

The Messiah and Eschatology in the *Psalms of Solomon*

by

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Abstract

Many of the earliest Christian communities recognized Jesus as a messianic figure very early on in their history, but the reasoning behind this designation is much less clear. The central purpose of this thesis is to read the *Psalms of Solomon* as a literary and theological whole while considering the particular historical and theological milieu in which they were written. My reading of the *Psalms of Solomon* will demonstrate that, in these poems, the Messiah is expected to be a Davidic monarch who will restore the righteous to their appropriate position under the rule of Yahweh with a decisive victory that will include the ingathering of the exiles in the penultimate period of history and bring an everlasting theocratic peace. I will further demonstrate that the writers of these psalms came to this conclusion through a careful rereading of their scriptural traditions based on their current historical circumstances. Connections will be drawn between this understanding of the Messiah's eschatological role and the role of messianic figures in the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as messianic interpretations in the Septuagint. These findings will raise important questions about the messianic status of Jesus in the earliest Christian communities, and provide a clearer picture of what some Jews believed about the Messiah in the Second Temple period.