Yeshaya and Micha's Competing Messianic Visions:

The Ongoing Relevance of a Great Prophetic Debate

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1. Bava Basra 14b

ושנים עשר מכדי הושע קדים דכתיב (הושע א, ב) תחלת דבר ה' בהושע וכי עם הושע דבר תחלה והלא ממשה ועד הושע כמה נביאים היו וא"ר יוחנן שהיה תחלה **לארבעה נביאים שנתנבאו באותו הפרק ואלו הן הושע וישעיה עמוס ומיכה** וליקדמיה להושע ברישא

The Sages taught: The order of the books of the Prophets when they are attached together is as follows: Joshua and Judges, Samuel and Kings, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and Isaiah and the Twelve Prophets. The Gemara asks: Consider: Hosea preceded some of the other prophets whose books are included in the Bible, as it is written: "The Lord spoke first to Hosea" (Hosea 1:2). At first glance this verse is difficult: But did God speak first with Hosea, and not with any other prophet before him? Weren't there many prophets between Moses and Hosea? And Rabbi Yoḥanan says: He was the first of four prophets who prophesied in that period, and they were: Hosea and Isaiah, Amos and Micah. Accordingly, Hosea preceded those three prophets; and the book of Hosea as well should precede the books of those prophets.

2. Isaiah 2:2-4

וְהָיָה ׀ בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים נָכוֹן יִהְיֶה הַר בֵּית־ה' בְּרֹאשׁ הֶהָרִים וְנִשָּׂא מִגְּבָעוֹת וְנָהֲרוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם: וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לְכוּ ׀ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל־הַר־ה' אֶל־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וְיֹרֵנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנֵלְכָה בְּאֹרְחֹתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר־ה' מִירוּשָׁלִָם: וְשָׁפַט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים וְכִתְּתוּ חַרְבוֹתָם לְאִתִּים וַחֲנִיתוֹתֵיהֶם לְמַזְמֵרוֹת לֹא־יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא־יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה:

In the days to come, The Mount of the LORD's House Shall stand firm above the mountains And tower above the hills; And all the nations Shall gaze on it with joy. And the many peoples shall go and say: "Come, Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, To the House of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word of the LORD from Jerusalem. Thus He will judge among the nations And arbitrate for the many peoples, And they shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up Sword against nation; They shall never again know war.

3. Micah 4

א וְהָיָה ׀ בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים יִהְיֶה הַר בֵּית־ה' נָכוֹן בְּרֹאשׁ הֶהָרִים וְנִשָּׂא הוּא מִגְּבָעוֹת וְנָהֲרוּ עָלָיו עַמִּים: ב וְהָלְכוּ גּוֹיִם רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לְכוּ ׀ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל־הַר־ה' וְאֶל־בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וְיֹרֵנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנֵלְכָה בְּאֹרְחֹתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וּדְבַר־ה' מִירוּשָׁלִָם: ג וְשָׁפַט בֵּין עַמִּים רַבִּים וְהוֹכִיחַ לְגוֹיִם עָצֻמִים עַד־רָחוֹק וְכִתְּתוּ חַרְבֹתֵיהֶם לְאִתִּים וַחֲנִיתֹתֵיהֶם לְמַזְמֵרוֹת לֹא־יִשָּׂא גּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא־יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה: ד וְיָשְׁבוּ אִישׁ תַּחַת גַּפְנוֹ וְתַחַת תְּאֵנָתוֹ וְאֵין מַחֲרִיד כִּי־פִי ה' צְבָאוֹת דִּבֵּר: ה כִּי כָל־הָעַמִּים יֵלְכוּ אִישׁ בְּשֵׁם אֱלֹהָיו וַאֲנַחְנוּ נֵלֵךְ בְּשֵׁם־ה' אֱלֹקֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

In the days to come, The Mount of the LORD's House shall stand Firm above the mountains; And it shall tower above the hills. The peoples shall gaze on it with joy, And the many nations shall go and shall say: "Come, Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, To the House of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word

of the LORD from Jerusalem. Thus He will judge among the many peoples, And arbitrate for the multitude of nations, However distant; And they shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not take up Sword against nation; They shall never again know war; But every man shall sit Under his grapevine or fig tree With no one to disturb him. For it was the LORD of Hosts who spoke. Though all the peoples walk Each in the names of its gods, We will walk In the name of the LORD our God Forever and ever. In that day —declares the LORD— I will assemble the lame [sheep] And will gather the outcast And those I have treated harshly; And I will turn the lame into a remnant And the expelled into a populous nation. And the LORD will reign over them on Mount Zion Now and for evermore.

4. Isaiah 11

א וְיָצָא חֹטֶר מִגֵּזַע יִשָׁי וְנֵצֶר מִשָּׁרָשָׁיו יִפְרֶה: ב וְנָחָה עָלָיו רוּחַ ה׳ רוּחַ חָכְמָה וּבִינָה רוּחַ עֵצָה וּגְבוּרָה רוּחַ דַּעַת וְיִרְאַת
ה׳: ג וַהֲרִיחוֹ בְּיִרְאַת ה׳ וְלֹא־לְמַרְאֵה עֵינָיו יִשְׁפּוֹט וְלֹא־לְמִשְׁמַע אָזְנָיו יוֹכִיחַ: ד וְשָׁפַט בְּצֶדֶק דַּלִּים וְהוֹכִיחַ בְּמִישׁוֹר לְעַנְוֵי־
אֶרֶץ וְהִכָּה־אֶרֶץ בְּשֵׁבֶט פִּיו וּבְרוּחַ שְׂפָתָיו יָמִית רָשָׁע: ה וְהָיָה צֶדֶק אֵזוֹר מָתְנָיו וְהָאֱמוּנָה אֵזוֹר חֲלָצָיו: **ו וְגָר זְאֵב עִם־**
כֶּבֶשׂ וְנָמֵר עִם־גְּדִי יִרְבָּץ וְעֵגֶל וּכְפִיר וּמְרִיא יַחְדָּו וְנַעַר קָטֹן נֹהֵג בָּם: ז וּפָרָה וָדֹב תִּרְעֶינָה יַחְדָּו יִרְבְּצוּ יַלְדֵיהֶן
וְאַרְיֵה כַּבָּקָר יֹאכַל־תֶּבֶן: ח וְשִׁעֲשַׁע יוֹנֵק עַל־חֻר פָּתֶן וְעַל מְאוּרַת צִפְעוֹנִי גָּמוּל יָדָו הָדָה: ט לֹא־יָרֵעוּ וְלֹא־יַשְׁחִיתוּ
בְּכָל־הַר קָדְשִׁי כִּי־מָלְאָה הָאָרֶץ דֵּעָה אֶת־ה׳ כַּמַּיִם לַיָּם מְכַסִּים: (פ)

1 But a shoot shall grow out of the stump of Jesse, A twig shall sprout from his stock. 2 The spirit of the LORD shall alight upon him: A spirit of wisdom and insight, A spirit of counsel and valor, A spirit of devotion and reverence for the LORD. 3 He shall sense the truth by his reverence for the LORD: He shall not judge by what his eyes behold, Nor decide by what his ears perceive. 4 Thus he shall judge the poor with equity And decide with justice for the lowly of the land. He shall strike down a land with the rod of his mouth And slay the wicked with the breath of his lips. 5 Justice shall be the girdle of his loins, And faithfulness the girdle of his waist. 6 The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard lie down with the kid; The calf, the beast of prey, and the fatling together, With a little boy to herd them. 7 The cow and the bear shall graze, Their young shall lie down together; And the lion, like the ox, shall eat straw. 8 A babe shall play Over a viper's hole, And an infant pass his hand Over an adder's den. 9 In all of My sacred mount Nothing evil or vile shall be done; For the land shall be filled with devotion to the LORD As water covers the sea.

5. Micha 4

ו בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא נְאֻם־יהוה׳ אֹסְפָה הַצֹּלֵעָה וְהַנִּדָּחָה אֶקַבֵּצָה וַאֲשֶׁר הֲרֵעֹתִי: ז וְשַׂמְתִּי אֶת־הַצֹּלֵעָה לִשְׁאֵרִית וְהַנַּהֲלָאָה לְגֹוי
עָצוּם וּמָלַךְ יהוה עֲלֵיהֶם בְּהַר צִיּוֹן מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם: (פ)

ח וְאַתָּה מִגְדַּל־עֵדֶר עָפֶל בַּת־צִיּוֹן עָדֶיךָ תֹּאתָה וּבָאָה **הַמֶּמְשָׁלָה הָרִאשֹׁנָה** מַמְלֶכֶת לְבַת־יְרוּשָׁלִָם: ט עַתָּה לָמָּה
תָּרִיעִי רֵעַ הֶמָלֶךְ אֵין־בָּךְ אִם־יוֹעֲצֵךְ אָבַד כִּי־הֶחֱזִיקֵךְ חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה: י חוּלִי וְגֶחִי בַּת־צִיּוֹן כַּיּוֹלֵדָה כִּי־עַתָּה תֵּצְאִי מִקָּרְיָה
וְשָׁכַנְתְּ בַּשָּׂדֶה וּבָאת עַד־בָּבֶל שָׁם תִּנָּצְלִי שָׁם יִגְאָלֵךְ ה׳ מִכַּף אֹיְבָיִךְ: יא וְעַתָּה נָאֶסְפוּ עָלַיִךְ גּוֹיִם רַבִּים הָאֹמְרִים תֶּחֱנָף
וְתַחַז בְּצִיּוֹן עֵינֵינוּ: יב וְהֵמָּה לֹא יָדְעוּ מַחְשְׁבוֹת ה׳ וְלֹא הֵבִינוּ עֲצָתוֹ כִּי קִבְּצָם כְּעָמִיר גֹּרְנָה: יג קוּמִי וְדוֹשִׁי בַת־צִיּוֹן כִּי־
קַרְנֵךְ אָשִׂים בַּרְזֶל וּפַרְסֹתַיִךְ אָשִׂים נְחוּשָׁה וְהַדַּקּוֹת עַמִּים רַבִּים וְהַחֲרַמְתִּי לַיהוה׳ בִּצְעָם וְחֵילָם לַאֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ: יד עַתָּה
תִּתְגֹּדְדִי בַת־גְּדוּד מָצוֹר שָׂם עָלֵינוּ בַּשֵּׁבֶט יַכּוּ עַל־הַלְחִי אֵת שֹׁפֵט יִשְׂרָאֵל: (ס)

6In that day —declares the LORD— I will assemble the lame [sheep] And will gather the outcast And those I have treated harshly; 7And I will turn the lame into a remnant And the expelled into a populous nation. And the LORD will reign over them on Mount Zion Now and for evermore. 8And you, O Migdal-eder, Outpost of Fair Zion, It shall come to you: The former monarchy shall return— The kingship of Fair

Jerusalem. 9Now why do you utter such cries? Is there no king in you, Have your advisors perished, That you have been seized by writhing Like a woman in travail? 10Writhe and scream, Fair Zion, Like a woman in travail! For now you must leave the city And dwell in the country— And you will reach Babylon. There you shall be saved, There the LORD will redeem you From the hands of your foes. 11Indeed, many nations Have assembled against you Who think, “Let our eye Obscenely gaze on Zion”. 12But they do not know The design of the LORD, They do not divine His intent: He has gathered them Like cut grain to the threshing floor. 13Up and thresh, Fair Zion! For I will give you horns of iron And provide you with hoofs of bronze, And you will crush the many peoples. You will devote their riches to the LORD, Their wealth to the Lord of all the earth. 14Now you gash yourself in grief. They have laid siege to us; They strike the ruler of Israel On the cheek with a staff.

6. 1 Kings 5:5

וַיֵּשֶׁב֩ יְהוּדָ֨ה וְיִשְׂרָאֵ֜ל לָבֶ֗טַח אִ֣ישׁ **תַּ֤חַת גַּפְנוֹ֙ וְתַ֣חַת תְּאֵנָת֔וֹ** מִדָּ֖ן וְעַד־בְּאֵ֣ר שָׁ֑בַע כֹּ֖ל יְמֵ֥י שְׁלֹמֹֽה׃

All the days of Solomon, Judah and Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba dwelt in safety, everyone under his own vine and under his own fig tree.

7. Daniel L. Dreisbach, "'The ‘Vine and Fig Tree' in George Washington's Letters: Reflections on a Biblical Motif in the Literature of the American Founding Era," 322

George Washington used this phrase multiple times in correspondence throughout his life, and one can find Washington reference it almost fifty times.

8. Isaiah 31:8 – 9

וְנָפַ֤ל אַשּׁוּר֙ בְּחֶ֣רֶב לֹא־אִ֔ישׁ וְחֶ֥רֶב לֹֽא־אָדָ֖ם תֹּאכְלֶ֑נּוּ וְנָ֣ס לוֹ֙ מִפְּנֵי־חֶ֔רֶב וּבַחוּרָ֖יו לָמַ֥ס יִהְיֽוּ׃ וְסַלְעוֹ֙ מִמָּג֣וֹר יַעֲבֹ֔וֹר וְחַתּ֥וּ מִנֵּ֖ס שָׂרָ֑יו נְאֻם־יה׳ אֲשֶׁר־א֥וּר לוֹ֙ בְּצִיּ֔וֹן וְתַנּ֥וּר לֹ֖ו בִּירוּשָׁלָֽם׃

Then Assyria shall fall, Not by the sword of man; A sword not of humans shall devour him. He shall shrivel before the sword, And his young men pine away. His rock shall melt with terror, And his officers shall collapse from weakness— Declares the LORD, who has a fire in Zion, Who has an oven in Jerusalem.

9. 2 Shmuel 12

כט וַיֶּאֱסֹ֥ף דָּוִ֛ד אֶת־כָּל־הָעָ֖ם וַיֵּ֣לֶךְ רַבָּ֑תָה וַיִּלָּ֥חֶם בָּ֖הּ וַיִּלְכְּדָֽהּ׃ ל וַיִּקַּ֣ח אֶת־עֲטֶ֣רֶת־מַלְכָּם֩ מֵעַ֨ל רֹאשׁ֜וֹ וּמִשְׁקָלָ֗הּ כִּכַּ֤ר זָהָב֙ וְאֶ֣בֶן יְקָרָ֔ה וַתְּהִ֖י עַל־רֹ֣אשׁ דָּוִ֑ד וּשְׁלַ֥ל הָעִ֛יר הוֹצִ֖יא הַרְבֵּ֥ה מְאֹֽד׃לא וְאֶת־הָעָ֨ם אֲשֶׁר־בָּ֜הּ **הוֹצִ֗יא וַיָּ֣שֶׂם בַּמְּגֵרָה וּבַחֲרִצֵ֨י הַבַּרְזֶ֜ל וּבְמַגְזְרֹ֣ת הַבַּרְזֶ֗ל וְהֶעֱבִ֤יר אוֹתָם֙ במלכן [בַּמַּלְבֵּ֔ן]** וְכֵ֣ן יַעֲשֶׂ֔ה לְכֹ֖ל עָרֵ֣י בְנֵֽי־עַמּ֑וֹן וַיָּ֣שָׁב דָּוִ֛ד וְכָל־הָעָ֖ם יְרוּשָׁלָֽם׃

29 David mustered all the troops and marched on Rabbah, and he attacked it and captured it. 30 The crown was taken from the head of their king and it was placed on David’s head—it weighed a talent of gold, and [on it] were precious stones. He also carried off a vast amount of booty from the city. 31 He led out the people who lived there and set them to work with saws, iron threshing boards, and iron axes, or assigned them to brickmaking; David did this to all the towns of Ammon. Then David and all the troops returned to Jerusalem.

10. Micha 5:7

וְהָיְתָה שְׁאֵרִית יַעֲקֹב בַּגּוֹיִם בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּים רַבִּים **כְּאַרְיֵה בְּבֶהֱמוֹת יַעַר כְּכְפִיר בְּעֶדְרֵי צֹאן** אֲשֶׁר אִם עָבַר וְרָמַס וְטָרַף וְאֵין מַצִּיל:

The remnant of Jacob Shall be among the nations, In the midst of the many peoples, Like a lion among beasts of the wild, Like a fierce lion among flocks of sheep, Which tramples wherever it goes And rends, with none to deliver.

11. Isaiah 31:4

כִּי כֹה אָמַר־ה' ׀ אֵלַי **כַּאֲשֶׁר יֶהְגֶּה הָאַרְיֵה וְהַכְּפִיר עַל־טַרְפּוֹ** אֲשֶׁר יִקָּרֵא עָלָיו מְלֹא רֹעִים מִקּוֹלָם לֹא יֵחַת וּמֵהֲמוֹנָם לֹא יַעֲנֶה כֵּן יֵרֵד ה' צְבָקוֹת לִצְבֹּא עַל־הַר־צִיּוֹן וְעַל־גִּבְעָתָהּ:

For thus the LORD has said to me: As a lion—a great beast— Growls over its prey And, when the shepherds gather In force against him, Is not dismayed by their cries Nor cowed by their noise— So the LORD of Hosts will descend to make war Against the mount and the hill of Zion.

12. Rambam H. Melachim 11:1

1 הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ עָתִיד לַעֲמֹד וּלְהַחֲזִיר מַלכוּת דָּוִד לְיָשְׁנָהּ **לַמֶּמְשָׁלָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה**. וּבוֹנֶה הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וּמְקַבֵּץ נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְחוֹזְרִין כָּל הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים בִּימָיו כְּשֶׁהָיוּ מִקֶּדֶם. מַקְרִיבִין קָרְבָּנוֹת. וְעוֹשִׂין שְׁמִטִּין וְיוֹבְלוֹת כְּכָל מִצְוָתָן הָאֲמוּרָה בַּתּוֹרָה. וְכָל מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מַאֲמִין בּוֹ. אוֹ מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ מְחַכֶּה לְבִיאָתוֹ. לֹא בִּשְׁאָר נְבִיאִים בִּלְבַד הוּא כּוֹפֵר. אֶלָּא בַּתּוֹרָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ. שֶׁהֲרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הֵעִידָה עָלָיו שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דברים ל, ג) "וְשָׁב ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ וְרִחֲמֶךָ וְשָׁב וְקִבֶּצְךָ" וְגוֹ' (דברים ל, ד) "אִם יִהְיֶה נִדַּחֲךָ בִּקְצֵה הַשָּׁמָיִם" וְגוֹ' (דברים ל, ה) "וֶהֱבִיאֲךָ ה'". וְאִלּוּ הַדְּבָרִים הַמְפֹרָשִׁים בַּתּוֹרָה הֵם כּוֹלְלִים כָּל הַדְּבָרִים שֶׁנֶּאֶמְרוּ עַל יְדֵי כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים. אַף בְּפָרָשַׁת בִּלְעָם נֶאֱמַר וְשָׁם נְבֵא בִּשְׁנֵי הַמְּשִׁיחִים. בַּמָּשִׁיחַ הָרִאשׁוֹן שֶׁהוּא דָּוִד שֶׁהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִיַּד צָרֵיהֶם. וּבַמָּשִׁיחַ הָאַחֲרוֹן שֶׁעוֹמֵד מִבָּנָיו שֶׁמּוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל [בָּאַחֲרוֹנָה]. וְשָׁם הוּא אוֹמֵר (במדבר כד, יז) "אֶרְאֶנּוּ וְלֹא עַתָּה" זֶה דָּוִד. (במדבר כד, יז) "אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ וְלֹא קָרוֹב" זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ. (במדבר כד, יז) "דָּרַךְ כּוֹכָב מִיַּעֲקֹב" זֶה דָּוִד. (במדבר כד, יז) "וְקָם שֵׁבֶט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל" זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ. (במדבר כד, יז) "וּמָחַץ פַּאֲתֵי מוֹאָב" זֶה דָּוִד. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר (שמואל ב ח, ב) "וַיַּךְ אֶת מוֹאָב וַיְמַדְּדֵם בַּחֶבֶל" (במדבר כד, יז) "וְקַרְקַר כָּל בְּנֵי שֵׁת" זֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בּוֹ (זכריה ט, י) "וּמָשְׁלוֹ מִיָּם עַד יָם". (במדבר כד, יח) "וְהָיָה אֱדוֹם יְרֻשָּׁה" זֶה דָּוִד. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שמואל ב ח, יד) "וַתְּהִי אֱדוֹם לְדָוִד לַעֲבָדִים" וְגוֹ'. (במדבר כד, יח) "וְהָיָה יְרֻשָּׁה" וְגוֹ' זֶה הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (עובדיה א, כא) "וְעָלוּ מוֹשִׁעִים בְּהַר צִיּוֹן" וְגוֹ':

1. The King Messiah will arise and re-establish the monarchy of David as it was in former times. He will build the Sanctuary and gather in the dispersed of Israel. All the earlier statutes will be restored as they once were. Sacrifices will be offered, the Sabbatical and Jubilee years will be observed, as commanded in the Torah. Anyone who does not believe in him or one who does not anticipate his coming not only denies the Prophets, but also the Torah and Moses our Teacher. For the Torah has given testimony about him saying, “And the Lord your G-d will turn your captivity and have compassion with you. He will return and gather you from all the peoples…If any of you should be dispersed at the ends of Heaven, from there G-d will gather you, from there He will fetch you. And the Lord, your G-d will bring you…” (Deut. 30:3-4). These matters are explicit in the Torah and include everything said by all the Prophets. It is even written in the Chapter of Balaam who prophesized about both the Messiahs. The first Messiah was David who saved Israel from her adversities. The final Messiah will be from his sons and will deliver Israel from the hands of the descendants of Esau. There it says, “I shall see him, but not now” (Numbers 24:17) - this refers to David; “I behold him, and not soon” (ibid.) - this is the King Messiah; “A star from Jacob shall step forth” (ibid.) - this is David; “and a scepter shall arise out of Israel” (ibid.) - this the King Messiah; “and shall smite through the corners of Moab” - this is David; and so it says, “And he smote Moab and measured them with a rope” (II Samuel 8:2); “and break down all the sons of Seth” (Numbers

24:17) - this is King Messiah of whom it says, “and his dominion shall be from sea to sea” (Zechariah 9:10); “and Edom shall be a possession” (Numbers 24:18) - this is David, as it says, “And Edom shall become slaves to David” (see II Samuel 8:6 and II Samuel 8:14); “Seir also, even his enemies, shall be a possession” (Numbers 24:18) - this is King Messiah, as it says, “And the saviors shall come upon Mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau…” (Obadiah 1:21).

3 וְאַל יַעֲלֶה עַל דַּעְתְּךָ שֶׁהַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ צָרִיךְ לַעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתוֹת וּמוֹפְתִים וּמְחַדֵּשׁ דְּבָרִים בָּעוֹלָם אוֹ מְחַיֶּה מֵתִים וְכַיּוֹצֵא בִּדְבָרִים אֵלּוּ [ב.] אֵין הַדָּבָר כָּךְ. שֶׁהֲרֵי רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא חֻכָּם גָּדוֹל מֵחַכְמֵי מִשְׁנָה הָיָה. וְהוּא הָיָה נוֹשֵׂא כֵּלָיו שֶׁל בֶּן כּוֹזִיבָא הַמֶּלֶךְ. וְהוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר עָלָיו שֶׁהוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ. וְדַמָּה הוּא וְכָל חַכְמֵי דּוֹרוֹ שֶׁהוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ. עַד שֶׁנֶּהֱרַג בַּעֲוֹנוֹת. כֵּיוָן שֶׁנֶּהֱרַג נוֹדַע לָהֶם שֶׁאֵינוֹ. וְלֹא שָׁאֲלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ חֲכָמִים לֹא אוֹת וְלֹא מוֹפֵת. וְעִקַּר הַדְּבָרִים כָּךְ הֵן. שֶׁהַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת חֻקֶּיהָ וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיהָ לְעוֹלָם וּלְעוֹלְמֵי עוֹלָמִים. וְאֵין מוֹסִיפִין עֲלֵיהֶן וְלֹא גּוֹרְעִין מֵהֶן:

3. It should not occur to you that the King Messiah must bring wondrous signs or perform marvels or invent new things or revive the dead or anything like what the fools say. It is not so. For Rabbi Akiva, one of the wisest of the Sages of the Mishna, was King Ben Coziba’s arms-bearer and said that he was the King Messiah. He and all the Sages of his generation thought that he was the King Messiah, until he was killed because of his sins. Since he was killed, they then understood that he was not the one. The Sages never asked of him neither a sign nor a wonder. So, the essence of the matter is like this: The Laws and the Statutes of the Torah never change. We may not add to them nor detract from them. Anyone who adds to or subtracts from them or reveals some new dimension to the Torah or understands the Commandments differently than their plain meaning is, for sure, an evil person and an Apikoris.

4 דּוּאַם יַעֲמֹד מֶלֶךְ מִבֵּית דָּוִד הוֹגֶה בַּתּוֹרָה וְעוֹסֵק בְּמִצְוֹת כְּדָוִד אָבִיו. כְּפִי תּוֹרָה שֶׁבִּכְתָב וְשֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה. וְיָכֹף כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵילֵךְ בָּהּ וּלְחַזֵּק בִּדְקָהּ. וְיִלָּחֵם מִלְחֶמוֹת ה'. הֲרֵי זֶה בְּחֶזְקַת שֶׁהוּא מָשִׁיחַ. (אִם עָשָׂה וְהִצְלִיחַ וּבָנָה מִקְדָּשׁ בִּמְקוֹמוֹ וְקִבֵּץ נִדְחֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲרֵי זֶה מָשִׁיחַ בְּוַדַּאי. וְיִתַּקֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ לַעֲבֹד אֶת ה' בְּיַחַד שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר כִּי אָז אֶהְפֹּךְ אֶל עַמִּים שָׂפָה בְרוּרָה לִקְרֹא כֻּלָּם בְּשֵׁם ה' וּלְעָבְדוֹ שְׁכֶם אֶחָד):

4. Now, if a king should arise from the House of David who is versed in Torah and engages in Commandments, as did David his forefather, in accordance with both the Written and the Oral Torahs, and he enjoins all of Israel to follow in its ways and encourages them to repair its breaches, and he fights the Wars of G-d, then he may be presumed to be the Messiah. If he succeeds in his efforts and defeats the enemies around and builds the Sanctuary in its proper place and gathers the dispersed of Israel, he is definitely the Messiah.

12. Raavad

אל יעלה על דעתך וכו .א"א והלא בן כוזיבא היה אומר אנא הוא מלכא משיחא ושלחו חכמים לבדקו אי מורח ודאין או לא וכיון דלא עביד הכי קטלוהו:

13. Rambam H. Melachim 12

א. אַל יַעֲלֶה עַל הַלֵּב שֶׁבִּימוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ יִבָּטֵל דָּבָר מִמִּנְהָגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם. אוֹ יִהְיֶה שָׁם חִדּוּשׁ בְּמַעֲשֶׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית. אֶלָּא עוֹלָם כְּמִנְהָגוֹ נוֹהֵג. וְזֶה שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בִּישַׁעְיָה (ישעיה יא, ו) "וְגָר זְאֵב עִם כֶּבֶשׂ וְנָמֵר עִם גְּדִי יִרְבָּץ" מָשָׁל וְחִידָה. עִנְיַן הַדָּבָר שֶׁיִּהְיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל יוֹשְׁבִין לָבֶטַח עִם רִשְׁעֵי עַכּוּ"ם הַמְשׁוּלִים כִּזְאֵב וְנָמֵר. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ירמיה ה, ו) "זְאֵב עֲרָבוֹת יְשָׁדְדֵם וְנָמֵר שֹׁקֵד עַל עָרֵיהֶם". וְיַחְזְרוּ כֻּלָּם לְדַת הָאֱמֶת. וְלֹא יִגְזְלוּ וְלֹא יַשְׁחִיתוּ. אֶלָּא יֹאכְלוּ דָּבָר הַמֻּתָּר בְּנַחַת עִם יִשְׂרָאֵל. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (ישעיה יא, ז) "וְאַרְיֵה כַּבָּקָר יֹאכַל תֶּבֶן". וְכֵן כָּל כַּיּוֹצֵא בְּאֵלּוּ הַדְּבָרִים בְּעִנְיַן הַמָּשִׁיחַ הֵם מְשָׁלִים. וּבִימוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ יִוָּדַע לַכֹּל לְאֵי זֶה דָּבָר הָיָה מָשָׁל. וּמָה עִנְיַן רָמְזוּ בָּהֶן:

It should not occur to you that during the days of the Messiah a single thing from the “ways of the world” will be canceled nor will there be something novel in the Creation. Rather, the world will

continue in its customary way. Now, that which is said in Isaiah, “And the wolf will live with the sheep and the leopard shall lie down with the kid” (Isaiah 11:6) is a parable and riddle. The substance of the matter is that Israel will dwell in safety with the wicked of the world who are compared to wolves and tigers, as it says, “a wolf of the deserts spoil them, a leopard watches over their cities” (Jeremiah 5:6). But, they will all return to the true religion and they will not steal and not destroy. Rather, they will eat of the permissible foods comfortably like Israel, as it says, “and the lion will eat straw as does the ox” (Isaiah 11:7). And so similar matters written about the Messiah are parables. In the days of the King Messiah everyone will understand these parables and to what these matters were compared and to what was hinted.

ב. אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים אֵין בֵּין הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה לִימוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ אֶלָּא שִׁעְבּוּד מַלְכֻיּוֹת בִּלְבַד. יֵרָאֶה מִפְּשׁוּטָן שֶׁל דִּבְרֵי הַנְּבִיאִים. שֶׁבִּתְחִלַּת יְמוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ תִּהְיֶה מִלְחֶמֶת גּוֹג וּמָגוֹג. וְשֶׁקֹּדֶם מִלְחֶמֶת גּוֹג וּמָגוֹג יַעֲמֹד נָבִיא לְיַשֵּׁר יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְהָכִין לִבָּם. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (מלאכי ג, כג) "הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי שֹׁלֵחַ לָכֶם אֵת אֵלִיָּה" וְגוֹ'. וְאֵינוֹ בָּא לֹא לְטַמֵּא הַטָּהוֹר. וְלֹא לְטַהֵר הַטָּמֵא. וְלֹא לִפְסֹל אֲנָשִׁים שֶׁהֵם בְּחֶזְקַת כַּשְׁרוּת. וְלֹא לְהַכְשִׁיר מִי שֶׁהֵחֶזְקוּ פְּסוּלִין. אֶלָּא לְשׁוּם שָׁלוֹם בָּעוֹלָם. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (מלאכי ג, כד) "וְהֵשִׁיב לֵב אָבוֹת עַל בָּנִים". וְיֵשׁ מִן הַחֲכָמִים שֶׁאוֹמְרִים שֶׁקֹּדֶם בִּיאַת הַמָּשִׁיחַ יָבוֹא אֵלִיָּהוּ. וְכָל אֵלּוּ הַדְּבָרִים וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן לֹא יֵדַע אָדָם אֵיךְ יִהְיוּ עַד שֶׁיִּהְיוּ. שֶׁדְּבָרִים סְתוּמִין הֵן אֵצֶל הַנְּבִיאִים. גַּם הַחֲכָמִים אֵין לָהֶם קַבָּלָה בִּדְבָרִים אֵלּוּ. אֶלָּא לְפִי הֶכְרֵעַ הַפְּסוּקִים. וּלְפִיכָךְ יֵשׁ לָהֶם מַחְלֹקֶת בִּדְבָרִים אֵלּוּ. וְעַל כָּל פָּנִים אֵין סְדוּר הֲוַיַת דְּבָרִים אֵלּוּ וְלֹא דִּקְדּוּקֵיהֶן עִקָּר בַּדָּת. וּלְעוֹלָם לֹא יִתְעַסֵּק אָדָם בְּדִבְרֵי הַהַגָּדוֹת. וְלֹא יַאֲרִיךְ בַּמִּדְרָשׁוֹת הָאֲמוּרִים בָּעִנְיָנִים אֵלּוּ וְכַיּוֹצֵא בָּהֶן. וְלֹא יְשִׂימֵם עִקָּר. שֶׁאֵין מְבִיאִין לֹא לִידֵי יִרְאָה וְלֹא לִידֵי אַהֲבָה. וְכֵן לֹא יְחַשֵּׁב הַקִּצִּין. אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים תִּפַּח רוּחָם שֶׁל מְחַשְּׁבֵי הַקִּצִּים. אֶלָּא יְחַכֶּה וְיַאֲמִין בִּכְלַל הַדָּבָר כְּמוֹ שֶׁבֵּאַרְנוּ:

Our Sages have said that there is no difference between This World and the Days of the Messiah except (our) subservience to the kingdoms of the world alone. From the plain meaning of the words of the prophets we understand that at the beginning of the days of the Messiah there will be the War of Gog and Magog. Before the War of Gog and Magog, a prophet will arise to correct Israel and prepare their hearts, as it says, “Behold, I will send you Elijah” (Malachi 3:23). He will not come to make the pure impure, nor purify the impure, nor disqualify people who are presumed to have legitimate lineage, nor qualify those who are disqualified. He will only come to bring peace to the world, as it says, “And he shall turn the hearts of the fathers on the children” (Malachi 3:24). Some of the Sages say that Elijah will come before the coming of the Messiah. But regarding all these matters and similar, no one knows how it will be until it will be. For these matters were unclear to the Prophets. Even the Sages themselves did not have a Tradition regarding these matters and only could attempt to understand the verses. Thus, there were disagreements in these matters. Nevertheless, neither the order that these events will occur nor their details are fundamental to the religion. Thus, a person must never busy himself with the Aggadohs and not dwell on the Midrashim regarding these matters or similar issues. He must not make them dogma. For these do not result in either love (for G-d) nor fear (of sin). Similarly, one should not calculate the Ends. Our Sages have said that the spirit of those who calculate the Ends will expire. Rather, one is to (simply) wait and believe in the principle of this matter, as we have explained.

14. Raavad

אל יעלה על הלב שבימות המשיח כו' עד משלים. א"א והלא כתוב בתורה והשבתי חיה רעה מן הארץ: