

# SIGNS OF THE HOUR & THE MESSIAH

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## Abstract

This paper explores the intersection of religious and social crises in the contemporary world, emphasizing the conflicts between science and religion, among religions, and within religions themselves. The paper discusses how the breakdown of trust in societal institutions creates a vacuum that gives rise to a new form of religion based on technological advancements and media influence, being symptomatic of a deeper rebellion against the Creator. After a survey of traditional Rabbinic eschatology, it compares various traditions, including the roles of the Mahdi, Messiah, Armilus and the Dajjal, suggesting that these diverse narratives are representations of the same eschatological events seen from different perspectives. It discusses how propaganda and misinformation, especially in the digital age, have become what might be termed “the mindset of the Dajjal”. The paper concludes with a reflection on the hadith about the rise of "harj"—a time of deceit and internal conflict—and how the believers with the best intentions may find themselves becoming armies of the Dajjal.

Key Words: Eschatology, Armilus, Dajjal, Messiah of Joseph, Messiah fo David, King Messiah, Mahdi, Judaism, Islam

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Paraphrasing Rabbi Eliyahu Benamozegh: Everyone agrees that we are going through a great religious and social crisis, but it is not so generally noticed that this presents itself in three aspects.

First, the conflict between religion and science which is in an acute state and consequently brings into relief the antagonism between religions. Since the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution, advances in technology have brought with them enormous economic and military benefit. Although there is no fundamental reason for religion and science to be incompatible, the seemingly endless squabbling and sectarianism among the religious has caused the proponents of technological advancement to distance themselves from religion, even to the point of condemning it.

Second, the conflict between religions, and within them. Even if the need for religious unity is understood by all, there are fundamental disagreements on the nature of the true religion. Even the Abrahamic faiths, whose prophets are brothers from different mothers, are far from getting along. This is how the antagonism between modern civilization and religion is added to that of antagonism between religions. Does peace reign within each of these different religions? Not at all. Various tendencies are constantly working to disturb the interior harmony of the faithful. Wherever an external authority does not impose silence on discordant voices, the differences appear in broad daylight; they voice freely their professions of faith, the number of which continues to multiply. Where an authority is opposed to any hint of independence, unity is only apparent. One keeps silent, or takes refuge in equivocation.

Third, we are dealing with the base nature of man. Whether it is the generation of the flood who believed that everyone was free to do as they pleased, or the generation of the dispersion whose leader Nimrod built the Tower of Babel to unify mankind to declare war on God. The common theme is rebellion against the Creator: "Why have nations gathered and [why do] kingdoms think vain things? Kings of a land stand up, and nobles take counsel together against the Lord and against His messiah? Let us break their bands and cast off their cords from us." (Psalm 2:1-3)

The above manifests itself in a breakdown of trust and credibility in the

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government, economy, newsrooms, courts and universities. There is a deep sense of a lack of justice and a lack of balance. In this place a corrupted religion is born, one that requires no God. Through modern medical advances, it can cure the lame, heal the blind, and revive those who have died. Media influencers are the philosophers and prophets of this faith. Their temples are the museums and theater. Their priests are streamed live on tiktok and youtube. Their holy cities are Hollywood, Bollywood, and Akihabara. Conformity is a requirement since truth is defined to be what the majority of people believe, new ideas become dangerous. Money and need determine morality. It is the mindset of the Dajjal. This is the religion of Bilaam, the man who is one eyed and walks with a limp. Just as the believer uses speech to pray and submit to God, he tried to use speech to cause discord and war to serve the tyrants, all for the love of money. This corrupted religion is the antithesis of faith, but it only exists because of the vacuum brought about by the discord among the faithful. In the light of the prophets, the breath of their explanations, it melts away.

But its not enough to be righteous alone before God. God sent prophets and made covenants with nations, not with individuals. We must work to bring ourselves and our community to a better place, including people of our faith and people who differ from ours: Muslim, Christian or Jew. Hindu, Buddhist or Atheist. And this cannot be done through war, but through seeing the best of each other, and reconnecting all with the truth faith: One God, the Last Day and good deeds.

## **Eschatological Framework**

The end time, end times, or end of days is a time period described in the eschatological writings in Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. This is a known, specific period mentioned in the Torah: "Gather yourselves together and I will tell you that which will happen to you in the latter days" (Genesis 49:1).

From a Jewish point of view there are three aspects to this.

1) Prophecy is a set of analogies which can be stretched to fit many situations and circumstances. In any story there is Beginning, Middle and End. In literary terms there are five steps: Exposition or Introduction, Rising action, Climax, Falling action, Dénouement or resolution. In mystical literature it is expressed in even greater resolution, in ten steps: Conception, Wisdom, Understanding, Plan, Generalization, Specification,

Balance, Resource, Talents, Action, and Completion. By finding the corresponding points between a prophecy and human events, one can find meaning and purpose in history. Finding meaning is the main purpose of eschatology, not foretelling the future. Each Divinely revealed prophecy is applicable at each level: personal, community, national and at a world level. The "end times" is often concerned about how prophecy applies at a world level, but one should not lose sight that to a lesser degree it also applies during the lifetime of each individual, and may apply during multiple epochs of world history.

2) As more and more Scripture was revealed and explained by Prophets and Sages, we accumulate more and more information about the nature of this universal "end of days". This does not mean that we know more than the Sages, or even Adam. It simply means that what they knew instinctively and intuitively, we now know conceptually and intellectually. During the days of Moses, it was assumed that the final redeemer would be like Moses. During the years of the Joseph, the Prophets and Sages told us that there would be a period of suffering and occultation of the Messiah. During the years of David, further knowledge was added by the Prophets and Sages when they told us that the Messiah would be a King like David, etc. Most of the expectations "end times" that we have today, for Muslims, Jews and to a lesser degree Christians, are derived from events during the pivotal period between 610CE to 680 CE, from the Persian Invasion of the Holy Land led by the son of the Exilarch, to the tragedy of Karbala. From the point of view of the Jews, Nehemiah ben Hushiel fulfilled the expectation of Messiah and Heraclius fulfilled the expectation of the anti-Messiah. From the point of view of the Byzantines, the reverse was true.

3) Lastly there is an aspect of Symmetric Diversity. It is taught within Judaism that there are "seventy nations" in the world that correspond to the seventy children of Noah. Each of these faith communities (Hebrew: Am, Arabic: Ummah) have a world view which is shaped by their birth, land and language. These are the same categories that define citizenship today. In the Torah, it is described how God made different covenants with different nations according to their understanding and mission. Each nation was given exactly the commandments that it needed to fulfill the mission which God had given them.

This teaching can be used to explain the minor differences in eschatology. In Islam, for example, the main characters in the end times are

the Mahdi, Isa and the Dajjal. In Judaism the main characters are Elijah, King Messiah and Armilus. In Islam the Mahdi plays the lead role in world redemption and the Messiah has a relatively minor role. In Judaism the Messiah plays the lead role in world redemption and Elijah has a relatively minor role. One could propose that these are the same events, but viewed from a different perspective.

## Scriptural Sources

The **Tanakh** contains several eschatological portions, where themes of the "end times," the coming of the Messiah, resurrection, divine judgment, and the ultimate restoration of the world are addressed. Here are the major eschatological portions:

Section	Book	Passage	Eschatological Themes
Torah	Deuteronomy	30:1-10	Return to the land, repentance, and restoration after exile.
	Numbers	24:17-19	Balaam's prophecy of a star from Jacob, often interpreted as messianic.
Nevi'im	Isaiah	2:2-4	Vision of nations seeking God and universal peace (swords to plowshares).
		11:1-16	Messianic era with a peaceful world, a righteous ruler, and the ingathering of exiles.
		25:6-9	The destruction of death and establishment of eternal joy.
		66:22-24	A new heaven and a new earth, and judgment of the wicked.
	Jeremiah	23:5-8	Prophecy of a righteous branch from David's line and the return of Israel to their land.
		31:31-34	Promise of a new covenant with Israel.
	Ezekiel	37:1-14	Vision of the dry bones, symbolizing resurrection and restoration of Israel.
		38-39	Battle of Gog and Magog, a climactic conflict in the end times.
		40-48	Vision of the restored Temple and renewed land of Israel.
	Hosea	3:4-5	Israel's return and seeking God and Davidic kingship in the end days.
Joel	3 (or 4 in some traditions)	Judgment of nations and eternal blessings for Israel.	
Micah	4:1-5	Parallel to Isaiah 2:2-4, describing peace and God's reign.	
Zechariah	8:20-23	Nations seeking God in Jerusalem.	
	12-14	Prophecies of battles, divine intervention, and God's reign in Jerusalem.	

	Malachi	3:1-5	God's messenger refining and purifying.
		4:1-6	The Day of the Lord, Elijah's return, and ultimate reconciliation.
<b>Ketuvim</b>	Psalms	22, 72, 110	Messianic psalms and the ultimate reign of God.
	Job	19:25-27	Reference to the Redeemer and hope for life after death.
	Daniel	2:31-45	Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the statue and God's eternal kingdom.
		7:1-28	Vision of the four beasts and the Son of Man receiving eternal dominion.
		12:1-3	Resurrection of the dead, eternal reward for the righteous, and judgment for the wicked.
	Haggai	2:6-9	Shaking of the heavens and earth, and the glory of the second Temple surpassing the first.

Here's a table summarizing how **rabbinic writers** interpret the Book of **Daniel**, particularly focusing on the **empires** mentioned, including **Greece** and **Alexander the Great**:

<b>Book of Daniel</b>	<b>Passage</b>	<b>Rabbinic Interpretation</b>	<b>Empire and Figures</b>
<b>Daniel 2:31-45</b>	Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Statue)	The four empires in the dream are interpreted by rabbinic sources as representing the <b>Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman</b> empires.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Babylon (Nebuchadnezzar):</b> Babylonian Empire</li> <li><b>2. Persia (Darius/Cyrus):</b> Persian Empire</li> <li><b>3. Greece (Alexander):</b> Greek Empire</li> <li><b>4. Rome:</b> Roman Empire</li> </ol>
<b>Daniel 7:1-28</b>	Vision of Four Beasts	The four beasts in Daniel's vision are interpreted similarly to the statue in Chapter 2. The <b>fourth beast</b> is especially identified with <b>Rome</b> , often seen as the most destructive and enduring empire.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. First Beast:</b> Babylon (Lion with eagle wings)</li> <li><b>2. Second Beast:</b> Persia (Bear, raised on one side)</li> <li><b>3. Third Beast:</b> Greece (Leopard, with four heads and four wings)</li> <li><b>4. Fourth Beast:</b> Rome (Terrifying, with iron teeth)</li> </ol>
<b>Daniel 8:20-22</b>	Vision of the Ram and Goat	The ram (with two horns) represents <b>Medo-Persia</b> , and the goat (with a prominent horn) represents <b>Greece</b> . The great horn is identified with	<b>Greece (Alexander the Great):</b> The prominent horn in the vision is Alexander the Great, and his empire is divided into

		<b>Alexander the Great</b> , and its four smaller horns after the horn is broken are the divisions of his empire after his death.	four parts after his death.
<b>Daniel 11:2-45</b>	The Kings of the North and South	Detailed interpretation of the struggles between the <b>Seleucid and Ptolemaic</b> dynasties (both descendants of Alexander's generals). This passage also reflects the persecution of the Jewish people under <b>Antiochus IV Epiphanes</b> (a Seleucid ruler).	<b>Greece:</b> The struggles between the Seleucid Empire (in the north) and the Ptolemaic Empire (in the south) are significant. <b>Antiochus IV Epiphanes</b> is associated with the "desolating sacrilege" and the oppression of the Jewish people.

The Seventy Weeks of Years in Daniel 9:24-27 are often interpreted by Rabbinic sources as a prophetic period that unfolds in history. The passage is seen as a complex and multi-layered prophecy about the fate of the Jewish people, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the coming of the Messiah. Below is a table summarizing how Rabbinic interpretation understands these seventy weeks:

Stage	Daniel 9:24-27 Passage	Rabbinic Interpretation	Time Period (in Years)
<b>The 7 weeks (49 years)</b>	"Seventy weeks are decreed... to restore and build Jerusalem until the Messiah, the Prince." (Daniel 9:25)	The first <b>7 weeks</b> (49 years) refer to the period of the Babylonian exile, between the <b>First and Second Temples</b> . Time will be given from the day of the destruction until the coming of Cyrus.	<b>49 years</b> (Cyrus's decree to the rebuilding of the Second Temple, around 538 BCE–circa 489 BCE)
<b>The 62 weeks (434 years)</b>	"Then after the sixty-two weeks, the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing." (Daniel 9:26)	The <b>62 weeks</b> (434 years) represent the period after the rebuilding of the Second Temple until its destruction. Rabbinic sources see the <b>Messiah's cutting off</b> as Agrippa, the king of Judea, who was ruling at the time of the destruction, will be slain.	<b>434 years</b> (From the completion of the Temple to the destruction of the Second Temple, around 489 BCE–70 CE)
<b>The</b>	"He will make a	The <b>final week</b> (7 years) is	<b>7 years</b>

<b>Final Week (7 years)</b>	firm covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering..." (Daniel 9:27)	often interpreted as a time of tribulation, the <b>Messianic age</b> , and the events leading to the redemption of Israel.	(Tribulation, or as a reference to events leading to the Messiah's appearance)
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Normally this 490 year period is seen beginning with the destruction of the First Temple, but others speculated it also began with the destruction of the Second Temple

As used in the Torah, the term "**anointed**" (**Mashiach**) is a title. Similar to the way the word "Prophet" means one who speaks the word of God, the "Messiah" is one who does the special command of God. There are several people who have been given the title "Messiah" in the Torah, such as **David** and a **High Priest**, including even the non-Jewish king **Cyrus**. Below is a table summarizing these references:

Section	Book	Passage	Context and Interpretation	Anointed Figure
<b>Torah</b>	Leviticus	4:3, 4:5, 6:15, 21:10	<b>The High Priest</b> is referred to as anointed in relation to the consecration ritual, where anointing signifies the priest's sanctification.	<b>High Priest</b> (Anointed for service in the Tabernacle/Temple)
		4:16-17, 6:20-22	The High Priest is anointed when he offers sacrifices for the people's atonement and serves as a mediator between God and Israel.	<b>High Priest</b> (Mediator, Atoner)
<b>Historical Figures</b>	1 Samuel	16:13	<b>David</b> is anointed by Samuel as the future king of Israel. Rabbinic sources view this anointing as the moment God chooses David to lead Israel.	<b>David</b> (King, Chosen by God)
		2 Samuel 5:3-4	<b>David's anointing</b> as king over all Israel is reaffirmed	<b>David</b> (Anointed king, precursor to the Messiah)



			by the elders of Israel. Rabbinic texts see David as the prototype for the Messianic King.	
<b>Other Kings</b>	1 Samuel	10:1	<b>Saul</b> is anointed by Samuel to be the first king of Israel. His anointing signifies God's choice, though his reign is later rejected.	<b>Saul</b> (Anointed king, rejected due to disobedience)
	1 Kings	19:15-16	<b>Jehu</b> is anointed to be king over Israel, indicating God's will for him to end the dynasty of Ahab and bring judgment.	<b>Jehu</b> (Anointed king, bringer of judgment)
<b>Cyrus the Persian</b>	Isaiah	45:1	<b>Cyrus</b> is called God's "anointed" for his role in liberating the Jews from Babylonian exile, though he is not a Jewish king.	<b>Cyrus</b> (Anointed for deliverance)
<b>Righteous Person</b>	Isaiah (Sukkah 52a)	53	<b>The suffering Messiah</b> , a descendant of Joseph, is often described as "anointed" to bring righteousness.	<b>Messiah of Joseph</b> (Martyr)
<b>Kingly Figure</b>	Isaiah	11:1-10	<b>The future Messiah</b> , a descendant of David, is often described as "anointed" to bring justice, and peace.	<b>Messiah of David</b> (future redeemer)

Here is a table summarizing the **Seven Ushpizin** (Guests), who are also considered the **Seven Shepherds** of Israel, as described in Jewish tradition. These figures represent the spiritual leaders of the Jewish people, each associated with specific virtues and attributes:

Name	Role in Jewish History	Sefirah (Kabbalistic Attribute)	Key Virtue/Quality	Connection to Leadership
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Abraham	Patriarch, father of monotheism	Chesed (Kindness)	Unconditional love and generosity	Established a covenantal relationship with God, spreading monotheism.
Isaac	Patriarch, son of Abraham	Gevurah (Strength, Discipline)	Self-discipline and fear of God	Embodied devotion and self-sacrifice, representing divine judgment.
Jacob	Patriarch, father of the tribes	Tiferet (Harmony, Beauty)	Truth and balance	Balanced Chesed and Gevurah, symbolizing the synthesis of divine mercy and justice.
Moses	Leader, lawgiver	Netzach (Eternity, Victory)	Leadership and endurance	Gave the Torah, guiding the Israelites from slavery to freedom.
Aaron (Elijah)	High Priest, brother of Moses	Hod (Splendor, Humility)	Peace and humility	Embodied the ideal of a peacemaker, promoting harmony and unity among the people.
Joseph (Joshua)	Ruler of Egypt, son of Jacob	Yesod (Foundation)	Righteousness and integrity	Hidden for a time. Preserved Israel during famine and maintained spiritual integrity in exile.
David	King of Israel	Malchut (Kingship)	Leadership and humility	Represented the ideal Jewish monarch, embodying devotion to God and justice.

In Judaism, just like a prophet speaks the word of God, a messiah does the command of God. In this way there are several messiahs in the Torah. The high priest is called a Messiah, Cyrus is called a Messiah. We are taught in the end of days there will be a Messiah like David who is called "king messiah". We are taught that there was/will be a Messiah like Joseph

who is called "suffering messiah".

In Christianity, there is only one Messiah. He is not a prophet or a teacher, but the son of God (surely Allah SWT is above that) and is also part of a triune God (same). He is the measure of salvation. No one has eternal life except that has accepted Messiah and son of God. He is the way the truth and the life, and no one comes to the Father (God) except through Him. Judaism rejects Christianity's teachings (trinity, supersessionism and exclusive salvation,etc) which appear to contradict Torah.

In Islam, there is only one Messiah, but the concept of Messiah is another name for Prophet. Isa had a historical role to play as a warner to the Children of Israel, and will have a role in the end of days when he destroys the Dajjal with the breath of his mouth. Other than that, Isa has no role in Islam.

The Torah gives both prophetic description for King Messiah and the antichrist (called Armilus - the Roman - in later texts). King Messiah will be like David and will rule over the whole world. He will judge the Jews by Torah and the nations by the laws assigned to them. He will explain the scriptures properly and will fill the world with knowledge of God. In those days formerly ravenous beasts will become peaceable: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." This is interpreted as meaning that all the nations will work together for the common good, in peace,prosperity and knowledge of God. The antichrist will be the opposite. He will seed dissent, conflict and war. He will claim to be God. He will cause fear, terror and doubt. He will be destroyed by the breath of the mouth of Messiah.

We trust at that time, all these differences will be explained.

## **Eschatology in Judaism**

The main unit of communicating Jewish eschatology is the parable or analogy. By finding the corresponding points between scripture and human events, one can find meaning and purpose in history. That is why calculating the times of end captured the interest of many Jewish writers, as well as later Christians and Muslims. While an entire chapter of the Talmud is devoted to different calculations, the effort of calculation is also discouraged. The quote "Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end" appears in Sanhedrin 97b. This is because by pinning down a

eschatology cycle to a specific date and circumstance — even if it were correct — would limit the teaching value of that lesson in other events and circumstances. This is not to mention the damage that can be caused by an incorrect calculation.

## A. Creation

The prototypical cycle is the seven days of Creation.<sup>2</sup> This is at the bottom of all eschatological teachings. Based on the verse “For a thousand years in Your sight are but as a day past.” (Psalms 90:4) The Talmud (Sanhedrin 97a) uses this idea to explain the concept of the world lasting for 6,000 years, likening each “day” of creation to a thousand years of human history, followed by a “Sabbath” of rest in the Messianic era, although there are a dozen other opinions. The current year is 5785, so by this accounting we are close.

The religion of the Torah encompasses all religion. It conveys the message of One God, One First Man and One Basic Law. One God for proper organization of our thoughts (Genesis 1:1), One First Man to affirm the basic equal rights of humanity (1:26), and One Basic Law to establish cross-jurisdictional justice (2:16). Or put another way, One God, the Last Day and good deeds (seven of the Ten Commandments). Without a constructive relationship, this ends in death as when Cain killed Abel (4:8). Each nation must develop itself to the fullest (4:21), yet every nation was given something that another nation needed, and each nation needed something that another nation had. When humanity attempted to organize themselves as completely independent, uncaring individuals, they were wiped out in the flood (9-10). When they tried to form a monolithic, uncaring dictatorship, they were scattered at the Tower of Babel (11). **The antithesis of all proper religion and submission to God is rebellion, and the core concern of Jewish eschatology is how mankind comes into submission to God.**

## B. Abraham

To function properly together, mankind need to act as Adam did. All his limbs, though greatly differing, worked together to fulfill the Creator's

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<sup>2</sup> These seven days together with the three words “Beresheet Barah Elokim” correspond to the ten steps, or *sefirot*, mentioned above.

will. In order to complete their task all nations must work together. To show the path of cooperation without violence, God found a prototype of the caring, righteous man in Abraham (Genesis 12-13), and a prototype of the caring, righteous nation in the family of Jacob (45). These symbols that teach diversity within unity were made available for the benefit of mankind (49). To preserve the message from assimilation and loss, this symbolic nation was enclosed in an identity of particularism (Deuteronomy 33:2). Abraham was neither a Christian, nor a Jew, nor a Qur'anic Muslim. He was what the Torah calls "a God fearer/submitter". This is the same as "islam" with a small "i". It is also the same as "Jew." The Talmud (Megillah 13a) says, "Anyone who denies idolatry is called a Jew (Yehudi)." **This means that in Jewish apocalyptic visions, the term Jew or Israel actually includes *all* believers.**

### C. Lavan, Bilaam, Armilus

The hatred of Lavan toward Jacob and its continuation by Bilaam are deeply rooted in both personal and ideological conflicts. According to the rabbinical commentaries, Lavan's resentment of Jacob stemmed from jealousy over his growing wealth and divine blessings. Despite Lavan's repeated attempts to deceive and exploit Jacob, he could not thwart Jacob's success, which he attributed to divine intervention. This jealousy was compounded by a spiritual conflict, as Lavan, an idolater, opposed Jacob's monotheism and devotion to God. Commentators like Midrash Tanchuma and Rabbeinu Bachya interpret this animosity as symbolic of the broader cosmic struggle between good and evil, with Jacob embodying divine truth and Lavan representing the forces of idolatry and corruption. Bilaam, identified as a descendant of Lavan, perpetuated this enmity. His hatred of believers was fueled by jealousy of their divine mission and spiritual destiny. Midrash Tanchuma notes that Bilaam's efforts to curse the believers reflected his rejection of monotheism and his alignment with the forces opposed to God's plan. Bilaam's personal ambition and desire for wealth and prestige drove him to ally with Balak, further intensifying his hostility. In the Torah he is known as being blind in one eye (Numbers 24:3) and walking with a limp (Numbers 22:25). **Bilaam, the opponent of Moses, is the root of the teaching of the anti-Christ or Dajjal.** Armilus, the name for the Dajjal in Jewish writings is derived from Greek Ἐρημόλαος (Érimólaos) which means 'he will destroy a nation' just as the Talmud (Sanhedrin 105a) explains that "Bila' 'Am" means "destroyer of a [covenant]

people.”

#### D. Esav, Amalek, Gog and Magog

According to the Rabbinic commentaries, Esav’s hatred for Jacob originated from both personal and spiritual conflicts. Esav despised Jacob for receiving the blessings of their father, Isaac, which he believed were rightfully his (Genesis 27:41). Esav represented a worldview rooted in materialism and physical might, while Jacob embodied spirituality and devotion to God. This ideological opposition deepened the animosity, as Esav’s descendants saw Jacob and his progeny as a threat to their way of life. The Midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 67:4) portrays this as an eternal struggle between two conflicting forces: the material and the spiritual.

Amalek, as a descendant of Esav through Eliphaz and Timna (Genesis 36:12), inherited this animosity and took it to an extreme. Amalek’s unprovoked attack on the Israelites after the Exodus (Exodus 17:8) is seen by Rabbinic commentators as an act of pure hatred and defiance against God, targeting the believers not only out of tribal enmity but also to undermine their divine mission. Rashi (on Exodus 17:16) describes Amalek as representing the ultimate opposition to God and holiness, making their conflict with the believers perpetual and existential. This deep-seated hatred culminated in attempts throughout history to destroy Israel, making Amalek a symbol of those who oppose God’s will.

Amalek is the **is the root of the teaching of the wars of Gog and Magog**. The connection between Amalek and Gog and Magog is explored in Midrashic and Kabbalistic writings. They are archetypes of ultimate evil and adversaries of God’s kingdom in the eschatological battle. Rabbi Eliyahu Benamozegh (in *Israel and Humanity*) explains that the battles of Gog and Magog represent a cosmic struggle against divine justice, similar to Amalek’s defiance. Some Kabbalistic interpretations view Amalek as a spiritual precursor to Gog and Magog, with Amalek symbolizing individual hatred against Israel and Gog and Magog embodying a broader, global opposition to God’s plan for humanity. Together, they represent the forces that must be overcome to bring about ultimate redemption.

Although Esav/Amalek represented the top nation, both in power and in might, it was unguided. It was Bilaam (called by the title Haman in the Qur’an) who advised Pharaoh to throw the male infants of the Children of Israel into the Nile. It was Bilaam who advised all the nations to come

against the Children of Israel after their exodus from Egypt, by slandering them. It was Bilaam who convinced Amalek to wage an immoral fight against them, by telling Amalek they were in existential danger. It was Bilaam who spread the rumour that the Children of Israel were a danger to Midian and Maob, causing Balak to offer a huge amount of money to Bilaam to curse them. And what he could not accomplish by alliance with armies, he tried to do through culture, by encouraging immoral relations between the Moabite and Midianite women and the believers.

### **E. Yosef, Jonah, Messiah of Yosef**

The story of Yosef's sale highlights the breakdown of family bonds despite the righteousness of all the brothers. Misled by slander, the brothers believed Yosef was rebelling against their father and sold him into slavery. Yet, Yosef remained steadfast in his righteousness throughout years of hidden exile. When Yehudah later confronted Yosef, mistaking him for an adversary, Yosef revealed his true identity as their brother, resolving the conflict in a moment. This revelation transformed their relationship, uniting the brothers in a bond so deep that they were now willing to sacrifice themselves for one another.

This narrative reflects key themes associated with the Messiah of Yosef: unjust accusations, perseverance in righteousness, a period of concealment, and a final revelation that resolves conflict by providing clarity and missing information. These elements serve as a template for redemption, where misunderstanding and division are healed through truth and selfless unity.

Jonah extends this concept further. The "sign of Jonah" illustrates the responsibility to care for and guide not only one's own people but also other nations. Sent to warn Nineveh, Jonah struggled to embrace the mission to lead a foreign people to repentance. Yet, God's lesson to Jonah was clear: the moral and spiritual welfare of all nations is intertwined with the mission of the Children of Israel. As Rabbi Benamozegh teaches, the Torah was entrusted to Israel for the benefit of humanity, to illuminate the pure faith of Abraham accessible to all. When leaders neglect this responsibility or obscure the universal mission of the Torah, they provoke divine displeasure, as Jonah initially did. This call to embrace and celebrate the repentance of others underscores Israel's role as a light to the nations, fulfilling the broader covenantal mission.

## F. The Plagues, Tribulations, Ten Signs of the Hour

The first **Messianic figure in Judaism** is widely recognized as **Moses**, the redeemer who led the Children of Israel out of Egypt. His role as the deliverer of Israel from bondage, lawgiver at Sinai, and mediator between God and the people has become a paradigm for the Messianic figure in Jewish thought. The Midrash (**Midrash Tanchuma, Toldot 14**, and other sources) teaches that "**the last redeemer will be like the first**". This statement draws a parallel between Moses and the future Messiah, indicating that just as Moses initiated the redemption from Egypt with signs, wonders, and divine intervention, the final redemption will follow a similar pattern.

This concept implies that the **Messianic age** will be heralded by extraordinary events that mirror those of the Exodus. In this eschatological vision, there is an expectation that the world will witness signs and wonders, underscoring God's direct involvement in human history. The gathering of believers and the restoration of Israel to its rightful spiritual and physical places will follow these miraculous events. However, before this global redemption is realized, the Midrash suggests there will be **ten plagues** akin to those in Egypt, but on a far larger scale, affecting the entire world rather than a single nation. These plagues will serve as both a judgment on oppressive systems and a demonstration of God's sovereignty over creation.

Additionally, the connection between Moses and the Messiah highlights the dual role of the redeemer: a leader who not only brings physical deliverance but also ushers in spiritual transformation. This vision aligns with the broader themes of Jewish eschatology, emphasizing justice, divine revelation, and the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel and the world. By drawing on the archetype of Moses, Jewish tradition affirms that the ultimate redemption will mirror the patterns of the first, culminating in a renewed covenant and universal recognition of God.

**Rabbinic commentators have elaborated on this theme, viewing the ten plagues as the root of the tribulations, also called the tens signs of the coming of Messiah.** See below "'Otot of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai"

## G. Aharon, Pinchas, Elijah

Aaron exemplified the role of peacemaker through his gentle words and



actions, bringing reconciliation and harmony. He is described in rabbinic tradition as one who pursued peace by mediating conflicts and comforting individuals. Aaron would approach quarreling parties, offering words of explanation and encouragement, helping them see each other's perspectives. He also fostered peace within families, mending strained relationships. His compassionate and calming demeanor earned him deep respect and made him a model of unity and kindness. This essential quality continued through Pinchas, the Zadokite priesthood, Shimon HaTzadik, and into endtimes with Elijah.

Pinchas exemplified the role of peacemaker through his zealous actions and his ability to resolve conflicts with words. While his decisive act of zeal stopped a plague and restored peace, he later demonstrated his peacemaking skills by mediating between Ephraim and the other tribes. After settling in the Promised Land, the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh constructed an altar near the Jordan River. The rest of the Israelites, misunderstanding this act as rebellion against God, prepared for war. However, Pinchas and a delegation investigated the matter. The eastern tribes explained that the altar was not for sacrifices but as a witness of their shared faith with the other tribes. Pinchas explained their intentions, defusing the situation and maintaining unity among the tribes. (Joshua 22)

The Zadokite priesthood typified the role of peacemaker by maintaining religious order and unity during David's reign and beyond, mediating between the monarchy and the people. Ezekiel sees the Zadokite priesthood returning at the end of days.

Zephaniah typified the role of peacemaker by emphasizing unity and repentance. He called both the House of Israel and the House of Judah to turn back to God, warning them of impending judgment but also offering hope for restoration. His prophecies focused on a future where the divisions between the two would be healed, culminating in a united people serving God together in humility and righteousness (Zephaniah 3:9-13).

Elijah typified the role of peacemaker through his zealous stand against the priests of Baal, defending monotheism and restoring Israel's covenant with God. His future role, as prophesied, includes protecting the Jewish people from persecution often by appearing as an Arab, Bedouin or sage to give advice to rulers that defuses the situation, and resolving unresolved legal questions, fostering ultimate harmony and unity within Israel.

Shimon the Tzadok exemplified this role by diplomatically meeting

Alexander the Great, averting conflict, and ensuring the safety of the Jewish community.

About this time, the Midrash connected Quraysh with Korach.<sup>3</sup> It makes some comments about Korach who rebelled against Moses were consequently swallow up by the earth, see Numbers 16. The midrash says that these Levites could still be heard in the desert in the 3rd century CE. However, these comments seem to apply not to the community of Korach but to the Quraysh at the time when they tolerated polytheism:

This terrible death did not, however, suffice to atone for the sins of Korah and his company, for their punishment continues in hell. They are tortured in hell, and at the end of thirty days, hell again casts them up near to the surface of the earth, on the spot where they had been swallowed.

Whosoever on that day puts his ear to the ground upon that spot hears the cry. "Moses is truth, and his Torah is truth, but we are liars." Not until after the Resurrection will their punishment cease, for even in spite of their grave sin they were not given over to eternal damnation.

For a time Korah and his company believed that they should never know relief from these tortures of hell, but Hannah's words encouraged them not to despair. In reference to them she announced the prophecy, "The Lord bringeth low, to Sheol, and lifteth up." At first they had no real faith in this prophecy, but when God destroyed the Temple, and sank its gates deep into the earth until they reached hell, Korah and his company clung to the gates, saying: "If these gates return again upward, then through them shall we also return upward." God hereupon appointed them as keepers of these gates over which they will have to stand guard until they return to the upper world. (Bereshit Rabbah 18.13)

The midrash says that these Levites could still be heard in the desert, when the new month is announced by witnessing the crescent moon (every 30 days). They taught that "Moses is truth, and his Torah is truth" but they were "liars", perhaps meaning polytheists. But what is interesting is that the redemption of Israel is connected with their release.

## H. David, Solomon, Messiah of David

King David, King Solomon" We believe in the end of days, there will

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<sup>3</sup> Quraysh (Q-R-Sh) and Korach (Q-R-Ch) are linguistically related. The transition from the Chet פ sound in Hebrew to the Shin ש sound in Arabic is a known phonological change within Semitic languages.

come a rightly guided one who will act as king, bring peace, justice, prosperity and teach all the knowledge of God. We call this person King Messiah. When comparing the expectations concerning King Messiah and the expectations concerning Al Mahdi, it is clear that they will be fulfilled in the the same person.

Key aspects of life under his rule:

1. **Universal Justice:** His rule is characterized by the establishment of absolute justice. He will eradicate oppression, tyranny, and injustice, ensuring that all people are treated fairly and equitably.
2. **Spiritual Revival:** He will bring about a profound spiritual awakening, guiding people back to the true teachings of scripture. His leadership will help purify hearts and minds, leading to a widespread return to faith and piety.
3. **Global Peace and Prosperity:** During his reign, the world is expected to experience unprecedented peace and prosperity. Conflicts and wars will cease, and resources will be distributed equitably, leading to the end of poverty and suffering.
4. **Moral and Ethical Reformation:** His governance will emphasize moral and ethical conduct, inspiring people to lead righteous lives. Corruption, immorality, and vice will be eradicated from society.
5. **Unity of Believers:** Under his leadership, believers of all communities will be united, transcending divisions of sect, race, and nationality. He will be a unifying figure, bringing together all believers under the banner of true faith.
6. **Divine Guidance:** As a divinely guided leader, he will possess extraordinary knowledge and wisdom, enabling him to make just and wise decisions for the benefit of all humanity.
7. **Harmony with Nature:** It is believed that even nature will flourish under his rule, with abundant harvests and favorable conditions contributing to the well-being of the population.
8. **Restoration of true faith:** He will correct misconceptions and deviations that have crept into religious practice and belief over time, restoring the religion to its original form.

His era is often described as a golden age where divine will is perfectly

manifested on earth, and humanity lives in accordance with the principles of justice, compassion, and truth.

The destruction of the First Temple was seen through early eschatological expectations as divine punishment for Israel's sins, leading to exile. It also sparked hope for eventual redemption, restoration, and the coming of an ideal future kingdom under a Davidic messiah, as prophesied by figures like Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Jeremiah prophesied a future restoration of Israel and Judah after the exile, with a new covenant written on their hearts, ensuring lasting faithfulness to God (Jeremiah 31:31–34). He envisioned the return of the people to their land and the reign of a righteous Davidic king (Jeremiah 23:5–6). Ezekiel foresaw the revival of Israel through the vision of the dry bones, symbolizing national restoration (Ezekiel 37). He also described a messianic ruler, the reunification of the tribes, and a rebuilt, glorified Temple where God's presence would dwell permanently (Ezekiel 40–48).

Cyrus the Great, the Persian king, earned the title of "Messiah" (anointed one) in Isaiah 45:1 because he was chosen by God to fulfill a divine mission: the liberation of the Jewish people from Babylonian exile. Unlike other figures anointed with oil, Cyrus's anointing was metaphorical, signifying his role as a divinely appointed instrument of redemption. Cyrus decreed that the Jews could return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:1–4), restoring their religious and communal life. This act of deliverance mirrored the roles of earlier anointed figures, such as King David, who established Israel's monarchy under God, and the High Priests, who mediated between God and the people. By facilitating the rebuilding of the Temple, Cyrus became a pivotal figure in Jewish history, embodying the messianic ideal of restoring Israel's connection with God and securing its future.

## **I. Antiochus, the Syrian Antichrist**

Antiochus IV Epiphanes became a type of antichrist due to his persecution of the faithful, desecration of the Jewish Temple, and attempts to eradicate Judaism. He claimed divine status, as suggested by his title "Epiphanes" (manifest god), and enforced Hellenistic worship practices. His actions prefigured the antichrist archetype through tyranny, idolatry, and hostility toward God's people, as described in Daniel's prophecies and later eschatological interpretations.

Josephus records that under Antiochus III the Great, Jewish High Priests were invited to promote monotheism in the Seleucid kingdom. Onias III, Jason, and Menelaus were among those invited, but idol worship persisted. Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who claimed to be God, ruled during the period when these High Priest were killed or executed. This may have awakened the eschatological expectation of Witnesses going before the Antichrist, only to be killed. But in the end, divine retribution was made on their city when Antioch later suffered a devastating earthquake.

The destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in 70 CE reactivated Jewish expectations of exile and redemption akin to those following the First Temple's fall. The Temple's loss symbolized divine judgment and exile, sparking hopes for messianic deliverance. Unlike the Babylonian destruction, where eventual return was promised, Rome's suppression of Jewish autonomy, especially through the crushing of revolts, intensified the sense of helplessness and reliance on divine intervention for future redemption and restoration.

For Christians, Nero became a type of antichrist due to his extreme persecution of Christians, his tyrannical rule, and his association with blasphemy and immorality. While not formally claiming divinity, his megalomania and identification with Apollo and Jupiter suggested godlike aspirations. He is linked to the antichrist archetype through his brutality, arrogance, and disregard for divine law. The numbers 666 and 616 are linked to Nero through gematria, where the numerical values of the Hebrew spelling of "Nero Caesar" (קסר נרון) equal 666, and an alternative Latinized spelling equals 616. These numbers in Revelation symbolize Nero as a prototype of ultimate evil and opposition to God.

Daniel's Weeks prophecy likely influenced Jewish eschatological calculations, guiding Exilarch Huna VI's to seek autonomy in Persia (484–508 CE) and Dhu Nuwas to strengthen a Jewish kingdom in Arabia (525 CE). By 610 CE, messianic expectations peaked.

## **J. Persian Conquest of Jerusalem 614 CE**

The wars between Rome and Persia created a backdrop of uncertainty, struggle, and divine intervention that encouraged apocalyptic and messianic expectations across these religious traditions. For Jews, these wars reflected the potential collapse of oppressive powers and the approach of the Messiah. For Christians, they reinforced the belief in the

coming of Christ as the ultimate victor over evil. For sectarian communities, these wars embodied the cosmic struggle between good and evil, shaping their own eschatological narratives. The conflicts between these empires were perceived as signs of the end of the current world order, prompting these communities to anticipate imminent divine intervention and the fulfillment of their respective eschatological hopes.

The Persian conquest of Jerusalem was the focus, in eschalogical terms, of the hopes and dreams of Christians and Jews. Here is a brief outline of the history based on Sebeos and as it was perceived by the faithful, even if not historically accurate:

1. Revolts in Antioch and Yemen against Rome
2. To facilitate conquest of Egypt, the Sassanids promised the Holy Land to the Jews.
3. A son of the Exilarch (the Davidic dynasty) was made symbolic leader of the conquest of the Holy Land, and this generated great Messianic expectation among Jew and Christians.
4. The son of the Exilarch lead a battalion of Jewish soldiers
5. The Sassanids invaded from the North: Antioch, Damascus, Emesa (Homs), Caesarea Maritima, Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem), Jericho, through the coastal plains to Gaza, Pelusium, Alexandria in Egypt.
6. They Sassanids appointed the son of the Exilarch as governor of Jerusalem.
7. He began preparations for sacrifices.
8. He was killed by a Christian mob who revolted.
9. The Sassanids sacked Jerusalem in retaliation and many were killed (614 CE).
10. Khosro panicked and demanded the Jews leave the city.
11. The Jewish battalion tried to remain encamped outside the Golden Gate, but they were slaughtered or sold as slaves.
12. The Jews were forced to the desert.
13. Their "Messiah" was dead, so he must have been Messiah of Joseph. So they searched for the Prophet (Elijah).
14. Twelve representatives sent from Edessa to Arabia to swear

allegiance to the Prophet.

Midrashei Geulah refers to a category of rabbinic literature that deals with eschatological themes, particularly related to the redemption (Geulah) of the Jewish people. The following works were produced or modified during the above events. They encapsulated a eschalological view which would become a shared heritage of Jews, Christians and eventually Muslims:

<b>Work</b>	<b>Description</b>
Sefer Elijah	Explores the idea of the Jewish redemption and Elijah's preparatory role in it
Sefer Zerubbabel	A vision of redemption and the end of exile based on the Persian conquest and the rise of Islam
Pirqe de R. Eliezer §30 (end)	A discussion of Messianic themes, detailing the coming of the Messiah and the signs leading up to his arrival.
The Secrets of R. Shimon bar Yohai	A vision of redemption and the end of exile based on the Persian conquest and the rise of Islam
The Prayer of R. Shimon bar Yohai	A vision of redemption and the end of exile based on the Persian conquest and the rise of Islam
Otot R. Shimon bar Yohai	Provides a framework for understanding the spiritual dynamics leading to the Messianic age, highlighting the need for spiritual preparation and transformation.
Ten Signs	A guide for understanding the signs of the times and the unfolding of the divine plan
Otot Ha-HaMashiah	Elaborates on the eschatological views of the Talmudic period
Ten Further Things Pertaining to the Days of the Mashiah	Further clarification on the events surrounding the arrival of the Messiah and the final redemption,
Responsum of R. Hai Gaon on Redemption	A theological framework for understanding the process of salvation and the role of Jewish law in the end times.
Aggadat Ha-Mashiah	Eschatological visions and ethical teachings related to the Messianic era
Pirqe Mashiah	The rabbinic view of the Messiah and his role in the ultimate restoration of the Jewish people
Midrash Wa-Yosha' (end)	A final vision of the Messianic age and the ultimate victory of the faithful
Hazon Daniel	Explores Daniel's visions of heavenly mysteries and a trustworthy prognosticator of earthly events
Ma'aseh Daniel	Explores Daniel's reputation as a privileged seer of heavenly mysteries.

Some excerpts:

*Yemen revolt against Rome:* "Hephsibah, the mother of Menahem ben Amiel, will go forth and kill two kings, both of whom are determined to do evil. The name(s) of the two rulers are Noph, king of Yeman, (so named) because he will shake his hand against Jerusalem, and the name of the second is 'Isrinan, king of Antioch."<sup>4</sup>

*Wars of Gog and Magog:* I will place a spirit of true prophecy and prayerfulness upon the house of David and the inhabitants of Judah. Afterwards the Messiah of the lineage of Ephraim will emerge and fight a battle with Gog, but Gog will slay him in front of the gate of Jerusalem. Then they (i.e., Israel) will look to Me and seek from Me the reason why the nations have stabbed the Messiah of the lineage of Ephraim, and they will mourn him as a father and mother would mourn their only child, and they will grieve for him the way they would grieve for (the death of) a firstborn.<sup>5</sup>

*Kosro as Balak, Heraclius as Bilam:* "Armilus will emerge from it, [whose name in Greek Ἐρημόλαος Ἐρίμόλαος means] 'he will destroy a nation.' He will rule over all (peoples), and his dominion will extend from one end of the earth to the other, and ten signs will be in his hand. He will engage in the worship of foreign gods and speak lies. No one will be able to withstand him, and any one who does not believe in him he will kill with the sword: many among them will he kill. He will come against the holy people of the Most High, and with him there will be ten kings wielding great power and force, and he will do battle with the holy ones. He will prevail over them and will kill the Messiah of the lineage of Joseph, Nehemiah b. Hushiel, and will also kill sixteen righteous ones alongside him. Then they will banish Israel to the desert in three groups."<sup>6</sup> A man will come forth from the city of Rome whose.

*Heraclius sets his forces against Persia:* Armilos ... will come and wage war at Alexandria and destroy the entire seacoast (Tyre to Acre, Ascalon to Gaza). Woe to the one (unlucky enough) to be seized by his hand! He will come to Gaza by himself and establish his throne there. [These are his signs]: he will be ten cubits tall. ...He will sit there upon his throne and utter profanities and blasphemies. He will say to the gentile nations: "I am God! Bring me my Scripture which I gave to you!" They will bring him the

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<sup>4</sup> Sefer Zerubbabel

<sup>5</sup> Even-Shmuel, *Midreshey Ge'ullah*, 92 n. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Sefer Zerubbabel, p. 59



images of their idols, and he will respond: "this is indeed the Scripture which I gave you!"<sup>7</sup> (This is also analogous to what the Crusaders did).

*Heraclius' persecutions:* "Israel will experience great distress. They will hide themselves in caves and pits, and the rest of them will flee into the wilderness of 'Ammon and Moab, as scripture states: "Let my dispersed ones sojourn among you, O Moab"(Isa 16:4). They will wander about there for forty days, nourishing themselves with broom and salt-plant, for scripture says: "they pluck saltplant (and) leaves of shrubbery and the root(s) of broom for their food" (Job 30:4). Armilus will come to the wilderness of Moab: this is the Armilus spawned from a stone of whom scripture speaks:"and he produced the wicked one with the stone"(Zech 4:7).<sup>8</sup>

*Defectors at Baal Peor/Defectors to Armilus:* 80,000 Jews joined him: "Ten signs were revealed to R. Shimon b. Yohai (may his memory be for a blessing!) which will transpire in the world when the Messiah's advent is near—may he be revealed soon! ... The second sign... [The Lier] will stand on the grave and resurrect the dead; one will restore sight to the eyes of the blind; and one will cure the lame by using incantations. Eighty thousand Israelites will leave Israel by following him, but they are in fact not authentic Israelites; rather, they are the descendants of the Gibionites and assorted riff-raff. ... The fourth sign. A rain will fall from the sky for three days and three nights, a rain consisting not of water but of blood. The eighty thousand who had previously gone astray after the apostles of the Lie will drink from that fluid and die. Every man and woman who has followed them will drink and die.

*King Messiah rejected at first:* He touched me, and then I saw a man (who was) despicable, broken down and in pain... I said to him, "Who then are you? What is your name? What do you seek here? What are you doing in this place?" He said to me, "I am the Messiah of the Lord, the son of Hezekiah, confined in prison until the time of the End." When I heard this, I was silent, and I hid my face from him... He said: "Why did you become silent and hide your face from me?" I said to him: "Because you said, 'I am the servant of the Lord, His Messiah, and "the light of Israel" (2 Sam 21:17).'" Suddenly he appeared like a strong young man, handsome and

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<sup>7</sup> 'Otot of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, p. 114

<sup>8</sup> 'Otot of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, p. 115

adorned.<sup>9</sup>

*Muslims as deliverers:* R. Shimon answered and said: "From whence are they (understood as) our deliverance?" He said to him: "Did not Isaiah the prophet speak thusly? 'And should he see chariotry of a pair of riders, one riding an ass, (and) one riding a camel' (Isa 21:7)." Why did he put the "rider of an ass" before the "rider of a camel"? Should he not instead have said "rider of a camel, rider of an ass"? (No, the textual sequence means that) when the one who rides the camel (Ishmael or Muhammad) emerges, the kingdom ruled by the 'one mounted upon an ass' (Zech 9:9) has manifested (lit. 'sprouted') by his (i.e., Ishmael's or Muhammad's) agency. Another opinion: 'rider of an ass' (means) at the (same) time when he 'rides upon an ass' (Zech 9:9). Consequently they (Ishmael) are a deliverance for Israel like the deliverance (associated with) the 'one mounted upon an ass' (Zech 9:9).<sup>10</sup>

The black flags of the tribe of Joseph in Jewish eschatology symbolize a messianic deliverance at the last moment, resonating with themes of divine intervention and victory over oppression. The Abbasids, aware of Jewish and other eschatological traditions, may have adopted black flags to evoke a sense of prophetic legitimacy, aligning their rebellion against the Umayyads with messianic and redemptive imagery. This choice likely aimed to unify diverse factions under a symbol of divine support and imminent transformation, leveraging the widespread eschatological expectations of the era.

*Messiah will slay/melt Armilos with his breath:* He [i.e., the Messiah (Joseph or David)] will judge the poor fairly and provide reliable evidence for the less fortunate among the people; he will smite the wicked of the earth with the word of his mouth, and with the utterance of his lips he will slay Armilos the evil one.<sup>11</sup>

The Ottoman Empire prioritized the conquest of Istanbul partly due to Islamic eschatological traditions predicting the fall of "Rome" as a significant end-times event. These expectations, rooted in hadith literature, mirror earlier Jewish prophecies about the fall of Edom (Rome), signifying divine justice and the ushering in of a new era. The Ottomans saw the capture of Constantinople as fulfilling these prophecies, reinforcing their

<sup>9</sup> Sefer Zerubbabel, p. 53

<sup>10</sup> The Secrets of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, p. 79

<sup>11</sup> Targum Isaiah 11:4

religious legitimacy and positioning themselves as the heirs to both Islamic and Abrahamic eschatological aspirations.

*Islamic civil wars/Fall of Damascus/Fall of Rome:* "This will be the sign for you: when you see that the western *Jiron* (gate) has fallen—(the one) at the western side of (the place of) prayer of the children of Ishmael in Damascus—the dominion [of the wicked king] will have fallen."<sup>12</sup> It will be built (as a synagogue) then destroyed, the built (as a church) then destroyed, it will be built (as a mosque) and then destroyed. It will not be built again before the Messiah comes.

## **K. State of Israel**

In the Torah there is a section called "the blessings and the curses". There is an idea that eventually all these blessings and curses will befall the Children of Israel in a big or small way before the end of days. So the "decree" refers to Deuteronomy 28:36 and 64. The "corruption" is generally understood in Islam to be sins that led to the Babylon and Roman exiles.

Deuteronomy 28:36: "The Lord will lead you and your king whom you will have established over you, to a nation unknown to you or your fathers; and there, you will serve other deities [made] of wood and stone."

Deuteronomy 28:64: "And the Lord will scatter you among all the nations, from one end of the earth to the other, and there you will serve other deities unknown to you or your forefathers, [deities of] wood and stone."

First the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, which according to the Islamic commentaries was brought about because of the killing of the prophets, specifically Zechariah (pbuh), whose blood boiled in the courtyard of the Temple until it was stopped with the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar's general. (This event is recorded in both the ahadith and the Talmud). This ended with Cyrus' decree and the return of the Children of Israel under Ezra (pbuh). Next is the destruction by Rome, which according to Rabbinic tradition was because of baseless hatred (and Islamic tradition because of the killing of the prophets, specifically Yahya (John the baptist) (pbuh)).

In both these cases the return is on a conditional note, as laid out in Zechariah 1, especially the verse "Return to Me... and I will return to you":

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<sup>12</sup> The Secrets of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai, p. 84

"The Lord was wroth with your fathers, for they provoked Him. And you shall say to them: So said the Lord of Hosts, Return to Me, said the Lord of Hosts, and I will return to you, said the Lord of Hosts...Therefore, so said the Lord: 'I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built there,' says the Lord of Hosts. 'And a plumb line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem.' Further, proclaim, saying: so said the Lord of Hosts, 'My cities shall yet spread out with prosperity, and the Lord shall yet console Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem.'" (Zachariah 1:2-3,16-17)

Sūrat l-Isrā 17 follows Zechariah 1 very closely. "It may be that your Lord will have mercy upon you, but if you revert, We shall revert..." (Sūrat l-Isrā 17:8)

Indeed in Tafsir Tabari on that ayah brings an opinion "Yaqoub bin Ibrahim told me, he said: Ibn Aliya told us, on the authority of Abu Al-Mu'alla, he said: I heard Saeed bin Jubayr, he said: God sent Sennacherib against them the first time, he said: God turned the ball back on them as he said, he said: Then they disobeyed their Lord and returned when They forbade him, so he sent against them the next time with a victorious man, who killed the fighter, took captive the offspring, and took what money he found, and they entered the Holy House, as God Almighty said, "And let them enter the mosque (Temple) as they entered it the first time, and let them repudiate what they had risen to purify themselves." They entered it and repudiated it, destroyed it, and threw into it what they could. From impurity, menstruation, carrion, and filth, so God said, "Perhaps your Lord will have mercy on you, and if you return, we will return." So He had mercy on them, and restored to them their kingdom and saved whoever was in their hands of the descendants of the Children of Israel, and said to them: If you return, we will return."

There are complex Islamic discussions about the Arabic phrase "It may be..." ('asā), a phrase that Moses (pbuh) also echoed after the sin of the golden calf, "It may be that I may obtain forgiveness..." (Exodus 32:30). It is clear there will be no more exiles, but is the final redemption assured to happen even if the Children of Israel do or do not repent? This parallels the discussion between Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yohoshua in Sanhedrin 98a about whether redemption will come independent of repentance. However all opinions agree that the Children of Israel will return to their land if they repent.

The Three Oaths are derived from Biblical verses discussed in a Talmudic passage in Ketubot 110b-111a, centered on Rav Zeira's desire to

move from Babylonia to the Land of Israel, which his teacher Rav Yosef viewed as a Biblical sin. The Gemara quotes Jose bar Hanina:

1. **Israel should not ascend to the Land en masse ("like a wall").**
2. **Israel should not rebel against the nations.**
3. **The nations should not oppress Israel excessively.**

The Midrash connects these oaths to verses in Song of Songs (2:7, 3:5, 8:4) containing the phrase "I adjure you," interpreted as an allegory for God's relationship with Israel. Versions of the oaths appear in Song of Songs Rabbah, Midrash Tanchuma, and Mekhilta of Rabbi Ishmael, which add elements like not "forcing the end" or revealing secrets. As an aggadic midrash, the Three Oaths are not halachically binding and are absent from works like Maimonides' Mishneh Torah. Maimonides advocated re-establishing Jewish sovereignty through human initiative. Opinions differ on what constitutes "permission from the nations," with figures like Rabbi Meir Simcha of Dvinsk interpreting agreements like the Balfour Declaration as such permission. Maimonides, in his Epistle to Yemen, described the oaths as metaphorical. Moreover, some argue that gentile nations violated their oath through excessive persecution, nullifying the other oaths. Midrash warns that such violations could hasten the End of Days. Though once significant, the Three Oaths' relevance has diminished. Even among anti-Zionist Orthodox groups, such as Neturei Karta, their radical application is widely denounced as fringe.

## **L. The Temple Mount**

Both the Torah and the Qur'an recognize the Dome of the Rock next to Masjid Al Aqsa as the Qibla for those who keep the shari'ah of Torah. It is the direction of prayer, the destination of hajj, the place for celebrating 'Eid and offering Qurban for those who follow the Torah. The current situation is as if the Ka'aba had been taken over by the Vatican, and Muslims were prohibited from access to it. However the haram al-sharif is about 1 km square, so there is plenty of room for everyone. I have written in several places exactly how such an important place could be shared without making any changes to any existing structure whatsoever. It is certainly a sensitive issue, and one that the current secular government of Israel has no interest in and would like to avoid. But could be solved simply if people

wanted to.

Research seems to indicate that when Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan constructed or improved upon the various structures on the Temple Mount, he was to a large degree acting in agreement with Ezekiel 40. His first coins are shown to the right. Suyuti and by Mujr ad Din bring accounts of Jews and Christians working and praying on the Temple Mount for centuries.



The idea of the "Third Temple" replacing all existing structures is a Christian idea based on their end times expectations. It is not a Jewish one. None of the Jewish apocalyptic literature mentions that. It is a fabricated claim to incite hatred, to say that mainstream Judaism is seeking to destroy or damage Al Aqsa or prevent people from praying there.

Hamas, which is really just an extension of the Muslim Brotherhood, in their October 7 flood manifesto listed as one of Israel's crime that of bringing red cows to the holy land. When it comes down to it, the red heifer is a small symbol of the greater theological problem of supersessionism, i.e. that the Torah has been invalidated and replaced. The entire list centered around two points:

1. No sovereignty in the holy land
2. No restarting of mosaic sacrificial system

because this would signify that God has forgiven the Children of Israel and all the promises of the Prophets (pbuh) will become active. But more importantly this will signify that Judaism is an active shariah alongside Islam, which for the descendants of Christians who converted to Islam, is an absolute anathema. For them, the original sin committed by the "Zionists" is not the occupation or oppression, but the attempt to return to the Holy Land.

Hamas interprets Sūrat l-Isrā 17:8 "but if you revert, We shall revert" in the sense of supersessionism, as meaning the Children of Israel were given

two chances to inherit the Holy Land, and they failed both times, lost all their rights and blessings, and they have been replaced. If they deny this, and add to their arrogance by trying to claim their inheritance a third time, then God himself will fight them. As with the first who exiles it was done through His faithful servants. This kind thinking is a key concept in Hamas, which interprets as follows: If you Jews return to sin, we will also return to punish you. The sins of the Jews did not begin with occupation. Haniyeh recently quoted the verses from the Qur'an that talk about the wars between Muhammad (pbuh) and the Jews, who he says have always been hostile to Islam. Hamas perceives itself as the "Al-Tayfa Al-Mansurah", the group that God will adorn with victory, which is the destruction of any attempt of Jews to claim their inheritance which they no longer are entitled to.

## **M. The Cold War**

It is not new that religion was made a political tool for those seeking power. Populist rulers strongly motivated the troops with their religious slogans and public piety. However since the cold war between the United States and Russia, the emphasis was less on military might, and more on propaganda, slander and half truths. From the point of view of Rabbinic Judaism, World War I and II were the wars of Gog and Magog in this cycle. The propaganda wars that followed represented the ideology and mindset of Bilaam/Armlius, and it is entirely possible that this ideology may come to be represented in a single person. We have reached a period where information and slander is so effective that a fabricated tiktok post can cause the beheading of an entire family in Nigeria.

I have not found a better summary of the eschatological period than this hadith:

Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, may Allah be well-pleased with him, narrated: The Prophet informed us that towards the end of times, there will be harj. I asked: "And what is harj?" He said: Deceit and killings!" We said: "Even more than now?" He said: "It will not be the unbelievers killing you, rather, you will be killing each other... the intellects of the general masses at that time will be deceived! They will be following fools that have no intellects themselves. They will be assuming they have a (legitimate) cause, but they will not have a (legitimate) cause." (Authentic, narrated by Ahmad, Ibn Majah, Ibn Hibban).

## Eschatological Timeline

Based on the yearly cycle of holidays:

Holiday	Cosmic Event	Explanation
Passover	Creation	Represents divine liberation and the beginning of time.
Counting of Omer	The Patriarchs	Symbolizes personal and collective growth toward revelation.
Shavuot	Revelation of Torah	Marks the giving of the Torah, central to cosmic order.
9th of Av	Gog and Magog	Represents destruction and ultimate conflict before redemption.
Rosh Hashana	Resurrection of the Dead	Themes of renewal and divine kingship.
Yom Kippur	Day of Judgment	Focuses on atonement and divine justice.
Sukkot	Messianic Era / Olam Ha-Ba	Represents divine shelter and ultimate unity.

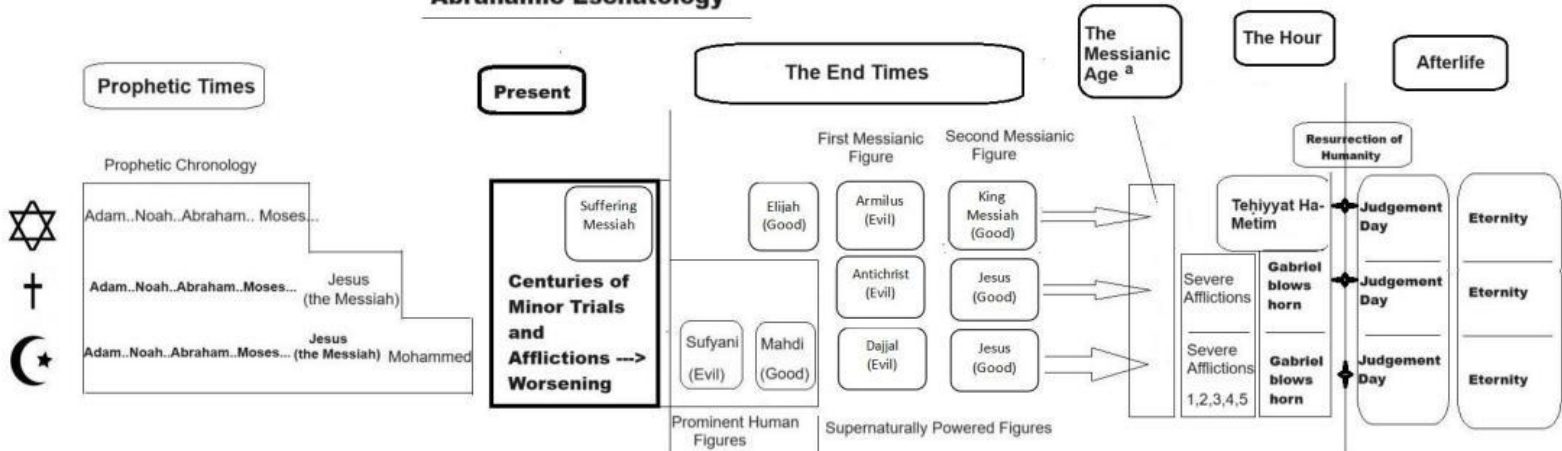
The comparison of Exodus events with messianic concepts effectively highlights the typological relationship between Moses' mission and the future roles of the Messiah. Rabbinic literature often views Moses as a prototype of the Messiah, particularly the parallels between "first redeemer" (Moses) and "final redeemer":

Exodus Event	Cosmic Event	Explanation
Moses Chosen	Initial Rejection of Messiah	Moses was unsure of his calling. He was rejected by Datan and Aviram (some Israelites) (Exodus 3:1–10, Shemot Rabbah 1:26)
Moses as shepherd	Occultation (disappearance) of Messiah	Before his prophetic mission, Moses spends years as a shepherd for Jethro's flock in Midian. (Exodus 3:1) Shepherding as preparation is discussed in Shemot Rabbah 2:2.
Moses given staff	Messiah appointed (staff of Adam)	God gives Moses the staff ( <i>mateh</i> ) to perform signs and wonders in Egypt, signifying divine authority. (Exodus 4:1–5, Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer 40, Zohar)
Plagues	Ten Signs Fire, Blood, Smoke Tribulations	The ten plagues occur in Egypt as part of God's judgment on Pharaoh and to compel him to release the Israelites. (Exodus 7–12,



	(occur throughout)	Midrash Tanchuma, Va'eira 14)
Leaving Egypt	Selection	The Israelites begin their journey toward Mount Sinai. Many stayed behind and were lost. Others, a mixed multitude, joined them, (Exodus 12–13, Midrash Tanchuma, Bo 8)
Amalek attacks	Gog and Magog, at Armilus' urging (Physical battle)	Shortly after the crossing of the Red Sea (Yam Suf), Amalek attacks the Israelites at Rephidim. Amalek's eschatological significance. (Exodus 17:8–16, Midrash Tanchuma, Ki Tetze 11)
Jethro Pinchas	Elijah (His explanations make peace)	Jethro (Yitro), Moses' father-in-law, visits the Israelites in the wilderness, offering advice on setting up a judicial system. Elijah as a peacemaker. (Exodus 18, Malachi 3:23–24)
Bilaam and Balak's Plot	Armilus uses slander and deceit	The deceit and slander of Bilaam aligns with Armilus' role. Seeing the believers can't be defeated militarily, an ideological struggle begins. (Numbers 22–24, Sanhedrin 105)
Baal Peor and Some Israelites' Sin	Many people follow Armilus. Even 80,000 Jews apostatize and follow him. They are killed by the faithful.	Bilaam/Armilus seduces many into idolatry and immorality. Moses, Pinchas and the faithful Israelites execute them. (Numbers 25:1–9)
Amalek Attacks Dressed as Canaanites	Smaller battle, more ideological in nature. Defeated by "breath" explanations of Messiah of Joseph.	Bilaam spreads slander and generates distrust. Amalek disguises themselves as Canaanites and attacks Israel. The Israelites pray for guidance and defeat them. (Numbers 21:1–3, as interpreted by Midrash)
Moses dies before entering Holy Land	Messiah of Joseph (ideological, incomplete)	Moses passes away on Mount Nebo, viewing the Promised Land but not entering it. This marks the end of his leadership. (Deuteronomy 34)
Joshua Leads Them Into the Land	Messiah of David (ruler, complete)	Joshua takes over leadership and leads the Israelites across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. (Joshua 1–4)
Fall of Jericho	Fall of Rome (by marching around walls)	The Israelites, under Joshua's leadership, conquer Jericho after encircling it for seven days and blowing <i>shofars</i> , as per God's instructions. (Joshua 6)

### Abrahamic Eschatology



Note that A represents the predicted timeline in Historic Premillennialism, also know as Post-Tribulational Premillennialism. It is a view held in some Protestant denominations.

Amillennialism rejects the idea of a Messianic age. Amillennialism is held typically in Eastern Orthodoxy as well as Catholicism.

Some of the Calamities of the Final Days in Islam, order may vary:

- 1) The Beast (Dabbah) will mark individuals
- 2) The Black Smoke (Dukhan) will cover Earth
- 3) Wind takes souls of believers
- 4) Sun rises from the West
- 5) Great fire from Yemen emerges and covers Earth

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