



When Will the Messiah Come? Week 4

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This class is dedicated by Rose and Andrew Braude to mark the yahrtzeit of Rose's mother on 2 Av

A generation that is entirely good/bad?

1. Talmud, Sanhedrin 98a

And Rabbi Yochanan said: The son of David will come only in a generation that is entirely meritorious or entirely guilty. In a generation that is entirely meritorious as Isaiah 60:21 says, "And your nation will be entirely righteous, they will settle in the land forever." In a generation that is entirely guilty as Isaiah 59:16 says, "And He saw that there was no one, and He was desolate for there was none to intercede [for them]," and Isaiah 48:11 says, "For Myself, for Myself I will act."

2. Rabbi David Kimchi, Commentary to Isaiah 59:16

...And so, too, when our sages said, "A generation which is entirely guilty," it means most. There has never been in Israel a generation which was entirely liable, without any righteous and good people. Also, "guilty" does not mean liable for destruction, Gd forbid, just that they are not worthy of redemption.

When Israel bears fruit

3. Talmud, Sanhedrin 98a

And Rabbi Abba said: There is no end more revealed than Ezekiel 36:8, "And you, mountains of Israel, your branches will give forth and you will bear fruit for My nation, Israel, etc."

4. Isaiah 49:14, 62:4

And Zion said: Gd has abandoned me, and Gd has forgotten me.

You shall no longer be called 'Abandoned,' and your land will no longer be called 'Desolate,' for you will be called 'My desire is in her.'

5. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Orot, Eretz Yisrael 1

The Land of Israel is not an external thing, an external prize acquired by the nation, a means toward the end of national unification and reinforcement of the nation's physical or even spiritual survival. The Land of Israel is an independent entity, bound to the nation in the bond of life...

6. Midrash, Pesikta Rabti 26

Jeremiah said: When I ascended to Jerusalem, I raised my eyes and saw a woman sitting atop a mountain, wearing black clothing and with her hair undone, crying out, seeking one who would console her. I cried out as well, and sought one who would comfort me. I drew close to her and spoke with her, and told her, "If you are a woman, speak with me. If you are a spirit, leave me." She replied, "Do you not recognize me? I am the one who had seven sons whose father left to go overseas. While I was yet crying for him, it was prophesied to me, 'The house has collapsed upon your seven sons and killed them.' I don't know for whom to cry, and for whom to release my hair!" I replied and told her, "You are no greater than my mother, Zion, who has been turned into grazing for the wild animals of the field." To which she replied and said to me, "I am your mother, Zion."

7. Rabbi Yissachar Teichtel, Eim haBanim Semeichah, First Prologue

It is written, 'And I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham I will remember, and the land I will remember.'... Rashi there wrote, 'Why are they listed in reverse? As if to say: Jacob the youngest is worthy of this, and if he is not worthy then Isaac is with him, and if he is not worthy then Abraham is with him.' Based on this, one may add that even if all of them are unworthy, meaning that the merit of our ancestors has ended, still, 'The land I will remember,' for the merit of the Land of Israel itself will save them from trouble... She will protect us, to free us whenever we are placed in trouble, Heaven forbid.

8. Talmud, Gittin 57a

"The land of the deer [lit. desire]" is written of her [in Jeremiah 3:19]. A deer's hide cannot hold its flesh [after being removed], and this is also true for Israel: when they live upon it the land expands, and when they do not live upon it the land shrivels.

Will all of us return to live in Israel?

9. Deuteronomy 30:2-5

And you will return to Hashem your Gd and you will listen to His voice, according to all that I command you today - you and your children, with all your heart and soul. And Gd will return your exile and have mercy upon you, and He will return and gather you from all the nations to which Hashem your Gd had scattered you. If you are scattered to the edges of the heavens, from there Hashem your Gd will collect you, and from there He will take you. And Hashem your Gd will bring you to the land your ancestors settled, and you will settle it...

10. Isaiah 27:13

A great shofar will be blown, and those lost in Assyria will come, and those who had been scattered in the land of Egypt, and they shall bow to Gd on the holy mountain, in Jerusalem.

11. Talmud, Megillah 29a

The synagogues and study halls of Babylon will be established in the Land of Israel, as it is written...

12. Rabbi Moses Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings 12:3

In the days of the Messiah, when his reign will be established and the Jews will be gathered from their exile, all of the tribes will have their lineages clarified by him, through Divine inspiration.

13. Ezekiel 39:28, with the commentary of Don Isaac Abarbanel

And they will know that I am Hashem their Gd, I exiled them to the nations and I will bring them in upon their land, and I will not leave of them there further.

Abarbanel: It will not be like [when Gd recalled them] in the Second Temple, when some of them came and many remained in the Diaspora, for in that future redemption "I will not leave of them" in the Diaspora, even one.

14. Rabbi Moses Sofer, Chatam Sofer commentary to Beitzah 4b

"Two festival days of the Diaspora" – In my humble opinion, this description is the name in the Diaspora about the past, for so it was, that the emissaries reached the edge of the Land of Israel and some places outside Israel, and the only ones who observed two festival days were those who lived in the distant Diaspora. But it appears to me that when Gd expands our borders, speedily in our days, then also all of the islands in the Mediterranean that are opposite Israel, to the western edge, the oceans, all will be part of Israel; see Gittin 8a and Tosafot "Rabbi Yehudah". It appears that in the future, no one disputes that this will be like the land of the ten nations, in any case. And if so, these islands in the sea, even via bonfires one cannot notify them, and so it must be that they will observe two festival days of our Redemption, not of the Diaspora...

15. Leviticus 26:33

And you I shall scatter among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be in ruins and your cities shall be destroyed.

16. Genesis 12:2, with the commentary of Rashi

And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will elevate your name; and be a blessing.

Rashi: The blessings are in your hand; until now they were in My hand, and I blessed Adam, Noach and you, and now you will bless those you choose.

17. Talmud, Pesachim 87b

Israel was exiled among the nations only so that converts would be added to them.

18. Isaiah 2:2-4 (JPS 1985 translation)

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 Gd 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. And he will judge between nations and he will instruct for many nations, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not raise sword against nation, and they shall not learn war.

19. Song of Songs 5:9

How is your beloved different from any beloved, you who are the most beautiful of women? How is your beloved different from any beloved, that you have sworn us thus? My beloved is pure and red...

How Abarbanel arrived at 1503: Daniel 7-8

20. Daniel 7:25-27

And words toward Heaven he will speak, and he will wear out the holy celestial beings, and he will think to alter times and law, and [the Jews] will be given into his hand until a time, times and half a time. And justice will convene, and his power shall be removed, to destroy and eliminate to the end. And monarchy and power and greatness of monarchy beneath the entire heavens I have given to the nation of the holy ones of the heavens. His reign [of this new human king] shall be eternal, and all powers shall serve him and heed him.

21. A time, times and half a time

	"A time"	Total	Counting from when?	Counting to when?
Ibn Ezra	One year	3.5 years	Siege of the Second Temple	
Rav Saadia Gaon Rashi	890 years (Exodus - 1 st Temple)	1335 years יש-הסתר אסתר	Destruction of the Second Temple	Mashiach
Abarbanel	410 years (1 st Temple)	1435 years	Destruction of the Second Temple	Mashiach

22. Daniel 8:13-14

And I heard one holy one speak, and one holy one said to *palmoni* who spoke: Until when is the vision of the continuous [offering] and the sin of the desolation, placing the Sanctuary and the multitudes for trampling? And he said to me: Until evening morning, 2300, then shall the Sanctuary be set right.

23. 2300 years

R' Avraham bar Chiya Nasi	From construction of the first Temple	Ends about 1370
Ralbag	From days of Shemuel	Ends early 14 th century
Ramban	From King David	Ends mid-14 th century
Abarbanel	From split of kingdom	Ends 1503-ish

A concluding thought

24. Genesis 49:1

And Jacob called his children, and he said: Gather, and I will tell you what will happen to you in the end of days.