

THE SCRIPTS FOR THE MESSIAH

by

WILLIAM EDWARD BRIDGES

(Under the Direction of David Williams)

ABSTRACT

This study will investigate Jewish messianic expectations through the texts of the Pseudepigrapha that contain the noun “Messiah,” or a translation equivalent from ca. 100 BCE to 100 CE. The first chapter will introduce the subject matter, problems in this area of research, a discussion of the original meaning and derivation of “Messiah,” and a short explanation of the Pseudepigrapha. The body of this thesis, chapters two through five, will detail the four texts that meet the established criteria of the study. The texts, *The Psalms of Solomon*, *the Parables (Similitudes) of Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch*, will be addressed chronologically and each will begin with a discussion of language, date, and provenance to provide the context in which each was written, and will be followed by an investigation into the messianic expectations presented in each text. The final chapter will detail the similarities and differences between the texts.

INDEX WORDS: Messiah, Messianic expectation, Pseudepigrapha, Second Temple Period, *The Psalms of Solomon*, *the Parables (Similitudes) of Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion.
(Isaiah 61: 1-3a)

The impetus of this thesis is to investigate Jewish messianic expectations during the Second Temple Period through Jewish texts of the time. This process is hindered by numerous factors including terminology, classification, nomenclature, etc. For example, what does it mean to say that a text or writing is messianic or describe a belief as a messianic expectation? Joseph Klausner defines a messianic expectation as, "The prophetic hope for the end of this age, in which there will be political freedom, moral perfection, and earthly bliss for the people Israel in its own land, and also for the entire human race."¹ Klausner has divorced a "Messiah" from his definition, which I believe contributes to additional ambiguity. Furthermore, Klausner's definition sounds very similar to eschatology, with "hopes" that would have been common to virtually all Jews in the first century, and is in no way necessarily interrelated to messianism.² I believe that Marinus de Jonge is correct in stating, "Messianic expectation should only denote the expectation of a redeemer who is actually called 'Messiah.'"³ In keeping with de Jonge, my thesis is going to investigate the Jewish texts of the Pseudepigrapha that contain the noun

¹ Joseph Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel* (trans. W. F. Stinespring; New York: Macmillan, 1955), 9.

² Although there are numerous complex ideas associated with the term eschatology, the simplest and most straightforward definition is a doctrine or ideology of the end of time, which is how it will be employed within this thesis.

³ Marinus de Jonge, "Messiah," *ABD* 4:777-788.

“Messiah,” “Christ,” or its translation equivalent from ca. 100 BCE to 100 CE. Only four texts meet these criteria: *The Psalms of Solomon*, *the Parables (Similitudes) of Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch*.⁴

Scope of Study

It is important to note that this study does not purport or strive to demonstrate the complete range of Jewish messianic expectations during the first century. The function in restricting this study to the guidelines above is to avoid the numerous problems of terminology and classification. As previously touched upon, there is no consensus on the definition of “messianic,” or “Messiah,” or “eschatology,” etc., which means that there is also no consensus on what constitutes a messianic text or expectation. By investigating only the texts that contain the term “Messiah” or its equivalents, much of the ambiguity associated with the terminology and classification of other studies is reduced if not eliminated. As an example, most scholars have interpreted the animal allegory in 1 Enoch 90:37-38 as messianic and identified the “white cow” or “white bull” as a symbol for the “Messiah.”⁵ This passage reads:

Then I saw that a snow-white cow was born, with huge horns; all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the sky feared him and made petition to him all the time. I went on seeing until all their kindred were transformed, and became snow-white cows; and the first among them became something, and that something became a great beast with huge black horns on its head. (1 En. 90:37-38)

⁴ Other texts of this period meet the established criteria, the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gospels of the New Testament, but only those contained in the Pseudepigrapha are to be investigated. The primary reason for this methodology is that the messianic expectations contained in the texts of the Pseudepigrapha have received little attention in comparison to the scrolls of Qumrân and the Gospels. In addition, both represent a sect of Judaism with very specific messianic thought in the case of the Gospels, and fragmentary and often ambiguous messianic expectations depicted in the scrolls of Qumrân. The texts of this study, while at times exhibiting similarities of thought with some first century Jewish parties, offer the “possibility” of viewing the messianic thought of first century Judaism outside sectarian lines.

⁵ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1-36; 81-108* (Hermeneia; ed., by Klaus Baltzer; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 406.

I will concede that this passage has been severed from its original context, nevertheless, interpreting this allegory as messianic and containing a concealed description of the “Messiah” is highly dubious considering that there is no “Messiah” in the passage or in the entire *Dream Visions* (1 En. 83-90).⁶

However, if within the four texts of this study only the passages that contained the title “Messiah” were investigated, any additional associations as understood and represented by the authors would go unnoticed, which would present a myopic view of Jewish messianic thought. Therefore, any additional titles or epithets within the texts that are demonstrated to be synonymous with “Messiah” will also be considered. This represents a slight alteration to de Jonge’s definition of messianic expectation, however it is an essential change if the objective is to obtain an understanding of the nuances of “Messiah,” and uncover equivalent expressions as understood by the authors of the texts.

Derivation of Messiah

Before embarking on a study of messianic expectations, the original meaning and application of the term “Messiah” should be explicated. The English term “Messiah” is derived from the Greek *messias*, which is a transliteration of the Aramaic equivalent for the Hebrew משיח, meaning “anointed.” The fact that משיח was transliterated by the Greek *messias*, as well as translated by χριστός (*christos*), seems to suggest that it was used in a technical sense within the Jewish vernacular of the first century CE.⁷ However, the *terminus technicus* “Messiah,” denoting an eschatological redeemer is not attested in the Hebrew Bible.⁸

⁶ James H. Charlesworth, “From Messianology to Christology: Problems and Prospects,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. James H. Charlesworth et al; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 18.

⁷ William Horbury, *Jewish Messianism and the Cult of Christ* (London: SCM Press, 1998), 8.

⁸ Charlesworth et al., eds., “From Messianology to Christology,” 11.

In the Hebrew Bible, the noun משיח (“anointed” or “anointed one”) occurs 38 times. It is always used in reference to a person, and is primarily applied to the Israelite king (29 times), but also the high priest (6 times), the patriarchs (2 times), and once by Deutero-Isaiah of Cyrus the Great. The term is employed most often in the expression משיח יהוה (“the Lord’s anointed”) to denote the sacral and intimate relationship between God and the Israelite king, specifically the Davidic king.⁹ This title designates the king as God’s terrestrial representative who has been chosen to rule over the Lord’s people.¹⁰ It is generally believed that the technical use or title “Messiah” is an abbreviation of the fuller expression משיח יהוה. However, the absolute form is only found in the late book of Daniel (9:25, 26), and המשיח (“the Messiah”) as an absolute, determined noun never occurs in the Hebrew Bible unless used attributively (Leviticus 4:3, 5, 16; 6:15).¹¹ What this indicates is that aside from the ambiguous passage in Daniel, in the Hebrew Bible משיח is always qualified, such as “the Lord’s anointed” or “his anointed.”

While the general use of משיח was traditionally reserved for the Davidic king, in the post-exilic period when kingship ceased and the priestly writer lived, the title was applied to the high priest as head of the people.¹² There is no evidence that the anointing of priests continued during the Hellenistic period, and it is believed to have been replaced by the investiture of special vestments. “It must be emphasized that the cessation of the ceremonial act of anointing of the priest, or high priest, and the collapse of the kingship meant that *there was no anointed one*

⁹ Franz Hesse, “χρίω κτλ,” *TDNT* 9:496-509.

¹⁰ de Jonge, “Messiah”, in *ABD*, 4:779.

¹¹ Hesse, *TDNT* 9:502.

¹² Hesse, *TDNT* 9:505.

among God's people."¹³ What impact this had on messianic thought is unclear, but the expectation of an eschatological "Anointed One" emerged during the Second Temple period in a transformation of biblical material. Therefore, it must be reiterated that in the Hebrew Bible the noun משיח is applied to various people and conveys a special relationship with God, but it is never used in reference to an eschatological savior.¹⁴

Pseudepigrapha

As an additional note, the following four texts are considered part of the Pseudepigrapha, which currently includes 65 documents from the period 250 BCE to 200 CE. The Pseudepigrapha is a modern compilation that lacks a consensus regarding its contents, therefore some texts may be found in additional collections. It contains a variety of literary genres composed by both Jews and Christians, many of which were regarded as divinely inspired and authoritative.¹⁵ The Pseudepigrapha provides a wealth of information regarding the Judaism and Christianity of this time, and contains some of the most important sources for messianic speculation. The four texts that follow are the only books of the Pseudepigrapha that contain the noun "Messiah," and each text is introduced with a discussion of date, language, and provenance to provide its general context. This study will proceed chronologically beginning with the *Psalms of Solomon*, which is where we will now turn.

¹³ James H. Charlesworth, "From Jewish Messianology to Christian Christology Some Caveats and Perspectives," in *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (ed. Jacob Neusner et al., eds.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 225-264.

¹⁴ Sigmund Mowinckel, *He that Cometh* (trans. G. W. Anderson; New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), 5.

¹⁵ James H. Charlesworth, "Pseudepigrapha, OT," in *ABD*, 5:537-540.

CHAPTER 2

THE PSALMS OF SOLOMON

Solomon son of David established himself in his kingdom; the Lord his God was with him and made him exceedingly great. (2 Chronicles 1:1)

Language

It is generally agreed by contemporary scholars that the original language of the *Psalms of Solomon* was Hebrew; however, there are no extant Hebrew manuscripts. The text survives in 10 Greek manuscripts (two are defective) and 1 Greek fragment dating from the tenth to the fifteenth century CE.¹⁶ The text also survives in five Syriac manuscripts that originated from the tenth to the sixteenth century CE.¹⁷ The consensus has been that the Greek composition is a translation of the Hebrew, and that the Syriac version was produced from the Greek. This view was challenged by K. G. Kuhn in 1937, who argued that the Syriac version was also translated from the Hebrew. Recently in similar findings, Joseph Trafton concluded that “the Syriac is based primarily, if not exclusively, on a lost Hebrew *Vorlage*, rather than on the Greek.”¹⁸ Despite these findings, the Greek manuscripts provide scholars with the only complete version of all eighteen psalms, and the utility of the Syriac manuscripts in uncovering the Hebrew original is fragmentary at best.

¹⁶ H. F. D. Sparks, ed., *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 649.

¹⁷ Kenneth Atkinson, *An Intertextual Study of the Psalms of Solomon: Pseudopigrapha* (vol. 49 of *Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity*; Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellon Press, 2000), 400. He notes that the possible exception is a fragment of Pss. Sol. 3 in a 7th century manuscript.

¹⁸ Joseph L. Trafton, “The Psalms of Solomon in Recent Research,” *JSP* 12 (1994): 5.

Date

The earliest external evidence for dating the *Psalms of Solomon* is from the fifth century CE and therefore provides no assistance in dating the original composition.¹⁹ However, most scholars consider the nearly transparent historical allusions as providing ample evidence for the time of its authorship. If a comparison is made between the siege of Jerusalem as it is depicted in the *Psalms of Solomon* and Pompey's conquest of Jerusalem as recorded by Josephus, the similarities between the two leave little room for doubt that they detail the same events.

The leaders of the country met him with joy. They said to him, 'may your way be blessed. Come, enter in peace.' They graded the rough roads before his coming; they opened the gate of Jerusalem, they crowned her city walls. He entered in peace as a father enters his son's house; he set his feet securely while they wavered. He killed their leaders and every (man) wise in counsel; he poured out the blood of the inhabitants of Jerusalem like dirty water. He led away their sons and daughters, those profanely spawned. (Pss. Sol. 8:16-21)²⁰

Arrogantly the sinner broke down the strong walls with a battering ram and you did not interfere. Gentile foreigners went up to your place of sacrifice; they arrogantly trampled (it) with their sandals. (Pss. Sol. 2:1-2)

The preceding verses sound very similar to Josephus' account of the conquest of Jerusalem at the hands of Pompey.

But those of the other faction admitted Pompey's army and handed over to him the city and palace. (*Antiquities* XIV 58)²¹

He moved up and set in place the siege engines and instruments of war that had been brought from Tyre, and began to batter the temple with his catapults. (*Antiquities* XIV 62)

And there was a slaughter everywhere . . . And so of the Jews there fell some twelve thousand . . . One of those taken captive was Absalom, the uncle and at the same time

¹⁹ The eighteen Psalms are mentioned at the beginning of Codex Alexandrinus. See Charlesworth, *OTP*, volume 2, pg. 639.

²⁰ All quotations from the *Psalms of Solomon* are from the translation of R. B. Wright, "Psalms of Solomon," in *Expansions of the "Old Testament" and Legends, Wisdom and Philosophical Literature, Prayers, Psalms, and Odes, Fragments of Judeo-Hellenistic Works* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; vol. 2 of *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 639-670.

²¹ Josephus, *Ant.* 14.58 (Thackeray, LCL).

father-in-law of Aristobulus. And not light was the sin committed against the sanctuary, which before that time had never been entered or seen. For Pompey and not a few of his men went into it and saw what was unlawful for any but the high priests to see. (*Antiquities* XIV 69-72)

Perhaps the clearest allusion is found in Pss. Sol. 2:26-27, which details the death of this gentile invader.

And I did not wait long until God showed me his insolence pierced on the mountains of Egypt, more despised than the smallest thing on earth and sea. His body was carried about the waves in much shame, and there was no one to bury (him), for he (God) had despised him with contempt. (Pss. Sol. 2:26-7)

Now the limit of his last hour had come; he was borne off in an Egyptian boat and . . . murderous Achilles had driven the point through his side . . . He is tossed on the sands and mangled on the rocks, while his wounds drink in the wave; he is the plaything of the Ocean. (*The Civil War*, Book VIII 610-710)²²

These parallels are convincing and seem to indicate that the *Psalms* were indeed written sometime between or after the conquest of Jerusalem by Pompey (63 BCE) and his death in 48 BCE. However, this in no way allows for the conclusion that all of the psalms were written during this period, or that any of the psalms were necessarily composed at the same time. We must allow for the possibility that at least a few psalms could have been written before or after these events and account for a final redaction of the collection. Nevertheless, "Because there are no hints at the reign of Antigonos in Jerusalem (40-37), nor at that of Herod the Great (37-4), scholars usually assume that the collecting took place before 40 BC."²³ Therefore, the *Psalms of Solomon* are dated by the majority of contemporary scholars between 63 BCE-48 BCE; however, other time periods and conquerors have been and continue to be maintained by scholars.²⁴

²² Lucan, *Civil War* 8.610-710 (Duff, LCL).

²³ Marinus de Jonge, *Outside the Old Testament*, (vol. 4 of *Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World 200 BC to AD 200*; ed. P. R. Ackroyd et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 161.

²⁴ Other suggested conquerors are Antiochus Epiphanes IV, the Parthians, Herod the Great and Sosius, and Titus to name a few. For a review of proposed dates, see Atkinson, *An Intertextual Study*, 410-419.

Provenance

The majority of scholars believe that the *Psalms of Solomon* emanated from Jerusalem, and at the very least are “patently Palestinian.”²⁵ In Pss. Sol. 1, Jerusalem is personified as the speaker and subject and this is possibly the case in Pss. Sol. 7 and 15.²⁶ In addition, the reference in Pss. Sol. 4.1 to “the council of the devout” is taken to represent Jerusalem’s Sanhedrin. Jerusalem is the stage for all of the historical events in Pss. Sol. 2, 8, and 17 and Jerusalem is addressed in Pss. Sol. 11. The centrality of Jerusalem throughout the *Psalms* is taken to be the primary indication for composition within the city, with the author or authors having possibly experienced the corrupt Sanhedrin and the siege of the city firsthand. However, great importance was placed on the city of Jerusalem and its Temple by Jews throughout Palestine and elsewhere, and its centrality in the *Psalms* does not necessitate a Jerusalem origin.

The *Psalms of Solomon* have been attributed to a variety of groups, and in fact, Herbert E. Ryle and Montague R. James titled their commentary *The Psalms of the Pharisees, Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon*. The variety of ascriptions includes virtually every sect or group in first century Judaism that scholarship has acknowledged. This includes not only the Pharisees, Essenes, or “an unnamed stream of Essenes,” but also the Hasidim and the Sadducees.²⁷ However, since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, modern scholarship has been less enthusiastic in granting authorship to any particular party, yet Pharisaic authorship is still widely upheld. James H. Charlesworth, Jacob Neusner, and other scholars are correct in noting that we currently have too little information about first century Jewish groups to mandate that a text be

²⁵ Sparks, *The Apocryphal Old Testament*, 652.

²⁶ Atkinson, *An Intertextual Study*, 11.

²⁷ Trafton, “The Psalms of Solomon,” 7.

written by any of them, particularly considering that Josephus, one of the few sources of Pharisaism, states that there were approximately 6,000 Pharisees at the time of Herod. According to Josephus, the Pharisees were the largest of the three groups (Pharisees, Essenes, and Sadducees); therefore, “relatively few Jews belonged to one of the parties.”²⁸ Despite this fact, scholarship has consistently endeavored to ascribe authorship to one of these parties. For our purposes, we should regard the *Psalms of Solomon* as reflecting “the piety of a group of Jews who were not Pharisees necessarily but shared much with that group.”²⁹

χριστός κύριος

The *Psalms of Solomon* present us with the first clear description of a Davidic Messiah in Early Judaism. The term χριστός or משיח occurs four times: in Pss. Sol. 17:32 (χριστός κύριος), in the title of Pss. Sol. 18 (χριστοῦ κυρίου), in Pss. Sol. 18:5 (χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ), and Pss. Sol. 18:7 (χριστοῦ κυρίου), therefore, my analysis will consider only these two psalms.³⁰ However, there is disagreement over the correct translation of 17:32 and “in the expression χριστός κύριος, we have perhaps the ‘crux’ of the whole book.”³¹

The consensus view has been to read χριστοῦ κυρίου (the Lord’s messiah) in place of or in favor of χριστός κύριος (lord messiah). Concerning this Joseph Klausner states, “Obviously we have here a Christian alteration, as also in the Septuagint at Lamentations 4:20,” and Marinus De Jonge similarly notes, “The way the word χριστός is used in Ps. 18 suggests that 17:32 was

²⁸ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE-66 CE* (London: SCM Press, 1992), 14.

²⁹ Charlesworth, “From Jewish Messianology to Christian Christology Some Caveats and Perspectives,” 234.

³⁰ James H. Charlesworth et al., eds., *Qumrân-Messianism: Studies on the Messianic Expectations in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 29; Marinus de Jonge, “The Use of the Word ‘Anointed’ in the Time of Jesus,” *Novum Testamentum* 8, (1966):134.

³¹ Herbert E. Ryle and Montague R. James, *Psalms of the Pharisees, Commonly Called the Psalms of Solomon* (Cambridge: University Press, 1891), 141.

deliberately altered or carelessly copied by a Christian scribe—compare Lam. iv 20 LXX.”³² The contention of Klausner, De Jonge, and others is that the Hebrew *Urtext*, as well as Lamentations 4:20, originally read משיח יהוה (the Lord’s anointed), which is a royal title in the Hebrew Bible. However, Robert R Hann has proposed that the original manuscript of Pss. Sol. 17 read משיח אדון (the lord messiah), which is “one of several new messianic titles combining ‘messiah’ with a political honorific used as an appositional modifier.”³³

Hann argues that the primary motivation against accepting χριστός κύριος is that it could not possibly reflect the thought of a Jew in the first century BCE. However, אדון is the Hebrew linguistic equivalent of κύριος, the union of ‘lord’ with other designations was widespread in Hellenistic practice, and Ryle and James affirm that אדון “might very properly be applied to a supreme conqueror of earthly origin.”³⁴ In addition, nine of the eleven Greek manuscripts attest to the χριστός κύριος reading. Concerning the two additional manuscripts, one is illegible past Pss. Sol. 16:8 and the other omits the line entirely.³⁵

It has been suggested that χριστός κύριος is the result of a Christian interpolation, yet this accusation is difficult to sustain since this phrase occurs only once in the New Testament (Luke 2:11).³⁶ Furthermore, the assertion by De Jonge and other scholars that the wording of Pss. Sol. 18 necessarily reflects the original phrase in Pss. Sol. 17 is absurd. The *Psalms of Solomon* are

³² Klausner, *The Messianic Idea in Israel*, 321; de Jonge, “The Use of the Word ‘Anointed’ In The Time of Jesus”, 134, continues this by recommending we also compare “the *variae lectiones* in Sir. xlvii II and II Macc. iii 30 and the quotation from Is. xlv in Ep. Barn 12:11.”

³³ Robert R. Hann, “Christos Kyrios in PsSol 17:32: ‘the Lord’s Anointed’ Reconsidered”, *NTS* 31 (1985): 620.

³⁴ W. Foerster, “κύριος,” *TDNT* 3:1039-1058; Hann, “Christos Kyrios,” 625; Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees*, 142.

³⁵ Hann, “Christos Kyrios,” 621.

³⁶ Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees*, 142, note, “It should be borne in mind, moreover, that this is the one and only phrase in the book to which any suspicion of the kind has attached . . . so that a very strong case would have to be made out before we could admit the validity of the charge here.”

comprised of a collection of psalms that appear to have been written across time and possibly by multiple authors. Pss. Sol. 17 has transparent historical allusions allowing scholars to date it between 61-57 BCE, but this is not the case for Pss. Sol. 18. De Jonge himself concedes, “There are indications that Psalm 18 is little more than a conventional composition made up when the psalms were put together into one collection.”³⁷ Nevertheless, scholars continue to alter the reading of Pss. Sol. 17 based on a late redactional psalm, by someone at a different time, and with quite possibly a different theology.³⁸

The previous discussion is germane to our investigation not only because Pss. Sol. 17 and 18 hold the only references to a Messiah in the *Psalms of Solomon*, but also because the personality of the author, text, and Messiah are drastically altered based upon what conclusion we reach concerning the original *Vorlage* (משיח יהוה or משיח אדון). If we accept the majority opinion (משיח יהוה), then we begin our analysis of the *Psalms of Solomon* with the predilection that the author is closer to the language of the Hebrew Bible in referring to the Messiah. However, if we accept משיח אדון as the designation in the original Hebrew *Vorlage*, then we must either accept that this is a messianic or political title, or simply two appositional honorifics, which denotes a qualification of the Messiah such as we find in Daniel 9:25. Contrary to the opinion of De Jonge, I believe that this denotes a political title, which I will explicate further in the forthcoming discussion.³⁹

The nature and function of the Messiah in Pss. Sol. 17 and 18 are intimately linked with the author’s theology and understanding of the kinship of the Lord. The Hebrew Bible records

³⁷ de Jonge, “*The Use of the Word ‘Anointed’*,” 135.

³⁸ de Jonge, *The Use of the Word “Anointed,”* 134, states, “There is a rather important difference, however, between Ps. 17 and Ps. 18, in so far as Ps. 17 is nearer to the O. T.-usage than Ps. 18.” However, this is based upon his reading the original *Vorlage* of Pss. Sol. 17:32 as משיח יהוה.

³⁹ de Jonge, “Messiah”, in *ABD*, 4:783.

the ideology that YHWH is king. This can be seen in virtually equivalent expressions such as “The Lord will reign forever and ever” (Exod 15:18), “You are my King and my God” (Ps 44:4a), and “The Lord is king, he is robed in majesty” (Ps 93:1a).⁴⁰ Similarly, Pss. Sol. 17 begins by asserting, “Lord, you are our king forevermore” and closes with “The Lord Himself is our king forevermore.” The psalmist prays to God, not the Lord Messiah, to “dispatch his mercy to Israel” and deliver them “from the pollution of profane enemies.” The Messiah functions as an agent of the Lord “faithfully and righteously shepherding the Lord’s flock” (Pss. Sol. 17:40b) and “The Lord himself is his king” (Pss. Sol. 17:34a). Therefore, the entire function and role of the Messiah must be seen within this paradigm. This is significant because it is between these two statements asserting the Lord’s kingship that a plea for a new terrestrial king of Davidic descent is made. Beginning and ending Pss. Sol. 17 with the declaration of the Lord’s kingship serves to hedge the personality and function of the Messiah within this ideology. Furthermore, the entire description of the role and character of the Davidic Messiah are contained between these two phrases.⁴¹

A Legitimate King

One of the central themes of Pss. Sol. 17 and 18 is that the new king, “the son of David” or “the Lord Messiah,” who will be raised up by the Lord is the legitimate king and ruler. The historical allusions within Pss. Sol. 17 seem to indicate that the author is issuing a polemic against the Hasmoneans, who “took to themselves the throne of David as well as the High Priesthood of Aaron.”⁴² There is some disagreement regarding which Hasmonean first took the

⁴⁰ All biblical quotations are taken from the NRSV.

⁴¹ Pss. Sol. 18 adds very little to our understanding of the character and role of the messiah in the *Psalms*. Furthermore, there is no direct reference to David or a ‘son of David’ in Pss. Sol. 18. Therefore, the majority of the discussion will focus on the Messiah as he is depicted in Pss. Sol. 17.

⁴² Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees*, 127.

title 'king,' but many scholars accept that it was Aristobulus I (104-103 BCE).⁴³ The psalmist notes that:

But (because of) our sins, sinners rose up against us,
 they set upon us and drove us out.
 Those to whom you did not (make the) promise,
 they took away (from us) by force;
 and they did not glorify your honorable name.
 With pomp they set up a monarchy because of their arrogance;
 they despoiled the throne of David with arrogant shouting.
 But you, O God, overthrew them, and uprooted their
 descendents from the earth,
 for there rose up against them a man alien to our race. (Pss. Sol. 17:5-7)

The psalmist believes that the Hasmoneans have usurped the throne of David because of their sins, but God has now removed the illegitimate rulers by sending “a man alien to our race” (Pompey). It is against the backdrop of the illegitimate kingship of the Hasmoneans, and in contrast to them, that the Davidic Messiah is compared and depicted.

As previously noted, Pss. Sol. 17 begins by acknowledging that the Lord is Israel's king and the Messiah is his agent. In contrast to the Hasmoneans, who usurped the throne of Israel, the “son of David” will be raised up by the Lord. Furthermore, in place of those who “took away (from us) by force,” the Davidic heir will take the throne in “the time known to you, O God.” In emphasizing these facts, the psalmist creates a dichotomy between the Hasmonean kingship and the kingship of the Davidic Messiah. The psalmist validates the rule of the Davidic Messiah through consistent comparisons with the illegitimate Hasmoneans. Pss. Sol. 17:4 states, “Lord, you chose David to be king over Israel, and swore to him about his descendants forever, that his kingdom should not fail before you.” The throne of Israel is the rightfully possession of the “son of David” because of the Lord's promise, which can be traced to 2 Samuel 7, Psalm 89:3-4,

⁴³ E. P. Sanders, *Judaism*, 23.

Psalms 132:11-12, and other passages in the Hebrew Bible. However, in seizing the throne, the Hasmoneans have rejected the Davidic kingship, and therefore have rejected the will of God.⁴⁴

In Pss. Sol. 18 the Davidic king is called “his messiah”, in reference to God, and he is the “Lord’s messiah” or the “Lord’s anointed” (χριστοῦ κυρίου). “The expression implies his close relationship to Yahweh, the sacral character of his office and his person (as priest-king), and the abnormal endowment of holy power which is his because he has been anointed king.”⁴⁵ The “son of David” has been anointed by the Lord, which is the ultimate legitimization of his kingship, and the decisive pronouncement of the Hasmoneans as charlatans.

Furthermore, the Hellenistic practice of applying the title κύριος (κύριος) to royal figures, which was applied to notables such as Ptolemy XIII, Augustus, Herod the Great, and Agrippa I and II, seems to have motivated the psalmist in appending it to χριστός.⁴⁶ I agree with Hann’s conclusion that the use of the phrase χριστός κύριος (משיח אדון) stresses “the legitimacy of the coming messianic king by applying to him the political title ‘lord’, and thereby to have denied such legitimacy to the established authorities in Jerusalem and in Rome.”⁴⁷ It is in light of this evidence and the author’s theme of legitimacy, that the phrase χριστός κύριος should be analyzed and understood. In applying the title χριστός κύριος (Lord Messiah), the psalmist has added the final legitimization and has validated the reign of the Davidic king threefold: politically, religiously, and divinely. By mistaking the original Hebrew *Vorlage* of the text, many scholars have overlooked the political legitimization that the title bestows, which is an essential theme of the author.

⁴⁴ Gene L. Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’ in Psalms of Solomon 17,” in *Ideal figures in Ancient Judaism* (ed. John J. Collins and George W. E. Nickelsburg; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980), 72.

⁴⁵ Mowinckel, *He that Cometh*, 5.

⁴⁶ Foerster, *TDNT* 3:1049.

⁴⁷ Hann, “Christos Kyrios,” 625.

The Son of David

The actions and character of the Messiah within Pss. Sol. 17 are delineated with virtually unparalleled clarity.⁴⁸ In Pss. Sol. 17:21, representing one of the earliest references to a future Davidic king and Davidic Messiah in Jewish literature, the psalmist pleads for “the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel.” It is generally assumed that the dissatisfaction with the Hasmonean rulers and faith in the promises contained within the Hebrew Bible impelled the expectation of a Davidic king.⁴⁹ As previously noted, numerous Hebrew Bible passages guarantee the throne of Israel to David and his descendants. 2 Samuel 7 states:

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you . . . and I will establish his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me . . . I will not take my steadfast love from him . . . Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever. (2 Sam 7:12-16)

This passage serves as the traditional archetype of the Lord’s promise to David and his descendants. However, several prophetic passages concentrate not on the Lord’s promise, but on the fulfillment of the promise and the coming of a future Davidic king.

Jeremiah 23:5 states, “The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king.” This thought is also found in Jeremiah 33:14-15a where it notes, “The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous branch to spring up for David.” The title “son of David” has implicit messianic overtones because of these and similar passages that speak of the coming Davidic heir. However, for our purposes, the title “son of David” is significant because this figure is explicitly

⁴⁸ See note 25.

⁴⁹ John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Ancient Literature* (ed. David Noel Freedman; New York: Doubleday, 1995), 95.

identified as the “Lord Messiah,” “king of Israel” and “the Lord’s Messiah.”⁵⁰ The expectation of a Davidic Messiah is attributed to a variety of biblical texts including those mentioned above, as well as Isaiah 11, canonical Psalm 2, Balaam’s oracle in Numbers 24, and Genesis 49.⁵¹ E. P. Sanders maintains that the expectation of a Davidic Messiah was not the norm in the first century, but because of clear references in biblical passages such as these, this notion could not be completely abandoned.⁵² Although numerous passages may have contributed to the author’s ideology concerning the “son of David,” the primary Biblical influences discernable in Pss. Sol. 17 and 18 are from Isaiah 11 and canonical Psalm 2.⁵³ These biblical allusions, as well as any others, will be highlighted as they pertain to the role and character of the Messiah, which is where we should now turn.

The Expectations of the Messiah: Role and Character

Ryle and James have classified the Messiah’s role as both destructive and restorative, which is an accurate representation.⁵⁴ After issuing a plea for a new king (“the son of David”) over Israel in Pss. Sol. 17:21, the psalmist reveals a series of destructive tasks for the Messiah to perform. The Messiah is “to destroy the unrighteous rulers” (22a), “to purge Jerusalem from gentiles” (22b), “to drive out the sinners from their inheritance” (23a), “to smash the arrogance of the sinners like a potter’s jar” (23b), “to shatter all their substance with an iron rod” (24a), “to

⁵⁰ Kenneth E. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its Significance for Messianism* (SBLEJL 7; ed. William Adler; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 162, states “It is significant too that this is the only time the phrase ‘Son of David’ occurs with reference to a messianic figure in early Jewish literature.”

⁵¹ John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 158.

⁵² Sanders, *Judaism Practice and Belief*, 295-6.

⁵³ Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’,” 72.

⁵⁴ Ryle and James, *Psalms of the Pharisees*, liii.

destroy the unlawful nations with the word of his mouth” (24b), and to “condemn sinners by the thoughts of their hearts” (25).

From the Messiah’s actions listed above a vague and possibly inaccurate conception may be formed concerning the Messiah’s role, therefore we should investigate more assiduously. In the destructive phase, which spans from Pss. Sol. 17:21-17:25, we learn that the Hasmoneans (“the unrighteous rulers”) will be destroyed and the gentiles will be purged from Jerusalem (17:22).⁵⁵ Likewise, in the following verses, the sinners who are driven out and “destroyed,” “shattered,” and “smashed,” are generally understood as representing the Hasmoneans and their supporters. In Pss. Sol. 17:24, the Messiah is to “destroy the unlawful nations with the word of his mouth.” The use of the plural “nations” indicates that for the psalmist the present enemies have come to represent and embody all those that have subjugated Israel.⁵⁶

The language in this phase is drawn heavily from Isaiah 11 and canonical Psalm 2, and the foremost influence is Isaiah 11:2-4.⁵⁷ The passage in Isaiah and the *Psalms of Solomon* both entreat the Lord to bestow the Davidic king with “strength” (17:22; NRSV of Isaiah 11:2b reads, “might”) and in “wisdom and in righteousness” (17:23a; NRSV of Isaiah 11:2a reads, “wisdom and understanding”). The Septuagint translation of Isaiah 11:4b (“word of his mouth”) is also incorporated by the psalmist into 17:24b.⁵⁸ In addition, practically all of canonical Psalm 2:9

⁵⁵ In this instance, “gentiles” seems to represent the Romans and Pompey. Elsewhere however, “gentiles” is used to represent foreign nations.

⁵⁶ Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’,” 73.

⁵⁷ Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’,” 72.

⁵⁸ NRSV renders Isaiah 11:4b as “he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth.”

(“You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel”) can be found in 17:23b-24a.⁵⁹

It has been asserted by James H. Charlesworth that the Messiah in the *Psalms of Solomon* “does not portray a political, revolutionary, and militant Messiah.”⁶⁰ It is not uncommon for Charlesworth to follow such a statement with a quote of Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan to Genesis 49:11, and conclude that the “Messiah in the Psalms of Solomon is, of course, not portrayed as a bloody warrior.”⁶¹ On this note, Charlesworth is correct in his conclusion; however, the Messiah in the Psalms was never alleged to be a bloody Messiah, only a violent one, which Charlesworth’s comparison hardly diminishes. John Collins, in commenting on Charlesworth’s conclusion, has remarked, “The imagery in Ps Sol 17 is certainly less bloody, but it is scarcely less violent.”⁶² To review, the language of the destructive phase requires the “son of David” to “destroy,” “purge,” “drive out,” “smash . . . like a potter’s jar,” “to shatter all their substance with an iron rod,” “to destroy,” and “at his warning nations will flee from his presence; and he will condemn sinners.”⁶³ This is unequivocally violent, in language as well as imagery. Furthermore, the biblical texts that are drawn upon, Isaiah 11 and canonical Psalm 2, are also violent in nature. To conclude that the Messiah does not act in a violent manner is to overlook the obvious. Similarly, if the Messiah were not violent, why would nations flee from his presence? Although I maintain that the Messiah is categorically violent, this feature is indeed

⁵⁹ Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord,’” 72.

⁶⁰ Charlesworth et al., eds., *Qumrân-Messianism*, 31.

⁶¹ Charlesworth et al., eds., *Qumrân-Messianism*, 31.

⁶² Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 55.

⁶³ The designation “destructive phase” and “restorative phase” by Ryle and James necessitates a violent upheaval, as well as the eventual repair and renewal.

secondary to the emphasis placed upon his spiritual nature, although these two aspects should be seen as interrelated and inseparable.⁶⁴

There is no indeterminate state between the two phases and the next verse (17:26) after the end of destruction marks the beginning of the Messiah's restorative tasks. The Messiah is said to "gather a holy people" (26a), "judge the tribes of the people" (26b), "distribute them upon the land according to their tribes" (28), "judge peoples and nations" (29), "purge Jerusalem (and make it) holy" (30b), "expose officials and drive out sinners" (36b), shepherd "the Lord's flock"(40b), "lead them all in holiness" (41a), and "judge the peoples in the assemblies, the tribes of the sanctified" (43a). The restorative tasks of the Messiah and the depiction of the sanctified Jerusalem and Israel occupy the remainder of Pss. Sol. 17. The author has dedicated twenty verses (17:26-17:46) to explicate the spiritual characteristics of the Messiah, his reign, and the blessings for those "born in those days," while the destructive phase is detailed in only five.

In the restorative phase, the Messiah is going to restore Israel and Jerusalem and make it "holy as it was from the beginning" (17:30b). The Messiah is going to gather "a holy people," judge the tribes that "have been made holy by the Lord their God," and then "distribute them upon the land according to their tribes" (28a). The reestablishment of the tribal system has biblical parallels in Isaiah 11:12 and 49:6, and the distribution of land according to the tribal system can be found in Ezekiel 45:8 and 47:13-14, 21-22. In the next verse, the author reveals the status of the gentiles in the purified Jerusalem and restored Israel. Pss. Sol. 17:28b states, "the alien and the foreigner will no longer live near them." Collins notes, "The holiness of Israel

⁶⁴ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 55, has stated, "The spirituality of the psalms is rooted in political and national conceptions and requires the exaltation of Israel above all other nations."

is understood in the priestly tradition of separation from the Gentiles.”⁶⁵ This ideology, that gentiles will be purged after the restoration of Jerusalem and Israel, has biblical antecedents in Joel 3:17 and Isaiah 52:1. In addition, in the verses that follow it is revealed that the Messiah is going to judge the gentiles “in the wisdom of his righteousness,” and that “he will have gentile nations serving him under his yoke.” The dominion over the gentiles by the Davidic king can be found in canonical Psalm 72:11, which states, “May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.” Despite the violent actions levied upon the gentiles in the Messiah’s destructive phase, the restorative phase reveals that, in the eschatological vision of the psalmist, the gentiles occupy a diminutive but positive position, as the Messiah will be “compassionate to all the nations” (17:34b).⁶⁶

In order for the Messiah to carry out his responsibilities in the destructive and restorative phases, the psalmist has characterized the king as having been endowed by God with a number of spiritual gifts or qualities, which not only enable him to accomplish the work of the Lord, but also define the spiritual character of the Messiah. As indicated above, the psalmist prays for the Lord to bestow upon the Messiah “strength” and “wisdom and in righteousness.” Just as these qualities were needed in executing God’s justice in the destructive phase, they are also requisite in the restorative phase. Wisdom (17:29, 35b, and “wise” in 37b) and righteousness (17:26a, 29, 32a, 37b, 40b, and “unrighteousness” in 27a, 32a) are heavily emphasized in Pss. Sol 17, which represent vital qualities to be possessed by both the Messiah and the community, seeing that “he will not tolerate unrighteousness” (17:27). These qualities govern how the Messiah is to drive out the sinners (“in wisdom and in righteousness”), how he will lead the people (“in

⁶⁵ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 55.

⁶⁶ Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty*, 163.

righteousness”), how he will judge peoples and nations (“in the wisdom of his righteousness”), and how he will rule the Lord’s people (“righteously shepherding the Lord’s flock”).

For the psalmist, righteousness is a quality to be obtained and upheld, and purity is the ensuing gift from God that is enacted through the Messiah. The Messiah is going to “gather a holy people” and judge the tribes that “have been made holy by the Lord their God.” Furthermore, the Messiah is going to “purge Jerusalem (and make it) holy” because in his days “all shall be holy.” This is an important statement, which should not go overlooked. The psalmist has portrayed the Messiah with the cultic duties of sanctifying Jerusalem in addition to his royal obligations. The Messiah, while similar to the Hasmoneans in occupying the dual role of king-priest (the Hasmoneans are seen as usurping this position), represents a reversal of the Hasmoneans who “held both royal and priestly duties and had subsumed the former under the latter.”⁶⁷

With the emphasis on righteousness, holiness, and the Messiah’s role of purifying the city of Jerusalem in Pss. Sol. 17, it seems almost natural that the Messiah is depicted as “free from sin, (in order) to rule a great people.” This phrase, although representing a *hapax legomenon*, does not seem peculiar in the context of the Pss. Sol. 17 or the expectations conveyed by the psalmist. It is possible that the author of Pss. Sol. 17 viewed the Messiah’s sinless nature as a requirement for his relationship with God, and that sin or impurity would disallow the relationship they share, which would also compromise the other qualities conferred by God.⁶⁸ Alternatively, one could readily assume that “a holy people” and a sanctified Jerusalem would necessitate an ideal and sinless king to lead them. After all, the king was “taught by God” and

⁶⁷ Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’,” 75.

⁶⁸ Davenport, “The ‘Anointed of the Lord’,” 80.

“God made him powerful in the holy spirit.” However, this is an inimitable expectation and it is important to bear in mind that “there is no indisputable Jewish parallel for such a statement about the messiah.”⁶⁹

The preceding discussions present us with a detailed and clear picture of the character and role of the Messiah, the state of Israel and Jerusalem, and the position of the gentiles. The “Lord Messiah” or “son of David” will purge Jerusalem of both the Romans and the Hasmoneans. The gentiles will be driven from the land, but they will be dealt with righteously and compassionately. The city as well as its inhabitants will be holy, “lead in righteousness,” and none will be oppressed. The Messiah is endowed by God with spiritual gifts with which to accomplish these tasks. The Lord is the true king, and the Messiah serves as his agent and viceroy over a consecrated Jerusalem and a restored tribal system in Israel.

There is nothing to suggest that the Messiah in the *Psalms of Solomon* is anything other than human. His function and role are centered on Jerusalem and Israel and do not refer to or take place in transcendent realms. Although depicted with superhuman characteristics, such as being sinless, possessing words “as the words of the holy ones,” and the fact that he will “condemn sinners by the thoughts of their hearts,” he is nevertheless of flesh and blood.⁷⁰ The Son of David is the legitimate king who fulfills the promise by God, who is chosen by God, and further legitimated by the assignment of a political title. Although the Messiah violently removes the sinners and unrighteous in the destructive phase, in the restorative phase the Messiah reigns in peaceful dominion, which is represented by the following:

(For) he will not rely on horse and rider and bow,
nor will he collect gold and silver for war,

⁶⁹Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 55.

⁷⁰Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 55.

Nor will he build up hope in a multitude for a day of war.
The lord himself is his king,
the hope of the one who has a strong hope in God. (Pss. Sol. 17:33-34)⁷¹

⁷¹Pss. Sol. 17:33-34 is often used to support the claim that the Messiah is non-violent. However, this fails to account for the placement and context in which the verses occur. The Messiah has already fulfilled the violent tasks of purging Jerusalem and Israel as required by God, which is what allows for the reign of peace and a time when a war-machine is no longer needed.

CHAPTER 3

THE SIMILITUDES OF ENOCH

Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years. Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him. (Genesis 5:23-24)

Language

The book of *1 Enoch*, including the *Similitudes*, is only complete in Ethiopic (Ge'ez), and at present, the *Similitudes* principal manuscript evidence is from the sixteenth and seventeenth century CE.⁷² There is almost universal acceptance that the Ethiopic version originated from a Greek translation, which derived from a Semitic original.⁷³ Disagreement has centered on whether the Semitic *Urtext* was Aramaic or Hebrew, or if the original was composed in both languages, which is how we currently have the Book of Daniel.⁷⁴ This matter is inconsequential for the intentions of this inquiry and it is unlikely that this topic will be soon resolved. For our purposes, a Semitic original is only significant because it reveals the Jewish character of the *Similitudes*.

Date

Scholars have supplied a vast range of dates for the possible composition of the *Similitudes*. R. H. Charles has dated the text as early as 94 BCE and as late as 64 BCE. Charles has even offered a more precise dating based upon his belief that the *Similitudes*, as well as the entirety of *1 Enoch*, are pharisaic in origin, which has lead him to assign a date of 94-79 BCE or

⁷² Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch* (SVTP 7; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 18.

⁷³ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 185.

⁷⁴ Ephraim Isaac, "1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; vol. 1 of *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 6.

70-64 BCE.⁷⁵ Representing the other end of the spectrum is the position held by J. T. Milik, who has dated the *Similitudes* to 270 CE.⁷⁶ Milik's conclusions are due in large part to the absence of fragments at Qumrân, his proposal that the *Similitudes* replaced the *Book of Giants* in an Enochic Pentateuch, and perceived Christian parallels with the *Sibylline Oracles*.⁷⁷ However, most scholars have found Milik's proposal highly suspect and have noted numerous flaws in his argument.⁷⁸

There is no external evidence to aid scholars in dating the composition of the *Similitudes*; therefore, researchers have scrutinized the text for historical allusions and parallels. One of the primary passages used in dating the text is 1 En. 56:5-7:

In those days, the angels will assemble and thrust themselves to the east at the Parthians and Medes . . . And they will go up and trample upon the land of my elect ones, and the land of my elect ones will be before them like a threshing floor or a highway. But the city of my righteous ones will become an obstacle to their horses. (1 En. 56:5-7)⁷⁹

This passage contains two pieces of information that scholars have used to arrive at the period of composition. The reference to the Parthians and Medes is one of the few historical allusions that can be gleaned from the *Similitudes*; however, this statement has been used as evidence for both an early dating (BCE) and a late dating (CE). Those in support of an early composition believe this references the invasion of Palestine by the Parthians in 40 BCE. Although, those who

⁷⁵ R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 171.

⁷⁶ J. T. Milik and Matthew Black, eds., *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumrân Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976), 96.

⁷⁷ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 177-178.

⁷⁸ For an analysis of Milik's arguments see James C. VanderKam. "Some Major Issues in the Contemporary Study of 1 Enoch: Reflections on J. T. Milik's *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments of Qumrân Cave 4*," in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 354-365; repr. from *MAARAV* 3 (1982).

⁷⁹ All quotations from the *Similitudes of Enoch*, unless noted, are from Isaac, "1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in *OTP* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:29-50.

support a later dating have seen in this Trajan's campaign against the Parthians in 113-17 CE, and Milik has argued that this same evidence supports his third century CE dating.⁸⁰ The ambiguity in this statement makes it of little use on its own. Furthermore, given the nature and eschatology of the text, there is a legitimate possibility that the reference to the Parthians simply represents a future prediction or potential threat.⁸¹

The second piece of information obtainable from this passage is the statement "But the city of my righteous ones will become an obstacle to their horses" (1 En. 56:7a). This is understood by many scholars to indicate that the "city of my righteous ones," which is considered Jerusalem, was an intact and defensible city.⁸² If this assumption is correct, then the *terminus ad quem* for the *Similitudes* would be before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Furthermore, there are no allusions to the Jewish war of 66-72 CE or the destruction of Jerusalem, which had such an impact on the Jewish conscience that it seems improbable that it would not have been mentioned by a Jewish writer in the late first century CE.⁸³

To establish the *terminus a quo*, scholars have relied upon another possible historical allusion in 1 En. 67:5-13. Matthew Black has translated the crucial verse as:

But those waters in those days shall serve the kings and the mighty and the exalted, and those who occupy the earth, for the healing of the body, but for the punishment of the spirit. Their spirits are full of lust, so that their bodies are punished, for they have denied the Lord of spirits; and they see their punishment daily, and yet they believe not in his Name. (1 En. 67:8)⁸⁴

⁸⁰ M. A. Knibb, "The Date of the Parables of Enoch: A Critical Review," *NTS* 25 (1979): 345-357.

⁸¹ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah: A Historical and Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981) 222.

⁸² Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 187.

⁸³ Thomas B. Slater, "Christ and Community: A Socio-Historical Study of the Christology of Revelation" *JSNT* Sup 178 (1999): 79.

⁸⁴ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 63.

Within this verse, many scholars perceive a reference to Herod's bathing in the hot springs of Callirrhoe prior to his death in 4 BCE. Josephus describes this event as follows:

It was said by those who pretended to divine, and who were endued with wisdom to foretell such things, that God inflicted this punishment on the king on account of his great impiety; yet was he still in hopes of recovering . . . and went beyond the river Jordan, and bathed himself in the warm baths that were at Callirrhoe. (*Antiquities* 17.6.5 §§170-171)⁸⁵

If the previous two passages detail the same events, then the *terminus a quo* for the *Similitudes* would be approximately 4 BCE. Therefore, the composition of the *Similitudes* could have taken place anytime between 4 BCE-66 CE, and to offer a date any more precise would be simply theoretical.

Provenance

Very little can be said about the provenance of *1 Enoch*, and even less about the *Similitudes*. Ephraim Isaac stated, "We are not certain about the city or place in which 1 Enoch was, or its constituent parts were, composed."⁸⁶ The available manuscripts have provided no clues to aid scholars, other than evidence for a Semitic *Urtext*, and it is almost as if the *Similitudes* never existed until the fourteenth or fifteenth century.⁸⁷

The most important, as well as one of the few details capable of being discussed, is whether the *Similitudes* represent a Jewish or Christian composition. However, the evidence in favor of Jewish authorship is convincing, primarily due to the absence of Christian references and interpolations. The primary evidence against Christian authorship is the absence of any

⁸⁵ Flavius Josephus, *The new Complete Works of Josephus* (trans. William Whiston, with commentary by Paul L. Maier; Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1999), 565.

⁸⁶ Isaac, "1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," in *OTP* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:7-8.

⁸⁷ This should not be confused with the dates assigned to the primary manuscripts as noted in the discussion of original language. There are earlier manuscripts, from the fifteenth and possibly fourteenth century, however, the primary manuscripts are from a later period.

references to the life, teachings, crucifixion, or resurrection of Jesus.⁸⁸ Emile Schürer observed, “An anonymous Christian author would scarcely have been so reserved as to avoid making any allusion to the historical personality of Jesus. Surely if the writer had any object in view at all it would be to win converts to the faith.”⁸⁹ In addition, the identification of Enoch as the Son of Man in 1 En. 71:14, which is generally considered an appendix or epilogue, would be unthinkable in a Christian text. If this section represents a late addition, a Christian redactor would have assuredly altered this identification, and if the *Similitudes* were Christian in their original composition, we would not expect this identification at all. Therefore, we should consider the *Similitudes* to be of Jewish origin and written some time in the first six decades CE.

Messianic Epithets in the *Similitudes of Enoch*

The *Similitudes of Enoch* are comprised of three parables, which assign and speak of an eschatological leader designated by four epithets: “the Righteous One,” “the Elect/Chosen One,” the “Son of Man,” and the “Messiah” or “Anointed One.” Therefore, to determine the messianic expectations of the *Similitudes* precisely, a determination must be made as to whether or not these designations refer to a single messianic leader, or multiple.

The primary method of establishing the referent behind the author’s use of these epithets is to search for passages that contain more than one designation. One of the primary passages that demonstrates an equivalence of terms is 1 En. 48.

At that hour, that Son of Man was given a name, in the presence of the Lord of Spirits . . . he became the Chosen One . . . In those days, the kings of the earth and the mighty landowners shall be humiliated on account of the deeds of their hands . . . For they have denied the Lord of the Spirits and his Messiah. (1 En. 48:1-10)

⁸⁸ Knibb, “The Date of the Parables of Enoch,” 350.

⁸⁹ Emil Schürer, *The Literature of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus* (ed. Nahum N. Glatzer; New York: Schocken Books, 1972), 68.

This passage demonstrates that the author views and identifies “that Son of Man,” “the Chosen One,” and the “Messiah” as equivalent expressions of the same individual. Furthermore, 1 En. 52 reveals that the “Messiah” and “the Elect One” are also synonymous: “All of these things which you have seen happen by the authority of his Messiah . . . all of them, in the presence of the Elect One . . . when the Elect one shall appear before the face of the Lord of the Spirits” (1 En. 52:4-9). Chapter 53 provides one of the clearest examples that “the Righteous One” and “the Elect One” are equivalent expressions by including them together in one designation, “After this, the Righteous and Elect One will reveal the house of his congregation” (1 En. 53:6a).⁹⁰ From the previous examples, it should be clear that the author of the *Similitudes* has employed four titles for one eschatological and messianic figure. Therefore, we can now turn to investigate what the eschatological leader, under his various titles, is expected to fulfill.

Separate but Equal

Despite the fact that the four epithets reflect the same individual, the author of the *Similitudes* has not employed them equally and certain roles are only delegated to certain epithets. Therefore, to investigate the messianic expectations accurately and thoroughly I believe we should demarcate the titles and investigate each epithet’s respective role within the text. The impetus in this methodology is the hope of obtaining what the author of the *Similitudes* understood by these titles and the function associated with each.

The Messiah

The epithet “Messiah” is only used twice in the *Similitudes* to refer to the eschatological leader. Scholars have provided no convincing proposals for the infrequent use of “Messiah” as a title in the *Similitudes*. However, to propose a reason for the author’s minimal use could imply

⁹⁰James C. VanderKam. “Biblical Interpretation in 1 *Enoch* and Jubilees.” in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 295; repr. from *JSPSupp.* 14 (1993).

that scholars have an accurate and complete view of Jewish messianic designations in the first century CE, and that the epithet “Messiah” characterizes the primary messianic title. The *Similitudes* offer compelling evidence for the use of multiple epithets for a messianic and eschatological leader, which includes the title “Messiah,” but is in no way dominated by it. Furthermore, the witness of “Messiah” in the *Similitudes* is fundamental to understanding messianic thought in the first century CE, because its identification with other titles and epithets seems to indicate that for the author they were somewhat synonymous terms.

The first occurrence is in 1 En. 48:10 and states, “For they have denied the Lord of the Spirits and his Messiah.” This statement is preceded by the lengthy description of the “Son of Man” detailed below, and the statement that “In those days, the kings of the earth and the mighty landowners shall be humiliated on account of the deeds of their hands” (48:8). This is a significant statement because this verse and the context of the passage seem indebted to canonical Psalm 2:1-2 where it notes, “Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed.” It has been suggested that the biblical allusion is what mandated the use of the term “Messiah,” however, the author of the *Similitudes*, as will be shown, has demonstrated great liberty in transforming source material.⁹¹

The final occurrence can be found in 1 En. 52:4 which notes, “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.” Although this represents the final reference to the “Messiah” in the *Similitudes* and it seems rather inconsequential, this verse has sweeping implications. Fourteen chapters have preceded this verse, every epithet has been introduced, and the primary role and function of

⁹¹James C. VanderKam, “Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37-71,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. James H. Charlesworth et al.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 169-191.

the eschatological leader have been reiterated numerous times, and “*All these things which you have seen happen by the authority of his Messiah.*”⁹² This single statement attributes all the previous actions to the “Messiah,” and furthermore, 1 En. 52:1 indicates that this includes “the future things.”⁹³ Scholars have been provided the requisite amount of references to the “Messiah,” one statement that comprehensively covers all previous and future action, and another to substantiate that it is not an interpolation or some type of error.

The Righteous One

The central theme of the *Similitudes* is the deliverance of the righteous and elect and the coming judgment of the sinners. Therefore, the eschatological leader’s character and role is completely dependent upon his relationship with these two groups, primarily of course with his relationship to the righteous and elect.⁹⁴ He functions as a source of hope for the righteous and elect, as well as anyone who witnesses or endures those that spill “the blood of the righteous,” until he is revealed by the Lord of Spirits and will “dwell among them” (1 En. 47:1, 4; 45:4). The eschatological leader functions as the heavenly counterpart to the righteous and elect on earth, and this relationship is implicit in the titles “the Righteous One” and “the Chosen/Elect One.”⁹⁵ However, the epithet “the Righteous One” can only be observed in two possible instances and only one is definitive.⁹⁶

The first occurrence is 1 En. 38:2, however, there are variant readings of this passage which make the use of the epithet dubious; despite this fact, some scholars assert that “the

⁹² Emphasis is mine.

⁹³ Charlesworth, “From Jewish Messianology to Christian Christology Some Caveats and Perspectives,” 238.

⁹⁴ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 185.

⁹⁵ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 187.

⁹⁶ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 170-171.

Righteous One” is the original reading.⁹⁷ If 1 En. 38:2 is accepted as containing the *Similitudes* first use of the epithet “the Righteous One,” then the text reveals that “he shall reveal light to the righteous and the elect,” “judge the sinners,” and he will drive the wicked “from the presence of the righteous and the elect” (1 En. 38:2-3).

The only instance in the *Similitudes* where the epithet is used and is not in question is 1 En. 53:6. This passage, which was quoted previously, states “After this, the Righteous and Elect One will reveal the house of his congregation” (1 En. 53:6a). The verses that follow reveal that the “mountains shall become (flat) like earth in the presence of his righteousness,” and that “hills shall become like a fountain of water. And the righteous ones shall have rest from the oppression of sinners” (1 En. 53:7). Both passages contain references to the righteous ones, and in addition, all of the eschatological leader’s actions are focused on and for the direct benefit of the righteous ones. However, if 1 En. 38:2 should not be rendered “the Righteous One” based on text-critical evidence, then we only have one occurrence of this title and it is used as an additional designation for “the Chosen/Elect One.”⁹⁸

The infrequent use of “the Righteous One” makes it very difficult to glean any additional information from the text, however; the title itself could be drawn from two passages in Isaiah. Isaiah 24:16a records “From the ends of the earth we hear songs of praise, of glory to the Righteous One,” however; the context of this verse makes it clear that the Lord is the referent of this designation. Isaiah 53:11b is also a possibly influence and states, “The righteous one, my servant, shall make many righteous.” According to Matthew Black, of the two passages in Isaiah,

⁹⁷ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 195.

⁹⁸ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 170-171.

the latter seems to be the source for this title.⁹⁹ However, this epithet does not necessitate a biblical source, and James VanderKam has noted that the eschatological leader is “characterized by righteousness so that it is not surprising to find him so labeled.”

The Elect or Chosen One

The epithet “the Elect One” or “the Chosen One” is one of the two most frequent expressions for the eschatological leader in the *Similitudes*.¹⁰⁰ This title is seen as originating from servant songs in Second Isaiah where the term “chosen” is ubiquitous in describing the servant of the Lord.¹⁰¹ The passages in Second Isaiah refer to Israel as the servant of God whom “I have chosen” (Isa 41: 8,9), as “my chosen” (Isa 42:1), “my servant whom I have chosen” (Isa 43:10), “my chosen people” (Isa 43:20), “Israel whom I have chosen” (Isa 44:1; 45:4), “Jeshurun whom I have chosen” (Isa 44:2), and “the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you” (Isa 49:7).

The first use of this designation occurs in 1 En. 39:6a where it states, “And in those days my eyes saw the Elect One of righteousness and of faith.” In the chapters that follow, “the Elect One” is blessed by an angel along with the earthly elect ones (40:5), he will “sit on the seat of glory and make a selection of their deeds” (45:3a), after which he will “dwell among them” (45:4a). He “stands before the Lord of the Spirits; his glory is forever and ever and his power is unto all generations,” in him dwells the spirit of wisdom, knowledge, strength, “the spirit which gives thoughtfulness,” “the spirit of those who have fallen asleep in righteousness,” he will “judge the secret things. And no one will be able to utter vain words in his presence” (49:2b-4). In addition, it is noted that “In those days, (the Elect One) shall sit on my throne, and from the

⁹⁹ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 195.

¹⁰⁰ The epithet of the Eschatological leader is translated differently by various scholars, some rendering the title as “the Chosen One” and others choosing “the Elect One.” I will follow the translation of Isaac, “1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *OTP* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:13-89.

¹⁰¹ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 189.

conscience of his mouth shall come out all the secrets of wisdom” (51:3a), after he has arisen “the earth shall rejoice; and the righteous ones shall dwell upon her and the elect ones shall walk upon her” (51:5). In his presence various mountains “will become like a honeycomb (that melts) before the fire” (52:6b), no one will be able to escape (52:7), “he sits in the throne of glory and judges Azaz’el and all his company, and his army, in the name of the Lord of the Spirits” (55:4). The Lord of the Spirits “placed the Elect One on the throne of glory; and he shall judge all the works of the holy ones in heaven above, weighing in the balance their deeds” (61:8), and he is included among the heavenly forces (61:10).

The “Elect One” is the only epithet that appears in all three parables, and if the “Righteous One” in 1 En. 38 is the product of an error, it also represents the first epithet applied to the eschatological leader in the *Similitudes*. From the lengthy description above, the prominent characteristics of “the Elect One” are perceptible. As previously noted, he functions as a heavenly *Doppelgänger* to the righteous and elect ones.¹⁰² This is supported by the fact that the terrestrial righteous and elect ones are prominent figures in the passages that refer to the eschatological leader as “the Elect One,” occurring in 1 En 39:1, 6, 7 (in reference to angels); 40:5; 51:5; 53:7; 61:3, 12, 13; and 62:8, 11, 13, 15.¹⁰³ However, the most prominent feature discernable from the illustration above is the role of “the Elect One” as eschatological judge. Due to the correlation between “the Righteous One” and the “Son of Man” in this matter, as well as additional functions, it would be beneficial to investigate the “Son of Man” epithet before returning to this discussion.

¹⁰² Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 187.

¹⁰³ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 170-187.

The Son of Man

The “Son of Man” is one of the most debated and discussed topics in apocalyptic literature as well as religious studies in general. Fortunately, the task of the present study is primarily concerned with how it is employed within the *Similitudes* and the implications that it suggests for the eschatological leader, and not the origin of such a phrase or its interpretation in Daniel 7. The “Son of Man” is used as an epithet in the *Similitudes* nearly as often as “the Elect One,” and is the only epithet that is used to designate the eschatological leader after 1 En. 62:1.¹⁰⁴ The biblical influences and parallels between the “Son of Man” and “the Elect One” will be discussed forthcoming, however, the function of the “Son of Man” should be delineated before continuing.

The “Son of Man” is first introduced in 1 En. 46 as one “whose face was like that of a human being. His countenance was full of grace like that of one among the holy angels” (1 En. 46:1). This is followed by a grocery list of character traits and tasks that the “Son of Man” will accomplish.

This is the Son of Man, to whom belongs righteousness, and with whom righteousness dwells. And he will open all the hidden storerooms; for the Lord of the Spirits has chosen him, and he is destined to be victorious before the Lord of the Spirits in eternal uprightness. 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. He shall loosen the reins of the strong and crush the teeth of the sinners. He shall depose the kings from their thrones and kingdoms. (1 En: 46:3-5)

Chapter 48 discloses another lengthy passage detailing the “Son of Man.” 1 En. 48:2 reports “that Son of Man” was named before the Lord of the Spirits and before time. He was named before the creation of the sun, moon, and stars in the presence of the Lord of the Spirits (48:3). He will become a staff for the righteous ones to lean on (48:4a), he will be the light of the gentiles and the hope of those sick in their hearts (48:4b), “all those who dwell upon the earth

¹⁰⁴ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 174.

shall fall and worship before him” (48:5a), he was concealed before the Lord of the Spirits prior to the creation of the world (48:6b), “he has revealed the wisdom of the Lord of the Spirits to the righteous and the holy ones” and “preserved the portion of the righteous” (48:7a), and they “will be saved in his name” (48:7b).

In the later chapters of the *Similitudes*, where the “Son of Man” is the only epithet used, it notes, “pain shall seize them when they see that Son of Man sitting on the throne of his glory” (62:5b), and “On that day, all the kings, the governors, the high officials, and those who rule the earth shall fall down before him on their faces, and worship and raise their hopes in that Son of Man; they shall beg and plead for mercy at his feet” (62:9). In addition, “their faces shall be filled with shame before that Son of Man; and from before his face they shall be driven out. And a sword shall abide in their midst, before his face” (63:11).

However, after the “Son of Man” is revealed and he has fulfilled the tasks of the Lord of the Spirits, the situation is characterized as follows:

The righteous and elect ones shall be saved on that day; and from thenceforth they shall never see the faces of the sinners and the oppressors. The Lord of the Spirits will abide over them; they shall eat and rest and rise with that Son of Man forever and ever. The righteous and elect ones shall rise from the earth and shall cease being of downcast face. They shall wear the garment of glory. (1 En. 62:13-15)

Chapter 69 further details the condition after the appearance of the “Son of Man” by stating, “(Then) there came to them a great joy” (69:27a). Then they blessed, glorified, and extolled the Lord because the name of that “Son of Man” was revealed to them (69:27b). From that day on “nothing that is corruptible shall be found; for that Son of Man has appeared and has seated himself upon the throne of glory; and all evil shall disappear from before his face” (69:29).

The depiction of the eschatological leader in the *Similitudes* relies heavily upon Daniel 7 and Second Isaiah as its two primary biblical influences. Second Isaiah appears to be the source

for the epithets “the Righteous One” and “the Elect/Chosen One,” and the epithet “Son of Man” is indebted to Daniel 7. Chapter 46 of the *Similitudes*, however, draws more from Daniel 7 than the title “Son of Man.” God is called the “Ancient One” or literally “Ancient of Days” in Daniel 7 (vv. 9, 13, 22), where as 1 En. 46 (vv. 1, 2) refers to God, literally, as the “Head of days.” Furthermore, Daniel 7:9 describes God with “the hair of his head like pure wool” and 1 En. 46:1 states “and his head was white like wool.” Most importantly, Daniel 7:13 notes “I saw one like a human being coming on the clouds of heaven,” which literally reads, “I saw one like a son of man.” The *Similitudes* describe someone “whose face was like that of a human being” and “the One who was born of human beings” before declaring that “This is the Son of Man” (1 En. 46: 1-3). There are additional passages that reflect the possible influence of Daniel 7, such that 1 En. 47:3 may reflect Daniel 7:9-10, yet others remain unconvincing.¹⁰⁵ What is clear from investigating the *Similitudes* is that the author has taken these sources and others, transformed them, and made them her or his own.

For example, the servant songs in Second Isaiah clearly reference Israel as “the Chosen One,” yet the author of the *Similitudes* has altered its original referent and applied this epithet to the eschatological leader. Similarly, Isaiah 49:1 has been proposed as a source for the author’s concept of a preexistent eschatological leader, but this passage is referring to Israel when it states, “The Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother’s womb he named me.”¹⁰⁶ If these passages influenced the author of the *Similitudes*, they have been transformed from their original associations. The author’s willingness to transform source material can also be seen in the integration of concepts within the text.

¹⁰⁵ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 188.

¹⁰⁶ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 189.

The title “Head of days” originated from Daniel 7 and one would expect to find this designation for God when the “Son of Man” is an actor in the passage; however, the author of the *Similitudes* has also used the title “Head of days” when “the Elect One” is the primary actor (1 En. 55:1-4). This is also evidenced in the reference to the “Son of Man” as a “light of the (nations) gentiles” (48:4), a phrase which would seem more fitting if applied to “the Elect One” considering that it is derived from Second Isaiah (Isa 42:6; 49:6).¹⁰⁷ The author of the *Similitudes* has merged ideas and images and drawn connections between concepts that would apply more suitably to one epithet than another. Although, according to some scholars, there is an apparent connection for the author of the *Similitudes* between “the Elect One” and the “Son of Man” that is perceptible in juxtaposing their roles and functions.

As touched upon earlier, the most striking and pronounced role of “the Elect One” in the *Similitudes* is that of eschatological judge. The text repeatedly observes that “the Elect One” will “make a selection of their deeds” (45:3), “judge the secret things” (49:4), how he “judges Azaz’el and all his company, and his army” (55:4), and how “he shall judge all the works of the holy ones in heaven above, weighing in the balance their deeds . . . in order to judge the secret ways of theirs” (61:8-9). For the author of the *Similitudes* “the Elect One” is unequivocally an eschatological judge, but VanderKam and other scholars have asserted that this role is also applied to the “Son of Man.”¹⁰⁸

The two passages that VanderKam supplies in support of this position are 1 En. 69:27 and 69:29. However, Isaac has translated these verses in this manner:

(Then) there came to them a great joy. And they blessed, glorified, and extolled (the Lord) on account of the fact that the name of that (Son of) Man was revealed to them . . . (29) thenceforth nothing that is corruptible shall be found; for that Son of Man has

¹⁰⁷ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 186.

¹⁰⁸ VanderKam, “Righteous One,” 186.

appeared and has seated himself upon the throne of glory; 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 Lord of the Spirits. Here ends the third parable of Enoch. (1 En. 69:27, 29)

The “Son of Man” as judge is omitted in the primary text that Isaac based his translation on, and is based upon an interpolation found in two other manuscripts.¹⁰⁹ However, other scholars have included this section within their translations, which Matthew Black renders:

And he sat on the throne of glory, and the sum of judgment was given to the Son of Man, And he will cause the sinners to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth, And those who have led the world astray . . . (29) And from thenceforth there shall be nothing corruptible, For that Son of Man has appeared, And has seated himself on the throne of glory, And all evil shall pass away and depart from before his face, And the word of the Son of Man shall be strong before the Lord of Spirits, This is the third Parable of Enoch. (1 En. 69:27, 29)¹¹⁰

Even if it is conceded that the original text included this reading of 1 En. 69:27, and the “Son of Man” was given the “sum of judgment,” there is still no reference to his judgment in verse 29. What verse 29 provides, is a depiction of the “Son of Man” on the throne of glory, which although may imply judgment, does not make it explicit. Furthermore, Black himself has commented on verses 26-29 acknowledging, “It seems unlikely that these verses are at home in their present context . . . Where, if at all, they may have appeared originally in the Son of Man sections is a matter of debate.”¹¹¹

The depiction of the eschatological leader seated on a throne is also predominately related to “the Elect One.” The *Similitudes* record that “my Elect One shall sit on the seat of glory” (45:3), “In those days, (the Elect One) shall sit on my throne” (51:3), “You would have to see my Elect One, how he sits in the throne of glory” (55:4), and “He placed the Elect One on the throne of glory” (61:8). In comparison, the “Son of Man” receives this depiction in only two

¹⁰⁹ Isaac, “1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *OTP* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:6, 49, (note g2).

¹¹⁰ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 66.

¹¹¹ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 249.

passages, in 1 En. 69:29 quoted above, and once in 1 En. 62:5. However, this verse shows little consistency in the translations that it has received from scholars. To illustrate this point, 1 En. 62:5 has been translated:

One half portion of them shall glance at the other half; they shall be terrified and dejected; and pain shall seize them when they see that Son of Man sitting on the throne of his glory. (1 En. 62:5)¹¹²

And one portion of them shall look on the other, And they shall be terrified, And they shall be downcast of countenance, And pain shall seize them, When they see that child of woman sitting on the throne of his glory. (1 En. 62:1-2, 5)¹¹³

These two passages demonstrate that the available manuscript evidence is ambiguous as to whether or not the “Son of Man” is the figure sitting on the throne, but regardless of this fact, there is only one passage that may speak of the “Son of Man” as eschatological judge and a maximum of two passages that portray the “Son of Man” as seated on the throne of glory.

In contrast, it is possible that only one passage details the “Son of Man” as seated on the throne and that there is no reference to him as eschatological judge. This is scarcely enough evidence to form the conclusion that “the functions and descriptions of the chosen one and son of man, the two frequent epithets, are the same.”¹¹⁴ I believe a more realistic conclusion would be that the author of the *Similitudes* views all of these epithets as closely connected and interrelated, yet is somewhat firm in the role and function that she or he originally associated with each. However, if the author did not somewhat blur the lines between the epithets, their roles, and connect them in passages together, there would be no way of determining if there was one eschatological leader or many, and I do not believe that any ambiguity in that regard was intended.

¹¹² Isaac, “1(Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *OTP* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:43.

¹¹³ Black, *The Book of Enoch or 1 Enoch*, 59.

¹¹⁴ VanderKam, “*Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son Of Man in 1 Enoch 37-71*,” 186.

The Sum of the Parts

If the role and function of the eschatological leader are viewed as a whole, regardless of individual epithets, the primary picture is of a heavenly judge, who resides in heaven as a representative for the righteous and elect on earth. The eschatological leader is preexistent, named before creation, concealed by the Lord in heaven until he is revealed, at which time he will drive the sinners from the presence of the righteous and elect ones and will then “dwell among them” (45:4). Then the eschatological leader will take a seat on the throne of glory and act as judge. There is no reference to or apparent concern for Davidic descent. Although, scholars have noted that the figure does fulfill certain tasks associated with a Davidic Messiah, such as “remove the kings and mighty ones” and “crush the teeth of the sinners” (46:4).¹¹⁵

There is no reason to conclude that the eschatological leader is terrestrial in any significant sense. In fact, he seems to have assumed many of the characteristics normally associated with God.¹¹⁶ The eschatological leader will sit on the Lord’s throne (51:3), he will not only judge the sinners, but he will “judge the secret things” (49:4) and the “works of the holy ones in heaven above” (61:8), he functions as a revealer and will “open the hidden storerooms” (46:3), furthermore, “all those who dwell on earth shall fall and worship before him” (48:5), and he is the one “who rules over everything” (62:6). This is scarcely the description of a terrestrial savior. In addition, the eschatological leader is depicted in language similar to biblical theophanies:

As for these mountains which you have seen with your own eyes . . . all of them, in the presence of the Elect One, will become like a honeycomb (that melts) before fire, like water that gushes down from the top of such mountains and becomes helpless by his feet. (1 En. 52:6)

¹¹⁵ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 182.

¹¹⁶ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 181.

And these mountains shall become (flat) like earth in the presence of his righteousness, and the hills shall become like a fountain of water. (1 En. 53:7)

Compare these statements with the description of the theophany in the book of Micah.

For lo, the Lord is coming out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. Then the mountains will melt under him and the valleys will burst open, like wax near the fire, like waters poured down a steep place. (Micah 1:3-4)

What is even more noteworthy, is that the descriptions of the eschatological leader presented above are also very similar to the theophany depicted in 1 En. 1:5-7. It seems improbable that the author of the *Similitudes* would not have been very familiar with this passage and this text, considering that it is from one of the oldest in the Enochic corpus, the *Book of the Watchers*. Furthermore, the *Similitudes* seem to build upon much of the material that originated from the *Book of the Watchers*.¹¹⁷ If the author of the *Similitudes* did have knowledge of 1 En. 1:5-7, then the eschatological leader has deliberately been portrayed in a godly manner.

The transcendent eschatological leader of the *Similitudes* is similar to Melchizedek in the scrolls of Qumrân, and angelic figures, such as Michael in the book of Daniel. However, the eschatological leader is identified as the Messiah, functions as an aggrandized “Son of Man,” and embodies many characteristics generally reserved for God, which have made the *Similitudes* extremely popular among New Testament studies.¹¹⁸ As noted earlier, the eschatological leader, and specifically the “Son of Man,” is identified with Enoch in 1 En. 71:14. Scholars have issued numerous explanations for this identification, however, this matter will continue to be a matter of debate.

¹¹⁷ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 214-215.

¹¹⁸ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 192.

CHAPTER 4

THE FOURTH BOOK OF EZRA

This Ezra went up from Babylonia. He was a scribe skilled in the law of Moses that the Lord the God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all that he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was upon him. (Ezra 7:6)

Language

It is now generally agreed that the original language of *4 Ezra* was Semitic. There is some disagreement as to whether or not the *Urtext* was composed in Hebrew or Aramaic, although there is a growing consensus for a Hebrew original.¹¹⁹ It is believed that from the Semitic text a Greek version was rendered, which underlies the numerous extant manuscripts.¹²⁰ Currently the text survives in Latin and Syriac, which have been the most significant on Western scholarship, as well as Ethiopic, Georgian, Armenian, two independent Arabic versions, and various fragments.¹²¹

Date

Establishing *4 Ezra*'s date of composition is not aided by manuscript evidence, and there are few unambiguous quotations. The oldest definitive citation is from *Stromateis*, a work by Clement of Alexandria, believed to have been written near the end of the second century CE. In

¹¹⁹ B. M. Metzger, "The Fourth Book of Ezra," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; vol. 1 of *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 519-520.

¹²⁰ Mitchell G. Reddish, ed., *Apocalyptic Literature: A Reader* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 61.

¹²¹ Michael E. Stone, *Fourth Ezra: A Commentary on the Book of Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 1-8.

this work, *Stromateis* 3:16 quotes *4 Ezra* 5:35, which suggests that *4 Ezra* was in existence and translated into Greek by 190 CE.¹²²

For a more precise dating, scholars have looked for internal evidence; however, the nature of *4 Ezra* has made this task very complicated. First, the text is written under the pseudonym Ezra, who is depicted in Babylon thirty years after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 586 BCE. The second problem is due to the fact that *4 Ezra* is an apocalypse, and is characterized by its use of cryptic and symbolic language and images. Both of these factors have made the tasks of obtaining internal clues onerous, but scholars have focused on a few key areas to obtain possible information.

Just as the citation by Clement provides the *terminus ad quem*, scholarship has long considered the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 CE to represent the central theme and *terminus a quo* for *4 Ezra*.¹²³ The destruction is referenced in *4 Ezra* 3:2; 6:19; 10:48; 12:44 and elsewhere, however, the opinion held by the majority of scholars, that the author is writing after the desolation in 70 CE, has been questioned by a minority who assert that the author is writing before this event, and is merely maintaining the pseudonymous role of Ezra. This contention is unpersuasive, and *4 Ezra* should be viewed as originating some time after 70 CE.

Similarly, the reference in *4 Ezra* 3:1 (cf. 3:29) which states, “In the thirtieth year after the destruction of our city,” is understood by scholars in a variety of ways. This statement is considered either a part of the pseudonymous role of the author and of no relevance to an actual date, as an approximate time of its composition (95-100 CE), or of a clear reference to 100

¹²² Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 1, 9.

¹²³ Michael E. Stone, *Features of the Eschatology of IV Ezra* (HSS 35; ed. Frank Moore Cross; Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1989), 2.

CE.¹²⁴ Clearly, this verse can be used as little more than a supplement for a hypothesis based upon additional internal references. Of all the areas that scholars have looked to reap additional clues, such as interpreting the “signs” of the end (5:1; 9:1) or deciphering *4 Ezra* 6:7-10 and identifying Jacob and Esau, the primary means of determining the date of composition from internal evidence has centered on the Eagle vision in chapter 11 and its interpretation in chapter 12.

Chapter 11 describes an eagle with twelve feathered wings, eight little wings, and three heads, which is interpreted in chapter 12 as the fourth kingdom from the book of Daniel. Scholars have focused their attention on identifying the three heads that are said to dominate and oppress the earth, given that the culmination of history is expected during the third head, and due to the fact that attempts to identify the wings of the eagle with known rulers has been unsuccessful, leading many scholars to conclude that the author of *4 Ezra* had a greater knowledge of historical events than we do today.¹²⁵ Therefore, the identification of the three heads provides the best internal dating evidence available to scholars. A variety of interpretations have been suggested, however the information contained in *4 Ezra* 11:29-35 corresponds with our knowledge of the Flavian emperors, and consequently, the three heads have been identified as Vespasian (69-79 CE), Titus (79-81 CE), and Domitian (81-96 CE).¹²⁶ Scholars have therefore placed the date of composition for *4 Ezra* during the latter part of Domitian’s reign, which is compatible with the typological dating in *4 Ezra* 3:1 and still close enough to the destruction of the Second Temple.

¹²⁴ Stone, *Features of the Eschatology*, 3.

¹²⁵ Stone, *Features of the Eschatology*, 7, 10.

¹²⁶ Bruce W. Longenecker, *2 Esdras* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 13-14.

Provenance

As with the vast majority of apocalypses, very little information is known regarding *4 Ezra*'s provenance. The few internal references speak of the author as living in Babylon (3:1, 29, etc), which is a symbolic reference to Rome. Although some scholars have postulated Rome as the site of authorship, the cryptic references are more likely related to the pseudonymity of the text and the author's role as Ezra.¹²⁷ Based on *4 Ezra*'s Semitic nuances and the close relationship with *2 Baruch*, which for several reasons is believed to have originated in Palestine, scholars have suggested the land of Israel as *4 Ezra*'s site of composition.¹²⁸

From the following references, "instruct those that are wise" (14:13), "some things you shall make public, and some you shall deliver in secret to the wise" (14:26), "keep the seventy [books] that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people" (14:46), one can assume that there is a social group associated with this work, but these verses provide our only insight into a possible social dynamic. There are also a number of parallels between the ideology expressed within *4 Ezra* and various ideas found in rabbinic teaching, but again, they are little help in establishing a more precise social context.¹²⁹

If *4 Ezra* was composed in approximately 100 CE, then there are a few general statements which may be made regarding Israel at that time. Of the utmost importance is the fact that the author of *4 Ezra* wrote at a time when Israel and Judaism were in a decisive period of reformulation and self-definition.¹³⁰ Judaism was forced to reconsider what it meant to be faithful and obedient to God in a world after the destruction of the Temple. During this period

¹²⁷ Longenecker, *2 Esdras*, 14.

¹²⁸ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 10.

¹²⁹ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 40.

¹³⁰ Longenecker, *2 Esdras*, 15.

the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Zealots, as well as the high priesthood and Sanhedrin, and other Jewish groups that were known by accounts of Josephus and the New Testament disappeared.¹³¹ Rabbinic Judaism provided a substitute for life without a Temple through daily prayer, the synagogue, and the study of the Torah. The significance of the Law is unmistakable in *4 Ezra* and is witnessed by the copious references which pervade the text: 3:18; 3:20; 3:22; 4:23; 5:27; 7:17; 8:56; 9:31, 2, 6, 7; 13:55; 14:21, 2, to list a few. Furthermore, there was a search for understanding and a quest for the answer to why God would permit this calamity when Israel is God's elect. While neither the location nor social group that produced *4 Ezra* may be known precisely, the text is a witness to this tumultuous time and enables the reader a glimpse of the author's own search and struggle for the justice of God.

The Messiah Introduced

In the most explicit depiction of eschatological events in *4 Ezra* (7:26-44), the Messiah appears and is described as "my son the Messiah" (*4 Ezra* 7:28).¹³² In the Hebrew Bible this title and relationship is almost exclusively reserved for the Davidic king or heir. This concept can be traced to Psalm 2:7-8 "I will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, 'You are my son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.'" Psalm 2 is an important allusion because it also references "his anointed" or "his messiah" in verse 2. However, this designation could also be drawn from 2 Samuel 7:14 "I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to me," and Psalm 89:26-27 "He

¹³¹ Shaye J. D. Cohen, *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (LEC 7; ed. Wayne A. Meeks; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987), 221-226.

¹³² Stone, *Features of the Eschatology*, 98. Stone prefers to read this title as "my Messiah" or "my servant the Messiah." See Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 207-208.

shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation!’ I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.”¹³³

The first appearance of the Messiah in *4 Ezra* appears almost incidental and is detailed in only two verses (7:28-29). The Messiah is going to be revealed along with his cohorts (7:28), which has suggested to some that he is preexistent.¹³⁴ However, the Messiah is given no role in inaugurating the messianic kingdom, and in fact, he does not seem to arrive until after it has commenced.¹³⁵ After he is revealed, those “who remain” will rejoice for four hundred years and then the Messiah and “all who draw human breath” will die (7:28-29). This statement concerning the Messiah’s death is virtually unequalled and the closest parallel is *2 Baruch* 30:1.¹³⁶ It is only after the death of the Messiah and the righteous that the world is transformed, the dead are resurrected, and God is revealed on the seat of judgment (7:30-44).

The Eagle Vision

The Messiah’s next appearance is in the fifth vision, or the Eagle vision, and he is depicted with a much more pronounced role. In a dream vision, Ezra sees “a creature like a lion” accuse and sentence the three-headed eagle symbolizing Rome that was discussed previously (11:37). In the following chapter, Ezra’s vision is interpreted to reveal that the eagle represents the fourth kingdom from Daniel that will arise in the end of days (12:10-12). It is also revealed that the lion is the Messiah “who will arise from the posterity of David” whom God is keeping until the end of days (12:31-32). Despite the Messiah’s descent from David, scholars believe that the statement “whom the Most High has kept until the end of days” provides additional

¹³³ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 163.

¹³⁴ Michael E. Stone, “The Question of the Messiah in 4 Ezra,” in *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (ed. Jacob Neusner et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 210.

¹³⁵ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 208.

¹³⁶ Stone, “The Question,” 210.

proof of his preexistence (12:32).¹³⁷ The depiction of the Messiah as a lion seems to represent his Judahite descent, which can be seen in Genesis 49:9-10 and Revelation 5:5.¹³⁸ After this identification, the Messiah is said to denounce the last empire, set them “living before his judgment seat,” reprove them, and then destroy them (12:32b-33).

Scholars have noted that the role of the Messiah in the Eagle vision has certain characteristics and additional functions from his previous appearance. One of the notable features in chapters 11 and 12 is that forensic language is used to describe the actions of the Messiah. In *4 Ezra* 11:38-43, the lion makes a legal indictment of the fourth beast noting that it has conquered the other beasts, ruled the world in terror and oppression (11:40), judged the earth not in truth, afflicted the meek, injured the peaceable, hated truth tellers and loved liars (41-42), and so its “insolence has come up before the Most High” (43). This is followed by the Messiah’s pronouncement of sentence in 11:45-46, where he announces to the eagle that all its parts will disappear, along with “your whole worthless body,” so that the earth will be free from its violence. Then the execution of sentence is carried out in *4 Ezra* 12:1-3 with the final verse stating, “And I looked . . . and the whole body of the eagle was burned, and the earth was exceedingly terrified.”¹³⁹ Furthermore, the interpretation of these legal tasks in 12:32-33, although described much more succinctly than 11:38-12:3, is all the more intense and explicit.¹⁴⁰ In addition, it is clear that in *4 Ezra* 12:33 the Messiah is the destroyer of the fourth kingdom, a detail that was ambiguous in *4 Ezra* 12:1-3.

¹³⁷ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 292.

¹³⁸ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 186.

¹³⁹ Michael E. Stone, “The Concept of Messiah in 4 Ezra,” in *Religions in Antiquity: E. R. Goodenough Memorial* (ed. Jacob Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 1968), 301.

¹⁴⁰ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 209.

After the Messiah carries out his legal functions, he gathers “the remnant of my people, those who have been saved throughout my borders, and he will make them joyful until the end comes, the day of judgment” (12:34). From this statement it becomes clear that for the author of *4 Ezra* the remnant that will be saved and survive the eschatological woes are only the inhabitants of Israel. This verse also reveals that the judgment by the Messiah is only the first, because it is known from *4 Ezra* 7:30-44 that the final judgment is the jurisdiction of God.

The Man from the Sea Vision

The Messiah, although not designated by this title, is also a prominent figure in the sixth vision or the Man from the Sea vision, which is another interpretation of Daniel 7. In the second dream vision, Ezra sees something “like the figure of a man” arise out of the sea and fly “with the clouds of heaven” (13:3). Although this portrayal is closest to Daniel 7:13, it is also reminiscent of the biblical passages in which God is the rider on the clouds such as Psalm 104:3 and Isaiah 19:1.¹⁴¹ It is stated that everything under his gaze would tremble and that all who heard his voice “melted as wax melts when it feels the fire” (13:3b-4). The language in this verse has parallels with the depiction of God as the divine warrior in Psalm 97:5 and Micah 1:4, although typically it is the mere presence of the Lord that causes this effect.¹⁴² After this, a multitude makes war against this figure and he “carved out for himself a great mountain, and flew upon it” (13:6). This verse seems to reflect Psalm 2:6 where it states, “I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill,” or possibly Daniel 2:34 and 2:45.¹⁴³ Although afraid, the multitude “dared to fight” the man from the sea, but he destroyed them all with no weapons of any kind, because from his mouth he sent forth a “stream of fire,” “a flaming breath,” and “a storm of

¹⁴¹ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 383.

¹⁴² Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 383.

¹⁴³ Collins, *The Scepter and the Star*, 184; Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 385.

sparks” (13:8-10). This verse also reflects the language and description generally assigned to the divine warrior, which can be seen in Psalm 97:3 and 2 Samuel 22:9 (cf. Psalm 18:8).¹⁴⁴ After the destruction the man called a peaceful multitude “some of whom were joyful and some sorrowful; some of them were bound, and some were bringing others as offerings” (13:12-13). It has been suggested that the joyful and sorrowful may represent the Israelites and the Gentiles; nevertheless, this representation seems to rely upon Isaiah 66:20 where “they shall bring all your kindred from all the nations as an offering to the Lord.”¹⁴⁵

After viewing these events, Ezra is again revealed the interpretation of what he witnessed. Ezra is told that the man coming up from the sea is “he whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages” who will deliver the Lord’s creation and direct those that are left (13:26). This verse is significant because it strengthens the argument that the Messiah is preexistent, but also because in *4 Ezra* 12:32 the individual “whom the Most High has kept until the end of days” is explicitly identified as the Messiah. Further substantiating the fact that the man from the sea is the Messiah, is the identification made in *4 Ezra* 13:32: “And when these things come to pass and the signs occur which I showed you before, then my son will be revealed, whom you saw as a man coming up from the sea.” Hence, the man from the sea in the sixth vision should be equated with “my son the Messiah” in *4 Ezra* 7:28.

The Messiah takes his stand on Mount Zion and begins another series of legal tasks.¹⁴⁶ He is said to “reprove the assembled nations for their ungodliness,” “reproach them to their face with their evil thoughts and with the torments with which they are to be tortured,” and then “he

¹⁴⁴ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 383.

¹⁴⁵ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 387.

¹⁴⁶ The biblical parallels to Daniel 2:34 and 2:45 are much more pronounced in the interpretation than in the original vision (cf. 13:6).

will destroy them without effort by the law” (13:38). These tasks are reminiscent of those described earlier in the Eagle vision, the exception may be the absence of the Messiah’s pronouncement of sentence, but this may be implied by the phrase “which they are to be tortured.”¹⁴⁷ Following the Messiah’s forensic duties, the peaceable multitude is revealed as the ten tribes of Israel that were taken into another land (13:40). In addition, those who remain in Israel are going to be saved and the Messiah is going to defend them and show them “very many wonders” (13:48-50). The final reference to the Messiah testifies to his hidden nature (cf. 13:3) and that he will arrive with an entourage (cf. 7:28): “so no one on earth can see my Son or those who are with him except in the time of his day” (13:52).¹⁴⁸

The text holds only one additional reference to the Messiah, in a statement to Ezra where he is told, “you shall be taken up from among men, and henceforth you shall live with my Son and those who are like you, until the times are ended” (14:9). Because of the previous identifications, “my Son” in this statement should also be understood as the Messiah; however, the text does not disclose any additional information regarding the character and role of which is he is to fulfill.

Juxtaposing the Depictions

The depiction of the Messiah in the previous discussions reveals that there are differences and similarities between the accounts. The first occurrence in *4 Ezra* 7:28-29 details very little of the Messiah’s role and function, aside from insinuating his preexistence, making those who remain rejoice, and noting that he will die. There is no mention of his activities as judge or destroyer, and he appears after the inception of the messianic kingdom. In contrast, both the Eagle vision and the Man from the Sea vision detail the role of the Messiah in forensic terms,

¹⁴⁷ Stone, “The Concept,” 309.

¹⁴⁸ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 406.

with the primary concern being the destruction of the fourth kingdom, which places the Messiah in the events prior to the messianic kingdom. The Eagle vision represents the only instance within *4 Ezra* where the Messiah is attributed with Davidic descent, whereas, the Man from the Sea vision describes the Messiah in more transcendent terms. However, both seem to confirm the preexistence of the Messiah, which corresponds to 7:28-29, and in each case the Messiah gathers a faithful remnant. When the functions and character of the Messiah are viewed collectively, then the following picture develops.

The Messiah of *4 Ezra*

The unparalleled statement concerning the Messiah's death confirms that he is human (7:29). This is further supported by the fact that he is described as arising from the posterity of David (11:37; 12:32). However, the Messiah is not described in terms of kingship and the text does not grant him the role of king. This fact has induced some scholars to consider this a traditional element.¹⁴⁹ Despite the Messiah's apparent mortal characteristics, he is described in language and with attributes that are transcendent, some of which are generally reserved for God.

The Messiah dwells in heaven (14:9), and is seemingly preexistent (7:28; 12:32; 13:26; 14:9), although this fact is not noted explicitly. Furthermore, his appearance in the Man from the Sea vision (6th vision) is preceded by a wind that "arose from the sea and stirred up all its waves" (13:2). The appearance of wind is common before theophanies in the Hebrew Bible (1 Kings 19:11-12; Job 40:6; Zechariah 9:14).¹⁵⁰ In addition, the Messiah flew with the clouds of heaven, which is again a traditional motif in divine warrior imagery (Psalm 104:3; Isaiah 19:1, 14:14; 1

¹⁴⁹ Stone, "The Concept," 311.

¹⁵⁰ Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 212.

Kings 8:10-11; Exodus 19:9 etc.).¹⁵¹ The Messiah destroys the multitude, not with weapons of any kind, but through a “stream of fire and flaming breath and a great storm . . . and burned them all up” (13:11). The destruction of enemies by fire is also a power associated with God and can be seen in Psalm 97:3 “Fire goes before him, and consumes his adversaries on every side,” and 2 Samuel 22:9 “Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him.” As already discussed, the statement “melted as wax melts when it feels the fire” is another depiction associated with theophanies in the Hebrew Bible. The Messiah has been described in much of the imagery that was reserved for God and is depicted more as a transcendent figure than mortal; however, the Messiah’s role is limited in certain respects.

The Messiah’s primary role within *4 Ezra* is the destruction of the fourth kingdom (12:1-3; 12:32-34 etc). This process, as has been noted, is discussed in legal terms, and is followed by the Messiah’s judgment. However, the Messiah’s judgment takes place at the end of the messianic age, which is temporary, and does not constitute the final judgment.¹⁵² This fact can be seen in *4 Ezra* 7:30-44 where it is after the death of the Messiah that resurrection takes place and the Most High takes his place on the seat of judgment, and this is also apparent in 12:34, which references a judgment after the one carried out by the Messiah. The final judgment is clearly the authority of God.

In sum, the Messiah is a quasi-divine being that has human mortality and lineage. His destructive powers are described in transcendent terms, and he functions as a deliverer of Israel, but not their king. He acts as judge, but final judgment remains the jurisdiction of God. Few other details are assigned to the Messiah in *4 Ezra*. He will arrive with a company (7:28; 13:52),

¹⁵¹ Stone, “The Concept,” 308.

¹⁵² Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 210.

he will deliver a remnant of people, restore the ten tribes (13:40), causing them joy (12:34), making them rejoice (7:28), he will defend them (13:49), and he will show them wonders (13:50; cf. 7:27).

CHAPTER 5

THE SYRIAC APOCALYPSE OF BARUCH OR 2 BARUCH

Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the Lord that he had spoken to him. (Jeremiah 36:4)

Language

The original language of *2 Baruch* is still a matter of debate among scholars. The text is extant fully in one, sixth or seventh century CE Syriac manuscript that states in the heading that it has been translated from Greek.¹⁵³ One Greek fragment from the fourth or fifth century CE of the text has survived, which corroborates the existence of a Greek version. At one time, there was almost universal acceptance for a Greek original; however, this proposal has been challenged in the last century.¹⁵⁴

Scholars in favor of a Hebrew original have noted that *4 Ezra* and other Jewish writings, which seems to have been composed in Hebrew, display parallels with *2 Baruch*, making it reasonable to assume that it was also composed in Hebrew.¹⁵⁵ In addition, retranslating the Syriac text into Hebrew is said to reveal word plays and make many of the incoherent Syriac expressions intelligible.¹⁵⁶ Although Greek continues to be suggested as the original language of composition, the arguments in favor of a Hebrew *Urtext* are gaining a scholarly consensus.

¹⁵³ A. F. J. Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," in *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; vol. 1 of *OTP*, ed. James H. Charlesworth; Garden City: Doubleday, 1983), 615.

¹⁵⁴ R. H. Charles, "II Baruch," in *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English* (Vol. 2; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 472.

¹⁵⁵ Klijn, "2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch," in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:616.

¹⁵⁶ Charles, "II Baruch," 472-473.

Date

The *terminus a quo* for *2 Baruch* is generally considered the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE. Scholars believe that this is evidenced by the statement in *2 Baruch* 32:2-4 that states “for after a short time, the building of Zion will be shaken in order that it will be rebuilt. That building will not remain; but it will again be uprooted after some time and will remain desolate for a time.” The author of *2 Baruch*, like *4 Ezra*, is purported to be detailing the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. However, the reference of two destructions indicates that the author had knowledge of the destruction in 70 CE, establishing the *terminus a quo* shortly after the destruction of the Second Temple.¹⁵⁷ Establishing the *terminus ad quem* has proved much more difficult.

One of the primary problems with establishing the *terminus ad quem* is that internal references can reflect a number of potential dates. For example, *2 Baruch* 68:5 has been understood in a variety of ways and has been used to support a number of possible time periods. Scholars who assume that *2 Baruch* is composite in character can argue that this is a pre-70 CE source, yet scholars have also argued that this passage reflects a restoration before the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-135 CE).¹⁵⁸ Scholars have also attempted to arrive at a date from *2 Baruch* 28:2, which has generated both a date of 99 CE and 139 CE, while other scholars have argued that the verse is ambiguous and insignificant.¹⁵⁹ External evidence has proved to be more useful as a source for determining the date and *2 Baruch* 61:7 is believed to be quoted in the *Epistle of Barnabas* 11:9. However, the date of *Barnabas* is not universally agreed upon and both 117 and

¹⁵⁷ Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:616.

¹⁵⁸ Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:616.

¹⁵⁹ Antti Laato, *A Star is Rising: The Historical Development of the Old Testament Royal Ideology and the Rise of the Jewish Messianic Expectations* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 365-366.

132 CE have been proposed by scholars, yet either date would demonstrate knowledge of 2 *Baruch*.¹⁶⁰ Based on this fact, the terminus *ad quem* should be approximately 132 CE.

Therefore, at the very least 2 *Baruch* would have been composed at some time between 70-132 CE. Scholars have made attempts at establishing a more precise date of composition by identifying the earthquake in 2 *Baruch* 70:8 or by correctly interpreting the opening verse “And it happened in the twenty-fifth year of Jeconiah, the king of Judah” (1:1), but these attempts remain unpersuasive. Perhaps one of the most useful tools in establishing a more precise date is the fact that many scholars have asserted that 2 *Baruch* is reliant upon or responding to 4 *Ezra*. The similarities between these two texts have prompted many scholars to assign a date of 100 CE, which is roughly contemporaneous with 4 *Ezra*.¹⁶¹ This date is consistent with the available information and places the date of composition within the established guidelines for this study, and furthermore, “One cannot go far wrong by assigning the composition of the book to about A. D. 100.”¹⁶²

Provenance

The majority of scholars maintain that 2 *Baruch* was written in Palestine, possibly in Jerusalem. A. F. J. Klijn has succinctly summarized:

There are three reasons why this work was probably written in Palestine. The original language, Hebrew, indicates this region. Also, the work shows a close acquaintance with Jewish rabbinical literature. Finally, the author takes his stand with the inhabitants of Palestine, who, especially in the final letter, try to exhort and encourage the Jews in the Dispersion.¹⁶³

¹⁶⁰ Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:617.

¹⁶¹ Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:617.

¹⁶² Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (Vol. 3 of 3; ed. Geza Vermes et al.; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 753.

¹⁶³ Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:617.

The writer is categorically a Jew and has been associated by some scholars with those assembled at Jamnia around Rabbi Akiba or with the teachings of Rabbi Joshua ben Hananiah.¹⁶⁴ In fact, John Collins has suggested that there is a parallel between the escape of Yohanan ben Zakkai during the Roman siege and the departure of Baruch and Jeremiah in chapter two. Furthermore, the central theme of *2 Baruch* is obedience to the Law, which along with the messianic expectations and general outlook of the text, places the author and *2 Baruch* within mainstream rabbinic Judaism.¹⁶⁵

The Messiah in Chapters 29-30

The author of *2 Baruch* has detailed his eschatological viewpoint through three visions, and has located the Messiah within each. The first appearance of the Messiah is in *2 Baruch* 29:3 which states “And it will happen that when all that which should come to pass in these parts has been accomplished, the Anointed One will begin to be revealed.” The Messiah does not appear until after the period of tribulation and is not depicted as having any active role or function. The Messiah seems to represent merely the end of suffering and little additional information is provided aside from the fact that he is “revealed,” suggests that he is preexistent.

Following the appearance of the Messiah, the messianic period is inaugurated by an eschatological feast where Leviathan and Behemoth serve as “nourishment for all who are left” (29:4). The closest biblical parallel can be found in Psalm 74:14 and states “You crushed the heads of Leviathan; you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.” The messianic period is also characterized as a terrestrial paradise with a time of plenty across the earth and all those who remain will see “marvels every day” (29:6).

¹⁶⁴ L. H. Brockington, “The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch,” in *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (ed. H. F. D. Sparks; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 837.

¹⁶⁵ Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 222.

The previous descriptions are followed by the second reference to the Messiah in 2 *Baruch* 30:1 which states: “And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance of the Anointed One has been fulfilled and he returns with glory, that then all who sleep in hope of him will rise.” The text gives no explicit details as to where the Messiah is to return. Some scholars have assumed that heaven is insinuated from the statement “and he returns with glory,” where as others have argued that this passage corresponds with 2 *Baruch* 29:2 and that the Messiah is to return to the land of Israel or earth with glory.¹⁶⁶ This matter cannot adequately be resolved and remains ambiguous. However, what is clear from the passage, is that the appearance of the Messiah is related to the resurrection of the righteous and that the “souls of the wicked will the more waste away” (30:4), which seems to imply that the souls and bodies of the wicked will continue to decompose.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, it indicates that the messianic period is only for a limited duration and will be followed by the resurrection of the righteous souls.

Chapters 35-40

The Messiah appears for the third time explicitly in 2 *Baruch* 39:7 in an explanation of Baruch’s vision of the Forest, the Cedar, the Vine, and the Fountain. The vision is interpreted as four kingdoms that will arise and subjugate Israel, which is reminiscent of Daniel 7. The final Cedar apparently represents the Roman Empire, who will be “harsher and more evil than those which were before it” (39:5).¹⁶⁸ The Roman Empire’s fate at the hands of the Messiah is depicted: “And it will happen when the time of fulfillment is approaching in which it (the Cedar) will fall, that at that time the dominion of my Anointed One which is like the fountain and the

¹⁶⁶ Charlesworth, “From Jewish Messianology to Christian Christology Some Caveats and Perspectives,” 246.

¹⁶⁷ Charlesworth et al., eds., *Qumrân-Messianism*, 33.

¹⁶⁸ Laato, *A Star is Rising*, 368.

vine, will be revealed. And when it has revealed itself, it will uproot the multitude of its host” (39:7). The use of “revealed” further alludes to the preexistence of the Messiah as noted in 2 *Baruch* 29:3.

Chapter 40 begins with an interpretation of what the “vine opened its mouth and spoke and said to the cedar” (36:7).

The last ruler who is left alive at that time will be bound, whereas the entire host will be destroyed. And they will carry him on Mount Zion, and my Anointed One will convict him of all his wicked deeds and will assemble and set before him all the works of the hosts. And after these things he will kill him 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. This is your vision, and this is its explanation. (2 *Baruch* 40:1-4)

The passages in chapter 39 and 40 mark the first active tasks of the Messiah in 2 *Baruch*, which is the destruction of the Roman Empire and the capture of the “last ruler.” His role, like that of the Messiah in 4 *Ezra*, is depicted in forensic language and imagery. The Messiah is to arrest or “bound” the final ruler and Mount Zion will be the location of the trial. Furthermore, based on the evidence that includes of “all his wicked deeds” and “all the works of the hosts,” the Messiah will “convict him” and pronounce a sentence of death. The legal functions of the Messiah are not only explicit in the interpretation, but are also perceptible in the actual vision of 2 *Baruch* 36:1-11.

Along with the Messiah’s forensic responsibilities, he is seen as a ruler with “dominion” during the messianic period. The author of 2 *Baruch* does not describe the Messiah in additional royal or kingly language within these passages. Instead, it is noted that he will “protect the rest of my people who will be found in the place that I have chosen” (40:2). However, it is again reiterated that this period is only temporary and will last “until the world of corruption has ended and until the times which have been mentioned before have been fulfilled” (40:3).

Chapters 70-74

The final and longest section that details the activities and kingdom of the Messiah is found in the vision of the Bright Waters and the Black Waters. Like the previous visions, the author has depicted the calamities that will befall the earth prior to the arrival of the Messiah. The final Black Water represents the tribulation, which culminates in a great war between the nations of the earth, and is followed by an earthquake, fire, and famine (70:7-8). After detailing the events to come, Baruch is told “And it will happen that everyone who will save himself and escape from all things which have been said before—both those who have won and those who have been overcome—that all will be delivered into the hands of my Servant, the Anointed One” (70:9). The Messiah marks the end of the final Black Waters and the tribulation, and the beginning of the last Bright Waters.

When the Messiah arrives, he summons all the nations and “every nation which has not known Israel and which has not trodden down the seed of Jacob will live,” and “all those, now who have ruled over you or have known you, will be delivered up to the sword” (72:4,6). The nations that are to be destroyed are culpable not because they are Gentiles, but based on the fact that they have subjugated or have simply “known” Israel.¹⁶⁹ George Nickelsburg has stated “The detailing of the criterion for salvation or destruction of the Gentiles is unique to this literature.”¹⁷⁰ Scholars have suggested Psalm 72:11, Isaiah 14:2; 66:12, as well as additional

¹⁶⁹ Charlesworth et al., eds., *Qumrân-Messianism*, 35.

¹⁷⁰ Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 285.

biblical passages as a source of possible parallels, however most are unpersuasive.¹⁷¹ In fact, some scholars have noted that after chapter 68 there are noticeably few biblical allusions.¹⁷²

After the Messiah has carried out his militant tasks and “has sat down in eternal peace on the throne of the kingdom” (73:1), the author depicts the messianic kingdom, which seems heavily indebted to Isaiah 11, specifically verses 6-9.¹⁷³

Then joy will be revealed and rest will appear. And then health will descend in dew, and illness will vanish, and fear and tribulation and lamentation will pass away from among men, and joy will encompass the earth. And nobody will again die untimely, nor will any adversity take place suddenly. Judgment, condemnations, contentions, revenges, blood, passions, zeal, hate, and all such things will go into condemnation since they will be uprooted. For these are the things that have filled this earth with evils, and because of them life of men came in yet greater confusion. And the wild beasts will come from the wood and serve men, and the asps and dragons will come out of their holes to subject themselves to a child. And women will no longer have pain when they bear, nor will they be tormented when they yield the fruits of their womb. And it will happen in those days that the reapers will not become tired, and the farmers will not wear themselves out, because the products of themselves will shoot out speedily, during the time that they work on them in full tranquility. For that time is the end of that which is corruptible and the beginning of that which is incorruptible. (2 *Baruch* 73:1b-74:2)

The Messiah does not make another appearance in 2 *Baruch*, and the tasks presented above are the only functions he performs. The author’s primary emphasis is dedicated to the description of the paradisiacal kingdom to come, and the Messiah’s judgment and militant victory serves as little more than requisite tasks to usher in the new age.

The Entire Portrayal

The author of 2 *Baruch* has devoted far more time and effort in detailing the messianic woes and the eschatological age, than the character and role of the Messiah. From the three sections in which the Messiah is referenced, only two assign him any tasks at all. However, the

¹⁷¹ Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” in *Apocalyptic Literature* (ed. Charlesworth), 1:645.

¹⁷² Gerbern S. Oegema, *The Anointed and his People: Messianic Expectations from the Maccabees to Bar Kochba* (JSPSup 27; Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 222.

¹⁷³ Charlesworth, “From Jewish Messianology to Christian Christology Some Caveats and Perspectives,” 247.

general picture of the Messiah is that of a terrestrial king who through military action destroys the enemies of Israel. He is depicted as acting in forensic terms (“convict him”), as well as violently (“destroyed,” “killed,” and “delivered up to the sword”). However, there is nothing to suggest that the Messiah is transcendent other than the fact that he is said to be “revealed,” which implies preexistence (29:3, cf. 39:7). Similarly, there is very little said of the Messiah’s role as king, other than his “dominion will last forever,” and that he will sit down “in eternal peace on the throne of his kingdom” (40:3, 73:1). The Messiah is not represented in royal language, there is no reference to Davidic descent, and the text makes it clear that his kingdom is temporary (30:1, 40:3). Aside from the Messiah’s destruction of the Gentile rulers, the Messiah in 2 *Baruch* is more of a symbol than an actor. He represents an end to the suffering and tribulation because he will “protect the rest of my people.” His appearance marks a time when the righteous will be resurrected, and signifies a time of earthly abundance and of a terrestrial paradise. The author of 2 *Baruch* seems more concerned with the ends, than the means, and the lengthy description of the messianic kingdom above is evidence for this fact.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

So that you may not claim to be wiser than you are, brothers and sisters, I want you to understand this mystery. (Romans 11:25a)

The four texts of the Pseudepigrapha that have been investigated exhibit diverse expectations concerning the tasks, functions, and characteristics of the eschatological leader, as well as some notable similarities. Along with the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the New Testament, these four texts provide our primary evidence for messianic expectations in the first century. It is important to reiterate that these texts do not necessarily represent the complete range of messianic thought that was present in the first century, only that which has survived for whatever reason. We have no way of knowing with certainty how ubiquitous any of the beliefs represented within any of these four books were held by the general populace. Therefore, these texts should be viewed as examples of the speculation and expectation concerning the Messiah, however, none of these texts may completely encompass the messianic thought of the majority, or even reflect a single aspect of it, although this is not believed to be the case.

Furthermore, the scope of this study has been limited to include texts that use “Messiah” or a translation equivalent. While this may allow an analysis of how the authors of these four texts used and seemingly understood the term “Messiah” and any equivalent expressions associated therein, it does not account for the fact that other epithets and titles may have had greater or lesser messianic undertones or expectations associated with them, which are now lost or are seen as secondary to the title “Messiah.” However, the importance of investigating messianic expectations based on this study’s established criteria is that it allows for a possible

understanding and glimpse of how “an anointed one” evolved into the title “the Messiah” with eschatological responsibilities, and what connotations this term embodied for the author. In addition, the present study presents two messianic texts before the period of the synoptic gospel writers and two after such time, which has broad implications for the development of Jewish messianism and New Testament research. By comparing and contrasting the four texts of our study, we can obtain a sense of what at least some first century Jews believed and expected from the Messiah.

In two of the texts, *4 Ezra* 12:32 and the *Psalms of Solomon* 17:21, the Messiah is described as a descendent of David. Whereas, there is no mention of ancestry in *2 Baruch*, and the *Similitudes* contain an identification with Enoch as the Messiah (Son of Man) in 1 En 71:14. However, of the two texts that contain a Davidic Messiah, only the *Psalms* present the Messiah as a king who will rule over Israel (Pss Sol 17:21-33). As noted in the discussion above, the failure to attribute kingship to the Messiah in *4 Ezra* has convinced many scholars that this is a traditional concept. In fact, aside from the *Psalms*, kingship can only be discerned in *2 Baruch* 40:3 and 73:1. Therefore, Davidic ancestry and kingship were not requirements in the messianic thinking of all Jews, but did continue to maintain a contingent in the first century.

Similarly, while the Messiah in *2 Baruch* and the *Psalms* is depicted as a human, the Messiah in the *Similitudes* is transcendent, and the nature of the Messiah is ambiguous in *4 Ezra* where he exhibits mortal frailties but is described in divine imagery. Despite these characterizations, only the *Psalms* are silent concerning the Messiah’s preexistence, and this component is found implicitly or explicitly in *2 Baruch* (29:3; 39:7), *4 Ezra* (7:28; 12:32; 13:26; 14:9), and the *Similitudes* (46:1-2; 48:2-3; 62:7). Although, even the *Psalms* may testify to this belief, and Charlesworth has translated Pss Sol 18:5 as “May God cleanse Israel in the day of

mercy and blessing, in the day of election when he brings back his Messiah.”¹⁷⁴ If this translation adequately captures the intent of the author, then all four texts seem to confirm the belief in a preexistent Messiah.

One of the most debated aspects concerning the Messiah’s role is whether he was perceived as a militant warrior. Charlesworth has stated, “Explicit support for this bewitching view that Jews were expecting a militant Messiah is found among the early Jewish Pseudepigrapha only in 2 Baruch 72.”¹⁷⁵ As I have already demonstrated in the discussion of the *Psalms*, Charlesworth’s statement and conclusions are not tenable. Charlesworth has based his conclusions, at least in part, on the method in which the Messiah brings about his destruction and whether it was accomplished through military weapons.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, based on this rationale, the following statement in *4 Ezra* is seen as non militant:

And behold, when he saw the onrush of the approaching multitude, he neither lifted his hand nor held a spear or any weapon of war; but I saw only how he sent forth from his mouth as it were a stream of fire, and from his lips a flaming breath, and from his tongue he shot forth a storm of sparks. All these were mingled together, the stream of fire and the flaming breath and the great storm, and fell on the onrushing multitude which was prepared to fight, and burned them all up, so that suddenly nothing was seen of the innumerable multitude but only the dust of the ashes and the smell of smoke. (4 Ezra 9-13)

Although the author of *4 Ezra* has made clear that the destruction was not by any weapon of war, the action is undeniably violent, and Charlesworth also fails to account for additional references in *4 Ezra* which state that the Messiah will “destroy” the unrighteous (12:33; 13:38). It is hard to imagine that a Jew writing during the reign of Domitian would have made a distinction between a militant Messiah and a violent Messiah. Furthermore, not only is the Messiah in the *Psalms*

¹⁷⁴ James H. Charlesworth, “From Messianology to Christology; Problems and Prospects,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity* (ed. James H. Charlesworth et al.; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 3-35.

¹⁷⁵ Charlesworth, “From Messianology to Christology; Problems and Prospects,” 20.

¹⁷⁶ Charlesworth, “From Messianology to Christology; Problems and Prospects,” 20.

and *4 Ezra* portrayed as a violent figure, but the *Similitudes* also state that the Messiah will “crush the teeth of the sinners” and “a sword shall abide in their midst before his face” (1 En. 46:5; 63:11). According to Charlesworth’s methodology, the reference to the sword would seemingly make the Messiah in the *Similitudes* a militant warrior; however, he has not addressed this detail because it is the Son of Man that is attributed this action. Therefore, semantics aside, the Messiah in all four texts is described as functioning in a violent and aggressive manner.

In a related concept, all four texts also attest to the idea that the Messiah will act as a judge, although this is not typically the final judgment. The judgment of the Messiah in Pss. Sol. 17:21-33 and *2 Baruch* 40:1-2 takes place at the beginning of the messianic age and is not depicted as final judgment. Likewise, *4 Ezra* 12:31-34 clearly establishes that the Messiah will execute judgment on the sinners, but also notes that a final judgment remains. It is clear from earlier passages in *4 Ezra* 7:31-44 and 7:113-144 that the final judgment is the jurisdiction of God and commences after the death of the Messiah. While the Messiah in the *Psalms of Solomon*, *4 Ezra*, and *2 Baruch* judges the wicked in preparation for the messianic age, the Messiah in the *Similitudes* is seated on the Lord’s throne and judges sinners, “secret things,” and “the holy ones in heaven above” (1 En. 51:3; 49:4; 61:8). In addition, if Black has accurately translated 1 En. 69:27-29 as discussed previously, the Messiah is also given “the sum of judgment,” which is unique among the texts of our study.

Scholars are quick to point out that the Messiah’s functions concerning the faithful remnant, his role in the resurrection, and the reasons provided for the Messiah’s destruction, as well as additional features, are varied among the texts of our study.¹⁷⁷ This fact is not a matter of contention; however, the similarities are often treated as less important than the areas of agreement. As scholars, we must glean insight not only from exceptions, such as *4 Ezra*’s

¹⁷⁷ Charlesworth, “From Messianology to Christology; Problems and Prospects,” 19-24.

expectation that the Messiah will die or the fact that the Messiah is sinless in the *Psalms*, but also from matters of accord. Each text presents a sketch of the author's eschatology and messianic expectations, and there is no certainty that these two areas were always in complete agreement with each other, meaning that one possibly had to give way to the other. Therefore, an author's rigid eschatology may have shaped his messianic expectations and vice versa. We tend to forget that, today as in the past, there is not a single Christianity, but many Christianities, not a single Judaism, but many Judaisms, and not a unified messianic expectation in the first century, but many Messiahs. The messianic thought displayed from our study ranges from terrestrial to transcendent, Davidic ancestry to ambivalence, with greater emphasis placed on kingship in some texts and eschatological judgment in others. However, many of the points of agreement are striking, and we must conclude that regardless of how popular these beliefs were, the expectation of a preexistent Messiah who will violently remove and judge the sinners existed, in the very least, as an undercurrent from ca. 100 BCE-100 CE. However, assigning these beliefs to a larger contingent or to the general populace would be merely conjectural.

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