

Messiah in the Tanach, 05

Second Temple Period Perspectives on Messiah in the Tanach

Introduction

- The separatist Qumran community had clear messianic expectations.
- The orthodox Rabbis also had clear messianic expectations.
- Their texts borrow language from the Hebrew Tanach.
- Jews in Jesus' day studied these texts.

1QS IX 9–11 (*Community Rule*)

"...until the coming of the prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel."

עַד בּוֹא הַנְּבִיא וּמְשִׁיחֵי אַהֲרֹן וְיִשְׂרָאֵל

- Prophet: The (expected) prophet
- Messiahs: Anointed (kings)
- Aaron: Priestly function
- Israel: (Davidic) king

4Q285 (Fragment 5)

"And the King, the Messiah, will work vengeance upon his enemies..."

וַיַּעֲשֶׂה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ נֶקֶם בְּאֹיְבָיו

"And he will kill the prince of the congregation, the Branch of David..."

וְהָמָתוּ נָשִׂיא הָעֵדָה צֶמַח דָּוִד

4Q521 (*Messianic Apocalypse*)

"He will heal the wounded, and revive the dead, and proclaim good news to the poor, and open the eyes of the blind."

יְבַשֵּׁר עֵצִים וַיַּפְקֵחַ עֹרְמִים וַיַּבְשֵׁר עֲבִיִּים וַיַּפְקֵחַ עֹרְמִים

- Heal: Compare Isaiah 35 & 61
- Revive: NT: John's query to Jesus
- Proclaim: NT: Jesus' reply to John
- Open eyes: NT: Jesus' final miracle

Talmud: Sanhedrin 98b

Rabbi Hanina said: "The name of the Messiah is Menachem ben Hizkiyah."

Rabbi Yehudah says: "His name is Shiloh, as it is said, 'Until Shiloh comes' (Genesis 49:10).

- From the Tannaitic period (roughly 10–220 CE) preserved in the Mishnah (commentary on the written Law, Tosefta (Commentary on the oral law), and early strata of the Talmud.

Talmud: Berakhot 34b

Shmuel said: "The only difference between this world and the days of the Messiah is [the end of] subjugation to foreign kingdoms."

אמר שמואל: אין בין העולם הזה לימות המשיח אלא שעבוד מלכויות בלבד

- "Not a miraculous overhaul of nature but a political transformation." (ChatGT5)

John the Baptizer (Mt 11 ESV 2016)

³ Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to [Jesus], "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"

- Heard: About Jesus' miracles
- The one: The end-times Messiah
- Another: Who would conquer

Jesus About Himself (Luke 24 ESV 2016)

²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

⁴⁴ "I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures...

⁴⁶ "Thus it is written, that the [Messiah] should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations.

- Written: Law, Prophets, Writings
- Opened: Not only to political parts
- Dead: Messiah had to die & rise.
- Nations: Must be reached before Messiah will bring worldwide peace.

Psalm 16 (Tanach NJPS 1985)

¹⁰ For You will not abandon me to Sheol,
or let Your faithful one see the Pit.

¹¹ You will teach me the path of life.

In Your presence is perfect joy.

- Sheol: Place where the dead go.
- Pit: A physical grave or tomb.
- Life: Opposite of death.
- Joy: Place where the living go.

Peter (Acts 2, re: Psa 16)

²⁹ The patriarch David ... ³⁰ being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath ... ³¹ foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

- Resurrection: Messiah would rise.
- Hades: He would first die.

Peter (1 Pet 1 ESV 2016)

¹⁰ The prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully,

¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of [Messiah] in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of [Messiah] and the subsequent glories.

- He: The LORD's Spirit.

Psalm 110 (NJPS 1985)

¹ The LORD said to my lord,

"Sit at My right hand

while I make your enemies your footstool."

...יְהוָה יֹאמַר לַאֲדֹנָי שֵׁב לְיְמִינִי עַד

- LORD: YHWH, God's proper name.
- lord: 'adon, title of superior rank.

- while: 'ad, or 'until'.

Psalm 110 in the NT

⁴² "What do you think about the [Messiah]? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." ...

⁴⁵ If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?" Matthew 11

- Lord: 'adoni = 'my lord' ≠ 'Adonay, although identical in the consonantal text: 'dny
- Son: Hebraism = 'descendent'

³³ Exalted at the right hand of God... ³⁴ David did not ascend into the heavens ... ³⁶ God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." Acts 2 ESV 2016

- Exalted: Psalm 110.1, 'Sit at my right hand.'
- David: Died and went into Sheol.
- Lord: Post-exaltation.

Peter

¹⁸ What God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his [Messiah] would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore... ²⁰ that he may send the [Messiah] appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things. (Acts 3 ESV 2016)

Isaiah 53 (NJPS 1985)

⁷ He was maltreated, yet he was submissive, ...

Like a sheep being led to slaughter, ...

He did not open his mouth.

⁸ By oppressive judgment he was taken away, ...

For he was cut off from the land of the living...

Philip

³⁴ The eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵ Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. Acts 8 ESV 2016

Paul

"We bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus, as also it is written in the second Psalm, 'You are my Son, today I have begotten you.'"

Acts 2:32-33 ESV 2016

¹ There was a synagogue of the Jews. ² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead. Acts 17:1-3 ESV 2016

Appolos

²⁴ Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. ...

²⁷ When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, ²⁸ showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus. Acts 18 ESV 2016

Conclusion

- Skeptics accuse Jesus, his apostles, or the NT writers of fabricating their reports of Jews responding to Jesus' messianic pretensions.
- More likely, 2nd temple era Jews held the entire Tanach to be both predictive and messianic.