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Jewish Messianic Expectations and Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology

by

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1. Introduction

The title given me for this paper involves very large and complex issues. Clearly, therefore, severe limits have to be set; it is simply not possible to provide proper discussion even of the main texts and issues involved. Instead, the procedure I have adopted is to give an outline (with reference to the principal relevant texts) of the main features and significance of, first, messianic expectation and, secondly, mediatorial figures in the period (chiefly) from the second-century BC to the first-century AD. Then, thirdly, I indicate how some main aspects of Pauline christology may be understood within this context and in light of the preceding discussion. That is, it seems to me important to take proper account (as far as possible within the constraints of this essay) of the various Jewish material and to show how Paul can be understood in relation to it, rather than set Pauline christology as the central point of reference and only bring Jewish evidence in to the extent that it appears directly relevant.

2. Jewish Messianic Expectations

Simply to speak of the 'Messiah' or 'messianic expectations' in relation to Second Temple Judaism does itself present problems¹, since very different definitions of these terms have been used (either implicitly or explicitly) in treatments of the question as a whole. Thus at times 'messianic' has been defined in very broad terms, not limited at all to a specifically messianic figure, but including more or less everything that is generally subsumed under Jewish 'eschatology'². This mode of approach, however, begs too many questions, and

¹ On the problems of definition, cf. e.g. COLLINS 1987, 97-98; LEVEY 1974, xviii-xx; DE JONGE 1966, 132-133; LUST 1985, 175, and the further references given there.

² This is the case most strikingly in KLAUSNER 1956, *passim*; cf. also MOWINCKEL 1956; SCHÜRER-VERMES-MILLAR 1979, 488-549.

the definition involved is too broad to be of use. Hence the 'minimalist' definition that has been proposed seems in many ways preferable; to limit the discussion to passages which specifically refer to a 'Messiah', that is, those using the Hebrew term or its equivalent³. The advantages, obviously, are that the use of general eschatological passages are excluded from the start and, correspondingly, the discussion is limited to indubitably messianic figures. There are, however, inherent disadvantages as well, especially in thus excluding figures with distinctively messianic traits but not designated with the specific title 'Messiah'. Thus reference could be made to what are, or at least become in developed Jewish tradition, messianic passages in the Old Testament, from which specific terms and descriptions are taken up and assume importance in various texts within our period⁴. Hence there seems to be a common working definition that extends the messianic category to include reference to a figure who is anointed (even if not specifically designated 'Messiah'), Davidic or more generally royal⁵. Even this proposed definition, however, is probably too limiting: it appears both reasonable and necessary to insist on extending this definition sufficiently to allow it to include at least the characteristics of a specific individual figure (who may, but need not be, anointed, Davidic or transcendent) who effects final deliverance from foreign oppression and brings in the divine kingdom⁶.

Yet even here there is no consensus; thus it has been urged that there is no necessary correlation between a Messiah and eschatological hope⁷, and similarly that the ending of oppression and the ushering in of the kingdom of God are not central or integral, at least if they are supposed to have political

³ So e.g. DE JONGE 1966, 133; CHARLESWORTH 1979, 195–196; CHARLESWORTH 1987, 226–230.

⁴ Cf. e.g. Gen 49 (esp. 49.10: 'The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet...'); Num 24 (esp. 24.17: '...there shall come forth a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel...'); Zech 6.12: '...Behold, the man whose name is the Branch' (or 'Shoot'); cf. 3.8). Terms such as 'Sceptre', 'Star' and 'Branch' are taken up to designate a deliverer or leader of the Jewish community in Qumran and other texts, and these terms and texts are given specifically messianic interpretation in the LXX and, especially, the Targums; cf. below, 2.9 and 2.10.

⁵ Cf. e.g. COPPENS 1968, 11–12; LEVEY 1974, xix; LUST 1985, 175; this cluster of notions as in general terms defining the essential characteristics of a Messiah or messianism could be illustrated much more extensively, both from explicit statements and still more from implicit assumptions, especially in New Testament scholarship.

⁶ Cf. e.g. LUST 1985, 175; he does also, however, define messianism as 'the expectation of an individual human and yet transcendent saviour'. This begs questions, as will become evident in the subsequent discussion in this section, since although in some cases both human and transcendent aspects are combined in a messianic figure, it is by no means clear that there is any transcendent dimension involved in the case of, for example, Bar Kochba, the messianic leaders of the 66–70 revolt, the 18 Benedictions or the Kaddish.

⁷ M. SMITH 1959, 67–68.

connotations⁸. In fact, these objections do themselves beg, or at least raise, questions, and the instances cited can in any case simply be seen as unimportant exceptions; nevertheless, they need to be taken seriously. Thus already it is clear that attempts to define messianism, messianic expectation and messianic figures raise complex questions. There is not space here to discuss these issues fully, but it should be apparent by now that there is an obvious need to avoid on the one hand too loose and on the other too pre-emptive a set of definitions and categories. Effectively in this essay I have adopted a fairly narrow definition, simply in order to set limits to the material to be covered. This should not, however, be taken to imply that I think that I have thus resolved the problem satisfactorily, and I wish therefore to stress again that the whole question of definition needs fuller, separate treatment of its own.

2.1. *Ben Sirah*

The whole of this work has no specific references at all to a Messiah, but a few passages have been adduced as evidence for the clear expression of messianic hope on the part of the author⁹, for example 36.1–17. Thus:

v. 1: Deliver us, God of all, and cause your fear to fall on all the nations.

vv. 7–8: Rouse your anger and pour out your wrath, remove the adversary and destroy the enemy; hasten the time and remember the appointed time...

Compare also 35.18–19: The Lord will not be slow, nor will the Mighty One hold back, until he smites the loins of the merciless and repays vengeance to the gentiles, until he takes away the sceptre of the proud and destroys the staff of the wicked... until he judges the cause of his people, and makes them rejoice in his salvation.

Yet although this section speaks of God bringing about the final events and deliverance, and the restoration of Jerusalem and Zion, in a manner (vv. 13–14) to an extent reminiscent of the Shemoneh Esreh, there is no mention at all of an individual agent of this deliverance, still less a (Davidic) Messiah, while it is also precisely the strongly eschatological emphasis of this passage (in contrast to the rest of the work) that has caused doubts to be cast on its authenticity¹⁰. There are, certainly, impressive references to the divine upholding of the Davidic dynasty (ch. 47, especially vv. 11, 22)¹¹, as also of the

⁸ DE JONGE 1966.

⁹ Cf. e.g. SMEND 1906; KLAUSNER 1956, 252–258; for further discussion and bibliography, cf. COPPENS 1968, 111–115.

¹⁰ Cf. COLLINS 1987, 98; cf. also, arguing for a complete lack of messianism in Ben Sirah, CAQUOT 1966, 43–68.

¹¹ Thus 47.11: 'Yahweh also put away his sin, and lifted up his horn for ever. He also gave to him the decree of the kingdom, and established his throne (Gk adds 'of glory') over Israel (Heb 'Jerusalem')'; 47.22: 'Nevertheless God did not forsake his mercy, nor did he allow any of his words to fail. He will not cut off the posterity of his chosen (?), nor will he destroy the

Aaronic priesthood (ch. 45, especially vv. 6–7, 13), but again there is no hint of an individual messianic figure or anything resembling this. More impressive, as far as Ben Sirah's treatment of the priesthood is concerned, is the eulogy of Simon the High Priest in ch. 50, as for example in the portrayal of him as 'the morning star from between the clouds' at 50.6¹². The most striking section in the whole work is found in the Thanksgiving inserted by the Hebrew text alone after 51.12 (lines 8–9 of the additional text)¹³:

Give thanks to him who causes a horn to sprout from the house of David ... Give thanks to him who chooses the sons of Zadok to be priests ...

Yet even this is not unequivocally messianic, and is in any case scarcely original. It is indeed difficult to imagine that Ben Sirah should introduce or emphasise messianic belief; nor is there any need, apparently, for him to counter popular messianic expectation. This is scarcely surprising in view of the social, economic and political conditions prevailing at the time of the writing of his work at the start of the second century BC¹⁴.

2.2. Qumran Literature

2.2.1. 1QS 9.9–11: 'And they shall not depart from any of the counsels of the Law, to walk in all the stubbornness of their hearts, but they shall be judged according to the former precepts, in which the men of the community were instructed at the start until the Prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel come.'

This, the most famous of the messianic sections from the Scrolls, spells out unmistakably what is often taken to be the distinctive theme of Qumran messianism, that of the two Messiahs. It is necessary to be careful here, however; an older version of the Community Rule, from Cave 4 (4QS), apparently lacks this passage altogether¹⁵, and thus it seems that the concept of the two Messiahs may be a later development at Qumran (at least as far as the Community Rule is concerned), dating probably from the first-century BC. This is in any case the only instance of the plural usage of 'messiahs' (משיחִים) in the Scrolls as a whole, and the Qumran literature otherwise does not provide

offspring of those that love him. And to Jacob he will give a remnant, and to the house of David a root from him.' It should also be noted that 47.22 is closely related to at least latently messianic OT passages such as 2 Sam 7.15; Ps 89.

¹² Literally 'morning star' should be rendered 'shining star', and the phrase has its closest parallel in Ps 148.3; but there could equally be some allusion to the 'star' of Num 24.17.

¹³ There is also reference to a 'horn' at 47.21 and 49.5 (Greek text); but the usage in the passage here is much more heightened and distinctive.

¹⁴ On Ben Sira's message in context of his political and social setting, cf. HENGEL 1974, 131ff.; cf. also STADELMANN 1980; MACK 1987, 21–25.

¹⁵ Cf. MILIK 1959, 123–124; MILIK 1960, 411; STARCKY 1963, 482; CHARLESWORTH 1987, 231–232. The issue may be more complex than this summary suggests, however, since MILIK

anything in the way of conclusive or unequivocal corroborating evidence for two separate Messiahs. It is, however, quite possible, as we shall see, that some other texts do imply belief in two Messiahs. Certainly the idea of two separate messianic figures belongs more widely within Second Temple Judaism¹⁶, and is by no means unique to Qumran, while the striking feature of the *third* eschatological figure, the prophet, is also attested within Jewish tradition otherwise¹⁷. None of this, however, can substantiate the view that a concept of two Messiahs is fundamental to the Qumran community, not least since there are significant differences as well as similarities between what is found in these sources and the Qumran literature. Nevertheless, this passage in 1QS remains an important text, reflecting at least one aspect of messianic expectations at Qumran. It also raises important questions concerning the relationship of messianic figures to other leaders of the Jewish community, as for example priests. This is an issue which is already raised as early as Zechariah, and is one which recurs subsequently in the Maccabean period and beyond.

2.2.2. CD 12.22–13.1: And this is the rule for the assembly of the camps. Those who walk in these [statutes] in the age of wickedness until there arise the Messiah of Aaron and Israel ...

CD 14.18–19: And this is the exact explication of the statutes [in which they shall walk until there shall arise the Messiah]h of Aaron and Israel, and he will atone for their iniquity ...

CD 19.10–11: These will be saved at the time of the visitation, but the rest will be given over to the sword when the Messiah of Aaron and Israel comes ...

CD 19.33–20.1: Thus all the men who entered into the new covenant in the land of Damascus, but who rebelled again and turned away from the well of living waters, shall not be reckoned in the congregation of his people and shall not be inscribed in their record, from the day of the departure of the Teacher of Righteousness until there shall arise the Messiah from Aaron and Israel ...

All four of these passages from the Damascus Document refer to the coming of the Messiah of Aaron and Israel (in three cases in what is clearly a stereotyped formula). In contrast to 1QS 9.9–11, the term 'Messiah' is here used throughout in the singular, not plural, form. Nevertheless, because of the reference to both Aaron and Israel, and in comparison with the distinctive usage in 1QS, it has been argued that these phrases in CD should also be understood to refer to

1959 proposes an 'intermediate' stage of tradition, and notes that 4QSa moves directly from 1QS VIII.16 to IX.12. Hence the question should be raised whether this may be a case of haplography or otherwise defective manuscript. The wider discussion of the whole question of the two Messiahs at Qumran has assumed vast proportions; cf. e.g. SCHUBERT 1957, 177–197; K. G. KUHN 1957, 54–64; H. W. KUHN 1958, 200–208; BROWN 1957, 53–82; BROWN 1969, 37–45; LIVER 1959, 149–185; LAURIN 1963–64, 39–52; WCELA 1964, 340–349.

¹⁶ Cf. Test Sim 7.2; cf. also Test Jud 24.1. Cf. VAN DER WOUDE 1957, 195–216; BEASLEY-MURRAY 1947, 1–12; K. G. KUHN 1957, 57–63; M. SMITH 1959, 67; GINZBERG 1976, 222–53.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. the Targums of Ex 12.42 (Neof, Ngl, Fragment Targums [PVNurl]).

two Messiahs; that is, a Messiah from Aaron and (a Messiah) from Israel¹⁸. This is not, however, the most obvious meaning or linguistically probable, and the evidence of CD should not be made to fit that of 1QS; despite the similarities between the two works, there are also obvious differences. It is likely that the Damascus Document was not produced by the Qumran Covenanters themselves¹⁹, and is to be dated considerably earlier than the relevant passage in 1QS. Hence CD is probably best understood as speaking of a single Messiah, who represents the priestly line, above all, but is also set over the whole people (the same idea is also reflected in CD 1.7). Again, however, there can be no certainty about this, and we have to allow that a plurality of messianic figures here is quite plausible.

2.2.3. 1QSa 2.11–14: 'This is the assembly of the men of renown, [summoned] to the meeting of the Council of the Community, when [God] begets(?)²⁰ the Messiah among them. [The priest] will come at the head of the whole congregation of Israel, with all [his brethren, the sons] of Aaron, the priests [those summoned] to the meeting, the men of renown. And they shall sit before him, each according to his worth. And then the [Messiah] of Israel will [come/?sit].'

2.17–21: 'And [when] they meet together for the common [table], to eat [and to drink] new wine, and the common table shall be set for eating and the new wine [is ready] to be drunk, no man shall [stretch out] his hand over the first-fruits of bread and wine before the Priest; for [he] will bless the first-fruits of bread and wine. He will be the first to [stretch out] his hand over the bread, and then afterwards the Messiah of Israel will stretch out his hand over the bread...'

These two passages are fragmentary and difficult to make clear sense of; the most obvious interpretation (especially for the latter text) is that they concern a single Messiah (of Israel), but that he is secondary to the Priest, who has

¹⁸ This question has been the subject of a very wide-ranging debate. The view that there are two distinct messianic figures referred to has been strongly advocated by K. G. KUHN 1957, 58–60, who argues that משיח in these instances in CD was originally plural; cf. also e.g. TALMON 1987, 122, who claims that this is the majority opinion, and implies that those he cites support this stance; but, for example, BROWN 1969, 42–43, leaves the question open, while LAURIN 1963–64, 49–51, argues for a single messianic figure. The striking fact (as LAURIN notes), which should be set against KUHN and others, is that the Priest is nowhere specifically identified as a Messiah. It is much more obvious, in fact, to see him as a (non-messianic) leader than to make him conform to some messianic category. There are two further instances of משיח in CD, at 2.12 and 6.1, both in the form משיחו. The reference in both cases appears most obviously to be to the 'anointed' prophets of the biblical record, and the plural משיחי is usually read, to give this specific sense.

¹⁹ Cf. e.g. DAVIES 1983.

²⁰ This text is difficult, and different reconstructions have been proposed; thus for example LOHSE 1971, 151 (and 280, note): '... Wenn [Gott] geb[or]en werden lässt d[en] Messias unter ihnen'; cf. LAURIN 1963–64, 49: 'When God begets the Messiah to be with them'. But with these contrast BRUCE 1960, 44: '... when God brings the Messiah with them', reading 'holikh' for 'holidh', 'begets'), and VERMES 1987, 102: '... when [the Priest-] Messiah summons them'.

precedence over everyone. The double reference to the Messiah in the first passage makes the interpretation there more difficult. It is certainly possible that the Messiah referred to first is intended to be synonymous with the Priest, in which case we have here a further reference to both a priestly Messiah and also a Messiah of Israel. But the passage need not be taken in this way, and here also it is likely that the Priest is a quite separate figure, the head of the community, who takes precedence over the Messiah. If the reference to God begetting the Messiah is how the lacuna is properly to be filled, there is probably a deliberate echo of Ps 2.7.

2.2.4. 4QPBless 1–4: (after citing Gen 49.10) 'Whenever Israel rules there shall [not] be lacking a descendant of David upon the throne. For the ruler's staff is the covenant of kingship, [and the cl]ans of Israel are the feet, until there comes the Messiah of righteousness, the Shoot of David. For to him and to his seed has been given the Covenant of Kingship over his people for eternal generations...'

Gen 49.10, an important messianic text variously within post-biblical Judaism, is used here in support of the Davidic line and messianic hope, and implicitly against the Hasmonean dynasty. The 'Shoot of David' is also found at 4QFlor 1.11–13:

(After citing 2Sam 7.11–14) This is the Shoot of David, who will stand with the Interpreter of the Law (...) in Zi[on] at the end of days, as it is written, "And I will raise up the fallen hut of David, he who will stand to save Israel".

Here again the 'Shoot' is clearly intended as a Davidic messianic figure bringing in the divine rule in the last days, even though the specific term 'Messiah' does not occur. Clearly also the 'Interpreter of the Law' is an eschatological, and possibly a messianic, figure as well; that is (as has been argued)²¹, it would thus represent a priestly Messiah, although it may be more akin to the (non-messianic) eschatological prophet that we have already encountered at 1QS 9.9–11.

The figure of the Interpreter of the Law is also introduced in CD, at 7.15–21:

(After citing Amos 5.26–27) The books of the law are the tabernacle of the king, as he said, "I will raise up the fallen tabernacle of David" (Amos 9.11). The king is the congregation, and the bases of the statues are the books of the prophets, whose words Israel has despised. And the star is the Interpreter of the Law who is coming to Damascus, as it is written, "A star is coming out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel" (Num 24.17). The sceptre is the Prince of the whole congregation, and when he appears he will smite all the children of Seth.

Here, then, Amos 9.11 is interpreted by means of Num 24.17; this latter verse is, of course, another important messianic text in post-biblical Judaism, and the

²¹ Cf. BROOKE 1985, 197–205. On 4QPBless see ALLEGRO 1956; STEGEMANN 1967–69.

impression is given that the Interpreter of the Law as well as the Prince is specifically intended as a messianic figure here.

1QSB 5.20ff. is also of interest in this context:

... For the Master, to bless the Prince of the Congregation ... and he will renew for him the covenant of the congregation, in order to establish the kingdom of his people for eve[r and to judge the poor with righteousness and] to give justice with [equity to the oppressed] of the land, and to walk perfectly before him in all the ways of [truth], and to establish his [holy cov]enant at the time of the affliction of those who seek him.

Here the Prince of the Congregation is given the specific eschatological role of bringing in the kingdom, and in the following lines his role is further defined by means of paraphrases of or allusions to Isa 11.4, Num 24.17, and Gen 49.10. The last two, as we have seen, are used with messianic reference elsewhere in the Scrolls, while Isa 11.1(-4) not only assumes messianic significance in general but is also the specific basis for the designation 'Shoot' (of Jesse/David)²². Thus also Isa 11.1-3 is expounded at 4QpIsa, where the term 'Shoot' should probably be supplied in the text ('... then the [Shoot] of David will arise at the end of days and rule over many nations'), so that here again the Shoot of David would designate a Davidic Messiah.

The whole of Num 24.17-19 is cited at 1QM 11.4-7:

For yours is the battle and from you is the strength; it is not ours, and it is not our might and the strength of our hands that have performed valiantly, but it is by your might and the strength of your great power, as you have proclaimed it to us of old, saying "A star shall come forth from Jacob, and a sceptre arise from Israel". And he will crush the forehead of Moab and destroy all the sons of Seth. And he will go out from Jacob, and he will make the remnant from the city perish. And the enemy will become his possession, and Israel perform valiantly.

This is clearly to be understood to imply that the final victory will be brought about by God using the agency of a messianic figure, even though there is no further interpretation concerning such a figure. The immediately following lines do indeed contain the term משיח (specifically משיחיה, but in the sense of 'anointed', referring to the biblical prophets, as at CD 2.12; 6.1). Num 24.15-17 is also one of the texts cited in 4Q175 (4QTest), a collection of what are clearly seen in the Community as fundamental messianic texts (comprising Dt 5.28-9; 18.18-19; Num 24.15-17; Dt 33.8-11; Josh 6.26, followed by a distinctive sectarian interpretation). Here, then, there is reference to the figure of an eschatological prophet (Dt 18), a royal (or Davidic) Messiah (Num 24) and the Priestly Messiah (Dt 33).

²² Cf. also 1QM 5.1 for further reference to the Prince of the Congregation.

2.2.5. Conclusions

As far as Qumran messianic expectation overall is concerned, therefore, these various texts present a complex rather than a unified picture. It is not possible to present a single, homogeneous Qumran messianic belief without doing violence to the nature of the evidence²³. Nor, however, is it acceptable to make this variety of concepts the basis for working out a pattern of systematic development in chronological order for messianic beliefs at Qumran²⁴. We simply do not have sufficient information to allow precise dating of the Qumran works (essential for the construction of this kind of chronological schema), nor do we know enough about the interrelationship of the various Qumran writings.

It is at least clear that there are indisputably *two* messianic figures in 1QS 9, one priestly, the other (probably) royal. This is possibly the case in CD as well, although it seems to me doubtful. It is also possible, although by no means certain, that there are two messianic figures referred to in a few other texts (e.g. 4QFlor). Certainly 4QFlor could well be understood in this way, since it develops two distinctive figures out of the 2Sam 7 prophecy. But although the 'Shoot' of David looks very probably 'messianic', there is no compelling reason to see the 'Interpreter of the Law' as such; and since the text does not use the term 'Messiah', caution is needed in reaching any very positive conclusions. The developed formulation of *two* Messiahs in 1QS 9, at least, may specifically reflect an attack on the Hasmonean house, its usurpation of the High Priesthood and its improper combining of both kingly and priestly roles into one office.

There is, as we have seen, an obvious *variety of eschatological figures* in the different texts, some specifically designated as messianic, others implicitly so, others possibly so. There is also prominent emphasis in several texts on a priestly Messiah, and in others, sometimes exclusively, on a royal, Davidic Messiah²⁵. It is of course not surprising in view of our understanding otherwise of the nature of the Qumran community that it should be made clear both that the proper tenure of the priesthood does not belong to the Hasmonean dynasty, and also that its claims to the kingship have no legitimate basis, so that the

²³ This point is made cogently and forcefully by STARCKY 1963.

²⁴ STARCKY 1963 posits four distinct and successive stages of development in messianic belief at Qumran: that is, the Maccabean, the Hasmonean, the Pompeian and the Herodian epochs. The problems inherent in this argument, and the reasons for rejecting it, are clearly set out by BROWN 1966. The fundamental weakness with STARCKY's argument is, of course, that it is too schematized and precise to do justice to the disparate Qumran evidence, in much the same way, ironically, as is the single unified Qumran messianic construct that he rightly criticizes.

²⁵ Again, however, cf. e.g. M. SMITH 1959; DE JONGE 1966 for the argument that those designated 'messiahs' or 'anointed' need not be eschatological or redeemer figures; although in the case of the Qumran texts this has little cogency, at least as far as the eschatological dimension is concerned; cf. further LAURIN 1963-64, 42-44.

coming of the Davidic Messiah will simply represent the culmination of the Davidic line, over against the Hasmonean usurpation of power.

It is also clear that several biblical texts assume importance for the formulation of messianic beliefs at Qumran: especially Num 24.17; Gen 49.10; Isa 11.1–4. Again, this choice of texts is scarcely surprising²⁶, but it is notable that they now apply directly to the community and the leaders it looks for in the immediate future, since it sees itself as the community of the final age in which the biblical eschatological and messianic prophecies will find their fulfilment²⁷.

We do not know as much as we would like about the origins and development of the Qumran community, to help us set the nature and variety of messianic expectations at Qumran in a precise context²⁸. It may be, however, that we should reckon with the possibility that the community began as a millenarian or messianic movement²⁹, with vivid hopes and expectations of the vindication of its distinctive stance and the ushering in of the final, new age, in which Israel would have its proper priesthood, rule and society restored. If so, then these expectations were not fulfilled, and the Qumran community found itself having to adapt to a prolonged period of waiting for the fulfilment of its hopes, and to the internal organisation of its own members to await the events they looked for.

It is in fact a striking feature of the Scrolls that the vast majority say nothing whatever about a Messiah, even though in some cases especially (for example the *Hodayoth*) it would appear very natural that some mention should be made. Even in the War Scroll the references and role assigned to the Messiah are very limited indeed. It is also notable that the messianic references are mainly rather remote or limited (although there are a few indications of expectation of a specific messianic age and rule, e.g. 4QPBless), while there is also a striking development in several texts (including 1QM) of transcendent angelic saviour figures, set in a dualistic framework (cf. 3.3.5, below); hence it is worth asking how these phenomena may be related to the posited disappointment of messianic expectation at Qumran.

It seems, then, that we have to reckon not only with the fact of a considerable variety in the nature of messianic expectations held at Qumran, but also that over the course of three centuries, at some periods and for at least some sectarians, messianic belief as such was not important, at least on the surface; nor was there for the most part any clear expectation of the realization of the messianic age on earth. There is of course not simply one single community throughout the whole of this period, and even within a particular community at

²⁶ Thus these texts assume messianic importance also, for example, in the LXX and the Targums; cf. note 4, above, and sections 2.9 and 2.10 below.

²⁷ Cf. DIMANT 1984; TALMON 1987.

²⁸ Cf. e.g. DAVIES 1983, although he may be unduly negative in his conclusions.

²⁹ Cf. ISENBERG 1974; cf. also TALMON 1987, 115 ff.

a particular time there will probably have been different views and expectations. It can certainly be said that (especially in view of the probable origins of the community) the category of some kind of messianic expectation would at least have been latent, and there are sufficient texts already published to show that this was so (especially the messianic anthology in 4QTest); indeed, not merely latent but at times specifically activated. Yet the picture we are left with, on the evidence thus far available, is again one of variety, of a lack of consistency in the specific nature of the messianic beliefs, and the question of whether in some cases there is any messianic expectation at all. This is not to deny that the Qumran Scrolls are important evidence for the nature of messianic expectations within Second Temple Judaism; but the evidence itself is double-edged.

2.3. *Psalms of Solomon*

PsSol 17 is the most sustained messianic passage of the Second Temple period, although the term 'Messiah' (χριστός) occurs only once here, at 17.32:

And he (will be) a righteous king, taught by God, over them,
and there will be no unrighteousness in his days among them,
for all shall be holy, and their king shall be the Lord Messiah.

It is also found twice (apart from the title) in the immediately following Ps 18, in vv. 5–7:

May God purify Israel for the day of mercy, in blessing,
for the day of election, in bringing up his Messiah.
Blessed are those who shall be in those days,
to see the good things of the Lord,
which he will perform for the generation that is to come,
under the rod of discipline of the Messiah of the Lord, in the fear of his God,
in wisdom of spirit, and of righteousness and strength.

The usage in these verses is striking, but partly for that reason has given rise to suspicion of Christian interpolation, especially as far as the phrase χριστός κύριος is concerned, since it corresponds closely to what is found in the New Testament and other early Christian writings, as does 'Son of David' (υἱὸς Δαυὶδ) at 17.21. There is no real reason, however, to doubt that the references in these two psalms represent specifically Jewish messianic hope³⁰. Both 17 and

³⁰ Cf. the discussion in RYLE and JAMES 1891, 141–143. There is some ambiguity in the Greek usage; thus at 18.7, Χριστοῦ κυρίου (following ὑπὸ ῥάβδον παιδείας) could mean either (under the rod of discipline of) 'the Lord's Messiah' or 'the Lord Messiah'. Certainly 18.5 speaks simply of 'Messiah', and κύριος is used elsewhere in PsSol 17 and 18 of God; hence, partly, the suspicion that the composite χριστός κύριος at 17.32; 18.7 is a later Christian interpolation. If, however, 18.7 is taken in the sense of 'the Lord's Messiah', it would

18 belong to a group of Psalms written probably shortly after the death of Pompey in 48 BC (cf. PsSol 2), exulting in his death and looking for the overthrow of the hated Roman rule. It is in this context that Ps 17 invokes the Davidic Messiah (e.g. 17.21: 'See, Lord, and raise up for them their king, the son of David, to rule over your servant Israel in the time known to you, O God') as the means by which God will destroy the oppressor and bring about a just society for the Jewish people. The picture we are presented with is idealized, certainly, but it is in no sense otherworldly. It looks for its fulfilment in a new perfect age, but one which is firmly rooted in the land, specifically in Jerusalem³¹. God himself is set fully and finally over the whole course of events; in particular, he is said to be the king of the Messiah and also the king over the whole people. Yet the Messiah himself is also said to be the king, and is portrayed as God's agent for ending oppression, bringing in the new order and presiding over it, although ultimate control of events and sovereignty belong to God. Thus the king-Messiah rules in the messianic kingdom, with authority and power given him by God.

Notably, the king-Messiah is not a warrior-Messiah; while he destroys and drives out the Roman oppressors, he does not do so by force of arms. This is probably a deliberately realistic assessment vis-à-vis Roman military strength. Further, the vision of the new Jerusalem says little or nothing of the Temple. That is, Ps 17 probably looks for the overthrow not only of the Romans but also of the corrupt ruling establishment, the Hasmoneans, in both their priestly and

leave only 17.32 identifying the two terms with each other. Hence also it has been argued that, assuming that PssSol were originally composed in Hebrew (as is very probable), this phrase could represent a mistranslation of the Hebrew construct מָשִׁיחַ יְהוָה, which ought to be rendered Χριστὸς κυρίου (with the sense that Χριστοῦ κυρίου at 18.7 may, but need not, have; this argument can gain further support from the use of Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ at 18.5). Something of the difficulties and ambiguities of the Greek text is reflected in the various translations: thus e.g. GRAY, in CHARLES 1913, and BROCK, in SPARKS 1984, have 'the anointed Lord' at 17.32, and 'the Lord's anointed' at 18.7, while RYLE and JAMES 1891 have 'the Lord Messiah' at 17.32 and 'the Lord's anointed' at 18.5, and WRIGHT, in CHARLESWORTH II 1985, has 'the Lord Messiah' for both. There is no insuperable problem in taking Χριστὸς κύριος at face value; the Messiah has already been described as a βασιλεύς (17.32), and can easily take on other elevated titles. But it is important that we do not simply read into κύριος the implications of the title as it is used in the New Testament. A further problem is posed by the phrase ἐν ἀνάξει χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ, since the sense of ἀνάξει is unclear. If it is taken to mean 'bringing up/again', it can be understood to imply the idea of the Messiah's pre-existence. This, however, is doubtful, and as RYLE and JAMES 1891 suggest, it is better to interpret it in much the same sense as ἀνάστησον αὐτοῖς τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῶν υἱὸν Δαυὶδ, 'raise up for them their king, the Son of David'. BROCK adopts (from MANSON) the interesting suggestion of reading ἀναδείξει 'manifestation' for ἀνάξει, which thus produces a sense akin to that where ἐπιφάνεια and related terms are used of the Messiah; cf. SJÖBERG 1946, 102–115; SJÖBERG 1955, 54ff.; CHESTER 1986, 214–219.

³¹ This needs to be emphasised strongly against DE JONGE 1966, 136–137. His argument that the description here is of an ideal king and kingdom that appears to be this-worldly, earthly and human, but on closer examination turns out not to be, is unconvincing. Thus he invokes

royal capacities³²; it looks instead for the new messianic age of justice and peace to be inaugurated by a Messiah from the proper (that is, Davidic) line.

The provenance of the Psalms of Solomon is a question that has still not been satisfactorily resolved. For a long time, the predominant view has been that they are a Pharisaic work³³; but this view has rightly been challenged, as has the attribution to the Essenes similarly³⁴. There are certainly notable points of contact between the Psalms of Solomon and some main concerns of the Pharisees (as far as we know anything for certain about them) and the Essenes³⁵. Hence it is tempting to identify those responsible for the Psalms of Solomon with a group emanating at least from the early Hasidic movement of the second century BC. But most of the points of contact can be seen to belong to the common stock of Judaism of the first century BC, so that it is a mistake to connect the Psalms of Solomon too closely with any group of which we know, simply because of correspondence of this kind. What can be said, from the evidence of these psalms³⁶, is that the Psalms of Solomon apparently emanate from a group opposed not only to Roman rule but also to the current hierarchy

AMOS WILDER in support of a sharp distinction between metaphorical description and metaphysical concepts. But this simply begs the question here: there is no obvious reason why the description of a kingdom on earth should not refer to the expectation of precisely that. It is not adequate to argue, as DE JONGE does, that the picture of a kingdom on earth here is not an 'earthly' kingdom because it is entirely and essentially different; much the same argument was indeed already advanced by RYLE and JAMES 1891. Certainly the language here is pictorial, and in at least some sense metaphorical, but the fact that conditions in the new kingdom will be very different from those obtaining at present does not in the slightest preclude the possibility that the new kingdom is specifically on earth. It is not necessary for the new kingdom to be the same, or recognisably the same, as the present order for it to be an earthly kingdom, as DE JONGE seems to suggest. Nor, *pace* DE JONGE, is it necessary that the King-Messiah's reign be eternal; all that is required for the kingdom to be 'this-worldly, earthly and human' is that he inaugurate it, but it is God's kingdom and God's rule throughout, ultimately at least. It is merely confusing for DE JONGE to try to make an earthly kingdom non-earthly and other-worldly; nor is it the case that PsSol 17 portrays it primarily in spiritual terms. His whole argument looks like special pleading, to avoid having a Messiah or messianic kingdom inaugurating a new age on earth. In fact 17.21 can be compared to the 18 Benedictions, where again the most obvious interpretation is of yearning for God's kingdom on earth.

³² Cf. MACK 1987, 32–41; CHARLESWORTH 1979, and further references given there.

³³ Cf. e.g. GRAY, in CHARLES 1913, vol. II, 627–630; HOLM-NIELSEN 1977, 59; SCHÜPPHAUS 1977, 158; indeed, RYLE and JAMES 1891 actually entitle their edition and commentary, 'The Psalms of the Pharisees commonly called the Psalms of Solomon', and proceed to defend this designation at length in their Introduction (xxxvii–lxii).

³⁴ Cf. e.g. CHARLESWORTH 1987, 234; cf. also EISSFELDT 1965, 612–613, who argues that contrary to the usual view, there is nothing distinctively Pharisaic about PssSol and that its main traits are characteristic of Judaism more widely.

³⁵ Thus RYLE and JAMES 1891, xlv–lii, give a list of affinities between PssSol and the Pharisees: negatively, the denunciation of the Sadducees, and positively, issues concerning Torah, righteousness, theocracy, providence and free-will, future judgement, angels and the Messiah.

³⁶ That includes not just 17 and 18, but also 1, 2, 7, 8, 11; cf. NICKELSBURG 1981, 204–209.

and establishment in Jerusalem. This group may not champion the rights of the ordinary people alone, or reflect popular or widespread messianic feeling, but it certainly seems to stand on the side of the ordinary people against oppressive establishment and Temple rule.

2.4. 1 Enoch

A 'Messiah' is mentioned only twice in the whole corpus of 1 Enoch, both times in the latest section, the Similitudes (37–71). The only other possible reference is the portrayal of the Great White Bull in 90.37–38³⁷ (as part of the Animal Apocalypse, 85–91). The two passages in the Similitudes are 48.10 and 52.4:

48.10: And on the day of their trouble there will be rest (v.l. 'hindrance') on the earth, and they shall fall down before him and not rise; and there will be no-one who will take them with his hands and raise them up, for they denied the Lord of Spirits and his Messiah. Blessed be the name of the Lord of Spirits!

52.4: And he said to me, all these things which you have seen serve the authority of his Messiah, so that he may be strong and powerful upon the earth.

Neither of these provides a great deal of information; it is, however, scarcely possible to doubt that this specifically messianic figure is in fact intended to be identical with the figure which is designated variously throughout 37–71, as, especially, the 'Chosen One' (or 'Elect'), also as '(that) Son of Man'³⁸ and 'Servant', and is identified in 71, at the climax of the work, with Enoch himself. Clearly 37–71 is itself a composite section, but the text as a whole makes little sense unless these designations all refer to one and the same figure.

This is not to imply that the Messiah simply takes over the characteristics and features of these other designations. In fact the Messiah is not the focal point of attention in 1 Enoch at all; the emphasis is really on the Chosen One, and to a lesser extent the Son of Man. It is remarkable nevertheless that all these originally different figures are thus fused together, resulting in the Chosen One who is at the same time Son of Man, Messiah and Servant. What has happened, therefore, is that themes from earlier parts of the Enoch corpus, and also

³⁷ 'And then I saw that a white bull was born with large horns, and all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air feared him and made petition to him all the time.' CHARLES 1913, vol. II 260, identifies this unequivocally as the Messiah; so also, more recently, does GOLDSTEIN 1987, 72–73. But the imagery and meaning of the passage are obscure; hence NICKELSBURG 1981, 93, sees the identification only as a possibility, while in NICKELSBURG 1987, 55–56, he is more doubtful still, and sees the portrayal of the Ram in the immediately following lines as a more promising messianic candidate. COLLINS 1987, 100, is still more sceptical about understanding the Bull as a messianic figure, although he does not rule out the possibility completely. For fuller discussion, cf. the further references for the Animal Apocalypse cited by COLLINS.

³⁸ Cf. MÜLLER 1972, 52–60; NICKELSBURG 1987, 58–64; CHARLESWORTH 1987, 237–241.

themes from outside Enoch (that is, mainly, Second Isaiah and Daniel 7–12), are taken over and transformed³⁹. One result of this transformation is that this composite figure is represented as heavenly, pre-existent and 'transcendent'. Thus the 'Messiah', to the extent that he is caught up in this chain of developments, is not a Davidic, human figure related to the present world, but belongs to the heavenly realm and takes on a transcendent role. This does not preclude the possibility that this heavenly figure should also take on an earthly role or function, but there is certainly no indication of this. It has then to be stressed again that the Messiah, or any other messianic figure, hardly appears at all in 1 Enoch, and is merely peripheral, not central (as a distinctively *messianic* designation) even within 37–71; nor is he portrayed in the role of bringing about the messianic kingdom on earth. Again, however, the point needs to be made that the definition of the Messiah implicitly becomes less limited than is sometimes held. Here the Messiah is not restricted to Davidic categories, and terms such as 'Servant' and 'Son of Man' assume a messianic connotation, even if that is not their primary point of reference.

2.5. 4 Ezra

There are only two specific references to the Messiah in 4 Ezra⁴⁰:

7.28–29: For my son the Messiah shall be revealed, along with those who are with him, and those who remain shall rejoice for four hundred years. And it shall be after these years that my son the Messiah shall die, and all who draw human breath.

12.31–32 (interpreting the vision of 11.37–12.1): And as for the lion that you saw rising up out of the wood and roaring and speaking to the eagle and reproving him for his unrighteousness, and as for all his words that you have heard, this is the Messiah whom the Most High has kept until the end of days, who will arise from the seed of David, and will come and speak to them; he will denounce them for their ungodliness and for their wickedness, and will cast up before them their contemptuous dealings.

Yet there are also two further passages which almost certainly refer to the same messianic figure, although the technical term 'Messiah' is not used:

13.51–52: I said, O sovereign Lord, explain this to me: Why did I see the man coming up from the heart of the sea? He said to me, Just as no one can either explore or know what is in the depths of the sea, so also can no one on earth see my son or those who are with him, except in the time of his day.

14.9: For you shall be taken up from among men, and henceforth you shall remain with my son and with those who are like you, until the times are ended.

³⁹ Cf. NICKELSBURG 1987, 56–65.

⁴⁰ Cf. above all STONE 1968; STONE 1987 on the issues discussed here; cf. also CHARLESWORTH 1987, 202–206.

In fact 13.51–52 comes at the end of the long interpretation (13.25–52) of the vision of the man from the sea (13.1–13), while 14.9 is an isolated reference, but in both cases the use of ‘my Son’ (and ‘those who are with him/like you’), with their strong similarity to 7.28, shows clearly that it is the same figure who is referred to throughout. Here also, therefore, it is necessary to look beyond the specific usage of ‘Messiah’ as such in order to gain even a reasonably inclusive (and still not fully exhaustive) picture of messianism overall. Thus here ‘my Son’ (a term probably taken up from Ps 2.7, as at 1QSa 2.11–14, above, 2.2.3) effectively becomes a messianic designation.

Nevertheless, the portrayal of this messianic figure and his role is not completely consistent throughout. The most striking passage is 7.28–29, where the Messiah only appears after the new age has already been inaugurated, then dies (a feature unique within the Pseudepigrapha)⁴¹ before the final judgement takes place. In 11–12 and 13, by contrast, the emphasis is on the Messiah denouncing Israel’s enemies, passing judgement and bringing about their destruction, and although the final judgement and final age follow this messianic activity, there is no suggestion that the Messiah has been removed from the scene by this stage. Even so, however, it has to be said that the Messiah’s final, eschatological role is circumscribed in these passages, especially in relation to Dan 7 (on which it bases itself), and he is not the ultimate focal point for hopes of vindication. This should not of course surprise us in this largely despondent work, directed against Rome in the immediate aftermath of the catastrophe of 66–70, and it is equally obvious why the texts portray the Messiah not as a military figure but as destroying his enemies with the Torah(/fire)⁴². Thus also the reference in 13.2–3 to ‘one like a man . . . on the clouds of heaven’ obviously draws on Dan 7.13 (‘one like a son of man’); hence, as in 1 Enoch, clearly in this sense the Messiah and Son of Man figures are identified with each other⁴³, and the understanding of the Messiah is thus developed in the direction of a heavenly figure. It is also notable that the reference to the Messiah dying comes in the only messianic passage that is not taken over from tradition⁴⁴. Thus it is very obviously, at this stage of the tradition, a human figure, not belonging primarily to the heavenly world or transcendent in character. It would be interesting to know what hopes and expectations, if any, were

⁴¹ The Latin version specifically identifies the Messiah here as ‘filius meus Iesus’, ‘my son Jesus’, but although the text obviously lent itself to this kind of easy Christian assimilation, there are no grounds for thinking it to be a Christian interpolation in itself.

⁴² Thus at 13.38; for the identification, or comparison, of Torah with fire in Jewish tradition, cf. Dt 33.2 (where the Hebrew phrase itself is ambiguous, and does not use the term ‘Torah’), and especially some of the Targumic interpretations of this verse, especially Neof and PsJ; cf. also the renderings of these Targums at Ex 20.2. Cf. further CHESTER 1986, 165–167.

⁴³ Cf. MÜLLER 1972, 117–34.

⁴⁴ Cf. STONE 1968; STONE 1987.

attached to this figure. If the portrayal of the Messiah in this way is a purely literary device, it could of course correspond to a pessimistic view of Israel’s history and the recent calamitous events; but the fact that the Messiah dies does not in itself preclude positive hope being attached to the messianic figure or a movement based on him. It may indeed be that the original representation of the Messiah as a heavenly transcendent figure in 4 Ezra manifests a more concerted attempt to divert attention away from any messianic figure or hope in relation to Israel’s immediate fortunes or popular following. At any rate, in these other texts, the Messiah plays certainly an important, but in the end only a limited, role.

2.6. 2 (Syriac) Baruch

The specific references to the Messiah occur in the following six passages:

29.3: And it will happen that when all that which should come to pass in these periods has been accomplished, the Messiah shall begin to be revealed.

30.1: And it will happen after this, when the time of the appearance of the Messiah has been fulfilled, that he will return in glory; then all who sleep in hope of him will rise again.

39.7: And it will be when the time of its fulfilment is approaching in which it will fall, that at that time the dominion of my Messiah, which is like the fountain and the vine, will be revealed. And when it has been revealed, it will uproot the host gathered around it.

40.1: The last ruler at that time will be left alive bound, after the entire host has been destroyed, and he will be put in fetters and carried to Mount Zion, and my Messiah will charge him with all his wicked deeds and will assemble and set before him all the works of his hosts.

70.9: And it will happen that everyone who will save himself and escape from all things which have been said before, both those who have conquered and those who have been conquered, will all be delivered into the hands of my Servant, the Messiah.

72.2: After the signs have appeared which I have told you about before, when the nations are in confusion and the time of my Messiah is come, he will call all nations, and some of them he will spare, and others he will kill.

2 Baruch belongs to very much the same setting as 4 Ezra, in the immediate post-70 period, but it represents a considerable contrast (and perhaps reply) to it. Both in 39–40 and 70–72 the emphasis is on the Messiah as a victorious warrior, delivering Israel and destroying her enemies (the Romans) with the sword. He is portrayed as participating in the final judgement and inaugurating the messianic kingdom, which is described in idyllic terms, as the fulfilment of biblical prophecies (especially Isa 11). In 29–30 the Messiah is not represented in an active role, but it is probably implied that he is pre-existent. This is the most obvious sense of ‘return with glory’ (30.2), and the references both here

and in the later passages to the Messiah being 'revealed' may be intended to imply both something akin to a theophany and also the fact that the Messiah has hitherto been 'hidden' (as is specifically said of the Son of Man in 1 Enoch) from the beginning until the eschatological age when he is to make his dramatic intervention on God's behalf for the sake of his people⁴⁵.

Thus in 2 Baruch we find the portrayal of the Messiah to be more internally consistent than in 4 Ezra; he is clearly a transcendent, heavenly (and probably pre-existent) figure, who comes to earth, overthrows Israel's enemies and brings in the divine kingdom. It is not clear to what extent the kingdom is conceived of as a concrete, this-worldly reality, involving the changing of existing social structures. The main emphasis in 39–40 and 70–72 is negative (although 40.3, at least, is an exception to this), but in 73–74 the portrayal of the kingdom is set in very positive, and apparently concrete, terms; by this stage, following the final judgement, the Messiah has returned to his true home in the heavenly world, but the kingdom itself is one of peace and harmony on earth: the contrast to this, of course, and the main theme of the work, is the devastation the Jews have suffered at the hands of the Romans, but that does not in itself limit the scope of the millennial kingdom.

2.7. Sibylline Oracles

There are two passages in Book 3 of the Sibylline Oracles that appear to reflect messianic expectation:

265–294, especially 286–7: And then the God of heaven will send a king and will judge each man in blood and the gleam of fire.

652–656: And then God will send a king from the sun (?east: ἀπ' ἡελίοιο) who will give every land respite from evil war, killing some and imposing pledges of loyalty on others. Nor will he do all these things by his own decisions, but in obedience to the excellent decree of the great God.

In both cases, however, it is not clear who precisely is meant by the 'king'; nor is it certain that the reference is to a specifically Jewish Messiah. Thus 286–287 most obviously refers to Cyrus, since the whole passage (265–294) is a retrospective prophecy of the period of exile of 587/6 onwards and the subsequent return and restoration under Cyrus. But this does not preclude the oracle having contemporary application for the audience it addresses; it is surely more probable that it is intended to work on both levels. In this case, the king could either be again a non-Jewish (in this instance Egyptian) 'messianic' deliverer, as with Cyrus, or a Jewish messiah proper⁴⁶.

⁴⁵ Cf. SJÖBERG 1946; CHARLESWORTH 1987, 246–247.

⁴⁶ Both LANCHESTER, in CHARLES 1913, vol. II 384, and COLLINS 1974, 40ff.; COLLINS in CHARLESWORTH 1983, 368, take the reference to be to Cyrus, but LANCHESTER allows for the

The situation is different at 652–656; these lines form part of a long oracle of eschatological prophecy. The main problem concerns the meaning of the Phrase ἀπ' ἡελίοιο. If it is taken in the sense 'from the sun', it is possible to find an interesting link with the famous Egyptian Potter's Oracle ('And then shall Egypt be made to flourish, when the king who has reigned beneficently for fifty-five years comes from the sun as a bestower of blessings, established by the greatest goddess Isis, so that those who survive will pray that the people who have previously died will rise in order to share their blessings'). Hence it has been argued that the reference here is to an Egyptian ruler of this kind, specifically a Ptolemaic king seen as a Jewish 'messiah', again (as at 286–287) on the model of Cyrus, and similarly as an instrument of God's purpose⁴⁷. If so, then it is not of course the case that Sibylline 3 is imposing on its Jewish audience the alien ideology of the Egyptian sun-god (with which the idea of the 'king from the sun' is bound up)⁴⁸, or even acquiescing in it, but rather that it is making the Egyptian royal ideology serve the purpose of Jewish messianic hope and eschatological deliverance. Indeed, just as striking as the Jewish appropriation of this ideology (if that is what is happening here) is the affinity between the Egyptian Potter's Oracle and Jewish apocalyptic and prophetic traditions⁴⁹. But the translation of the phrase in Sibylline 3 by 'from the sun(-god)', and the implicit identification of the messianic figure with an Egyptian king, have been called in question⁵⁰. If the phrase is taken instead to mean

possibility that contemporary messianic reference is implied, and notes that EWALD understands the king to be the Messiah of contemporary Jewish hope. So also NOLLAND 1979 argues that this passage is intended to refer typologically to the time of the author himself and specifically to a Davidic Messiah within this second-century setting; his argument is rejected by COLLINS, in CHARLESWORTH 1983, 355.

⁴⁷ The potential relevance and importance of the Potter's Oracle is set out by BIDEZ and CUMONT 1938, vol. II 372 note 3; there is further discussion of it (including its relevance for SibOr 3) in HENGEL 1974, vol. I 184–185, vol. II 124–125, and GRIFFITHS 1983, 287–291. This theme is taken up (although without reference to Bidez and Cumont) and applied more fully to SibOr 3 by COLLINS 1974, 40–44, 52–53; COLLINS 1983, 356.

⁴⁸ Cf. GRIFFITHS 1983, 290.

⁴⁹ Cf. especially HENGEL 1974, vol. I 184–185, vol. II 124–125; GRIFFITHS 1983, 290–291.

⁵⁰ Thus especially by SCHWIER 1989, 236–237, 242–243; cf. also NIKIPROWETSKY 1970, 133–137, 323; KIPPENBERG 1983, esp. 433. SCHWIER notes that both BIDEZ and CUMONT and also COLLINS fail to take account of the similar expression in Phlegon, *Mirabilia* 3.7: '... ἐξ Ἀσίας ὅθεν ἡλίου ἀνατολαί εἰσιν', where the identification is specifically with Asia (for which 'the East' could be used interchangeably). This criticism does not in fact answer COLLINS' argument, that it is the very close parallel between the Potter's Oracle and SibOr 3 652 in the use of ἀπ' ἡελίοιο ('from the sun'), *tout court*, without any mention of ἀνατολαί or anything similar, that is so striking. Nevertheless, it is by no means certain on linguistic grounds that ἀπ' ἡελίοιο must mean 'from the Sun(-God)' even in the Potter's Oracle, still less in SibOr 3; it could be a contracted form of, for example, ἐξ ἀνατολῶν ἡλίου, and properly be taken in the sense 'from the East'. Hence SCHWIER's objection must be considered seriously, and the reference to a Ptolemaic king in SibOr 3 is therefore by no means as straightforward as COLLINS implies.

'from the east', it could still evoke the idea of a Cyrus-like figure, but from an Egyptian setting it could be understood as a distinctively Jewish Messiah. Overall, then, Sibylline 3 twice portrays what can be termed 'messianic' figures, although it is not clear whether these (the latter especially) can be seen as specifically Jewish, or whether they represent some accommodation and synthesis with the Egyptian cultural setting and ideology.

In Book 5 the emphasis is quite different in the four possible messianic references:

106–110 (esp. 108–09):

And then a certain king sent from God against him
will destroy all the great kings and noble men.

155–161:

But when after the fourth year a great star shines
which will alone destroy the whole earth, because of
the honour which they first paid to Poseidon (god) of the sea,
there shall come a great star from heaven to the divine sea,
and it will burn up the deep sea and Babylon itself,
and the land of Italy, because of which many
holy faithful of the Hebrews and a true people have perished.

256–59:

There will be one exalted man from the sky
who stretched out his hands on the fruitful wood,
the best of the Hebrews, who will one day cause the sun to stand still,
when he will speak out with fair speech and holy lips.

414–425 (esp. 414–417):

For there came from the expanses of heaven a blessed man,
having a sceptre in his hands which God had delivered to him,
and he gained control over all things well, and gave back
to all the good the wealth, which men had formerly taken.

Clearly 5.257 is Christian, but neither the rest of 256–259 nor the other passages here should be dismissed as Christian interpolations. Both 256–259 and 414ff. speak of a man from heaven, while the 'star' reference could also be understood in this way. Hence if the same figure is intended, then clearly messianic and heavenly man traditions have been fused together (cf. 1 Enoch), while this 'heavenly' figure is also obviously intended to play at least some part in bringing about the messianic kingdom on earth. Perhaps most strikingly, at 414–425 this messianic figure from the heavenly realm is given the role of rebuilding the temple, in glorious form, so that it will dominate Jerusalem and all around. Along with this, 375–385, (a passage closely-linked with 414ff.) portrays the eschatological messianic age in idyllic terms, with peace and harmony for the Jews. So in Sibylline 5 there is more developed messianism than in Sibylline 3; the various passages are not fully homogeneous, but it is possible to distinguish the main negative thrust of judgement against Israel's

enemies (as also, for example, in 2 Baruch), and also, and especially strikingly, the positive portrayal of the Messiah and the messianic age. This represents a vision of a time when Jews (at least, righteous Jews) will have their land, holy city and temple all restored, and live in paradisaic state⁵¹.

2.8. Further References in Intertestamental Texts

There are several references to what appear to be messianic figures in *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. Especially striking are:

Test Levi 18.2–3: And then the Lord will raise up a new priest to whom all the words of the Lord will be revealed. He shall effect the judgement of truth over the earth for many days. And his star shall rise in heaven like a king...

Test Judah 24.1,4: And after this there shall arise for you a Star from Jacob in peace. And a man shall arise from my posterity like the Sun of righteousness... This is the Shoot of God...

Although the Testaments have undoubtedly undergone Christian revision and editing, there is no reason why these passages should not be genuinely Jewish⁵². They do not, of course, use the specific term 'Messiah' (the lack of which would be strange, although not impossible, if they had undergone consistent Christian editing), but again it is notable that the focus of Jewish eschatological hope and deliverance is described by terms such as 'Star' and 'Shoot' (as well as 'King' and 'Priest'), terms which themselves derive from biblical passages that are, as I have noted, at least latently messianic and are given specific messianic interpretation in Qumran texts and in the LXX and Targum.

It would also be possible to refer here to other messianic passages, for example in Pseudo-Philo, but these are often suspected of being Christian interpolations, while in other cases there are difficulties of dating and assigning the works as a whole clearly to a Jewish setting; hence I have not taken them into account.

2.9. Septuagint

The Septuagint is a potentially valuable source for Jewish messianic hope, especially in illustrating something of its development in the Diaspora (above all Alexandria), for which otherwise it is difficult to find much evidence. It has to be said, however, that problems of dating the translation, and the fact that it has been transmitted to us through Christian scribal tradition, may affect its usefulness for the understanding of Jewish messianism in the period we are

⁵¹ Cf. the further discussion in CHESTER 1990, with reference to other relevant works.

⁵² On the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, cf. DE JONGE 1953, although he exaggerates the extent of the Christian revision involved.

concerned with. It is not possible to do justice to all the evidence of the Septuagint here, and the most that can be done is to note a few of the more striking passages:

Gen 49.10:

There will not fail a ruler from Judah,
And a leader from his loins,
Until there come the things that have been reserved for him,
And he will be the one the nations are awaiting.

Num 24.7:

A man will come forth from his seed
And will rule over many nations,
And his kingdom will be made higher than Gog,
And his kingdom will be made to increase⁵³.

Amos 4.13:

For behold, I am the one who strengthens the thunder and creates the wind and proclaims to men his Messiah (Χριστός), making the morning and the mist, and treading upon the high places of the earth; the Lord God, the Omnipotent, is his name⁵⁴.

At the same time, it needs to be noted that the portrayal of a messianic figure in the Septuagint is disparate, not homogeneous. This lack of consistency is scarcely surprising, since the LXX is not the work of one single translator; this indeed makes the different developments of messianism in the Septuagint the more interesting. Along with this, however, it is important to realize that the LXX does not develop some passages that look ripe for messianic interpretation, and in other cases actually effects a diminution of messianic emphasis, by toning down or removing the messianic reference already inherent in the Hebrew⁵⁵. Hence the evidence of the LXX, although important, needs to be handled carefully.

⁵³ There is a similar interpretation at Num 24.17; the extent to which this is seen as potentially messianic, at 24.17 especially, depends on the significance attached to ἀνθρώπος 'man'. Thus LUST 1985, 178, argues that the messianic implications here are much more evident in the Hebrew text than they are in the LXX, and that it is correspondingly possible to see the LXX diminishing rather than enhancing this. Even if this is true for 24.17, however, it is certainly not for 24.7, and LUST probably plays down rather too much the potential force of ἀνθρώπος.

⁵⁴ Cf. also the striking phrase Χριστός κύριος at Lam 4.20, although there is a clearer basis in the Hebrew text there than in the Amos passage, and LUST 1985, 179, in any case sees it as arising from Christian influence. Among the other LXX texts often cited as messianic are Gen 3.15; 2Sam 7.16; Isa 7.14; 9.5–6; 11.4; Zech 9.10; Dan 7.13; Ps 110.3.

⁵⁵ Cf. LUST 1985; but cf. also the contrary caution issued by HORNBURY 1988 against limiting the scope and significance of the LXX overmuch.

2.10. Targums

The Targums are mostly much fuller and more developed in their messianic expression than either the Hebrew text or the LXX. Thus, for example, within the Pentateuch the various interpretations of Gen 49.10–12 go well beyond not just MT but LXX as well:

(Neof) Kings shall not cease from among those of the house of Judah, nor scribes teaching Torah from his sons' sons until the time the king Messiah shall come, to whom belongs the kingship; to him shall all the kingdoms be subject. (11) How beautiful is the king Messiah who is to arise from among those of the house of Judah. He girds his loins and goes forth to battle against those who hate him, and he kills kings with rulers; and makes the mountains red from the blood of their slain and makes the valleys white from the fat of their men. His garments are rolled in blood; he is like a presser of grapes. (12) How beautiful are the eyes of the king Messiah; more than pure wine, lest he see with them the revealing of nakedness or the shedding of innocent blood. His teeth are purer than milk, lest he eat with them things that are stolen or robbed. The mountains will become red from his vines and the vats from wine, and the hills will become white from the abundance of grain and flocks of sheep⁵⁶.

In the Pentateuchal Targums as a whole, it is TPsJ that has most messianic interpretation, but it is neither homogeneous nor internally consistent; by contrast O, the official Rabbinic Targum, has much less messianic material than the other Targums, as is the case with haggadic expansions more generally⁵⁷.

Targum Jonathan of the Prophets also has some striking developments, for example Isa 16.5:

Then the Messiah of Israel will establish his throne in goodness, and will occupy it in truth, in the city of David, judging, demanding justice and doing righteousness.

Overall, however, the messianic development is quite limited; this is notable, since Targum Jonathan (like Onkelos) is the official Targum. It is notable also that there are no instances of messianic interpretation in Ezekiel, despite obvious opportunities, while other passages that would lend themselves to such interpretation (for example, 2Sam 7) are also not developed.

There is more developed messianic interpretation in the Targum of the Hagiographa, as at Song of Songs 4.5:

Your two deliverers, who are destined to deliver you, the Messiah the son of David

⁵⁶ So also the Fragment Targums here, with a few minor differences; PsJ is also similar, although it differs more substantially, while O, although less developed, also interprets these verses messianically.

⁵⁷ Cf. LEVEY 1974, 31–32; CHESTER 1986, 252–259; SHINAN 1979. The best treatment of messianic interpretation in the Pentateuchal Targums is that by PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ 1981, which is much more satisfactory than LEVEY 1974 and MUÑOZ LEON 1970/72.

and the Messiah the son of Ephraim, are like Moses and Aaron, the sons of Jochebed, who are compared to two fawns, the twins of a gazelle; they, by their merit, shepherded the people of Israel in the wilderness for forty years, supplying them with manna, fattened fowl and with the water of the well of Miriam.

All this, however, needs to be set under the caveat that the evidence of the Targums as a whole cannot be dated sufficiently early to be of use within the limits set for this paper or of relevance for the picture of messianic development at this stage. This is the case even for Onkelos and Jonathan, which cannot safely be dated earlier than the fourth century AD. It is still more so for Neofiti, the Fragment Targums and Pseudo-Jonathan. This point has to be made emphatically against the frequent arguments and assumptions that the so-called 'Palestinian Targum', in particular Neofiti, is early, and can be used directly in relation to the New Testament⁵⁸, as also similar arguments concerning Pseudo-Jonathan⁵⁹. That is, the space given to the discussion of these Targums here is out of proportion to their potential significance for an understanding of the variety of messianic hope in Judaism in this period (from the second century BC to the first century AD). This is not to deny that these Targums contain traditions that very probably do go back to this period, but the problem is that unless they are independently attested they cannot be used as evidence with any certainty. Still less is it to say that the Targums are not important; on the contrary, they are, but their importance belongs much more to the Judaism of a later period.

2.11. Conclusions

Messianic figures appear in only a small minority of texts from this period. Further, within these works, the references to a Messiah are often quite limited, and there is considerable variety in the way in which messianic figures are portrayed, even at times within the same text (for example, 4 Ezra) or body of texts (for example, the Dead Sea Scrolls). Hence it is not possible to speak of a single form of messianic expectation or concept within Judaism in this period; instead we have to reckon with a *variety* of different kinds of beliefs and figures.

It is therefore simply misleading to produce (as for example Klausner does)⁶⁰ a very broad and vague definition of 'messianism' and then find instances of this in a wide range of different texts, all made to conform to the same pattern. This kind of approach fails to differentiate between what is specifically 'messianic'

⁵⁸ Cf. e.g. Díez Macho 1960; McNamara 1978; cf. the further references given in Chester 1986, 255.

⁵⁹ Cf. e.g. McNamara 1978; against this, cf. Chester 1986, 252–254, and the references to further discussion given there.

⁶⁰ Cf. Klausner 1956, *passim*, e.g. 237–243.

and what can be categorized more broadly as 'eschatological' (although the overlap between these should obviously be recognised), besides failing to respect the very different kinds of texts that are being drawn upon and to distinguish the different figures and complex patterns of thought to which they belong. Misleading also, and for much the same reasons, is the kind of conflated picture of 'messianism', which uses 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch as its basic point of reference and fits everything else into this overall pattern⁶¹. The effect of this, of course, is to make the particular perspective of these post-70 texts paradigmatic for all other 'messianic' texts, including those where no messianic figure at all appears. What in fact has happened is that the 'messianic age', conceived of in quite general terms, has been made the determinative category for interpreting 'messianism'.

Hence, negatively, questions have quite rightly been raised both about the validity of synthetic portrayals of a single messianic figure common to Judaism throughout this period and also about the assumption that the expectation of a Messiah is an integral and common part of Judaism in the first century AD. The question is raised, that is, whether Jews of the first century for the most part reckoned with a messianic figure at all. The paucity of evidence from the Pseudepigrapha certainly seems to suggest not, and the implication is that this common messianic construct derives from the early Christian paradigm of Jesus as the fulfilment of the messianic longing of the people at that time, rather than from the Jewish evidence at all⁶².

Nevertheless, despite the obvious merit of these strictures concerning previous scholarship, it is necessary to exercise caution in allowing these negative arguments and conclusions themselves to become normative. Care especially is needed about drawing wide-ranging conclusions, negatively as well as positively, about first-century Judaism simply on the basis of the texts that we have considered. Above all, these kinds of argument fail to do justice to the fact that only a limited range of texts, which have commonly been seen as messianic, is being taken into account. This is scarcely surprising, since this evidence is very nearly all that we have got, and it is in any case obviously of importance. For the most part, however, these works derive from only a small, and not necessarily representative, minority of the population.

Hence it is necessary to pay serious attention to the evidence, mainly provided by brief accounts in Josephus, of popular messianic movements in Palestine in the first century BC/AD⁶³. Thus Judas b Hezekiah, Simon and Athronges can all be identified as messianic leaders in the movements that

⁶¹ Cf. e.g. Schürer 1907, vol. II, 579–651; this approach is still largely retained in the revised English version, Schürer–Vermes–Millar 1973–87, vol. II, 488–554.

⁶² Cf. e.g. M. Smith 1959; de Jonge 1966; Charlesworth 1979; cf. also several of the essays in Neusner, Green and Frerichs (ed.) 1987, e.g. Green 1987, 1–13.

⁶³ This point was made already by Mowinkel 1956, 284–285; it has been argued more

broke out following the death of Herod in 4 BC, while Simon bar Giora and Menahem both appear as messianic leaders in the revolt against Rome in 66–70 AD. They are all oriented towards bringing about liberation, by force, from oppressive and alien rule (of the Romans and Herodians in 4 BC, and of the Romans in 66–70 AD) and to bringing about a more just social system and socio-economic structures. These movements all (except perhaps for that led by Menahem) also have a very large following, made up of the ordinary peasant population. These are then large and popular movements, and the political and military leaders are human figures who have been popularly acclaimed as 'kings' and who apparently have specific programmes for defeating Israel's enemies and bringing about a new society on earth and in the near future. Also to be taken into account is the important related phenomenon of popular prophetic movements⁶⁴, again with a large peasant following, looking for the bringing about of God's rule on earth and freedom from oppression.

The phenomenon we encounter here, then, is not that of the expectation or conceptualization of an individual messianic figure (or figures), but instead large-scale social movements with messianic leaders for and by whom messianic expectations are held. These movements have their own social, economic and political context, and have to be understood specifically in relation to this (as of course, *mutatis mutandis*, do the texts that we have examined as well). All this, however, inevitably calls in question the view that messianic expectation was *not* commonly held in Judaism, at least as far as first-century Palestine is concerned. This view is fundamentally correct as far as the bulk of the texts goes; but it is scarcely adequate in light of the evidence of these large messianic movements. If there really is no climate of messianic expectation, or if there is no latent messianic hope as a resource for the ordinary people to draw on, it is hard to see how these movements can attract support in large numbers⁶⁵. This does *not* of course mean that all Jews at any particular time are living in expectation of the Messiah, or that they all expect the same messianic figure or understand him in the same way. It does clearly imply, however, that messianic expectation need not be simply a rarified, elitist belief or limited concept, but rather that it is something which is potentially very widespread and easily intelligible, although that obviously depends in each case on the kind of

recently and in more detail especially by HENGEL 1989a, 229–233, 290–298; cf. further HORSLEY 1984; HORSLEY and HANSON 1985, 88–134.

⁶⁴ Cf. HENGEL 1989a, 229–245; HORSLEY 1985; HORSLEY and HANSON 1985, 135–189. It is of course the case that these popular prophetic movements, as also the popular messianic movements referred to in the previous note, are treated by HENGEL as directly related to the Zealot movement that came into being in AD 6 (the messianic movements as integral to the Zealots, the prophetic leaders as more loosely connected), whereas HORSLEY argues that the Zealot movement proper only originated during the 66–70 revolt, and that these popular movements arose separately.

⁶⁵ Cf. SCHÜRER-VERMES-MILLAR 1973–87, vol. II, 509–510.

messianic expectation involved. This conclusion is also supported by the evidence of the Shemoneh Esreh and the New Testament, despite the obvious problems posed by both those texts⁶⁶. Along with this, at least brief mention ought also to be made of the Bar Kochba revolt of 132–135; because there is no Josephus in this case (or any source at all comparable to that which we possess for the 66–70 war), and because the slender evidence we have is scrappy and difficult to evaluate, it is scarcely possible to get a coherent and reliable picture of the revolt as a whole⁶⁷. Nevertheless, at least some of the evidence (including the Murabba'at documents and especially the coins issued by Bar Kochba) is potentially very revealing, and clearly shows that Bar Kochba claimed to be a messianic leader and that it was therefore, implicitly, a messianic movement and revolt that he led⁶⁸.

The point, therefore, that again is worth insisting on is that the very specific, this-worldly, social and political emphasis of these movements is in fact an integral part of Jewish messianism throughout. Thus what should strike us as surprising and demand explanation is not that this phenomenon manifests itself in first-century Palestine, but that different configurations of messianic expectation develop in the ways that they do in the literary texts that have come down to us. This, again, is not to suggest that there is a single, uniform, homogeneous messianic expectation or understanding on the part of all Jews in Palestine in the first century, or at all times everywhere. It is merely to draw attention to the common phenomenon of specific, this-worldly messianic belief attested widely within Judaism, and familiar as a phenomenon of millenarian movements, in distinct but related forms, in cultures and societies of very different time and place⁶⁹.

All this, however, as far as the evidence thus far considered is concerned, largely applies to Palestine. For the Diaspora there are the Sibylline Oracles (for Egypt, Book 3 for the mid-second century BC, book 5 for the early second-century AD) and also the LXX, which is potentially an especially interesting and important witness, although with some limitations set (as already indicated) by doubts about dating; otherwise there are no texts that we can use with any certainty.

Here again, however, it is worth considering the potential importance of popular messianic movements. It has of course to be said that in this respect as

⁶⁶ On the origin and development of the Shemoneh Esreh, cf. esp. HEINEMANN 1977, 26ff.; SCHÜRER-VERMES-MILLAR 1973–87, vol. II, 454–464.

⁶⁷ The problems, inherent in the source-material, for constructing an account of the Bar Kochba revolt both in general and in detail are sharply portrayed by SCHÄFER 1981.

⁶⁸ For an indication and discussion of the evidence, especially the Murabba'at documents and Bar Kochba coins, see e.g. YADIN 1963; YADIN 1967; MESHORER 1967; SCHÜRER-VERMES-MILLAR 1973–87, vol. I, 534–557.

⁶⁹ On specifically Jewish manifestations, cf. HENGEL 1989a; HORSLEY 1984; HORSLEY and HANSON 1985, for the period around the first century, and for Judaism more generally cf.

well there is a severe dearth of evidence, not least since for the Diaspora we lack anything comparable to Josephus, but there are at least a few indications. Thus it can be shown quite plausibly, from literary and epigraphic evidence, that the revolts against Rome in 115–117 AD in Egypt, Cyrene and Cyprus were popular messianic movements of this kind, with at least one leader, Lucuas, seen as a king⁷⁰. This evidence is of course rather late as far as our present purpose is concerned, and we have no comparable evidence for an earlier period to enable us to gauge whether these movements, and the implicit messianic hopes they represent, are merely isolated instances or whether they represent something more deep-rooted and continuous.

Here, however, the evidence of Philo should be considered, even though at first sight this does not look to be a promising source of information about messianic expectation at all. It is striking that in the whole of Philo's voluminous works there is almost no messianic reference; this silence is certainly significant. Even where messianic terminology is found, for the most part it is used allegorically to designate the Logos⁷¹. That is, specifically, where messianic events and expectations are employed, they are in fact used, ethically, to describe what happens within the human soul, and how the transformation of this soul is effected internally by the stimulation of virtue. There is really only one passage where Philo uses specific messianic terminology in relation to historical and political processes; that is, it is intended to describe the transformation, potentially, of events in the real world, externally, not the soul or mind, internally. In this long section (Praem 79–172) Philo portrays the natural world and the cosmos being transformed, and specifically enmity between humans and animals being overcome (probably with implicit reference to Isa 11, at Praem 87–90). It is also in this section (95–97) that he speaks specifically of a messianic leader, citing Num 24.7:

For there will come forth a man, says the oracle, and commanding his troops and fighting war he will subdue great and populous nations, because God has sent to his aid the reinforcement that is proper for the godly; that is, dauntless courage of soul and tremendously powerful strength of body, either of which is fearsome for the enemy, and the two if joined together are completely irresistible...

The point that has to be emphasised, however (as Hecht stresses)⁷², is that throughout this whole section the description is generalized and atemporal; it is an idealized and spiritualized picture, completely lacking reference to any

SCHOLEM 1961; SCHOLEM 1971; SCHOLEM 1973; BUCHANAN 1978; and most recently and cogently SHAROT 1982. On the phenomenon more widely, cf. e.g. WORSLEY 1968; THRUPP (ed.) 1962; BURRIDGE 1969.

⁷⁰ Cf. esp. APPLEBAUM 1951; APPLEBAUM 1979; FUKS 1961; HENGEL 1983b.

⁷¹ Thus Conf 62–63; Vit 75; VitMos II. 44, 288; Op 79–81; cf. DE SAVIGNAC 1959, 319–324; HECHT 1987, 148ff.

⁷² Thus HECHT 1987, esp. 153–158.

particular historical situation. Hence there is probably no real tension between the two different ways in which Philo uses messianic themes in his writings. Philo's developed philosophical theories are not abstractions formulated in some sort of vacuum; they belong to a particular social, economic and political context.

Hence it is worth asking, in relation to this context, what the significance may be both of the relative lack of messianic reference in his writings and also of the particular nature of the 'messianic' passages that do occur. Although there is no evidence of large popular messianic movements or widespread messianic expectation in Alexandria in Philo's time, it is certainly the case that the social, economic and political conditions were becoming increasingly difficult for the majority of Jews there. It would therefore not be surprising if large-scale messianic expectation and messianic (and potentially revolutionary) movements either appeared or seemed about to appear. The fact that Philo not only allegorizes messianic themes, putting them on a spiritualized level accessible only to an intellectual and philosophical elite, but also apparently finds it necessary to describe in detail and in a completely non-allegorical way the whole course of events involved in bringing about the messianic age and the nature of that age itself, but at the same time thoroughly spiritualizes and 'dehistoricizes' it, points in the same direction. Thus it is reasonable to suppose that Philo feels himself forced to take up the central themes from at least nascent messianic expectation but deliberately reacts against the radical political implications of such a messianic movement, by stressing that it is not the present social and political context that will be transformed. Hence it has been plausibly suggested by Hecht⁷³ that Philo is mainly concerned to defuse the revolutionary potential of a nascent messianic movement and 'neutralize' the messianism of a large section of the Jewish community in Alexandria; not, that is, to deny the validity of the messianic hope in general, but to remove it to a level where its fulfilment cannot be expected in the immediate future.

If this interpretation of Philo is on the right lines, it may also help us to understand the lack of messianic material and expectation in much of the literature of the Second Temple period, and also some of the different kinds of messianic expectation that do appear. Thus, for example, there is no hint of messianic hope in 1 Maccabees, which fully supports the prevailing establishment, in this case the Hasmonean dynasty, and sees no reason to look beyond it. Similarly, Ben Sira (in the pre-Maccabean period), although seeing cause for bringing about changes in society, is largely content to acquiesce in the aristocratic, priestly hierarchy. This kind of approach may also help throw light on the remarkable development of transcendent, heavenly figures in Jewish literature from the second century BC onwards. We have already seen that the

⁷³ Cf. HECHT 1987, 159–163.