

The Concept of Repentance, Forgiveness, and the Messiah

By Duane D. Miller

The reason I am writing this short article is because the concept of repentance, forgiveness, and the Messiah tends to always come up in conversation with respect to the disagreement that occurs between Judaism and the Messianic or Christian faith. Recently I received an email from a friend (obtained from www.aish.com) which described a Christian congregation that began to study the Torah, and eventually led to a falling away from faith in the Messiah Yeshua as well as the conversion of a large number of the congregational members to Judaism. First, the study of Torah should not cause someone to lose their faith in the Messiah; in fact it should strengthen one's faith dramatically. To begin I would like to (i) define what "repentance" is according to Judaism, (ii) look at how Judaism today defines proper T'shuvah (repentance) and (iii) give two examples why the Torah should strengthen our faith in Yeshua as truly being the Messiah of G-d.

Repentance

In the Tanach we find there is no specific word for repentance. The fundamental concept that is laid down in the **נביאים** (Nevi'im, prophets) is turning back to Adonai in obedience which is the result of one's conviction of sin. The realization of Sin stems from moral as well as religious evils (the very essence of the sin which has been committed) is one which causes a falling away from G-d and his righteous will. Generally speaking the Hebrew word which is associated with this turning back is **שוב** (Shuv) which means "turn back, go back." Judaism needed a noun for the word "repentance" and therefore took the word **תשובה** (T'shuvah) which in the Tanach is used only for "return" in the literal sense or for a return of speech in an argument, a "reply" while for the verb "repent" to distinguish it from "return" in the ordinary use of the word, the phrase **עשה תשובה** is used meaning "do repentance." So, basically the idea of doing repentance or **עשה תשובה** is the process of change in a man's attitude toward G-d and in the conduct of life where there is a religious and moral reformation of the people or individual who is attempting to perform T'shuvah to G-d.

Now that we have defined repentance according to the Tanach, the real question is how to perform **תשובה** (T'shuvah)? Messianic believers say proper T'shuvah requires blood atonement while Judaism states without a temple it is impossible to perform this mitzvot. To answer this question let us first look at **תשובה**/T'shuvah (repentance) according to Judaism.

תשובה According to Judaism

According to the Torah, in order to receive forgiveness of sins there is a need for “ritual expiations” where blood is shed to make atonement for sin. However, with the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD, this becomes a serious problem; there is now no place for to make atonement for sin (i.e. the temple is destroyed). So the first order of business of the rabbinical school and synagogue concerning the nature of true repentance had to be one which could explain forgiveness from G-d without the ritual expiations required of in the Torah.

A most often quoted rabbinical teaching on the issue of repentance without ritual expiations comes from *Maimonides, Hilkot Teshubah 2:2* and refers to *Hosea 14:2-4*.

Hosea 14:2-4

14:2 Take words with you, and return to ADONAI; say to him, "Forgive all guilt, and accept what is good; we will pay instead of bulls [the offerings of] our lips. 14:3 Ashur will not save us, we will not ride on horses, and we will no longer call what we made with our hands our gods. For it is only in you that the fatherless can find mercy." 14:4 "I will heal their disloyalty, I will love them freely; for my anger has turned from him. (CJB)

The rabbinical teaching continues: “Take with you words and return to the Lord, say to him, All together forgive guilt, and accept good, and let us pay (in place of) bullocks (the utterance) of our lips. We will never again call the work of our hands our gods.” Basically the concept was developed to teach the principle that repentance involves the resolve not to repeat offenses. You can find the development of this teaching in the *Talmud, Yoma 86a-b*. In a later Midrash then the teaching is expanded upon saying G-d says to Israel: “My sons, I will not receive from you burnt-offerings nor sin offerings nor trespass offerings nor oblations; but I will have you propitiate me by prayer and supplication and by fixing your thoughts. Lest one should imagine that empty words suffice, we are taught, ‘For Thou art not a G-d that likes wickedness, evil cannot abide with thee’ (*Psalms 5:5*); but with confession and with pleas for mercy and with tears. This is what is meant when it says, Take with you words.” (*Pesikta Rabbati ed. Friedmann f. 198b.*) So it is taught that the confession of sins belongs to repentance and is a condition of the divine forgiveness, and when Israel would confess their sins G-d at once turns and has mercy on them. You can find this in the teaching upon sefer Vayikra 26:40 in *Behukkotai Perek 8*.”

Basically, after the destruction of the second temple in 70 AD it was necessary to develop a method for receiving forgiveness of sins without the ritual expiations or blood atonement which is prescribed according to G-d’s mitzvot in His Torah. Apparently, the rabbinical teaching on forgiveness and repentance has been successful in satisfying the needs of the religious man who loves the Lord, seeks to walk in all His ways, and receive forgiveness out of a motive of obedience in all things which G-d requires. The problem I have however is the need for reinterpreting the meaning of repentance, and the Torah’s mitzvot on ritual expiation.

The problem I have is the need for reinterpretation.

Let's look a little further at how Judaism explains repentance and forgiveness with respect to a convicted criminal who has been sentenced to death. In Jewish Law, when a criminal drew near to the place of execution he was exhorted to confess his sins in a formula prayer that went something like this "May my death be an expiation for all my wickedness." (see *M. Sanhedrin 6:2; Tosefta Sanhedrin 9:5*) The teaching essentially assures a person who confesses has a share in the olam habah (world to come). It is believed that death wipes out the guilt even of those who caused the name of G-d to be profaned, supposing that the person has repented of their sin first. Basically, all who die are expiated by death from sin, except the man who despises the word of Adonai. (see *Numbers 15:31*)

Numbers 15:31

15:31 Because he has had contempt for the word of ADONAI and has disobeyed his command, that person will be cut off completely; his offense will remain with him." (CJB)

However in the *Talmud Sanhedrin 104a on sefer Devarim*, and see also *Marmorstein, The old Rabbinic Doctrine of G-d pp. 185-196*. "A man can by no means redeem his brother, nor give G-d his ransom; for too costly is the redemption of their life that it should live forever." This comes from the **זכות אבות** meaning "merit of the fathers."

If we cannot redeem a brother by giving G-d his ransom, how can we give G-d a ransom for ourselves by simply determining our hearts for repentance and then obedience?

A ransom is the payment for a price which is placed upon our life for forgiveness from sin. Essentially by determining our hearts for obedience and repentance, we are not paying the ransom which G-d requires of us through ritual expiation according to the Torah's mitzvot. This is the major dividing point between Judaism and Messianic faiths. As a messianic believer I have to say the Torah has certainly not passed away and neither is the requirement for blood atonement. With that in mind, the next question is whether the Messiah Yeshua has made atonement in his blood for our sins or not? Is it acceptable for Yeshua to have laid down his life (*John 10:15*) as a ransom for many? (see *Matthew 20:28; Acts 20:28; Romans 3:23-24; 1 Corinthians. 6:19-20; Galatians 3:13; 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; 1 Timothy 2:6; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18, 19*. In all these passages the same idea is expressed). To address this question of Yeshua giving his life for his friends, let's first look at what Judaism has to say.

In the *Mekilta, Ed. Friedmann f. 2a; ed. Weiss f. 2a.*, "You will find that the patriarchs and the prophets gave themselves for Israel. What does it say of Moshe? 'And now if Thou wilt forgive their sin, well; but if not, blot me out, I pray, for the book Thou hast written' (*Exodus 32:32*); and again 'If Thou deal thus with me, kill me outright, I pray, if I have found favor in Thy sight; and let me not behold the evil that has befallen me' (*Numbers 11:15*). And what does it say of David? 'Lo, it is I that has sinned and done wickedly, but these sheep, what have they done? Let Thy hand, I pray, be upon me and

upon my father's house' (*2 Samuel 24:17*). Everywhere you will find that the fathers and the prophets gave their life for Israel.”

So why is it so objectionable that the Messiah would do the same as the fathers and the prophets?

Today the rabbinical concept of repentance and forgiveness comes to us as a result of the difficulty of atoning for sin without ritual expiation because of the destruction of the second temple. Now the reasoning behind why the Rabbinical counsels decision to reinterpret the scriptures based upon the destruction of the second temple is understandable, especially since Yeshua was rejected as Messiah savior and rejecting the atonement which was made in His blood. However, is it acceptable? That is the real and very serious question at hand here. Is the method of forgiveness for sins one that excludes blood atonement since the temple has been destroyed? This is the question you will need to decide upon. I say it is not acceptable because G-d's Torah still requires blood ... we still need blood atonement for our sins.

We have looked at how Judaism has claimed it is possible to receive forgiveness for sins outside of blood atonement; however G-d's Torah has not passed away and is still in effect today. We looked at how Judaism allows for and praises the fathers and prophets for their selfless desire to give themselves for the children of Israel, and yet it is objectionable that the Messiah would do the same. Since it is praise worthy thing to honor our fathers and the prophets in their desire to lay down their lives for Israel, why is it so objectionable that the Messiah Yeshua could not have done so and satisfy the mitzvot in the Torah in his own Blood?

The Messiah

In Judaism, the concept of the Messiah comes with it thoughts of a “Golden Age” that is reminiscent of the golden age in the past, the good old times of the early monarchy in Israel, the revival of the kingdom under a prince of the Davidic line. The idea of a prince from the Davidic line is figuratively described as a “branch” or “offshoot” and comes from *Jeremiah 23:5-6*:

ירמיה 23:5-6

הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻמ־יְהוָה וְהִקְמֹתִי לְדָוִד צִמַח צְדִיק
וּמֶלֶךְ מִלֶּךְ וְהַשְׁכִּיל וַעֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה בָּאָרֶץ: בְּיָמָיו
תֹּשֵׁעַ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יֹשְׁבֵן לְבֶטֶח וְהִשְׁמָו אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא
יְהוָה צְדִיקוֹ: לְכֵן הִנֵּה־יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻמ־יְהוָה

Jeremiah 23:5-6

23:5 "The days are coming," says ADONAI 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. 23:6 In his days Y'hudah will be saved, Isra'el will live in safety, and the name given to him will be ADONAI Tzidkenu [ADONAI our righteousness]. (CJB)

In his days Judah will be delivered and Israel live in security; and this is the name by which he shall be called "Adonai our righteousness." Similarly in the twin passage in *Jeremiah 33:14-16*, with the addition that the succession of Davidic kings and of Levitical priests shall never be cut off, and more expansively and emphatically in the versus following in *Jeremiah 33:19-22*.

ירמיה 33:14-16

14 הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נֹאֲמֵי יְהוָה וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת־הַדָּבָר
15 הַטּוֹב אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי אֶל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל־בֵּית יְהוּדָה׃ בְּיָמִים
הָהֵם וּבָעֵת הַהִיא אֶצְמִיחַ לְדָוִד צֶמַח צְדָקָה וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט
16 וְצְדָקָה בְּאֶרֶץ׃ בְּיָמִים הָהֵם תִּישַׁע יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכֹּן
לְבַטָּח וְזֶה אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָא־לָהּ יְהוָה צְדָקָנוּ׃

Jeremiah 33:14-16

33:14 "Here, the days are coming," says ADONAI, "when I will fulfill this good promise which I have proclaimed for the house of Isra'el and the house of Y'hudah. 33:15 When those days come, at that time, I will cause to spring up for David a Branch of Righteousness. He will do what is just and right in the land. 33:16 When those days come, Y'hudah will be saved, Yerushalayim will live in safety, and the name given to her will be ADONAI Tzidkenu [ADONAI our Righteousness]." (CJB)

In the *Talmud, Jer. Berakot 5a*, Rabbanan says on *Hosea 3:5*, "This is the king Messiah. If he comes from among the living, David is his name, and if from those that sleep, David is his name," that is it will be David himself. (*Talmud, Sanhedrin 98b*) This speaks of a return of persons of a great figure of former times where Elijah is used as the example (See *Malachi 3:23*).

Hosea 3:5

3:5 Afterwards, the people of Isra'el will repent and seek ADONAI their G-d and David their king; they will come trembling to ADONAI and his goodness in the acharit-hayamim. (CJB)

With this in mind, I want you to notice something what is written in the gospel of Mark. Yeshua asks his disciples who do the people say that he is? (*Mark 8:27*):

Mark 8:27-29

8:27 Yeshua and his talmidim went on to the towns of Caesarea Philippi. On the way, he asked his talmidim, "Who are people saying I am?" 8:28 "Some say you are Yochanan the Immerser," they told him, "others say Eliyahu, and still others, one of the prophets." 8:29 "But you," he asked, "who do you say I am?" Kefa answered, "You are the Mashiach." (CJB)

Do you notice the mindset here in the answers from the people of the time of Yeshua, their ideas of who the Messiah is follows the mindset laid out in the Talmud? Yeshua recognized Elijah (Eliyahu) in John the Baptist, and the people here recognized the Messiah as a person of a great figure of former times, which is why they answered with "Elijah."

Now in the rabbinic literature it is recognized the Messiah would be a scion of David, from the branch of David, and recognize these verses in Jeremiah are in reference to the Messiah so that isn't something new or debated over between Judaism and Messianic Believers. The primary problem lays with the belief that the Messiah would usher in the "Golden Age" where all men are at peace, and Israel is free from its enemies. It is taught since we have not come upon the Golden Age yet the Messiah has not yet come. There is something I would like to point out. Have you ever thought about the nations that have surrounded Israel, and those countries that have ruled over the nation of Israel? What is one of the major reasons for war, capture, captivity, and bondage to these other nations? Isn't the major cause related to some religious belief system? The nations surrounding Israel are pagan, and Israel has the mitzvot to destroy the pagan practices, beliefs, etc. So my question is how would the Messiah usher in a Golden Age when the nations still exist in their pagan faith? There is no way peace could be obtained. The only way peace can be achieved would be by causing the nations and all people to love the G-d of Israel. The one true G-d; only then would peace be possible. This means there needs to be a change of heart, T'shuvah towards G-d by all peoples.

Next, notice the verses in *Jeremiah 23:5-6* and *33:14-16* which refer to the Messiah.

ירמיה 23:5-6

הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻמֵּי־יְהוָה וְהִקְמֵתִי לְדָוִד צִמַח צְדִיק
וּמֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ וְהִשְׁבִּיל וְעָשָׂה מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה בָּאָרֶץ: בְּיָמָיו
תֹּשֵׁעַ יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁבֹּן לְבַטָּח וְהָיָה שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרָאוּ
לְכֵן הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻמֵּי־יְהוָה: **יְהוָה צְדִיקֵנו:**

ADONAI Tzidkenu [ADONAI our Righteousness]

The verse says “Adonai Tzidkenu” which means the Lord our Righteousness. This is exactly the role the Messiah is to take, to become our righteousness in the sense that the Messiah brings with him a form of T’shuvah that becomes our righteousness before G-d. This fits exactly with what Yeshua did on our behalf.

Rabbinically speaking, how then is it possible to offer our own fat and blood to make atonement for our sins? Can we offer our lips as bulls when we are a people of unclean lips? (*Isaiah 6:5*) Clearly the rabbinical teaching that the sacrifice has moved to one of “**repentance only**” teaches against the explicit mitzvot in the Torah on ritual expiation.

Throughout the Torah we see G-d has taken the first steps towards our receiving forgiveness of sins. With Adam and Eve G-d provided the first sacrifice and made skins to cover the nakedness of their bodies. For Avraham Avinu, G-d provided a ram for him to offer in place of his son Yitzchak. And in these last days G-d has provided his only son Yeshua Hamoshiach to make atonement in his blood for our sins. This last thing G-d did on our behalf is what enables us to receive forgiveness while yet maintaining the truth of G-d’s mitzvot within the Torah.

Hebrews 9:14

9:14 then how much more the blood of the Messiah, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to G-d as a sacrifice without blemish, will purify our conscience from works that lead to death, so that we can serve the living G-d! (CJB)

עברים 9:14

**אף כי דם המשיח אשר הקריב את עצמו לאלהים ברוח נצח
ובלי מום יטהר לבבכם ממעשי מות לעבד את אלהים חיים:**

As a messianic believer I believe that it is impossible to make atonement and receive forgiveness before G-d without a sacrifice. I also believe G-d has provided a way to both receive atonement and forgiveness which is found in the Messiah. Furthermore, G-d using his Messiah enables us not only to fulfill Torah in our lives, but to also love others as G-d has loved us by setting up his kingdom in our hearts. G-d has set up his kingdom in our hearts as a way to bring peace not only to Israel, but also to all the earth in His Messiah.

In [Parashat Devarim](#) we find this very concept which demonstrates G-d’s love for us and how he deals with sinful mankind. G-d takes the first step by calling us to Himself. We see this in the Torah how G-d called Avraham Avinu from the Chaldeans and made a nation of special people through whom he would reveal Himself. G-d initiated His kingdom by first calling His people through Avraham. Today, we see Yeshua has initiated G-d’s kingdom here on earth in the communities which are established amidst a world of prejudice, violence, and greed. The way Yeshua brought peace onto this earth, especially amidst the pagan nations, was to start in our hearts. The kingdom of G-d is deposited within the hearts of men/women and it is only then that true peace can come

upon the earth. If you think logically about this, is it practical that the Messiah would come and force people to stop their prejudice, violence, and greed by any other way? There has to be a heart change in order for real change to occur.

Clearly we can see how the rabbinical teaching on atonement has certain difficulties in light of the scriptures. The Torah is not fulfilled with respect to the rabbinical teaching; however, as messianic believers we do have atonement for our sins. Believers in Yeshua have atonement according to the requirement of the mitzvot in the Torah on ritual expiation which is actual **blood** atonement.

The Torah Strengthens our faith in Messiah Yeshua

I stated earlier that the study of Torah should strengthen our faith in the Messiah Yeshua rather than weakening our faith. I believe every word found in the Hebrew Scriptures has a meaning, and even every letter can show us a little glimpse of truth which G-d desires us to know. I demonstrated this in Parashat Vayishlach _2007-2008_.pdf on www.matsati.com where the Lawyers/Doctors of the Torah asked Yeshua about which was the greatest of the commandments in the Torah, Yeshua quoted from *Deuteronomy 6:4-5* (see *Matt22:37 Mar12:30 Luk10:27*). *“He told him, “You are to love ADONAI your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”* The part I want to focus upon is the heart. In rabbinical Judaism there is what is called (i) the good inclination of the heart of man, and (ii) the evil inclination of the heart of man. The good inclination is the part that desires to do G-d’s will and the evil inclination all the other things we desire that does not bring glory to the Lord. Without these two inclinations, the world would cease to function. We can see this by listing a few examples (i) financial prosperity, (ii) sexual relations (I think this can be both, giving glory to G-d in marriage, versus one’s own desires), (iii) pursuing studies outside of studying the scriptures (secular schooling), etc. The point is our heart consists of two parts and all of our desires fall within these two categories. With that in mind, looking at the verses Yeshua quoted from in Deuteronomy 6:4-5, let’s look at the word for heart לב (Lev).

דברים 6:4-5

4 5 שִׁמְעֵ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד׃ וְאַהֲבַת אֵת
6 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ׃ וְהוֹי

Evil inclination

Good inclination

Interestingly two letters “bet” are used in this verse which translates “with all your heart.” These two letters are representative of the good and evil inclinations of our heart. G-d is telling us that we are to love him with “ALL” of our hearts which includes both the good

and the evil inclinations. HaShem wants us to love Him with all of our hearts, honoring him with our lips, our eyes, our bodies, and all that we do.

I am using this example to show you the importance of every word and even every letter found in the Hebrew Scriptures can have such great meaning. Next, I will show you two interesting things found in the Hebrew Scriptures which give us an Allusion (REFERENCE, mention, suggestion, hint) or a Remez of the Messiah Yeshua. The first one I want to mention comes from Parashat Vayetzei where Ya'akov has a dream in "the place" which he later calls "Beit-El." (Bethel).

בראשית 28:11-13

חָרַנָּה: וַיִּפְגַּע בְּמָקוֹם וַיֵּלֶן שָׁם כִּי־בָא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבְנֵי
הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשֶׂם מִרְאשׁוֹתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בְּמָקוֹם הַהוּא: וַיַּחֲלֹם וַהֲנִה
סֶלֶם מַצֵּב אֶרֶצָה וְרֹאשׁוֹ מַגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וַהֲנִה מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים
עֹלִים וְיֹרְדִים בּוֹ: וַהֲנִה יְהוָה נֹצֵב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי
אֲבֹתֶיךָ אֲבִיךָ וְאֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה שֹׁכֵב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ
אֶתְנַנְּנָה וְלְיֹרְעָךְ: וְהָיָה זֶרְעֶךָ בְּעֵפֶר הָאָרֶץ וּפְרָצְתָּ יָמָה וּקְדָמָה

Genesis 28:11-13

28:11 He came to a certain place and stayed the night there, because the sun had set. He took a stone from the place, put it under his head and lay down there to sleep. 28:12 He dreamt that there before him was a ladder resting on the ground with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of ADONAI were going up and down on it. 28:13 Then suddenly ADONAI was standing there next to him; and he said, "I am ADONAI, the God of Avraham your [grand]father and the God of Yitz'chak. The land on which you are lying I will give to you and to your descendants. (CJB)

While reading through Parashat Vayetzei the Hebrew language brought out a very interesting thing in verse 13. At the end of the verse it is translated as "and behold, angels of G-d ascending and descending in him" do you see that? The Hebrew word **בו** (in him) is used, and the very next verse 14 it says and behold, Adonai stood next to him (Ya'akov). So the question I have is who "him" is referring too? Who is being referred too in these scriptures? Well reading through the gospels, I found out the answer in John 1:51.

יוחנן 1:51

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אָמֵן אָמֵן אֲנִי אֶמַר לָכֶם כִּי תִרְאוּ אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם פִּתּוּחִים
וּמְלַאכֵי אֱלֹהִים עֹלִים וַיִּרְדּוּ עַל בְּן־הָאָדָם:

John 1:51

1:51 Then he said to him, "Yes indeed! I tell you that you will see heaven opened and the angels of God going up and coming down on the Son of Man!" (CJB)

Here in John 1:51 Yeshua the Messiah is explaining that heaven will be opened upon and the angels of G-d will be ascending and descending upon the Messiah. The basic idea of the first chapter of the book of John is that the "word" of G-d had become flesh. The Memra which is the creative word of G-d according to Judaism is the agent by which God created the world has become flesh, and has become our Messiah Yeshua. So the answer to the question on "who him is referring too" the scriptures in Parashat Vayetzei is referring too the Messiah of G-d.

The next example I want to give is found in Parashat Beshalach, Shemot chapter 16 verses 14-15. In these sections of verses we find G-d giving the beni-Yisrael (children of Israel) manna from heaven. The interesting part of these verses is the response that is given from the people when they first saw the manna upon the ground.

שמות 16:14-15

14 סָבִיב לַמַּחֲנֶה: וַתַּעַל שֹׁכֶבֶת הַטֹּל וְהִנֵּה עַל־פְּנֵי הַמִּדְבָּר בַּקֶּץ
15 מַחֲסָפִים בַּקֶּץ עַל־הָאָרֶץ: וַיֵּרְאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ
אֶל־אָחִיו מִן הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת כִּי לֹא יָדַע מִהֵיאָךְ וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֲלֵהֶם
16 הוּא הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה לָכֶם לֶאֱכֹלָהּ: זֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר

This statement that they make is "Ma Hu" which means "what is He." Now my question again is who is "He" this is referring too? This is a Remez that points to the Messiah. Let us look again in the gospel of John chapter 6 where Yeshua explains who it is these verses are referring too.

יוחנן 6:31-32

אָבוֹתֵינוּ אָכְלוּ אֶת־הַמֶּן בַּמִּדְבָּר פְּכֻתוֹב לָחֶם שָׁמַיִם נָתַן־לָמוּ לֶאֱכֹל:
וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם יֵשׁוּעַ אָמֵן אָמֵן אֲנִי אֶמַר לָכֶם מֹשֶׁה לֹא נָתַן לָכֶם לָחֶם
שָׁמַיִם כִּי אִם־אָבִי נָתַן לָכֶם לָחֶם אֶמֶת מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם:

John 6:31-32

6:31 Our fathers ate man in the desert -- as it says in the Tanakh, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' 6:32 Yeshua said to them, "Yes, indeed! I tell you it wasn't Moshe who gave you the bread from heaven. But my Father is giving you the genuine bread from heaven; (CJB)

6:41 יוחנן

וַיִּלְנוּ עָלָיו הַיְהוּדִים עַל כִּי־אָמַר אָנֹכִי הוּא לֶחֶם הַיָּרְד מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם:

John 6:41

6:41 At this the Judeans began grumbling about him because he said, "I am the bread which has come down from heaven." (CJB)

6:41 יוחנן

וְזֶה הוּא הַלֶּחֶם הַיָּרְד מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם לְבַעֲבוֹר יִאֲכַל־אָדָם מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא יָמוּת:

John 6:50

6:50 But the bread that comes down from heaven is such that a person may eat it and not die. (CJB)

6:41 יוחנן

זֶה הוּא הַלֶּחֶם הַיָּרְד מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם לֹא כַּמֶּן אֲשֶׁר אָכְלוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וּמָתוּ הֲאֵל כֹּל מִן־הַלֶּחֶם הַזֶּה יִחְיֶה לְעוֹלָם:

John 6:58

6:58 So this is the bread that has come down from heaven -- it is not like the bread the fathers ate; they're dead, but whoever eats this bread will live forever!" (CJB)

The world today is much different than the world 2,000 years ago and even more different than 4,000 years ago. In order to more fully understand the Torah, and the entire Bible it is important to understand the world of the children of God as they knew it so many thousands of years ago. To help minimize the 21st century definitions and ideas being imposed upon a 2,000-4,000 year old words, phrases, and culture we have to diligently study the historical, linguistic, cultural, religious and political context of the bible. Here I have presented a linguistic study with two examples found in the Torah. Our faith is strengthened by studying the Torah. Understanding the Torah points to the Messiah, at least it is pretty obvious to me. Studying Torah also helps us to find meaning in what and why Yeshua taught what he did in the scriptures.

In this study we have looked at T'shuvah (Repentance) according to Judaism, and according to G-d's Torah. Rabbinical teaching on atonement has certain difficulties in

light of the scriptures due to the fact there is no Temple to offer ritual expiations. The Torah is not fulfilled with respect to atonement for sins when we only offer prayers in the hopes that propitiation is made for our sins. With the issues of rabbinical teaching, messianic believers believe atonement for sins is completed in the Messiah. In Jeremiah 23:5-6, we find the Messiah will be “The Lord our Righteousness” and the way he becomes our righteousness is by the atonement he has made in His own blood, and by faith we have that atonement. He sent his Memra, the creative word to come and create in us a new heart, and to write His living Torah upon our hearts giving us a love for the one True God and finally bringing in the “Golden Age” which ultimately is peace among men.

I pray this helps you to understand God is reaching out to draw you near to Him in His Messiah Yeshua.