

THE MOTIFS OF THE MESSIANIC ADVENT
IN JEWISH LITERATURE FROM THE SEVENTH
THROUGH THE ELEVENTH CENTURIES

JEROME FOX

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Advisor: Dr. Leonard S. Kravitz

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Jewish Messianic literature is an enormous topic; many works have been written concerning the inception of the Messiah idea in Biblical literature through its application in modern times. When I first began to explore this topic, I wanted to know what specific motifs the Jewish tradition ascribes to the Messianic advent. It is well known that the traditional Jew believes in a personal Messiah, a scion of the house of David who will redeem the exiled Jewish people and restore Jewish independence in the land of Israel. My basic question was: where do the specific motifs of the Messianic advent play a part in this scheme? Many of the general works on the subject of Jewish Messianism referred to a medieval work called the Book of Zerubbabel, considered to be a rich source of the imagery to be found in the Messianic folklore of the Jewish people. I was lucky to find a vocalized and annotated text of the Book of Zerubbabel in the Yehudah Even-Shmuel anthology Midreshei Geullah¹. Along with this apocalypse were many others which flowed from the same well-spring of literary creativity. Most of these works had never been translated into English. Therefore, my thesis work evolved as I started translating one after another. The only work included in this thesis which I did not translate was Saadia Gaon's "An Essay concerning Redemption", which is readily available in English translations of his Emunot ve-Deot².

Yehudah Even-Shmuel (Kaufman) is undoubtedly the fore-

most scholar to have researched this period of Jewish literature. He, along with Israel Levi of France, provides the basis for most of the scholarly work done to date in this field. Even-Shmuel's volume was of tremendous help. He collated the manuscripts of the various apocalypses, often interweaving several versions in his text. My translation of those secondary versions will be found either within double parentheses or lettered "A." and "B.". Each work has been annotated, giving the Biblical and Tannaitic sources of many of the allusions, as well as words of explanation. I found these aids to be most helpful in my translating. In addition to that, he has provided analysis and introductory material to each document, and, in some cases, his historical reconstruction was the most convincing and complete that exists today.

In my translating I generally tried to render the text easily readable. Obscure passages are explained in the notes at the end of each chapter. The translation of proper names was sometimes difficult. A name that is readily identifiable was translated into its ordinary English equivalent, e.g.: Paras as Persia. Those that were not were transliterated from the Hebrew. The quotations from Scripture generally follow the J.P.S. translation, with the modernizing of pronouns and verbal endings.

In addition to Professor Even-Shmuel, I would like to

thank Dr. Leonard Kravitz of HUC-JIR, New York, for his many hours of assistance in translating and organizing the works; Dr. Edward Kiev and the library staff of HUC-JIR for their assistance; my wife Carole for proofreading and correcting the English; and Karen Goldfarb for typing the manuscript piecemeal, as she received it.

Interest in Jewish Messianism is heightened whenever the fortunes of the Jewish people are at a low ebb. Even-Shmuel first published his work in 1943, when the impact of the Holocaust was becoming apparent to the Jews of Palestine. I also found comfort in reading these apocalypses of Jewish triumph during these difficult times in the wake of the Yom Kippur War.

The word "Messiah" was first used in Biblical literature. The kings of the Davidic dynasty were each known as the mashiah, the anointed one. Saul was also a mashiah, as was Cyrus of Persia (Isa. 45:1) It was during the Second Temple period that the Messiah became an eschatological personality.³ During the oppression of the Greco-Roman era the belief in a redeeming Messianic king heightened. These messiahs were always human beings. Although they sometimes had supernatural qualities, they were always an agent of God, not a Savior in the Christian sense.⁴

For the Rabbis, the Messiah was a king who would redeem and rule Israel at the climax of human history; he is the instrument by which the Kingdom of God will be established. The world, in its present historical context, was considered finite:

The world will exist for six thousand years.
 The (first) two thousand will be chaotic.
 The (second) two thousand will be governed
 by the Torah. The (last) two thousand will
 be the days of the Messiah.⁵

Clearly they felt that they themselves were living just prior to the Messianic advent.

The stormy period following the destruction of the Second Temple was one of hopes and dashed hopes. Some saw Bar Kochba as the Messiah⁶; others saw the Messianic process evolving when Julian the Apostate reversed the Christianizing of the Roman Empire begun by Constantine, and began to make overtures to the Jews.⁷ During this period the Hishuvei Qetz, calculators of the end, began to speculate regularly concerning the imminent Messianic coming. So often were the people disillusioned that the Rabbis finally forbade the calculating of the end, lest the expectations generated would once again prove fruitless.⁸

The era of the Perso-Byzantine wars (early 7th Century) was a time of heightened Messianic hopes. It was during those years when the major world power groupings were changing, that the two major apocalypses, the Book of Elijah and the Book of Zerubbabel, were most likely written⁹. These two works contain

the major elements found in most Jewish apocalypses and have had a significant influence on the literature. They, in turn, were based somewhat on earlier sources, to which I will briefly turn to ascertain the origins of some of the major apocalyptic elements.

Typical of the notions concerning the Messianic coming is the idea of two Messiahs, the Messiah ben Joseph and the Messiah ben David. The Messiah ben Joseph usually comes first, starts the redemptive process, but fails to achieve final victory. He is slain by the adversary, and is later resurrected by the Messiah ben David, who is the true Messiah and who will bring about the final triumphs¹⁰.

The Messiah ben Joseph is often called Nehemiah ben Hushiel. His proper name is from the root nhm meaning 'to comfort'. His paternal name is related to the root hwsh, to 'hasten or hurry'. He is the comforter who hurries the end, and hence fails.¹¹ Both Zerubbabel¹² and Bar Kochba¹³ have been equated with the tragic figure of the Messiah ben Joseph.

Interwoven in these notions is the connection between the valley or city of Arbel in Galilee and the appearance of the Messiah. (Some legends connect this location with the appearance of the Messiah ben Joseph, some with the Messiah ben David.¹⁴) Even-Shmuel presents a very interesting theory concerning this information. Seder 'Olam Zuta (chapter 9)

lists the first ten exilarchs of the Davidic dynasty in Babylon. The tenth is Hezekiah ben Shechaniyah who is buried in the land of Israel, in the valley of Arbel, on the land that belonged to the priest Joshua ben-Saraf. Even-Shmuel connects this fact with the unusual command made by the dying Yohanan ben Zakkai to his disciples, ordering them to deliver the throne of the nasi to Hezekiah.¹⁵ Even-Shmuel understands this to mean that they were to restore the leadership of the nation from the Hillelites to the rightful scion of the House of David.¹⁶ Perhaps this Hezekiah personally intervened with Vespasian and Titus to spare Jerusalem. His request was denied, but the Roman leaders honored him as a Persian prince and granted him two fortresses, Birat-Malka and Birat-'Arba, near the Pools of Solomon in the vicinity of Bethlehem.¹⁷ It was there, during the destruction of Jerusalem, that a son named Menahem was born to Hezekiah. Later, the Resh Galutha moved to Arbel, the priestly city belonging to Joshua ben Nisraph, in the vicinity of Tiberias, and there established an academy. Many felt that the Messianic redemption would begin at that academy.¹⁸

The Messiah ben David was often called Menahem ben Amiel. Again, 'Menahem' signifies comforter. 'Amiel' in gematria equals gana', the "avenger" of the slain Messiah ben Joseph. The notion of the suffering Messiah imprisoned in Rome follows the memra of R. Joshua ben Levi.¹⁹ Only in the Book of

Zerubbabel is Hephtzi-bah mentioned and named as the mother of the Messiah ben David. In gematria her name equals ha-qetz, signifying the "end". (For more discussion on Hephtzi-bah see my introduction to the translation of the Book of Zerubbabel, page 27).

The opponents of the Messiah are either Gog and Magog or Armilus. Ezekiel, chapters 38-39, mentions the invasion of Gog, from the land of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. He will come after Israel is ingathered and dwelling securely in her land. God, personally, will fight this vengeful horde. The corpses of Gog's army will be buried in Hamon Gog. Gog is characterized not as an historical enemy of Israel, but rather as a northern king who sends his hordes against the Israelite people merely out of jealousy and lust for violence. One theory is that Gog refers to Giges (or Gogo) king of Lydia in Asia Minor.²⁰ Gog and Magog are mentioned throughout the Aggadah connected with the Messianic period.²¹ The New Testament²² sees this enemy as waging the final war before the second coming, and later Christians identified them with both the Goths and the Muslims.²³

Armilus is often the arch-enemy of the Messiah in these legends. The name seems to have originated during the Perso-Roman wars of the Seventh Century.²⁴ It is probably connected with Romulus, the legendary founder of Rome. Like Romulus, Armilus was born of a beautiful virgin. The medieval notion

that the pagan Romans had illicit relations with a marble statue of a virgin comes from the writings of Virgil²⁵, and is echoed in several of our apocalypses. Historically, the legendary Armilus is identified with the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, who quelled the last struggle for Jewish independence in the land of Israel. Lévi theorizes that the marble statues of his mother, which he set up throughout the land, were actually statues of the Virgin Mary. The asheras that he planted were a euphemism for the crucifixes that he re-established in Palestine after the Judeo-Persian revolt.²⁶ Even-Shmuel sees a secondary explanation in the name of Armilus. He derives it from the place name 'Aram,' the letters of which can be rearranged to spell the name "Ramai", signifying the "deceiver". Like Laban the Aramean, Heraclius deceived the Jews into laying down their arms.²⁷

Many legends contain the notion that the rebuilt Temple, or the entire city of Jerusalem, has been prepared by God and rests in heaven ready to be lowered once the freedom and ingathering are accomplished. This idea is repeated many times in Tannaitic literature,²⁸ and is concisely expressed in the midrash Heavenly Jerusalem (Yerushalayim shel Ma'lah) found in the Even-Shmuel anthology.²⁹

The Book of Elijah and the Book of Zerubbabel had a profound effect on all later Jewish eschatological literature. The paytanim Elazar Kalir and Yannai borrowed from them as did

the geonim Saadia and Hai ben Sherirah. Maimonides did not accept the vivid imagery of this literature. For him the coming of the Messiah would simply be expressed in the re-establishment of Jewish independence in the land of Israel.³⁰ Despite his efforts, and those of other rationalists, the more vivid images persisted in the folk literature of the Jewish people. Every new upheaval created new legends and speculations concerning the Messiah's advent. These images became part of the mysticism of the later Middle Ages.³¹ Even today, for example, there are elements in the orthodox community who see the recent moon landings as the beginning of the Messianic process, and identify Soviet Russia with Gog and Magog.³²

GENERAL INTRODUCTION -- NOTES

¹Yehudah Even-Shmuel, Midreshei Geullah, (Revised Edition; Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, Massada, 1943 (1954)).

²cf. Samuel Rosenblatt, translator, Saadia Gaon; The Book of Belief and Opinions (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1948).

and, Alexander Altmann, Saadia Gaon; The Book of Doctrines and Beliefs (abridged edition Oxford: East and West Library, 1946).

³"Messiah," Encyclopedia Judaica, XI (1971), 1408.

⁴Ibid., 1410.

⁵cf. Sanh. 97a, A.Z. 9a.

⁶cf. Sanh. 99b.

⁷Even-Shmuel, op. cit. xliv.

⁸Ibid., xliv.

⁹According to Even-Shmuel and Israel Lévi. See the introductions to the two works for further discussion.

¹⁰cf. Suk. 52a.

¹¹Even-Shmuel, op. cit. liv.

¹²See the introduction to the Book of Zerubbabel in the thesis.

¹³Even-Shmuel, op. cit., l.

¹⁴See the comparison charts under "Arbel" at the end of this thesis.

¹⁵cf. Ber. 28b.

¹⁶cf. Even-Shmuel, op. cit., xlviii.

¹⁷cf. Huledet ha-Mashiah v'Higanzo in Even-Shmuel, op. cit. p. 302

¹⁸cf. T.J. Ber. 1:1; Sh-ha-sh. R. 36:10; and the advice of R. Hiyya in Aggadat ha-Mashiah, in this thesis.

¹⁹cf. Sanh. 98a.

²⁰"Gog and Magog," Encyclopedia Judaica, VII, 691-93.

²¹cf. Mek. Be-Shallah 2; A.Z. 3b; Tanh. Noah 18, PdRK 79; Eduy. 2:10; Targum Jonathan to Num. 11:26, Deut. 34:1 and 3, Zech. 12:10.

²²N.T. John 20.

²³"Messiah," Encyclopedia Judaica, XI, 1413.

²⁴Jakob Klatzkin, "Armilus," Encyclopedia Judaica, III (1971), 476-477.

²⁵Ibid., 477.

²⁶Even-Shmuel, op. cit., xliii.

²⁷Ibid. xli.

²⁸cf. Ta'an. 5a; Hag. 12b; Mek. Be-Shallah 10 on Ex. 15:17; Tanh. Va-Yakhel, Siman 7; T.J. Ber. 4:8; Mid. Teh to 90:3 (Buber ed.)

²⁹Even-Shmuel, op. cit., pp. 11-22.

³⁰Maimonides, Yad ha-Hazakah, "Hilkhoh Melakhim," chs. 11, 12; "Hilkhoh Teshuvah," 9:2; also, Shab. 63a.

³¹Even-Shmuel, op. cit., slv.

³²M. Kasher in No'am XIII (1970); Raphael Halevi Eisenberg, Nahkorah v'Nashuvah (Jerusalem: Hidekel, 1973); Hayyim Shevili, Heshbonot ha-Geullah, (Jerusalem: Ha-Ma'arav, 1964).

CHAPTER I. THE BOOK OF ELIJAH (Sefer Eliyahu)
Introduction

This work is sometimes known as the Apocalypse of Elijah; in Hebrew, however, it is known as Sefer Eliyahu. The apocalypse builds on the notion that the prophet Elijah will be sent before the awesome and great day that marks the end of historic time to 'turn the hearts of the fathers to the sons, and the sons to the fathers.'¹ The historical events center around the Perso-Roman wars. Their connection with the end of days is based on the Talmudic notion that the "destroyers" (i.e.: Rome) are destined to fall to the Persians before the period of redemption is to come.² The details in this work concerning the return of the three exiles is based upon the Jerusalem Talmud.³

Moses Bottenwieser and Samuel Krauss place the historical events in the 3rd Century of the Common Era. Bottenwieser believes that the "last king of Persia" referred to in this text is Shapur I who ruled from 241-272 CE.⁴ Shapur conquered Antioch in 256 and took the Emperor Valerian captive. Krauss calls the "last king" Artaxerxes from the name "Hartakhshasta" which appears in our text. Artaxerxes reigned around 226 CE. Gog and Magog are an allusion referring to the Gothic invasion of the Roman Empire.

Yehudah Even-Shmuel dates the work later, in the Geonic period. He theorizes that the "last king" was Khosrau II,⁶ who because of his liberality towards the Jews may have been likened to Cyrus the Great. Khosrau ruled from 590-628.

During that era Phocas gained the throne of Byzantium (602) and ordered the Jews of Jerusalem to convert.⁷ Many Israelites probably joined the forces of Khosrau, the Jewish resistance centered in Tiberias, led by the wealthy Benjamin.⁸ Khosrau may have given promises that Jewish aid in his wars against Byzantium would lead to Jewish autonomy in the land of Israel. In 613 Damascus fell to the advancing Persian forces; by 614 Jerusalem and most of the Byzantine East was in Khosrau's hands.

Even-Shmuel theorizes that the "least of kings" mentioned in the text was the Byzantine dictator Phocas⁹ who was of humble origins. Elsewhere, Phocas had been likened to a monstrous anti-Christ, his description resembling that of the despised Emperor Caligula.¹⁰ The diaspora Jews of Babylon and Persia may have lent support to Khosrau, thus explaining the allusion to the three exiles in our text. The coming of Gog and Magog may refer to the Avar attack of Constantinople in the year 627.¹¹ Using his reconstruction, Even-Shmuel believes that the Book of Elijah was written in the year 627 CE.

Translation of Text

"And he lay down and slept under a broom-tree, and, behold, an angel touched him, and said to him: 'Arise and eat.'" (I Kings 19:5)¹ This secret was revealed by Michael the great captain of Israel, to Elijah the prophet on Mount Carmel, concerning the end of days, at the end of the four kingdoms.

((Elijah said:))

God's wind carried me and brought me to the east of the world² and there I saw a high place burning with fire, no being could enter there. Then the wind carried me to the south of the world³ and there I saw stars battling with one another,⁴ but they were not prevailing over one another. The wind carried me to the west of the world,⁵ I saw souls given to sorrow, each one according to his deeds. Then Michael said to me that the end of the future will come about during the days of the king who will (reign) at the end of days. 5 10

((His name is Harmelat; and there are those who say his name is Tarmeila; R. Simai says: his name is Hakhsherat; R. Elazar says: his name is Hartahshasta; R. Judah ben-Batira says: Koresh (Cyrus) is his name; R. Simeon bar Yokhai says: his name is Hakhsera-- but the accepted opinion is according to R. Simeon who said: his name is Hakhsera.))

The last king of Persia will go up against Rome for three consecutive years until he conquers it for twelve months.

Three generals shall come up towards him from the sea, and they will be delivered into his hands.

15

A. ((On the 20th of Tishrei)) the least of kings, son of a handmaiden, whose name is Gigit, will go up against him from the sea. These will be his signs: a long face, a long horn between his eyes, his stature will be very tall, his arches⁶ will be very high, his hips will be very slim. On that day he will set his hand against the faithful nation.

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B. ((On the 20th of Nisan a king will come up from the sea, and come to the beautiful holy mountain and burn it. Cursed among women be the one who bore him. He is the horn that Daniel saw⁷...on that day there will be sorrow and war in Israel.))

On the 20th of Marheshvan the world shall shake, and the heavens and earth shall tremble. All the constellations shall be gathered to one place...((and, there will be no peace, says the Lord, for the nations of the world and the evil ones of Israel)) who take houses by oppression, rob fields, and pervert the case of the orphan and widow with lies. But, should they repent, they will obtain forgiveness.

25

On the 20th of Kislev all Israel shall stand to pray and cry before their Father in heaven, on that very day a sword shall descend and fall upon the nations of the world--as it is said: (II Sam. 11:25): "for the sword devours in one manner or another."

On the 22nd of Tishrei the first captivity shall go out of Babylon with 18,000 men and women, and not one of them shall perish. On the 25th of Tishrei the second exile⁸ from the Sabatyon River shall go forth with 17,000 men and women; but of their number, 20 men and 15 women shall be killed.⁹ On the 25th day of the 8th month, the third exile¹⁰ shall go forth, weeping and crying out for their brethren who were killed, fasting in the wilderness for forty-five days, not tasting a thing and living 'by that which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord'. The first group of exiles shall not go forth from Babylon until the second has reached Babylon-- as it is said (Micah 4:10): "Be in pain, and labor oh daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail: for now shall you go forth out of the city, and shall dwell in the field, and shall come to Babylon, there shall you be rescued; and there shall the Lord redeem you from the hand of your enemies."

The second war¹¹ will be waged by Demitros son of Poriphos and Anphilipos son of Panfos, with them shall be 100,000 cavalry, 100,000 infantry, transported by a navy of 300,000¹².

A. On the 20th of Elul a Messiah shall come; his name will be Yinnon. During that very day Gabriel shall descend from the third to the ninth hour and destroy from amongst the nations of the world 92,000 men.

B. On the 20th of Adar the Messiah shall come, with him will be 30,000 righteous men--as it is said (Isa. 11:15): "And the righteous shall be the girdle of his loins." When the nations

of the world will see it, immediately each of them will be smitten, they and their horses,--as it is said (Zech. 14:12, 15): "And this will be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the peoples that have warred against Jerusalem: their flesh shall be consumed...their eyes shall be consumed in their sockets, and their tongues shall be consumed in their mouths...and so shall be the plague of the horses." At that very hour the Holy One, blessed be He, shall say to the nations of the world: "Woe to you, evil ones, for at the end of the four kingdoms, all of you shall be expelled from the world!"

On the twentieth of Tevet the third war will transpire. Who will wage it? Costantinus and Cartilus and all the cities¹³ allied with them--a great host stretching from the great valley unto Jaffa, even to Ashkelon. On the twentieth of Shevat the Messiah shall come and the angels of destruction shall descend and destroy that whole multitude, leaving not a soul. And these cities shall be destroyed: Jericho, Beeroth, Beit-Horon, Susin, Malka and Arvad, Shallum and Shimron, Beit-Magdiel, Tyre, and Beit Halfuth, and Lydda, Buz and Beit 'Einam, Hamath, Sefer, Hadshah, Antochia, Alexandria and Edom.¹⁴ All the Israelite towns shall be surrounded with fire from the ministering angels--as it is said (Zech. 2:9): "For I, says the Lord, will be unto her as a wall of fire round about her."

At that very hour the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Abraham: "Just as your children have descended to

the lowest rung--(Isa. 29:4): "And brought down, you shall speak out of the ground,"--thus will they grow tall over all the nations--as it is said (Deut. 28:1): "The Lord your God will set you on high above all the nations of the earth."

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Afterwards all the nations of the world shall come and bow down to every single Israelite and lick the dust from off of his feet--as it is said (Isa. 49:23). "Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing mothers; they shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, and lick the dust off your feet..."

65

One kor of wheat will become nine hundred kors¹⁵, and thus for wine, and for oil; and every tree will be laden with delicacies and fruits, as it is said (Ezek. 36:8): "But you, O mountains of Israel, you shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to My people Israel!"--and Israel shall eat and rejoice forty years.¹⁶

Afterwards the Holy One, blessed be He, shall raise up Gog and Magog¹⁷ and all their retainers, and after all the peasants have been gathered together, they will encircle Jerusalem in order to fight against her. The Messiah will come, and, with the help of the Holy One, blessed be He, shall wage war with them--as it is said (Zech. 14:3): "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fights in the day of battle." The Holy One, blessed be He, shall gather all the fowl of the heavens and the beasts of the earth

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together to eat their flesh and to drink their blood for a period of twelve months¹⁸--as it is said (Isa. 18:6): "...the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." Israel will make fires of their weaponry for seven years--as it is said (Ezek. 39:9):
 "And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and use them as fuel, both the shields and the bucklers...and they shall make fires of them seven years." They will be burying them for seven months--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 12): "For seven months shall the house of Israel be burying them that they may cleanse the land."

75

Afterwards the last day¹⁹ shall come, which is as long as forty days,²⁰ mountains and hills shall topple and quake,²¹ walls and towers shall fall, and the land shall reprimand the evil ones²² and shall say: "In such-and-such a place so-and-so killed so-and-so--as it is said (Isa. 26:21): "The earth shall disclose her blood."

80

Elijah said: I see the dead taking on form, their dust gaining shape²³ they are becoming as they were beforehand, to give praise to God--as it is said (Deut. 32:39): "See now that I, even, I, am He, and there is no god with Me; I kill and I make alive," and so Ezekiel (37:8) said: "And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them..." The ministering
 angels are opening their sepulchers and casting souls out of them, -and they are alive,- and standing them on their feet.

85

All those in need of judgment are pushed into a great cave,²⁴ the length of which is 2,000 cubits, its width is 50 cubits. The eyes of the righteous shall see the downfall of all those who did not take delight in the Torah of the Holy One, blessed be He--as it is said (Isa. 56:24) "And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have rebelled against Me."

90

Elijah said: I see fire and brimstone descending from heaven on the wicked--as it is said (Ps. 11:6): "Upon the wicked He will cause it to rain coals; fire and brimstone." The Holy One, blessed be He, will place the Temple a great distance from this worldly destruction, so that the righteous will not hear the cries of the wicked and ask mercy for them,²⁵ as if they had not been (wicked).

Elijah said: I see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the righteous sitting, the land before them is sown with all types of delights, the very tree that the Holy One, blessed be He, prepared stands in the midst of the garden--as afore-said (Ezek. 47:12): "By the river upon its bank, on this side and on that side, shall grow every tree for food, whose leaf shall not wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail--and boats are coming from Ein Gedi and as far as Eglaim loaded with wealth and honor for the righteous."

95

Elijah said: I see a lovely city, splendid and great descending from heaven completely built--as it is said (Ps. 122:3):

100

"Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together."--built and perfected, her people dwelling within her, (the city) is resting on 3,000 towers. Between each tower are 20 ris.²⁷ each ris contains 25,000 cubits of smargards, precious stones, and pearls--as it is said (Isa. 54:12): "I will make your pinnacles of rubies, your gates of carbuncles, and your borders of precious stones."

105

Elijah said: I see the houses and gates of the righteous, their thresholds and doorposts are of valuable stones, the treasuries of the Temple are open at their entrances. Amongst them there in the study of the Torah and peace--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 13): "All your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be your children's peace." And it further says (Ps. 119:165): "Great peace have they that love Your Torah," and it further says (Ibid. 31:20): "Oh how abundant is Your goodness which You have stored for them that fear You; which You have wrought for them that take refuge in You."

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Notes

Introduction

- ¹cf. Mal. 3:23-4.
- ²cf. Yoma 10a.
- ³cf. T.J. Sanh. X:6, 29c.
- ⁴Moses Bottenwieser, Outline of Neo-Hebraic Apocalyptic Literature (Cincinnati: Jennings and Pye, 1901, 30).
- ⁵Yehudah Even-Shmuel, Midreshei Geullah (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1954) p. 34.
- ⁶Ibid. 35.
- ⁷J.B. Chabot, Revue des Etudes Juives, XXVIII, 1894, p. 290.
- ⁸Heinrich Graetz, History of the Jews, III, 19.
- ⁹Even-Shmuel op. cit. 39.
- ¹⁰Edward Gibbon, The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, ch. 47.
- ¹¹Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 39.

Translation of Text

- ¹This does not refer to eating in the physical sense, but to gaining knowledge of the future. Cf. Ezek. 3:1: "Eat this scroll, and, go speak to the house of Israel."
- ²Even-Shmuel: The east of the world is Jerusalem.
- ³Even-Shmuel: Egypt
- ⁴The respective captains of the nations.
- ⁵Even-Shmuel: Byzantium
- ⁶Heb.: Kapot raglaw.
- ⁷cf. Dan. 7:8.
- ⁸The Ten Lost Tribes.
- ⁹The guilt of the Ten Tribes was not completely punished.
- ¹⁰the Three Exiles, cf. T.J. Sanh. X:6, 29c.
- ¹¹Between Rome and Persia.

- ¹⁰The Three Exiles, cf. T.J. Sanh. X:6, 29c.
- ¹¹Between Rome and Persia.
- ¹²Based on Ps. 72:17; cf. Pesh. 54a, Ned. 39a, Sanh. 98b.
- ¹³These were Roman-Christian settlements during that era.
- ¹⁴The war evidently extended outside the borders of the land of Israel.
- ¹⁵cf. Shab. 30b; Ket. 111b, Sifra Bekhuotai 1:6.
- ¹⁶cf. Sanh. 99b.
- ¹⁷Ezek. 39:2, 38:16.
- ¹⁸According to R. Akiba, cf. Mishna Eduy. 2:10; Seder Olam Rabba 83.
- ¹⁹The Day of Judgment.
- ²⁰Alpha-Beta d'R. Akiba.
- ²¹cf. Jer. 4:23-24.
- ²²Pesikta Rabbati (Asseret ha-Dibbrot) 21:4.
- ²³Pesikta de Rav Kahana 23.
- ²⁴Heb.: Halhalah, or an empty space.
- ²⁵cf. Otiyot de R. Akiba; Yalkut Shimoni to Isa. 26:2.
- ²⁶cf. Yalkut on Ps. 48:13.
- ²⁷A ris equals 2/15 of a mile.

CHAPTER II. THE BOOK OF ZERUBBABEL (Sefer Zerubavel)

Introduction

The Book or Apocalypse of Zerubbabel is one of the richest works written during this period; its vivid imagery has given rise to numerous other works. Perhaps this vision of redemption is shown to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel because he functioned as the redeemer of the Jews at the end of the Babylonian Exile. Israel Levi¹ states that his parental name 'Shealtiel' is symbolic to one who asks futuristic questions.

Yehudah Even-Shmuel finds the Shealtiel argument of Levi to be rather forced.² He argues that the vision was shown to Zerubbabel because Zerubbabel, grandson of the last reigning king of Judah, represents the archetype of the Messiah ben Joseph, the Messiah who does not succeed in bringing about the final redemption.³ According to Sellin,⁴ Zerubbabel was actually crowned king of Judah and murdered by agents of the Persian imperial government. Zerubbabel became the folk hero in Israel. He was attributed with the recitation of the Kiddush ha-Shem in heaven, and it is he who will blow the shofar on the day of redemption.⁵ Even-Shmuel sees a connection between the Messiah ben Joseph, Nehemiah ben Hushiel, and Zerubbabel. As Nehemiah's paternal name implies; he, like Zerubbabel, tried to hasten the redemption.⁶ In one instance the Talmud equates Zerubbabel with Nehemiah ben Hilkiyah. From this, Even-Shmuel argues that there could easily have been confusion between the two Nehemiahs.

There have been several theories put forth concerning

the historical events to which our midrash alludes. Graetz, Steinschneider, and Harkavi point to the 1058 CE, which follows the 990 year date after the destruction of Jerusalem mentioned in the text.⁸ Graetz and Greenstone⁹ theorize that the apocalypse was written by an Italian Jew. Marx¹⁰ also contends that the Book of Zerubbabel was written in Italy in 958. He bases his contention on a letter written by the Rhenish Jewish community to the Jews of Palestine inquiring about the supposed appearance of the Messiah.

Israel Lévi¹¹ was the first to contend that this work is over three hundred years earlier than originally assumed. His theory is based on the name 'Shiroy' used in some manuscripts of the Book of Zerubbabel. He identifies Shiroy with Syroes, the son of Khosrau II of Persia, who murdered his father and usurped the throne. Therefore, he contends that the Book of Zerubbabel was written in the land of Israel between the years 629 to 636 CE, between the death of Khosrau and the Muslim conquest under 'Omer. Lévi disregards the 990 year problem, saying that it is merely the work of a later copyist.

Even-Shmuel generally agrees with Lévi's reconstruction. He solves that 990 year difficulty stating that the historic Zerubbabel, who was building the Second Temple, was told that 990 years after the building (not the destruction) of that Temple, the Messiah would come, hence he works it out very nicely to the year 638 CE!¹²

The Book of Zerubbabel was, according to Even-Shmuel, written two years after the Book of Elijah. The historic events are centered around the Perso-Roman wars. The legions of Khosrau II invaded the Byzantine province of Palestine.¹³ Tiberias (near the valley of Arbel), and Galilee in general were the centers of the Jewish revolt. The wealthy Benjamin of Tiberias was the principle Jewish leader. The Persian army under Sharbarza took Jerusalem in July, 614. The fourteen year period of Persian hegemony was characterized by the Jews avenging themselves against their former Byzantine Christian oppressors. During this era there were numerous recorded conversions to Judaism. The Persian dominion, however, was corrupt and did little to promote an independent Jewish commonwealth. In 628 Syroes (Shiroy) revolted against and murdered his father Khosrau; the provinces of Syria, Egypt and Israel reverted back to Byzantine rule. The Byzantine Emperor Heraclius retook Jerusalem. At first he promised immunity to the Jews; he may have even made a treaty with Benjamin of Tiberias. The monks of Jerusalem, however, allowed Heraclius to break his vow, after which he wrought stern vengeance upon the former Jewish rebels. He went as far as renewing the edicts of Hadrian and Constantine forbidding a Jewish presence in Jerusalem.

The saying was that 'Syroes destroyed everything that Kosrau had wrought.'¹⁴ With the advent of Heraclius (Armilus) the Jews were fighting for the last vestiges of their independence.

Some held out in the fortress of Jerusalem under the leadership of Hephtzi-bah, whom Even-Shmuel theorizes was of the Resh Galutha family, hence of Davidic lineage.¹⁵ Noph and Sargon were two Christian leaders or generals whose assault was repulsed by Hephtzi-bah.¹⁶ Heraclius (Armilus) arrived unscathed by the assault of Gog and Magog, the Avars who attacked Constantinople in 627. He broke his vow to the Jews by killing the Messiah ben Joseph. Hephtzi-bah continued to resist, hoping that her son, the Messiah ben David, could eventually bring about the promised salvation. According to Even-Shmuel, the Book of Zerubbabel was written at this juncture in history. The Messianic advent had been postponed ten years, and all were looking to the emerging Muslim Arabs in the south as the vehicles for Jewish redemption.²⁷

Translation of Text

The prophecy of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel the satrap of Judah:

On the twenty-fourth day of the month of Shevat the Lord showed me this vision, which was like the vision that I saw at the Chebar River.¹

I had been praying to the Lord, and when I said: "Praised be You, O Lord, who revives the dead," my heart yearned to know the plan of the Eternal Temple. A voice came forth to me--I heard a voice, but I saw no image--it answered me from the gates of heaven and said to me: "Are you Zerubbabel the satrap of Judah?" And I said: "I am your servant."

5

Then I arose and continued to pray as I had been doing. I finished my prayer² and turned to go home.

I was so distressed that I became sick. I arose from my sorrow to say my prayers and to entreat the God of Israel. I confessed my transgressions and sins saying: "Please Lord, I have sinned, I have transgressed, I am guilty--You are the God of Israel, who created all with the breath of Your mouth; a word from Your lips can revive the dead."

10

On the eleventh day of Adar it came to me and spoke to me saying: "Ask me!" And I said: "What shall I ask? My end has come and my allotted number of days are fulfilled." And he said to me: "I will lengthen your days."

15

The wind lifted me between heaven and earth and took me to Nineveh, the great city, the bloody city³. And he said to me: "Go to the pagan temple⁴." ((to the place of levity)). I went as he commanded me. He said to me: "Turn this way!" I turned, and a hand touched me. I saw a despised and wounded man.⁵ ((a downtrodden man, one acquainted with suffering.)). The wounded and despised man said to me: "Zerubbabel, what are you doing here?" I answered and said: "The Lord's wind 20 wind carried me ((to where I do not know)), and brought me to this place." He said to me: "Do not fear, for you were brought here to be shown."

When I heard his words, I was at ease and I asked him: "What is the name of this place?" He said to me: This is the greater Rome."⁶ And I said to him: "Who are you and what is your name, and what are you doing in this place?" He said to me: "I am the Messiah of the Lord, and I am imprisoned here until the end of days." When I heard this, I was silent and hid my face from him for a moment. But longing to see him burned within me, and I looked at him once again, and out of 25 fear I hid my face again. He said to me: "Approach me! Do not fear or dread... Why are you silent?" I said: "For I heard that you were God's Messiah, the servant of the Lord, and the Light of Israel." Immediately he appeared to me as a youth, the perfection of beauty. ((a handsome and beautiful youth with none to rival him)). I said to him: "When will the light of Israel shine forth?"

When I had finished saying these things to him, a winged man came to me and said to me: "Zerubbabel, what do you ask of the Lord's Messiah?" I answered and said to him: "When will the end bringing redemption come?" And he said: "Ask me, and I will tell you." I said: "Who are you, my lord?" 30

A. He said: "I am captain of the Host of the Lord God of Israel⁷, who fought all the battles with the kings of Canaan, and I am ((the Lord's angel)) who fought with Sennacherib⁸ 35 and I smote 185,000 men, and I am the captain of Israel who will fight the wars of God's Messiah with the king of fierce countenance⁹, Armilus the son of Satan, who will come forth from the stone image¹⁰, for the Lord has placed me over His people¹¹ as captain to fight against the captains of the nations.¹²

B. ((And he answered: I am Michael ((Metatron)). And he said to me: "I am the angel who guided Abraham¹³ through the whole land of Canaan, and blessed him in the name of the Lord, and it was I who announced to Sarah¹⁴ (concerning the forthcoming birth of Isaac) and it was I who caused it to rain fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven on Sodom and Gemorrah.¹⁵ It was I who redeemed Isaac¹⁶ and wept for him,¹⁷ and it was I who struggled with Jacob at the ford of the Jabbok.¹⁸ It was 40 I who guided Israel in the wilderness forty years¹⁹ in the name of the Lord, for the Lord put His name inside of me.²⁰ ((It is I whose name is the same as his Master)) and it was I who was revealed to Joshua at Gilgal²¹)).

And you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel son of Yechania, King of Judah, ask and I will tell you what will happen to your people in the end of days.

45

((And I asked and said, what is the name of this one, the Lord's Messiah, and what is he doing in this place?))

He said to me: "He is the Messiah ben David, and his name is Menahem²² ben Amiel,²³ he was born to the house of David, king of Israel, when Nebuchadnezzar came against Jerusalem.²⁴ The Lord made him the Prince of the Covenant for the people. I carried him with the wind of God and I hid him in this place, until the end of time. It is as the prophet Isaiah has said:

For the fortified city is solitary,

A habitation abandoned and forsaken,

like the wilderness;

There shall the calf feed, and there shall he

lie down,

And consume the branches thereof. (Isa. 27:10)

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((I asked and said:)) When ((will)) the event be? ((He said to me)): When the Temple shall be standing 420 years, it be destroyed a second time. ((On the seven hundred)) and twentieth year from the founding of Rome a certain king shall rule over it. Seventy kings shall rule over it, corresponding to the seventy nations (of mankind), and once these ten kings have finished their reigns, the tenth (king) shall destroy the

Temple, the daily sacrifice shall cease,²⁵ the holy nation shall be scattered and shall be the victims of the sword, plunder and confusion, and many of them shall fall away from their Law and worship the idolatrous images of the other nations. In their downfalling, they shall be given some small help²⁶ and the evil ones who put detestable things in the Sanctuary shall have dominion over them from the time of the removal of the continual burnt-offering. At the end of nine hundred and ninety years, "when they have made an end of breaking in pieces the power of the holy people," (Dan. 12:7), the salvation of the Lord will redeem them and gather them together by the hand of the Lord's Messiah.

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I Zerubbabel asked the captain of the Lord's hosts ((Metatron)) ((concerning the signs of the End)). He said to me: "The Lord will give the rod of salvation²⁷ to Hephtzi-bah,²⁸ mother of Menahem ben Amiel.

60

A. The rod--an almond branch²⁹--is the rod that blossomed in the Tent of meeting³⁰, it blossomed and brought forth live almonds. It is hidden in Raqqat of Naphtali.³¹

B. ((This rod is of onyx. It is hidden in Raqqat of Naphtali, and it is the rod that the Lord gave to Adam,³² to Noah, to Shem, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to Joseph, to Moses and to Aaron, to Joshua and to King David.)) From there Elijah³³ will bring it forth ((Elijah son of Elazar))³⁴ and give it to a man whose name is Nehemiah ben Hushiel³⁵, son of Ephraim³⁶

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son of Joseph. ((And he will give it to Hephtzi-bah, mother of Menahem ben Amiel)).

I answered and said: "Tell me, please, when will the Lord's Messiah come?" He said to me: "Nehemiah ben Hushiel will come and gather all Israel together in Jerusalem, as a man gathers his family together, and they will take their stand there. They will offer a sacrifice which will be pleasing to the Lord, and the Israelites shall gather according to their families and geneologies³⁷. In the fifth year, after Nehemiah ben Hushiel gathered the nation of the holy people, the king of Persia ((Shiroy, King of Persia)) will go up against Nehemiah and against Israel and there will be great sorrow in Israel. Hephtzi-bah, mother of Menahem ben Amiel, shall come forward with the staff that Nehemiah ben Hushiel gave her ((for warfare against the Lord's enemies)), and a star shall shine in front of her.³⁸ ((All the stars in their courses shall fight her wars.))³⁹

70

A. The Lord shall send a wind causing dizziness⁴⁰ (amongst the enemies). Each man shall kill his comrade, and his brother, and there the evil ones shall die.

75

B. ((She shall kill two kings (the two whose hearts are set at doing evil)⁴¹. The first one's name is Nof, King of Teiman⁴² (who waved his hand against Jerusalem)⁴³, and the second will be Sargon king of Antiochia.

When I heard these words, I fell upon my face and said to him. "Tell me the truth concerning the Messiah, prince of the holy nation⁴⁴." He strengthened me and brought me to the pagan Temple, ((house of levity)) and he showed me a marble statue in the form of a woman, her appearance was comely, and her form was most beautiful. He said to me: "Zerubbabel, what do you see?" I said to him: "I see a marble statue with the face of a very beautiful woman."

80

He said to me: "Satan ((Belial)) will come to this statue and lie with it, and from it will spring forth Armilus.

A. He will rule over everything, and his dominion will reach from one end of the earth to the other, there will be no one to oppose him. He will kill with his fierce sword any one who does not believe in him. Ten kings will be allied with him.

B. ((He will arise and rule over the Emim, the state of Satan ((Belial)) his father. These are the signs by which (you can recognize him): The hair of his head is like green gold,⁴⁵ his hands reach to his feet, the width of his face is comparable to the span of one's little finger, his eyes are deep-set, his teeth come to points--anyone who looks upon him is sure to tremble. All the nations of the world will go astray after him, except for Israel, who will not believe in him. He will come against the saintly people of the most High in Jerusalem with a huge, mighty army. Ten

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kings will arise over the nations⁴⁶ in seven years, but they will not be able to reign a single year ((a half a year))

((These are their names and their cities: The first king Seleucus, the name of his city is Sepharad ((it is Aspamia of the Sea country)); the second king Artemus, his city Gotia; the third king Pleus, his city Plueus; the fourth king Galias, his city Galia; the fifth king Demetrus, his city Moratia; the sixth king Herculanus, his city Italia; the seventh king Achtenus, his city Dormus; the eighth king Ephramus, his city Aram-Nahariam; the ninth king Shiroy king of Persia; the tenth king Armilus son of Satan, who came forth from the stone image, and he is the ruler of all of them.

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The ten kings shall come to Jerusalem and will wage war against the holy people and kill many of them. He shall kill ((Shiroy shall stab)) Nehemiah ben Hushiel, and sixteen righteous ones shall be killed along with him. The Israelites shall be exiled to the wilderness. Hephtzi-bah, mother of Menahem ben Amiel, shall take her stand at the eastern gate, for there the evil ones shall not reach. This will uphold that which Scripture assures (Zech. 14:2); "And the rest of the nation shall not be cut off from the city."

100

A. Never before has Israel experienced such sorrow. (The people) shall flee to the high and rocky hills and to the caves, but they will not be able to flee from him.

B. ((There will be a great and very difficult famine over the entire land; it will last for forty-five days. During those days neither man nor beast will have his reward.⁴⁷ All Israel shall go out to the Judean wilderness, to the Brook of Shittim, and shall gather salt-wort with worm-wood, and shall eat the roots of the broom plant for sustenance⁴⁸..)) 105

The Israelites shall mourn Nehemiah ben Hushiel forty-one days, his pierced corpse⁴⁹ shall be cast before the gates of Jerusalem--but the wild beasts and birds shall not touch it. ((After 41 days the Holy One, blessed be He, shall bury him among the graves (of the Kings) of the Judean house)) The Israelites shall cry to the Lord out of much stress and in great vexation. 110

Armilus shall go (up) from Jerusalem to Rivlah⁵⁰ ((which is Antioch)) and conquer it. He shall then make an alliance with the sons of the east,⁵¹ who had ruled over it (Rivlah), and then shall start a war against the sons of Kedar⁵² in the Valley of Arbel, and he shall win that battle and conquer the entire world. 115

He will begin to plant the Asheras of the Gentiles⁵³ which the Lord hates upon the land. He will take the statue from which he was born⁵⁴ from the pagan temple ((the house of levity)) and bring it up to him, seven altars shall be built to it and it shall be the chief goddess of his pagan rites. And all the

peoples shall come from all the (surrounding) places and worship that very statue, and burn incense before it and offer libations to it. Whoever finds the courage to look at it will not be able to do so for no one is able to look at its face because of its beauty,⁵⁴ ((and anyone who does not bow to it shall die the death of suffering animals)). Armilus shall anger the Lord with his evil deeds."

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When I heard this thing according to the prophecy of the Lord which came to me, I was very distressed, I arose and went to the aqueduct and there cried out before the Lord God of Israel ((the God of all flesh.)) The Lord heard me and sent His angel to me while I was still praying. I did not interrupt my prayer, but I saw him and knew that he was the angel who spoke all the previous words to me, so I bent the knee and bowed before him. Again he touched me, as he did the first time, and he said to me:

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"What is the matter, Zerubbabel?" I said: "My lord, the spirit within me constrains me."⁵⁵ Metatron answered and said to me: "Ask me, and I will tell you before I go away from before you." I said to him: "My lord, when will the light of Israel come?" He said to me: "As the Lord who sent me and placed me over Israel lives, now I will tell you the doings of the Lord, for the holy God said to me: 'Go to my servant Zerubbabel and tell him whatever he asks of you!'"

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Michael ((Metatron)) said to me: "Please come towards me and

take heed of all that I speak to you, for what I will speak is truth, by the word of the Living God."

He said to me: "Menahem ben Amiel will come suddenly⁵⁶ and take his stand in the valley of Arbel⁵⁷ (that is in the territory of) Joshua ben Nisraph⁵⁸ ((ben Yehotzadak the priest)) All the remaining sages of Israel will go out to him, few of them will remain after the smiting of Gog ((from the decrees of Armilus)) and from the despoilment that he wrought against them. Menahem ben Amiel will say to the elders and sages: "I am the Lord's Messiah, (the Lord) has sent me to redeem and save you from the hands of these enemies." The elders and sages shall look at him and see him as a despised man whose clothing is ragged and they will despise him as you have despised him. His anger shall be kindled within him and "he shall put on the garments of vengeance for his apparel, and shall be clad with zeal as a cloak." (Isa. 59:17) and he shall go forward to the gates of Jerusalem. Hephtzi-bah, his mother, shall come forward and present to him the staff with which signs were wrought, Elijah shall join with him, and they shall resurrect Nehemiah ben Hushiel. All the elders of Israel shall go and see that Nehemiah is alive--standing on his two feet--and immediately they will believe in Menahem ben Amiel. There will be a peace

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conference between them--as is said in the prophecy of Isaiah: 'Ephraim shall not envy Judah: and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.'" (Isa. 11:13)

After all this, Menahem ben Amiel will come, accompanied 145
by all Israel, those who have come from near and far. Also, Nehemiah ben Hushiel and all the resurrected, Elijah the prophet, and the entire company shall go up to Jerusalem.⁵⁹ In the month of Ab, during which they had previously mourned for Nehemiah, the ruins of Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and there will be great rejoicing for Israel. They shall offer a sacrifice to the Lord, and He shall accept it from them. Israel's offering shall be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, as in the ancient days, and the Lord shall savor⁶⁰ the pleasant odor brought by His people Israel, and shall greatly rejoice for Israel. The Lord shall bring down to the earth 150
the Temple built in Heaven.⁶¹ In the cloud of incense that is in the shrine, the Lord shall again ascend to heaven. The Lord's Messiah, all Israel following him ((at his heels)), shall go out and stand before the gates of Jerusalem, opposite the Mount of Olives, and the holy God shall stand at the head of the top of the mountain⁶² and the fear of Him shall weigh heavily on the heavens,⁶³ and on the upper heavens, and on the earth and on the underworld, on the waters and their channels, on the mountains and their foundations, on all flesh and all that has breath, for the Lord God shall be

revealed in the sight of all. Jerusalem's exiles shall climb the Mount of Olives. They shall see Zion and shall rejoice for Jerusalem, and Zion shall say: 'Who hath begotten me these?',⁶⁴ and 'These, where were they?' Nehemiah shall go up to Jerusalem and say to her: 'Behold, here are your children to whom you had given birth, and who had been exiled from you! Rejoice greatly,⁶⁵ O daughter of Zion. Shout! O daughter of Jerusalem!' Enlarge the place of your tent⁶⁶ and the curtains of your habitations.'"

155

He showed me ((Metatron showed me)) Jerusalem in her rebuilt state. He shall increase her length and width,⁶⁷ and showed me the walls of Jerusalem, walls of fire⁶⁸ all around her--she shall extend from the wilderness⁶⁹ to Lebanon, from the mighty Euphrates to the Mediterranean. He showed me the Sanctuary ((the Temple))--the Temple was built on the summits of five mountains.⁷⁰ He said to me: "These are the mountains that God has chosen to carry His holy place." I asked: "What are their names?" He said to me: "These are their names: Lebanon, Mt. Moriah, and Tabor, and Carmel, and Hermon."

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((I said to the Captain of the Lord's army: "Tell me the order of signs, year by year, month by month.")) He answered and said to me: "In the nine hundred and ninetieth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, the redemption of

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Israel will come." He continued to explain the master to me and the vision about which he had previously dealt. Thus the Captain of the Lord's host ((Metatron)) announced to me: "At the beginning of the beginning of the seven year cycle⁷¹, Nehemiah ben Hushiel will come and gather all Israel to Jerusalem.

On the fifth year of the cycle, Hephtzi-bah (mother of Menahem ben Amiel) ((the wife of the prophet Nathan)) ((the wife of Nathan ben David who was born in Jerusalem)) will come. 170

During the seventh year, the root of Jesse shall blossom, he is Menahem ben Amiel---on the first month--the month of Nisan, on the fourteenth day of the month ((during the Watch-night⁷²)) according to the prophecy of Isaiah: "The watchman said: 'The morning cometh and also the night---If ye will inquire, inquire ye; return, come.'" (Isa. 21:12)

On the twenty first day of the first month⁷³ Menahem ben Amiel will come, with him will be Nehemiah ben Hushiel, Elijah the Prophet ((with his band of prophets)) and they shall stand at the Great Sea and call: 'Let all the corpses of the Israelites who threw themselves into the sea rather than allow themselves to be taken captives, come forward.'⁷⁴ An ocean wave shall arise, scattering them, and casting them out alive into the Brook of Shittim. On that day "a fountain from the House of the Lord shall water the Valley of Shittim" (Joel 4:18). 175

During the second month, Iyyar, Korah's band⁷⁵ shall be 180
resurrected in the valley of Jericho by the Brook of Shittim,
and they will go to the Messiah.⁷⁶ Asaf shall hold the Korakh-
ites' banner.⁷⁷

On the first day of the third month, the month of Sivan,
those who died in the wilderness shall be resurrected and
shall join together with their brethren by the Brook of Shittim.

A. On the 18th day of the month the mountains and hills
shall quake,⁷⁸ also the land and all that is upon it, and 185
the sea and all that is in it shall collapse.

B. ((On the 18th day there shall be a great earthquake⁷⁹ in
the land of Israel affecting the houses, walls, and towers;
the land and its inhabitants shall tremble.))

On the fourth month which is the month of Tammuz, the
Lord God of Israel shall descend upon the Mount of Olives,
and shall sound the great shofar,⁸⁰ and the Mount of Olives
shall be cleft in half from underneath,⁸¹ and all the high
places of the foreign gods and the houses of their images,
every wall and steep place, shall fall to the ground.⁸²

Menahem ben Amiel shall go up from the Brook of Shittim,
and blow into Armilus' face and kill him according to the 190
prophecy of Isaiah; "And with the breath of his lips shall
he slay the wicked." (Isa. 11:4) The Lord shall go forth⁸³
and fight the army of Gog and Magog ((the army of Armilus)),

as a man of war He shall stir up jealousy.⁸⁴ The holy nation shall go forth and see the salvation of the Lord, eye to eye⁸⁵ all Israel shall see Him as a warrior, wearing the armor of righteousness⁸⁶ and the helmet of salvation on His head.

He will fight those nations, sticking one man's sword into his companion's neck. They will fall dead in the valley of Arbel, and all Israel shall go out and spoil those that spoiled them,⁸⁷ and rob those that robbed them. 195

The remnants (of Armilus' army) shall take refuge at Tzela ha-Elef,⁸⁸ four hundred thousand men, and one hundred thousand armored troops. Five hundred (Israelite) men shall come forward, headed by Nehemiah, Elijah ((and you, Zerubbabel)), and shall slay all of them--(one of your men shall chase a thousand⁸⁹)

((That will be the third war, for there will be three wars 200 in the land of Israel: One fought by Hephtzi-bah against the king of Persia ((against Shiroy, king of Persia)) and one that the Lord God of Israel will fight ((Menahem ben Amiel will fight)) with Armilus and the ten royal allies ((Gog and Magog)), and the third fought by Nehemiah ben Hushiel at Tzelah ha-Elef.))

((Two saviors shall go up to Mt. Zion))

The kingdom shall belong to the Lord.

These are the words spoken by Metatron to Zerubbabel ben Shealtiel satrap of Judah during the days of the Persian Empire.

They were written down by Zechariah ben 'Anan and Elijah who were in complete exile⁹⁰. ((in the midst of Exile))

Notes

Introduction

¹Israel Lévi, Revue des Etudes Juives, LXXI, 57.

²Yehudah Even-Shmuel, Midreshei Geullah (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1954) p. 56.

³Ibid. p. 57, and cf. Haggai 2:7, 22:23.

⁴Sellin, Serubabel: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Messianischen Erwartung, 1898. and, cf. Zech. 12:10-14, Suk. 52a.

⁵Even-Shmuel, op. cit. p. 59.

⁶Ibid. and Mid. Teh. ch. 60

⁷Sanh. 38b.

⁸Even-Shmuel, op. cit. p. 61.

⁹Julius H. Greenstone, The Messiah Idea in Jewish History (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972, first published 1906) p. 135.

¹⁰Alexander Marx, "Studies in Gaonic Literature," Jewish Quarterly Review, New Series, I, p. 77

¹¹Lévi, REJ, LXXI, (1915), pp. 71-73; and Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 62-3.

¹²Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 63.

¹³Heinrich Graetz, History of the Jews (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1894) III, 19-23.

¹⁴Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 64.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid. 65.

¹⁷Ibid. 66

Translation of Text

- ¹cf. Ezek. 43:3.
- ²The Tefillah or Shemoneh Esraei.
- ³cf. Ezek. 22:2, 24:6 and 9; Nah. 3:1.
- ⁴Heb.: beit ha-toref; Lévi: maison d'impudicité.
- ⁵cf. Isa. 53:5, Sanh. 98a.
- ⁶Heb.: Roma rabba, Levi: Rome la grande, Even-Shmuel: Perhaps signifying the Rome of Italy in distinction to Byzantium.
- ⁷cf. Josh. 5:14.
- ⁸cf. II Kings 19:35.
- ⁹Heb.: 'az panim, Lévi: impudent; cf. Dan. 8:23.
- ¹⁰Heb.: she-yeitzei min tzalmat ha-even, Lévi: né d'une statue de pierre.
- ¹¹cf. Dan. 12:1.
- ¹²Ibid. 6:13 and 21.
- ¹³cf. Josh. 24:3.
- ¹⁴cf. B.M. 86b.
- ¹⁵Ibid. The above source, however, speaks of Gabriel.
- ¹⁶cf. Gen. 22:12; Midrash Va-Yosha' 81.
- ¹⁷cf. Gen. R. 56, P.R. 41, P.R.E. 31, Midrash Va-Yosha' 1.
- ¹⁸cf. Gen. 24:25, and Yalkut Shimoni to the verse.
- ¹⁹cf. Ex. 23:20, and Ex. R. to the verse.
- ²⁰cf. Ex. 23:21; Sanh. 38a.
- ²¹Sanh. to Ex. 23:21 (parashat "Mishpatim," siman 18).
- ²²Sanh. 98b; T.J. Ber. V:1. "Menahem" equals tzemah in gematria, which is another symbolic name of the Messiah.

²³"Amiel" in gematria equals qana'=vengeance. Cf. Sanh. 94a, Sh. ha-Sh. R. to 4:8. Perhaps there is also a connection to the name "Emanuel" in Isa. 7:14.

²⁴T.J. Ber. V:1.

²⁵cf. Dan. 11:31.

²⁶cf. Dan. 11:34; Lévi: "L'auteur, par cette citation, veut dire que ce ne sera pas cependant la fin d'Israël."

²⁷cf. "a rod of strength" in Ps. 110:2.

²⁸The name "Hephtzi-bah" which signifies "My desire is in her," is used only in this apocalyptic midrash.

²⁹cf. Jer. 1:11.

³⁰cf. Num. 17:23, Num. R. 11.

³¹cf. Josh. 19:35; identified with Tiberias in Meg. 2a and 6a; cf. also Moed Katan 25b, Sanh. 12a.

³²cf. P.R.E. 40, Yalkut Shemot 173, Sefer Ha-Yashar 168.

³³cf. Mek. Be-Shallah, parashat Va-Yisa'.

³⁴cf. P.R.E. 47.

³⁵He wants to hasten the end (ahishenu)

³⁶Lévi: déscendant d'Ephraïm.

³⁷Heb.: V'yetyahasu b'nei Yisrael l'mishp'hoteihem; Lévi: enregistrés selon leurs généalogies. Cf. Ezra 2:73-4.

³⁸cf. Num. 24:17.

³⁹cf. Judg. 5:2.

⁴⁰cf. Isa. 19:14.

⁴¹cf. Dan. 11:27.

⁴²Lévi: Yémen

⁴³cf. Isa. 6:32. A play on words--Nof, heinif=to wave.

⁴⁴cf. Dan. 9:25.

⁴⁵Heb.: k'zahav yarok. Levi places yarok with the next clause, hence: "Ses chevaux sont comme de l'or, il est vert, jusqu'à la plante de ses pieds."

⁴⁶Roman emperors.

⁴⁷cf. Zech. 8:10.

⁴⁸cf. Job 30:4.

⁴⁹cf. Zech. 12:10.

⁵⁰The location where Nebuchadnezzar tried to ascend Solomon's throne. (Abba Gurion 4).

⁵¹The Persians.

⁵²The Arabs.

⁵³Even-Shmuel: The ashera is a euphemism for the cross, the marble statue is that of the Virgin Mary.

⁵⁴cf. to brazen serpent in Num. 21:9.

⁵⁵cf. Job 32:18.

^{55b}Ner Yisrael, in Ber. 28b referring to Yohanan ben Zakkai, see also, Tanh. (Tetzaveh, siman 8).

⁵⁶cf. Mal. 3:2.

⁵⁷T.J. Ber. LXXXI:1, T.J. Yoma LXXXIII:1, Sh. ha-Sh. R. 6, Esther R. 10, Mid. Teh. 22.

⁵⁸Baraita of "Mishmarot ha-Kohanim" in Sefer ha-Yeshuv of S. Klein, I:1, p. 162 ff.; and Seder 'Olam Zuta IX.

⁵⁹From the gates of the city to the Temple mount.

⁶⁰cf. Mal. 3:4.

⁶¹cf. Midrash Yerushalayim shel-Ma'alah in Even Shmuel, op. cit. p. 11.

⁶²cf. Zech. 14:4.

⁶³cf. the Kedushah of Rosh ha-Shanah.

⁶⁴cf. Isa. 49:21.

⁶⁵cf. Zech. 9:9.

⁶⁶cf. Isa. 54:2.

⁶⁷P.R.K. piska "Roni 'akarah"; B.B. 75b.

⁶⁸P.R.K. Ibid. and Zech. 2:9.

⁶⁹cf. Deut. 11:24 concerning the boundaries of the land of Israel. R. Levi in P.R., piska 1: "Jerusalem will be as great as the whole land of Israel.

⁷⁰P.R.K., piska "Qumi ori".

⁷¹cf. Sanh. 97a.

⁷²cf. Gen. R. 18, R.H. 11a.

⁷³On the seventh day of Passover, the day of the dividing of the Red Sea, those Israelites who died at sea shall be resurrected.

⁷⁴cf. Git. 57b.

⁷⁵cf. Mishna Sanh. 6:3.

⁷⁶cf. Sanh. 110b.

⁷⁷cf. Sh. ha-Sh. R. 4:3.

⁷⁸cf. Joel 4:16.

⁷⁹Ezek. 31:19.

⁸⁰cf. Zech. 9:k4, Isa. 27:13.

⁸¹cf. Zech. 14:4.

⁸²cf. Ezek. 38:20.

⁸³cf. Zech. 14:3.

⁸⁴cf. Isa. 42:13.

⁸⁵Ibid. 52:8.

⁸⁶Ibid. 59:17

⁸⁷cf. Ezek. 39:10

⁸⁸cf. Josh. 18:28

⁸⁹Ibid. 23:10

⁹⁰Lévi: "dans l'exil complet" cf. Amos 1:6,9.

CHAPTER III. FOLLOWING THE BOOK OF ZERUBBABEL

More than any other work, the Book of Zerubbabel popularized the legends of Armilus and the Messiah ben Joseph. Later apocalyptic works including the Apocalypse of Rabbi Shimeon bar Yochai, Otot ha-Mashiah, and Pirke Moshe all enlarge upon the Book of Zerubbabel.¹

In the midrashic literature read in the synagogues, the names of Armilus, and Gog and Magog became synonymous with Rome and Christianity. Paytanic literature is full of allusions from the Book of Zerubbabel. Even the geonim, principally Saadia and Hai Gaon, accepted the Armilus legend.

Armilus, Michael and the wars of Gog and Magog are mentioned in the Jerushalmi translation of Deut. 34:1-3. Jonathan ben Uzziel mentions the wars of Gog in his comment on Num. 11:26, as does Jerushalmi to that same verse. Targum Jonathan to Isa. 11:4 speaks of Armilus the evil one. He also mentions Armilus in Zech. 12:10.

Abraham ibn Ezra speaks of the Book of Zerubbabel when he comments on Ex. 2:22. Along with the Book of Eldad the Danite and the Chronicles of Moses, these are, in his opinion, books not to be believed, for they are books that deny reason.

CHAPTER IV. THE DAYS OF THE MESSIAH (Y'mot ha-Mashiah)

Introduction

This apocalypse is found as the last piska of Midrash Va-Yosha'. In addition to the standard descriptions of Armilus, this midrash adds the charming folkloristic notion of his working and deaf ears. The text probably appeared soon after the Book of Zerubbabel, probably by the end of the first Islamic Century.¹ In this work the wars of the Messiah last only three months, as opposed to nine months in the Book of Zerubbabel. The description of the final judgment follows the opinion of Rabbi Joshua that all idolators are doomed to Gehinnom, while all Israel will merit the Garden of Eden.² The description of the days of plenty follow the Book of Elijah and other earlier midrashim. There is a Yiddish translation of this apocalypse found next to the Targum Sheni of the Megillah of Esther, which was published in Prague around 1687.

Translation of Text

"The Lord shall reign forever and ever!" (Ex. 15:18)

---Thus said our Sages of blessed memory: Moses said to Israel: "You have seen all the miracles, mighty acts, and wonders that the Holy One, blessed be He, has wrought on your behalf,---so much the more so is He going to do for you in the future to come! The world to come is not like this world: In this world there are wars and troubles, the evil inclination, and Satan and the angel of death who have power to rule in this world. But, in the world to come there is no sadness nor hatred, no sighing¹ nor slavery,² no evil inclination, no Satan nor the angel of death³---as it is said (Isa. 25:8): "He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces," and it is further written: (Ibid. vs. 9): "And it shall be said in that day: 'Lo, this is our God, for whom we have waited, that He might save us; this is the Lord for whom we waited we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.'"

5

When the Messianic days arrive Gog and Magog shall come upon the land of Israel--for he⁴ will hear that Israel, without a king, is dwelling securely. Immediately we will bring with him seventy-one nations and ascend to Jerusalem and he will say: "Pharaoh was a madman⁵ for he only decreed to kill the males and leave the females; Balak was a fool in that he only sought to curse them, unaware that their God would bless

10

them. Haman was insane for he wanted to kill them not being aware that their God would be able to save them. I will not do likewise, I will go up and first engage their God in battle, afterwards I will kill them!"--as it is said: (Psalms 2:2):

15

"The kings of earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Messiah." The Holy One blessed be He will say to him: "Evil one! You wish to engage me in war? By your life, I will make war against you!"

Immediately He, the Holy One blessed be He, will throw down upon him meteors and the hailstones which are stored up in the firmament, and He will plague him mightily, as it is said (Zech. 14:12): "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the peoples that have made war against Jerusalem: their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouths."

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After him, another king will arise, evil and of fierce countenance, and he will wage war with Israel three months--his name is Armilus. These are his signs: His head is bald, one eye is larger than the other, his right arm is the length of a handsbreadth, while his left is two and one half cubits, he has a leprous forehead, and his right ear is deaf while the other is clear. When someone comes to speak good tidings he inclines his deaf ear, when someone wishes to speak evil he inclines his working ear.

25

Afterwards, the Messiah ben David shall come in a cloud⁷ as
 it is said (Dan. 7:13): "And, behold, there came with the
 clouds of heaven one like a man⁸." And it is further written
 (Ibid. vs. 14): "And there was given him dominion, and glory,
 and a kingdom." He will kill the evil Armilus as it is said
 (Isa. 11:4): "And with the breath of his lips he shall slay
 the wicked."

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Afterwards the Holy One blessed be He will gather the
 banished and scattered Israelites as it is said (Zech. 10:8):
 "I will hiss for them, and gather them, for I have redeemed
 them; and they shall increase as they have increased." In
 Jerusalem shall be suspended seventy-two jewels which will
 glisten from one end of the earth to the other, the nations
 of the world will move about to that very light, as it is
 said (Isa. 60:3): "And nations shall walk at thy light, and
 kings at the brightness of your dawn."

35

The Holy One, blessed be He, shall lower the Sanctuary
 from Heaven⁹ as He demonstrated to Moses--as it is said
 (Ex. 15:17): "You bring them in, and plant them in the mountain
 of Your inheritance. The place, O Lord, which You have made
 for Yourself to dwell in; the Sanctuary, O Lord, which Your
 hands have established."

Israel shall dwell ((securely)) there for two thousand
 years, the Holy One, blessed be He, will sit on His judgment
 seat in the valley of Jehoshafat--and immediately the heavens

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and earth shall be changed," the sun and the moon shall be shamed as it is said (Isa. 24:25): "The moon shall be confounded, the sun ashamed." From whence do we know that on the third day will be this judgment? From the verse which states (Hosea 6:2): "After two days He will revive us, on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence."¹²

The Holy One, blessed be He, will bring every nation and tongue¹³ (to His place of Judgment) and say: "What did you worship in the world that has passed, and to what did you bow down?" And they will say: "To gods of silver and gods of gold." The Holy One, blessed be He, will say to them: "Pass through the fire that is here, and your gods, if they are able to save you, let them save you!" Immediately they will pass through and be burnt there¹⁴--as it is said (Ps. 9:18): "The wicked shall return to the nether-world: even all the nations that forget God."

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After this Israel will come and the Holy One, blessed be He, will say to them: "You, whom did you worship?" Immediately they will respond (Isa. 63:16): "For You are our Father; for Abraham knew us not, and Israel does not acknowledge us."¹⁵ You, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer, from everlasting is Your name." Immediately, the Holy One, blessed be He, will save them from the judgment of Gehinnom and they will dwell in the Garden of Eden, enjoying its fruits¹⁶--as

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it is said (Ps. 37:11): "The humble shall inherit the land, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

After this¹⁷ the Holy One, blessed be He, will renew the heavens and earth for them---as it is said (Isa. 65:17):

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." The Holy One, blessed be He, will renew it in the future and will bring forth trees and all types of delicacies. When the Holy One, blessed be He, renews the world He will order the ranks of the righteous ones, and of the saintly ones, thus every generation, every creature and every breathing soul, and they will live on forever and ever.

55

He who performed miracles and wonders in those days, He will perform miracles and wonders in these days, at this time. He will gather us up from the four corners of the earth and bring us to Jerusalem so that we may rejoice in her.

Amen, Selah

Notes

Following the Book of Zerubbabel

¹Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 90.

The Days of the MessiahIntroduction

¹Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 93.

²cf. Sanh. 107a.

Translation of Text.

¹cf. Ber. 17a.

²cf. Sanh. 99a.

³cf. B.B. 16a.

⁴or: Gog, king of Magog.

⁵cf. Lev. R. 27.

⁶cf. Suk. 52a.

⁷cf. Sanh. 98a.

⁸Aramaic: k'bar enash.

⁹cf. Midrash Yerushalayim shel Ma'alah in Even-Shmuel, op. cit. p. 11.

¹⁰A.Z. 9b.

¹¹cf. Pes. 68a, Sanh. 21a.

¹²The third day is the "Day of the Holy One," the "day" of the world's Sabbatical year--(Yom ha-Shemittah l'Olam). This is the third millenium after two millenia of Messianic rule, or the seventh after the Creation of the world. Cf. Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 97

¹³cf. A.Z. 2a ad fin, Seder Eliyahu Zuta 21.

¹⁴Tosefta Sanh. ch. 13.

¹⁵There is no intermediary between God and Israel, not even the patriarchs qualify.

¹⁶A play on words: mit'adnim and Gan'Eden.

¹⁷At the beginning of the eighth millenium.

CHAPTER V. THE LEGEND OF THE MESSIAH

(Aggadat ha-Mashiah)

Introduction

This work is found in the Midrash Lekah Tov or Pisikta Zutreta. It is based on Balaam's blessing of Israel (Num. 24:17-19). It opens with a description of the shavua' or seven year cycle during which the son of David will come. It ends with the directives of ten divine voices (benot kol).

Translation of Text

I see him, but not now;

I behold him, but not nigh. (Num. 24:17)

'I see him, I behold him.'--this refers to the King Messiah.

'Not now, not nigh'--this refers to the length of this drawn out exile.

What does the Holy One, blessed be He, mean by the term m'heirah--'quickly'?¹ This corresponds to the phrase 'You shall have been long in the land.'² This number corresponds to the time that they dwelt (in the land) prior to their exile---the matter that is written 'and not now' and 'not soon', is it not all the more so?³ Therefore, it is said (Habakkuk 2:3): "Though he tarry, wait for him; because he will surely come, he will not delay."

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There shall step forth a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the carcass of Moab, and break down all the sons of Seth.

And Edom shall be a possession,
Seir also, even his enemies, shall be a possession,
While Israel does valiantly!

And out of Jacob shall one have dominion,
And shall destroy the remnant of the city.

(Num. 24:17-19)

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'There shall step forth a star out of Jacob.' In the name of the Rabbis we learn about the seven year cycle during which the son of David shall come.⁴ During the first year there will not be sufficient food. During the second year arrows of hunger shall be sent. During the third year there shall

be great famine. During the fourth there will be neither famine nor sustenance. During the fifth year there will be great sustenance. A star shall grow⁵ in the east.⁶ It is the star of the Messiah, and it will remain in the eastern (sky) for fifteen days. If it lingers, it is to the benefit of Israel. During the sixth year, 'sounds of thunder' (will be heard). During the seventh year there will be warfare.

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The sons of the West⁷ will grow arrogant, they will gain dominion without bloodshed.⁸ They shall reach out as far as Egypt, taking captives. During that time a king of 'fierce countenance'⁹ shall arise over a poor and downtrodden people, obtaining the kingdom through cunning.¹⁰ Concerning that very era, Isaiah said (Isa. 26:20):

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"Come, my people, enter your chambers
and shut your doors about you,
Hide yourselves for a little moment,
until the indignation has past."

The Sages said: Rabbi Hiyya commanded his generation: When you hear that the king of fierce countenance has arisen, do not continue to dwell there (in his country), for he will decree: "Anyone who proclaims the Oneness of the God of the Hebrews shall be killed!" and he will say: "Let us all be of one language and one people!" (Then) he will nullify the seasons and appointed times, Sabbaths and the (celebrations) of the new moon, and he will abolish the Torah from Israel--as it is said (Dan. 7:25): And he shall think to

change the seasons and the law. And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time." 25

"A time" is a year, "And times" two (years), "and half a time" half of a year. They said to him (to Rabbi Hiyya): "Our master, where shall we be saved?" He said to them: "(Go) to upper Galilee!"

"For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those that escape." (Joel 3:5)

"But in Mount Zion there shall be those that escape." (Obadiah 17)

Rav Huna said in Rabbi Levi's name: It teaches us 30 (the above verses) that Israel was gathered in Upper Galilee and the Messiah ben Joseph was revealed to them there in the midst of Galilee. (Then) they and all Israel shall go up from there to Jerusalem, ((and he will pursue from there all the evil ones of Israel who lent support to the king of the 'fierce countenance' in Jerusalem)) This upholds that which is said (Dan. 11:4): "Also the children of the violent among your people shall lift themselves to establish the vision; but they shall stumble."¹¹

He¹² will go up and rebuild the Temple and offer sacrifices, and fire shall descend from heaven. 35

"And shall smite through the corners of Moab."--he will come against the land of Moab and kill half (of its inhabitants) and the rest shall be taken captives.¹³ Finally, he will make

peace with Moab and collect taxes from her--as it is said (Jer. 48:47): "Yet will I return the captivity of Moab in the end of days."

"And breakdown all the sons of Seth". He will smite all the Canaanites who will suffer punishment on their buttocks,¹⁴ as it is said (Isa. 20:4):

So the king of Assyria shall lead away the captives of Egypt, and the exiles of Ethiopia, young and old, naked and barefoot and with buttocks uncovered, the shame of Egypt.

Israel shall dwell forty years in security, eating and drinking with foreigners as their serfs and vineyard keepers.

After all this, Gog and Magog¹⁵ shall hear of it and go up against him¹⁶--as it is said (Psalms 2:2): "The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Messiah." He will enter and kill him within the streets of Jerusalem--as it is said (Dan 12:1): "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time." Israel seeing this shall say: "Our Messiah is lost, and no other Messiah will come!" The four families will mourn for him as it is said (Zech. 12:12): "And the land shall mourn every family apart: the family of the house of David apart... the family of the house of Nathan apart...the family of the house of Levi apart... the family of the Shimeites apart."

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The Holy One, blessed be He, shall go forth and fight with Gog--as it is said (Ibid. 14:3): "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations." The mountains shall be moved and the hills shall collapse, the Mount of Olives shall be cleft in half and the Holy One, blessed be He, shall descend upon it, and Israel shall flee and be delivered--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 5): "And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains...as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah."

55

Afterwards, Israel shall go into exile¹⁷ in the marshy wilderness to forage, for salt-wort and the roots of the broom plant. Clouds of glory shall surround them; there Israel shall be hidden. The clouds shall cast out whoever has an evil thought against the Holy One, blessed be He, and (then) the Canaanites¹⁸ shall kill him.

Amongst the Israelites there will be many who will defect to the Canaanites, and they will not share a portion with Israel in the next world. Those who remain in the wilderness, however, are destined to be tried with salt-wort for only forty-five days.

60

After forty-five days a divine voice will say to them: "Go down to Babylon!--as it is said (Mic. 4:10): 'And come to Babylon, there shall you be rescued!'" A second divine

voice shall interrupt: "Go to Edom¹⁹ and wreak my vengeance there!--as it is said (Ezek. 25:14): 'And I will lay My vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel.'"

Israel shall come to Rome. The divine voice shall go forth a third time. "Do to her, as Joshua did to Jericho!" They will encompass the city and sound the shofars. During the 65 seventh sounding, they shall shout out loud²⁰: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord, our God, the Lord is one!"--and the wall of the city shall fall; they will enter into it and find its young men lying dead in its streets--as it is said (Jer. 49:26; 50:30): "Therefore her young men shall fall in her broad places." Afterwards they will gather up all the spoil, the silver and gold, and load it unto camels-- as it is said (Isa. 60:5): "The caravan of camels shall cover you."²¹ 70

A fourth divine voice shall go forth saying: "In the wilderness, clear the way for the Lord!" (Ibid. 40:3) A fifth divine voice shall say: "No lion shall be there." (Ibid. 35:9); a sixth divine voice shall say: "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, acacia tree, and the myrtle." A seventh divine voice shall proclaim, "Give comfort, give comfort to my people!" (Ibid. 40:1) Elijah shall announce to Israel: "Your God reigns!" (Ibid. 52:7) 75

An eighth divine voice shall proclaim and say: "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem!" (Ibid. 40:2) A ninth divine voice shall say: "Open the gates that the righteous nation may enter!" (Ibid. 26:2)

A tenth divine voice shall say: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates!" (Ps. 24:7, 9)

Israel will seek their Lord and David their king. Im- 80
 mediately the Messiah shall be revealed to them. He will say
 to them: "I am he, the Messiah, for who you have been waiting!"
 The dead shall return to life--as it is said (Isa. 26:19):
 "Your dead shall live, my dead bodies shall arise." Then the
 exiles shall be gathered--as it is said (Ibid. 27:13): "It
 shall come to pass in that day, that the great shofar shall
 be blown, and they will come that were lost in the land of
 Assyria, and they that were dispersed in the land of Egypt;
 and they shall worship the Lord in the holy mountain at Jeru-
 salem." And it further says, (Ibid. 11:12): "And he will set
 up an ensign for the nations, and will assemble the dispersed
 of Israel, and gather together the scattered of Judah from
 the four corners of the earth."

 Thus let it be the will of our Father who is
 in heaven, in our days and in the days of all
 Israel!

Notes

- ¹Based on Git. 88a,b; and Dan. 9:14.
- ²Heb.: v'noshantem.
- ³"Quickly" is deduced to equal 852; hence, "not now," "not soon" is even longer. Cf. Sifre, parashat 'Ekev on Deut. 4:25-26.
- ⁴Shavua she Ben-David ba' Sanh. 97a; Derekh Eretz Zuta, beginning of ch. 10.
- ⁵Heb.: yitzmah kokhav, cf. T.J. Ta'an LXVIII:4.
- ⁶cf. Isa. 41:2.
- ⁷the Byzantines, based on Dan 8:5.
- ⁸Heb.: b'lo apayim, compare Dan. 11:20.
- ⁹Ibid. 8:23.
- ¹⁰Ibid. 11:21.
- ¹¹Saadia Gaon: "They shall make themselves false prophets, dreamers of dreams, and advise him."
- ¹²The anointed son of Joseph.
- ¹³cf. Num. 21:29 and Jer. 48:47.
- ¹⁴cf. Gen R. 37. A play on words between the name Seth (=Canaan) and sheit=buttocks.
- ¹⁵or: Gog, king of Magog, Armilus.
- ¹⁶Messiah ben Joseph.
- ¹⁷Even-Shmuel: "willingly, to be distant from the final war."
- ¹⁸or gentiles.
- ¹⁹Rome.
- ²⁰Heb.: m'ri'im t'ruah.
- ²¹"You" refers to Jerusalem or the land of Israel. The wealth brought back shall be so great that the land shall be covered with caravans.

CHAPTER VI. THE MESSIAH BEN JOSEPH AND THE MESSIAH
BEN DAVID (Mashiah ben Yosef u'Mashiah
ben David)--A PIYYUT

This anonymous piyyut is in a poor state of preservation. Even-Shmuel has reconstructed a great deal of it. It is interesting because it varies in several essential points from the other apocalyptic midrashim. Here Menahem ben Amiel is the Messiah ben Joseph. It speaks of ten thousand troops from the tribes of Menasseh and Ephraim rallying to the messianic wars. The Messiah ben David is not named in the extant versions of this poem.

God delivered (this gift)¹

(to Noah, to Shem, to Abraham, to Isaac,) and to Israel,
to Judah, to Moses (and to Aaron, priest of God)

It is that which blossomed (in the Dwelling place of God's
Testimony²)

(And I will ask the one who spoke all these things) in the
name of God

5

And he shall say (to me: Listen to me and I will inform you
of the divine matter!)

During the fifth year (Me)nahem ben Am(iel)³ (will come)

He shall say: 'I (am he) the Messiah ben Joseph, son of
Israel!'

He shall breach⁴ the (ends) of the earth with the utterance
of God.

(and with him) will be ten thousand Ephramites who call upon
God,

10

Also thousands of Menassites whom God has chosen,
They shall ascend to Jerusalem, gathering all Israel to him,
They shall offer up a sacrifice that shall be acceptable to God.
All Israel shall be organized according to their tribes.

Armilus shall come and stab Menahem ben Amiel.

15

The Messiah⁵ shall (then) come and resurrect by the word of
God.

All Israel (shall say) to him:

"From Zion, would that redemption be brought to Israel!"

He shall say to all Israel:

"I am the Messiah ben David, son of Judah, son of Israel, 20

It is I whom God has appointed.

I carry away the illness of Israel,

In order to bring joy to Jacob, happiness to Israel."

Notes

¹Even-Shmuel: the staff which God first gave to Adam.

²cf. Num. 17:23.

³Here Menahem ben Amiel is the Messiah ben Joseph!

⁴A variant reading might be: v'nagah=he shall brighten.

⁵The Messiah ben David is not named.

CHAPTER VII. IN THOSE DAYS, AT THAT TIME

(Ba-Yamim ha-hem, u'va-'Et hahi)

--A PIYYUT OF Elazar ha-Kalir

Introduction

This piyyut attributed to Elazar ha-Kalir is found in his Nehamot l'Tish'ah b'Av. He agrees in most details with the Book of Zerubbabel. The poem is arranged in twelve stanzas, each describing one month in the Messianic advent, while the Book of Zerubbabel only covers the months of Ab through Nisan. In this work Menahem ben Amiel makes his appearance in the Valley of Arbel. Kalir rejects the myth about Armilus' birth, the stories about the Messiah ben Joseph and Hephtzi-bah, and the use of the rod of salvation. According to Even-Shmuel Kalir only accepted those events having an historical basis or those strongly grounded in national folk belief.¹ Since Kalir was a contemporary of these events he accepted less from the Book of Zerubbabel and the Book of Elijah than Saadia and Hai Gaon who lived some three hundred years later.

Translation of Text

I

In those days, at that time,
During the first month, which is the month of Nisan,
On the fourteenth of the month,
Menahem ben Amiel shall suddenly come,
His goodness shall sprout in the Valley of Arbel.
He shall put on the clothes of vengeance as a garment.¹

II

In those days, at that time,
During the second month, which is the month of Iyyar,
Hidden things shall be revealed² to those who observe the
Sabbatical year.
Korah's band shall arise in the sight of all the tribes,
The banners of Asaph shall decorate
From the plains of Moab to the Brook of Shittim.

III

In those days, at that time,
During the third month, which is the month of Sivan,
Those that died in the wilderness shall arise,

A great earthquake shall (pull down) the walls,
 But on the mountain peaks there shall be an abundance of
 grain.³

The earth shall shake, and the hidden secret⁴ shall be
 mentioned.

IV

In those days, at that time,
 During the fourth month, which is the month of Tammuz,
 Anger and hatred shall be found everywhere,
 A king, lacking God's favor, shall go out,
 (for) the mighty one⁵, the slanderer, shall say to him:
 "Go forth!"

A few shall find profit and salvation.

V

In those days, at that time,
 During the fifth month, which is the month of Ab,
 The Pure One⁶ shall be clothed in the garments of vengeance,
 The Mount of Olives shall be cleft in half by his rebuke,⁷
 The Messiah, in his greatness, shall go forth
 As the mighty sun.

VI

In those days, at that time,
 During the sixth month which is the month of Elul,
 Upon seeing him, the son of Shealtiel⁸ shall proclaim.
 Michael and Gabriel shall descend
 To wage the war of God's revenge,
 so that none of God's enemies shall remain.

VII

In those days, at that time,
 During the seventh month, which is the month of Tishrei,
 Every nation shall be thrown into confusion and quarrelling,⁹
 They shall say: "Let us go and deny them their nationhood."
 ((It shall be as awesome as when He took them as His people¹⁰
 from amongst the nations))
 To be despised of men and abhorred by nations.¹¹

VIII

In those days, at that time,
 During the eighth month, which is the month of Marheshvan,
 There shall be a whirlwind¹² for the first exile.¹³
 During that time, the lily shall go out to the wilderness,¹⁴

Ten thousand who came in her support shall be revealed,
And the first shall not be as the last.¹⁵

IX

In those days, at that time,
During the ninth month, which is the month of Kislev,
Suddenly a sword shall descend from heaven,
And the blood of the uncircumcized shall flow as streams
of water.

From the third to ninth days of the Pure One¹⁶ shall confuse¹⁷
them like the rushing of waters,¹⁸

The dead shall arise and live after two days.¹⁹

X

In those days, at that time,
During the tenth month, which is the month of Tebet,
The voices of the diligent pious ones²⁰ shall be heard:
"Woe is us for the day declines!"²¹
There shall be famine forty-five days,²²
But there He shall be praised: "Blessed be the Lord from
day to day!"²³

XI

In those days, at that time,
During the eleventh month, which is the month of Shebat,
A plague shall break out amongst ninety thousand,
Amongst one hundred thousand armored troops,
The fourth war will take place at Tzela' ha-Eleph,
And there "one of you shall pursue a thousand."²⁴

XII

In those days, at that time,
During the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar,
the three shall be united²⁵ in the rebuilding:
The Tishbei,²⁶ and Menahem, also Nehemiah,
The glory of the priesthood shall also serve with them.²⁷
And there,²⁸ every soul shall praise God!

Notes

- ¹Heb.: havuto=garment, cf. Prov. 7:15.
- ²Even-Shmuel: The dead, hidden in the ground, shall live.
- ³Despite the earthquake, the prosperity of the Messianic age is already apparent. Cf. Ps. 72:16.
- ⁴The revelation of the end.
- ⁵Satan, the mighty one.
- ⁶a name of God, cf. Hab. 1:13.
- ⁷cf. Zech. 14:4.
- ⁸Zerubbabel.
- ⁹Especially Persia and Byzantium.
- ¹⁰cf. Deut. 4:34.
- ¹¹cf. Isa. 49:7.
- ¹²The first of the three exiles.
- ¹³A whirlwind to protect them from their enemies.
- ¹⁴Israel, a lily amongst thorns, cf. Song of Songs 2:2.
- ¹⁵The first exiles arrived without suffering loss of life, the later returning exiles lost some of their members.
- ¹⁶God, based on the midrash of Song of Songs 8:10.
- ¹⁷cf. II Sam. 22:15.
- ¹⁸cf. Isa. 17:12.
- ¹⁹cf. Hosea 6:2.
- ²⁰cf. Prov. 8:34.
- ²¹cf. Jer. 6:4. The peoples of the north are planning war.

²²during the siege.

²³Despite the siege, the pious in Jerusalem shall continue to praise God.

²⁴cf. Josh. 23:10.

²⁵Heb.: tamim=t'omim, like twins.

²⁶Elijah the Tishbei.

²⁷The priests will also be in the leadership of the rebuilt Jerusalem.

²⁸Jerusalem.

CHAPTER VIII. AN ESSAY CONCERNING REDEMPTION
(Ma'amar ha-Geullah) of Saadia Gaon

The literature of the geonim was also influenced by the legends of the Messiah, most particularly by the Book of Zerubbabel. Saadia ben Joseph, Gaon of Sura, (892-942), included many details of the redemption narrative in his "Essay on Redemption", which is chapter eight of his magnum opus Emunot ve-Deot. Since this text is readily available in English, I will only summarize its contents according to the numeration of Hebrew lines as it appears in Even-Shmuel.¹

Saadia's goal was to arrange the various legends and give them order and purpose. Each detail of the popular legends became symbolic of the greater general plan. For example, Armilus becomes symbolic of Christian-Roman rule in the land of Israel.² The Messiah ben Joseph comes in order to start the process of repentance. Neither he nor the Messiah ben David is named or described in any great detail:

The gaon subordinates the personality of the Messiah to the great fact of Israel's liberation and the establishment of the millennium.³

Elijah and even the Messiah play rather unimportant parts in Saadia's eschatology, for God is the Redeemer who will perform all the acts of mercy for His people Israel.⁴

Saadia has done much to demythologize the colorful legends. Everything must fit into his philosophical scheme. The essay is replete with Scriptural proof-texts. Saadia's essay had such a profound influence on later generations that some manuscripts of the Book of Elijah and the Book of Zerubbabel were

altered to bring them into agreement with Saadia.⁵

Summary of the Text according to Even-Shmuel, pp. 121-128.

1-7--The "Time of the End" ('Et Qetz) is predetermined by God. If Israel repents, the end will come sooner than the predetermined time. If Israel does not repent, God will send a king more cruel than Haman to persecute Israel, forcing them to seek repentance before the end.

8-15--In one paragraph Saadia describes the major elements in the Messiah narrative, including the Messiah ben Joseph, who will arise in Galilee and go up to Jerusalem to fight the Edomite (=Roman) Armilus. He will be killed and Israel will be exiled in the wilderness until Elijah comes to announce the redemption.

16-38--Saadia finds proof texts from Scripture to support all the above material.

39-43--Saadia thanks God for warning us about the imminent suffering so that we will not despair when it comes.

44-60--If, however, Israel repents before the predetermined end, there will be no need for the Messiah ben Joseph. The Messiah ben David will come immediately. The Messiah ben Joseph serves as the forerunner of the King Messiah. His task is to arouse repentance.

61-66--Gog and Magog will come up against the Messiah ben David out of jealousy when they hear that Israel is dwelling in peace.

67-68--Many peoples will join with Gog on his way to Jerusalem. Amongst them will be those who are completely evil and are to be slain. In addition there will be those whose hearts can be improved (m'taqnim l'yavam); these will convert to Judaism.

69-85--The evil ones will be killed in four ways: by fire, by brimstone, by fratricidal war, and by plague. Some will escape mutilated, and return to their native lands to tell of the great events that occurred.

86-99--Those who convert will either remain in Israel and serve the native Jews or will return to their own lands, but remain under the dominion of the Messiah ben David. These will make an annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the festival of Sukkot.

100-122--All the nations shall transport the exiled Jews back to the land of Israel by various means. Those Jews in the wilderness, where there are no gentiles, shall be miraculously transported by God, as if they were carried in a cloud or by the wind.

123-125--Once all the living Israelites have returned, then the Resurrection of the Dead shall occur. The Messiah ben Joseph shall be the first to be revived.

126-131--God will rebuild His Temple. (There is no specific mention of it being lowered from Heaven). The entire land shall be rebuilt and resettled, leaving no waste places.

132-137--The light of the Shechina shall shine above the Temple to guide pilgrims.

138-144--All the Israelites, even the servants, shall become prophets gaining the ability to foretell the future.

145-162 (end)--This perfected state will continue for the remainder of natural time. Life will be free of troubles so that the Israelite people will willingly choose to serve God. Saadia metaphorically interprets Isa. 65:17, saying that the world will seem as if it were renewed.

Notes

¹Even-Shmuel, op. cit. pp. 121-128.

²Ibid. 119.

³Joseph Sarachek, The Doctrine of the Messiah in Medieval Jewish Literature (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1932) p. 43.

⁴Julius H. Greenstone, The Messiah Idea in Jewish History (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972, reprint of 1906 edition) p. 134.

⁵Even-Shmuel, op. cit. 120.

CHAPTER IX. AN ESSAY CONCERNING ARMILUS

(Ma'amar Armilus) attributed to Saadia Gaon

Introduction

This essay is found in Shloshet Perushim 'al Shir ha-Shirim by Isaac ben Abraham ben Judah of the Spanish Exile, published in Constantinople in 1573. In the explanation to Song of Songs 7:12-14, the author gives us a complete essay on the subject of Armilus. Armilus is the son a statue; his monster qualities include six fingers on each hand. The two Messiahs are mentioned by name. Even-Shmuel contends that if this particular essay was not written by Saadia Gaon, it was certainly based on his "Essay concerning Redemption".¹

Translation of Text

Our Rabbis of blessed memory said, at the end of days, there will reign in Edom a king by the name of Armilus, who will venture out of Rome and rule over the entire world, he will have six fingers on each hand. He will go to Jerusalem, and will rule over it for nine months. Israel during his time will be in great distress. He will want to lead Israel astray with his false gods,¹ but they will not choose to do his will. Therefore, they will go out to the wilderness, as our ancestors went out to the wilderness, and they will gather according to their tribes. The Messiah ben Joseph, ((whose name is Nehemiah)) ben Hushiel, will go out, taking with him men of Israel, and wage war with the evil Armilus, but he will not succeed. Armilus will overcome him, he will kill the Messiah ben Joseph, and Israel will mourn him, family by family. Afterwards, the Messiah ben David will arise, whose name is Menahem ben Amiel, but the Israelites will not believe in him until he has resurrected the Messiah ben Joseph in their presence. Elijah, may he be remembered for good, ((and Michael)) will appear before them at that very hour. Concerning the going forth of Armilus it is said (Obadiah 18): "And the house of Jacob shall be afire, and the house of Joseph aflame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord has spoken."

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As we have said they will experience great sorrow in those days--as it is said: (Dan. 7:25): "...and he shall think to change the seasons and the law; and they shall be given unto his hand until a time, and times, and half a time." And it was known that Armilus would come forth from one stone which is in Rome--as it is said. (Zech. 3:9): "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua"² We have said that he would rule over them nine months--as it is said: (Micah 5:2):

15

"Therefore He will give them up, until the time that she who travails, has given birth." As we have said he will cast out Israel and they will go forth to the wilderness--as it is said (Ezek. 20:35): "and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples..." and it is also written (Hosea 2:16): "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness..." And that they will (suffer from) hunger and thirst--as it is said (Ezek. 20:36): "Like as I pleaded with your fathers..."--that is the famine,--as it is said (Ex. 17:3):

"...to kill this whole assembly with hunger." And thirst--as it is said (Ibid. 17:3): "And the whole people thirsted

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there for water." Our Rabbis, of blessed memory, said that the aforementioned distress would be upon them for five and forty days: Tevet and half of Shevat. Many will go astray after that evil one and say: "Woe is us! Is that the one for whom we have been hoping many years, and many seasons?!" Concerning those that went astray it is said (Ezek. 20:38): "And

I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me..." and they will be strangers, and they will not enter the land. The righteous ones shall go about from one Israelite migration to another to speak to their hearts and to strengthen them in the unity of God--as it is said (Isa. 35:3): "Strengthen the weak hands." At that very hour they will seek mercy from God³ that He should spread forth the divine presence among them and go with them in those wildernesses and lead them in a way that has previously not been known--as it is said (Ibid. 42:16): "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not..."

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Therefore, Solomon said (Song of Songs 7:12-14): "Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field...let us get up early in the vineyards." The meaning of "There I will give you my love"⁴ is the coming of the two Messiahs: ben Joseph, and ben David. The meaning of "The mandrakes give forth fragrance" is the gathering together of Israel by tribes, --and therefore it says: "new and old." Their righteous ones and their sages shall see--as it is said: "and at our doors are all manner of precious fruits."

35

Notes

¹Heb.: sh'karaw.

²Referring to Joshua the priest when he is arraigned before the Heavenly Tribunal.

³Heb.: ha-Maqom

⁴Heb.: dodai, a dual form.

CHAPTER X. CONCERNING SALVATION

('Al Inyan ha-Yeshuah)

--A RESPONSUM of Hai Gaon

Introduction

The responsum of Hai, Gaon of Pumbeditha (998-1038), concerning salvation is based on a whole panoply of Jewish literature, including the Book of Zerubbabel and its offshoots. Hai differentiates between Armilus who fights against the Messiah ben Joseph, and Gog who engages the Messiah ben David in battle. At the end of the responsum the Messiah bestows his sukkah of peace on the entire world. Hai adds that those who die after the resurrection shall be revived at the end of the Messianic age, when a new world will be established. All the righteous and repentant, both Jew and gentile, shall gain eternal life.¹

Translation of Text

You asked to explain what salvation will be like from its beginning to its end, the resurrection of the dead and the 'new heavens', etc.,--If I were to explain each and every detail in all its particulars, the time would not suffice. However, I will tell you of the general principles of each matter, thus I say!

(When salvation does come) The remaining years of the end are seven in number,¹ they are the beginning of the salvation, that the sages designated by saying: "The week when the son of David will come, etc. "During that seven year cycle Edom will be ruling over Israel, not less than nine months and not longer than three years. Israel can achieve the dominion from Edom only--as it is said (Num. 24:18-19): "And Edom shall be a possession, etc.,...and out of Jacob shall one have dominion, and shall destroy the remnant of the city," once Edom has wrested the dominion from Assyria--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 24): "But ships shall come from Kittim, and they shall afflict Asshur," etc., after Assyria has wrested the dominion from the Kenim, who are the Midianites, who are the Ishmaelites,---as it is said (Ibid. vs. 22): "Nevertheless Kain shall be wasted." Therefore, when we see that Edom will be ruling over the land of Israel, we believe that the beginning of our salvation (is at hand)--as it is said (Obadiah 27): "Their saviors shall come up on Mount Zion, etc."

At that time a man from among the sons of Joseph ((ac-

according to the word of God)), shall come, and he shall be called the Messiah of the Lord. He shall gather to him many men in Upper Galilee and he will be a king over them; other men shall also gather themselves to him, two or three from this city, four or five from another city,--concerning that moment He said (Jer. 3:14): "I will take you, one of a city, and two of a family". However, the majority of Israel shall remain in their state of exile, for the end has not yet been made clear to them.

15

Then the Messiah ben Joseph shall ascend from Upper Galilee to Jerusalem, with those men who had joined him, and kill the officer of the Edomite king and the people that are with him. Concerning that moment, He said (Ezek. 25:14): "And I will lay My vengeance upon Edom by the hand of My people Israel." He shall dwell in Jerusalem for several days.

20

Once all the nations hear that a king has arisen over the Israelites in Jerusalem, they shall stand up against them in all the countries and drive them away saying to them: Up until now you had been faithfully remaining with us, for you had no king or prince; now that you have a king--do not dwell in our land! Many Israelites shall go forth to the wilderness that is near their respective countries--concerning that moment He said (Ezekiel 20:35): "I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples." There you shall dwell in tents,---concerning that very moment He said (Hosea 12:10): "I will yet again make you dwell in tents."

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Many of them shall lack water and despair in their predicament--concerning that very moment He said (Ezek. 20:37): "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." Many will leave the covenant of Israel, for they will become disgusted with their lives. Concerning them He has said (Ibid. vs. 38): "I will purge out from among you the rebels and them that transgress against Me."

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Once the Messiah ben Joseph and all the people with him have been dwelling in Jerusalem, Armilus shall hear of their fame, and he shall come and perform magic acts and seductions, in order to mislead many. He will go up and fight against Jerusalem, and be victorious over the Messiah ben Joseph and his band, and kill some of them, and take others captive, and divide their spoil,--concerning that very moment He said (Zech. 14:2): "For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle." Even the Messiah ben Joseph shall be killed, and there will be great sorrow in Israel--concerning that very moment He said (Ibid. 12:10-11): "And they shall look unto Me because they have thrust him through...In that there shall be great mourning in Jerusalem."

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Why was Armilus given permission to kill the Messiah ben Joseph? In order to break the hearts of the divisive ones among the Israelites, for they have no faith, and will say: "Is this the man for whom we hoped, he just came and he is already killed; there remains no salvation for ((Israel))." They will leave

the covenant of Israel and join the nations.

He will kill them---concerning them He said (Amos 9:10):
 "All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword." Those
 who remained in Jerusalem will be refined and purified, even 45
 those who went out into the wilderness shall be tested and re-
 fined. From these, they will go out as two parts,² but a third
 shall be left,---concerning them He said (Zech. 13:8-9): "And
 it shall come to pass that in all the land... two parts shall
 be cut off and die, but a third shall be left therein, and I
 shall bring the third part through the fire, and I will re-
 fine them as silver is refined." At that very time all the
 pangs of the Messiah shall pass over them, as explained in
 several places in Scripture and in the words of our Rabbis,
 of blessed memory. After this they will cry out, and the 50
 Holy One, blessed be He, will hear their cry--as it is said
 (Ibid.) "They will call on My name and I will answer them."

At that very time from the wilderness Elijah shall be
 revealed to those found in the wilderness and cause their
 hearts to return--as it is said (Malachi 3:24): "And he shall
 return to the heart of the fathers," etc. The Messiah ben
 David shall be suddenly revealed to those in the land, for the
 Messiah ben Joseph had already gathered the people together be-
 fore him--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 1): "Behold, I send My mes- 55
 senger, and he shall clear the way before Me; and the lord,
 whom you seek, will suddenly come. The Israelites who are in

the wilderness shall follow Elijah until they meet the Judeans and Israelites in the land of Israel who are with the Messiah ben David--concerning them He said: (Jer. 3:18): "In those days the House of Judah shall walk with the House of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to that land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers."

As the Messiah ben Joseph, after his death, will remain a cast-out corpse forty days, so most of those killed shall remain (unburied) within the land forty days. No unclean thing shall touch him until the Messiah ben David shall resurrect him by the word of the Lord. The resurrection of the dead whom he will revive is the beginning of the signs that he will perform.

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Then the Messiah ben David, Elijah, and the Israelites who came with them from the wilderness to Jerusalem will dwell securely and peacefully for many days, they will build houses, plant vineyards and succeed in trade dealings, until Gog hears of their fame--as it is written (Ezek. 31:11): "And you shall say: I will go up against the land of the unwalled. I will come upon them that are quiet, that dwell safely." The land of Gog is Magog in the land of Edom--thus He said concerning this matter (Ibid. vs. 2): "the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal." And he will bring peoples from all the surrounding lands and from Edom--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 6): "the uttermost parts of the north and all his bands, many peoples." Many will even join with him from each city and country through which he passes:

evil and destructive men--in order that they might be punished 70
and annihilated, also the best men from amongst the gentiles--
so that they may be gathered under the wings of the divine
presence. All of them will come to fight, and they will
fight against the Messiah ben David and the men who are
within the city--concerning that very moment He said (Zech.
12:2): "Behold, I will make Jerusalem as a cup of staggering."
All of this is said in the section concerning Gog. And at
that very time there will be a great earthquake in the
land of Israel.

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"And the Lord shall go forth and fight those nations"
with four types of retributions: amongst them will be those
who are destroyed by fire, brimstone, and catapult stones,
which are 'great hailstones'--concerning which He said
(Ezek. 38:22): "an overflowing shower, and great hailstones,
fire, and brimstone;" and there will be amongst them those
who will be lost, one to the other's sword--as it is said:
(Ibid. vs. 21): "And I will call for a sword against his
brother;" and will be amongst them those whose flesh shall
waste away limb by limb--concerning them He said (Zech. 14:12):
"And this shall be the plague..." And they shall lay hold
everyone upon the hand of his neighbor, to support them-
selves by it, but his hand shall be plucked off--as it is
said (Ibid. vs. 13): "Each man shall grasp the hand of his
neighbor, but his hand shall be lifted by the hand of his
neighbor."³; there will be those who will be afflicted by
the defect of blindness or the breaking of a

hand or foot, or the severing of a nose or ear. They will flee and go forth to far-away countries, and tell of what they saw with their eyes--as it is said (Isa. 66:19): "And I will work a sign among them, and I will send such as escape of them unto the nations..."

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At that very time all the nations of the world will calculate and say to themselves: "What gift shall we carry to that king, for is it not so that all silver and raiment and vessels are not important to him? But the children of his people, his flock we will carry to him as a gift-offering." ---as it is said (Ibid. vs. 20: "And they shall bring all your brethren out of all the nations for an offering unto the Lord." Every nation according to its wealth shall transport them: some by horse, some by chariot, some by covered wagon, some by mule and some by carriage⁴, and some will carry them on their shoulders--as it is said (Ibid. 49:22): "And they shall bring your sons in their bosom, and your daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders;" some of them on ships of Tarshish--as it is said (Ibid. 60:9): "And the ships of Tarshish will be first to bring your sons from afar." and some in vessels of papyrus--as it is said (Ibid. 18:2): "That sends ambassadors upon the sea, even vessels of papyrus upon the waters," and it further says: (Zeph. 3:10): "From beyond the

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rivers of Ethiopia shall they bring My suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, as My offering," and it further says (Isa. 18:1): "Ah, land of the buzzing of wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia," --for wooden boats are not able to travel there because of the rocks and stones that are hidden in the water. As for the remainder of the Israelites in the wilderness, where there are no nations to bring them, they will be carried by our God using the winds--as it is said (Ibid. 43:6): "I will say to the north wind: 'Give up' and to the south wind: 'Keep not back!'"--they are like those carried on the clouds and on the thick clouds--as it is said (Ibid. 60:8): "Who are these that fly as a cloud?"

95

As these exiles come, the sea of Egypt⁵ shall be split at one location, and the Euphrates River at seven locations, --concerning that very moment, He said (Ibid. 41:18-19): "I will open the rivers on the high hills...I will plant in the wilderness cedar, the acacia tree, etc." to shelter them. Not a single living Israelite shall remain in any place until they come to Jerusalem--as it is said (Ezek. 39:28): "...And I will leave none of them anymore there."

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After all the living shall be gathered, and only the dead shall remain, the great shofar shall be sounded, the earth shall quake and the dead of Israel shall be resurrected--as it is said (Isa. 27:13): "And it shall come to pass in that day

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that a great horn shall be blown," and it is said that Zerubabel will blow that horn. And why will there be a great earthquake? In order to raise up the bones that have been pulverized into the ground, that have been built into buildings, that have been burnt into bricks, and have been covered with debris, one bone shall draw near to another---as it is written in the 'Section on the Valley (of Dry Bones)' (Ezek. ch. 37): and the Holy One, blessed be He, shall stretch sinews upon them and cover them with flesh and spread skin upon them, but (as yet) there is no spirit within them. After-
 this the Holy One, blessed be He, shall cause the life-giving 110
 dew, which contains the light of living souls, to descend from heaven--as it is said (Isa. 26:19): "Your dead shall live, My dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in the dust--for your dew is like the dew of light." They will recognize that they had been alive previously, had died and afterwards were resurrected--as it is said (Ezek. 37:13): "And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, and caused you to come up out of your graves, O My people!" Everyone who had had a defect shall at first remain with his defect, if he were old, he shall come in his elderly state, in the leanness of his flesh--so that they will 115
 not say: "These are different creatures,"--and afterwards, the Holy One, blessed be He, shall heal them--as it is said (Isa. 35:5-6): "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the

ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as the antelope." It further says (Ps. 103:5): "So that your youth is renewed as the eagle." ((And from whence do we know that the resurrection of the dead is in the days of the Messiah? As it is said (Micah 5:4): "Then shall we raise against him)) seven shepherds and eight princes among men," ((and our Rabbis, of blessed memory, said that the 'seven shepherds')) were: Adam, Seth, Methu-
 selah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, and the 'eight princes' were: Jesse, Saul, Samuel, Amos, Zephaniah, Hezekiah, Elijah, and the Messiah. For whom is this resurrection of the dead? For every Israelite who was righteous from the beginning and also those who sinned and repented; but he whose transgressions are more numerous than his merits and has not repented will not arise during the days of the Messiah--as it is said (Dan. 12:2): "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to
 reproaches and everlasting abhorrence." Therefore, our Rabbis taught (Shab. 32a; Sanh. 43b): "To one who is sick and near death we say: 'Confess!' The way of all who are to be put to death is to confess. If he does not know how to confess, they say to him: 'Say: I have sinned, I have transgressed, I have done perversely--let my death be an atonement for all my transgressions!'"--so that all Israel should merit resurrection of the dead. Therefore, those dead whom the Holy One, blessed

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be He, will resurrect, will not return to their dust--as it is said (Dan. 12:2): "Those to everlasting life," and it further says (Isa. 4:3): "he shall be called holy, even every one that is written unto life in Jerusalem." Israel shall be astounded and say: "From where did all this suddenly come?" As it is said (Ibid. 49:21): "Then you shall say in your heart: who has begotten me these?" --and even the nations of the world will wonder--as it is said (Ibid. 66:8): "Who has heard of such a thing, who has seen such things?!"

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After the (former) dead and the living are gathered together, the form of the Temple shall be revealed to us, its plan and location, according to the vision that Ezekiel son of Buzi, the priest and prophet, may he rest in peace, saw. There are those who say: It will descend to its place from heaven--as it is said (Ps. 122:3): "Jerusalem that is built as a city that is compact together."

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Then all the Israelites shall become prophets--as it is said (Joel 3:1): "And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters shall prophesy,"--and even the servants and handmaids of Israel--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 2): "And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out My spirit."

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Those gentiles who remain ((alive)) shall convert-- as it is said (Zeph. 3:9): "For then I will turn to the peoples

a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord;" and they will say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths--for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (Isa. 2:3). When they come before the King Messiah, he will command them to put an end to battles and wars-- as it is said (Ibid. vs. 4): "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, etc."

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The peoples of Sodom and Gomorrah shall be resettled in their cities, the entire plain (shall be rebuilt), so that the land of Israel shall not be rendered defective by the cataclysm that occurred within it--as it is written (Ezek. 16:55): "Your sister Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former state." Also, every beast of prey shall cease from the world-- as it is said (Isa. 11:6-9): "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb...the cow and the bear shall feed...and the suckling child shall play in the hold of the asp...they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain."

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The people who will be found with the King Messiah will live long lives and then die--as it is said (Ibid. 65:22): "They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat, for the days of the tree shall be the days of my people." A man shall not die as a lad or a youth--

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as it is said (Ibid. vs. 20): "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man, that has not filled his days; for the youngest shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed."--no, they shall certainly die, but thus shall it be at the time of salvation: he who will then die at the age of one hundred shall resemble he who now dies at age twenty; and even if he will be one hundred years sinning against men, and they curse him and do not suffer him, because in their eyes he is not worthy to be suffered, in that he is like a twenty year-old youth to them. There are those who say that death shall be uprooted from the world--as it is said (Ibid. 25:8): "He will swallow up death forever." And there are those who say: He shall only die for three days, and then come back to life--concerning them He says (Hosea 6:2): "After two days will He revive us, on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His presence." The dead that are resurrected during the days of the Messiah will live on eternally because of the merit of the completely righteous ones.

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In those days, when the Sanctuary and Jerusalem are revealed, the divine presence shall descend from heaven and stand straight up as a pillar of fire from the earth to the firmament--as it is said (Isa. 4:5): "And the Lord will create over

the whole habitation of mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night." Anyone who wishes to go to Jerusalem will see the pillar of fire from his country, and will go by its light until he reaches Jerusalem--as it is said (Ibid. 60:3): "And nations shall walk at Your light," Since this light is greater than the light of the sun or the moon, it will darken the two of them--as it is said (Ibid. 24:23): "Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed; for the Lord of hosts will reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem."

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At that time the heavens and the earth shall be seen as if they were renewed, as if the heavens and earth of slavery have passed on and changed; and a new heaven and earth have been brought in their place--as it is said (Ibid. 65:17): "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." They will see Jerusalem and Israel as if they were new, as if Jerusalem and Israel of slavery have changed and passed away, as if different ones were brought in their place, those of happiness and rejoicing--as it is said (Ibid. vs. 18): "For behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."

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They shall dwell in their kingdom until the end of the world,--and there are those that say: until the end of seven thousand years from the time of the Creation; and there are those who say: many millenia without a known limit; afterwards the heavens and earth will end--as it is said (Ibid. 51:6): "For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke," etc. The

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dead who were resurrected and saw for themselves the salvation, shall go forth by themselves to the next world--as it is said (Ibid.): "But My salvation shall be for ever, and My favor shall not be abolished," At that time the Holy One, blessed be He, shall create a different heaven and earth, different from that which already exists, and the righteous ones shall dwell in them for ever and ever--as it is said (Ibid. 66:22): "For as the new heaven and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, says the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain!"

May the Lord look from heaven to be gracious
unto you,

May He listen from on high to your supplication,

May He turn with mercy to you

To bring you forth from your enslavement!

May He perfect His Sanctuary during your lifetimes,

And rebuild His Temple in your days!

May He draw near the end for your redemption

And hasten the coming of your Messiah,

May He gather your scattered ones

From amongst their enemies!

May the Master of Mercies command

That time and that season to draw nigh!

Thus let it be His will, Amen!

Notes

¹Heb.: b'hiwater mishnei ha-qetz sheva' shanim.

²Heb.: yadot.

³J.P.S. translates verse 13b thus: "And they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor."

Hai Gaon, however, reads the verse as a description of the continuing plague.

⁴Heb.: kikarot, some translate as dromedary.

⁵Heb.: yam Mitzraim, either Red Sea or Nile River.

CONCLUSION AND COMPARISON CHARTS

The apocalyptic works presented in this thesis range from the seventh through eleventh centuries. They encompass several genres of literature. Some are written in the terse narrative style of the Bible; others are more midrashic, building from Scriptural quotations. The piyyutim are vivid poetry; the essays of the geonim are analytic in style.

The Book of Elijah and the Book of Zerubbabel are the works most closely tied to specific historical events. Their rich detail and imagery have been borrowed by all the works that followed them. The poetry naturally follows them in the richness of its imagery. The two midrashim, the Days of the Messiah and the Legend of the Messiah, are more fanciful, they have less grounding in specific, contemporary events.

Saadia Gaon generalizes the material, fitting it into his philosophical system. Much of the specific material has been made symbolic, the actions of the human heroes have been toned down, if not completely eliminated. Hai Gaon follows Saadia's style and example in only accepting the most salient facts from the earlier works.

The following charts trace the various elements in the works presented. In order to expedite the readability of the charts, I have shortened the titles of several of the works. Hence, the "Messiah ben Joseph and the Messiah ben David" is

simply called 'Piyyut', "In those days, at that time" is referred to by the name of its poet, 'Kalir'. Saadia's "Essay concerning Redemption" is indicated by the name 'Saadia', Hai Gaon's "Responsum concerning Salvation" is referred to as "Hai Gaon", "An Essay concerning Armilus" is simply indicated as "Armilus."

VALLEY OF ARBEL--GALILEE

<u>Book of Zerubbabel</u> --	Messiah ben David appears in Valley of Arbel.
<u>Legend of the Messiah</u> --	Messiah ben Joseph appears in Upper Galilee
Piyyut--	Menahem ben Amiel comes suddenly from Valley of Arbel.
Saadia--	Messiah ben Joseph appears in Galilee.
Hai Gaon--	Messiah ben Joseph gathers army in Upper Galilee.

ARMILUS--ROME

<u>Book of Elijah</u> --	Armilus is not mentioned by name, but the monster-like description of the 'least of kings', son of Gigit, is similar to other notions concerning Armilus.
<u>Book of Zerubbabel</u> --	Armilus is the son of a marble statue and Satan; he gains world dominion; he has ten royal allies. He kills the Messiah ben Joseph, plants asheras in the land of Israel, sets up statue of his mother for public worship. He is killed by the Messiah ben David.
<u>Days of the Messiah</u> --	Armilus comes after Gog and Magog; he is described as a king of 'fierce countenance', monster description, the notion of working and deaf ears. He kills Messiah ben Joseph, killed by the Messiah ben David.
<u>Legend of the Messiah</u> --	Armilus is not named, but described as the 'king of fierce countenance', who gains kingdom by cunning, forbids practice of Judaism. City of Rome destroyed like Jerusalem in the Bible.

ARMILUS--ROME (Continued)

Piyyut-- Armilus stabs Menahem ben Amiel (Messiah ben Joseph).
 Kalir-- Armilus is not named. A king, lacking God's favor, sent by Satan, is mentioned.
 Saadia-- Armilus is the Edomite (Roman) king who kills the Messiah ben Joseph.
 "Armilus"-- Armilus is king of Edom (Rome); he has six fingers on each hand. He will rule Jerusalem for nine months and try to lead Israel astray with his false gods. He will kill the Messiah ben Joseph, he will come forth from a stone located in Rome.
 Hai Gaon-- Edomite king (not Armilus) will control Jerusalem; then Armilus will go up against the Messiah ben Joseph.

EARTHQUAKE

Book of Elijah-- Reference
Book of Zerubbabel-- Reference, God descends on Mount of Olives which is cleft in half.
 Kalir-- Reference, God descends on Mount of Olives and cleaves it in half.
 Hai Gaon-- First earthquake as Gog enters Israel; second earthquake to release the bones of the dead for resurrection.

ELIJAH

Book of Elijah-- Elijah is narrator.
Book of Zerubbabel-- Elijah joins Messiah ben David and Hephtzi-bah.
 Kalir-- Called the Tishbei, one of the three leaders of the renewed state.
 Saadia-- Elijah comes to announce the end of the wilderness exile and redemption.
 "Armilus"-- Elijah comes at the time of the resurrection of the Messiah ben Joseph.
 Hai Gaon-- Elijah is the forerunner of the Messiah ben David who will lead the Israelites out of the wilderness to join forces with the Messiah ben David.

EXILES TRANSPORTED TO LAND OF ISRAEL BY GENTILES

Saadia-- Gentiles and winds return Israelites to land.
 Hai Gaon-- Similar account, even more detailed.

THREE EXILES

Book of Elijah-- Elaborate description.
Kalir-- Mentions first exile.

GOG AND MAGOG

Book of Elijah-- They come against Messiah.
Book of Zerubbabel-- In one manuscript they are confused with Armilus.
Days of the Messiah-- They will come against peaceful Israel with 71 allies. They will attempt to engage God in battle; God will kill them with plagues and meteors.
Legend of the Messiah-- They will kill the Messiah ben Joseph. God, Himself, will fight them.
 Saadia-- They and their allies will come against the Messiah ben David. Their army will be decimated in four ways by God.
 Hai Gaon-- Gog from the land of Magog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, will come against the Messiah ben David. God will destroy his forces as in Saadia.

HEPHTZI-BAH

Book of Zerubbabel-- Only appears in this work. She is the mother of Menahem ben Amiel, gives rod of salvation to Messiah ben Joseph, holds out in eastern gate after Hushiel is killed. One manuscript identifies her as the wife of the prophet Nathan.

JUDGMENT

Days of the Messiah Lengthy description. After 2,000 years of peace gentile idolators will burn in Gehinnom, all Israel will be saved and live on in the Garden of Eden.

KORAH'S BAND

Book of Zerubbabel-- They will be resurrected at the Brook

KORAH'S BAND (Continued)

Kalir-- of Shittim, Asaf will lead them.
Similar information.

MESSIAH BEN DAVID

Book of Elijah--

Only one Messiah, called Yinnon in some manuscripts.

Book of Zerubbabel--

At first seen as a wounded and despised man in Rome. Called Menahem ben Amiel; he will appear suddenly in the Valley of Arbel after the Messiah ben Joseph is killed. Goes to Jerusalem, receives rod of salvation from his mother Hephtzi-bah, Elijah joins him, resurrects Nehemiah ben Hushiel, kills Armilus (or Gog and Magog in some texts).

Days of the Messiah--

Kills Armilus.

Legend of the Messiah--

Speaks of the seven year cycle when the son of David will come.

He is revealed once Rome falls and all Israel is gathered together in land of Israel.

Piyyut--

He is not named; he will begin the resurrection process.

Kalir--

He will come suddenly in the Valley of Arbel. He is only Messiah mentioned, not specifically named except that 'Menahem' will be one of the leaders of the renewed state.

Saadia--

He is the King Messiah. If Israel repents, he will come immediately.

"Armilus"--

He is called Menahem ben Amiel; he will not be believed until he has resurrected the Messiah ben Joseph.

Hai Gaon--

He will come suddenly, he will resurrect the Messiah ben Joseph.

MESSIAH BEN JOSEPH

Book of Zerubbabel--

Called Nehemiah ben Hushiel; killed by Armilus, resurrected, joins forces with the Messiah ben David.

Days of the Messiah--

Killed by Armilus.

Legend of the Messiah--

Appears in Upper Galilee; killed by Gog and Magog after taking Jerusalem.

Piyyut--

Called Menahem ben Amiel! Joined by Ephraimites and Menassites, killed by Armilus.

Kalir--

Nehemiah mentioned as one of the leaders of the re-established state.

Saadia--

He is necessary in order to bring about repentance. He will be killed by

MESSIAH BEN JOSEPH (Continued)

Armilus, and be the first to be resurrected.
 "Armilus"-- (Nehemiah) ben Hushiel will try to repulse Armilus from Jerusalem; he will not succeed, and be killed by Armilus.

MICHAEL--METATRON--GABRIEL--ANGEL

Book of Elijah-- Michael speaks to Elijah, Gabriel fights for Israel.
Book of Zerubbabel-- Michael (Metatron) is Israel's guiding angel, instructs Zerubbabel.
 Kalir-- Michael and Gabriel descend and fight for Israel.
 "Armilus"-- In one manuscript, he appears at the time of the resurrection of Messiah ben Joseph.

PROSPERITY, PEACE, AND LEARNING

Book of Elijah-- Speaks of these elements.
Days of the Messiah-- Israel will dwell securely in land for two thousand years prior to day of Judgment; then eternal life in a Garden of Eden existence in new earth.
 Saadia-- All Israelites will become prophets. Ideal state will endure for remainder of natural time. Then, metaphorically, new heavens and earth will be established.
 Hai Gaon-- All Israel will become prophets. Remainder of gentiles will convert. Sodom and Gomorrah will be reestablished. Beasts of prey will cease. Long life spans will be the rule. Heavens and earth will seem renewed (metaphorically); end of subjugation and universal happiness. Then the end of this world will come about.

RESURRECTION

Book of Elijah-- Judgment will come after resurrection; fire and brimstone rained on wicked.
Book of Zerubbabel-- Messiah ben David will resurrect Messiah ben Joseph. Israelites who drowned at sea will be washed up into Brook

Kalir-- of Shittim for resurrection. Korah's band will be resurrected. Those who died in wilderness will be resurrected. Korah's band and those who died in the wilderness will be resurrected. Treats the subject extensively elsewhere in Emunot ve-Deot, Chapter 7. Once every living Israelite has returned, an earthquake will release the bones of the dead. Hai Gaon deals with subject extensively.

Saadia--

Hai Gaon--

ROD OF SALVATION

Book of Zerubbabel-- It was Aaron's rod which blossomed in the Tent of Meeting, used by other Biblical heroes, hidden in Raqqat of Naphtali. Elijah will deliver it to Messiah ben Joseph, he to Hephtzi-bah.

Piyyut-- Aaron's rod used by other Biblical heroes.

TEMPLE--JERUSALEM

Book of Elijah-- built in heaven, will descend, covered with jewels.

Book of Zerubbabel-- will descend from heaven, be built on five important mountains. Rebuilt Jerusalem will be surrounded with walls of fire, it will cover the entire land of Israel.

Days of the Messiah-- Temple built in heaven. 72 jewels suspended from Jerusalem to guide travelers to the holy city.

Saadia-- God will rebuild Jerusalem; but no reference to Temple lowered from heaven. Entire land to be rebuilt and resettled. Pillar of fire over Temple to guide pilgrims.

Hai Gaon-- Temple will descend from heaven; its plan will follow plan of Ezekiel. A pillar of fire will be suspended over it.

TZELAH HA-ELEPH

Book of Zerubbabel-- location of final Messianic battle.

TZELAH HA-ELEPH (Continued)

Kalir-- location of the fourth war.

VISITATION

Book of Elijah-- Angel Michael visits Elijah. God's wind carries Elijah to the east, south and west of the world.

Book of Zerubbabel-- Michael or Metatron visits Zerubbabel. God's wind carries him to Nineveh (=Rome) to see suffering Messiah.

ISRAELITES EXILED TO WILDERNESS

Book of Zerubbabel-- Exiled to wilderness after killing of Messiah ben Joseph for 45 days, they suffer famine.

Legend of the Messiah-- Exiled to wilderness after Messiah ben Joseph killed by Gog. Remain there 45 days, protected by divine cloud.

Kalir-- Forty-five day famine in Jerusalem.

Saadia-- Exiled there after killing of Messiah ben Joseph, no specific time.

"Armilus"-- Israel exiled there 45 days after Armilus takes Jerusalem.

Hai Gaon-- After Jewish independence is re-established, Israelites will be cast out from respective countries of exile to neighboring wilderness in order to be tried and purified.

YINNON

Book of Elijah-- Only reference to Yinnon as the name of the Messiah.

ZERUBBABEL

Book of Zerubbabel-- Recipient of information concerning the messianic advent. In one manuscript, he is one of the commanders at the battle of Tzelah ha-Eleph.

Kalir-- Ben Shealtiel proclaims God's war of revenge.

Hai Gaon-- Zerubbabel will blow shofar announcing the resurrection earthquake.

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