has the root form *karat*, and is used of “cutting a covenant,” a ritual which involved the death of the sacrificial victim—cf. Genesis 15:10, 18; *karat* was also frequently used of death in general. The prophecy states that the Anointed One would be revealed to Yisra'el as a *nagid*—a ruler, a prince, but that he would be *executed*, and that his death would not be for himself, but, by implication, *for others*.

The prophecy implies that the **death of Messiah the Prince** would occur **before the destruction of the second temple**.

Note that Dani'el 9:26 states that *mashiach nagid*—*Messiah the Prince* will be cut off. The Messiah that will see death, will be the same Messiah that will rule as the Prince, the *Nagid*. This shows that the historical rabbinic exegesis of messianic prophecies, namely that there would be two messiahs—*Mashiach ben-Yosef* (the suffering servant) and *Mashiach ben-David* (the conquering king)—is in error: There is only *one* Messiah, and He will fulfil the prophecies about the suffering servant *and* the prophecies about the conquering King.

The countdown begins...

Dani'el 9:25 shows that the countdown of the 69 “sevens” that would culminate in the sacrificial death of the Messiah, would start on the day when permission is given to

reconstruct the city of Yerushalayim. When was the command to rebuild Yerushalayim issued? Persian rulers issued 4 decrees in reference to the Yahudim in their empire.

- ① King Cyrus (Hebrew: *Koresh*) issued a decree in 538 BM¹⁸ (Ezra 1:1–4). This decree was a permission to rebuild the *Beit haMiqdash* in Yerushalayim.
- ② King Daryawesh (Darius) made a second decree in 520 BM (Ezra 6:1–12); this decree was a confirmation of King Koresh's decree.
- ③ The third decree was issued by King Artaxerxes Longimanus in 458 or 457 BM—Ezra 7:11–26. This decree dealt with finances for animal sacrifices and the *Beit haMiqdash*.

The first and second decrees deal with the rebuilding of the *Temple* in Yerushalayim. The third decree deal with *finances* for animal sacrifices and the Temple. Dani'el 9:25 says that the countdown should begin when a *davar* (spoken word) to restore and rebuild Yerushalayim is given. Not one of the above decrees mentions a word about the rebuilding of the city itself. Accordingly, none of these decrees signifies the beginning of the countdown of the 69 sevens. Also note that, anciently, a city was not considered rebuilt unless its encompassing wall was reconstructed. We should search Scripture to find the place where explicit permission is given to reconstruct the *city* and its *walls*.

(Some denominations, particularly those who have chained themselves to the visions and interpretations of supposed latter-day prophets, tenaciously cling to the year 457 BC as the starting date of the countdown. They often seem more interested in upholding the supposed exegetical and prophetic infallibility of this latter-day prophet than in rigorous exegesis. This problem is widespread—pastors and theologians get caught in structures where they look at other *people* for approving nods, promotion and annual salary increases. An independent and rigorous exegesis would land them in disrepute and could even cost them their position. Therefore they “toe the party line,” thereby earning approving nods and pats on the back.)

- ④ The command to rebuild and to restore Ir Yerushalayim was issued in the month Nisán (In the Babylonian captivity, the month *Aviv* was renamed to *Nisan*) of the 20th year of the reign of King Artaxerxes Longimanus. This event is recorded in...

Nechemyah 2:1 – 8

¹*B'chodesh Nisan* (with the new moon in the month of Nisan) in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been downcast in his presence before; ²so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so downcast when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.”

I was very much afraid, ³but I said to the king, “May the king live for ever! Why should my face not look downcast when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

⁴The king said to me, “What is it you want?” Then I prayed to the Elohim of heaven, ⁵and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favour in his sight, let him send me to the **city in Yahudah** where my

¹⁸ Read as “**B**efore **M**essiah.” The equivalent of BC and BCE.

fathers are buried so that I can **rebuild** it.” ⁶Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?” It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time. ⁷I also said to him, “If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Yahudah? ⁸And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the Temple and for the **city wall** and for the residence I will occupy?”

And because the gracious hand of my Elohim was upon me, **the king granted my requests.**

The king's consent seems somewhat informal. We should remember, however, that any command given by a king of the Medes and Persians was considered to be a legally binding, irrevocable decree. Remember, too, that the Hebrew word translated as “command” in Dani'el 9:25 is *davar*, which means “a spoken word.”

In the Hebrew, Nechemyah states that this decree was issued *b'chodesh Nisan*—“in the month Nisan.” Because the root *chadash* (chet-dalet-shin) means *renewed* or *new*, we may read more into Nechemyah 2:1 than is transparent in most translations, and may translate it as “With the new moon in the month of Nisan.”

The first step in our calculation should therefore be to determine the date of the new moon in the month Nisan, in the 20th year of the rule of king Artaxerxes Longimanus.

Nisan overlaps with our month March and April. The “new moon in Nisan” would thus be translated as “the first appearance of the new moon in March.” According to *The Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* (Gehman, H.S., 1944), Artaxerxes Longimanus became king of Persia in 465 BM, so that his 20th year of rule (employing Jewish inclusive reckoning) would have been 445 BM. The *New Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Unger, 1988) concurs by stating,

Artaxerxes I Longimanus reigned over Persia for 40 years, 464–424 BC. In the 7th year of his reign he commissioned Ezra to return to Yerushalayim, granting large privileges to him and those accompanying him (Ezra 7:11-26), 457 BC. About 13 years later (445 BC) he granted permission to Nechemyah to assume control of the civil affairs at Yerushalayim (Nechemyah 2:1-8).

To know the date on which the word was given to rebuild the city of Yerushalayim, we have to calculate the date of the first new moon in March 445 BM. Detailed calculations by Dr. Gawie Nothnagel and Dr. Willie McLoud show that in March 445 BM, the new moon fell on Thursday 10 March (McLoud, 1995).

The question we have to answer is: On what date did king Artaxerxes Longimanus give Nechemyah permission to rebuild Yerushalayim? According to the Mishnah, Jewish months began on the date of the new moon or on the date when the disk of the moon first become visible, i.e. one or two days later. It follows that in 445 BM, Nisan 1, the first day of the first month of the religious calendar, could have fallen on any date from Thursday 10 March to Saturday 12 March. From Numbers 10:10, 28:14; 1 Shmu'el 20:5, 18, 24; 2 Kings 4:23; 1 Chronicles 23:31; Ezra 3:5; Nechemyah 10:33; Psalms 81:3; Yeshayahu 1:14; 66:23; Yechezq'el (Yechezq'el) 46:1, 46:6; Hoshea 5:7 and Amos 8:5 we know that *Rosh Chodesh* (the New Moon festival) is a day of rest. Because the

appearance of the new moon and the subsequent *Shabbat* was only one or two days apart in Nisan, 445 BM, they would have been celebrated on the same day, i.e. on the *Shabbat* that fell on 11/12 Nisan. It is very likely that on this *Shabbat*, that was also the first day of the new year on the religious calendar, Nechemyah prayed earnestly to YHWH for the restoration of Yerushalayim. The day after the *Shabbat*, i.e. Sunday 13 March 445 BM, would have been the first day after the combined *Rosh Chodesh/Shabbat* that Nechemyah would have appeared before king Artaxerxes Longimanus. This explains why Nechemyah was so sad and downcast in the king's presence.

We conclude that the prophetic countdown to the revelation of *mashiach nagid*—Messiah the Prince—began on Sunday 13 March 445 BM.

The day *Messiah the Prince* would come

According to

Dani'el 9:25–26

²⁵Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the *davar* (word) to restore and build Yerushalayim until **Messiah the Prince** (*mashiach nagid*), there shall be seven *sevens* and sixty-two *sevens* [i.e. a total of $7 + 62 = 69$ *sevens*]; the streets shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.

²⁶And after the sixty-two *sevens*, **Messiah shall be cut off** (*yikaret*), **but not for Himself** (*w'ein lo*); and the people of **the prince who is to come** (*am nagid ha-ba*) shall destroy the city and the *ha-qodesh* (set-apart place). The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.

a total of

$$(7 \times 7) + (62 \times 7) = 483 \text{ years}$$

would elapse from the date on which King Artaxerxes Longimanus gave permission to Nechemyah to rebuild Yerushalayim, until the coming of Messiah as the Prince. This would be followed by the subsequent “death-but-not-for-himself” of the Messiah.

In the books of Dani'el and Revelation, 3.5 years (“a time, times and half a time”), 42 months and 1260 days are synonyms. Mathematically, this gives rise to 3 simultaneous equations in 3 unknowns. The solution is that

$$1 \text{ prophetic year} = 360 \text{ days,}$$

and that

$$1 \text{ prophetic month} = 30 \text{ days.}$$

It follows that $69 \times 360 = 173880$ days would elapse between the issue of the decree and the coming of Messiah the Prince, followed by his being “cut off but not for himself.” Because 173880 is an exact multiple of 7, it also follows that the first and last dates of the period of 173880 days would fall on the same calendar day, i.e. a Sunday.

If we take into account that there is only 1 year between 1 BM and 1 YM, it follows that **MESSIAH THE PRINCE ENTERED YERUSHALAYIM ON 10 NISAN in the year 32 YM.**

Messiah the Prince

Before we continue our discussion, we have to point out that two calenders are in use in Scripture. From Genesis 1 to Exodus 11, the *civil calender* is in use. On this calender, Aviv is the seventh month and Tishrei the first. According to Hebrew chronology, the breath of life (Hebrew: *neshamah*) was imparted to Adam on Tishrei 6, about 6000 years ago. In Exodus 12, the *religious calender* is introduced. From this point forward, Aviv is the first month, and Tishrei the seventh. After the Babylonian captivity, Aviv is called Nisan.

According to the Apostolic writings (i.e. the New Testament), Yahushua was executed on 14 Nisan (Mattithyahu 27: 62; Mark 15: 42; Luke 23: 54 & Yochanan 19: 31), and died at 15:00, the exact time when the *Pesach* lambs were slaughtered in Yerushalayim. At least two independent accounts by secular historians support this (see the well-known book, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict* by Josh McDowel). He was buried just before 15 Aviv/Nisan, (the first day of *Chag ha Matzah*, the Feast of Unleavened Bread). He spent 3 days and 3 nights in the tomb, and was resurrected on 17 Aviv/Nisan, on the Feast of the Firstfruits of the barley harvest. (In the Jewish calender, days do not start at midnight but at sunset; 15 Aviv was a Shabbaton, i.e. a special high-Sabbath that fell on a fixed date, i.e. on any weekday that happened to coincide with that calender day. Also note that Hebrew reckoning is inclusive, i.e. a fraction of a day or night constitutes a whole day or night.)

Many *Torah*-pictures point to 17 Aviv as a special day of the beginning of new life. The Yisra'elites came up from the Sea of Reeds between 04:00 and 06:00 on 17 Aviv, after having left the old life of slavery in Mitsrayim behind. Noach's ark touched down on the mountains of Ararat on 17 Aviv after having passed through the Flood, leaving the utterly devastated old world of sinfulness behind (Genesis 8:4). Together with the Festivals, these events were acted Messianic prophecies, signposts and rehearsals along the way that were given to the people so that they would not miss the real event, when it came.

We have seen that Yahushua was executed on 14 Aviv. In what year was he executed? According to Luke 3: 1–23, Yahushua started his teaching in the 15th year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius. If we correlate this with information presented by the historian Flavius Josephus, we find that he started his ministry in 28 YM. Yahushua taught for close to $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. This brings the year of his death to 32 YM.

Dani'el 9:24-27 shows that the Anointed One would be revealed as a *Nagid* (Ruler; Prince) on 10 Nisan, 32 YM. In Exodus 12:3 we read that the *Pesach* lambs had to be separated on 10 Aviv (Nisan). The lambs had to be without defect; they had to be inspected for 4 days before being sacrificed on the 14th day of Aviv/Nisan. Does the Almighty do anything without a purpose, without a plan? No. Mattithyahu 21, Luke 19 and Yochanan 12 show that the itinerant, aggadic proto-rabbi, Yahushua, entered

Yerushalayim in a triumphant procession on Sunday Nisan 10, exactly 4 days before his execution on Thursday, Nisan 14.

Yochanan 12:1-15:

Six days before the Passover [i.e. 6 days before the start of *Chag ha Matzah* on Nisan 15, i.e. on Nisan 9], Yahushua arrived at Bethany, where Eliezer (Lazarus) lived, whom Yahushua had raised from the dead...

...**The next day** [i.e. Sunday Nisan 10, 32 YM] the great crowd that had come for the Feast [*Chag ha Matzah*] heard that Yahushua was on his way to Yerushalayim. They took palm branches [Hebrew: *lulavim*] and went out to meet him, shouting,

“*Hosanna!*”

“*Barukh haba b'shem Adonai!*”

[“Blessed is he who comes in the name of YHWH!”]

“Blessed is the King of Yisra'el!”

Yahushua found a young **donkey** and sat upon it, as it is written,

“Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Tziyon;
see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt.”

Mattithyahu 21:1-10

As they approached Yerushalayim and came to Beit-Pagey on the Mount of Olives, Yahushua sent two *talmidim*, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Master needs them, and he will send them right away.”

This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet [Zekharyahu 9:9]:

“Say to the Daughter of Tziyon,
'Look! Your King comes to you,
riding humbly on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”

The *talmidim* went and did as Yahushua had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Yahushua sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of YHWH!”

“Hosanna in the Highest!”

Luke 19:29-44

As he approached Beit-Pagey and Beit-Anyah at the hill called the Mount of Olives, Yahushua sent two of his *talmidim*, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no-one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Master needs it.’” Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners

asked them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They replied, “The Master needs it.” They brought it to Yahushua, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Yahushua on it.

As he went along, people spread their cloaks on the road. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of *talmidim* began joyfully to praise YHWH in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen:

“*Barukh* is the king who comes *b'shem Adonai!*”

“Shalom in heaven!”

and

“Esteem in the Highest!”

Some of the *P'rushim* in the crowd said to Yahushua, “Rabbi, rebuke your *talmidim!*” “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”

As he approached Yerushalayim and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognise the time of your visitation.”

Yahushua's words in Luke 19:40–44 contain definite overtones of Dani'el 9:25-26, which foretold the very date when *Messiah the Prince* would come to Yerushalayim, an event immediately to be followed by his substitutionary death, and later by the destruction of Yerushalayim. *The very date on which he would have entered the city in triumph was indeed pinpointed in prophecy—this is why the stones would have cried it out...!* Yahushua's words also show that he foreknew his subsequent rejection by the Sadducean religious leaders of the nation and the consequent destruction of the city of Yerushalayim, which is also clearly foretold in Dani'el's prophecy.

Signs of Destruction

Dani'el 9:26 states that *Mashiach Nagid*—the anointed ruler—would be executed, cut off, before the destruction of the Second Temple and the city of Yerushalayim. This would, according to the Book of Dani'el, happen close to the year 30 YM.

Jewish sources record that very specific signs were given to Yisra'el in the last 40 years of the existence of the Second Temple, i.e. roughly from the year 30 YM to the year 70 YM, when the *Beit haMiqdash* and *Ir Yerushalayim* were destroyed.

To understand one important sign, we have to look at an important facet of the *Yom Kippur* avodah (service).

On *Yom Kippur*, lots were drawn for two goats. The one lot read *L'YHWH*, which means “to YHWH,” while the other lot read, *L'Azazel*, which means “to Azazel” —

Wayyiqra 16:8. The goat *l'Azazel* was led from the *Miqdash* (Temple) by a chosen priest who is called an *ish iti* (a “timeless man,” i.e. a man without any sense of time or season, rain, snow or inconvenience) and taken to *Har Azal* (Mount Azal) where it was pushed off backwards from a high, steep, jagged cliff to be torn to shreds.

In the *Me'am Lo'es Torah Anthology: Yom Kippur Service* (Kaplan, 1982: 17), the teachings of the sages about the meaning of the word *Azazel* is summarised:

The etymology of the word *Azazel* is as follows: it is derived from the word *az* or *azuz*, which denotes *strong*. The word *Azazel* refers to a powerful, strong rock or cliff. The word *el* means strong...

Some say the word *Azazel* refers to the cliff over which the goat was pushed. The word *Azazel* could also be broken up into “*az azel*,” which means “*the goat who goes*.”

Kaplan (1982: 17-18; 54) describes the manner in which goat *l'Azazel* was killed:

The High Priest would then come to the goat upon which there was the lot “to *Azazel*.” He would place both his hands on it and make confession for all Yisra'el. He would say, “O YHWH, Your people have erred, sinned and rebelled before you...”

He would then call the priest who had been designated from the day before *Yom Kippur*, and would give him the goat to bring to the desert. On the day before *Yom Kippur*, people would go to huts that had been put up previously to accompany the person leading the goat. Those in the last hut would stand at the edge of the area where one can go...to see from a distance what the person in charge of the goat does.

The priest to whom the goat is given over, brings it to the cliff that we have mentioned and leads it to the top of the cliff. Half of the hank of scarlet cloth he would tie to the rock, and half he would tie between the goat's horns. Then with his hands he pushes the goat down so that it tumbles down the cliff. It would not reach halfway down before it was broken into pieces, totally dismembered. The cliff over which the goat was thrown consisted of sharp, jagged rocks that would tear the goat into shreds. He would then say, “This is the way the sins of the House of Yisra'el should be destroyed.”

The sages taught that the command to slay the goat *l'Azazel* in this particular manner is a *chukah*—a decree, which cannot be fully comprehended with the intellect. The reasons are known to YHWH, and Yisra'el should obey it although they do not understand it fully.

The sages grappled with the meaning of the *chukah* concerning goat *l'Azazel*. *The Torah Anthology: Yom Kippur Service* (Kaplan, 1982: 20-21) relates one explanation:

When *Yom Kippur* comes, HaShem sends Satan Sama'el his portion in the form of the goat sent to *Azazel*. This is sent by the Yisra'elites to the desert, which is a place of demons (*shedim*). This is where Satan Sama'el has power...When Sama'el sees the goat sent to the desert, he also goes to the desert...and he no longer speaks evil against Yisra'el.

Therefore a hank of scarlet wool was tied between the horns of the scape-goat...When the goat was pushed off the cliff, that skein of scarlet wool would

become white. This teaches that this act atoned for the sins of the Yisra'elites and whitened them: "If your sins are like scarlet they shall become white as snow" (Yeshayahu 1:18).

Through this repentance and confession, all the unclean spirits and denouncing forces that were created out of the sins are placed on the goat's head. They are destroyed with him in the desert, since this is the abode of these denouncing forces.

The most probable meaning of the term *Azazel* is a desert demon. The high priest (*Kohen Gadol*) took the two golden lots, one marked *L'YHWH* and the other marked *L'Azazel*, and placed one upon the head of each animal, sealing their fate. It was considered a good omen if the lot marked *L'YHWH* was drawn by the priest in the right hand. Goat *L'YHWH* was sacrificed to sprinkle its blood on the seat of atonement of the Ark of the Covenant in the *Qodesh Ha Qodeshim* (Holy of Holies), to atone for sins. The goat marked "to Azazel" was led off to wander through the wilderness and taken to the mountain where it would be killed. Before goat *L'Azazel* was led off to the wilderness, the high priest lay both his hands upon its head and confesses over it all the iniquities and transgressions of the Yisra'elites, whatever their misdeeds. Thus, the *Torah* adds,

Wayyiqra 16:20-22

The goat shall carry on it all their iniquities to an inaccessible region...

A tongue-shaped scarlet (Hebrew: *shaniy*) cloth was tied around the horn of goat *L'Azazel*. Then it was led out of the city by a group of men, who led it through the Judean wilderness to *Mount Tzok*, also known as *Mount Azazel*. From the moment that goat *L'Azazel* was led from the Temple, the entire temple service stopped, while the people waited in tense expectancy for the news that was to come. On the way to Mount Azazel, were constructed 10 *sukkot* (booths) where other men awaited the men who were leading goat *L'Azazel*, and offered them food and water. They had to refuse the food, because *Yom Kippur* is a day of fasting. The highest and steepest cliff near Yerushalayim was on Mount Tzok. On Mount Azazel, goat *L'Azazel* was pushed off backwards over the cliff, evidently to signify the physical removal of sin from the community. Just before goat *L'Azazel* was pushed off to its death, the scarlet cloth was divided in two pieces. The one piece was left tied to the goat's horn, while the other piece was tied around a rock, the *Rock Chúdown*. In Tractate *Yoma 39b* of the Babylonian Talmud, the Rabbis tell how a miracle regularly happened on *Yom Kippur*—the scarlet cloth would turn white. By this miracle, the Almighty communicated to the people that He had forgiven the sins of Yisra'el. The joyous message that the scarlet cloth had turned white was relayed from sukkah to sukkah to the crowd of people waiting at the Temple, by the jubilant waving of scarves and flags. When this message that the goat marked for Azazel had been killed and that the *shaniy* cloth had turned white, reached the people waiting at the temple, they celebrated by dancing, singing and rejoicing.

The Talmud teaches that, during the *last 40 years* of the Temple service, this miracle never happened. Not once. The Temple was destroyed in 70 YM—about 40 years after the time of the date prophesied in Dani'el 9:26 for the coming of *mashiach nagid*. In *Seder Mo'ed, Tractate Yoma 39b* of the Babylonian Talmud, we read:

Our Rabbis taught: During the last forty years before the destruction of the Temple the lot ["L'YHWH," i.e. "For YHWH"] did not come up in the right hand; nor did the crimson-coloured [*shaniy*] strap become white; nor did the western-most light [of the seven-branched menorah] shine; and the doors of the *Hekhal* would open by themselves, until Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai rebuked them, saying: "*Hekhal, Hekhal*, why wilt thou be the alarmer thyself [i.e. why do you predict your own destruction]? I know about thee that thou wilt be destroyed, for Zekharyah ben Yiddo has already prophesied concerning thee: 'Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars.'"

In other words, during the last 40 years of the Temple, the *ner Elohim* (light of Elohim), i.e. the flame in the branch of the *Menorah* closest to the *Qodesh haQodeshim*, did not stay lit, and the heavy Nikanor gates, which required 20 men to open and close, opened by themselves during the night. Josephus, who was a kohen (priest) before he became a general, also described this spontaneous opening of the inner gates in circa 63 YM (Josephus, 1957):

Moreover the East Gate of the inner Temple which was of brass and vastly heavy, had been with difficulty shut by 20 men,... was seen to be opened of its own accord about the 6th hour of the night... this also appeared to the vulgar to be a happy prodigy but men of learning understood it, that the serenity of their set-apart House was dissolved of its own accord, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies. So these publicly declared that the signal foreshadowed the desolation that was coming upon them.

The spontaneous opening of the gates was seen as a sign that the desolation of the Temple was near.

To understand how sages like Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai drew this conclusion from Scripture, we must understand the connection between the Temple, the Nikanor gates, and a prophecy in the book of Zekharyah:

Zekharyah 11:1-3

¹Open your doors, O Lebanon, so that fire may devour your cedars!

²Wail, O pine tree, for the cedar has fallen; the stately trees are ruined! Wail, oaks of Bashan; the dense forest has been cut down!

³Listen to the wail of the shepherds: their rich pastures are destroyed! Listen to the roar of the lions; the lush thicket of the Jordan is ruined!

The Hebrew word translated as "doors" in Zekharyah 11:1 also means gates. King Sh^elomo used cedars from Lebanon in the construction of the Temple. The Nikanor gates were made of cedar wood from Lebanon, which was overlaid with brass. In Hebrew, the name *Levanon* is related to the word *lavan*, which means *white*; the Temple was white. Accordingly, the spontaneous opening of the Nikanor gates of the (white) Temple was interpreted as a sign from YHWH that the destruction of the cedars of Lebanon, i.e. the desolation of the Temple, predicted in Dani'el 9:26, was about to take place.

Yeshayahu 9

The ancient sages of Yisra'el understood the following prophecy as announcing the Mashiach.

Yeshayahu 9:6-7

⁶For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And He will be called *Pele Yo'etz, El Gibbor, Avi Ad, Sar Shalom* (Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty El, Father of Eternity, Prince of Peace).

⁷Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and for ever. The zeal of *YHWH Tzva'ot* will accomplish this.

Modern Judaism has often attempted to translate this prophecy in Yeshayahu 9 so that it is hardly recognisable as a messianic prophecy. Sadly, this is a forced, apologetic reaction against Christianity, and conflicts with the understandings of the sages. For example, the ancient Aramaic paraphrase *Targum Yonathan* renders this passage:

From ancient times his name was given as Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty El, He who lived forever, the Messiah in whose days peace shall increase.

From *Pereq Shalom* (quoted in Patai, 1979: 21), we also see that the ancient Jewish sages identified the Son of Yeshayahu 9:6 as the Messiah:

Rabbi Yose the Galilean said: "The name of the Messiah is *Shalom*, for it is said, *Everlasting Father, Prince of Shalom* [Peace] (Yeshayahu 9:6)..." Rabbi Yose the Galilean said: "Great is peace, for in the hour in which King Messiah is revealed to Yisra'el, he begins with peace, for it is said, *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good tidings who announces peace* (Yeshayahu 52:7)."

Rabbi Yahushua and the Torah

Rabbi Ya'aqov Emden (18th century) wrote (Falk, 1985: 21-22):

Not one of our sages spoke out more emphatically concerning the immutability of the *Torah* [than Yahushua]...

...If certain Christians who consider themselves scholars, who believe that they are commanded to abolish the *Torah* of Mosheh from the seed of Yisra'el, would understand this deep truth [that the *Torah* is for the Jews, while the Noachide commandments is for Gentiles]...they would not engage in such foolishness...[The termination of *Torah*-observance by Jews] was never intended by the writers of the Gospels. Quite the opposite, they have written clearly that they intended the contrary...

Because of these errant [Christian] scholars [who teach that the *Torah* was abolished], hatred has increased towards the Jews...

It is a grave error to state that Judaism ever saw the *Torah* as a vehicle for attaining salvation. Professor E.P. Sanders have investigated the view of the relationship between

salvation and the *Torah* that was held in Yisra'el at the time of Yahushua's ministry. He calls the view of the sages *covenantal nomism*. The sages viewed election and salvation as sovereign acts of unmerited grace, whereby the nation is brought into the covenant. Once inside the covenant, man is given *instruction* on how to live his life. This instruction, i.e. *Torah*, is his *covenant obligation*.

The Redemption in Aviv (Nisan) or Tishri

After the [*Ge'ulah*] service [on *Yom Kippur*], people wish each other, “Shanah ha-ba'ah ba Yerushalayim”—“Next year in Yerushalayim.” Only twice a year is this wish expressed: Once at the termination of the Haggadah on Pesach night and once on *Yom Kippur*. This is in accordance with the difference of opinion between Rabbi Eiliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua as to whether the Messiah will come to redeem Yisra'el in Aviv/Nisan or in Tishrei.

The 7000 year plan of YHWH

The Alef and the Tav

The first sentence in the first chapter in the first book of the *Torah* contains a very important prophecy about the coming of the Messiah. *Bereshith* (Genesis) 1:1 reads:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Bereshith</i>	<i>bara</i>	<i>Elohim</i>	<i>[et]</i>	<i>haShamayim</i>	<i>[v'et]</i>	<i>haEretz</i>
In the beginning of	created	Elohim	↑	the heavens	↑	the earth

The Hebrew spelling of Z} (*et*), the fourth word in Genesis 1:1 is *alef-tav*, and the spelling of the sixth word, Z}V (*v'et*), is *wav-alef-tav*. In the Hebrew language, the Z} (*et*) is a purely grammatical word. Its only function is to point to the subject/object of a sentence. Therefore the word Z} (*et*) is not translated. The *wav* prefixed to the *et* (or other words) is the Hebrew way of saying “and.”

What is the deeper significance of the word Z} and its usage in Genesis 1:1? The } (*alef*) is the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet, and the Z (*tav*) the last. (Refer to the acrostic Tehillim 119 to verify this). The V (*wav*) is the 6th letter. The ancient sages identified the *wav* as the letter of man, because man was created on the 6th day when the *neshamah* (breath of life) was imparted to Adam, making him a being in the image (*tselem*) and likeness of the Almighty.

In Zekharyah 12:9-14 we read that the Yisra'elites will look up to Him whom they have pierced and will bitterly grieve for Him, like one mourns at the death of a firstborn son:

Zekharyah 12:9-14:

⁹**In that day** [*ba'Yom ha-hu*] I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Yerushalayim.

¹⁰ “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim a spirit of grace and supplication. **They will look on Me, whom they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.**

¹¹**In that day** [*ba'Yom ha-hu*] the weeping in Yerushalayim will be great, like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. ¹²The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves: the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan and their wives, ¹³the clan of the house of Levi and their wives, the clan of Shimei and their wives, ¹⁴and all the rest of the clans and their wives.

It is very significant that, in the Hebrew text, the grammatical word, the *alef-tav*, is used in direct relation to the subject (“Me”) of the sentence in verse 10 that reads,

They will look on me Z} whom they have pierced and they will mourn for him...

Is there any significance in this use of the Z} in Zekharyah 12:10? In Mattithyahu 24:30, Yahushua makes it clear that Yisra'el will mourn for *Him* at his second coming:

At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the tribes of the Land [i.e. the land Yisra'el] will mourn [a reference to Zekharyah 12:9–14]. They will see the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, with power and great *kivod* [a reference to the *bar-Enosh*¹⁹ of Dani'el 7:13²⁰].

In Revelation 1:7-8 we find a paraphrased quote of Zekharyah 12:10, which renders the *alef-tav* of the latter passage explicitly into the Greek language as the **Alpha and the Omega**:

Revelation 1:7-8

Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the land will **mourn** because of him. So shall it be! Amen. “I am the **Alpha and the Omega**,” says the Master Elohim, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

In Revelation 1:11, 21:6 and 22:13, the Messiah calls himself the **Alpha and the Omega**:

Revelation 1:11

Saying, “I am **Alpha and Omega**, the first and the last. What you see, write in a book, and send it to the seven assemblies which are in Asia, to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and to Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.

Revelation 21:6

He said to me: It is done. I am the **Alpha and the Omega**, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

Revelation 22:13

I am the **Alpha and the Omega**, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

We see that, in the Greek of the *B'rit Chadashah* (New Testament) writings, both the Father and the Son are termed the *Alpha* and the *Omega*, which are the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet, and therefore the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *alef* and the *tav*. We conclude that the *alef-tav* is a term for the Messiah, who is the visible

¹⁹ Dani'el 7 falls within the Aramaic part of the book of Dani'el. *Bar-Enosh* (or *Anash*) is the Aramaic term for the Hebrew *ben-Adam*, i.e. Son of Man. It is important to note that the term Son of Man was understood 2000 years ago in Yisra'el as a Messianic title, as the title of a transcendent heavenly being who is a man and to whom all the authority to rule and judge the world, was given by the Almighty. Because they had very little insight in the Hebrew background of the Scriptures, the Church Fathers wrongly understood Yahushua's use of the term “Son of Man” as a statement about the humanity of the Messiah (Young, 1995). It is a statement about his authority, pre-existence and transcendence, and His eschatological coming as the Second Adam, the new Representative and King of the redeemed faithful remnant of mankind, to rule the earth.

²⁰ This prophecy is understood messianically in Numbers Rabbati 13:14; Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 96b–97a; 98a; Targum to 1 Chronicles 3:24; Pirqei Mashia'ch, Beit HaMidrash 3:70; 4 Ezra 13:1-9; Matthew 24:27-30; 26:64; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 12:40; 17:24; 18:8; 21:27-28; 22:69-70; Acts 7:56 and Revelation 1:13.

image and exact representation, of the invisible Father. The fact that Revelation 1:7-8 is a paraphrased quote of Zekharyah 12:10, which renders the *alef-tav* of the latter passage explicitly into the Greek language as the Alpha and the Omega, also shows that the Hebrew word *et* in Zekharyah 12:10 is very significant: it is a title of the One who was pierced.

We now come back to Genesis 1:1. The *alef-tav* is the **fourth** word while the *wav-alef-tav* is the **sixth** word in this sentence. The *sod* (deeper meaning) of the use of these grammatical words in their specific positions in the opening sentence of the *Torah*, is that King Messiah, the beginning and the goal, the Alpha and the Omega, the *Alef* and the *Tav*, the visible image of the invisible Father, will come to earth two times — 4000 and 6000 years after the creation of Adam, respectively. We know that He indeed came to earth 4000 years after creation. After having come to earth near the year 4000 to pay the price for His Bride, he went to heaven (*shamayim*) — the fifth word in Bereshith 1:1. In the year 6000, He, the Man (*wav*) who is the *Alef* and the *Tav*, will come back to earth (*eretz*) — the seventh word in Genesis 1:1. We will show that an impressive number of prophetic patterns in Scripture teach that the Messiah will come again at the end of 6000 years.

The opening sentence of the *Torah* contains a magnificent and rich Messianic prophecy. It is salvation history in a nutshell. There are at least 4 Messianic prophecies in the first chapter of Bereshith.

The Z} is also an allusion to the *Torah*. The Messiah is the personification of the *Torah*; the righteousness that is through Him is the goal at which the *Torah* aims; under His rule, the *Torah* will go forth from Yerushalayim and the *Devar* (Word) of YHWH from Tziyon.

Because it is a purely grammatical word, some Hebrews advocate the removal of the Z} from modern Hebrew. At this suggestion, most Rabbis cringe in horror. Their resistance against doing away with this little word is to be valued, seeing that it is a term for the Messiah.

Eschatological significance of the Sabbath

The Almighty created the heavens and the earth in 6 days. On the 7th day He was in *menuchah* — in rest. Therefore He set the 7th day apart as a *Shabbat* — a day of rest. The *Shabbat* is called the Day of YHWH. The *Shabbat* is the first thing that is made *qadosh* (set-apart) in Scripture. Does the Almighty do anything without a purpose, without a plan? No. He could have created the universe in a moment. But He *chose* to do it in six days and rest on the seventh day. Why? To communicate with us, to teach us. The account of creation is designed to teach us about our redemption by the Messiah, about the coming of the *Malkut Shamayim* — the Kingdom of Heaven. We will show that the six days of creation followed by the *Shabbat* of rest — the Day of YHWH — is instruction, communication, about salvation history.

The *sod* (deeper meaning) of *eretz* (earth) being the seventh word in Bereshith 1:1 is that the *shalom* and *menuchah*, which is prophetically enacted in the weekly Shabbat, will come to the earth after 6000 years. In the Messianic kingdom, the faithful remnant of man will be in *menuchah* — in rest.

In Tractate Sanhedrin 97a–97b of the Babylonian Talmud, we find the following very profound statement about the teachings of an ancient sage, Rabbi Eliyahu²¹:

It was taught in the school of [the sage, Rabbi] Eliyahu, that the *'Olam ha-zeh* is to endure for 6000 years. In the first 2000 years there was *tohu* (desolation), for 2000 years the *Torah* flourished, and the next 2000 years is the *Yemot HaMashiach*. But through our many iniquities, all these years have been lost.

Paraphrased, this statement reads:

It was taught in the school of the sage, Rabbi Eliyahu, that the present age is to endure for 6000 years. This 6000 year period will unfold in three distinct phases, each lasting 2000 years:

- ① The first 2000 years was the age of desolation.
- ② The next 2000 years was the age of *Torah*, i.e. teaching, instruction.
- ③ The next 2000 years is the *Days of the Messiah*.

But the Days of the Messiah did not begin when and as we [national Yisra'el] expected it to begin. Why not? [Rabbi Eliyahu taught that] it was the many iniquities of the house of Yisra'el that caused this, so that all these years of the *Days of the Messiah* have been lost to Yisra'el.

This view that the present age would last 6000 years and would unfold in 3 stages, each lasting 2000 years, is rooted in Scripture, as well as in the prophetic *tavnit* (pattern) of the seven days of the week: The 6 days of hard work comes to an end and is followed by a *Shabbat of menuchah* (rest). The ancient perspective of the Jewish sages was that every day of the week represents 1000 years. They based this on the statement in Tehillim 90:4 that a 1000 years are to the Almighty as a day.

Tehillim 90:4

For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.

Just as there is seven days in a week, the sages taught, there will be 7000 years to time. The events of the 6 days of creation followed by a day of *menuchah* (rest) is a *tavnit* (pattern) that will recur in salvation-history. The first six days of creation foreshadows the 6 days of work, the 6000 years of the *'Olam ha-zeh*. This will be followed by a 1000 year period of *menuchah* (rest), which is prophetically foreshadowed in the *Shabbat*. This is the 1000 years of the Messianic Kingdom, *Yom YHWH*, which is a major theme of prophecy. We will develop this theme extensively in this chapter.

The ages of salvation history

²¹ Eliyahu is the correct form of the Hebrew name commonly transliterated as Elijah.

If we combine the best of the teachings of the ancient rabbinic sages, with the revelation given in the *B'rit Chadashah* writings, we can construct the following eschatological timeline:

← <i>Olam ha-zeh</i> →			← <i>Athid Lavo</i> →	' <i>Olam ha-bah</i>
0 — 2000	2000 — 4000	4000 — 6000	6000 — 7000	World to come
Age of <i>Tohu</i>	Age of <i>Torah</i>	<i>Yemot HaMashiach</i> (Firstfruits)	<i>Yemot HaMashiach</i> (Messianic Kingdom)	
← Adam sins	Messiah → comes 1	Messiah → comes 2	Messiah reigns as Zeroah YHWH	YHWH reigns directly

Figure 0.1: *The ages of salvation history. The ‘Olam ha-zeh (“this world”) is ordained to last 6000 years, calculated from the impartation of the neshamah to Adam. The first 2000 years was the Age of Desolation, i.e. there was almost no Torah, no showing of the way, no instruction, no teaching. This age ended in failure. During the next 2000 years, that is from the calling of Avraham to the first coming of the Messiah, the Torah flourished. It was the Age of Instruction. At the year 4000 the Go’el came and redeemed us by dying in our place, bearing the punishment that was due to us, making atonement to the Father. At the first Shavuot after the kinsman-redemption was accomplished, the eschatological congregation was empowered. The Yemot HaMashiach (the Days of the Messiah) began. The Yemot HaMashiach has 2 distinct phases. From the redemption to the year 6000, it has a spiritual, first-fruits nature. Those who do teshuvah, i.e. turn from their sins to the Almighty, by faith in the substitutionary qorban chata'at (sin-offering) of Yahushua the Messiah, are spiritually translated into the Yemot HaMashiach. They receive the gift of imputed righteousness and the firstfruits of the adoption as children of Elohim. They receive the foretaste of the powers of the ‘Olam ha-ba, the world to come. The year 6000 marks the beginning of the reign of King Messiah. The resurrection of the dead tzadeqim, the coronation and wedding of the Messiah will take place on Yom Teruah. The tzadeqim will be bodily transformed and the Ruach haQodesh, the Sh'khinah and the Kivod will come upon them in fullness. The Athid Lavo, the Future Age, will arrive; this is phase 2 of the Yemot HaMashiach. After the Millennial reign of the Messiah, the ‘Olam ha-ba, the world to come, will arrive for all the faithful. At that time, Messiah will hand the Kingdom over to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:28).*

Note: The ‘Olam ha-ba is not a simple concept. It is related to resurrection and to being a tzadiq, i.e. having received the tzadeqah of Messiah Yahushua as a gift. When a tzadiq is resurrected, or transformed at the coming of King Messiah, he or she enters the ‘Olam ha-ba. Yahushua is already in the ‘Olam ha-ba. After 7000 years, all the tzadeqim will be in the ‘Olam ha-ba.

During the first 2000 years of the ‘*Olam ha-zeh* (the present age), YHWH gave very little *Torah* (instruction) to mankind — that is why the Rabbinic sages called it the *Age of Tohu* (desolation). Less than 10 chapters in the entire Scriptures deal with this age, which ended in the total failure of mankind, with the exception of one family. The *Artscroll Rosh HaShanah Machzor* describes this initial failure (Sherman, 1985: xix):

The Talmud teaches that in Noach's time, all humanity except Noach and his family had become morally and ethically corrupt. It began with covert denial of Elohim in the form of covert idolatry, and later became public. It spread to thievery and violence of all sorts, reaching a level of decadence...sexual debauchery and perversion became the norm.

This initial failure of mankind was repeated after the Flood with the rebellion at Bavel, apparently led by Kush and Nimrod, according to extra-Scriptural sources.

After the 2000 years of the repeated failure of mankind, YHWH chose Avraham avinu (our father Avraham), made a *b'rit* (covenant) with him and started giving him *Torah*—teaching, instruction. He took him by the hand and showed him the way to walk, how to hit the mark in life. The *Artscroll Rosh HaShanah Machzor*, (1985: xvi) states this as follows:

Avraham was the new beginning for mankind after its failure...

The *Artscroll Tanakh Series*, Vol. 1A (p. 359), explains the qualitative leap in the progression of salvation history that occurred with the calling of Avraham:

With Avraham, there began a new birth of the history of mankind. Avraham, in a real sense, was as much the “first man” as were Adam and Noach. The Era of Desolation ended with the year 2000. It was indeed a bleak era in history. The fall of Adam, the murder of Hevel, the introduction of idolatry, the failure of the first ten generations, the deluge, the failure of ten generations after Noach, the Dispersion. But in the year 1948 (from Creation), Avraham was born. When he was 52 years old—the year 2000 [since Creation]—he began gathering people together in Charan and teaching them how to serve HaShem. With that, an era began. Desolation was over and a new light began to shine upon humanity, the light of Avraham who embodied the light of *Torah*.

Avraham was a new phenomenon; there had never been anyone like him and he was completely apart from his birthplace and family, even from his parents...

When the *b'nei-Yisrael* (the children of Yisra'el) were led from Mitsrayim, YHWH gave the written *Torah* to Mosheh on *Har Sinai* (Mount Sinai) on the first *Shavuot* (Pentecost). During *Pesach* and *Chag Ha Matzah*, He brought them into freedom, and during *Shavuot* He gave them His *Torah*. Before they received the *Torah*, they were a collection of newly freed slaves. At *Shavuot*, YHWH made them into a nation. The *Torah* was and is their national constitution. The *Torah* constitutes the covenant obligations of the nation of Yisra'el, a guide and framework they had to keep for their own good. It is instruction about how to live separated and dedicated unto YHWH, about our sinful, fallen state, our need of redemption by the shed sacrificial blood of the innocent Messiah and our restoration to the *Malkut Shamayim* by objective deeds in salvation-history—deeds performed by the *chesed* (loyal, covenantal love) of the Father and through the faithfulness of the Son. At Sinai, YHWH betrothed Himself to Yisra'el, the firstfruits of the harvest of the nations (Yirmeyahu 2:1-3). The Judaism of the time of Yahushua's ministry in Yisra'el is characterised by a unitary “pattern of religion” namely *covenantal nomism*. The pattern or structure of covenantal nomism is this: (1) YHWH has chosen Yisra'el and (2) given the *Torah*. The *Torah* implies both (3) YHWH's promise to maintain the election and (4) the requirement to obey. (5) YHWH rewards obedience and punishes transgression. (6) The *Torah* provides for means of

atonement, and atonement results in (7) maintenance or re-establishment of the covenantal relationship. (8) All those who are maintained in the covenant by obedience, atonement and YHWH's mercy, belong to the group which will be saved. An important interpretation of the first and last points is that election and ultimately salvation are considered to be by YHWH's mercy rather than human achievement. Passage after passage from Tannaitic literature, the Qumran documents, and inter-testamental literature may be cited to prove conclusively that the perception of late Second Temple Period Judaism (or some branch thereof) as a religion of legalistic works-righteousness, wherein YHWH's approbation must be earned by good works in a system of strict justice, is wrong.

Let us now turn to a beautiful *Torah*-picture of the coming of the *Go'el*. In the account of creation, the lights in the heavens appeared on day four:

Bereshith 1:14-19

¹⁴And Elohim said, "Let there be **lights** in the expanse of the sky to **separate the day from the night**, and let them serve as **signs** to mark seasons and days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to **give light on the earth.**" And it was so.

¹⁶Elohim made two great lights—the **greater light to govern the day** and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars.

¹⁷Elohim set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸to govern the day and the night, and **to separate light from darkness.** And Elohim saw that it was good.

¹⁹And there was evening, and there was morning—the **fourth day.**

After 2000 years of total darkness in the Age of Desolation, and 2000 years of a gradual dawn during the Age of Instruction, i.e. after a total of 4000 years, the Light of the World came into the world to redeem the world.

Yochanan 8:12

When Yahushua spoke again to the people, he said, "I am **the light of the world.** Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

After 4000 years of darkness, the Anointed One came to earth to make *kapparah* (atonement) for our sins and to accomplish the redemption so that we can be adopted as children of the Almighty and be restored back into the fulness of the *Malkut Shamayim*. There are many such exquisite *Torah*-pictures in Scriptural history, because Scriptural history teaches past and future salvation history.

The teaching that 6000 years would elapse from Adam to the physical Messianic Kingdom, is certainly not peculiar to Rabbi Eliyahu, who lived before the time of Yahushua. It was a major teaching of the Jewish sages and the early Christians. Let us review some examples.

In the following quotation from Scripture, Shimon haSh'liach (Peter the apostle) echoes Psalm 90 by restating the principle that there is a specific mapping between days and years:

1 day = 1000 years.

Note that the context of this passage is the judgement that will come at the end of the *'Olam ha-zeh*. (In Scripture, a consuming fire symbolises judgement.)

2 Peter 3:8-9

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With YHWH a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. YHWH is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to do *teshuvah* [come to repentance].

The Jewish sages conceived of history as a long *shavuah* (“seven”), i.e. week, with every day representing 1000 years. Just as the creation of the earth took six days, followed by a *Shabbat* of rest, so there would be 6000 years followed by the great *Shabbat* of the 1000 years of the Messianic Kingdom, as described in Hebrews 4:4-9 and Revelation 20. Because history is viewed as a week, with every day representing 1000 years, the first 4000 years since Adam is called the “former days,” while the last 2000 years before the coming of the *Shabbat* of rest, the Messianic kingdom, represents the *acharit-yamim*, i.e. the latter days. The term *acharit-yamim* is, in Jewish thought, a synonym for eschatology. It is, of course, a special term for the last of the last days—the time when the world would go through convulsions, excruciating pain and the shedding of blood like a woman in labour while the Messiah and His Bride enjoy the *shavuah chuppah* in heaven. The other Jewish term for eschatology is *'Iqqvot Ha Mashiach*—“footsteps of the Messiah.” This term comes from Tehillim 89:51

Tehillim 89:51

Wherewith your enemies have reproached, O YHWH;
wherewith they have reproached the **footsteps of your Messiah**.

The ancient Jewish understanding of eschatology is that it includes everything dealing with the coming of the Messiah. In this view, the entire period between the two comings of the Messiah is eschatological; believers are in the *acharit-yamim* and should walk *'Iqqvot Ha Mashiach*—footsteps of the Messiah.

Science states that the universe is approximately 16.4 billion years old. Scripture teaches, indirectly, that Adam and Eve were created 6000 years ago. How can we reconcile these vastly different figures?

It is very important to note that scriptural chronology does not date events from the first day of creation, but from the day that the neshamah was imparted to Adam, i.e. from the end of the sixth day. Modern archaeology testifies to the accuracy and integrity of scriptural chronology.

The rabbinic sage Nachmanides²² stated that the first 6 days of creation are 6 days of 24 hours each, but that they stand apart from ordinary scriptural chronology, and contain all the secrets and ages of the universe. Nachmanides also stated that the universe started as an infinitesimally small sphere which expanded rapidly. This sounds like the “Big Bang” theory! Could it be that the creation account of Genesis and the Big Bang theory are just different ways of stating the same thing?

The General Theory of Relativity tells us that the difference in the rate at which time passes in different frames of reference, depends on the ratio of the strengths of the gravitational fields in the two systems. Let us suppose that the first 6 days of creation are described from a different frame of reference than the subsequent history, which is described in the earth's own frame of reference. What would the frame of reference for the first 6 days be? The most obvious choice would be to take the point of reference at the very moment when time itself became well-defined, i.e. at the moment of quark condensation.

According to Stephen Weinberg, author of *The First Three Minutes* (1977), the force of gravitation was 10^{12} times stronger at the moment of quark condensation, compared to its strength in our present frame of reference here on earth. Suppose that the duration of the first 6 days of creation are expressed in this cosmic frame of reference, while the remainder of scriptural history is expressed in our own earthly frame of reference. Then the 16.4 billion years of the age of the universe transforms into:

$$\frac{16.4 \times 10^9 \text{ years}}{10^{12}} = 6 \text{ days.}$$

We see that if we place the frame of reference for the description of the first 6 days of creation at the moment of quark condensation, when time became well-defined, 16.4 billion years on earth becomes equivalent to exactly 6 days of 24 hours each in the cosmological frame of reference.

Readers who are interested in reading more on this topic, are referred to the book, *The Science of God*, by Dr. Gerald L. Schroeder—see the Bibliography. South African readers who have difficulty in obtaining Dr. Schroeder's audiotapes and books, may

²² Nachmanides (Ramban; Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman) (1194-1270 C.E.)

Nachmanides was the foremost *halakhist* of his age. Like Maimonides before him, Nachmanides was a Spaniard who was both a physician and a great Torah scholar. However, unlike the rationalist Maimonides, Nachmanides had a strong mystical bent. His biblical commentaries are the first ones to incorporate the mystical teachings of qabalah.

He was well-known for his refutations of Christianity, most notably, his debate with Pablo Christiani, a converted Jew, before King Jaime I of Spain in 1263.

Nachmanides could be described as one of history's first Zionists, because he declared that it is a *mitzvah* to take possession of Israel and to live in it (relying on Bemidbar 33:53). He said, “So long as Israel occupies [the Holy Land], the earth is regarded as subject to Him.” Nachmanides fulfilled this commandment, moving to the Holy Land during the Crusades after he was expelled from Spain for his polemics. He found devastation in the Holy Land, “but even in this destruction,” he said, “it is a blessed land.” He died there in 1270 C.E.

Nachmanides should not be confused with Rabbi Nachman of Breslov.

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The throne of King Sh'lomo

The reign of king Sh'lomo (Solomon) is a *tavnit* of the reign of King Messiah. King Sh'lomo was empowered by the Spirit with *chokhmah* (wisdom). He reigned in shalom and splendour. The *form* of the throne of Sh'lomo (Solomon) is highly significant. In 2 Chronicles 9:17-19 and 1 Kings 10:19 we read that *six steps* led to his throne. Likewise, there will be 6000 years leading up to the throne, the kingdom, of King Messiah.

The Wedding on the Seventh Day

In the first 2 chapters of Yochanan, we have another picture of the 7000 year plan of YHWH. The key is to count the number of days before Yahushua went to the wedding in Cana in the Galil. It is on the seventh day that Yahushua attended the wedding, a parallel to the wedding in the Messianic Kingdom. The first 4 days are found in verses 19, 29, 35 and 43 of Chapter 1. On the fourth day, Yahushua makes a trip, and is not seen until the seventh day (Chapter 2). The journey Yahushua makes on the fourth day relates to scriptural chronology. Starting from [Adam], and counting the days from Adam to the Flood, from the Flood to Avraham, it is apparent that the Messiah came into the world at the end of 4000 years (the fourth day) and that he will return at the end of the year 6000 for the wedding at the beginning of the seventh day, *Yom YHWH*.

The days of Noach

Noach was 600 years old when the flood came. The flood foreshadows the judgement of the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach* that the Almighty will bring over the earth after 6000 years.

The Marriage of Yitzchak and the birth of Ya'aqov

Yitzchak was not seen after the *aqeida* (binding of the sacrifice) on Mount Moriyah (Bereshith 22). We only see him again when he takes a bride at age 40. His son Ya'aqov, who became Yisra'el, is born when Yitzchak is 60 years old. Likewise, Messiah Yahushua went away (to heaven) after He was sacrificed on Mount Moriyah. He came in the year 4000 to take a Bride. Yisra'el will be born again after the 6000 years of the *Olam ha-zeh*.

The Mountain of Transfiguration

The transfiguration of the Messiah teaches important messages on the coming of the Messianic kingdom. It is described in Mattithyahu 17:1-9

¹**After six days**, Yahushua took with him Peter, Ya'aqov and Yochanan the brother of Ya'aqov, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.

²There he was **transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.**

³Just then there appeared before them Mosheh and Eliyahu, talking with Yahushua. ⁴Peter said to Yahushua, “Master, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Mosheh and one for Eliyahu.”

⁵While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

⁶When the *talmidim* heard this, they fell face down to the ground, terrified. ⁷But Yahushua came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don't be afraid.” ⁸When they looked up, they saw no-one except Yahushua.

⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Yahushua instructed them, “Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

The transfiguration takes place after 6 days—a picture of the 6000 years of the *'Olam ha-zeh*. In the preceding passage (Mattithyahu 16:27-28), Yahushua promises His *talmidim* that some of them will not see death till they see Him in His *kivod* (esteem; radiance). This promise was literally fulfilled in the vision of the transfiguration. In Yahushua's transfiguration into His glorified body, the Almighty promises those who put their trust in Yahushua that they would receive a similar body when the Messiah returns—

1 Yochanan 3:2

Dear friends, now we are children of Elohim, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he [Yahushua the Messiah] appears, **we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**

The transfiguration teaches us that, when the *Malkut Shamayim* comes in its fullness with the return of the Messiah, our transformed bodies will have the *kivod*—the glorious radiance of the *Sh'khinah*. Yahushua takes the three and brings them up a high mountain, apart. At the end of 6000 years, the Messiah will gather those who are His *talmidim* [faithful student-followers] together in the *Natzal* (rapture):

Yeshayahu 13:2-3

Lift up a banner on a high mountain, raise your voice unto them, beckon to them, that they may enter through the gates of the nobles. I have commanded my set-apart ones, I have called my mighty ones to my nose—they who rejoice in my exaltation.

Yeshayahu 18:3

All you people of the world, you who live on the earth, when a banner (*nes*) is raised on the mountains, you will see it, and when a trumpet sounds, you will hear it.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

¹⁶For the Master himself will come down from heaven, with a *teruah* (loud command), with the voice of the archangel and with the shofar call of Elohim, and the dead in Messiah will rise first.

¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Master in the air. And so we will be with the Master for ever.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

⁵¹Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—⁵²in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the *last shofar*. For the shofar will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

Leah's children

The account of Leah's children provides a prophetic object lesson about Yisra'el's history. Her husband, Ya'aqov (Jacob), did not love her. So she tried to win his heart by having many children. She called her *fourth* child *Yahudah*, which means: *to praise*. The Messiah was born approximately *4000 years* after creation, from the tribe of Yahudah. After the birth of her fourth child, Leah suffered a period of barrenness. Her slave gave birth to Ya'aqov's children. This may be taken as a picture of the long period when Yisra'el gave birth to wind and did not bring *yeshu'ah* (salvation) to the *Goyim* (cf. Yeshayahu 26:17-18). But after her barrenness, Leah had a 6th boy!—*Z'vulun*—which means, “*to dwell exaltedly*.” This corresponds to the Millennium, the *Day of YHWH*, which will *probably* start *approximately* 6000 years after creation. Then the *faithful remnant* of Yisra'el will *dwell exaltedly* with Messiah. Leah had a seventh child, a daughter—*Dinah*, which means “judgement.” The great white throne *judgement* (Revelation 20:11-15) takes place at the end of the millennium, probably 7000 years after creation. We see that the history and names of the 7 children of Leah may be interpreted as an object lesson on the “the 7000-year plan of *YHWH*.”

The Coronation of King Yoash

In 2 Kings 11:1-16 we find another picture of the coronation and revelation of the Messiah, the Son of YHWH, after 6000 years:

2 Kings 11:1-16

¹When Athaliah the mother of Achaziyah saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy the whole royal family.

²But Yehosheva, the daughter of King Yehoram and sister of Achaziyah, took Yoash son of Achaziyah and stole him away from among the royal princes, who were about to be murdered. She put him and his nurse in a bedroom to hide him from Athaliah; so he was not killed.

³**He remained hidden with his nurse at the *Miqdash* of YHWH for six years** while Athaliah ruled the land.

⁴In the **seventh year**, Yehoiada sent for the commanders of units of a hundred, the Carites and the guards and had them brought to him at the *Miqdash* of YHWH. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath at the *Miqdash* of YHWH. **Then he showed them the king's son...**

...¹²Yehoiada brought out the king's son and ① **put the crown on him**; he ② **gave him the *eidut*** [testimony] and ③ **proclaimed him king**. They

④ anointed him, and ⑤ the people clapped their hands and shouted, “Long live the king!”

¹³When Athalayah heard the noise made by the guards and the people, she went to the people at the *Miqdash* of YHWH.

¹⁴She looked and there was the king, standing by the pillar, as the custom was. The officers and the trumpeters were beside the king, and all the people of the land were rejoicing and blowing *shofarot*. Then Athalayah tore her robes and called out, “Treason! Treason!”

¹⁵Yehoiada the priest ordered the commanders of units of a hundred, who were in charge of the troops: “Bring her out between the ranks and put to the sword anyone who follows her.” For the priest had said, “She must not be put to death in the *Miqdash* of YHWH.”

¹⁶So they seized her as she reached the place where the horses enter the palace grounds, and there she was put to death.

Note that the king's son is hidden for 6 years, and revealed in the seventh year. In *The Messiah Texts* by Raphael Patai (1979), midrashim are quoted that interpret this passage as a *tavnit* of the revelation and coronation of King Messiah after He had been kept hidden in heaven for 6000 years. The rabbis taught that Yoash was hidden in the Temple in the room directly above the *Qodesh haQodeshim*. The midrashim sees this as a picture of Messiah being hidden in heaven, and revealed at the end of 6000 years. When the King's son was revealed, the usurper who reigned murderously and illegally, was eliminated.

The Coronation of King Messiah

From the above, from the account of Shlomo's coronation in 1 Kings 1, as well as from archaeological and historical sources, we can reconstruct the five steps in a Jewish coronation ceremony:

Step 1: **Investiture with the emblems of kingship:** the *netzer* (crown), the *eidut* and *hoq* — a sealed scroll containing prophecies of the greatness of the coming reign of the king.

Step 2: **Anointing:** anointing oil is poured over the head of the king.

Step 3: **Acclamation:** “Long live the king!” Example: Tehillim 47.

Step 4: **Enthronement.**

Step 5: **Homage.**

The *eidut* is thought to be a bracelet that contained the seal of the king, as these were the emblems brought to David at Sha'ul's death. Along with the bracelet, a scroll was presented to the king. This scroll was known as the decree or *hoq*. This decree [*hoq*], a part of the testimony [*eidut*], contained all the royal titles (coronation-names) of the king, as well as prophecies of what he would accomplish during his reign. It would speak of his triumphs over his enemies as well as the esteem of his kingdom. The fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Revelation are set in the context of the Jewish coronation ceremony. It is specifically Yahushua's coronation. The seven-sealed scroll

that is presented to Yahushua in Chapter 5 of Revelation may be seen as an *eidut*, the testimony. Throughout Scripture, every prophecy, every royal title, and every description of the kingdom is also a part of Yahushua's *eidut*.

Let us look at the elements of a classical Jewish coronation ceremony that we find in Revelation 4-5. In Revelation 5, Yahushua receives a *hoq*—a sealed scroll that contains prophetic proclamations or decrees of the events that would unfold during his reign. We also see the acclamation and homage that is given to the Father and the Son:

Revelation 5:5-14

⁵Then one of the *zekanim* (elders) said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Yahudah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is worthy to open the scroll [*eidut; hoq*] and its seven seals.”

⁶Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four *chaiyot*²³ (living creatures) and the *zekanim*. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of Elohim sent out into all the earth.

⁷He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.

⁸And when he had taken it, the four *chaiyot* (living creatures) and the twenty-four *zekanim* fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the *tzadeqim*

⁹And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll [*hoq*] and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for Elohim from every tribe and language and people and nation.

¹⁰You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our Elohim, and they will reign on the earth.”

¹¹Then I looked and heard the voice of many messengers, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the *chaiyot* and the *zekanim*.

¹²In a loud voice they sang:

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power
and riches
and wisdom
and strength
and honour
and esteem
and praise!”

¹³Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

“To Him who sits on the throne
and to the Lamb

²³ Rabbi Ibn Ezra (1873: 34) explains *chaiyot* as “Living beings, signifying a certain class of angels, frequently mentioned by Yechezq'el.”

be praise and honour and esteem and power,
'olam va'ed [for ever and ever]!”

¹⁴The four *chaiyot* said, “Amen”, and the *zekanim* fell down and worshipped²⁴.

The *hoq* that is given to Yahushua during his coronation, is the prophetic part of the Book of Revelation, along with all Scripture's prophecies of the greatness of the reign of Kings. When we put Revelation back into its historical Jewish context, we realise that the prophecies of this book forms part of the coronation-*hoq* of the Messiah — a sealed scroll of prophecies of the greatness of his reign that is given to him as the first step in the coronation ceremony that will take place in heaven.

This shows that the natural exegesis of Revelation 4-5 would be that they describe the coronation of the Messiah in heaven on *Yom Teruah* — the coronation festival, which has Kingship and Coronation as its major theme — at the end of the 6000 years of the *'Olam ha-zeh*.

Let us put Revelation 4-5 besides Dani'el 7:13-14. The context shows that the Son of Man (Aramaic: Bar-Enosh; Hebrew: Ben-Adam) is crowned in heaven just when the reign of the False messiah, the blasphemous ruler of the Revived Roman Empire of the *acharit-yamim*, unfolds on earth:

¹³“In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

¹⁴He was given authority, esteem and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped²⁵ him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Yom Teruah (*Rosh Ha Shanah*) is the coronation festival. It is the *mo'ed*, the appointed time, the annual prophetic rehearsal, for the coronation of King Messiah, the Set-Apart Arm of YHWH, who will rule for him:

Yeshayahu 40:10

See, Adonai YHWH comes with power, and his Arm rules for him.

Yom Teruah is the very next festival that must go into fulfilment. The three pillars of the worship structure on this day are *Malkhiyot* (Kingships), *Zikhronot* (remembrances) and *Shofarot* (shofar blasts). Why is this important? Because the *avodot* (services) were given to King David by the *Ruach haQodesh* of YHWH (1 Chronicles 28), and the

²⁴ Strong's' definition of the word *proskuneo* translated as worship:

4352 **proskuneo** {pros-koo-neh'-o}

1) To kiss the hand towards one, in token of reverence; hence among the Orientals, especially the Persians, to fall upon the knees and touch the ground with the forehead as an expression of profound reverence; in the NT by kneeling or prostration to do homage (to one) or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication.

1a) used of homage shown to men of superior rank: the Jewish high priests;

1b) of homage rendered to YHWH and the ascended Messiah, to heavenly beings, and to demons.

²⁵ Aramaic: *pelakh*. It means to serve, to stand in the service, and pay reverence to.

Almighty does everything with a purpose: to communicate, to teach, to instruct, to guide, to lead us. The *mo'ed Rosh HaShanah* signifies the end of the betrothal between Messiah and his bride, and the coming of the full wedding, the beginning of the Kingdom, the beginning of the Day of YHWH, i.e. the sabbatical millennium. This festival also speaks prophetically about the resurrection of the righteous dead. It also teaches about the concealment of the *tzadeqim* before the *yom tzarah*: the Day of Trouble—this is the only festival that falls on a New Moon, a *Rosh Chodesh*. The hidden moon is a picture of the *tzadeqim*, the believers, who will be hidden on *Yom Teruah* in the year 6000, to escape the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach*. The coronation Psalms of Yisra'el are sung on *Yom Teruah*; Tehillim 47, a coronation Psalm that offers *acclamation* to the King at his coronation, is chanted 7 times in the *Yom Teruah* liturgy:

Tehillim 47

¹For the director of music. Of the Sons of Qorach. A mizmor.

Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to Elohim with shouts of joy.

²How awesome is YHWH Most High, the great King over all the earth!

³He subdued nations under us, peoples under our feet.

⁴He chose our inheritance for us, the pride of Ya'aqov, whom he loved. *Selah*.

⁵Elohim has ascended amid shouts of joy, YHWH amid the sounding of *shofarot*.

⁶Sing praises to Elohim, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises.

⁷For Elohim is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.

⁸Elohim reigns over the nations; Elohim is seated on his set-apart throne.

⁹The nobles of the nations assemble as the people of the Elohim of Abraham, for the kings of the earth belong to Elohim; he is greatly exalted.

We can expect that this Psalm of praise will be sung at the coronation of King Messiah, the Messenger of the very face of YHWH Elohim, the exact representation of His Person.

In the *Yom Teruah* liturgy, the phrase, “Arise, o Arise” is spoken many times. This liturgical element speaks prophetically of the resurrection of the dead *tzadeqim*. In his letter to the believers in Ephesus, Sha'ul quotes a prayer from the ancient liturgy of *Yom Teruah*—

Ephesians 5:14

“Wake up, O sleeper, arise from the dead, and Messiah will shine on you.”

We have now laid the foundation to answer a specific counter-argument against the view that the *tzadeqim* will be caught away before the Birthpangs (i.e. a pre-tribulation rapture). Many premillennialists believe that Scripture teaches that the *tzadeqim* will go *through* the Birthpains. They claim to find strong support for this view in Revelation 20. This chapter teaches that there will be a *first resurrection* when King Messiah returns after the Birthpains. All the *tzadeqim* who have died during the Birthpains, will be resurrected. They will come to life and will reign with King Messiah. The second resurrection, that of the unrighteous, will take place at the end of the millennium.

Because Revelation 20 places the first resurrection — that of the righteous — at the end of the Birthpangs, these premillennialists deduce that the *tzadeqim* will not be caught away before the Day of Trouble, but will have to go through it. If prophecy is interpreted literally, this view leads to a rather fearful expectation of the future, because no dramatic act of physical deliverance will happen between today and the horrors of the *et tzarah* — the time of trouble.

This argument seems quite bullet-proof, until one understands that the prophetic part of the book of Revelation is a coronation-*hoq*. It describes the great events that will happen *during* the reign of King Messiah. The two resurrections mentioned in Revelation 20 will happen *during* his reign. The resurrection of the righteous mentioned in Revelation 20 is the first resurrection that will happen *during* his reign. However, the resurrection of the *tzadeqim* and their catching away with the living believers on *Yom Teruah* before the Birthpangs, takes place *before* the reign of King Messiah begins. It is a resurrection and *natzal* (catching away/deliverance) *for* the coronation, and is therefore not found in Chapter 20, which describes Messiah's reign on earth after his glorious second coming. The major prophetic teachings of *Yom Teruah* are **1** the dawn of *Yom YHWH*, **2** the judgement of humanity into three classes (*tzadeqim*, intermediates and *resha'im*), **3** the resurrection of the righteous dead and the glorification of the living righteous, which will be announced by the blowing of the *last shofar*, **4** and the coronation of the Messiah; the *natzal* is just the bus that we take to the event:

Tehillim 84:9

Behold, O Elohim our **shield**,
and look upon the face of **your Messiah**.

Yeshayahu 21:5b

...Arise, you princes, anoint the shield!

Understood in this light, Revelation 20 does not contradict a pre-tribulation *natzal*.

Jewish Eschatology: A Sabbatical Millennium

The Article *Eschatology* in Volume 5 of the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* (1925) contains a wealth of information of the ancient understanding of the 7000 year plan of Elohim. Under the subheading, **A World-Week**, it states (page 211),

[Jewish eschatology was based upon] a world-week of seven millenniums [i.e. 7 periods of 1000 years each], corresponding with the week of creation, the verse, Psalm 90:4

For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

having suggested that the Present World (the '*Olam ha-zeh*') is to be followed by a sabbatical millennium, the World to Come (the '*Olam ha-ba*').

The *Jewish Encyclopaedia* further explains that the rabbinic sages believed that the 6 millennia of the '*Olam ha-zeh*' are divided into 3 periods of 2000 years each — the *Age of Tohu* (desolation), the *Age of Torah* (instruction), followed by the *Yemot HaMashiach* (the Days of the Messiah). (It will be recalled that Rabbi Eliyahu saw that the *Yemot*

HaMashiach would be lost to the nation of Yisra'el.) The 6000 years of the '*Olam hazeh* correspond to the 6 weekdays of hard labour, while the Millennial Kingdom of the Messiah corresponds to the *Shabbat* of rest. The *Jewish Encyclopaedia* lists the following rabbinic and early Christian sources which formulate the ancient understanding of the 7000 year plan of YHWH explicitly:

- Mishnah Ta'anit 74.
- *Rosh Ha Shanah* 31a.
- Sanhedrin 97a.
- Enoch 23:1.
- 2 Esdras 7:30, 43.
- The Testament of Abraham A19 & B7.
- Revelation 20:1.
- 2 Peter 3:8.
- The Epistle of Barnabbas.
- *Against Heresies* by Irenaeus.

Early Christian Eschatology: A Sabbatical Millennium

Let us now investigate early Christian sources. An early Christian writer, Lactantius, wrote as follows in his *Divine Institutes* (quoted in Jeffrey (1990: 173, 179)):

But we, whom the Set-apart Scriptures instruct to the knowledge of the truth, know the beginning and the end of the age...Therefore let the philosophers...know that the **sixth thousandth year** is not yet completed, and that when this number is completed, the **consummation must take place**...

...Because all the works of Elohim were finished in six days, it is necessary that the world should remain in this state six ages, that is 6000 years. Because having finished the works He rested on the seventh day and blessed it, it is necessary that at the end of the sixth thousandth year all wickedness should be abolished out of the earth and justice should reign for a thousand years.

A document known as the *Epistle of Barnabbas* was written to the early Christian assemblies. Though not canonical, it presents valuable information concerning the teachings of the first century Church. It says the following about the account of creation given in Genesis:

And Elohim made in six days the work of His hands; and He finished them on the seventh day and set it apart. Consider, my children, what that signifies—that He finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this: that in 6000 years YHWH Elohim will bring all things to an end. For with Him, one day is a thousand years...Therefore children, in six days, that is, in 6000 years, shall all things be accomplished.

Early Christian commentators, including Methodius of Tzor²⁶, pointed out that there was a specific reason why Adam died at the age of 930 years, and did not reach an age higher than 1000 years. In Bereshith 2:17, the Creator told him that,

Bereshith 2:17

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the **day** that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely **die**.

Since a day represented a 1000 years to the Almighty, Adam had to die before he could reach the age of 1000 years. Likewise, no natural descendant of Adam could live longer than 1000 years.

In *Against Heresies* (circa 150 YM), Irenaeus states that 6 days of creation followed by a day of rest, has a deep prophetic significance. Views by respected scholars of this early epoch are very significant, as they date from an era before Christianity became completely de-Judaised, and original understandings were tragically lost in the rising tide of Christianised paganism. Irenaeus wrote (quoted in Jeffrey, (1990:176)),

This is an account of the things formerly created, as also it is a prophecy of what is to come. For a day to YHWH is as a thousand years; and in six days created things were completed; it is evident therefore that they will come to an end at the sixth thousand years.

This view expressed by a respected leader of the early church, was directly derived from rabbinic understanding of Scripture. It echoes the teaching of Rabbi Eliyahu, who lived a few centuries before Irenaeus. Statements by other rabbinic sages are in agreement. In the Gemara, for example, Rabbi Ketina stated,

The world endures six thousand years...As out of seven years every seventh year is a year of remission, so out of the seven thousand years of the world, the seventh millennium shall be the 1000 years of remission, that Elohim alone may be exalted in that day [*ba'Yom ha-hu*].

In 1552, Bishop Latimer wrote as follows about his understanding of the 1000 year period that will start around [date omitted — TJVR] (quoted in Jeffrey (1990:178)):

The world was ordained to endure, as all learned men affirm, 6000 years ago. Now of that number, there have passed 5552 years [i.e. in 1552], so that there is no more left but 448 years.

Jeffrey (1990:179) writes as follows about the views and calculations of Archbishop Usher:

...Usher, who had access to many ancient church manuscripts which were tragically lost in the burning of the early Irish churches during the savage Irish wars, also calculated that the millennium would begin in [date given by Jeffrey omitted]. [Was it not for a mistake of 3 years in his calculation,] his calculation would have placed the start of the Millennium in the year [date given by Jeffrey omitted].

Jeffrey (1990:179) states that the above documented evidence are not exhaustive, and that more authorities may be quoted in support:

²⁶ *Tzor* is the Hebrew word for Tyre.

Writings could be produced in great numbers from other early Church leaders including Victorinus, Bishop of Petau, Hippotylus, Justin Martyr and Methodius to illustrate this belief that the Millennium would commence upon the completion of 6000 years from Adam. This widespread evidence, together with 2 Peter 3:8, is a strong argument that this belief was, in fact, the genuine teaching of the apostles and the early Church.

“After two days He will revive us: on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight...”

Hoshea 5:15-6:3 states that YHWH has left Yisra'el and returned to His place. He has judged them severely. In their affliction, Yisra'el will seek Him. After their punishment is complete, they will repent and seek Him earnestly. Then, after 2 days, He will heal and bind her up. On the third day, He will raise Yisra'el up to live in His sight:

Hoshea 5:15-6:3

“...Then I [Jewish midrashim states that it is the Messiah who speaks here] will go back to my place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me.”

“Come, and let us return to YHWH; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. **After two days He will revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.** Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of YHWH. His going forth is established as the morning. He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain to the earth.”

The 2 days of the forsaking of the nation of Yisra'el correspond to the 2000 years of the *Yemot HaMashiach*. At the level of the *sod*, there is yet another allusion to this deep truth in Yochanan 4:40

So when the **Samaritans** came to [Yahushua], they urged him to stay with them, and **he stayed two days.**

The two days that Yahushua stayed with the people of Shomron, correspond to the 2000 years that the *nation of Yisra'el* would be “given up” (Mikhah 5:3), and that the majority of people who receive His salvation, would be Gentile. This time period will be followed by the national salvation of the Messianic remnant of Yisra'el in the Day of YHWH, the 1000 year Messianic Kingdom. The 2000 year period of spiritual barrenness —

Yeshayahu 26:16-18

¹⁶YHWH, they came to you in their **distress; when you disciplined them**, they could barely whisper a prayer.

¹⁷As a woman with child and about to give birth writhes and cries out in her pain, so were we in your presence, O YHWH.

¹⁸We were with child, we writhed in pain, but **we gave birth to wind.** We have not brought salvation [Hebrew: *yeshu'ah*] to the earth; **we have not given birth to people of the world.**

corresponds to the time when Leah could not conceive and gave her slave to Ya'aqov to bear him children. Leah's time of barrenness was bracketed by birth of Yahudah, her

fourth child, and Z'vulun, her sixth child. Yahushua, the lion from the tribe of Yahudah, was born 4000 years after the creation of Adam. Z'vulun means “to dwell exaltedly”; all indications are that the Messianic Kingdom, wherein the faithful remnant of Yisra'el will *dwell exaltedly* with the Messiah, will commence after 6000 years.

In *The Messiah Texts*, Jewish author Professor Raphael Patai echoes the understanding that national Yisra'el would be abandoned for 2000 years (1979: xix):

And when the flames engulfed the Temple, three young priests went up to its roof and threw the keys of the House of Elohim to heaven. A hand reached down and took the key.

And the priests said, “How long, O Adonai, how long?”

And a heavenly voice issued and said: “Not longer than two days, My children.”

Then they knew that the exile of the *Sh'khinah* and the dispersion of Yisra'el would last two millennia, for it is written, “A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday” (Psalm 90:4).

And they said before Him: “Master of the Universe! How can Yisra'el endure two thousand years of suffering?”...

How did Rabbi Eliyahu see in Scripture that the 2000 years of the Days of the Messiah would be lost to the nation of Yisra'el? Nearly 700 prophetic passages in Scripture teach that the faithful remnant of Yisra'el will be Elohim's people when Messiah reigns from Yerushalayim in the Day of YHWH. The *Shabbat*, the seventh day, is a picture of the Day of YHWH, the time of *shalom* and *menuchah*. From Hoshea 5:15-6:3 and the principle that a day represents 1000 years, we know that the time of the great healing of Yisra'el will be preceded by 2 days, i.e. 2000 years, of abandonment and punishment. This is the time when Yisra'el would be *given up* by the Messiah, the Ruler who was born in Beit-Lechem, until the beginning of the birthpains, i.e. the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach* (Mikhah 5:3):

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Yahudah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Yisra'el, whose origins are from of old, from days of immeasurable time.”

³Therefore Yisra'el will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labour gives birth²⁷ and the rest of his brothers return to join the Yisra'elites²⁸.

From Dani'el 9:24-27 we can calculate the time of Messiah's first coming and atoning death²⁹. This happened close to 4000 years since Adam. Rabbi Eliyahu's conclusion follows logically from the above. Other ancient rabbis agreed with him about the duration of the *Yemot HaMashiach*—in Midrash *Tanchuma Ekeb* §7, the rabbis generally concur that the *Yemot HaMashiach* would last for 2000 years (Cohen, 1949: 356).

²⁷ That is, until the beginning of the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach*, the first 7 years of the Day of YHWH, the 70th year-week of salvation history decreed over Yisra'el.

²⁸ That is, the return of the 144 000 from the eschatological country code-named Babylon (cf. Yirmeyahu 50-51).

²⁹ Dani'el 9:25-26 is understood Messianically in 4 Ezra 7:27-30; Talmud Yerushalami, Sukkah, 55b; Talmud Bavli, Sukkah 52a and Sanhedrin, Megillah 3a; Chai Gaon, “Responsum”, (10th century CE).

The 7000 year plan of YHWH is hinted at in the following cryptic words given to the prophet Yeshayahu:

Yeshayahu 30:26

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that YHWH binds up the breach of his people, and heals the stroke of their wound.

Promised restoration after punishment

Advocates of replacement theology are fond of quoting the covenant curses set out in Deuteronomy 28. To this they add their mistaken interpretation, or failure to take note of, Dani'el's prophecy of the seventy sevens. They conclude that Yisra'el has failed their final test and that they will never be YHWH's nation in future. Replacement theology then identifies the general "Church" as the New Yisra'el. The cults go further and identify their specific group as the unique "remnant of Yisra'el" that has a specific mission and/or exclusive salvation. The essence of this mission is usually, alas, to get others to interpret Scripture in the same way they read it! It is a characteristic trait of cults that they give themselves the central, heroic role in the great drama of the end-times. That role belongs, of course to YHWH and His Messiah.

Replacement theology completely neglects...

Deuteronomy 30:1-10:

¹When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come upon you and you take them to heart wherever YHWH your Elohim disperses you among the nations, ²and when you and your children **return to YHWH your Elohim and obey him with all your heart and with all your being** according to everything I command you today, ³then YHWH your Elohim will **restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.** ⁴Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there YHWH your Elohim will gather you and bring you back. ⁵He will **bring you to the land that belonged to your fathers, and you will take possession of it.** He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your fathers. ⁶YHWH your Elohim will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your being, and live. ⁷**YHWH your Elohim will put all these curses on your enemies who hate and persecute you.** ⁸You will again obey YHWH and follow all his commands I am giving you today. ⁹Then YHWH your Elohim will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. YHWH will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your fathers, ¹⁰if you obey YHWH your Elohim and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the *Torah* and turn to YHWH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your being.

Scripture fully supports the finding that replacement theology is wholly erroneous and that YHWH will take up his special dealings with the nation of Yisra'el once again, to

bring a faithful remnant to national salvation in *Yom YHWH*. An impressive number of foreshadowing prophetic patterns support the expectation that the cataclysmic events of the *Chevlei Shel Mashiach* will take place within the next few decades.

Let

Deuteronomy 30:7

YHWH your Elohim will put all these curses on your enemies who hate and persecute you.

be a warning to all who oppose YHWH's restoration of Yisra'el by preaching that Elohim has irreversibly rejected the nation of Yisra'el.

Note: Missing years in the Jewish Calender

According to the Jewish calender, we are now (February 2000) living in the year 5760 since Adam. Most Jews think that this is indeed the case, and that we are still more than 240 years from the end of the year 6000, when we expect the '*Olam ha-zeh* to come to its end, and *Yom YHWH* to begin. This is not correct. According to Professor George Foot-Moore, former head of Jewish Studies at Harvard University, roughly 200 years were not counted (Moore, 1927: 6). This confusion entered during the time when the Persian empire ruled over Yahudah. Professor Moore observes (1927: 6) that,

As for the dates, they had not the canon of Ptolemy to operate with, but only four names of Persian kings in the confusing disorder in which they occur in the Books of Ezra, Nechemyah, and Dani'el, and they were consequently always far out of the way in their chronology of the Persian period...compression of the history...

Our present-day Jewish calender misses these years. All indications are that we are at present certainly less than 40 years away from the correct year 6000. According to the chronological calculations of scholarly Christian inquirers, we may well be less than a decade away from the year 6000.

No man knows the day or the hour of the coming of the Messiah. There are several reasons for this. Although we expect the Messiah at the end of the year 6000, accurate chronological records were not kept. The Jewish calender misses more than 200 years. Although we expect the coming of the Messiah to fetch his bride—the *tzadeqim* of all ages—on a *Yom Teruah*, that *mo'ed* is one long day of 48 hours, and falls on Tishrei 1 & 2. Furthermore, the method that is used nowadays to set the Jewish calender, differs slightly from the methods that was used anciently. This introduces an additional uncertainty of a few days in the date.

I believe that it is rather fruitless to engage in calculations of the time of the coming of the Messiah. It is not necessary, either. Scripture gives a wealth of information about the endtimes. Unfortunately, only a handful of people in the world know what to look for. It is as though both Christianity and Judaism have gone into a state of slumber in their understanding of scriptural prophecy.

Summary

There is an impressive number of prophetic pictures in Scripture that show that we can expect the return of King Messiah, the *Moreh Tzadeqah* (Teacher of Righteousness) on *Yom Teruah* at the end of the year 6000. However, no person can know the exact day and hour of his coming.

The Zohar on the coming of Mashiach

Zohar Va'era 32a

...Come and see—for four hundred years the supervising angel of Yishmael beseeched YHWH. He said “whoever is circumcized has a portion with you?”

YHWH replied, “Yes.”

The celestial prince over Yishmael said, “Well, Yishmael is circumcized; how come he doesn't have a portion with you like Yitzchak?”

YHWH replied, “This one (Yitzchak) is circumcized properly, and this other one (Yishmael) is not. Also, this one does it properly on the eighth day.”

He asked him “And despite all this, even though he is circumcized he gets no reward?”

YHWH responded by distancing the children of Yishmael from Himself in the upper worlds, and He gave them a portion below in the Holy Land, because they are circumcized.

In the future, the children of Yishmael will rule over the Holy Land for a long time while the land is empty, just as their circumcision is empty and without completion. And they will hinder the children of Israel from returning to their place, until their merit in the Holy Land runs out.

In the future the children of Yishmael will stir great wars in the world. And the children of Edom [the West] will gather against them, and make war with them, one on the sea, and one on the land, and one by Yerushalayim; and each one will prevail over the other but the Holy Land will not fall to the hands of Edom.

At the same time, a nation from the end of the world will be awakened against wicked Rome. And it will make war against her for three months, and many nations will gather there, and they will fall by her hand, until all the children of Edom will gather against her from all corners of the earth. And then YHWH will awaken Himself against them, as it says, a “a sacrificial slaughter for YHWH in Botzrah”, and it says, “to shake the corners of the Land”.

And after this, the children of Yishmael will be finished from the world. And all the supernal powers of the nations will be broken, and no power will remain above except for the power of Israel alone.

The Chevlei shel Mashiach—the birthpangs of Mashiach—are bearable only in anticipation of the bliss that follows them...

Sanhedrin 98a

When you see a generation ever dwindling, hope for him .. when you see a generation overwhelmed by many troubles as by a river, await Mashiach.

Bereishit Rabba 42:4

When you see many great nations fighting each other, look toward the footsteps of Mashiach.

The actual date of the Messianic redemption is a guarded mystery unknown to man. It will happen “in its time” (Yeshayahu 60:22), predetermined from the beginning of

creation. This ultimate *qetz* (time of the end) is unconditional: it does not depend on Yisra'el's merit, as it is said, “For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it...” (Yeshayahu 48:11); “I wrought for My Name's sake that it should not be profaned in the eyes of the nations” (Yechezq'el 20:9).

“The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie. Though he tarry — wait for him, for it will surely come... it will not be late...” (Chawaquq 2:3).

“Therefore wait for Me, says YHWH, for the day that I rise to the prey; for My judgment is to gather nations, that I assemble kingdoms, to pour out upon them My indignation, all My fierce anger. For all the earth shall be consumed by the fire of My jealousy” — Tzephanyahu 3:8.

“Happy are all those that wait for him” (Yeshayahu 30:18).

Waiting for Mashiach, anticipating his coming, is not simply a virtue but a religious obligation. Rambam thus rules that whoever does not believe in — and whoever does not yearn for the coming of Mashiach, in effect denies the whole *Torah*, and all the prophets beginning with Mosheh. In the popular formulation of his thirteen Principles of the Faith (the hymn of *Ani Ma'amin*) this is put as follows:

I believe with complete faith in the coming of Mashiach. Though he tarry, nonetheless I await him every day, that he will come.

As stated above, some authorities view this principle as an integral part of the first of the Ten Commandments which states “Anochi — I am YHWH, your Elohim, who has taken you out of the land of Mitzrayim, out of the house of bondage” (Shemoth 20:2). The connection may be seen in the fact that the initial word — Anochi — is linked with redemption:

Anochi signifies the first redemption from Egypt and the last redemption through Mashiach. Anochi is an explicit expression of compassion, consolation and comfort. Indeed, Anochi is an acronym with every one of its four letters signifying Scriptural prophecies of the Messianic consolations and comfort.

In view of this legal obligation to await Mashiach, therefore, one of the first questions an individual will be asked on the Day of Judgment, will be:

“*Tzipita li'yeshu'ah* — did you earnestly expect yeshu'ah?”

Final word

A strong case can be made that the *Tanakh* (Hebrew Scriptures) shows that the itinerant, aggadic proto-rabbi Yahushua is the Messiah and that he will come *two* times. The first time as a *moreh* (teacher), healer, instructor and suffering *eved* (servant). The second time as conquering king — the eschatological Ben-Adam (Son of Man) — Mashiach ben-David.

Look at the Hebrew text of Bereshith 1:1. Look at the word “et” which is spelt alef-taw. Word 4 and word 6 in Bereshith 1:1 is alef-taw. I believe that HaShem inspired every word and letter of the Hebrew Scriptures. Now look at Zekharyah 12:10 in Hebrew.

Note that the pierced One whom they will look up to, is the alef-taw. Therefore Genesis 1:1 seems to contain, at the interpretative level of the sod (secret, mystery, golden apple in a plate of silver) the intimation that the pierced One will come 2 times — the first time about 4000 years after the impartation of the *nishmat chayim* (breath of life) to Adam, because the first alef-taw is the 4th word in Bereshith 1:1. The man (waw) who is the alef and the taw will come again near the year 6000, because the second alef-taw is the 6th word in Bereshith 1:1. Notice that the 5th word in this verse is *shamayim* — the heavens. The man who is the alef-taw will be in heaven inbetween his first and second comings. He is coming back to *haEretz*: the 7th word of Bereshith 1:1. The 7 words of Bereshith 1:1 is also structured as a menorah. The central lamp of a menorah is the *shamash* — the servant lamp from which the other lamps are lit. The 4th word in Genesis 1:1 is the *shamash* or *eved* (servant) of the sentence and speaks of the redemptive work of the *Go'el* of Yisra'el as the servant who brought light to the world.

Note that Revelation 1:7-8 contains a paraphrased quote from Zekharyahu 12:10 where the alef-taw is explicitly rendered into Greek as “alpha and omega.”

Now turn to the last verse of Hoshea 5. There and in the first verses of Chapter 6, the Speaker says that He will return to his *maqom* (place) until Yisra'el repents and seeks Him. The time of their punishment will be “2 days.” From Tehillim 90 we know that a thousand years is to HaShem as a day. The Talmudic sages understood from this verse that the time of the exile of the *Shekhinah* and the punishment of Yisra'el will endure 2000 years. This is the 2000 years when the alef-taw will be in *ha-shamayim* (heaven) — his *maqom* He has returned to.

Now turn to Mikhah. Mikhah 4:8 talks about *Migdal Eder* — the tower a hundred odd metres south of Beit-Lechem (Bethlehem). This is where the Levitical shepherds tended the flocks destined for sacrifice in the *Beit haMiqdash* (Temple). It is these Levitical shepherds that came to see Yehoshua at his birth — to behold the “seh ha Elohim chanoseh chata'at ha-olam” — the Lamb of Elohim who took away the sins of the world. Mikhah 5 teaches that the Ruler of Yisra'el would be born in Beit-Lechem, being the greater Son of Dawid. Then He would give them (Yisra'el) up until the time of the *chevlei-leidah shel Mashiach* — the time of the Birthpangs of the Messiah (the tribulation) that will come upon the world after the 6000 years of the *Olam ha-zeh* — the present age. This time of Yisra'el's *galut* (dispersion) is the time when He has returned to his *maqom* (heaven).

Now turn to Dani'el 9:24-27. Seventy Shavuot (sevens) are decreed over Am Yisra'el and Ir Yerushalayim. After $7 + 62 = 69$ sevens, i.e. yearweeks, i.e. seven year periods, *mashiach nagid* — Messiah the Ruler — shall be “karet” — cut off, executed. The reckoning of this time starts with the decree to rebuild Ir Yerushalayim after the exile to Bavel. This decree was given in 445 BCE — see Nechemyah 2. A calculation brings us to the realisation that 69 yearweeks after the year 445 BCE brings us to the day of Rabbi Yehoshua's triumphant entry into Yerushalayim on the back of the colt, when his followers crowds quoted Tehillim 118 and sang “Ana Adonai hoshia-na” and “Barukh ha-ba b'shem Adonai.” This was Aviv 10, the same day the Pesach lambs were separated (see Shemot). On about 13 Aviv, Rabbi Yehoshua performed a Bediqat chametz — a cleansing of the leaven — on HaShem's House by driving out the unrighteous merchants. On 14 Aviv he was “cut off but not for himself” — Dani'el 9:26.

He was laid in the grave on Aviv 15 and rose on Aviv 17—the day of the Bikkurim (Firstfruits) of the Barley Harvest. On Chag Shavuot, 7 weeks later, the *Ruach Ha-Qodesh* empowered the *qahal/edah* of the *Yemot HaMashiach*. The *mo'edim* of HaShem are the *Iqvot ha-Mashiach*—the Footsteps of the Messiah. Every *mo'ed* is a *miqra qodesh*—a gathering that is a rehearsal. When there is a rehearsal, it means that there is a real event coming.