

Ancient Versions and Responses to 'Post-Zionism'

1. Isaiah 2:3 – For out of Zion shall come forth Torah and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (כי מציון תצא תורה)
2. Isaiah 51:4 – Torah shall come forth from Me (כי תורה מאתי תצא)

(cf. Michael Segal: "The exiles and this prophet found themselves far away from Zion, and therefore the message of Isa. 2:23 according to which teaching and the word of God emanate specifically from Jerusalem became problematic...the reformulation of Isa. 2:3 informs the exiles that they need not be alarmed at their distance from the central locus, Jerusalem; the dispensing of justice and divine instruction is not a function of the Temple's location, but rather of the presence of God in that or any other location").

3. Pirkoi ben Baboi (9th century) – And even in the days of the Messiah they (i.e. Babylonian Jewry) will not witness the pre-messianic tribulations for it is written "Deliver yourself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon" (Zechariah 2:7: הוי הוּי בבל עִיּוֹן יוֹשֵׁבֶת בֵּת בָּבֶל – deliver yourself from evil Edom and its *galut*, and 'Zion' (ציון) is none other than the yeshiva where they are outstanding (מצויינים) in Torah and mitzvot, ...and deliverance shall not come first but to the *yeshiva* in Babylon, for just as Israel is redeemed by their merit, therefore redemption comes to them first, as it is written "there shall thou be delivered, there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of your enemies" (Micah, *ibid.*) And we have heard that God has blessed you and established *batei midrashot* in all the lands of Africa and all the areas of Spain...and we rejoiced very much...and we heard that disciples from the yeshiva came to you, some of whom were previously in Eretz Israel and they studied the customs of Eretz Israel and practiced customs (borne) of persecution (מנהגי שמד) that were the practice of the residents of Eretz Israel, and now for five hundred years they were persecuted and forbidden to study Torah...and have not abandoned customs of persecution to this day...

4. BT Ketubot 111a – Rav Judah said: One who lives in Babylonia – it is as if he lived in the Land of Israel, for it says: " Deliver yourself O Zion, thou that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon" (Zechariah 2:7).
5. Philo, Life of Moses 2:232 (on 'Pesach Sheni') – The same permission also must be given to those who were prevented from joining the whole nation in worship not by mourning, but by absence in a distant country (cf. Num. 9:6-14). For settlers abroad and inhabitants of other regions are not wrongdoers who deserve to be deprived of equal privileges, particularly if the nation has grown so populous that a single country cannot contain it and it has sent out colonies in all directions.
6. Josephus, Antiquities 4:115-116 – That land to which He himself has sent you ye shall surely occupy...and ye shall suffice for the world, to furnish every land with inhabitants from your race...(for the whole habitable world, be sure, lies before you as an eternal habitation, and your multitudes shall find abode on islands and continent, more numerous than even the stars in heaven (paraphrase of Num. 23:9!).
7. Lamentations Rabbah 1:28 – "Judah has gone into exile" (Lam. 1:3) – Do not the nations of the world go into exile? [The fact is, however, that] though they go into exile, their exile is not really exile. The heathen nations who eat their bread (i.e. local bread) and drink their wine – their exile is not real exile; but Israel – who do not eat their bread or drink their wine – they experience true exile.
8. Deut. 28:65 – "And among these nations thou shall have no rest, and there will be no rest for the sole of your foot" (ולא יהיה מנוח לך רגלך)
9. Gen. Rabbah 33:6 – "And he (Noah) sent forth a dove...but the dove found no rest for the sole of its foot, and so it returned to him, to the ark" (Gen. 8:8-9). R. Judah bar Nahman in the name of Resh Laqish said: Had it found a place of rest – it would not have returned

10. Tosefta Avoda Zara 4:3 - A person should always live in the Land of Israel, even in a town in which the majority of residents are gentiles, and not abroad, even in a town in which all the residents are Israelites. This teaches that living in the Land of Israel is weighed against (=is equal to) all the commandments of the Torah.
11. BT Ketubot 110b - ...for whoever lives in the Land of Israel may be considered to have a God, but whoever lives outside the Land may be regarded as one who has no God. For it says in scripture: "[I am the Lord your God who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt] to give you the land of Canaan to be your God" (Lev. 25:38).
12. Tosefta Avodah Zara 4:5 – Whoever leaves the land in a time of peace and goes abroad, it is as if he worships idols, for it is written: "I will plant them in this land in faithfulness, with all my heart and all my soul" (Jer. 32:41).
13. PT Moed Katan 3:1 81c – A certain priest (*cohen*) approached R. Hanina (bar Hamma) with the following question: (My brother has passed away, leaving a childless widow). Is it permissible to leave (the Land) for Tyre to perform a mitzvah, either of levirate marriage (*yibbum*) or *halitza* (releasing the widow from her bond to me; cf. Deut. 25:5-10)? He replied: Your brother left (the land) – blessed is God that killed him, to you wish to follow in his steps? And some say he replied: Your brother abandoned his mother's bosom (זיק אמו) and embraced a foreign bosom (זיק נכריה) – blessed is God that killed him, do you wish to follow in his steps?
14. Tosefta Ketubot 13:2 (Vienna ms. 12:5) – He (= the husband) desires to come to Eretz Israel and she (= his wife) does not wish to come, she is coerced to come; if she wishes to come and he does not – he is coerced to come (this according to the Vienna ms of the Tosefta; in the Erfurt ms.: he is not coerced). If he wishes to leave Eretz Israel and she does not, she is not coerced to leave. If she wishes (to leave) and he does not – she is coerced not to leave. (cf. BT Ketubot 10b – If she wishes to go up (to the Land) and he refuses – he is coerced to go up, and if he refuses he must divorce her and pay her *ketubah*)

15. Gen. Rabbah 96 (ed. Theodor-Albeck p. 1240) – R. bar Qoraiya and R. Eleazar were sitting and studying Torah in the *ilasis* of Tiberias when they saw coffins arriving from abroad. Said R. bar Qoraiya to R. Eleazar: regarding these I apply the verse: In your lifetime "you made my possession abhorrent" (Jer. 2:7), and in your death – "you came and defiled my land" (Jer. 2:7). He (=R. Eleazar) said to him: Not so, when they come to the land of Israel, they place upon them a lump of earth thus atoning for their sins. On what basis (is this assertion made)? "And the land doth make expiation for His people" (Det. 32:43 *וכפר אדמתו עמו*).
16. BT Ketubot 110b – 111a – R. Zera was avoiding Rav Judah, for he (Zera) wished to go up to the Land of Israel, and Rav Judah said: All who go up from Babylonia to the Land of Israel transgress a positive commandment, for it says: "They shall be carried to Babylon and there they shall remain until I remember them, said the Lord" (Jer. 27:22). [And how might] R. Zera [respond]? That scripture refers to the vessels of ministry! [What scripture then supports] Rav Judah? There is another scripture: "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem...[that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till it please" (Song of Songs 2:7)], And R. Zera? [He would reply that] this scripture refers to the prohibition of going up as a wall (i.e. *en masse*).
17. BT Berakhot 63a-b - ...He (= Hananiah the nephew of R. Joshua) said to them: On what account do I declare unclean and you clean, I forbid and you permit? They said to him: Because you intercalate the years and determine the months outside The Land (of Israel). He said to them: And did not Akiva ben Joseph do so abroad? They said to him: Ignore (the case of) R. Akiva ben Joseph, for he did not leave his equal (in learning) in Eretz Israel. He said to them: I too did not leave my equal in Eretz Israel. They replied: The lambs that you have left behind have become rams with horns, and they sent us to you...

18. PT Sanhedrin 1:19a - R. Isaac stood up and read in the Torah: "These are the festivals of Hananiah the nephew of R. Joshua"! They said: "These are the festivals of the Lord" (Lev. 23:4). He (R. Isaac) replied: By us! R. Nathan arose and completed (i.e. read the haftarah) "For out of Babylonia shall come forth Torah, and the word of God from Nehar Pekod"! They said: "For out of Zion shall come forth Torah and the word of God from Jerusalem" (Isaiah2:3). He (R. Nathan) said to them: By us! He (Hananiah) went and complained about them to R. Judah b. Bathyra at Nisibis. He (Judah) said to him: After them, after them... He (Hananiah) rose up and rode on his horse. Whither he reached - he reached (and corrected the local calendar), and whither he did not reach - they observe in error.
19. BT Sukkah 20a - At first when the Torah was forgotten from Israel, Ezra came up from Babylon and established it. It was again forgotten and Hillel the Babylonian came up and established it. Yet again it was forgotten, and R. Hiyya and his sons came up and established it.

Diaspora Reactions to the Destruction: Some Modern Comments

20. Martin Goodman, "Diaspora Reactions to the Destruction of the Temple", p. 27 - "There is...every reason to suppose that the raising of the Temple horrified diaspora Jews as much as their Judaeon compatriots. Jews outside Palestine seem to have presumed the central importance of the Temple in Jewish worship despite the physical obstacles to their frequent attendance at the cult. ..it is a fair assumption that even those diaspora Jews within the Roman empire who had not themselves suffered in the war of AD 66-70 were profoundly affected by its consequences". (cf. also Goodman: : "The Roman state, and Romans in general, for the first time came properly to appreciate that people of non-Jewish origin could become Jews...After 96 CE the definition of a Jew by the Roman state was, for the purpose of the tax, a religious one. For Romans, Jews were those who worshipped the divinity whose temple had been destroyed in Jerusalem and who refused to worship other gods. I suspect that this innovation had a profound effect on the self-perception of Jews in the diaspora."

21. Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel*, pp. 35-36 - "The loss of the temple first of all removed the inequality...between the Palestinian Jews, able to keep the whole law, and those outside Palestine, able to keep only part of it. ..For Jewish universalism the temple was an obstacle and a hindrance. It was a forceful reminder of the connection between the Jewish religion and the territory of Palestine. ..In destroying Jerusalem the Romans forcibly dissociated the Jewish religion from the Jewish state, for manifestly the former continued whereas the latter did not. In this the Romans in the long run did Judaism a service.

22. Gedaliah Alon, *The Jews in their Land*, vol. 1 p. 10: Hegemony of the Homeland: The hegemony of Palestine over Jewish communities within the Roman Empire was expressed in the following ways: 1) Religion...Halakhic questions; 2) Law...Jewish civil law 3)Judiciary...Jewish judges in the diaspora were appointed by the Patriarch 4)Communal organization...through their legates the Patriarchs could appoint and dismiss leaders of Jewish communities abroad 5) Discipline...The leadership exercised religious supervision over the communities abroad, including the power to impose sanctions 6) Support...taxes to the Patriarch and the sages.

