

## JEWISH MESSIANIC TEXTS

### THE TITLE “THE SON OF MAN”

#### **DANIEL, CHAPTER 7 (WRITTEN IN THE 160s B.C., AT THE TIME OF THE MACCABEAN REVOLT)**

*The Beasts and the Judgment.* \*1In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, as Daniel lay in bed he had a dream, visions in his head. Then he wrote down the dream; the account began:2In the vision I saw during the night, suddenly the four winds of heaven stirred up the great sea,\*3from which emerged four immense beasts,<sup>a</sup> each different from the others.4The first was like a lion, but with eagle’s wings.\* While I watched, the wings were plucked; it was raised from the ground to stand on two feet like a human being, and given a human mind.5The second beast was like a bear;\* it was raised up on one side, and among the teeth in its mouth were three tusks. It was given the order, “Arise, devour much flesh.”6After this I looked and saw another beast, like a leopard;\* on its back were four wings like those of a bird, and it had four heads. To this beast dominion was given.7\* After this, in the visions of the night I saw a fourth beast, terrifying, horrible, and of extraordinary strength; it had great iron teeth with which it devoured and crushed, and it trampled with its feet what was left. It differed from the beasts that preceded it. It had ten horns.8I was considering the ten horns it had, when suddenly another, a little horn, sprang out of their midst, and three of the previous horns were torn away to make room for it. This horn had eyes like human eyes, and a mouth that spoke arrogantly.9\* As I watched,

Thrones were set up

and the Ancient of Days took his throne.

His clothing was white as snow,

the hair on his head like pure wool;

His throne was flames of fire,

with wheels of burning fire.

10A river of fire surged forth,

flowing from where he sat;

Thousands upon thousands were ministering to him,  
and myriads upon myriads stood before him.<sup>b</sup>

The court was convened, and the books were opened.11I watched, then, from the first of the arrogant words which the horn spoke, until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the burning fire.12As for the other beasts, their dominion was taken away, but they were granted a prolongation of life for a time and a season.

**13As the visions during the night continued, I saw coming with the clouds of heaven<sup>c</sup>**

**One like a son of man.\***

**When he reached the Ancient of Days**

and was presented before him,  
14He received dominion, splendor, and kingship;  
all nations, peoples and tongues will serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion

that shall not pass away,  
his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.<sup>d</sup>

15Because of this, my spirit was anguished and I, Daniel, was terrified by my  
visions.16 I approached one of those present and asked him the truth of all  
this; in answer, he made known to me its meaning:17“These four great beasts  
stand for four kings which shall arise on the earth.18 But the holy ones<sup>\*</sup> of the  
Most High shall receive the kingship, to possess it forever and ever.”

19Then I wished to make certain about the fourth beast, so very terrible and different from  
the others, devouring and crushing with its iron teeth and bronze claws, and trampling  
with its feet what was left;20and about the ten horns on its head, and the other one that  
sprang up, before which three horns fell; and about the horn with the eyes and the mouth  
that spoke arrogantly, which appeared greater than its fellows.21For, as I watched, that  
horn made war against the holy ones and was victorious 22 until the Ancient of Days  
came, and judgment was pronounced in favor of the holy ones of the Most High, and the  
time arrived for the holy ones to possess the kingship.23 He answered me thus:

“The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth,

different from all the others;

The whole earth it shall devour,

trample down and crush.

24The ten horns shall be ten kings

rising out of that kingdom;

another shall rise up after them,

Different from those before him,

who shall lay low three kings.

25He shall speak against the Most High

and wear down the holy ones of the Most High,  
intending to change the feast days and the law.<sup>\*</sup>

They shall be handed over to him

for a time, two times, and half a time.

26But when the court is convened,

and his dominion is taken away

to be abolished and completely destroyed,

27 Then the kingship and dominion and majesty  
of all the kingdoms under the heavens  
shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the Most High,

Whose kingship shall be an everlasting kingship,

whom all dominions shall serve and obey.”

28 This is the end of the report. I, Daniel, was greatly terrified by my thoughts, and my face became pale, but I kept the matter to myself.\*

- \* [7:1–27] This vision continues the motif of the four kingdoms from chap. 2; see note on 2:36–45. To the four succeeding world kingdoms, Babylonian, Median, Persian, and Greek, is opposed the heavenly kingdom of God and the kingdom of God’s people on earth. The beast imagery of this chapter has been used extensively in the Book of Revelation, where it is applied to the Roman empire, the persecutor of the Church.
- \* [7:2] The great sea: the primordial ocean beneath the earth, according to ancient Near Eastern cosmology (Gn 7:11; 49:25). It was thought to contain various monsters (Is 27:1; Jb 7:12), and in particular mythological monsters symbolizing the chaos which God had vanquished in primordial times (Jb 9:13; 26:12; Is 51:9–10; etc.).
- \* [7:4] In ancient times the Babylonian empire was commonly represented as a winged lion, in the rampant position (raised up on one side). The two wings that were plucked may represent Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar. On two feet like a human being...a human mind: contrasts with what is said in 4:13, 30.
- \* [7:5] A bear: represents the Median empire, its three tusks symbolizing its destructive nature; hence, the command: “Arise, devour much flesh.”
- \* [7:6] A leopard: used to symbolize the swiftness with which Cyrus the Persian established his kingdom. Four heads: corresponding to the four Persian kings of 11:2.
- \* [7:7–8] Alexander’s empire was different from all the others in that it was Western rather than Eastern in inspiration, and far exceeded the others in power. The ten horns represent the kings of the Seleucid dynasty, the only part of the Hellenistic empire that concerned the author. The little horn is Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.), who usurped the throne and persecuted the Jews.
- \* [7:9–10] A vision of the heavenly throne of God (the Ancient of Days), who sits in judgment over the nations. Some of the details of the vision, depicting the divine majesty and omnipotence, are to be found in Ezekiel 1. Others are paralleled in 1 Enoch, a contemporary Jewish apocalypse.
- \* [7:13–14] One like a son of man: In contrast to the worldly kingdoms opposed to God, which are represented as grotesque beasts, the coming Kingdom of God is represented by a human figure. Scholars disagree as to whether this figure should be taken as a collective symbol for the people of God (cf. 7:27) or identified as a particular individual, e.g., the archangel Michael (cf. 12:1) or the messiah. The phrase “Son of Man” becomes a title for Jesus in the gospels, especially in passages dealing with the Second Coming (Mk 13 and parallels).
- \* [7:18] “Holy ones” in Hebrew and Aramaic literature are nearly always members of the heavenly court or angels (cf. 4:10, 14, 20; 8:13), though here the term is commonly taken to refer to Israel.
- \* [7:25] The reference is to the persecution of Antiochus IV and specifically to the disruption of the Temple cult (1 Mc 1:41–64). A time, two times, and half a time: an indefinite, evil period of time. Probably here, three and a half years, which becomes the standard period of tribulation in apocalyptic literature (Rev 11:2; 13:5 [in months]; 11:3 [in days]; and cf. 12:14). As seven is the Jewish “perfect” number, half of it signifies great imperfection. Actually, the Temple was desecrated for three years (1 Mc 4:52–54). The duration of the persecution was a little longer, since it was already under way before the Temple was desecrated.
- \* [7:28] This verse ends the Aramaic part of the Book of Daniel.

## **1 Enoch Chapter 48**

1 And in that place I saw the fountain of righteousness  
Which was inexhaustible:

And around it were many fountains of wisdom:

And all the thirsty drank of them,

And were filled with wisdom,

And their dwellings were with the righteous and holy and elect.

2 And at that hour that Son of Man was named

In the presence of the Lord of Spirits,

And his name before the Head of Days.

3 Yea, before the sun and the signs were created,

Before the stars of the heaven were made,

His name was named before the Lord of Spirits.

4 He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall,

And he shall be the light of the Gentiles,

And the hope of those who are troubled of heart.

5 All who dwell on earth shall fall down and worship before him,

And will praise and bless and celebrate with song the Lord of Spirits.

6And for this reason hath he been chosen and hidden before Him,  
Before the creation of the world and for evermore.  
7And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits hath revealed him to the holy and righteous;  
For he hath preserved the lot of the righteous,  
Because they have hated and despised this world of unrighteousness,  
And have hated all its works and ways in the name of the Lord of Spirits:  
For in his name they are saved,  
And according to his good pleasure hath it been in regard to their life.  
8In these days downcast in countenance shall the kings of the earth have become,  
And the strong who possess the land because of the works of their hands,  
For on the day of their anguish and affliction they shall not [be able to] save themselves.  
9And I will give them over into the hands of Mine elect:  
As straw in the fire so shall they burn before the face of the holy:  
As lead in the water shall they sink before the face of the righteous,  
And no trace of them shall any more be found.  
10And on the day of their affliction there shall be rest on the earth,  
And before them they shall fall and not rise again:  
And there shall be no one to take them with his hands and raise them:  
For they have denied the Lord of Spirits and His Anointed.  
The name of the Lord of Spirits be blessed.

**1 Enoch 69:26 (likely written between 60 and 80 A.D.)**

26And there was great joy amongst them,  
And they blessed and glorified and extolled  
Because the name of that Son of Man had been revealed unto them.  
27And he sat on the throne of his glory,  
And the sum of judgement was given unto the Son of Man,  
And he caused the sinners to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth,  
And those who have led the world astray.  
28With chains shall they be bound,  
And in their assemblage-place of destruction shall they be imprisoned,  
And all their works vanish from the face of the earth.  
29And from henceforth there shall be nothing corruptible;  
For that Son of Man has appeared,  
And has seated himself on the throne of his glory,  
And all evil shall pass away before his face,  
And the word of that Son of Man shall go forth  
And be strong before the Lord of Spirits.

**2 Esdras 1 – 13 (most likely written 70 - 96 A.D.)**

1 And it came to pass after seven days, I dreamed a dream by night:

2 And, lo, there arose a wind from the sea, that it moved all the waves thereof.  
 3 And I beheld, and, lo, that man waxed strong with the thousands of heaven: and when he turned his countenance to look, all the things trembled that were seen under him.  
 4 And whosoever the voice went out of his mouth, all they burned that heard his voice, like as the earth faileth when it feeleth the fire.  
 5 And after this I beheld, and, lo, there was gathered together a multitude of men, out of number, from the four winds of the heaven, to subdue the man that came out of the sea  
 6 But I beheld, and, lo, he had graved himself a great mountain, and flew up upon it.  
 7 But I would have seen the region or place whereout the hill was graven, and I could not.  
 8 And after this I beheld, and, lo, all they which were gathered together to subdue him were sore afraid, and yet durst fight.  
 9 And, lo, as he saw the violence of the multitude that came, he neither lifted up his hand, nor held sword, nor any instrument of war:  
 10 But only I saw that he sent out of his mouth as it had been a blast of fire, and out of his lips a flaming breath, and out of his tongue he cast out sparks and tempests.  
 11 And they were all mixed together; the blast of fire, the flaming breath, and the great tempest; and fell with violence upon the multitude which was prepared to fight, and burned them up every one, so that upon a sudden of an innumerable multitude nothing was to be perceived, but only dust and smell of smoke: when I saw this I was afraid.  
 12 Afterward saw I the same man come down from the mountain, and call unto him another peaceable Multitude.  
 13 And there came much people unto him, whereof some were glad, some were sorry, and some of them were bound, and other some brought of them that were offered: then was I sick through great fear

### “The Suffering Servant” Isaiah 53

<sup>g</sup>Who has believed what he has heard from us?<sup>1</sup>  
 And to whom has <sup>h</sup>the arm of the LORD been revealed?  
<sup>2</sup> For he grew up before him like a young plant,  
<sup>i</sup>and like a root out of dry ground;  
<sup>j</sup>he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,  
 and no beauty that we should desire him.  
<sup>3</sup> <sup>k</sup>He was despised and rejected<sup>2</sup> by men;  
 a man of sorrows,<sup>3</sup> and acquainted with<sup>4</sup> grief;<sup>5</sup>  
 and as one from whom men hide their faces<sup>6</sup>  
 he was despised, and <sup>l</sup>we esteemed him not.  
<sup>4</sup> <sup>m</sup>Surely he has borne our griefs  
 and carried our sorrows;  
 yet we esteemed him stricken,

<sup>n</sup>smitten by God, and afflicted.

<sup>5</sup> <sup>o</sup>But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
<sup>p</sup>and with his wounds we are healed.

<sup>6</sup> <sup>q</sup>All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
<sup>r</sup>and the LORD has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

<sup>7</sup> He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
<sup>s</sup>yet he opened not his mouth;  
<sup>t</sup>like a <sup>u</sup>lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he opened not his mouth.

<sup>8</sup> By oppression and judgment he was taken away;  
and as for his generation, <sup>v</sup>who considered  
that he was cut off out of the land of the living,  
stricken for the transgression of my people?

<sup>9</sup> And they made his grave with the wicked  
<sup>w</sup>and with a rich man in his death,  
although <sup>x</sup>he had done no violence,  
and there was no deceit in his mouth.

<sup>10</sup> Yet <sup>y</sup>it was the will of the LORD to crush him;  
he has put him to grief;<sup>7</sup>  
<sup>z</sup>when his soul makes<sup>8</sup> an offering for guilt,  
he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days;  
<sup>a</sup>the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

<sup>11</sup> Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see<sup>9</sup> and be satisfied;  
by his knowledge shall <sup>b</sup>the righteous one, my servant,  
<sup>c</sup>make many to be accounted righteous,  
<sup>d</sup>and he shall bear their iniquities.

<sup>12</sup> <sup>e</sup>Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many,<sup>10</sup>  
<sup>f</sup>and he shall divide the spoil with the strong,<sup>11</sup>  
because he poured out his soul to death  
and was numbered with the transgressors;  
<sup>g</sup>yet he bore the sin of many,  
and makes intercession for the transgressors.