



MESSIAH TO BE GOD-DIVINE

The LORD our Righteousness

Jeremiah 23:5-6 Shows That the Messiah Was to be God Himself

Buried within the pages of the book of Jeremiah lies one of the most precious and revealing prophecies of the Messiah (see Vocabulary p.6) to be found within the bounds of the Hebrew scriptures. In it, we see revealed that the Messiah, the Branch whom God was going to raise to fill the throne of David, would be given the name of the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, YHWH Tsidkenu (יְהוָה צְדִיקְנוּ). As we will see below, this phraseology points us to the divine nature of the Messiah, specifically that He was to be YHWH-יְהוָה Himself. Below, this shall be briefly explored, and some of the more common Jewish objections to this proposition will be examined.

Let us look at the passage in question,

"The days are coming," says ADONAI (LORD GOD) when I will raise a righteous Branch for David. He will reign as king and succeed, he will do what is just and right in the land. In his days Y'hudah (Judah) will be saved, Isra'el will live in safety, and the name given to him will be ADONAI Tzidkenu [ADONAI our righteousness]. Jeremiah 23:5-6 CJB

From what is said in this passage, we see that this portion is specifically Messianic in content. This is seen both from the term "Branch" (*tsemach* - תְּצַמַח), and from the Davidic ancestry of the King who was to be raised up.

The name "Branch" is almost universally accepted as Messianic, both by Jews and Christians alike. This term is a metaphor, literally meaning "shoot" or "sprout", and signifies the new life that Messiah was to bring to the Davidic monarchy, which was presumed dead. Further, the implications of the name were that Messiah would bring new life to all mankind, not just to His people Israel. This description as "Branch" appears several times in the Hebrew scriptures. It appears in Isaiah 4:2, where the Messiah's presence in the coming Kingdom is described as "beautiful" and "glorious". In Isaiah 11:1, the Branch is said to come from the "stem of Jesse", and is filled with the Spirit of God. In Jeremiah 33:15, the Branch again is said to come from the royal line of David. Yet, this same Branch from the royal line is termed God's servant in Zechariah 3:8, and is described as a man who will carry out God's work in Zechariah 6:12. The rabbis recognized that Branch was a name for the Messiah. R. Y'hoshu'a notes this as a name for Messiah from Zechariah 6:12¹. Rav Huna also refers to this as a Messianic name², with Buber concurring in his commentary notes on that statement³.

Likewise, the instances in Jewish rabbinical literature in which the Messiah is explicitly understood to be descended from David are too numerous to list more than a sampling here. Moses Maimonides pointed to the statements of Numbers 24:17 when he wrote,

"And there he says: 'I see him but not now', this refers to David; 'I behold him but not nigh', this refers to King Messiah; 'A star shall step forth out of Jacob', this refers to David; 'and a scepter shall rise out of Israel', this refers to King Messiah."⁴

Rav Y'huda taught that the Messiah would be "another David", and that the Messiah and the first David would rule as King and viceroy, respectively⁵. The Aramaic Targum of Jonathan b. Uzziel likewise interprets Jeremiah 23:5 specifically in the sense of the Messiah's descent from David, even translating "branch" as "Messiah"⁶. Levey notes that in his Targum, Jonathan expands the name "LORD our righteousness" to read "may vindication be accomplished for us by the Lord in His day", a paraphrasical explanation of "YHWH Tsidkenu—יְהוָה צְדִיקְנוּ" which the commentator felt impelled to explain because of the Messianic idea contained in the verse⁷. Thus, the interpretation of Jeremiah 23:5-6 as Messianic would seem to rest on a solid Biblical foundation, and is also supported by the understanding of Jewish traditional theology.

Most interesting to our point here is that many of the rabbis recognized that the Messiah would be God. R.

Abba bar Kahana explicitly stated that the Messiah's name would be "LORD-God (Adonai)", and quotes Jeremiah 23:6 as evidence⁸. Smith remarks that the Jewish teachers frequently interpreted this name in Jeremiah 23:6 as a personal name of the Messiah (rather than as a title for Israel or Jerusalem) in the Targumim, Midrashim, and Talmud⁹. In the Peshikta Rabbah, we find the statement, "You find that at the beginning of the creation of the world King Messiah was born [and] that he emerged in the thought [of God] even before the world was created..."¹⁰

The sentiment that the Messiah, or His name, was pre-existent as a thought or word of God is found widely across the rabbinical literature. In many cases, the statements imply a pre-existence of the Messiah, which, if one understands the Hebrew scriptures correctly, therefore implies the deity of the Messiah, as the Tanakh is quite explicit in stating that before God created the world, nothing else existed with Him. The Genesis Rabbah explains the Messiah as being one of six things preceding the creation of the world, with the Messiah being cast as one of these which arose in the thought of God¹¹. In this same work, R. Shim'on ben Laqish explicitly states that the "spirit of God" mentioned in Genesis 1:2 as hovering over the face of the waters is the spirit of King Messiah, and appeals to Isaiah 11:2 ("And the spirit of the Lord will rest upon him") for support¹². The Babylonian Talmud likewise records that it was taught that the name of the Messiah was one of seven things created before the world, and that his name would endure forever, relying upon Psalm 72:17 for support¹³. The First Book of Enoch reiterates that the Messiah (there called the "Son of Man") was hidden in God from the beginning, before the creation, and even that the kings and rulers of the earth worship the Son of Man, setting their hopes in him and petitioning for mercy at his hands¹⁴, something directed appropriately only to God. Perhaps most explicitly of all is the statement found in R. Simeon b. Yochai's comments on the Zohar,

"There is a perfect Man, who is an Angel. This Angel is Metatron, the Keeper of Israel; He is a man in the image of the Holy One, blessed be He, who is an Emanation from Him; yea, **He is Jehovah; of Him cannot be said, He is created, formed or made; but He is the Emanation from God.** This agrees exactly with what is written, Jeremiah 23:5-6, Of צִמְחָה לְדָוִד, David's Branch, that though He shall be a perfect man, yet He is 'The Lord our Righteousness.'"¹⁵

Throughout the Targumim, we see the Lord and His name being referred to with the term Memra" (Aramaic for "word"), which has been attributed to the discomfort of the Targumists with the many places where the Lord appears to be dealing with Himself in a uniplural sense (ex. Exodus 17:16) or where there seemed to be anthropomorphic references to God (ex. Deuteronomy 30:8, Jeremiah 30:11). In Ezekiel 34:24, as in other passages, where the prophet says, "...I the LORD have spoken it", Jonathan renders, "I, the Lord, have decreed this by my Memra". Elsewhere, the Memra which appears in the Targumic commentaries appears to take on distinct functions itself. For example, in Genesis 19:24, the Hebrew text says, "The LORD rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven." Grammatically, the Hebrew here seems to indicate that two separate Jehovah's are fulfilling two distinct roles. The Targum of Jonathan at this verse substitutes "The Memra of the LORD" for the first of the two Jehovah's in the verse, indicating the Targumist's understanding that the two actors described with the name "YHWH" were distinct in person from each other, yet intimately connected in essence, hence his use of the Memra, or Word.

In many other places, the Memra of the LORD in the Targumim takes on personality and characteristics of God Himself, indicating the understanding of the Targumists that the Memra could be equated WITH God, while yet dealt with as a separate personality. At various points, the Memra is praised and prayed to as God¹⁶, it speaks to men¹⁷, it is to be trusted in with the same sense as trusting in God Himself¹⁸, it is an active agent in creation¹⁹, and is even said to **be** God²⁰. This all would seem to indicate a view of the Memra of the Lord as an hypostatic agent of the Lord, whereby the Lord's word takes on separate and distinct function while yet retaining the essential character and being of the Lord Himself²¹.

From this, we can see in the literature both that the Messiah was pre-existent before creation as a thought or word of God, and that the idea of hypostasis of aspects of the Lord's personality was a known quantity in Judaism. This concept seems to be explored by Baron in his analysis of Zechariah. He notes,

"Perhaps in no other single book in the Old Testament is Messiah's Divinity so clearly taught as in Zechariah. In the second chapter (8-11) the prophet calls Him Who is to come and dwell in the midst of Zion, Whom the Jews always understood to be the Messiah, by the name Jehovah. This passage must be a very difficult one to the Jew or Unitarian, for here the prophet represents two Persons, both of Whom he calls by the Divine title Jehovah, though One is sent by the Other to accomplish some mission on the earth."²².

We note, of course, that there are several other portions of the Hebrew scriptures where God appears to have a uniplural nature, with multiple persons yet each with the same revealed essence. The angel of the LORD which appears to Hagar is a distinct personality from the invisible LORD, yet is identified with Him and addressed as the LORD (Genesis 16:7-13). Manoah, the father of Samson, dealt with the angel of the LORD, and stated that he had seen God (Judges 13:22). Both of these would be impossible in light of the narrative in Exodus 33:18-23 (where it is said that no man can see God and live) unless what they were seeing was the hypostasis of God's Word, manifested in the flesh as a theophany. Further, we see in Isaiah 48:12-16 that the LORD is speaking, yet says that "the Lord GOD, and his Spirit" had sent him, which implies **three** different personalities of God in action in this passage. Also, in Zechariah 3:1-5, the angel of the LORD commands that Joshua the high priest be clothed with clean garments, saying "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee...." (v.4), which is forgiveness and cleansing from sin which only God can give. Thus, the uniplurality of God appears on numerous occasions in the Hebrew Scriptures, and is often intimately connected with the manifestation of divine hypostasis in the form of the angel of the LORD, who is from God and yet is God, a messenger who yet is of the essence of the author of the message, treated as God Himself.

It is in Jeremiah 23:5-6 that we see these two concepts, pre-existent Messiah and divine hypostasis, united into one person who was to be God incarnated into the flesh, a physical manifestation of the Word of God, just as is taught in the *Brit Chadassah-New Testament* in John 1:1,14. In this passage, we see the King being raised up, the Branch identified by both Jew and Christian as the Messiah, given the name "Jehovah our Righteousness, יְהוָה יִצְדָקֵנוּ", a name which firmly teaches that the Messiah would manifest the divine trait of righteousness, both in His actions as ruler and in His own intrinsic character. Yet, because of the understanding derived from Hebrew scriptures themselves (and recognized on numerous occasions by the rabbis as well as by Christian theologians) that the name and character of the Messiah would be pre-existent and divine, we can understand that Jeremiah 23:5-6 is teaching that the name of the Messiah was to be "YHWH Tsidkenu, יְהוָה יִצְדָקֵנוּ". As Laetsch has stated, the name given is itself a statement of the Messiah's nature and essence²³.



RABBINICAL OBJECTION #1 - Is a divine title applied to Jerusalem in Jeremiah 33:16, and why shouldn't Jeremiah 23:6 be understood as referring to Jerusalem, in parallel with 33:16?

This objection refers to the fact that, in Jeremiah 33:16, Jerusalem will be called "the LORD our righteousness, יְהוָה יִצְדָקֵנוּ", in language that roughly parallels that of Jeremiah 23:6. Because of this, it is supposed either that Jerusalem is also being spoken of in 23:6, or else that the Christian understanding of 23:6 as predicting a divine Messiah is incorrect since the parallel would suggest that **Jerusalem** also be a divine Messiah, an obvious illogic.

Dealing with the first objection, we see that the reason for viewing the name given in 23:6 as not speaking of Jerusalem but rather the Messiah, and 33:16 as what Jerusalem will be called, has to do with the simple grammar of the verses. In the Hebrew of 23:5-6, the emphasis of these verses centers upon the Branch introduced in v. 5. The "days" mentioned in v. 6 are "in his days בְּיָמָיו" a masculine possessive construction, and "he" is the one being called "YHWH Tsidkenu יְהוָה יִצְדָקֵנוּ". Yet, in 33:16, the emphasis upon reaching that verse moves from the Branch and to Jerusalem, with "she" being the one called "YHWH יְהוָה" and instead of "in his days", we find the more neutral "in those days" בְּיָמָיִם, which again shifts emphasis away from the Branch.

The other angle of this argument, that the Christian argument taken to its logical conclusion would propose a literal divine Jerusalem, fails to take an important consideration into account. While both the Messiah in 23:6 and Jerusalem 33:16 are referred to with "YHWH Tsidkenu יְהוָה יִצְדָקֵנוּ", we see that there is a very important difference. In 23:6, the Branch is said to be called "by the name יְהוָה שְׁמִי" of the Lord our Righteousness. This

word, "name", is a translation of the Hebrew word "*shem*" (שֵׁם). *Shem* has a much more full and complex meaning than the simple word "name" in English implies. *Shem* refers to the very character and essence of the one bearing the name. As Kaiser tells us, "This noun appears 864 times, but less than 90 times in the plural. No certain etymology has been established for this root. Two earlier conjectures are now rejected: Redslab (Zeit. deut. morgenlandische Gesellschaft 1872: 751-56) sought to derive it from the root for *shem* שָׁם "to be high" and thus "monument" (Genesis 11:4), "excellence" or "majesty" (Psalm 54:1 [H3]), while others have regarded it as a shortened form of *shema'* שָׁמַע. "The concept of personal names in the OT often include existence, character, and reputation (I Samuel 25:25). Often the plural form of *shem* שְׁמוֹת is rendered as "persons," (e.g. Numbers 1:2,18,20; 3:40,43; 26:55). Further "to cut off the name" was equal to liquidating the person himself (Deuteronomy 7:24, 9:14; I Samuel 24:21 [H 22] etc.). the name chosen for a child was often descriptive of the parents' wishes or expectations for the personality that was to mature. This is particularly evident in the renaming process, e.g. Jacob becoming Israel (Genesis 35:10)....

"In some passages *shem* Yahweh יְהוָה-שֵׁם, Name of God, is so inextricably bound up with the being of God, that it functions almost like an appearance of Yahweh (Exodus 23:20-21; Isaiah 30:27). Cf. the tabernacling of the Name at various spots almost like a Christophany (Exodus 20:24; Deuteronomy 12:5; II Samuel 7:13, etc.).

"The name of God also signifies the whole self-disclosure of God in His holiness and truth (Psalm 22:22 [H 23]). This Name can be "walked in," i.e. people are to live according to its teachings (Micah 4:5)."²⁴ *Shem* שֵׁם engenders the whole gamut of reputation and renown which a person or thing being "named" has, its character, what is known of it, its essential being. The fact that in Jeremiah 23:6 it is said of the Branch that "this is his **name** whereby he shall be called..." is very enlightening. What is essentially being said here is that this Branch, this Messiah who was to be raised up, was going to be invested with the full body of God's revealed character and reputation. This contrasts with the statement in 33:16 about Jerusalem, where (despite the italicized added word in the KJV) the word *shem* שֵׁם is NOT used. Jerusalem, unlike the Branch in 23:6, would not be invested with the essential reputation and character of God Almighty, though it would still be called after God, and would bask in His care and concern.

RABBINICAL OBJECTION #2 - Many names for Israelites in the Hebrew scriptures contain the name Jehovah, so this means that Christians consider these people to be the Messiah too, or perhaps deity as well, right?

This objection relies upon the modern sense of the term "name", which in most Western societies today means little more than just the word used to distinguish one person from another. Thus, it is assumed that when speaking of the theological importance of "name" (*shem*, שֵׁם), that the importance rests upon whether the word used as the name contains the same letters as the word used to refer to Jehovah, יְהוָה. This ignores the theological emphasis on "renown" or "reputation" which is engendered in *shem*, שֵׁם.

Further, we should note that none of these Israelites or others in the Hebrew scriptures whose names contain the word Jehovah, יְהוָה, are specifically said to be given the name, *shem*, שֵׁם of Jehovah, יְהוָה. They are not invested with his repute and renown the way the Branch is in Jeremiah 23:6. Further, it should be noted that when a person in the Hebrew Scriptures has a name which contains the word Jehovah, the full tetragrammaton



is never included in the name. Most often, the name takes the shorted form "Jah/Yah", such as appears in names like "Isaiah" or "Zechariah", or some other shortened form of the name, such as in "Joshua" or "Jehoshaphat". Nowhere, however, are all four letters of the tetragrammaton (YHWH, יהוה) found together in that form in a name given to a human being or other created creature.

RABBINICAL OBJECTION #3 - At various places in the Tanakh/תנ"ך. Old Testament, objects such as altars, etc. are "named", using the word *shem*/שֵׁם. Does this mean that Christians believe these object to be divine, because they are named using the Divine name?

This objection ignores now the other pertinent reason as to why Christians interpret Jeremiah 23:5-6 in a divinely Messianic sense. This is because of the fact that in v.5, the person of the Branch, the Messiah, had been specifically introduced. Because the Messiah is elsewhere alluded to in the Hebrew Scriptures, Tanakh/תנ"ך, as

"the LORD" (Psalm 110:1) and as the "son of God" (Psalm 2:7,12; Proverbs 30:4), there is a fundamental difference between a Messiah who is given the *shem*/שֵׁם name of Jehovah and an inanimate object which is given the same. This is not to say, however, that objects given the *shem*/שֵׁם, name of Jehovah are not imparted at least vicariously with the renown and reputation of God, at least in the sense of their symbolizing His character, etc. A good example of this would be in Exodus 17:15, where after the defeat of the Amalekites, Moses builds an altar and "names" (with *shem*) it Jehovah-nissi יְהוָה נִסִּי, meaning "Jehovah is my banner". The altar was meant to symbolize the great victory wrought by God for Israel, and thus both His great power and saving ability.

However, the full implications of *shem*, שֵׁם go beyond (but will still yet include) this sort of symbolic attribution when the term is applied to a figure which is elsewhere in the Tanakh imbued with traits fitting to God Himself. Further, as a personality, the Messiah would be able to manifest in a very real and concrete way the full meaning of the *shem* of Jehovah as our righteousness, whereas the naming of an altar would be unable to extend to that level. Also, the names of the altars and other inanimate objects such as Jehovah-nissi, יְהוָה נִסִּי, Jehovah-yireh, יְהוָה יִרְאַה (Genesis 22:14, meaning "Jehovah will provide"), and so forth all depict the objects named (and thus, their builders) as passive. God is acting upon the builders of those altars for a visible testimony of God's activity. God is providing, God is the banner acting as a shield and rallying point. Yet, in Jeremiah 23:6, the Branch is given the name "Jehovah our righteousness", which is not an activity of God, but an essential trait. God is completely holy and righteous (see I Samuel 2:2, Isaiah 6:1-6, etc.), and the Messiah He sent with the *shem*, שֵׁם, name of "Jehovah our righteousness" would fulfill this true and complete righteousness. Thus, one set of "names" depict the one named as a passive agent, while the other depicts an active, personal being.

IN CONCLUSION, we can see that Jeremiah 23:5-6 shows us a messianic Branch who was to be a divine hypothesis of God Himself, and who was to manifest to His people the full account of righteousness, a trait inherent to God alone. This is seen in the systematic theological construct built up involving the Biblical teaching of the messianic nature of the Branch, and the appearance of divine theophanies and uniplurality in the Hebrew scriptures which imply the incarnation of God in the likeness of man to fulfill this messianic role. This view is supported from the teachings of the Tanakh, תנ"ך, Jewish Scriptures and in its parts, was recognized at various times in the Jewish theological writings of 2nd Temple and post-2nd Temple Judaism.

End Notes

- (1) - *Lam. Rab.* 1:51; *Y. Ber.* 5a
- (2) - *Midrash Mishle*, ed. S. Buber, p.87
- (3) - *Midrash Mishle*, ed. S. Buber, p.87
- (4) - Maimonides, *Yad haHazaqa*, Shoftim, Kilkhoh M'lakhim 11
- (5) - *B. Sanh.* 98b
- (6) - Targum Jonathan on the Prophets, Jer. 23:5
- (7) - S.H. Levey, *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation*, n. #82, p. 156
- (8) - *Lam. Rab.* 1:51
- (9) - J.E. Smith, *What The Bible Says About The Promised Messiah*, p. 347, n. 18
- (10) - *Pes. Rab.*, ed. M. Friedmann, p. 152b
- (11) - *Gen. Rab.* 1:4
- (12) - *Gen. Rab.* 2:4
- (13) - *B. Pes.* 54a; *B. Ned.* 39a
- (14) - I Enoch 62:7-9
- (15) - *The Propositions of the Zohar*, cap. xxxviii, Amsterdam ed. - emphasis mine
- (16) - Jerusalem Targum, Genesis 16:13, "And Hagar praised and prayed in the name of the Memra Of YHWH who had revealed Himself to her..."
- (17) - Jerusalem Targum, Exodus 3:14, "And the Memra of YHWH said to Moses: 'I am He who said unto the world 'Be!' and it was: and who in the future shall say to it 'Be!' and it shall be." And He said: "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'I Am' has sent me to you."
- (18) - Targum on Psalm 62:8 [H 9], "Trust in the Memra of Yah at all times, O people of the house of Israel! Pour out before Him the sighings of your heart; Say, God is our trust forever."
- (19) - Targum Jonathan, Genesis 1:27, "And the Memra of YHWH created man in his likeness, in the likeness of YHWH, YHWH created, male and female created He them."
- (20) - Targum Onkelos, Genesis 28:20-21, "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If the Memra of YHWH will be my support, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall



the Memra of YHWH be my God."

(21) - Similar to the orthodox Christian principle of the Trinity, with its three distinct personalities of God which yet share the one, united, divine nature and essence.

(22) - D. Baron, *Rays of Messiah's Glory: Christ in the Old Testament*, p. 77ff, n.1

(23) - T. Laetsch, *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah*, p. 195

(24) - W.C. Kaiser, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, eds. R.L. Harris, G.L. Archer, and B.K. Waltke, Vol. II, pp. 934-935

Vocabulary:

Brit Hadashah—New Testament 27 books

Messiah— מָשִׁיחַ; means "Anointed One," the name given to the promised Deliverer who would some day come to the people of Israel as their great Savior and Redeemer, "anointed" as Prophet, Priest, and King by God Himself.

Midrashim— ancient Rabbinical expositions of Holy Writ. The term Midrash (of which Midrashim is the plural form) occurs twice in the Hebrew Bible (2 Chron. xiii. 22, and xxiv. 27); and in both passages it is represented in the Anglican version by the word "story," while the more correct translation, "commentary," is relegated to the margin. "Legendary exposition" best expresses the full meaning of the word Midrash. The Midrashim, for the most part, originated in a praiseworthy desire to familiarize the people with Holy Writ, which had, in consequence of changes in the vernacular, become to them, in the course of time, almost a dead letter. These Midrashim have little or nothing to do with the Halachoth or legal decisions of the Talmud, except in aim, which is that of illustration and explanation. They are not literal interpretations, but figurative and allegorical, and as such enigmatic. They are, however, to be received as utterances of the sages, and some even regard them of as binding obligation as the law of Moses itself. The following are fairly representative extracts.

Moses Maimonides—Name at birth: Moshe ben Maimon; regarded by many as the greatest Jewish philosopher ever. As a doctor, rabbi, religious scholar, mathematician, astronomer, and commentator on the art of medicine, his influence has spanned centuries and cultures. He was born in Spain and educated by his father, a Jewish judge. Eventually settling in Cairo, he became court physician to two viziers of Egypt, Saladin and el Fadil, and chief rabbi of the city's Jewish community. His *Guide of the Perplexed* (1190) used philosophical reasoning to argue that the Bible and Jewish faith did not conflict with Aristotle's popular system of thought. Today, Maimonides' "Thirteen Principles of Faith" are still recited in synagogues. His works continue to be studied by Jewish scholars, including *Commentary on the Mishnah* (1168), nicknamed "The Luminary," and *Mishneh Torah* (1180), 14 volumes of biblical and rabbinic law, coded and compiled. His nickname, Rambam, is an acronym for Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon... Scholars disagree on his birth year. Recent research points to 1138, not the more frequently cited 1135... He was multilingual and wrote most of his works in Arabic... Hospitals in such cities as Brooklyn, N.Y., San Francisco and Montreal bear his name... His tomb in the Galilean city of Tiberias has attracted tourists for centuries...

Paraphrasal—rewritten in the reader's own words.

Righteousness — be in the right, be right, have a just case, what is right, just, normal; rightness, justness, of weights and measures

Talmud—normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the Babylonian Talmud, although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud, or Palestinian Talmud. When referring to post-biblical periods, namely those of the creation of the Talmud, the Talmudic academies and the Babylonian exilarchate (head of the Jewish community in Babylonia in talmudic and medieval times), Jewish sources use the term "Babylonia" from a strictly Jewish point of view,^[1] still using this name after it had become obsolete in geopolitical terms. The Talmud has two components: the Mishnah (Hebrew: 200 CE), a written compendium of Rabbinic Judaism's Oral Torah (Talmud translates literally as "instruction" in Hebrew); and the Gemara (500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic (the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10-220 CE.) writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible. The term "Talmud" may refer to either the Gemara (the component of the Talmud comprising rabbinical analysis of and commentary on the Mishnah) alone, or the Mishnah and Gemara together. The entire Talmud consists of 63 tractates, and in standard print is over 6,200 pages long. It is written in Tannaitic Hebrew and Aramaic, and contains the teachings and opinions of thousands of pre-Christian Era rabbis on a variety of subjects, including Halakha (law), Jewish ethics, philosophy, customs, history, lore and many other topics. The Talmud is the basis for all codes of Jewish law, and is widely quoted in rabbinic literature.

Targumim—spoken paraphrases, explanations and expansions of the Jewish scriptures that a Rabbi would give in the common language of the listeners, which during the time of this practice was commonly, but not exclusively, Aramaic. This had become necessary near the end of the last century before the Christian era, as the common language was in transition and Hebrew was used for little more than schooling and worship.

Tanakh—Old Testament 39 books

Uniplural—A uniplural noun can be used to indicate an object in the singular or plural sense. Example: The word *sheep* can be used to describe one sheep or many sheep.

This article is drawn upon:

- The LORD our Righteousness —Jeremiah 23:5-6 Shows That the Messiah Was to be God Himself and used by permission of the author Timothy W. Dunkin. www.studytoanswer.net/judaism/jahtsidqenu.html
- Multiple general Jewish texts and resources
- Experience of Menorah's staff



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