

## Some Messianic Expectations from Intertestamental Literature

I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob and a scepter will rise out of Israel. It will crush the foreheads of [Moab](#) and break down all the sons of Sheth. [Edom](#) will be dispossessed.  
(Numbers 24.17-19)

### Expectations

And on the staff of the [prince](#) of the whole community they will write his name and the names of Israel, Levi and Aaron, together with the names of the twelve tribes according to their genealogy and the names of the twelve chiefs of their tribes.

[War scroll 5.1-2]

He will gather a holy people whom he will lead in righteousness; and he will judge the tribes of the people that have been made holy by YHWH their Elohim. He will not tolerate unrighteousness even to pause among them, and any person who knows wickedness will not live with them. For he will know that they are all children of their Elohim. He will distribute them upon the land, according to their tribes. The alien and the foreigner will no longer live near them.

[Psalms of Solomon 17.26-28]

The foreigners who join themselves to YHWH, to minister to Him, to love the name of YHWH, and to be His servants, every one who keeps the shabbat and does not profane it, and holds fast My covenant - these I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples.'

Thus says YHWH Elohim, Who gathers the outcasts of Israel: 'I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.'

[Isaiah 56.6-8]

The Spirit of the Sovereign Master is on me, because YHWH has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of YHWH's favor and the day of vengeance of our Elohim, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

[Isaiah 61.1-3]

And after this there will arise for you a star from Jacob in peace. And a man will 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 holy Father. And he will pour out the spirit of grace on you. This is the shoot of Elohim most high; this is the fountain of life of all humanity. Then he will illumine the scepter of my kingdom, and from your root will 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.

(Testament of Judah 24.1-6  
alluding to Joel 2.28-29 and Isaiah 11.1-5)

And the star is the seeker of the Law who came to Damascus, because it was written *A star has come forth out of Jacob and a scepter has risen out of Israel*. The scepter stands for the prince of the congregation. At his coming *he will break down all the sons of Sheth*.

(Damascus Document 7.18-21  
alluding to Amos 9.11)

For *there will come a man*, says the oracle, and leading his host to war he will subdue great and populous nations, because Elohim has sent to his aid the reinforcement which befits the righteous.

(Philo On rewards and punishments 95)

There had spread over all the Orient an old and established belief that it was fated at that time for a man coming from Judaea to rule the world. This prediction, referring to the emperor of Rome, as it turned out, the Jews took to themselves, and they revolted accordingly.

(Suetonius, *Vespasian* 4-5)

### Son of

And a king will come forth from the sons of Jesse, and the Messiah will be exalted from the sons of his sons. In the days of the Messiah of Israel will peace increase in the land, and the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together and a little suckling child will lead them.

[*Targum Isaiah 11.1 and 6*]

The interpretation of the matter concerns the branch of David, who will appear at the end of days to save Israel and to exterminate his enemies. And Elohim will sustain him with a mighty spirit [...] And Elohim will give him a throne of glory, a holy crown.

[4Q161]

And after this there will arise for you a star from Jacob in peace. And a man will arise from my posterity like the sun of righteousness, walking with sons of men in gladness 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 holy Father. And he will pour out the spirit of grace on you. And you will be sons in truth, and you will walk in his first and final decrees. This is the shoot of Elohim most high, this is the fountain for the life of all humanity. Then he will illumine the scepter of my kingdom, and from your root will 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.

[*Testament of Judah 24*]

[...] When great fear settled upon him, he fell down before the throne. Then he said to the king: 'Live, o king, forever! You are vexed, and changed is the complexion of your face; depressed is your gaze. But you will rule over everything forever! And your deed will be great. Yet distress will come upon the earth; there will be war among the peoples and great carnage in the provinces, which the bands of the king of [Assyria](#) will cause. And Egypt will be with them. But your son will be great upon the earth, and all peoples will make peace with him, and they will all serve him. For he will be called "son of the great Elohim", and by his name he will be named. He will be hailed "son of Elohim" and they will call him "son of the most high".

For some years they will rule upon the earth and will trample everything under foot; people will trample upon people; province upon province, until there arises the people of Elohim, and everyone rests from the sword. Then his kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all his ways will be in truth. He will judge the land with truth, and everyone will make peace. The sword will cease from the land, and all the provinces will pay him homage. The great Elohim, by his might, will make war for him. Peoples He will put in his hand; and all of them He will cast before him. His dominion will be an everlasting dominion, and all of the territories of the earth will be his.'

[4Q246]

As I looked, thrones were placed and one that was ancient of days took his seat; his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came forth from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

I looked then because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was slain, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire. As for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away, but their lives were prolonged for a season and a time.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the ancient of days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be destroyed.

[*Daniel 7.9-14*]

The high-priest asked him, 'Are you the Messiah, the son of the Blessed?'

Jesus replied, 'I am. And you will see the son of man seated at the right hand of the Power, coming with the clouds of heaven.'

[*Mark 14.61-62*]

*Thrones were placed* - what is there to say? One throne for Him and one for [the son of] David, even as has been taught: 'One was for Him and one was for David' - the words of rabbi Aqiba.

Rabbi Yose said to him: 'Aqiba, how long will you profane Elohim? Rather, one throne is for justice and one for mercy.'

Did he accept this answer from him, or did he not accept it? Come and hear what has been taught: 'One throne for justice and one for mercy' - from now on, the words of rabbi Aqiba.

Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah said to him: 'Aqiba, what do you have to do with the interpretations of narratives? You'd better occupy yourself with purity laws. It is: one as a throne and one as a footstool: a throne as a seat and a footstool for support of His feet.'

[Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin* 38b]

And the star is the seeker of the law, who came to Damascus; as it is written *A star has journeyed out of Jacob and a scepter is risen out of Israel*. The scepter is the Prince of the whole congregation, and at his coming *he will break down all the sons of Seth*.

[Thanksgiving Psalms Hodayot]

[*Damascus document* 7.18-21]

[...] during the time of unElohimliness until the appearance of the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel [...]

[*Damascus document* 12.23-13.1]

This is the exact statement of the ordinances in which they walk until the Messiah of Aaron and Israel appears and expiates their iniquity.

[*Damascus document* 14.18-19]

Those who heed Him are the poor of the flock; they will be saved at the time of visitation. But others will be delivered up to the sword at the coming of the Messiah of Aaron and Israel.

[*Damascus document* 19.9-11]

And they will not depart from any counsel of the law to walk in all the stubbornness of their heart, but they will be governed by the first ordinances in which the members of the community began their instruction, until the coming of the prophet and the anointed ones of Aaron and Israel

[*Manual of discipline* 9.9b-11]

### Messianic Rule

This is the sitting of the men of renown called to the assembly for the council of the community when Elohim will have begotten the Messiah among them. The Priest will enter at the head of all the congregation of Israel, then are all the chiefs of the sons of Aaron, the priests, called to the assembly, men of renown. And they will sit before him, each according to his rank.

Afterwards, the Messiah of Israel will enter. The chiefs of the tribes of Israel will sit before him, each according to his rank, according to their position in the camps and during their marches; then all the heads of family of the congregation, together with the wise men of the congregation, will sit before them, each according to his rank.

And when they gather for the community table, or to drink wine, and arrange the community table and mix the wine to drink, let no man stretch out his hand over the first-fruits of bread and wine before the Priest. For it is he who will bless the first-fruits of bread and wine, and will first stretch out his hand over the bread. And afterwards, the Messiah of Israel will stretch out his hands over the bread. And afterwards, all the congregation of the community will bless, each according to his rank.

[*Messianic Rule* 1Q28a 2.11-21]

Probably, the idea of a dual Messiahship did not disappear with the sect (which came to an end during the [war](#) between the Jews and Romans of 66-70). It is possible, but certainly not proven, that [Simon ben Kosiba](#) was recognized as the Messiah of Israel and his collaborator Eleazar of Mode'in as the Messiah of Aaron.

### Priestly Messiah

Melchizedek

And Melchizedek will avenge with the vengeance of the judgment of Elohim [...] from the hand of Belial and from the hand of all the spirits of his lot. And to his help are all the heavenly ones on high. He [...] all sons of might and [...] this.

This is the day of salvation about which Elohim spoke through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah who said: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace, who brings glad tidings of good, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion: 'Your heavenly one is king.'* [Isaiah 52.7]

Its interpretation is this. The mountains are the words of the prophets, those who [saw the things ordained and] prophesied to all those who mourn in Zion. *And who brings good news:* this is the Messiah of the spirit, of whom Daniel speaks: *He who brings glad tidings of good, who proclaims salvation.* That is what is written concerning him, when He speaks [...] *to comfort those who mourn in Zion to instruct them in all the ages of the world.*

[11Q13 col.2, 13-20]

Seeing then that we have a great high-priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the son of Elohim, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high-priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

[Hebrews 4.14-16]

#### Wisdom Teacher Messiah

Taught by Elohim, the Messiah will be a righteous king over the gentile nations. There will be no unrighteousness among them in his days, for all will be holy and their king will be YHWH Messiah.

He will not rely on horse and rider and bow, nor will he collect gold and silver for war. Nor will he build up hope in a multitude for a day of war. YHWH himself is his king, the hope of the one who has a strong hope in Elohim.

He will be compassionate to all the nations, who reverently stand before him. He will strike the earth with the word of his mouth forever; he will bless YHWH's people with wisdom and happiness.

And he himself will be free from sin, in order to rule a great people. He will expose officials and drive out sinners by the strength of his word.

[Psalms of Solomon 17.32-36]

The heavens and the earth, and all that is in them, will obey Elohim's Messiah, who will not turn aside from the commandments of the holy ones. Take strength in his service, you who seek YHWH. Will you not find YHWH in this, all you who wait patiently in your hearts? For YHWH will visit the pious ones, and the righteous ones He will call by name.

Over the meek His spirit will hover, and the faithful He will restore by His power. He will glorify the pious ones on the throne of the eternal kingdom. He will release the captives, make the blind see, raise up the downtrodden. Forever I will cling to Him, and I will trust in His loving kindness and His goodness. [...] of holiness will not delay [...] And as for the wonders that are not the work of YHWH, when He [...]

Then he will heal the slain, resurrect the dead and announce glad tidings to the poor. He will lead the holy ones; he will shepherd them; he will do [...] and all of it [...]

[4Q521]

This text is remarkably similar to a better known text.

When the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus, they said to him: 'Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'

At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So he replied to the messengers: 'Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.'

[Q = Luke 7.20-23 || Matthew 11.2-6]

Yours is the battle! From You comes the power; the battle is not ours. Not our might nor the strength of our hands display valor; as You declared to us in former times, *A star has journeyed from Jacob, a scepter has arisen from Israel; and he will crush the temples of Moab and overturn all the sons of Seth. And he will rule from Jacob and will cause the survivors of the city to perish. And the enemy will become a conquered land and Israel will display its valor.* And by the hand of your Messiahs, the seers of things ordained, You have announced to us the times of the battles of Your hands, in which You will be glorified.

(War scroll 11.4-9)

I will be reckoned with the angels, my dwelling is in the holy council. Who [...] and *who has been despised like me? And who has been rejected of men like me?* And who compares to me in enduring evil? No teaching compares to my teaching. For I sit [...] in heaven. Who is like me among the angels? Who could cut off my words? And who could measure the flow of my lips? Who can associate with me and thus compare with my judgment? I am the beloved of the King, a companion of the holy ones and none can accompany me. And to my glory none can compare, for I [...]. Neither with gold I will crown myself, nor with refined gold [...]

[4Q431 and 4Q427 fr.7]

Rejoice, you righteous among the angels [...] in the holy dwelling, hymn [...] proclaim the sound of a ringing cry [...] in eternal joy, without [...] to establish the horn of His Messiah [...] to make known his power in might.

[4Q491, fr.11, col.1]

#### War Messiah

And concerning that which He said to David: *I will give you rest from all your enemies* [2 Samuel 7.11b], this means that He will give them rest from all the sons of Belial, who will seek to cause them to stumble that they may destroy them and swallow them up, just as they came with a plot of Belial to cause the sons of light to stumble and to devise wicked plots against them, delivering his soul to Belial in their wicked straying.

*And YHWH declares to you that He will build you a house; and I will raise up your seed after you, and I will establish his royal throne forever. I will be a father to him and he will be My son.* [2 Samuel 7.11c-14a] This is 'the branch of David' who will stand with the interpreter of the Law, who will sit on the throne in Zion at the end of days; as it is written, *I will raise up the tent of David which is fallen*[Amos 9.11]. This is the fallen tent of David who will stand to save Israel. [.....]

*Why do all the nations rage and the peoples imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against YHWH and against his Messiah.* [Psalm 2.1-2] The interpretation of the passage concerns the kings of the nations who will rage against the elected ones of Israel at the end of days.

[4QFlorilegium 1.7-13, 18-19]

And he will destroy him and his army. [...] And you will swallow up all the uncircumcised, and you will [...] And they will be righteous, and he will ascend to the height [...] one anointed with the oil of the kingdom of the [...]

[4Q458, fr.2, col.2]

#### Commentary on Isaiah

As is written in the book of Isaiah the prophet, *And felled will be the thickets of the forest with an ax, and Lebanon by a mighty one will fall. A shoot will arise from the roots of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.* Its interpretation is [...] the branch of David. And they will judge the [...]. And the prince (*nasi*) of the Community, the branch of David, will put him to death [...] with tambourine and with dancing. And the priest will command [...] the slain of the Kittim.

[4Q285 5.1-6]

YHWH will shatter the adversaries who arose to do evil to His people; He will blast them with a loud noise issuing from heaven. YHWH will exact punishment from [the proverbial northern enemy] Gog and from the marauding armies of the nations who come with him from the ends of the earth. He will give strength to His king and will make great the kingdom of His Messiah.

[Targum 1 Samuel 1.10]

How beautiful is king Messiah who is to arise from among those of the house of Judah. He girds his loins and goes forth to battle against those that hate him; and he kills kings with rulers, and makes the mountains red from the blood of their slain and makes the valleys white from the fat of their warriors. His garments are rolled in blood; he is like a presser of grapes.

[Targum Neofiti Genesis 49.10-12]

*Deuteronomy 18.15-19.* As we have already seen [above](#), this text was written in the seventh century BCE. Moses said: 'YHWH your Elohim will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. For that is what you asked of YHWH your Elohim at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "Let us not hear the voice of YHWH our Elohim nor see His great fire any more, or we will die." YHWH said to me: "What they say is good. I 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 them. If anyone does not listen to My words that the prophet speaks in My name, I Myself will call him to account.'"

I Enoch 48 3. Yea, before the sun and the signs were created,  
Before the stars of the heaven were made,  
His name was named before YHWH of Spirits.

4. He will be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall,  
And he will be the light of the Gentiles,  
And the hope of those who are troubled of heart.

5. All who dwell on earth will fall down and worship before him,  
And will praise and bless and celebrate with song YHWH of Spirits.

6. And for this reason hath he been chosen and hidden before Him,  
Before the creation of the world and for evermore.

7. And the wisdom of YHWH of Spirits hath revealed him to the holy and righteous;  
For he hath preserved the lot of the righteous,  
Because they have hated and despised this world of unrighteousness,  
And have hated all its works and ways in the name of YHWH of Spirits: p. 67  
For in his name they are saved,

And according to his good pleasure hath it been in regard to their life.

8. In these days downcast in countenance will the kings of the earth have become,  
And the strong who possess the land because of the works of their hands;  
For on the day of their anguish and affliction they will not (be able to) save themselves.

9. And I will give them over into the hands of Mine elect:

As straw in the fire so will they burn before the face of the holy:

As lead in the water will they sink before the face of the righteous,

And no trace of them will any more be found.

10. And on the day of their affliction there will be rest on the earth,

And before them they will fall and not rise again:

And there will be no one to take them with his hands and raise them:

For they have denied YHWH of Spirits and His Anointed.

The name of YHWH of Spirits be blessed.

Moses will go forth from the midst of the wilderness and the king Messiah from on high: this one will lead at the head of the flock, and that one will lead at the head of the cloud; and the word of YHWH will be between the both of them; and they will proceed together. This is the Passover night before YHWH.

[*Fragment Targum Exodus 12.42*]

Pierced Messiah 4Q285

1 ] Isaiah the prophet: The thickets of the forest] will be cut [down

2 with an axe and Lebanon by a majestic one will fall. And there shall come forth a shoot from the stump of  
Jesse [3] the Branch of David and they will enter into judgment with . . [4] and the Prince of the Congregation,  
the Bran[ch of David] will kill him 5 by stroke]s and by wounds. And a Priest [of renown (?)] will command [ 5  
[ ] with wounds (also “stripes” or “piercings”), and the Priest (the High Priest) shall order [ ]6 the s]lai[n] of  
the Kitti[m]

Gabriel Stone

By three days–live, I Gabriel command you, prince of princes, the dung of rocky crevices.”