Sanhedrin

The William Davidson Talmud (Koren - Steinsaltz)

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98a

מלכים יראו וקמו שרים וישתחוו

Kings shall see and arise, princes shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, Who is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, Who has chosen you" (Isaiah 49:7), indicating that redemption will come independent of repentance?

אמר לו רבי אליעזר והלא כבר נאמר (ירמיהו ד, א) אם תשוב ישראל
נאום ה' אלי תשוב אמר לו רבי יהושע והלא כבר נאמר (דניאל יב, ז)
ואשמע את האיש לבוש הבדים אשר ממעל למימי היאור וירם ימינו
ושמאלו אל השמים וישבע בחי העולם כי למועד מועדים וחצי וככלות
נפץ יד עם קדש תכלינה כל אלה וגו' ושתק רבי אליעזר

Rabbi Eliezer said to him: But isn't it already stated: "If you will return, Israel, says the Lord, return to Me" (Jeremiah 4:1), indicating that redemption is contingent upon repentance? Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: But isn't it already stated: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he lifted up his right hand and his left hand to heaven and swore by the One Who lives forever that it shall be for a period, periods, and a half; when the crushing of the power of the holy people shall have been completed, all these things shall be finished" (Daniel 12:7), indicating that the time for redemption is set and

unrelated to repentance? **And Rabbi Eliezer was silent,** unable to refute the proof from that verse.

ואמר רבי אבא אין לך קץ מגולה מזה שנאמר (יחזקאל לו, ח) ואתם הרי ישראל ענפכם תתנו ופריכם תשאו לעמי ישראל וגו' רבי (אליעזר) אומר אף מזה שנאמר (זכריה ח, י) כי לפני הימים (האלה) [ההם] שכר האדם לא נהיה ושכר הבהמה איננה וליוצא ולבא אין שלום מן הצר

§ And Rabbi Abba says: You have no more explicit manifestation of the end of days than this following phenomenon, as it is stated: "But you, mountains of Israel, you shall give your branches, and yield your fruit to My people of Israel, for they will soon be coming" (Ezekiel 36:8). When produce will grow in abundance in Eretz Yisrael, it is an indication that the Messiah will be coming soon. Rabbi Eliezer says: You have no greater manifestation of the end of days than this following phenomenon as well, as it is stated: "For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; nor was there peace from the oppressor to him who exits and to him who enters" (Zechariah 8:10). When there are no wages for work and no rent paid for use of one's animal, that is an indication that the coming of the Messiah is at hand.

מאי ליוצא ולבא אין שלום מן הצר רב אמר אף תלמידי חכמים שכתוב בהם שלום דכתיב (תהלים קיט, קסה) שלום רב לאהבי תורתך אין שלום מפני צר ושמואל אמר עד שיהיו כל השערים כולן שקולין

The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of the phrase: "Nor was there peace from the oppressor to him who exits and to him who enters"? Rav says:

It means that even for Torah scholars, with regard to whom the promise of peace is written, as it is written: "Great peace have they who love Your Torah; and there is no obstacle for them" (Psalms 119:165), there will be no peace from the oppressor. And Shmuel says: It means that the Messiah will not come until all the prices are equal.

אמר רבי חנינא אין בן דוד בא עד שיתבקש דג לחולה ולא ימצא שנאמר (יחזקאל לב, יד) אז אשקיע מימיהם ונהרותם כשמן אוליך וכתב (בתריה) (יחזקאל כט, כא) ביום ההוא אצמיח קרן לבית ישראל

Rabbi Ḥanina says: The son of David will not come until a fish will be sought for an ill person and will not be found, as it is stated with regard to the downfall of Egypt: "Then I will make their waters clear and cause their rivers to run like oil" (Ezekiel 32:14), meaning that the current in the rivers will come to a virtual standstill. And it is written thereafter: "On that day I will cause the glory of the house of Israel to flourish" (Ezekiel 29:21).

אמר רבי חמא בר חנינא אין בן דוד בא עד שתכלה מלכות הזלה מישראל שנאמר (ישעיהו יח, ה) וכרת הזלזלים במזמרות וכתיב בתריה בעת ההיא יובל שי לה' צבאות עם ממשך ומורט

Rabbi Ḥama bar Ḥanina says: The son of David will not come until the contemptuous [hazalla] kingdom of Rome will cease from the Jewish people, as it is stated: "And He shall sever the sprigs [hazalzallim] with pruning hooks" (Isaiah 18:5). And it is written thereafter: "At that time

shall a present be brought to the Lord of hosts, by a people scattered and hairless" (Isaiah 18:7).

אמר זעירי אמר רבי חנינא אין בן דוד בא עד שיכלו גסי הרוח מישראל שנאמר (צפניה ג, יא) כי אז אסיר מקרבך עליזי גאותך וכתיב (צפניה ג, יב) והשארתי בקרבך עם עני ודל וחסו בשם ה'

Ze'eiri says that Rabbi Ḥanina says: The son of David will not come until the arrogant will cease to exist from among the Jewish people, as it is stated: "For then I will remove from your midst your proudly exulting ones" (Zephaniah 3:11), and it is written afterward: "And I will leave in your midst a poor and lowly people, and they shall take refuge in the name of the Lord" (Zephaniah 3:12).

אמר רבי שמלאי משום רבי אלעזר בר"ש אין בן דוד בא עד שיכלו כל שופטים ושוטרים מישראל שנאמר (ישעיהו א, כה) ואשיבה ידי עליך ואצרוף כבור סיגיך וגו' ואשיבה שופטיך

Rabbi Simlai says in the name of Rabbi Elazar, son of Rabbi Shimon: The son of David will not come until all the judges and officers will cease to exist from among the Jewish people, and there will be no more autonomous government in Eretz Yisrael, as it is stated: "And I will turn My hand against you and purge away your dross as with lye and take away your base alloy. And I will restore your judges as at the first" (Isaiah 1:25–26).

אמר עולא אין ירושלים נפדית אלא בצדקה שנאמר (ישעיהו א, כז) ציון במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה אמר רב פפא אי בטלי יהירי בטלי אמגושי דכתיב אמגושי אי בטלי דייני בטלי גזירפטי אי בטלי יהירי בטלי אמגושי דכתיב (ישעיהו א, כה) ואצרוף כבור סיגיך ואסירה כל בדיליך ואי בטלי דייני בטלי גזירפטי דכתיב (צפניה ג, טו) הסיר ה' משפטיך פנה אויבך

Ulla says: Jerusalem is redeemed only by means of righteousness, as it is stated: "Zion shall be redeemed with justice and those who return to it with righteousness" (Isaiah 1:27). Rav Pappa says: If the arrogant will cease to exist, the Persian sorcerers will cease to exist as well. If the deceitful judges will cease to exist, the royal officers [gazirpatei] and taskmasters will cease to exist. Rav Pappa elaborates: If the arrogant will cease, the Persian sorcerers will cease, as it is written: "And I will purge away your dross [sigayikh] as with lye, and I will remove all your alloy [bedilayikh]." When the arrogant [sigim] are purged, the sorcerers, who are separated [muvdalim] from the fear of God, will also cease. And if the deceitful judges cease to exist, the royal officers and taskmasters will cease to exist, as it is written: "The Lord has removed your judgments; cast out your enemy" (Zephaniah 3:15).

אמר ר' יוחנן אם ראית דור שמתמעט והולך חכה לו שנאמר (שמואל ב כב, כה) ואת עם עני תושיע וגו' אמר רבי יוחנן אם ראית דור שצרות רבות באות עליו כנהר חכה לו שנאמר (ישעיהו נט, יט) כי יבא כנהר צר (ו) רוח ה' נוססה בו וסמיך ליה ובא לציון גואל

Rabbi Yoḥanan says: If you saw a generation whose wisdom and Torah study is steadily diminishing, await the coming of the Messiah, as it is stated: "And the afflicted people You will redeem" (II Samuel 22:28). Rabbi Yoḥanan says: If you saw a generation whose troubles inundate it like a river, await the coming of the Messiah, as it is stated: "When distress will come like a river that the breath of the Lord drives" (Isaiah 59:19). And juxtaposed to it is the verse: "And a redeemer will come to Zion" (Isaiah 59:20).

ואמר רבי יוחנן אין בן דוד בא אלא בדור שכולו זכאי או כולו חייב בדור שכולו זכאי דכתיב (ישעיהו ס, כא) ועמך כולם צדיקים לעולם יירשו ארץ בדור שכולו חייב דכתיב (ישעיהו נט, טז) וירא כי אין איש וישתומם כי אין מפגיע וכתיב (ישעיהו מח, יא) למעני אעשה

And Rabbi Yoḥanan says: The son of David will come only in a generation that is entirely innocent, in which case they will be deserving of redemption, or in a generation that is entirely guilty, in which case there will be no alternative to redemption. He may come in a generation that is entirely innocent, as it is written: "And your people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever" (Isaiah 60:21). He may come in a generation that is entirely guilty, as it is written: "And He saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no intercessor; therefore His arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness, it sustained Him" (Isaiah 59:16). And it is written: "For My own sake, for My own sake will I do it; for how should it be profaned? And My glory I will not give it to another" (Isaiah 48:11).

12 אמר רבי אלכסנדרי רבי יהושע בן לוי רמי כתיב (ישעיהו ס, כב) בעתה וכתיב אחישנה זכו אחישנה לא זכו בעתה

§ Rabbi Alexandri says: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi raises a contradiction in a verse addressing God's commitment to redeem the Jewish people. In the verse: "I the Lord in its time I will hasten it" (Isaiah 60:22), it is written: "In its time," indicating that there is a designated time for the redemption, and it is written: "I will hasten it," indicating that there is no set time for the redemption. Rabbi Alexandri explains: If they merit redemption through repentance and good deeds I will hasten the coming of the Messiah. If they do not merit redemption, the coming of the Messiah will be in its designated time.

13 אמר רבי אלכסנדרי רבי יהושע בן לוי רמי כתיב (דניאל ז, יג) וארו עם ענני שמיא כבר אינש אתה וכתיב (זכריה ט, ט) עני ורוכב על חמור זכו עם ענני שמיא לא זכו עני רוכב על חמור

Rabbi Alexandri says: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi raises a contradiction between two depictions of the coming of the Messiah. It is written: "There came with the clouds of heaven, one like unto a son of man... and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom...his dominion is an everlasting dominion" (Daniel 7:13–14). And it is written: "Behold, your king will come to you; he is just and victorious; lowly and riding upon a donkey and upon a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zechariah 9:9). Rabbi Alexandri explains: If the Jewish people merit redemption, the Messiah will come in a miraculous manner with the clouds of heaven. If they do not merit redemption, the Messiah will come lowly and riding upon a donkey.

אמר ליה שבור מלכא לשמואל אמריתו משיח על חמרא אתי אישדר ליה סוסיא ברקא דאית לי אמר ליה מי אית לך בר חיור גווני

King Shapur of Persia said to Shmuel mockingly: You say that the Messiah will come on a donkey; I will send him the riding [barka] horse that I have. Shmuel said to him: Do you have a horse with one thousand colors [bar ḥivar gavanei] like the donkey of the Messiah? Certainly his donkey will be miraculous.

ר' יהושע בן לוי אשכח לאליהו דהוי קיימי אפיתחא דמערתא דרבי שמעון בן יוחאי אמר ליה אתינא לעלמא דאתי אמר ליה אם ירצה אדון הזה אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי שנים ראיתי וקול ג' שמעתי

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi found Elijah the prophet, who was standing at the entrance of the burial cave of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said to him: Will I be privileged to come to the Worldto-Come? Elijah said to him: If this Master, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will wish it so. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says: Two I saw, Elijah and me, and the voice of three I heard, as the Divine Presence was also there, and it was in reference to Him that Elijah said: If this Master will wish it so.

אמר ליה אימת אתי משיח אמר ליה זיל שייליה לדידיה והיכא יתיב אפיתחא דקרתא ומאי סימניה יתיב ביני עניי סובלי חלאים וכולן שרו ואסירי בחד זימנא איהו שרי חד ואסיר חד אמר דילמא מבעינא דלא איעכב

16

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said to Elijah: When will the Messiah come? Elijah said to him: Go ask him. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asked: And where is he sitting? Elijah said to him: At the entrance of the city of Rome. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi asked him: And what is his identifying sign by means of which I can recognize him? Elijah answered: He sits among the poor who suffer from illnesses. And all of them untie their bandages and tie them all at once, but the Messiah unties one bandage and ties one at a time. He says: Perhaps I will be needed to serve to bring about the redemption. Therefore, I will never tie more than one bandage, so that I will not be delayed.

אזל לגביה אמר ליה שלום עליך רבי ומורי אמר ליה שלום עליך בר ליואי א"ל לאימת אתי מר א"ל היום אתא לגבי אליהו א"ל מאי אמר לך א"ל שלום עליך בר ליואי א"ל אבטחך לך ולאבוך לעלמא דאתי א"ל שקורי קא שקר בי דאמר לי היום אתינא ולא אתא א"ל הכי אמר לך (תהלים צה, ז) היום אם בקולו תשמעו

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi went to the Messiah. He said to the Messiah:

Greetings to you, my rabbi and my teacher. The Messiah said to him:

Greetings to you, bar Leva'i. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said to him: When will the Master come? The Messiah said to him: Today. Sometime later,

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi came to Elijah. Elijah said to him: What did the Messiah say to you? He said to Elijah that the Messiah said: Greetings

[shalom] to you, bar Leva'i. Elijah said to him: He thereby guaranteed that you and your father will enter the World-to-Come, as he greeted you with shalom. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said to Elijah: The Messiah lied to

me, as he said to me: I am coming today, and he did not come. Elijah said to him that this is what he said to you: He said that he will come "today, if you will listen to his voice" (Psalms 95:7).

שאלו תלמידיו את רבי יוסי בן קיסמא אימתי בן דוד בא אמר מתיירא אני שמא תבקשו ממני אות אמרו לו אין אנו מבקשין ממך אות

§ Rabbi Yosei ben Kisma's students asked him: When will the son of David come? Rabbi Yosei ben Kisma said: I am hesitant to answer you, lest you request from me a sign to corroborate my statement. They said to him: We are not asking you for a sign.

א"ל לכשיפול השער הזה ויבנה ויפול ויבנה ויפול ואין מספיקין לבנותו עד שבן דוד בא אמרו לו רבינו תן לנו אות אמר להם ולא כך אמרתם לי שאין אתם מבקשין ממני אות

Rabbi Yosei ben Kisma said to them: You will see when this existing gate of Rome falls and will be rebuilt, and will fall a second time and will be rebuilt, and will fall a third time. And they will not manage to rebuild it until the son of David comes. The students said to him: Our rabbi, give us a sign. Rabbi Yosei ben Kisma said to them: But didn't you say to me that you are not asking me for a sign?

20 אמרו לו ואף על פי כן אמר להם אם כך יהפכו מי מערת פמייס לדם ונהפכו לדם

They said to him: And nevertheless, provide us with a sign. Rabbi Yosei ben Kisma said to them: If it is as I say, the water of the Cave of Pamyas

will be transformed into blood. The Gemara relates: And it was transformed into blood.

בשעת פטירתו אמר להן העמיקו לי ארוני 2

At the time of his death, Rabbi Yosei ben Kisma said to his students: Place my coffin deep in the ground,