

THE TEMPORARY MESSIANIC KINGDOM IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM AND THE DELAY OF THE PAROUSIA: PSALM 110:1 AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHRISTIAN INAUGURATED ESCHATOLOGY

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Abstract: *Some early Jewish apocalypses include the concept of a temporary messianic kingdom as a transitional period between the old and new age. This idea receives much more attention in later rabbinic literature but there is enough early evidence to argue that the first Christians would have been familiar with the concept. This article will discuss the earliest evidence in Second Temple Jewish literature and argue that the idea of a temporary transitional messianic kingdom provided the earliest Christians with some of the needed conceptual resources for understanding Jesus's ascension and the delay of the parousia. The pre-existent Jewish idea of a transitional messianic kingdom was combined by the earliest Christians with Ps 110:1 in order to interpret the present time in terms of Jesus's temporary and transitional rule and kingdom. Second Temple Jewish expectation of a temporary messianic kingdom laid the groundwork for early Christian inaugurated eschatology and the unexpected interval between the inauguration of the new age and the final consummation was perhaps not so unexpected.*

Key Words: *temporary messianic kingdom, Second Temple Judaism, Psalm 110:1, delay of the parousia, inaugurated eschatology, Jewish apocalyptic literature.*

The earliest Christians were keenly aware that Jesus's life, death, and resurrection did not lead to the restoration of the kingdom to Israel and their expected utopian future (Acts 1:6). A future return of Jesus was needed to lead to the final and full fulfillment of God's promises, kingdom, and new creation; the *parousia*, along with the final consummation, was delayed.¹ Few early Christian texts explicitly wrestle with the delay and it is hard to find concrete evidence that the earliest Christians viewed it as a problem.² Whether or not the delay was a formative problem or an anachronistic projection of modern scholarship, inaugurated eschatology is now often put forward as a description of the early Christian belief that God's promises had begun to be fulfilled in Jesus's life, death, and resurrection but would

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¹ Stephen S. Smalley, "The Delay of the Parousia," *JBL* 83 (1964): 41–54; Richard J. Bauckham, "The Delay of the Parousia," *TynBul* 31 (1980): 3–36; David E. Aune, "The Significance of the Delay of the Parousia for Early Christianity," in *Current Issues in Biblical and Patristic Interpretation* (ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 87–109; Charles H. Talbert, "2 Peter and the Delay of the Parousia," *VC* 20 (1966): 137–45.

² See 2 Pet 3:4; *1 Clem.* 23:3; *Barn.* 19:5; *Herm. Vis.* 3.4.3; *2 Clem.* 11:2; Justin, *Dial.* 32:3; Justin, *1 Apol.* 28:2; *2 Apol.* 7:1. L. W. Barnard notes that "Justin, as a good representative of second century thought, was little troubled by the non-arrival of the second advent" ("Justin Martyr's Eschatology," *VC* 19 [1965]: 89).

not be completely fulfilled until Jesus's return.³ The fulfillment of God's eschatological promises had been inaugurated but not yet consummated.

The delay of Christ's return and the subsequent development of inaugurated eschatology is generally presented as an unexpected or unforeseen development. Schreiner is representative of many when he writes, "There is an *unexpected* interval between the resurrection of Jesus and the final resurrection. Hence, the new age is inaugurated but not consummated."⁴ Inaugurated eschatology is thus seen in part as a development stemming from the unexpected delay or interval between the Messiah's first and second coming, a delay which could not have been easily or obviously anticipated from the OT.

Some Jewish apocalypses contain the idea of a temporary messianic kingdom as a transitional period between the old and new age. This idea apparently developed in response to belief in a future resurrection and final judgment. The messianic kingdom allows for the fulfillment of certain prophecies which would more fittingly take place before the final judgment and eternal age.⁵ The idea of a temporary messianic kingdom receives more attention in later rabbinic literature but there is enough early evidence to argue that the earliest Christians would have been familiar with the concept. This article will discuss the earliest evidence in Second Temple Jewish literature and argue that the idea of a temporary transitional messianic kingdom provided Paul and the earliest Christians with some of the needed conceptual resources for understanding Jesus's ascension and the delay of the *parousia*. The pre-existent Jewish idea of a transitional messianic kingdom was combined by the earliest Christians with Ps 110:1 in order to interpret the present time in terms of Jesus's temporary and transitional rule and kingdom. Second Temple Jewish expectation of a temporary messianic kingdom laid the groundwork for early Christian inaugurated eschatology and the unexpected interval between the inauguration of the new age and the final consummation was perhaps not so unexpected.

³ For a fascinating look at a form of inaugurated eschatology in pre-Christian Jewish Diaspora see Jill Hicks-Keeton, "Already/Not Yet: Eschatological Tension in the Book of Tobit," *JBL* 132 (2013): 97–117.

⁴ Thomas R. Schreiner, *NT Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 287 (emphasis added). Grant Macaskill defines inaugurated eschatology as "an eschatology that contains both realised and future elements" (*Revealed Wisdom and Inaugurated Eschatology in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism [Leiden: Brill, 2007], 24–25). Oscar Cullman was an early influential proponent of a form of inaugurated eschatology, and inaugurated eschatology has become a common way to describe early Christian eschatology (*Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History* [trans. Floyd V. Filson; London: SCM, 1951], 81–93, 144–74). Cf. L. Joseph Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul's Eschatology* (JSNTSup 19; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 131–32; Herman Ridderbos, *Paulus: Ontwerp van zijn theologie* (Kampen: Uitgeverij Kok, 1997), 38–39; J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1980), 159–60.

⁵ David E. Aune notes, "The conception of a temporary messianic kingdom which would function as a transition between the present evil age and the age to come, between monarchy and theocracy, solved the problem of how the transition from the Messiah to the eternal reign of God (where such a conception is present) might be conceived" ("Apocalypticism," *DNTB* 50).

I. THE TEMPORARY MESSIANIC KINGDOM IN JUDAISM

The relevant Jewish material can be organized into three categories: (1) texts that explicitly speak of a temporary messianic kingdom; (2) texts that describe a temporary (non-messianic) transition period; and (3) texts that do not temporally distinguish between the future messianic kingdom/period and the eternal state.⁶

1. *The temporary messianic kingdom.* Several texts and traditions explicitly refer to a temporary messianic kingdom between the present evil age and the eternal age to come.

a. *4 Ezra.* 4 Ezra (c. AD 100) unambiguously points to a future temporary messianic kingdom: “my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those who are with him, and those who remain shall rejoice four hundred years. And after these years my son the Messiah shall die, and all who draw human breath” (4 Ezra 7:28–29).⁷ This leads to a seven-day period of primeval silence followed by the final judgment (4 Ezra 7:30–34).

Later in the book’s fifth vision the author interprets the encounter between the eagle and the lion to mean that the Messiah would come to judge and destroy the oppressive eagle (Rome). After this “he will deliver in mercy the remnant of my people, those who have been saved throughout my borders, and he will make them joyful until the end comes, the day of judgment, of which I spoke to you at the beginning” (4 Ezra 12:34).

The sixth vision of a man from the sea is less explicit since it does not distinguish the time of the Messiah from the final judgment and eternal state but indicates that the Messiah (“my son”; 4 Ezra 13:32) would stand on Mount Zion and destroy the attacking multitudes with fire from his mouth (the law) before regathering the lost ten tribes to Israel. “But those who are left of your people, who are found within my holy borders, shall be saved. Therefore when he destroys the multitude of the nations that are gathered together, he will defend the people who remain. And then he will show them very many wonders” (4 Ezra 13:48–50). If we read this sixth vision in light of the earlier descriptions of the Messiah and his activity, the Messiah’s leadership of the survivors would be for a temporary duration culminating in the final judgment.

b. *2 Baruch.* Three passages in 2 Baruch (c. AD 110–120) are relevant to this discussion (2 Bar. 29:1–30:5; 39:7–40:4; 70:9–74:4). When the “Anointed One” is revealed, the earth will enter into a period of incredible agricultural abundance and

⁶ For further discussion of these texts see J. W. Bailey, “The Temporary Messianic Reign in the Literature of Early Judaism,” *JBL* 53 (1934): 170–87; T. Francis Glasson, “The Temporary Messianic Kingdom and the Kingdom of God,” *JTS* 41 (1990): 517–20; Larry R. Helyer, “The Necessity, Problems, and Promise of Second Temple Judaism for Discussions of NT Eschatology,” *JETS* 47 (2004): 602–9; Jack T. Sanders, “Whence the First Millennium? The Sources behind Revelation 20,” *NTS* 50 (2004): 448–51; William Loader, “Sexuality and Eschatology: In Search of a Celibate Utopia in Pseudepigraphic Literature,” *JSP* 24 (2014): 57–62; Kreitzer, *Jesus and God in Paul’s Eschatology*, 29–92.

⁷ All quotations from 4 Ezra are from B. M. Metzger, “The Fourth Book of Ezra,” *OTP* 1:517–60.

the survivors will “see marvels every day” (2 Bar. 29:6).⁸ “And it will happen after these things when the time of the appearance of the Anointed One has been fulfilled and he returns to glory, that then all who sleep in hope of him will rise” (2 Bar. 30:1). The time of the Anointed One is not here described as a kingdom but pictured as a transitional period of affluence and security preceding the resurrection of the righteous and the final state (2 Bar. 30:2–5).

In the interpretation of the vision of the forest, vine, fountain, and cedar, Baruch is told that “the dominion of my Anointed One which is like the fountain and the vine, will be revealed” (2 Bar. 39:7). The Anointed One will then destroy the opposing host and convict and kill its leader (2 Bar. 40:1–2). “And his dominion will last forever until the world of corruption has ended and until the times which have been mentioned before have been fulfilled” (2 Bar. 40:3). This interpretation paints the transitional period as a kingdom (“dominion”) which will last until “the world of corruption has ended.” The Messiah is pictured as a warrior and king.

Finally, in the interpretation of the vision of the black and bright waters Baruch is told that the final bright waters are “the time of my Anointed One” (2 Bar. 72:2). The Anointed One will first function as a judge to spare nations which did not know or oppress Israel, but kill all who oppressed Jacob (2 Bar. 72:2–6). After this he will function as a king and sit down “in eternal peace on the throne of the kingdom” (2 Bar. 73:1). This will usher in a period of security, safety, and abundance where “nobody will again die untimely, nor will any adversity take place suddenly. . . . And the wild beasts will come from the wood and serve men, and the asps and dragons will come out of their holes to subject themselves to a child. And women will no longer have pain when they bear, nor will they be tormented when they yield the fruits of their womb” (2 Bar. 73:3, 6–7). This vision could be seen as lacking a distinction between the temporary messianic kingdom and the final state because judgment precedes the kingdom and there is no mention of the resurrection or final judgment following the kingdom. The transitional nature of the kingdom, however, is hinted at in the conclusion of the interpretation: “Therefore, it is far away from the evil things and near to those which do not die” (2 Bar. 74:3). The earlier description of the kingdom excluded untimely death and sudden adversity (2 Bar. 73:3) while this final description indicates that the messianic kingdom is a transitional period which is distant from the evil past and closer to the undying future. It is near the eternal state but not there yet.

c. *Rabbinic teaching.* In addition to the evidence from 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch for a temporary transitional messianic kingdom, the evidence from the rabbinic literature should be included here. This material is notoriously difficult to date with confidence, so it carries less weight, but certainly points to a developing belief in a temporary messianic kingdom in rabbinic Judaism.

It is by no means only in the apocalyptic literature that we have evidence for the temporary kingdom; the same doctrine is found in Rabbinic sources. Rabbi Aki-

⁸ All quotations from 2 Baruch are from A. F. J. Klijn, “2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch,” *OTP* 1:615–52.

ba said the Messianic reign would last 40 years; R. Eliezer 100 years; R. Berechya 600 years; R. Judah the Prince 400 years, corresponding to the years of Egyptian bondage, or alternatively 365 years, evidently matching the days of the year. Another R. Eliezer gave the period as 1,000 years; R. Abbahu 7,000; R. Eleazer 70 years. The Rabbis generally seemed attracted to a period of 2,000 years.⁹

d. *Samaritans*. Samaritan belief in a temporary messianic period of 1,000 years between the present age and the final judgment is difficult to date, but Josephus's account of a Samaritan messianic pretender can be dated to AD 36.¹⁰ Pilate suppressed the movement and killed the leader. John 4:25 also points to this Samaritan belief. The fact that an armed movement could be formed in AD 36 indicates that the origins of the expectation predate the emergence of Christianity.

e. *3 Enoch*. Although Merkabah texts generally neglect eschatological themes in favor of descriptions of God's throne and the mysteries of heaven, 3 Enoch (c. 6th century AD) contains several clear references to a messianic kingdom.¹¹ In manuscript A, the entire book closes with the following passage.¹²

At once Israel shall be saved from among the gentiles and the Messiah shall appear to them and bring them up to Jerusalem with great joy. Moreover, the kingdom of Israel, gathered from the four quarters of the world, shall eat with the Messiah, and the gentiles shall eat with them, as it is written, The Lord bares his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God; and it also says, The Lord alone is his guide, with him is no alien god; and it says, The Lord will be King of the whole world. (3 En. 48A:10; cf. 44:8)

This closing passage does not make a distinction between this period of time and the eternal state. A distinction may be suggested earlier in the book between the time of the messiah "in his generation" and "the end of time."

And I saw: the Messiah of David and his generation, and all the battles and wars, and all that they will do to Israel whether for good or bad. And I saw: all the battles and wars which Gog and Magog will fight with Israel in the days of the Messiah, and all that the Holy One, blessed be he, will do to them in the time to come. All the rest of the leaders of every generation and every deed of every generation both of Israel and of the gentiles, whether done or to be done in the time to come, to all generations, till the end of time, were all printed on the curtain of the Omnipresent One. (3 En. 45:5–6a)

The final form of 3 Enoch is quite late but contains many old traditions, likely including these ideas about the Messiah.

⁹ Glasson, "Temporary Messianic Kingdom," 518. See esp. *b. Sanh.* 97a–99a.

¹⁰ Josephus, *Ant.* 18.85–87. Cf. Bailey, "Temporary Messianic Reign," 179–80.

¹¹ P. Alexander argues, "though 3 Enoch contains some very old traditions and stands in direct line with developments which had already begun in the Maccabean era, a date for its final redaction in the fifth or the sixth century A.D. cannot be far from the truth" (*OTP* 1:229).

¹² All quotations from 3 Enoch are from P. Alexander, "3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch" in *OTP* 1:223–315.

f. *Conclusion.* Even though most of the material which explicitly points to a temporary transitional messianic kingdom postdates the emergence of Christianity, the ideas themselves were evidently circulating and being developed in some Jewish circles before the birth of Christ.

2. *A temporary (non-messianic) transitional period.* A few texts describe a temporary transitional period without an explicit messianic dimension.

a. *The Apocalypse of Weeks.* First Enoch is particularly important for its foundational role in the continuing development of Jewish eschatological expectations. The Apocalypse of Weeks (c. 175–170 BC; *1 En.* 93:1–10; 91:11–17 [the reordering of the Ethiopic text reflects the older order contained in the Aramaic text 4QEn^g]) indicates that the eighth week of world history would be a “week of righteousness” in which “judgment shall be executed in righteousness on the oppressors” and a “house shall be built for the Great King in glory for evermore” (*1 En.* 91:12–13).¹³ This would be followed by the ninth week in which “All the deeds of the sinners shall depart from upon the whole earth, and be written off for eternal destruction; and all the people shall direct their sight to the path of uprightness” (*1 En.* 91:14). The eternal judgment executed by the angels will finally come in the seventh part of the tenth week followed by the appearance of a new heaven and weeks without number in which “sin shall no more be heard of forever” (*1 En.* 91:17).

The Apocalypse of Weeks clearly points to a transitional period of time between the evil present and the final judgment and eternal state but there is no conclusive indication that this period was messianic. The line about a house being built “for the Great King in glory forevermore” (*1 En.* 91:13) and the later Ethiopic redacted literary context (“the righteous one” [sg.] in 91:10; 92:3, 4) may hint in this direction, but definitive proof is lacking. Larry Helyer suggests that “direct evidence is essential for sound arguments. One should not, however, place undue weight on lack of evidence.”¹⁴ Even though the Apocalypse of Weeks does not explicitly mention a messianic figure, it does not mean that the original readers would not have supplied such a figure from their preunderstanding of the eschatological scenario. From the other sectarian texts from Qumran and the rest of 1 Enoch it would be natural for a reader to fill in the messianic silence of the eighth week with a messianic figure. Roger Beckwith provides a strong example of this approach by reading the Apocalypse of Weeks as an Essene apocalypse in light of the Dream Visions (*1 En.* 83–90), Jubilees, and other texts that relate to the Essene calendar.¹⁵ This connection opens up the possibility of reading the Apocalypse of Weeks in light of the messianic material throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls which does not

¹³ All quotations from 1 Enoch are from E. Isaac, “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” *OTP* 1:5–90. On the date, see Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *1 Enoch 91–108* (CEJL; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 60–62. Cf. Matthew Black, “The Apocalypse of Weeks in Light of 4Q En^g,” *VT* 28 (1978): 464–69; James C. Vanderkam, “Studies in the Apocalypse of Weeks (1 Enoch 93:1–10; 91:11–17),” *CBQ* 46 (1984): 511–23.

¹⁴ Helyer, “Necessity, Problems, and Promise,” 612.

¹⁵ Roger T. Beckwith, “The Significance of the Calendar for Interpreting Essene Chronology and Eschatology,” *RevQ* 10 (1980): 189.

otherwise seem to distinguish between the time of the Messiah and the eternal state.¹⁶

b. *Jubilees*. No mention is made of the messiah or a kingdom, but *Jub.* 1:27–29 and 23:26–31 (c. 161–140 BC) can be read together as describing a period of time characterized by longevity, blessing, and healing which seems to transition into the eternal state.

c. *2 Enoch*. *2 Enoch* is impossible to date with confidence; suggestions range from the 1st century BC to the ninth century AD.¹⁷ This uncertainty weakens its role in any argument, but certain elements in *2 Enoch* are certainly very old. *2 Enoch* 32:1–33:2 seems to divide history into seven 1,000-year periods. The seventh period corresponds to the seventh day of rest and the eighth day points to the eternal state. This eternal period is further described as following the final judgment in *2 En.* 65:6–11. A similar tradition in *Barn.* 15:4–9 indicates that the division of history into 6,000 years with 1,000 years of Sabbath rest before the eternal state of the eighth day goes back to at least the early 2nd century. Barnabas likely represents a Christian adoption of older Jewish material while *2 Enoch* represents development of the same ideas within the Jewish tradition.

3. *A Messiah without a transitional messianic kingdom*. Many passages discuss the activity of the Messiah but do not clearly connect this activity with a transitional kingdom or period of time. The time of the Messiah seems to blend into the eternal state.

a. *Enoch's Animal Vision*. Enoch's animal vision (*1 En.* 85–90; c. 164–161 BC) allegorically describes world history with humans represented by animals. The messianic “snow-white cow” comes on the scene after God has acted to judge (*1 En.* 90:24–27) and God's people had put away the sword that had been given to them to fight their adversaries (*1 En.* 90:19, 34). No explicit role is given to the messianic snow-white cow but “all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the sky feared him and made petition to him all the time” (*1 En.* 90:37). A transitional period of time is implied by the way Enoch notes, “I went on seeing until all their kindred were transformed, and became snow-white cows” (*1 En.* 90:38). The messiah thus apparently begins a limited period of time during which all are transformed to be like him. The dream vision ends without indicating how long this period of time would last. Presumably it would last forever.

b. *Sibylline Oracles*. Book 3 of the Sibylline Oracles (c. 163–45 BC) seems to indicate Jewish expectation of an Egyptian Ptolemaic ruler as the eschatological messianic savior figure. “And then God will send a King from the sun who will stop the entire earth from evil war, killing some, imposing oaths of loyalty on oth-

¹⁶ See below. For messianic expectation in the Dead Sea Scrolls see John J. Collins, “He Shall Not Judge by What His Eyes See: Messianic Authority in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” *DSD* 2 (1995): 145–64; idem, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010); James H. Charlesworth et al., *Qumran-Messianism* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998); Craig A. Evans, “The Messiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Israel's Messiah in the Bible and in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. R. S. Hess and M. D. Carroll R.; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 85–101.

¹⁷ F. I. Andersen, “2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” *OTP* 1:94–97.

ers; and he will not do all these things by his private plans but in obedience to the noble teachings of the great God” (*Sib. Or.* 3.652–56).¹⁸ This ruler brings in a period of abundance which is followed by an assault on God’s temple; direct divine intervention and rescue through judgment and punishment; and an eternal period of abundance, peace, and prosperity on the earth (*Sib. Or.* 3.657–795). This scenario could be read as distinguishing between a messianic period and the final state but it is not explicit.

c. *Psalms of Solomon*. The Psalms of Solomon (c. mid-first century BC) are often neglected as evidence for a temporary messianic kingdom but certainly speak of a messiah active on the earth to restore Israel for a limited period (“in his days” [*Pss. Sol.* 17:32, 37]; “in those days” [*Pss. Sol.* 17:44; 18:6]).¹⁹ Although not as explicit as 4 Ezra or 2 Baruch, the Psalms of Solomon may point in the general direction of a temporary messianic kingdom on earth (“the coming generation” [*Pss. Sol.* 18:6]; “a good generation” [*Pss. Sol.* 18:9]). There is, however, no clear distinction between this period and eternity and no reference to a future resurrection or final judgment. In the Psalms of Solomon the apparent limitation of the Messiah’s reign (“in his days”) is counterbalanced by the expectation that he would rule forever (“He will strike the earth with the word of his mouth forever” [*Pss. Sol.* 17:35]).

d. *Dead Sea Scrolls*. The evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls points in the same direction. There is clear expectation of a royal messiah who, along with a priestly messiah, will restore Israel.²⁰ This restoration period will apparently endure indefinitely. The progression in 4Q521 ii illustrates this well: the appearance of the “anointed one” leads to restoration and an “eternal kingdom” with apparently some kind of resurrection (“make the dead live”; cf. Isa 26:19).

1 [for the heav]ens and the earth will listen to his anointed one, 2 [and all th]at is in them will not turn away from the precepts of the holy ones. 3 Strengthen yourselves, you who are seeking the Lord, in his service! *Blank* 4 Will you not in this encounter the Lord, all those who hope in their heart? 5 For the Lord will consider the pious, and call the righteous by name, 6 and his spirit will hover upon the poor, and he will renew the faithful with his strength. 7 For he will honour the pious upon the throne of an eternal kingdom, 8 freeing prisoners, giving sight to the blind, straightening out the twis[ted.] 9 And for[e]ver shall I cling [to those who h]ope, and in his mercy [...] 10 and the fru[it of ...] ... not be delayed. 11 And the Lord will perform marvellous acts such as have not existed, just as he sa[id,] 12 [for] he will heal the badly wounded and will make the

¹⁸ All quotations from the Sibylline Oracles are from J. J. Collins, “Sibylline Oracles,” in *OTP* 1:317–472.

¹⁹ Glasson, “Temporary Messianic Kingdom,” 517. All quotations from Psalms of Solomon are from R. B. Wright, “Psalms of Solomon,” in *OTP* 2:639–70.

²⁰ Evans, “Messiah in the Dead Sea Scrolls,” 87–88. Evans cites CD 7:20 (= 4Q266 3 iii 19–21); 12:23–13:1; 14:19 (=4Q266 10 i 12); 19:10–11; 20:1; 1QS 9:11; 1 QSa 2:11–21; 1Qsb 5:20, 27–28; 1QM 3:15 (= 4Q496 10 iv 3–4); 5:1; 11:6–7; 4Q161 2–6 ii 15; 7–10 iii 22; 4Q174 1 i 11; 4Q175 12; 4Q246 1:9; 2:1; 4Q252 1 3–4; 4 2; 4Q258 15 1; 4Q285 4 2–6; 5 3–4; 6 2; 4Q369 1 ii 6; 4Q376 1 iii 1–3; 4Q381 15 7 (?); 4Q382 16 2 (?); 4Q458 2 ii 6; 4Q521 2 ii 1.

dead live, he will proclaim good news to the poor 13 and [...] ... [...] he will lead the [...] ... and enrich the hungry. 14 [...] and all ... [...]²¹

Likewise, column ii of 4Q246 paints the same general picture.

1 He will be called son of God, and they will call him son of the Most High. Like the sparks 2 that you saw, so will their kingdom be; they will rule several year[s] over 3 the earth and crush everything; a people will crush another people, and a province another provi[n]ce. 4 *Blank* Until the people of God arises and makes everyone rest from the sword. *Blank* 5 His kingdom will be an eternal kingdom, and all his paths in truth. He will jud[ge] 6 the earth in truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease from the earth, 7 and all the provinces will pay him homage. The great God is his strength, 8 he will wage war for him; he will place the peoples in his hand and 9 cast them all away before him. His rule will be an eternal rule, and all the abysses²²

The kingdom of the messiah (“son of God”) begins and exists in time but is described as an eternal kingdom.

e. *The Similitudes of Enoch*. We noted above that the Apocalypse of Weeks clearly describes a transitional period of time but does not describe this period as a messianic kingdom or period. The Similitudes of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 37–71; late 1st century BC–early 1st century AD) clearly discuss a messianic figure but do not explicitly indicate a transitional period of time between this age and the age to come. The “Righteous One” (*1 En.* 38:2, 3; 53:6), “Elect/Chosen One” (*1 En.* 39:6; 45:3, 4, 5; 48:6; 49:2, 4; 51:3, 4; 52:6, 9; 53:6; 55:4; 61:5, 8, 10; 62:1), “Messiah” (*1 En.* 48:10; 52:4), and “Son of Man” (*1 En.* 46:2, 4; 48:2; 62:5, 7, 9; 63:11; 69:29; 70:1) plays a key role in bringing judgment and destroying opposing rulers. He helps the righteous and chosen ones and “is the light to the gentiles” (*1 En.* 48:4). He is said to sit on God’s throne (*1 En.* 51:3; 61:8) and “his glory is forever and ever and his power is unto all generations” (*1 En.* 49:2). His coming is associated with the future resurrection (*1 En.* 51:1–2), final judgment (*1 En.* 61:8), and the eternal life of God’s people on a purified earth (*1 En.* 45:4–6; 51:4–5). The Similitudes are thoroughly messianic but they do not seem to expect a transitional messianic kingdom. The coming of the messiah precipitates an overthrow of current world rulers, the resurrection, the final judgment, and the eternal state of God’s people on a purified earth.

4. *Conclusion: Pre-Christian Jewish belief in a temporary messianic kingdom*. In conclusion, the evidence points toward a fairly widespread pre-Christian Jewish belief, expressed in different ways and with different emphases at different places and times, of a future messianic period which would either seamlessly transition into the eternal state and last indefinitely or end with resurrection and final judgment before the beginning of the eternal state. In either case, when a messianic figure is

²¹ Florentino García Martínez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill), 2:1045.

²² *Ibid.*, 1:495.

present, he functions to move things along toward the final fulfillment of God's promises.

In texts which point to an explicit temporary messianic kingdom, the kingdom functions to transition history from this present evil age into the age to come. "This interim kingdom is transitional in that it is depicted as a synthesis or compromise between this age and the age to come, combining characteristics of both worlds or ages."²³ I would suggest that the diverse elements of this pre-Christian belief provided the earliest Christians with the conceptual resources for theologically thinking through and interpreting the delay of the *parousia*.

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT

Although the Jewish texts discussed above are often used as evidence for early Christian belief in a future, temporary, earthly, messianic kingdom in 1 Cor 15:22–28 and Rev 20:4–6, this narrow focus minimizes the role of Jewish apocalyptic thought in shaping early Christian inaugurated eschatology on a broader scale. The earliest Christians were convinced the long-awaited Messiah had come, had died, had risen from the dead, had ascended to heaven, and had poured out the eschatological gift of the Holy Spirit. Most also recognized that the final resurrection and judgment had not yet happened and they were waiting for Jesus the Messiah to return to bring the final consummation and the new heavens and earth. How did the earliest Christians understand and make sense of the delay? How did they interpret the present time? Why did Jesus ascend? What was he doing? The rest of this article will argue that the preexistent Jewish idea of a future transitional messianic kingdom was combined by many of the earliest Christians with Ps 110:1 in order to interpret the present time in terms of Jesus's temporary and transitional rule and kingdom.

1. *Psalm 110:1*. Quotations of Ps 110:1 are found in the NT at Matt 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; Luke 20:42–43; 22:69; Acts 2:34–35; and Heb 1:13 (cf. 1 Clem. 36:5). In addition, Ps 110:1 is alluded to in Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33; 5:31; 7:55; Rom 8:34; 1 Cor 15:25; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12, 13; 12:2; and 1 Pet 3:22 (possibly also Rom 16:20). The NT authors quote or allude to Ps 110:1 more than any other OT text.²⁴ The widespread usage of Ps 110:1 in the NT indicates that it was firmly established as a foundational text from the earliest days. It shaped

²³ David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22* (WBC 52C; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1105.

²⁴ Important studies of Ps 110:1 include the following: Martin Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 119–226; W. R. G. Loader, "Christ at the Right Hand: Ps. CX. 1 in the NT," *NTS* 24 (1977): 199–217; David M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity* (SBLMS 18; Atlanta: SBL, 1973); Terrance Callan, "Psalm 110:1 and the Origin of the Expectation that Jesus Will Come Again," *CBQ* 44 (1982): 622–36; W. Schrage, "Das messianische Zwischenreich bei Paulus," in *Eschatologie und Schöpfung: Festschrift für Erich Gräßer zum siebzigsten Geburtstag* (ed. Martin Evang et al.; BZNW 89; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1997), 343–54; Seth Turner, "The Interim, Earthly Messianic Kingdom in Paul," *JSNT* 25 (2003): 323–42; J. Lambrecht, "Paul's Christological Use of Scripture in 1 Cor. 15.20–28," *NTS* 28 (1982): 502–27; idem, "Structure and Line of Thought in 1 Cor. 15:23–28," *NovT* 32 (1990): 143–51; C. E. Hill, "Paul's Understanding of Christ's Kingdom in 1 Corinthians 15:20–28," *NovT* 30 (1988): 297–320.

nascent Christology and helped the earliest Christians interpret the present time. It would be hard to overestimate the importance of Ps 110:1 during the first formative years of Christianity.²⁵ The verse breaks down into three main parts: 1. The Lord (Yahweh in the MT) said to my lord; 2. Sit at my right hand; 3. Until I might make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

a. *The Lord said to my lord.* Psalm 110 is attributed to David, and it seems that first-century readers viewed David as the speaker (Acts 2:34; Matt 22:43–45 parr.). David was understood to be a prophet (Acts 2:30) and was speaking in the spirit (Matt 22:43). In Ps 110:1a David is thus describing a statement from Yahweh to his lord. The lord in question is not David (cf. *Barn.* 12:10). For early interpreters this first line established that David was prophetically describing the future relationship between God and the Messiah, David's lord.²⁶ This is important because the earliest Christians would never have been attracted to this verse if it only spoke about the enthronement of one of their ancient kings (David himself or Solomon). They viewed the verse as describing much more than the enthronement of a human king on a human throne. It was about the Messiah, David's lord.²⁷

b. *Sit at my right hand.* The early Christians used the second line of the verse to explain the ascension and enthronement. Jesus ascended following the resurrection in order to be enthroned at God's right hand. Sitting at the right hand is not a throne next to God's; it is sharing in God's own throne.²⁸ This is quite clear in Rev 3:21: "just as I overcame and sat with my father on his throne." It is a position of power and authority. This explains the claim that Jesus was "ruler of kings on the earth" (Rev 1:5) and "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev 17:14; 19:16; cf. 1 Tim 6:15). So where did the Messiah go? He was raised to share God's throne and reign.

c. *Until I might make your enemies a footstool for your feet.* This last line introduces an indefinite time period until when or during which God would subject all the adversaries of the Messiah under his feet. Clement interprets these adversaries to be the wicked that resist God's will (*1 Clem.* 36:6), while the NT usage focuses on spiritual powers which would have been closely associated with physical opponents. As we will see below, this indefinite length of time was connected with the present time, the delay of the *parousia*. The third line also introduces a note of conflict with adversaries and enemies. The time period would conclude with the full and final subjugation of all of the Messiah's adversaries. Even though it is not quoted in the

²⁵ Hengel plausibly argues that the Ps 110:1 was influential by AD 34 at the latest (*Studies in Early Christology*, 148–51).

²⁶ Cf. Barry C. Davis, "Is Psalm 110 A Messianic Psalm?," *BSac* 157 (2000): 160–73. Herbert W. Bateman IV argues that even though the Psalm originally referred to Solomon, it is typological-prophetic and points forward to Jesus as the Davidic heir ("Psalm 110:1 and the NT," *BSac* 149 [1992]: 438–53).

²⁷ Hays argues that "the universal opinion of early Christians that the psalm is messianic is readily explained if Jews of that period commonly took that view. . . . On balance, then, it seems fair to suppose that in the NT era a messianic interpretation of Ps 110 was current in Judaism, although we cannot know how widely it was accepted" (*Glory at the Right Hand*, 30).

²⁸ Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology*, 148–51.

NT, the note of conflict is further developed in Ps 110:2: “The LORD sends out from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your foes” (ESV).

2. *Psalm 110:1 in the NT.* The first line (Ps 110:1a) is only used by Peter in Acts and Jesus to draw attention to the messianic nature of the Psalm (Acts 2:34; Matt 22:44 parr.; cf. *Barn.* 12:10). The other NT occurrences of Ps 110:1 focus on the second two lines.

The second line is often used by NT authors simply to indicate the current position and authority of Jesus. Even though he was no longer visibly present on earth, he was reigning in a position of power “far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come” (Eph 1:20; cf. Luke 22:69; Col 3:1; Heb 3:1; 8:1; 12:2; 1 Pet 3:22).

The third line is the most significant for this present study because it provided the first Christians with an OT prophecy related to the delay of the *parousia*. It allowed for an indefinite period of time between the enthronement of the messiah and the final consummation. It also interpreted this present time; it was a time when the messiah was ruling at God’s right hand in heaven but his reign was contested on earth.

Hebrews 10:12–13 may suggest passivity on the part of Jesus during the present time: “But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, ‘he sat down at the right hand of God,’ and since then has been waiting ‘until his enemies would be made a footstool for his feet.’ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.” The author of Hebrews highlights a passive waiting because he is emphasizing the once-for-all nature of Jesus’s sacrificial death. Elsewhere the author highlights Jesus’s active intercession on behalf of believers (Heb 7:25; cf. Heb 2:18); other NT authors further develop this active perspective.

Jesus’s exaltation to God’s right hand means that he is a leader and savior who is able to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel (Acts 5:31). Jesus is pictured as standing at the right hand of God on Stephen’s behalf in Acts 7:55. In the courtroom context of Rom 8:33–34, Jesus is at the right hand of God, actively interceding on our behalf. The disputed longer ending of Mark’s Gospel links Jesus session at God’s right hand with his activity of working with his followers and confirming with signs the message they proclaimed (Mark 16:19–20). Jesus exists at God’s right hand as head over all things for the church, his body (Eph 1:20–23).

Most importantly, Jesus’s current position of exaltation is directly linked with the pouring out of the Spirit. In Peter’s first sermon in Acts he argues, “Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you both see and hear” (Acts 2:33). The activity of the eschatological Spirit in the present time is the direct result or extension of Jesus’s rule on God’s throne (cf. John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 20:22; Titus 3:5–6).

3. *1 Corinthians 15:23–28 and Hebrews 2:5–9.* Paul develops the third line of Ps 110:1 in much greater detail in his discussion of the future resurrection in 1 Cor 15:23–28:

But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is plain that this does not include the one who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all. (ESV)

The resurrection of Jesus was the firstfruits of the much larger harvest: the resurrection of those who belong to the Messiah at his coming (1 Cor 15:23). The end would come following the second coming of the Messiah (1 Cor 15:24). At the end, the Messiah will present his kingdom to God after having destroyed every ruler, authority, and power (1 Cor 15:24). The crucial line in verse 25 provides an interpretation of the present time and a reason for the delay—it is necessary (δεῖ) for him to rule (βασιλεύειν) “until [ἄχρι] he has put all his enemies under his feet.” It is important to note that Paul replaces the second line of Ps 110:1 (“sit at my right hand”) with the statement that δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν βασιλεύειν.²⁹ Jesus’s exaltation and enthronement is equivalent to his present rule which extends from the resurrection to the *parousia*.³⁰

Paul continues by quoting Ps 8:7 to drive home the point that everything will be subjected to the Messiah. Psalm 8:7 is almost always joined to Ps 110:1 in the NT (1 Cor 15:27; Eph 1:22; Heb 2:6–8; 1 Pet 3:22; cf. the independent allusion to Ps 8:6 in Phil 3:21). When Ps 110:1 is combined with Ps 8:7 in Eph 1:20 and 1 Pet 3:22, the focus is on current rule: all the powers are currently subjected to him because of his session at God’s right hand (cf. Pol. *Phil.* 2:1).

First Corinthians 15:27 and Heb 2:6–8, however, involve eschatological tension which is best described by inaugurated eschatology. In 1 Cor 15:25–27, Jesus is reigning now until a point of time in the future when everything would be subjected under his feet. Psalm 8:7 functions as a promise of that future subjugation.³¹

²⁹ Hengel, *Studies in Early Christology*, 164. Turner ignores this possibility in order to dismiss the weight of the pervasive and normative use of Ps 110:1b in the rest of the NT to refer to Christ’s present rule. He argues that “Paul has taken great trouble to avoid alluding directly to Ps. 110:1b, where the language of being at the right hand would imply Christ’s present position is in mind” (“Interim, Earthly Messianic Kingdom in Paul,” 334). Paul has not intentionally left out Ps 110:1b; he has reexpressed it in terms of present reigning.

³⁰ Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 745–60; H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 270–71; R. F. Collins, *First Corinthians* (SP 7; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 552–53; A. C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 1230–34; W. Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (EKKNT 7/4; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2001), 166–75; David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 710–11; Lambrecht, “Paul’s Christological Use of Scripture,” 507.

³¹ Loader describes Ps 8:7 in 1 Cor 15:27 as “a legal decree whose realization is still outstanding” (“Christ at the Right Hand,” 208). Lambrecht describes the aorist tense of ὑπέταξεν in 1 Cor 15:27 as a

The quotation of Ps 8:5–7 in Heb 2:6–8 is following up on the quotation of Ps 110:1 in Heb 1:13. The author of Hebrews makes the astute observation that, “At present, we do not yet [οὐπω] see everything in subjection to him” (Heb 2:8). The early Christians were quite aware that even though Jesus was enthroned at God’s right hand his rule was not yet evident on the earth. The use of “not yet” demonstrates the clear conviction that this rule would one day be visible and evident to all (“God subjected the world to come” [Heb 2:5]; cf. the combination of Ps 110:1 with Dan 7:13 in Matt 26:64; Mark 14:62). The “not-yet” of this future world is held in tension in the NT with the clear and pervasive conviction, based on Ps 110:1, that Jesus is already ruling and reigning at God’s right hand.

III. CONCLUSION: PSALM 110:1 AND A TEMPORARY MESSIANIC KINGDOM

Psalm 110:1 provided the earliest Christians with an OT prophetic interpretation of the period of time between Jesus’s first and second comings. Why had Jesus ascended? Why did he not establish the new heavens and new earth right then? Psalm 110:1 answered these questions. His ascension was his enthronement as king. It was the beginning of his messianic kingdom.³² From his place of power and authority on God’s throne he reigns in the present time. His reign, however, is not uncontested. The present is a time of conflict and warfare which will conclude with the full subjugation of all of the Messiah’s adversaries, both spiritual and physical.³³

The earliest Christians were not interpreting Ps 110:1 and applying it to Jesus in a vacuum. They grew up and existed within Jewish communities that held diverse expectations and hopes about God’s future fulfilment of his promises. Many of these expectations involved a messianic agent, and some included the idea that God’s messianic agent would begin a transitional period of rule on earth which would bridge the gap between this evil age and the future age to come. The temporary messianic period would either transition seamlessly into the eternal age or would be separated from it by a resurrection and final judgment.

I am suggesting here that the earliest Christian understanding of the delay of the *parousia* and the development of inaugurated eschatology was, at least in part,

prophetic aorist (“Structure and Line of Thought,” 149). I would add that it could also be viewed as universal and timeless (gnomic in *Aktionsart*).

³² Although the NT authors generally connect kingdom language with God, Col 1:13 provides an example of what I am suggesting. Salvation is there described as a transfer in the present from the authority of darkness to the kingdom of God’s beloved son. John also describes believers in the present as a kingdom (Rev 1:6; 5:10), and John describes himself and his hearers as fellow participants in the kingdom in Jesus (Rev 1:9). In Paul, the kingdom of God has a present-tense orientation in Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20; and 1 Thess 2:12. Ephesians 5:5 demonstrates the difficulty with drawing a strong distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Christ (ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ). The terms could be used synonymously.

³³ Schrage describes the subjugation of enemies in the present as a process: “... ist ein eschatologischer Überwindungsprozeß zwischen Ostern und Parusie im Blick. ... ist ein prozeßhaft-dynamisches βασιλεύειν des Christus ins Auge gefaßt, in dem Christus die Welt durchdringt und die gottfeindlichen Mächte entmachtet” (“Das messianische Zwischenreich bei Paulus,” 349).

textually dependent upon Ps 110:1 and conceptually dependent upon pre-Christian Jewish eschatological expectations.³⁴ T. Francis Glasson demonstrates that the latter of these arguments is not new.

R. Bultmann has an interesting and valuable reference to the temporary kingdom in his book *Jesus Christ and Mythology* (1960). He shows that Paul took one item of Jewish hope and gave it new meaning: “In the Jewish apocalyptic expectations, the expectation of the Messianic kingdom played a role. The Messianic kingdom is, so to speak, an interregnum between the old world time (οὔτος ὁ αἰών) and the new age (ὁ μέλλων αἰών).” Paul (he continues) identified this temporary kingdom, which would be finally delivered up to God the Father, “as the present time of preaching the gospel” (p. 33). Bultmann’s immediate aim is to show that Paul, and John also, were already demythologizing; this justifies his own enterprise.³⁵

One does not have to agree with Bultmann’s demythologizing program to recognize that he made an accurate observation at this point. Conzelmann likewise argued that Paul transposed the messianic kingdom of Jewish apocalyptic into the present time.³⁶ The earliest Christians combined this preexistent Jewish eschatological idea of a temporary messianic kingdom with Ps 110:1 in order to understand the delay of the *parousia* as an indefinite period of time characterized by Jesus’s rule in heaven alongside conflict and opposition on earth.³⁷

One result of this study is that the pre-Christian Jewish idea of a temporary messianic kingdom cannot be used uncritically as support for a literal future earthly millennium. C. E. Hill shares the assumption of many that “if we interpret Paul against the background provided by these works [Jewish apocalyptic] we must place the inception of Christ’s kingdom at the time of the *parousia* in the indefinite future.”³⁸ This assumption is not valid.

In conclusion, both discontinuity and continuity must be noted. The earliest Christians did not view the kingdom in the present as a geopolitical nation with borders and did not try to spread it by the violent subjugation and punishment of their enemies. The early Christian transformation of these traditional expectations

³⁴ Ernst Käsemann likewise argued that the theology of the exaltation should be derived from apocalyptic (*NT Questions of Today* [trans. W. J. Montague; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1979], 133–34).

³⁵ Glasson, “Temporary Messianic Kingdom,” 523.

³⁶ Conzelmann writes, “Paul refashions the Jewish notion in such a way as to make it a means to the presentation of his own eschatological intention, the distinction between present and future. He takes over from the schema the notion that death is not annihilated until the end of the messianic kingdom. But he transposes this kingdom into the present. For Christ is risen. His kingdom fills up the period between the resurrection and the consummation of the work of salvation after the *parousia*” (*1 Corinthians*, 270; cf. p. 272). Cf. Hans-Joachim Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (trans. Harold Knight; London: Lutterworth, 1961), 97–100.

³⁷ The Similitudes of Enoch probably link Ps 110:1 with the messiah in the description of the messiah ruling and judging on a throne (*1 En.* 45:3; 51:3; 55:4; 61:8; 62:2–5; 69:29), but the messiah does not seem there to have a kingdom which is distinct from the final age. Loader also rightly cautions against seeing every reference to enthronement as an allusion to Ps 110:1 (“Christ at the Right Hand,” 205).

³⁸ Hill, “Paul’s Understanding of Christ’s Kingdom,” 312. Turner shares this assumption (“Interim, Earthly Messianic Kingdom in Paul,” 323–24).

is expressed well in Matt 28:18–20. Because all authority on heaven and earth had been given to Jesus (a reexpression of Ps 110:1b), his followers must make disciples of all the nations (a reexpression of Ps 110:1c). This is a strong point of discontinuity with pre-Christian apocalyptic Jewish expectations.

The pre-Christian apocalyptic Jewish expectations also did not anticipate the death and resurrection of the Messiah at the beginning of the messianic period. This was completely unexpected, and it was particularly here that the first Christians found guidance in Ps 110:1. The resurrection and ascension led to the enthronement of the Messiah at God's right hand where he would reign during a period of contested rule until the time when he would make his enemies a footstool for his feet.

The main point of continuity has to do with the enthronement of the Messiah as the beginning of a transitional period of time which would culminate in the eternal state. This transitional period combines characteristics of both periods: the old age prior to the coming of the Messiah and the age to come, the eternal state. The earliest Christians did not need to struggle to find an explanation to make sense of the delay of the *parousia* and the intermediate period. At least some Jews were already expecting such a transitional kingdom. The nature and character of the kingdom may have been unexpected but the idea of a transitional messianic kingdom between the enthronement of the Messiah and the final consummation was already in place. It was this idea which the earliest Christians adapted in light of Ps 110:1 to understand the delay of the *parousia*.³⁹ The Jewish idea of a transitional messianic kingdom provided some of the conceptual resources needed for the development of early Christian inaugurated eschatology.

³⁹ This conclusion says nothing about the expected length of this transitional kingdom.