

A MAJOR WATERSHED OF THOUGHT REGARDING JEWISH PEOPLE AND MESSIANIC JEWS
AT THE END OF THE SECOND TEMPLE PERIOD

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Among many issues which Yeshua raised in His day, two stand out in stark relief; 1) How can a human Yeshua also be the Son of God? 2) How is it possible that Yeshua, who claimed to be the Messiah, should also suffer and die as the atonement for our sins? These two issues alone created a division between the followers of Yeshua and the people of Judea of that day. In fact, even these very followers, after his death, began to disperse homeward and those who remained in Jerusalem were disillusioned.

These two watersheds are still the two major issues which separate Messianic Jews from the Jewish community to this day. Yet the major thrust of this paper will be to understand the thinking of the Rabbinical authorities at the end of the Second Temple period regarding Messiah. We will note Yeshua's measures to circumvent some of this thinking by the religious leaders, try to understand the dynamics with which the disciples themselves had to wrestle, and what were the conclusions reached by Messianic Jews.

I. How Is Yeshua Both Human and Divine?

As the Second Commonwealth of Judea began to unfold,¹ the religious leaders sought to protect the high and lofty character of Israel's calling by their God. Specifically, the people of Judea must never again confuse their God with the pagan deities of other nations in the Middle East. The Babylonian exile

was a national trauma affecting the people of Judea and one of the main designs of God's providence was to purify a remnant among Israel who would never place their God on the same level with other pagan deities (Micah 4:9-10). Therefore, the post exilic leaders and writers emphasized it upon the people that God was indeed transcendent.

The Jewish literature of the period between the Hebrew Scriptures and the first century C.E. provides the development of a number of doctrines held by the people Israel, and particularly, for the discussion of this paper, the concept of Messiah. The so-called "silent years" were not silent in non-canonical materials because this period saw the development of the literary genius of a people where the people Israel enjoyed one of their golden ages of literature.

The Targumim

The interpretation of Scripture already began in the days of Ezra: "They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was being read" (Neh. 8:8). The phrase "making it clear" meant that Ezra, and the cadre of Levites gathered around him, had begun a system of oral interpreting and paraphrasing of the Scripture. Eventually, this came to be known as the Targumim. We have every reason to believe that this process continued to build after the days of Ezra, what was translated was carried orally through the intertestamental period, and eventually was committed to writing by 200 C.E.

It remains now to see what the religious leaders did with the concept of God in the Targumim.

Memra -- In the Targumim² the term memra, or "word" is prominent as the manifestation of divine power and also serves as the messenger of God on His behalf.

Memra is an interesting concept in early Jewish thought. The intermediate agency between God and man was commonly held to be memra as was a means of revelation of God to man. The etymology of the word is given by Jastrow

as "memra, 1) word, command, or 2) hypostatized, the Word, i.e., the LORD used in the Targum to obviate anthropomorphism..."³

Some examples of this term follow: 1) the biblical Deut. 1:32, "you did not trust the LORD your God" is seen in the Targum as "you have not believed in the (memra) of the LORD;"⁴ 2) it was the memra who plagued the people" (Targum Yerushalmi for Ex. 32:35)⁵ instead of the biblical, "the LORD smote the people;" 3) instead of "I will cover you with my hand," (Ex. 33:22), the Targum says that "I will cover you with my memra;" 4) it is the memra which goes before Cyrus (Targum Isa. 45:2)⁶ instead of the biblical, "I will go before you;" it is against the memra who men offend instead of God Himself as seen in the Scriptures (Ex. 16:8).

The memra is regarded as the manifestation of God. Targum Yerushalmi for Deut. 4:7 says that "The memra brings Israel nigh to God and sits on His throne receiving the prayers of Israel."⁷ The memra is the one who guards Jacob (Gen. 28:20-21; 35:3) and Israel (Ex. 12:28-29), and so on. The memra is also regarded as the agent of God, e.g., in the creation of the earth (Isa. 45:12)⁸ and that He is the one who executes justice (Targum Yerushalmi for Num. 33:4).⁹ The memra is even regarded as the comforter in the future: "So shall my memra comfort you" (Targum Isa. 66:13).¹⁰

Texts like this can be multiplied over and over. The problem before us is just how did the Jewish scholars understand the term memra by the first century C.E. G.E. Moore comments on this understanding: "Nowhere in the Targums is memra a "being" of any kind or in any sense, much less a personal being. The appearance of personality which in some places attaches to the word is due solely to the fact the memra of the LORD and similar phrases and reverent circumlocutions for 'God', introduced precisely where in the original God is personally active in the affairs of men."¹¹ In addition, Moore states that "the memra is purely a phenomenon of translation, not a figment of speculation; it never gets outside the Targums."¹² H.A. Wolfson echoes the same sentiments: "No scholar nowadays will entertain the view that it (memra) is either a real being or an intermediary."¹³ Obviously, both from the Jewish point of view of

the first century as well as modern commentators, the use of memra was intended as a means to deanthropomorphize the way people understand and talk about God. This became the means so as to protect the transcendency of Israel's God compared to the deities of other nations.

Shekinah -- Another means to obviate anthropomorphic expressions was the use of Shekinah, which was a way of describing the immanence of God, or referring to God Himself. This word appears many times in the Targumim as well as in other mainstream Jewish literature.

The Targum Onkelos¹⁴ uses this expression in interesting ways: For example, "The LORD is not in your midst" (Num. 14:42) is rendered "The Shekinah is not in your midst." The verse, "You cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live" (Ex. 33:20) is given as "You cannot see the face of my Shekinah." Of Deut. 12:5, where one reads, "To put his Name there," Onkelos renders it as "To rest his Shekinah there."

Other Procedures -- The Targumim paraphrasers (meturgemanim) also had a reverent way of speaking about God and His activities. When describing His relationship with the world, God is never made the direct subject or object of an action. Active words in the biblical text were handled in the passive so as to avoid undue anthropomorphic expression. McNamara points out this technique in a number of examples from a Targum known as Neofiti:¹⁵ 1) Gen. 1:4 is rendered, "and it was manifest before the Lord that the light was good;" 2) instead of "God heard their groaning" (Ex. 2:4), the Targum reads, "and their complaint was heard before the Lord;" 3) concerning Ex. 2:25, "God saw the people of Israel and God took notice of them," the paraphrasers provided it as "the servants of the sons of Israel were manifest before the Lord." Many more examples can be provided but the point is that God must not be brought into any direct contact whatsoever with man. The phrase "before the LORD," was chosen to avoid false impression among the unlearned and every care was exercised to render biblical materials so as to prevent the identification of the God of Israel with the pagan deities.

The Outside Literature

The Outside Literature of Israel reflects fairly accurately the Hebrew Scriptures when talking about God. And yet, some of the deanthropomorphizing process is also present in the Writings in specific words:

1) "Thy all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed, a stern warrior carrying the sharp sword of thy authentic command" (Wisdom of Solomon 18:15, 16). The Greek term for word is logos but it is not to be understood in a Greek philosophical reference. This passage is Hebraic in its world view and appears to mirror the imagery of I Chronicles 21:16 where the angel of the LORD drew out his sword over Jerusalem for destruction.

Joseph Reider suggests the usual later understanding of Jewish people on the Wisdom passage, "The writer had no intention of hypostatizing the Logos (Memra), but had in mind only the customary Jewish periphrasis for the LORD, i.e., the memra of Yahweh, meaning the Divine Being in self manifestation."¹⁶

- 2) "By the words (memra) of the Lord His works are done" (Ecclus. 42:15);
- 3) "Thy word (memra), O LORD, which heals all men" (Wisdom 16:12);
- 4) "Thy word (memra) preserves those who trust in Thee" (Wisdom 16:26), and so on.

The Septuagint -- The first Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (about 250-100 B.C.E.) represents a further step along the way in the deanthropomorphizing process. A few examples are indicated which show the distinction between the Hebrew Masoretic text and the Septuagint: 1) "likeness" (temunah) is rendered as "glory" when referring to the deity, "I shall be satisfied when thy glory (δοξα, for temunah, likeness) appears," and 2) in Num. 12:8, "He (Moses) beholds the form (temunah) of the LORD" is rendered, "He (Moses) had the glory (δοξα) of the LORD." "The mouth of the LORD" is also a phrase which is handled with concern at certain times: 1) In Isaiah 40:5, "For the mouth of the LORD has spoken," and 2) in Isa. 45:23, "The word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness" is rendered in the Greek translation as,

"Righteousness shall surely proceed out of my mouth; my words shall not be frustrated." Other examples can be demonstrated.

Later Greek translations, e.g., Symmachus, sharpened the consistency of deanthropomorphizing. These Jewish concerns, however, were already post first century, after the Council of Yavneh,¹⁷ when the original Greek translation was suspect in Jewish eyes because of the way the community of the Jewish believers were using it to proclaim the uniqueness of Jesus. Yet the pattern was already set as to the way one talked about God in the Greek translation by the first century. There was a reluctance to bring God down to the level of man.

Was this deanthropomorphizing process in the Septuagint because of the Greek philosophical influence which had an aversion to speaking of God in human terms and the attribution to God of anything corporeal? Philo recognized the philosophic distaste and allegorized Old Testament Scriptures with the Greek sensitivity in mind. However, Frankel indicated in an article at one time that he saw no traces of an influence of Greek philosophy on the Jewish main stream thinkers and religious leaders.¹⁸ The deanthropomorphizing by the Jewish translators of the Hebrew Scriptures reflected an activity which has already taken place upon Jewish soil and pointed up the intense interest in keeping the being of God as lofty as possible.

The Jerusalem authorities were reluctant to produce a Greek translation when the project was first broached by those who requested it in Egypt. However, when the permission was given, the Jewish translators in Egypt would only reflect the concern of the Judean religious leaders as to a proper understanding of anthropomorphisms. Even though the Prophets and the Writings of the Hebrew Scriptures did not receive as adequate a treatment as the Torah of Moses, yet anthropomorphisms of the more glaring kind would have been toned down, not by the aversion of Greek thinking, but from the common understanding of the Jewish scholars in the land of Israel.

Names for God

While Jewish literature after the first century abounded with various suggestions for the names of God, yet by the first century specific names were used so as to carefully protect the being of God from contact with His creation, including that of man.¹⁹

One quite prominent name is "heaven," found quite often in a number of compound expressions, e.g., "fear of heaven," which approximates the biblical "fear of the LORD". Besides the numerous places this word appears in the traditional literature, one may also note its presence in the Gospels (Matt. 21:25; Mk. 11:30; Luke 15:18, 21). Matthew often uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven," which is a periphrastic phrase for kingdom of God.

Still another substitute name for God is "power," found not infrequently in the rabbinic literature. One particular phrase associated with this name is what Yeshua used to describe His uniqueness when asked by the high priest if He was the son of the blessed one: "You shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of "power" (Matt. 26:64). The term "power" is seen as a circumlocution for that of "God."

The Implications of Deanthropomorphizing God

What does this mean by the time when we come to a first century Judaism? For one thing, while God certainly can be regarded as personal, yet He became in another way, far removed from the average Jewish person. A warm living vital relationship was lost in comparison with how the Hebrew Scriptures speak of God. God had become a "wholly other being".

This trend was to have a devastating influence on an understanding of the Messiah. The deanthropomorphizing process created a great gulf between God and man, and therefore, it would not be possible to think in terms of a human Messiah, who is at the same time, divine. Neither would it be possible for the divinity to be entangled with humanity; Israel's God was not an idol like that of any other nation. Can we perhaps see the problem now for the first century Jew? Yeshua can be a Messiah, even superhuman, but not divine. The development of a Jewish religious tradition in the way one talked about God had schooled the nation to its own particular concept of Messiah as human only.

Proclamation by Yeshua -- What is interesting, Yeshua did not proclaim in the beginning to one and all that He is the Son of God. Neither did He constantly insist on his Messiahship. There seemed to be a reticence about it all. William Wrede spoke of a doctrine of "veiled glory" and the Messianic secret.²⁰ But David Flusser, professor of Comparative religion at the Hebrew University, also commented on this fabric of reticence concerning Messiahship by pointing to a parallel in the reticence displayed at Qumran by the Teacher of Righteousness and Simon of Kosebah of Murabba'at.²¹ Flusser's convictions were that "from the strictly theological point of view no man can be defined as a Messiah before he had accomplished the task of the anointed."²² In other words, before the title can begin to have any true meaning, the real mission must be realized. Now, while the different personalities already mentioned have totally different goals, the aspect of reticence on the part of Jesus is more readily understood. So, the Messiah as the Son of man demonstrated all the works that the Messiah was supposed to do, and at one point, emphasized the testimony concerning Himself and His works (John 5:31-46).

His Unusual Works and Teaching -- A quick perusal of how Matthew related the claims of Yeshua's works is interesting (Matt. 8:1-9:8; 9:23-26): 1) He is the healer, caring for all who came to Him (Matt. 8:1-17); 2) He is the superb teacher (Matt. 8:18-22); 3) He has control over nature (Matt. 8:23-27); 4) He has control over the unseen world, both the good and the evil (Matt. 8:28-34); 5) He is the one who can forgive sins, based on his authority to accomplish all healing (Matt. 9:1-8); and finally, 6) He has the power to do what God does: raise people from the dead (Matt. 9:23-26). In this last presentation alone, Matthew demonstrates the strategy by Yeshua that as He raises people from the dead, He has the right to be both human and divine.

In His teaching and preaching, He always left the impression that His presentation is unique. He had a particular unique way of stating, "I say to you," and no religious leader of that day would dare utter such a statement. Teaching was a compendium of what other sages had taught, but Yeshua cut through

that methodology, and used the word: "I." No wonder the people proclaimed that He taught as no other man taught. But then again, He was no mere man.

His claims did not go unnoticed. At the end of His ministry when Yeshua was confronted by some of the Pharisees, He then openly challenged the thinking of His day concerning Messiah. To some of the Pharisees who questioned Him, He asked, "How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls Him 'LORD'?" The crux of the argument centered on the interpretation of Psalm 110:1, and in pressing the point, Yeshua queried, "If then David calls Him 'LORD,' how can he be his son?" (Matt. 22:45). To this statement, the Pharisees had no reply. But what was Yeshua doing? He had cut across the tradition of deanthropomorphizing the deity and demonstrated the distinct mysterious possibility of the divine sonship of Messiah son of David.

At Yeshua's Trial -- Finally, Yeshua faced the Sanhedrin at his trial, and near its end, the High priest asked, "Tell us if you are the Messiah, the son of God" (Matt. 26:63). Actually, there are two questions: 1) Is Yeshua the Messiah; and 2) (Is Yeshua) the Son of God, or, the Son of the Blessed one. Yeshua had no difficulty confirming His Messiahship, to which the Sanhedrin made no reply. To this day, there are many Traditional Jewish authorities who could accept Yeshua in a Messiahship role. The second question is what produces the watershed. And in response to it, Yeshua did not answer on His own but replied with a paraphrase of Daniel 7:13, 14. No doubt was left in the mind of Caiaphas as to the implications of the interpretation: Yeshua claimed an unique relationship with His Father.

As a side comment on Yeshua's pronouncement, it is interesting to note that when Jewish believers gave witness to the Messiah in the days after the destruction of the Temple, the rabbis of the Tannaitic period drew sharp lines as to what former messianic passages would be accepted. Rabbi Akiba was once reprimanded on an occasion when he and his colleagues were discussing the meaning of the plurality of "thrones" in Daniel 9:9; in answer to the reason for the plural, Akiba given the traditional answer: "One for God and one for David,

i.e., for Messiah the son of David." Rabbi Yose severely criticized him: "Akiba, how long will you profane the Shekinah? It is one for justice and one for righteousness."²³

The point in all this discussion, however, is that Yeshua's claims were based on a literal understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures and not through the tinted sunglasses of tradition. This thrust also became the basis by which Rav Shaul (Paul) could then emphasize in his Christology when sharing the Gospel with non-Jewish peoples.

The Testimony By Messianic Jews by the Second Century

Danielou considered how Messianic Jews proclaimed the uniqueness of Yeshua, calling Him the Name:

The beginnings of this Christology of the Name are already to be found in the New Testament. On the one hand Old Testament texts mentioning the Name are frequently quoted in the New testament. Thus Acts 15:17 quoting Amos 9:12, reads: 'All the Gentiles, upon whom my Name is called.' Paul (Rom. 2:24) mentions Isa. 52:5: 'The Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.' The same Epistle quotes Ex. 9:16: 'that my Name might be published abroad in all the earth' (Rom. 9:17)...

In these various quotations the Name can in fact only mean Yahweh, but it is very hard to see why these texts should have been collected in messianic dossiers unless the Name had appeared to have some relation to Christ. There are, moreover, some passages in which this relationship is explicitly stated. Thus Joel 23:5: 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved' is quoted in Acts 2:21 and 4:12 in a somewhat indeterminate sense. But the same text is repeated in Rom. 1:12, as follows: '(Christ) is the same Lord (Kurios) of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Here the name is clearly that of Christ; ...²⁴

What can we then conclude? Instead of using the title, The Son of God, Jewish believers spoke of Yeshua as The Name in such a way as to emphasize His uniqueness.

Danielou also points out the peculiar use of Law and Covenant. The Greek nomos (or, Hebrew Torah) was used in such a way with Jewish people so as to emphasize the uniqueness of Yeshua. Exactly because the Torah is somehow regarded as the presence of the divine word, it becomes an excellent means to describe Yeshua as the living Torah.

One of the first passages to be considered occurs in Hermas and treats of the vision of an immense willow-tree: 'This great tree which over shadows plains and mountains and all the earth is the Law of God (nomos Theou)

which was given to the whole world; and this Law is the Son of God preached unto the ends of the earth' (Sim. VIII, 3:2). The text could hardly be more explicit. The Law is the name of the Son of God. This is clearly and archaic expression in which nomos takes the place of Logos, which never occurs in the Shepherd ...

... Quoting the Preaching of Peter Clement of Alexandria writes: 'In the Preaching of Peter you will find the Lord called Law and Word ... (Strom. I, 182:3) ...

In Justin ... in the Dial. XXIV, 1 he writes 'There is now another Covenant; another Law has gone forth from Sion, Jesus Christ.' Justin again refers to Isaiah ... a little further on: 'The Son of God ... Christ ... was proclaimed as about to come as an everlasting Law (nomos) and new Covenant for the whole world (Dial. XLVIII, 1). It will be noticed that Christ is here called at the same time both Law and Covenant (diatheke)....

This conception of Christ as the Covenant is found in several times in Justin: 'The New Covenant ... which had long since been proclaimed by God was now already present, that is to say, the Christ himself' (Dial. LI, 3). It is interesting to note that the expression had already been applied to the person of Christ by the Epistle of Barnabas, which quotes Is. 42:6: 'I have given thee to be a covenant of the peoples' (XIV, 7). The text of Isaiah applying the world covenant to the Servant justified its application to Christ. In connection with this same text of Isaiah, Justin writes: 'What is the covenant of God? Is it not Christ?' (Dial. CXXII, 5; of also CXVIII, 3; CXII, 4).²⁵

Therefore, because of Jewish comprehension of the uniqueness of Yeshua, Messianic Jews dared to equate him with terms such as the Living Torah and the New Covenant that would underscore his deity.

Other suggestions for other consideration are the terms: 'arche and hemera (Day). We can only wish we had more materials at our disposal but their paucity is our limitation. We have to be content with what material we have which Jewish believers themselves used in the witness to their brethren.

The tragedy is that the Messianic Jewish presence disappears after the total Arabization of the land in the 600s. Although Jewish believers through the centuries in isolated instances were testimonies to the uniqueness of Yeshua to their brethren, the task facing us today is much the same as it was in the first century, at the end of the second temple period. We still wrestle with the major watershed with the Jewish communities over conception of the Messiah who is human and divine.

II. HOW CAN A MESSIAH INITIATE THE KINGDOM AND STILL DIE FOR OUR SINS?

Where before, when considering the uniqueness of the Messiah who is both human and divine, we have traditional evidence how the concept developed that a Messiah is only human. With regard to Jewish tradition that no Messiah was to suffer and die for our sins, we have no background as to how such a view developed. Perhaps, when dealing with the key passages which we consider to be definitive for Messiah's death, Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53, the Jewish mindset zeroed in instead on the triumphal coming of the Messiah. Hence, to think in terms of the death of the Messiah would have been completely inconsistent with his ministry of establishing world peace and restoring Israel to the head of the nations.

Targum Isaiah

One of the earliest literature which defined Messiah's ministry already in later Intertestamental history is the Targum on Isaiah.²⁶ For purposes of comparing the biblical texts with the Targum texts, the two are laid out side by side, as seen below, for easy comparison. The Isaiah text is shown on the left

side while Targum Isaiah is matched on the right side:

13

Behold, my servant
shall deal wisely,
and he shall be exalted
and lifted up
and shall be very high

Behold my servant,
the Anointed One (the Messiah),
shall prosper;
he shall be exalted,
and increase,
and be strong

14

Like as many were astonished
at thee

his
visage
was so marred
more than any man,

and his
form more
than the sons of men,

As the house of Israel
hoped (waited)
for him many days,
for his (their)
appearance
was wretched

among the nations
and his (their)
countenance beyond
that of the sons of men:

15

so shall he sprinkle
(startle)
many nations
kings shall shut
their mouths
at him

for that which
hath not been told them
shall they see;
and that which
they had not heard
shall they understand.

so shall he scatter
many nations;
kings shall be silent

because of him (it);
they shall set their
hands upon their mouths;
for the things which
had not been told them
have they seen,
and that which
they had not heard
have they perceived.

CHAPTER 53

1

Who hath believed
our message
and to whom
hath
the arm
of Jehovah been revealed?

Who hath believed
these our tidings?
and to whom
hath the power
of the mighty arm
of the Lord been so
revealed?

2

For he grew up before him

as a tender plant,
and as a root out of dry ground:

And the righteous
shall grow up before him

and as a tree that sendeth
forth its
roots
by streams of waters,
so shall the holy generations
increase in the land
that was in need of him:

he hath no form nor comeliness;

his appearance
shall not be that
of a common man,
nor the fear of him
that of an ordinary man;
but his countenance
(complexion)
shall be that of a holy
countenance,

and when we see him,
there is no beauty
that we should desire him.

so that all who
see him shall regard
him earnestly.

3

He was

despised,

and rejected of men

Then shall the glory
of all the kingdoms
be despised
and come to an end;

they shall be infirm
and sick

a man of sorrows,
and acquainted
with grief;
and as one from whom
men hide their face

he was despised;
and we esteemed him not.

4

surely he hath born

our
griefs,
and carried our sorrows;

yet we did esteem
him stricken,
smitten

of God,
and afflicted.

5

But he was wounded

for our
transgressions,
he was bruised for our

iniquities

the chastisement
of our peace
was upon him;

and with his stripes
we are healed.

even as a man of sorrows
and as one destined
for sicknesses,

and as when
the presence of the
Shekinah was withdrawn
from us, they (we)
shall be despised
and of no account.

Then shall he pray
on behalf of our
transgressions

and our iniquities
shall be pardoned
for his sake,
though we were

accounted smitten,
stricken from
before the Lord,
and afflicted

But he shall build
the sanctuary
that was polluted
because of our
transgressions and

given up because of our
iniquities
and by his teaching

shall his peace

be multiplied upon us,

6

All we like sheep
have gone astray;

we have turned
everyone to his own way;
and Jehovah hath laid
on him the iniquity of us all

7

He was oppressed,
yet when he was afflicted
he opened not his mouth;

as a lamb
that is led to the slaughter,
and as a sheep
that before it shearers
is dumb
so he openeth not his mouth.

8

By oppression
and judgment
he was taken away;

and as for his generation,

who among them considered
that he was cut off

out of the land of the living

and by our devotion
of his words
our transgressions
shall be forgiven us.

All we like sheep

had been scattered;
and had wandered off
each on his own way;

but it was the Lord's
good pleasure
to forgive the
transgressions
of us all for his sake.

He was praying,
and he was answered
and before he opened
his mouth
he was accepted;
the mighty ones
of the people
shall be delivered up
like a lamb
to the slaughter,
and as an ewe
that before her shearers
is dumb,

and there shall be none
before his opening
his mouth
or speaking a word.

Out of chastisement
and out of punishment

shall he bring our exiles
near,

and the wondrous things
that shall be wrought
for us in his days
who shall be able
to recount?

for he shall take away
the dominion of the
peoples

for the transgression
of my people
to whom the stroke was due?

9

And they made his grave
with the wicked,

and with a rich man in his death;

Although he had done no
violence,

neither was any deceit
in his mouth.

10

Yet
it pleased Jehovah
to bruise him;

he hath put him to grief:

when thou shalt make his soul
an offering from sin,

he shall see his seed,

he shall prolong his days,

and the pleasure of Jehovah

shall prosper
in his hand.

11

He shall see the travail

from the land of Israel
and the sins
which my people sinned

shall be transformed unto
them

and he shall delivery
the wicked unto Gehinnam,
and those that are rich
in possessions
which they have

obtained by violence
unto the death
of destruction
that those who commit
may not be established,
nor speak deceits
with their mouth.

And it was
the Lord's good pleasure
to refine and to purify
the remnant of his people
in order to cleanse

their soul from sin:
they shall look
upon the kingdom
of their Anointed One
(Messiah),
they shall multiply
sons and daughters,

they shall prolong days

and they that perform
the law of the Lord
shall prosper
in his good pleasure.

of his soul

and shall be satisfied:

by the knowledge of himself

shall my righteous servant
justify many;

and he shall bear
their
iniquities

12

Therefore will I divide
him
a portion with the great,
and he shall divide the spoil

because he poured out
his soul unto death
and was numbered
with the transgressors:

yet he bare the sin of many,
and made
intercession
for the transgressors.

From the subjection
of the peoples
shall deliver their
soul;
they shall look upon
the punishment of them
that hate them;
they shall be satisfied
with the spoil
of their kings:

by his wisdom

shall he justify the just,
in order to subject
many to the law;

and for their
transgressions
shall he make
intercession.

Then will I divide
unto him

the spoil of many peoples
and the riches
of strong cities;
he shall divide
the booty,
because he delivered
his soul unto death,

and subjected
the rebellious to the law;

and he shall make
for many transgressions
intercession
and the rebellious
shall be forgiven
for his sake.

A Unique View of the Messiah -- The Isaiah 53 passage in two areas indicates describes a Messiah who is personal, he is the Servant, the Anointed One, and that a future kingdom is described as the kingdom of the Anointed One.²⁷ The people of Judea at the end of the second temple period had not given up on a concept of a Messiah who is personal but his ministry is a unique one.

The Targum Isaiah treats the passage in an unusual manner. In the Targum, Israel suffers for its own sins.²⁸ Note how this contrasts with what is stated by modern Jewish thought, namely, Israel suffers for the sins of the entire world.²⁹ Therefore, any mention of suffering is relegated to the nation who suffers, but any description of exaltation is applied to the Messiah.

What Does the Isaiah Text Say -- Such a treatment in the Isaiah Targum does not square with the plain sense of the text where sufferings and glories are ascribed to one and the same person.³⁰ The Biblical text of Isaiah very clearly indicates that either: 1) "Though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering," or, 2) "You shall make of his soul an offering from sin." Both renderings are possible, but the point is that the subject in this chapter is the one whose soul is made an offering for sin. Suppose we could grant that the subject in verse ten is the nation; offerings, however, must be perfect, without spot or blemish. But the prophet himself, however, describes the nation who suffers, "From the soul of your foot to the top of your head. There is no soundness - only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil" (Isaiah 1:6). Isaiah had to sadly declare that his people were far from God in his day. Therefore, the nation cannot be the means of suffering as an atonement for its own sins. Even the Targum recognized that the nation was far from God, sinful, and the LORD had to "refine" and purify the remnant of his people in order to cleanse their souls from sin (Isaiah Targum 53:10).

A Mediatorial Ministry -- The Messiah has a mediatorial ministry as he prays on behalf of Israel's sins and iniquities. Israel is therefore pardoned for its own sake.³¹ One aspect of mediation describes him as he delivered his soul unto death,³² but this is the only reference in this passage describing death, but does this mean the Messiah actually died. It would seem, for the most part, what is described as mediation still does not include what an atoning sacrifice would mean where the Messiah makes expiation, that is, he dies of behalf of Israel and for the sins of mankind.

The Apocalyptic Literature (Pseudepigrapha)

The only other body of literature that has a lot to say about the Messiah son of Judah, or David, is what is in the Outside Literature, or what we know today as the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha.

In many of the Apocalyptic books, the Messiah is depicted as the Anointed One, who comes to reign over an Israel that has been delivered and where Jerusalem will be rebuilt. 1 Enoch refers to the Messiah as the Righteous one; he is the elect one; he has been chosen by God; and he reveals all the treasures which are hidden. He is called the Anointed One standing before the LORD of Spirits, and he is the one in whom dwells the spirit of wisdom. All wealth is created to serve the dominion of God's Anointed. The Messiah is the Righteous and Elect One at the head of the house of his congregation, and the time is coming when this congregation will no more be hindered by wicked people. The Messiah is also to reign over his dominion when Jerusalem is rebuilt after a great judgment.³³

The Testament of Judah says that the Messiah is the Branch; he is the Fountain-giving life to all; the scepter of his kingdom will shine; and he will be a rod of righteousness to the Gentiles to save all who call upon the name of the LORD.³⁴ The Testament of Naphtali states that after a second defection of

the children of Israel, the Messiah will come to establish righteousness and show mercy to those far and near.³⁵ The Testament of Levi says the LORD will raise up a new priest who will reign on the earth righteously for many days; in the priesthood of this priest, the Gentiles would be multiplied in knowledge on the earth; and this priest will open the gates of Paradise.³⁶

The Psalms of Solomon describe the Messiah's reign over Israel; he will purge Jerusalem, gather together a holy people, smite the earth with the word of his mouth, and be pure from sin. The LORD himself is the king and people will see the goodness of the LORD which he shall perform for the generation to come.³⁷ Baruch speaks of the Messiah who is to be revealed at the beginning of the kingdom; at the close of the advent the Messiah returns in glory; and after a tribulation the principate of the Messiah is revealed.³⁸ The Assumption of Moses indicates the Messiah as the Heavenly One arising from his throne and going forth from his holy habitation to fight on the behalf of the righteous.³⁹ The Sibylline Oracles states there is a time coming when a holy prince will wield the sceptre over all the world; he will bring judgement on the wicked in general, and in particular, Rome. Furthermore, the Oracles state that there is coming a king from the sunrise; this king will banish war and rule in obedience to the good ordinances of the Mighty God; and he will shield the righteous in the kingdom and encircle them as a wall of fire. The Messiah will bring upon men a great judgement; in the rule of the empire of Messiah, there would be a house of the great God and gifts would be brought there by men off all generations.⁴⁰

Qumran and a "Slain Messiah?"

This would be hardly the place to research adequately what is meant by one of the most recent fragments from the War Scroll which supposedly depicts a Messiah figure who is slain. Such is the contention by Professor Robert Eisenman of Long Beach, California. He had long taught that there were close links

between Qumran and the early believers in Jesus and therefore, both communities shared the belief in the Messiah who was to die.

We can not begin to cover adequately this entire discussion because there is so much technical material involved in an examination of this particular fragment.

This writer commented in an editorial article in the MOODY STUDENT newspaper of 20 February 1992 as follows: This interpretation of Eisenman is now being challenged by numerous reputable scholars. Everyone agrees that the specific fragment under investigation is indeed a "mutilated fragment ... suitable as a basis for a revolutionary thesis" according to the noted Qumran scholar Geza Vermes (British Jewish Chronicle, 10 January 1992). He had convened an Oxford's seminar to study the fragment in question, and three different possibilities seemed apparent, including the killing of the Messianic figure. The other two suggestions that do not admit it, however, are equally valid.

Stephen Reed of the Ancient Biblical Center study group in Claremont, California calls Eisenman's jump a "major interpretative jump," saying it is impossible to clearly conclude from the fragment construction the death of a Messiah. Eugene Ullrich of the Notre Dame Center for the Study of the Scrolls declares that Eisenman's suggestion is not explosive or revolutionary but after all is said and done, there is nothing conclusive.

What should our conclusion be as Evangelicals? It is best to hold our opinions until there is further opportunity for all scholars to honestly assess just what the fragment really says in light of the entire context of Qumran's notion of Messiah, especially the controversial phrase "Messiah son of Aaron and Israel." This writer has studied the literature of the period between the Testaments including Qumran as a part of his doctoral dissertation and it is best to conclude that this community believed their priestly leaders to be Messiah, but they also believed in the coming of the Messiah son of David. But nowhere else is there the notion to this date of a dying Messiah.

The New Covenant Testimony

We must assess what actually took place between Yeshua and his disciples concerning the issue of Messiah, considering the various passages where this particular response is presented:

1) After Peter's great confession that Yeshua is the Messiah, the son of the living God (Matt. 16:16), the Messiah then announced that He "Must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teacher of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day raised to life" (Matt. 16:21,22). This is also picked up in Mark 8:31-32 and Luke 9:22. What was Peter's reaction to this announcement? The blunt response is well known with his "Never!" The Messiah then turned on Peter and declared, "Out of my sight, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" (Matt. 16:23). Mark is the only other one who also relates this information. The plain sense of the response by Peter, however, is that he and the other disciples were never schooled that a Messiah was supposed to come and die for our sins, be raised again from the dead to be Israel's deliverer as well as the one to institute the Messianic kingdom.

2) The next time this announcement occurred is when Yeshua and disciples came together in Galilee and he said once more, "The son of man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised to life" (Matt 17:22). Mark also mentions this statement (9:31) and Luke provides a bare bones description (9:44). What we need to note is the response again by the disciples, "The disciples were filled with grief" (17:23). Why should they be filled with grief, if not but for the fact that their concept of a Messiah did not include one who will die.

3) The next occasion where Yeshua talked about his soon coming death is when he announced that: "We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life" (Matt. 20:17-19). Mark says somewhat the same as Matthew (10:33, 34) but all Luke comments on this

occasion is that "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled" and the rest is similar to what Matthew and Mark indicated. Luke, however, is the only one to add as a kind of interpretation regarding the response by the disciples, "The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about" (Luke 18:34). By the time Luke wrote these words, the disciples had already gone through the experience of the resurrection, had been taught in the post-resurrection ministry, and then finally saw the ascension. Luke's comment is what the disciples had already come to assess regarding the ministry of one Messiah who both suffers and dies, is resurrected, and will then perform the function of what the rabbis have indicated regarding Messiah Son of David, the deliverance of Israel, but at sometime in the future.

4) The next mention of Messiah dying is the citation by John, "Some Greeks had come to worship at the Passover feast and had requested an audience with Yeshua. When he heard of it through his disciples he commented, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed but if it dies, it produces many seeds" (12:23, 24). We must consider, however, that when John penned these words, it was already after the loss of the second temple, and of course, he already knew of the necessity for the Messiah to die, that he will be raised from the dead, and one day, this same Messiah will come to establish the kingdom of peace on earth.

5) Another very puzzling statement by the Messiah himself concerns the reply to the disciples when they asked the questions regarding the "The sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:4). Had they already begun to understand that not only was the Son of Man to die as the Messiah, but that after his resurrection and ascension, he would be come to establish the kingdom? We must question it, however. Matthew was only commenting on what occurred on that fateful day as they looked down on the temple mount. The Gospel writer already speaks of that situation in the light of having known about his death, burial and resurrection and coming again.

6) The Messiah once again predicted to his disciples concerning what would soon happen, "As you know, the Passover is two days away - and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified" (Matt 26:1-2). Matthew is the only one who made this comment, but the disciples made no response. By this point, they knew perfectly well what the Messiah had taught but for some reason, they didn't relate to it and perhaps didn't even want to consider it in their thinking. They were so under the impression what mainstream Judaism taught all along that they were not ready to consider anything else other than that the Messiah was supposed to appear in glory to bring in the kingdom.

Both Mark and Luke mention that the time had come when the chief priests and scribes were looking for ways and means on how to lay hold upon Yeshua and take him away and kill him. But these writers add that they didn't want to execute this decision during the Feast of the Passover (Mark 14:1,2; Luke 22:2). Both Mark and Luke seem to write from the point of view of what they already knew.

7) The next occasion where the Messiah mentioned his soon passing was at the Passover table. He went through the Passover of that day, some of which is provided in tractate Pesachim.⁴¹ In the Passover of that day, after partaking of the roast lamb, the next step was to take the third cup, the cup of redemption. But Yeshua introduced a new concept into the course of the Passover; after the meat, he reached for the unleavened bread on the table (at that point in history, there was no plate with three pieces of unleavened bread on the table as it is today in the Jewish Passover), broke it into pieces and gave to everyone to eat. As he did so he said, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me (Luke 22:19). Likewise, with the cup after supper, the cup of redemption which signified how God delivered Israel from Egypt, Yeshua now added a new meaning to it, declaring, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you" (Luke 22:20).

What did the disciples understand about these two elements? There is no evidence they understood the meaning and full significance of the Messiah dying as our substitute for us, and that his blood would be the means to cleanse our sins.

8) After the death and burial of Yeshua, many of the disciples left town and those who remained behind became greatly disillusioned. Why? Because they had never been schooled in the fact that the Messiah was to come and be the atonement for our sins and also be the Son of David to deliver Israel and to bring in world peace. They found it difficult to go against their schooling.

However, when news came of the fact that the tomb was empty, Peter and John ran to examine it. An interesting statement is made as John recalled the day when he stooped to look into the empty tomb, "Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed" (20:8). As a way to explain, however, what were his original feelings, because he wrote this gospel at least 60 years later, he declared, "They still do not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead" (John 20:9). We can say however that John, as he saw the grave clothes unwrapped but with no body, he began to realize what Yeshua had been saying all along. He would not only die as the atonement for our sins but would also be resurrected.

Was There Any Emphasis Upon Atonement in Israel?

The question that now must be raised is if there was any concept of redemption at all in the Jewish thinking at the end of the second temple period. Certainly, when one examines the tractate Yoma⁴² in the Mishnah, such an emphasis did exist. Building on what Leviticus 4 and 16 taught, Yoma is very precise in its meaning concerning the bull as a sin offering for the priest and then two goats to be offered on behalf of the people, the one a goat of sacrifice whose blood is taken into the Holy of Holies while the scapegoat, with the sins of the nation laid upon it, was taken away outside the city with enough distance to insure that this goat would not wander back into the city.

The prayer which the high priest offered over this scapegoat leaves no question as to the meaning of a sacrifice, in connection not only with the altar but also with sin being taken away:

"Oh God, thy people, the House of Israel, have committed iniquity, transgressed, and sinned before thee. O God, forgive, I pray, the iniquities and transgressions and sins which thy people, the House of Israel, have committed and transgressed and sinned before thee; as it is

written in the law of thy servant Moses, For on this day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you: from all your sins shall ye be clean before the Lord. And when the priests and the people which stood in the Temple Court heard the Expressed Name came forth from the mouth of the high priest, they used to kneel and bow themselves and fall down on their faces and say, 'Blessed be the name of glory of His kingdom forever and ever!' "43

With so many of the priests and people who grasped the significance of atonement in connection with the altar, why was it so difficult to make the connection between what the altar taught and what the Messiah claimed for himself? Nevertheless, the disciples and other people found it hard to transfer the altar experience to that of Messiah himself who would die on his altar, the tree. For that reason, therefore, after the resurrection, Yeshua upbraided some of the disciples on their way to Emmaus that they did not understand what he had been telling them all along, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms. Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures, saying, 'This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations'" (Luke 24:44-47). What the Messiah tried to get people to realize is that, once the resurrection became an accepted fact, they should then be able to cut through the Tradition that Messiah would only come with great glory and bring in the Kingdom. The point to be made however is that the resurrection became the great keynote concerning God's approval of the ministry of Yeshua. Without that event, he would be no different than any other religious leader who came on the platform, ministered to his people, and then left this earth's scene. The fact that the Messiah Yeshua is a living person, sitting at God's right hand today, is proof positive that whatever Yeshua said and did had God's stamp of approval upon him. Therefore we ought to listen all the more carefully to how he interpreted Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms or Writings to a biblical theology which set forth a suffering Messiah but also where this same person will have the power one day to initiate the kingdom of peace.

Israel's Response

The loss of the Temple in 70 C.E. was a crisis within Israel. Everyone recognized that. G.E. Moore explains that:

"The loss was keenly felt. It is narrated that R. Johanan ben Zakai was one day going out of Jerusalem accompanied by his disciple, R. Joshua ben Hananiah. At the site of the temple in ruins, Joshua explained, 'Woe to us, for the place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for is destroyed!'"⁴⁴

Two major responses are noted regarding this tragedy of loss of the temple and still another response appears later on:

1. The Window of Opportunity -- Obviously, the loss of Israel's sanctuary made a tremendous impact. Jewish believers in Jesus the Messiah used the tragedy as an occasion to point out again the importance of the claims of Yeshua (Jesus). There is every evidence to believe that many in Israel came to know the atoning work of Israel's Messiah when they understood the prophecies provided by Jesus, e.g., Matthew 24. A great window of opportunity opened up so that the number of believers grew in Israel until by the end of the first century, perhaps, and this writer says, perhaps, as many as twenty per cent of the nation could have acknowledged Yeshua as the Messiah. We can indicate the strength of the action of witness by the reaction among the religious leaders who changed many of the interpretations which Jewish believers used; the Jewish leaders reinterpreted many of the important portions of the Scriptures as a counteraction to the testimony of genuine believers.⁴⁵

2. The Council of Yavneh -- After the Temple was lost in 70 C.E., a Council met in Yavneh and Yohanan ben Zakkai became the architect among the religious leaders which met between 70 - 90 C.E. At this meeting of leading rabbis, Judaism became structured into a religion with no substitute atonement. It was Zakkai who set Judaism in motion on a course which became the basis of a traditional belief and practice concerning atonement but also, a direct challenge against the testimony of Yeshua.⁴⁶

Some subsequent statements concerning this self realization are indicated. Already in the Talmud we note that atonement is now made possible by the study of Torah.

"The descendants of Eli could find no atonement by sacrifice and meat offering, but they might receive pardon through the occupation with the study of Torah."⁴⁷

Then Rabbi Simeon said: "The words of the Torah are more precious to me than burnt offerings and sacrifices" (Avot de Rabbi Nathan 8).

In quick succession across the centuries, rabbis have pointed out that prayer, repentance and the service of "doing charity" become the means of atonement, a far cry from what Yeshua Himself said, that he indeed is the atonement for our sins through His suffering and death.

3. A concept of two Messiahs -- Another response by the rabbis appears by at least 200 C.E. proclaiming two Messiahs, Messiah ben Yosef, who in fighting Israel's enemies, suffers and dies, while the second Messiah, Messiah ben David, is still the one who will bring in the Messianic kingdom envisioned by the prophets.

Moore suggests:

"The earliest mention of this Messiah is a report of a difference between a certain R. Dosa and the prevailing opinion of scholars on the question what the mourning in Zechariah 12,10 ... is about. One - It is not clear which - said that it was for the Messiah ben Yosef who was killed, the other said it was for the 'evil impulse' which was slain."⁴⁸

But Moore also indicates that "it does not appear how commonly it was accepted among the authorities of the time".⁴⁹

The point is however that by the early 200s C.E., a certain rabbi, R. Samuel ben Nahman declared that "Esau (Rome) would be delivered only into the hand of a descendant of Joseph."⁵⁰ From a passage in Sukkah 52a⁵¹ "it appears that the career of the Josephite Messiah and his death was imagined to precede the coming of the Messiah son of David; but no other particulars are forthcoming."⁵²

Subsequently, across the years, the rabbis have used this as an argument against the one Messiah who both suffers and dies and is resurrected and also acts in the role of Messiah ben David: the rabbis now propound two Messiahs, one who suffers and dies, and the second one who will deliver Israel. It would seem this became the apologetic against the witness by Messianic Jews to as late as the end of 300s, and is still used to this day by the more religious Jew.

Conclusion

How then can we conclude with regard to the two issues which appear as a watershed between Judaism and Messianic Jewish faith. The issue today is that most Jewish people do not even believe anymore in a Messiah who is personal, but rather, in a Messianic kingdom to which all peoples together will help bring it in. However, the more observant we find the Jewish person to be, we find a repetition of what was the situation at the end of the second temple period.

We still have to deal with two major issues: 1) Is the Messiah both human and divine; and 2) Does a Messiah suffer and die as an atonement for the sins of mankind but is also the Messiah son of David who will bring in the kingdom. To these two questions, religious Judaism answers with an emphatic, NO: 1) the Messiah is human and perhaps maybe even superhuman but never divine. This usually becomes a test question regarding the identity of the Messianic Jew when he is confronted by a religious Jewish leader. Does he believe in both the humanity and divinity of Yeshua? If so, then the Jewish community will read this person out of the "family," and declare that the Messianic Jew is no longer a Jew.

If the attempt by Messianic Jews is to demonstrate that Yeshua is Messiah, who both suffers and dies and is also the Messiah son of David, then the religious Jewish community will react again, NO, it is not possible for a Messiah to suffer and die in the sense as Yeshua is proclaimed. If such is the case, then HE CAN NOT BE THE MESSIAH SON OF DAVID. Exactly because he did not bring in the Messianic kingdom, Yeshua's claims have been compromised. The religious Jew will affirm that with the concept of two Messiahs, Messiah son of Yosef is the one who suffers and dies on behalf of Israel in fighting their enemies. But, the Messiah son of David is yet to come to bring in the Messianic kingdom.

How then shall we conclude? We are still faced with the Gordian knot of trying to assert the claims of Yeshua. Believers must have a vested interest in sharing these two major concepts with the Jewish community. When he or she does, however, we may expect reaction by the religious Jew. And only the Spirit of God can open the mind and heart of the Jewish person to enable him to realize the biblical claims concerning Yeshua Ha-Mashiah, ben David.

ENDNOTES

¹ The Second Commonwealth covered the period from the end of the Babylonian exile until the loss of the second Temple in 70 C.E. The build up of traditional interpretation of the Scriptures began with the religious leaders not too soon after the death of Ezra, i.e., 400 B.C.E. Traditional rabbinical authorities today would insist that the Oral Law was given at Sinai along with the Hebrew Scriptures, a view which is challenged by Jewish historical criticism.

² The Aramaic translation of the first five books of Moses and the paraphrase of the prophetic portion of the Hebrew Scriptures required for those who returned from Babylonia and for successive generations in Israel who primarily spoke Aramaic.

³ M. Jastrow, Dictionary of the Targumim, Vol. 2 (New York: Title Publishing Co., 1943), p. 775.

⁴ All citations from the Targum on the Pentateuch are from J.W. Etheridge, tr., The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan - Ben Uzziel, 2 Vols., (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1865) except where otherwise noted.

⁵ K. Kohler. "Memra," in The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. VIII (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1891), p. 465, citing the Targum Yerushalmi. Several Targumim are identified for the Torah (Pentateuch): 1) Onkelos, 2) Palestinian Targum, and 3) the Yerushalmi, probably some offshoot of the Palestinian Targum.

⁶ J.F. Stenning, tr., The Targum of Isaiah (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), based on the Targum of the Prophets, primarily Jonathan ben Uzziel.¹

⁷ K. Kohler, Op. Cit.

⁸ J.F. Stenning, Op. Cit.

⁹ K. Kohler, Op. Cit.

¹⁰ J.F. Stenning, Op. Cit.

¹¹ G.E. Moore, Judaism, Vol. I (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 419.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ H.A. Wolfson, Philo, Vol. I (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 287.

¹⁴ Reputed to be the author, that is, the one to start to put the Targum into writing, a Targum on the first five books which had been carried orally to the end of the first and beginning of the second centuries.

¹⁵ M. McNamara, Targum and Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), pp. 103, 104. The author provides a citation from the Neofiti manuscript (The Palestinian Targum) describing the work of creation: "The earth was void and empty and darkness was spread over the face of the abyss. And the Word (Memra) was the light and it shone ... and he called it the first night ... If the Word (Memra) of the Lord shone at creation, this can only be because it was the light. It is identified with the primordial light ... This is precisely what John in his prologue to the Gospel says of the Logos. 'In the beginning was the word ... and the word was God. In him was light and the light shines in darkness' (John 1:1-3). And like the Targumist, John was speaking of the activity of the Logos at creation. He was then light, and this light still shines in Christ."

¹⁶ Joseph Reider, The Book of Wisdom (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), p. 210.

¹⁷ This was a council under the leadership of Yohanan ben Zakkai, which met in the village of Yavneh, not too far from the Tel Aviv of today, from about 70-90 C.E., for the purpose of restructuring Judaism without the Temple worship.

¹⁸ Louis Ginsberg. "Anthropomorphism and Anthropopathism," in The Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. I, citing Z. Frankel, Vorstudien zu der Septuaginta, 1841, pp. 174-179. This writer indicates main stream Judaism in the ancient period to be the traditional one which produced the literature that became basic for Jewish thought, e.g., tannaim, religious leaders until 200 C.E.

¹⁹ Louis Jacobs, A Jewish Theology (New York: Behrman House, 1973, pp. 143ff.

²⁰ William Wrede, Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1901), p.

²¹ David Flusser, "Two Notes on the Midrash on 2 Sam. vii" in Israel Exploration Journal, IX (1959), pp. 107-109.

²² Ibid.

²³ Sanhedrin 38b in Nezikin Vol. III, Jacob Schachter, tr. p. 245 (London: Soncino Press, 1935).

²⁴ Jean Cardinal Danielou, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, John Baker, tr. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), p. 147, 148.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 164, 165.

²⁶ F. Stenning, The Targum of Isaiah, Op. Cit.

²⁷ Ibid. 52:13 and 53:10.

²⁸ Ibid. 53:5, 6, 9, 10-12.

²⁹ Beginning with the Middle Ages, Jewish religious leaders for the most part, applied the idea of the Suffering Servant to Israel even though ancient Jewish interpreters never propounded this concept. See David Baron for a further discussion on the change over and the opposition to it in "The Servant of Jehovah," (London: Morgan, Scott, 1922).

³⁰ The concept of the two Messiahs, Messiah ben Joseph and Messiah ben David will yet be discussed below, pages 30, 31.

³¹ The Targum of Isaiah, Op. Cit., 53:4, 7, 12.

³² Ibid. 53:12.

³³ The Old Testament, Pseudepigrapha, James H.M. Charlesworth, ed., I, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1893), beginning with p. 30, 1 Enoch 38:2; 40:5; 46:3, 4; 48:10; 49:2; 52:4; 53:6, 7; 90:30-38.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 801, Testament of Judah 24:4-6.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 812, Testament of Naphtali 4:5.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 794, 795, Testament of Levi 18:2-10.

³⁷ Ibid., II, pp. 665-669, Psalms of Solomon, Ch. 17; 18:7.

³⁸ Ibid., I, pp. 630, 631, 645, 2 Baruch 29:3; 30:1; 72:1.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 932, Testament of Moses 10:3.

⁴⁰ Ibid., beginning with p. 363, Sibylline Oracles 3:49-56, 652-656, 705, 743, 757-767.

⁴¹ Pesachim Ch. 10, in H. Danby, ed., The Mishnah (London: Oxford, 1933), pp. 150, 151.

⁴² Yoma in the Mishnah, Op. Cit. pp. 162-172.

⁴³ Yoma 6:2, in H. Danby, Ibid., p. 169.

⁴⁴ G.E. Moore, Jerusalem in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), p. 503, citing Avot de Rabbi Natan 4, 5.44.

⁴⁵ Because of the strong reaction by the rabbis of this period, the Jewish believers' witness to Yeshua the Messiah must have been strong, a witness that continued through the 300s. See Bagatti, The Church from the Circumcision (Jerusalem: The Franciscan Press, 1971) for numerous examples.

⁴⁶ The Council also developed a way of barring out all apostates, including Messianic Jews, from the synagogues by inserting into the Shemoneh Esre, the Eighteen Benedictions, a malediction known as Birkat HaMinim, "I thank God I am not a min." While the word can include a reference to all apostates, the directive by the Council became a way to stop all Jewish believers in Yeshua from any fellowship with Jewish people, in the synagogues as well as in any other gatherings. See the discussion by Jacob Jocz, The Jewish People and Jesus Christ (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1979 reissue), pp. 174-190.

⁴⁷ RoShanah 18a in Moad IV, p. 71, M. Simon, ed. Babylonian Talmud, (London: Soncino, 1938).

⁴⁸ G.E. Moore, Op. Cit., II, p. 370.

⁴⁹ G.E. Moore, Op. Cit., II, p. 370.

⁵⁰ Baba Bathra 123b in Nezikim II, P. 512, I. Slotki, ed. Babylonian Talmud, (London: Soncino, 1935).

⁵¹ Sukkah 52a in Moed III, p. 247, I. Slotki, ed. Babylonian Talmud, (London: Soncino, 1938).

⁵² G.E. Moore, Op. Cit., p. 371.