

The Word become flesh, is it a distinctly Jewish concept?

*Looking at the concept of G-d in human form
and the deity of Yeshua the Messiah*

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1. Introduction

10 Today we live in a new age of understanding as compared to that of the first century. After the destruction of the second temple, Judaism proceeded towards a new model that was no longer centred around the temple service but on a pharisaic form of Judaism known today as “rabbinic Judaism.” The greatest teachers of rabbinic Judaism such as Hillel and Akiva ben Yoseph (50 – 135 CE) lived within the time period of the first century, very close to that when Yeshua walked the earth. Studying first century Judaism, we realize that the Judaism in Yeshua’s day was filled with debate and diversity. Within rabbinic Judaism, argumentation was the order of the day. To debate the meaning of life or the minutiae of the Torah was the reigning passion for rabbinic scholars. I said we live in a new age of understanding because today, believers in Yeshua the Messiah have lost the art and passion for argumentation that so impassioned the rabbinic scholar and believers of the first century. For example, Rabbi Yochanan in the Talmud mourned the loss of his colleague Resh Lakish because Rabbi Yochanan could not find another rabbi who could so vehemently disagree with him through argument (*Baba Metzia 84a*). Recently, I have gotten into a heated exchange of conflicting views with an anti-missionary from the orthodox community on the deity of Yeshua the Messiah.

20 The motivation for writing this paper titled “The Word become flesh, is it a distinctly Jewish concept” is an attempt to answer the anti-missionary argument from the orthodox community that the passages from *John 1:1-14* are not biblical and are as far from rabbinic thought as paganism is from true worship of the living G-d. The direction of the argument often proceeds as an attempt to define the nature and purpose of the messiah. “Who is the Messiah?” and “how do you understand the Messiah?” while trying to contrast the Torah over against the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings). Once the basic axioms of the argument are laid down, the discussion generally proceeds by an attack upon Yeshua the Messiah by discrediting the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) using the Torah. This kind of approach is the result of a poor scholarly balancing act on the part of the anti-missionary who supposes that the Torah stands in opposition to the Ketuvei Shelachim. The Ketuvei Shelachim contains many principles which are fully developed in the first century and are expressed without explanation on the development of the theological concepts. For example, in *John 1:1-14* the phrase “in the beginning was the Word, the Word was with G-d and the Word was G-d and the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among men” is a concept that seems foreign to us.

45 The Ketuvei Shelachim [1] is a first century text, in order to understand the origin of “the Word” being G-d we need to look to texts that predate the world of the first century such as the Masoretic text (Tanach) [2] and the Targumim [3].

50 Though the Masoretic text was primarily copied, edited, and distributed by the
Masoretes between the seventh and tenth centuries; the underlying text itself is
older than those from the first century. It also proves fruitful to examine the
rabbinic literature, history, and culture of the people of Yisrael. In this paper we
will look at a counter-missionary argument on the “Word become flesh” and
determine whether it is truly a Jewish concept. Is the concept of “the Word”
being G-d merely a new element developed to shape a changing faith or was this a
55 well known concept that did not require much further explanation than what John
had written?

The anti-missionary argument dealt with the following verses from the
book of John (*John 1:1-14*).

60 ***John 1:1-14***

*1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with G-d, and the
Word was G-d. 1:2 He was in the beginning with G-d. 1:3 All things
came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into
being that has come into being. 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the
65 Light of men. 1:5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did
not comprehend it. 1:6 There came a man sent from G-d, whose name
was John. 1:7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all
might believe through him.*



70 *1:13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the
will of man, but of G-d. 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt
among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the
Father, full of grace and truth. (NASB)*

75 It is claimed that the idea of the “Word” being G-d and the “Word”
becoming flesh is a pagan concept. The argument proposed that there is nothing
Jewish about these scriptures. The conversation then led into the all too common
polemic on questioning ones Jewishness by believing that Yeshua is both the
Messiah of G-d and also G-d.

80 This paper will show how the idea of the “Word” being G-d, and
becoming flesh is a thoroughly Jewish concept by presenting two things: (i) how
HaShem has revealed Himself to us in human form and (ii) how the Aramaic
Targum Onkelos and the Hebrew scriptures (Masoretic text) help elucidate the
meaning of “the Word of G-d” and “the Word being G-d” as being Jewish
85 concepts. Without understanding how G-d has revealed himself to us it is
possible to twist the scriptures based upon personal opinion.

90 **2. Literature Review**

The following literature review of the Hebrew and Aramaic texts is meant
to address the two points of order (i) how HaShem has revealed Himself to us in
human form (i.e. understanding and identifying His identity in the Hebrew

Scriptures) and (ii) how the “Word of G-d” and “the Word being G-d” are both Jewish concepts from the Masoretic text (Tanach) and the Targum Onkelos.

In order to understand how G-d has revealed himself to us in human form we need to look at various Hebrew texts in the Tanach on the phrases “Angel of the Lord” and “Angel of G-d.” In the English translations of the Tanach (such as the KJV), the phrase “Angel of the Lord” occurs 64 times in the Tanach, and 19 times in the Ketuvei Shelachim. The phrase “Angel of G-d” occurs 10 times in the Tanach. The following are a few selected examples (*Bereshit / Genesis 16:7-15, 22:11-18, 31:11-13, 48:15-16, Shmot / Exodus 3:2-8, Yehoshua / Joshua 5:13-15, and Shoftim / Judges 2:1*) to illustrate how the Lord appears in human form to various people in the Tanach.

2.1 G-d revealed to us in human form.

Bereshit / Genesis 16:7-15

7 מִפְּנֵיהֶּ: וַיִּמְצְאָהּ מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה עַל־עֵין הַמַּדְבֵּר עַל־הָעֵין
8 בְּדֶרֶךְ שׁוּר: וַיֹּאמֶר הַגֵּר שִׁפְתַת שָׂרַי אִי־מֵנָּה בָּאת וְאַנְּה תִלְכִּי
9 וְתֹאמַר מִפְּנֵי שָׂרַי גְּבֻרָתִי אֲנֹכִי בָּרַחְתִּי: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה
10 שׁוּבִי אֶל־גְּבֻרָתְךָ וְהִתְעַנִּי תַּחַת יָדֶיהָ: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה
11 הַרְבֵּה אַרְבֵּה אֶת־זַרְעֶךָ וְלֹא יִסְפֹּר מִרְבִּי: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהּ מִלְאָךְ
יְהוָה הִנֵּךְ הָרָה וְיִלְדֶת בֶּן וְקָרָאתָ שְׁמוֹ וַיִּשְׁמַעְאֵל כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה
12 אֶל־עֲנִיֶּךָ: וְהוּא יְהוָה פָּרָא אָדָם יָדוֹ כַּכֹּל וַיֵּד כֹּל בּוֹ וְעַל־פְּנֵי
13 כָּל־אֲחָיו יִשְׁכֵּן: וְתִקְרָא שְׁם־יְהוָה הַדֹּבֵר אֵלֶיהָ אֵתְהָ אֵל רֹאִי
14 כִּי אִמְרָה הִגַּם הַלֵּם רֹאִיתִי אַחֲרַי רֹאִי: עַל־כֵּן קָרָא לְבָאָר
15 בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי הֵנָּה בֵּין־קְדָשׁ וּבֵין בְּרָד: וְתִלְדֵּ הַגֵּר לְאַבְרָם בֶּן
16 וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָם שְׁם־בְּנֵוֹ אֲשֶׁר־יִלְדָהּ הַגֵּר וַיִּשְׁמַעְאֵל: וְאַבְרָם בֶּן־
שְׁמֹנִים שָׁנָה וְשֵׁשׁ שָׁנִים בְּלֶדֶת־הַגֵּר אֶת־יִשְׁמַעְאֵל לְאַבְרָם:

In *Bereshit / Genesis 16:10*, the words “Malach” and “HaShem” are juxtaposed together and are translated as “Angel of the Lord.” The section of scripture that precede and follow these words (the context) clarify its meaning, the Angel of the Lord is speaking to Hagar. Verse *16:10* indicates that the Angel of the Lord is the one who will be multiplying Hagar’s seed (multiplying her descendants through Ishmael her son) by the words “harbah arbeh.” Here “arbeh” (ארבה) is in the Qal Imperfect common singular form. The Imperfect form is the second major Hebrew verbal conjugation. The Imperfect, like the Perfect, reflects or changes its form in order to indicate person, gender, and number. The imperfect common singular form indicates that it is the Angel of HaShem that

Bereshit / Genesis 16:7-15

16:7 Now the angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. 16:8 He said, ‘Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from and where are you going?’ And she said, ‘I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.’ 16:9 Then the angel of the Lord said to her, ‘Return to your mistress, and submit yourself to her authority.’ 16:10 Moreover, the angel of the Lord said to her, ‘I will greatly multiply your descendants so that they will be too many to count.’ 16:11 The angel of the Lord said to her further, ‘Behold, you are with child, And you will bear a son; And you shall call his name Ishmael, Because the Lord has given heed to your affliction. 16:12 ‘He will be a wild donkey of a man, His hand will be against everyone, And everyone’s hand will be against him; And he will live to the east of all his brothers.’ 16:13 Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, ‘You are a God who sees’; for she said, ‘Have I even remained alive here after seeing Him?’ 16:14 Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. 16:15 So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. (NASB)

will be multiplying the seed of Hagar. The imperfect conjugation is used to express an incomplete action, HaShem is going to bless Hagar but He has not done that yet, this is a future promise. Normally an angel is understood to be a messenger of G-d, however, in our context the Angel appears to be in fact G-d in human form. This conclusion is based upon the fact that only the Lord Almighty is able to multiply and bless ones seed/descendents.

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130 **Bereshit / Genesis 22:11-18**

11 לִשְׁחַט אֶת־בְּנוֹ: וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר
 12 אֲבָרְחָם| אֲבָרְחָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־תְּשַׁלַּח יָדְךָ אֶל־
 הַנְּעָר וְאֶל־תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאוּמָה כִּי| עַתָּה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יִרְאֵ אֱלֹהִים
 13 אֶתָּה וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְתָּ אֶת־בְּנֶךָ אֶת־יְחִידְךָ מִמֶּנִּי: וַיֵּשֶׂא אֲבָרְחָם
 אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיִּרְאֵ וְהִנֵּה־אֵיל אַחֵר נִצָּחוּ בִּסְבָךְ בְּקִרְנָיו וַיִּלָּךְ
 14 אֲבָרְחָם וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאֵיל וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ לְעֵלְיָהּ תַּחַת בְּנוֹ: וַיִּקְרָא
 אֲבָרְחָם שְׁמֵי־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה| וַיֵּרָא אֲשֶׁר יֹאמֶר הַיּוֹם
 15 בְּתָר יְהוָה יֵרָאֵה: וַיִּקְרָא מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל־אֲבָרְחָם שְׁנֵית
 16 מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם: וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נֹאמְ־יְהוָה כִּי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂית
 17 אֶת־הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא חֲשַׁבְתָּ אֶת־בְּנֶךָ אֶת־יְחִידְךָ: כִּי־בָרַךְ
 אֲבָרְכְךָ וְהִרְבָּה אַרְבֵּה אֶת־זֶרְעֶךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכִחֹל אֲשֶׁר
 18 עַל־שֵׁפֶת הַיָּם וַיִּרְשׂ זֶרְעֶךָ אֶת שְׂעַר אֲבוֹיו: וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּזֶרְעֶךָ
 19 כָּל גּוֹי הָאָרֶץ עֵקֶב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקִלִּי: וַיֵּשֶׁב אֲבָרְחָם

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In *Bereshit / Genesis 22:11-18* we find the continuation of the previous sections of verses after Hagar had returned to Avraham and Sarah. Sarah drove Hagar away from her after her son Yitzchak was born to prevent Ishmael from taking the inheritance from her new born son. Hagar had no place to go and after her water runs out she sits down to die in the desert. She places Ishmael a considerable distance away from her so she wouldn't her him suffering and dying from the lack of water. At this point the "Angel of the Lord" calls out to Hagar as He had done before. In the text the "Malach HaShem" calls to Hagar from heaven. The NASB translates as the "Angel of G-d." Similarly to *Bereshit / Genesis 16:10*, the Angel of HaShem uses the "arbeh" (ארבה) in the Qal Imperfect common singular form. HaShem uses the imperfect conjugation to express an incomplete action, the Angel HaShem is going to bless Hagar's son Ishmael but He has not done that yet, this is a future promise. The multiple singular personal forms used by the "Malach HaShem" suggests that this Angel is no ordinary angel; this Angel is a physical manifestation of G-d Almighty.

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Bereshit / Genesis 22:11-18
 21:11 The matter distressed Abraham greatly because of his son. 21:12 But God said to Abraham, 'Do not be distressed because of the lad and your maid; whatever Sarah tells you, listen to her, for through Isaac your descendants shall be named. 21:13 'And of the son of the maid I will make a nation also, because he is your descendant.' 21:14 So Abraham rose early in the morning and took bread and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder, and gave her the boy, and sent her away. And she departed and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. 21:15 When the water in the skin was used up, she left the boy under one of the bushes. 21:16 Then she went and sat down opposite him, about a bowshot away, for she said, 'Do not let me see the boy die.' And she sat opposite him, and lifted up her voice and wept. 21:17 God heard the lad crying; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, 'What is the matter with you, Hagar? Do not fear, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. 21:18 'Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him by the hand, for I will make a great nation of him.' (NASB)

Bereshit / Genesis 31:11-13

11 נִקְדָּיִם וּבְרָדִים: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי מַלְאֲךְ הָאֱלֹהִים בַּחלֹם יַעֲקֹב
12 וַאֲמַר הֲנִנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר שֶׁאֵנִי עֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה כָּל־הַעֲתָדִים הָעֹלִים
עַל־הַצֹּאן עֲקָדִים נִקְדָּיִם וּבְרָדִים כִּי רָאִיתִי אֶת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר לָבֵן
13 עָשָׂה לָּךְ: אֲנֹכִי הָאֵל בֵּית־אֵל אֲשֶׁר מִשְׁחַת שֵׁם מִצְבֵּה
אֲשֶׁר נָדַרְתָּ לִּי שֶׁם נָדַר עֲתָה קוּם צֵא מִן־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְשׁוּב
14 אֶל־אֶרֶץ מוֹלְדְּתְךָ: וּתְעַן רַחֵל וְלֵאמֹר נָה לֹו הָעֹד לָנוּ

155 In *Bereshit / Genesis 31:11-13* we find Yaakov dreaming about the male goats and the Lord is speaking to him. The context has the Angel of G-d speaking to Yaakov in his dream. The personal pronoun, in *Bereshit / Genesis 31:13*, “ani” (אני) provides irrefutable evidence that the “Malach HaElohim,” the Angel of G-d is a reference to G-d himself. Furthermore, if we consider the context of these
160 verses and our understanding in angelology (theological doctrine concerning angels) the Angel of G-d mentioned here is more than any ordinary angel. Only G-d is able to speak to us in dreams and thus the Malach (Angel) is a physical manifestation of G-d.

Bereshit / Genesis 48:15-16

15 כִּי מְנַשֶּׁה הַבְּכוֹר: וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר
הִתְהַלְכִנוּ אֲבֹתַי לְפָנָיו אֲבָרְכֵם וַיְצַחֵק הָאֱלֹהִים הִרְעָה אֹתִי
16 מִעוֹדֵי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגָּאֹל אֹתִי מִכָּל־רָע וַיְבָרֵךְ
אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּקְרָא בָהֶם שְׁמֵי וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתַי אֲבָרְכֵם וַיְצַחֵק

165 Verses *48:15* and *48:16* indicate that Yoseph understood the Malach of G-d to be G-d. Yoseph said that “*the angel who has redeemed me from all evil*” is interesting because to my knowledge there is no reference that has ever been
170 made that an ordinary angel redeemed a man or woman from evil. Redemption is the purchase back of something that has been lost by the payment of a ransom. The Torah contains various uses for the word goel (גאל) to redeem. For example the Greek word for redemption is apolutrosis (απολύτρωση) or (λύτρωση) used in references between man’s relation to man (see *Shmot / Exodus 21:30*,
175 *Vayikra / Leviticus 19:20, 25:51, Bamidbar / Numbers 35:31, 32, Yashayahu / Isaiah 45:13, and Mishley / Proverbs 6:35*) and in the sense of man’s relation to G-d in *Bamidbar / Numbers 3:49, 18:15*. Here in our text “redeemed” (απολυτρώ) from evil indicates that the G-d delivered Yoseph and the Angel is the physical manifestation of G-d.

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Bereshit / Genesis 31:11-13

31:11 ‘Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, ‘Jacob,’ and I said, ‘Here I am.’
31:12 ‘He said, ‘Lift up now your eyes and see that all the male goats which are mating are striped, speckled, and mottled; for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you.
31:13 ‘I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you made a vow to Me; now arise, leave this land, and return to the land of your birth.’ (NASB)

Bereshit / Genesis 48:15-16

48:15 He blessed Joseph, and said, ‘The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,
48:16 The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.’ (NASB)

Shmot / Exodus 3:2-8

2 אֱלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים חִרְבָּהּ: וַיֵּרָא מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֵלָיו בְּלֶבֶת-אֵשׁ
 מִתּוֹךְ הַסֵּנֶה וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה הַסֵּנֶה בֹעֵר בְּאֵשׁ וְהַסֵּנֶה אֵינְנוֹ אֵכָל:
 3 וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶסְרֶה-נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה אֶת-הַמְּרָאָה הַגְּדֹל הַזֶּה מִדּוּעַ
 4 לֹא-יִבְעַר הַסֵּנֶה: וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה בִּי סֵר לְרֵאוֹת וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו
 5 אֱלֹהִים מִתּוֹךְ הַסֵּנֶה וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִינִי: וַיֹּאמֶר
 אֶל-תִּקְרַב הֵלֶם שֶׁל נִעְלִיךְ מֵעַל רִגְלֶיךָ בִּי הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה
 6 עוֹמֵד עָלָיו אֲדַמְתָּ-קֹדֶשׁ הוּא: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנֹכִי אֱלֹהֵי אֲבִיךָ אֱלֹהֵי
 אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וַיִּסְתֵּר מֹשֶׁה פָּנָיו כִּי יָרָא
 7 מֵהִבִּיט אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה רְאֵה רְאֵה רְאוּתִי אֶת-עֵינֵי עַמִּי
 אֲשֶׁר בְּמִצְרַיִם וְאֶת-צַעֲקוֹתָם שָׁמַעְתִּי מִפְּנֵי נַגְשָׁיו כִּי יִדְעוּתִי
 8 אֶת-מִכְאֲבוֹי: וְאֵרֶד לְהַצִּילוֹ מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וְלְהַעֲלֹתוֹ מִן-הָאָרֶץ
 הַהִוא אֶל-אֶרֶץ שׁוֹכֵה וְרֹחֶבֶה אֶל-אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ
 אֶל-מָקוֹם הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי וְהַכְּנִזִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי:

185

In *Shmot/Exodus 3:2-8*, the Angel of HaShem appears to Moshe in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush in the desert at the mountain of G-d in Horeb. It is beyond question that this was the presence of G-d revealed to Moshe in the desert. Verse 3:2 introduces the “Malach HaShem” and verse 3:6, we find the personal pronoun ani (אני) which provides the link between the Malach (Angel) and HaShem saying that “I am the G-d of Avraham, Yitzhak and Yaakov. Here, the Malach reveals himself within the flame of fire. If it is possible for G-d to reveal himself in the form of a flame of fire, why would it be impossible for Him to manifest as an Angel? The context here indicates that the Angel of HaShem is HaShem taking on human form.

190

195

Yehoshua / Joshua 5:13-15

13 בָּנֹעַן בַּשָּׁנָה הַהִוא: וַיְהִי בַדְּתוֹת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בִּירִיחוֹ
 וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה-אִישׁ עֹמֵד לְנֶגְדוֹ וְחָרְבּוֹ שְׁלוֹפָה בְיָדוֹ
 14 וַיֵּלֶךְ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֵלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הֲלָנוּ אִתָּה אִם-לְצָרֵינוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר
 לֹא כִּי אֲנִי שָׂר-צָבָא יְהוָה עִתָּה בָאתִי וַיִּפֹּל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל-פָּנָיו
 15 אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה אֲדֹנָי מְדַבֵּר אֶל-עַבְדּוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר
 שָׂר-צָבָא יְהוָה אֶל-יְהוֹשֻׁעַ שֶׁל-נִעְלֶךְ מֵעַל רִגְלֶיךָ בִּי הַמָּקוֹם
 אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עוֹמֵד עָלָיו קֹדֶשׁ הוּא וַיַּעַשׂ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ כֵּן: וַיִּרְחוֹ סִגְרָת וַיִּבְעַר

200

Shmot / Exodus 3:2-8

3:2 The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. 3:3 So Moses said, ‘I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up.’ 3:4 When the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, ‘Moses, Moses!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ 3:5 Then He said, ‘Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.’ 3:6 He said also, ‘I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. 3:7 The Lord said, ‘I have surely seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. 3:8 ‘So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite. (NASB)

Yehoshua / Joshua 5:13-15

5:13 Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, ‘Are you for us or for our adversaries?’ 5:14 He said, ‘No; rather I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord.’ And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, ‘What has my lord to say to his servant?’ 5:15 The captain of the Lord’s host said to Joshua, ‘Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy.’ And Joshua did so. (NASB)

6

205 *Yehoshua / Joshua 5:13-15*, Yehoshua meets a man who is called “prince of the armies of HaShem” and Yehoshua bows down before him. The English translation used the word “captain.” The prince tells Yehoshua to remove his sandals from his feet for the place where he is standing is holy. Note that the command to remove the sandals from Yehoshua’s feet (*Yehoshua / Joshua 5:15*) is the same phraseology as that in *Shmot / Exodus 3:5*. The KJV translates *5:14* as *Joshua 5:14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said* 210 *unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? (KJV)* The word וישתחו “and he bowed and worshiped” in the Hebrew text the NASB leaves off “worship” is very significant. The וישתחו act of worship is the way in which one throws one’s self flat on the ground in reverence. The prince of the armies of HaShem does not 215 detour Yehoshua from this act suggesting that he is more than a mere man, messenger, or angel.

Shoftim / Judges 2:1

וַיַּעַל מַלְאֲכֵי-יְהוָה מִן-הַגִּלְגָּל אֶל-הַבְּכִים ב
 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲעֵלֶה אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם וְאָבִיָּא אֶתְכֶם
 אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאֲבוֹתֵיכֶם וְאָמַר לֹא-אֶפְרָ בְרִיתִי
 אֶתְכֶם לְעוֹלָם: וְאַתֶּם לֹא-תִכְרְתוּ בְרִית לְיֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת

220 *Shoftim / Judges 2:1* the Malach HaShem proclaims that He brought Yisrael up out of Egypt. “Aaleh” in the second half of *2:1* is written in the past subjective, the past perfect subjective from the stem of the preterite (imperfect) form of the verb marked in the singular first person. The “Angel of HaShem” brought Yisrael up out of Egypt and made a covenant with the children of Yisrael. 225 The Malach HaShem within the context of this verse is a reference to G-d in human form.

2.2 The Word of G-d and the Word being G-d

230 Next, we will examine parallel verses from the Masoretic text (Tanach) and the Targum Onkelos in order to understand how the “Word of G-d” and the “Word being G-d” are both Jewish concepts. The Targumim are translations of the Masoretic text that come about as a result of the exile of Yisrael to Babylon and subsequent return back to Yisrael. The people returning to Yisrael have been 235 influenced by their surrounding culture, and so, the people understood Aramaic better than the Hebrew language. Consequently, the scribes translated the Hebrew text into the vernacular languages of the time (i.e. Aramaic). Thus the Tanach was translated into Aramaic where the collective works are called the 240 Targumim. The Targumim allowed those growing up speaking and reading in

Shoftim / Judges 2:1

2:1 Now the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, ‘I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, ‘I will never break My covenant with you, (NASB)

Aramaic to follow along in the public reading of the scriptures during the synagogue services.

245 It is claimed that rabbinic thought prevents one from concluding that “the Word” is “G-d.” It is interesting to note however, that one of the most important links between “the Word” and “G-d” is in fact taken from the rabbinic literature on “the word” which is called “Memra” in Aramaic found in the Targumim. “The Word” called the Memra in Aramaic, derived from the Hebrew and Aramaic languages, of the root “to say” is how G-d created using the word throughout the creation account found in *Bereshit / Genesis 1* (following the order “G-d said and then matter (physical substances) came into existence known as the World and the Universe).

255 Before we begin, I want to mention something on the use of the word “Memra.” *Bereshit / Genesis 3:8* is an example for understanding the difference between the Hebrew and the Aramaic translations. While *3:8* is being read the people who are listening to the reading of the scriptures would not have understood the Hebrew reading which says: *Bereshit / Genesis 3:8 They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. (NASB)* rather they would have understood the Targum which said in Aramaic “*And they heard the sound of the Word of the Lord God walking in the midst of the garden...*” In *3:8* the Targum Onkelos speaks of the Lord walking in the garden as the “Memra (Word) of the Lord God.” The Word here walking in the garden was G-d indicated by the word “Elohim,” the Word in this context is not an element of speech or writing as some might suggest.

265 **בראשית 3:8**
לָהֶם חִגְרָתָּ: וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶת־קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים מִתְּהִלָּךְ 8
בְּגֵן לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם וַיִּתְחַבֵּא הָאָדָם וְאִשְׁתּוֹ מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה
אֱלֹהִים בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגֵּן: וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶל־הָאָדָם 9

270 Notice something very interesting here, the Hebrew Scriptures say “and they heard ... walking” the text is alluding to G-d taking the form of a man to walk in the cool of the garden with two legs. The Aramaic text uses the “Memra” (Word) suggesting that the Memra took the form of a man to walk. The context of this scripture suggests that it is possible for the Memra (Word) of HaShem to take the form of a man and walk as we walk.

275 We find the concept of Memra hundreds of times in the Targum Onkelos. Now, I want to look carefully at the following verses from the Masoretic text and the Targum Onkelos. These snippets of scripture are examined to illustrate point (ii) how the “Word of G-d” and the “Word being G-d” are both Jewish concepts. Also, keep in mind while reading the following verses that the Targum Onkelos is the official translations used for rabbinic studies today. The Targumim took on great significance in the day of its translation just as it does today in rabbinic studies. The Targumim are a very important text in the religious life of rabbinic

Judaism today just as the English translations of the bible take on great significance for English speakers.

285

בראשית 6:6-7

6 לָבוּ רַק רַע כָּל־הַיּוֹם: וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה כִּי־עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם
 7 בָּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֶל־לְבוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֲמַחֶה אֶת־הָאָדָם
 אֲשֶׁר־בָּרָאתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ
 8 וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי נַחַמְתִּי כִּי עָשִׂיתֶם: וְנַח מֵצֶא חַן בְּעֵינַי
 יְהוָה:

ו וַתֵּב יְיָ בְּמִימְרֵיהָ אֲרִי עֶבֶד יְת אָדָם בָּאֲרַעָא וַאֲמַר בְּמִימְרֵיהָ לְמַתְבַּר תּוֹקֵפִיהוֹן
 כְּרַעוּתֵיהָ ז וַאֲמַר יְיָ אֲמַחִי יְת אֲנָשָׁא דִי בְרָאתִי מֵעַל אֲפִי אֲרַעָא מֵאֲנָשָׁא וְעַד בְּעִירָא
 עַד רִיחְשָׁא וְעַד עוֹפָא דְשָׁמַיָא אֲרִי תְבִית בְּמִימְרֵי אֲרִי עֶבְדֵתְנֹון ח וְנַח אֲשַׁכַּח רַחֲמִין

Hebrew
Bereshit / Genesis 6:6-7
 It repented the Lord that he made man on the earth.

Aramaic
Bereshit / Genesis 6:6-7
 And it repented the Lord through his Word that he made man on the earth.

290 *Bereshit / Genesis 6:6-7* expresses G-d’s feelings about having created man on the Earth and the extent of man’s wickedness just prior to the flood. The Hebrew text is translated “*It repented the Lord that he made man on the earth*” comparing this to the Aramaic text “*And it repented the Lord through His Word that He made man on the earth*” we see that it repented the Lord through the
 295 Word (Memra) suggesting the importance of the Memra. The Lord operates through the Memra.

בראשית 9:12

12 עוֹד מִמֵּי הַמַּבּוּל וְלֹא־יְהוָה עוֹד מִבּוּל לְשַׁחַת הָאָרֶץ: וַיֹּאמֶר
 אֱלֹהִים זֹאת אוֹת־הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי נֹתֵן בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין
 13 כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם לְדֹרֹת עוֹלָם: אֶת־קִשְׁתִּי נֹתַתִּי

יֵא וַאֲקִים יְת קִימִי עִמְכוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁתִּיצִי כָּל בִּשְׂרָא עוֹד מִמִּי טוֹפְנָא וְלֹא יְהֵא עוֹד
 טוֹפְנָא לְחַבְלָא אֲרַעָא יֵב וַאֲמַר יְיָ דֵּא אֶת קִיִּים דִּי אֲנָא יְהֵב בֵּין מִימְרֵי וּבֵינִיכוֹן וּבֵין
 כָּל נֶפְשָׁא חַיָּתָא דִּי עִמְכוֹן לְדִרֵי עֻלְמָא יֵג יְת קִשְׁתִּי יְהֵבִית בְּעֻנָא וְתֵהֵא לְאֶת קִיִּים

Hebrew
Bereshit / Genesis 9:12
 And God said, “This is the sign that I set for the covenant between me and you.”

Aramaic
Bereshit / Genesis 9:12
 And the Lord said, “This is the sign that I set for the covenant between my Word and you.”

300 Chapter 9 of *Bereshit / Genesis* describes the drying up of the flood and G-d making a covenant with Noah. In the Hebrew text HaShem is making a covenant between Himself and Noah “*I set for the covenant between me and you*” and the Aramaic text says “*I set for the covenant between my Word and you.*” Interestingly, comparing these two texts the first person singular pronoun “me” is replaced in the Aramaic text with “Memra” suggesting that the Memra (Word) is a reference to HaShem, a sort of circumlocution for the personal pronoun.
 305
 310

בראשית 15:6

וְהֵאֱמַן בַּיהוָה וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ צְדָקָה׃ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר
 הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׂדִּים לָתֵת לְךָ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ׃
 וַיֹּאמֶר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה בְּמֶה אֲדַע כִּי אֵירֶשְׁנָה׃ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי קַתָּה לֵאמֹר

Hebrew

Bereshit / Genesis 15:6
 And he believed in the Lord.

ה וַאֲפִיק יְתִיב לְבָרָא וַאֲמַר אֶסְתְּכִי כַעַן לְשִׁמְיָא וּמְנִי כּוּכְבִּיָא אִם תּוּכּוּל לְמַמְנִי יְתִהוּן
 וַאֲמַר לִיָּה כְּדִין יְהוּן בְּנֶדְךָ׃ וְנִחְמִינּוּ בְּמִימְרָא דִּינִי וְחִשְׁבִּיהָ לִיָּה לְזִכְרֵי ז וַאֲמַר לִיָּה אֲנָא

Aramaic

Bereshit / Genesis 15:6
 And he believed in the Word of the Lord.

315

The “he” in our text (*Bereshit / Genesis 15:6*) is Avraham, saying that Avraham believed in the Lord and in His promises. Comparing the Aramaic text we find that Avraham believed in “the Word of the Lord.” The addition of Memra (Word) in the Aramaic text suggests the theological importance of the Memra. Believing in the Memra (Word) of the Lord is analogous to believing in the Lord. Do you see the link here between the words of Yeshua in *John 6:47* which says “*he who believes on me has everlasting life*” believing in Yeshua is believing in the one who sent Him, the Lord Almighty, the Memra (Word) of the living G-d.

320

325

בראשית 20:3

אֶת־שָׂרָה׃ וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־אַבִּימֶלֶךְ בַּחלֹם הַלַּיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ
 הִנֵּנִי מֵת עַל־הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר־לָקַחְתָּ וְהִיא בְעַלְתָּ בְעַל׃ וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ

Hebrew

Bereshit / Genesis 20:3
 And G-d came to Abimelech.

ב וַאֲמַר אַבְרָהָם עַל שָׂרָה אֶתְתִּיבָא אֶתְתִּיבָא הִיא וְשִׁלְחָא אַבִּימֶלֶךְ מִלְכָּא דְגָרָר וּדְבַר יְת
 שָׂרָה׃ ג וַאֲתָא מִימְרָא מִן קַדְמָא יְיָ לִוְת אַבִּימֶלֶךְ בַּחלֹמָא דְלִילִיא וַאֲמַר לִיָּה קָא אֶת
 מְאִית עַל עֵיסְקָא אֶתְתָא דִּי דְבַרְתָּא וְהִיא אֶתְתָּא גְבַר׃ ד וַאֲבִימֶלֶךְ לֹא קָרִיב לְוִתָּהּ וַאֲמַר

Aramaic

Bereshit / Genesis 20:3
 And the Word from before the Lord came to Abimelech.

330

Sefer *Bereshit / Genesis 20:3* is very interesting. Avimelech is being warned by HaShem about Avraham’s wife. The Hebrew text says “*And G-d came to Avimelech.*” The Aramaic text however says that “*the Word*” came to Avimelech from before HaShem in heaven”. This places an interesting perspective on the words of Yeshua on being one with the Father, *John10:30 ‘I and the Father are one.’ (NASB)* and being sent from the Father in Heaven in *John 6:44-47*.

335

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John 6:44-47

6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. 6:46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen

345

the Father. 6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. (KJV)

350 *John 6:44* says that no man comes to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him. The concept of the Memra being sent from before the Lord draws a parallel to the words of Yeshua on being sent from the Father. Verse *6:45* indicates that those who have learned of the Father come to Yeshua. The Aramaic text says that the people believe in the Memra, the Memra delivered Yisrael from Egypt, and the Memra created the World, how clear the words
355 Yeshua become if he truly is the Memra (Word) become flesh? Verse *6:46* discusses that no man has seen the Father except he which is of G-d. The Memra being sent from before the Lord indicates that the Memra (Word) knows the father. The Memra (Word) is uses as a designation for the divine nature of G-d and so Yeshua, being the “Word become flesh” is able to say that *“He that
360 believeth on me has everlasting life”* in *John 6:47*. Believing in the Memra (Word) brings life everlasting; this is a very Jewish concept in the context of an Aramaic speaking community.

בראשית 28:20-21

לֹוּ שִׁם־הָעִיר לְרֵאשִׁנָּה: וַיִּדַר יַעֲקֹב נֶדֶר לֵאמֹר אִם־יְהִי
אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי וְשָׁמְרָנִי בַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וַנִּתְּנֵלִי
לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבִגְד לְלַבֵּשׁ: וְשָׁבְתִי בְשָׁלוֹם אֶל־בֵּית אָבִי וְהָיָה
יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים: וְהָאֶבֶן הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר־שָׁמַתִּי מִצְבָּה יְהִי

365

כ וְקִיִּים יַעֲקֹב קִים לְמִימְרָ אִם יְהִי מִימְרָ דִינִי בְּסַעְדֵי וַיִּטְרִינֵנִי בְּאַרְחָא הַדָּא דִּי אָנָּא
אֹיִל וַיִּתֵּן לִי לֶחֶם לְמִיכָל וּכְסוּי לְמַלְבָּשׁ: כַּא וְאִיתּוּב בְּשָׁלוֹם לְבֵית אָבִא וַיְהִי מִימְרָ
דִּינִי לִי לֵאלֹהִא: כַּב וְאִבְנָא הַדָּא דִּי שׁוּיְתִי קָמָא תְּחִי דְאַחֵי פְּלַח צְלָה קָנָם יְי וְכָל דִּי

370

In *Bereshit / Genesis 28:20-21* Yaakov is making a vow with the Lord before going to Haran in Mesopotamia to visit Laban. Yaakov swears that if HaShem returns him to his father’s house in safety, then the Lord will be his G-d. Comparing the Aramaic text, Yaakov says if HaShem returns him to his father’s house in safety, then “the Word” (Memra) of the Lord will be his G-d. The text
375 literally says that “the Memra will be to me Elohim (G-d).” This scripture suggests that Yaakov understood the Memra to be G-d and was making a covenant with the Memra (Word) of the Lord.

380

Hebrew

Bereshit / Genesis 28:20-21

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, ‘If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear, and I return to my father's house in safety, then the Lord will be my God.

Aramaic

Bereshit / Genesis 28:20-21

If the Word of the Lord will be with me ... then the Word of the Lord will be my God.

בראשית 31:49

49 גִּלְעָד: וְהִמְצַפָּה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר יֵצֵף יְהוָה בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ כִּי נִסְתָּר
 50 אִישׁ מֵרֵעֵהוּ: אִסְתַּעֲנָה אֶת־בְּנֹתַי וְאִסְתַּקַּח נָשִׁים עַל־בְּנֹתַי
 51 אֵין אִישׁ עִמָּנוּ רֵאֵה אֱלֹהִים עַד בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לְיַעֲקֹב

Hebrew

Bereshit / Genesis 31:49
 May the Lord keep watch
 between you and me.

385

מֵה וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן דְּגֹרָא קִדִּין סְהִיד בֵּינָא וּבֵינְךָ יוֹמָא דִּין עַל פִּן קָרָא שְׁמִיה גִּלְעָד:
 מִמָּ וְסִכּוּתָא דִּי אָמַר יִסְדַּ מִימְרָא דִּינִי בֵּינָא וּבֵינְךָ אָרִי נִסְכְּסִי גְבַר מַחְבְּרִיה: ג אַם

Aramaic

Bereshit / Genesis 31:49
 May the Word of the Lord
 keep watch between you
 and me.

390

The differences between the Hebrew and Aramaic texts in *Bereshit / Genesis 31:49* is that the Memra (Word) is inserted into the text. The Memra of the Lord keeping watch suggests that the Word is to lookout for danger or trouble and to maintain a protective observation between Laban and Yaakov. The Memra is used to make a covenant between these two men and the Word of the Lord is to keep watch in the case of a breach of contract (breach of the Covenant).

395

שמות 14:31

31 עַל־שִׁפְתַי הָיִים: וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־יְהוָה הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה יְהוָה
 בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיֵּרְאוּ הָעָם אֶת־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ בִּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה עֲבָדוּ:

Hebrew

Shmot / Exodus 14:31
 And they believed in the
 Lord

לֹא וְסוּא יִשְׂרָאֵל יֵת גְּבוּרַת יְדָא רַבְתָּא דִּי עָבַד יֵן בְּמִצְרַיִם וְדִחִילוּ עִמָּא מִן קַדָּם יֵן
 וְדִימְרוּ בְּמִימְרָא דִּינִי וּבְנֹבֵאת מֹשֶׁה עֲבָדִיה:

Aramaic

Shmot / Exodus 14:31
 And they believed in the
 Word of the Lord.

400

This portion of text is similar to that of sefer *Bereshit / Genesis 20:3* where Avimelech believed in the Lord. The Hebrew text reads “And they believed in the Lord.” The Aramaic text says “*And they believed in the Word of the Lord.*” According to the Aramaic text the Memra (Word) of the Lord is very important. The children of Yisrael believed in “the Word” of the Lord.

405

שמות 20:1

ב וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לְאָמָר:
 2 אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית
 3,4 עַבְדִּים: לֹא־יְהִנֶּה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל־פְּנֵי: לֹא־תַעֲשֶׂה

Hebrew

Shmot / Exodus 20:1
 And the Lord spoke all
 these words.

א וּמְלִיל יֵן יֵת כָּל פִּתְגֻמַּא הָאֵלִין לְמִימְרָא: ב אָנָּא יֵן אֱלֹהֶךָ דִּי אֲפִיקְתְּךָ מֵאֶרְעָא
 דְּמִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא: ג לֹא יְהִי לְךָ אֱלֹהָא אֲחֵרָא בְּרַ מְנִי: ד לֹא תַעֲבִיד לְךָ צִילָם

Aramaic

Shmot / Exodus 20:1
 And the Word of the Lord
 spoke all these words.

410

The Hebrew text says “*And the Lord spoke all these words.*” Comparing the Aramaic text “*And the Word of the Lord spoke all these words*” it is

415 interesting that “the Word” is speaking. “The Word” of the Lord spoke all of these words appears to be a little strange since the text indicates that the Word is speaking. However, if we take this verse into context with that of *John 1:1-2* we begin to see the Hebraic understanding that the Memra as mentioned in the Aramaic text is capable of taking on human form (i.e. *Bereshit / Genesis 3:8*).

שמות 25:22

420 **וְאֶל-הָאָרֶן תִּתֵּן אֶת-הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ: וְנוֹעַדְתִּי לָךְ: וְדִבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכְּפֹרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים אֲשֶׁר עַל-אָרֶן הָעֵדוּת אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה אוֹתְךָ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:**

Hebrew

Shmot / Exodus 25:22
And I will meet with you there.

425 **כב ואיזמן מימרי לך תמן ואמליל עמך מעילוי כפורתא מבין תרין כרוביא די על ארנא דסקדותא ית כל די אפקיד ! תך לנת בני ישראל בנ ותעביד פתורא דאצי**

Aramaic

Shmot / Exodus 25:22
And I will appoint my Word for you there.

430 Here HaShem is describing the construction of the mercy seat upon the Ark of the Covenant: *Shmot / Exodus 25:21* ‘You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. 25:22 ‘There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (NASB) The phrase “mercy seat” is not a translation of the Hebrew text that says “kapporeth” in the Masoretic text or of the Greek term “hilasterion” from the Septuagint (LXX), rather, “mercy seat” is a translation by William Tyndale from the German translation “gnadenstuhl.” The English description of the “mercy seat” demonstrates for us how far the English translation and meaning can diverge from the original translation of the Hebrew and Greek texts.

440 The Hebrew text of *Shmot / Exodus 25:22* says that HaShem will meet with Moshe to speak to him (and in the future to speak to the Kohen HaGadol [High Priest]) from between the Cherubim. The Aramaic text says “And I will appoint my Word for you there.” It is “the Word” that will meet with and speak to Moshe from between the Cherubim.

ויקרא 26:9

445 **וְנָפְלוּ אִיבֵיכֶם לְפָנֵיכֶם לְחָרֹב: וּפְנִיתִי אֵלֵיכֶם וְהִפְרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְהִקִּמְתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם: וְאָכַלְתֶּם יֶשֶׁן**

Hebrew

Vayikra / Leviticus 26:9
And I will turn to you.

ט ואתפני במימרי לאיטבא לכון ואפיש יתכון ואסגי יתכון ואקים ית קמי עמכון. י ותיכלון צתיקא דצתיק וצתיקא מן קדם חדתא תפנון: יא ואתן משכני ביניכון ולא

Aramaic

Vayikra / Leviticus 26:9
And I will turn through my Word to do good to you.

450 *Vayikra / Leviticus 26* is a discussion on (i) not to make idols, (ii) to keep the Shabbat, and (iii) to walk in HaShem's statutes and commandments and in doing these things HaShem will turn to you and bless you in the land in which you dwell. In *26:9* the Lord says "And I will turn to you ..." The Aramaic translation says "And I will turn through my Word to do good to you. Here, HaShem is operating through His Memra (Word).

455

במדבר 11:23

23 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה **תֵּדַע יְהוָה תִּקְצֹר** עֲתָה תִּרְאֶה תִּיְקַרְרֶךָ

24 דְּבַרִי אִם־לֹא: וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם אֵת דְּבַרֵי יְהוָה

כג ואמר יי למשה ומימרא די יתעפב יצו תחוי סיצרעפך פתגמי אם לא כד ונפק

460

Bamidbar / Numbers 11 recite the story when the children of Yisrael grumbled against the Lord for not having meat to eat. The Lord then brought meat for a month until the people were sick of eating meat. Verse *11:23 The Lord said to Moses, 'Is the Lord's power limited? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.'* (NASB) The Masoretic text has HaShem stating whether the hand of the Lord is limited or shortened? The Targum Onkelos says "Is the Word of the Lord detained?" Here, it is through the Word (Memra) of the Lord that HaShem is bringing meat to the children of Yisrael to eat.

465

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במדבר 14:35

35 תִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־עֹנֹתֵיכֶם אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וַיִּדְעֶתֶם אֶת־תְּנוּאוֹתַי: **אֲנִי**

יְהוָה דִּבַּרְתִּי אִם־לֹא | זֹאת אֲעִשֶׂה לְכָל־הָעֵדָה הַרְעָה הַזֹּאת

36 הַנוֹעֲדִים עָלַי בַּמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה וַתִּמְנוּ וַשֵּׁם יִמְתּוּ: וְהָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר־

לה אנא יי גזרית במימרי אם לא דא אעבד לכל כנשתא קדא דאזדמנון עלי במדברא קדי יסופון ותמן ימותון לו וגבריא די שלח משה לאללא ית ארעא ותבו

475

In the Masoretic text, *Bamidbar / Numbers 14:35*, "I the Lord have spoken," comparing the Aramaic text, "I the Lord decreed through my Word," the use of the personal pronoun illustrates the divine nature of the Memra (Word) of G-d. The Targum text indicates that G-d does everything through His Word. HaShem doing everything through the Memra suggests that "in the beginning was the Word, the Word was with G-d and was G-d" is a Jewish concept.

480

485

Hebrew

Bamidbar / Numbers 11:23

Is the hand of the Lord shortened?

Aramaic

Bamidbar / Numbers 11:23

Is the Word of the Lord detained?

Hebrew

Bamidbar / Numbers 14:35

I the Lord have spoken

Aramaic

Bamidbar / Numbers 14:35

I the Lord decreed through my word.

דברים 1:26

26 הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נָתַן לָנוּ: וְלֹא אָבִיתֶם לְעֹלֹת וְתַמְרוּ
 27 אֶת-פִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: וְתַרְגְּמוּ בְּאֵהֲלֵיכֶם וְתֹאמְרוּ בְּשֵׁנֹת

כּו וְלֹא אָבִיתוּן לְמַסַּק וְסִרְבִּיתוּן עַל מִימְרָא דִּי אֱלֹהִיכוּן: כּו וְאִתְרַעְמִיתוּן בְּמִשְׁכְּנֵיכוּן

490

Comparing the Hebrew and Aramaic translations, the people rebelled against the mouth of the Lord (Hebrew) and Word of the Lord (Aramaic) indicates that the Word proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. The proceeding of the Word from the mouth of G-d, the Word takes on the attributes and the divine nature of the Most High G-d since rebelling against the Memra is tantamount to rebelling against G-d.

495

Hebrew
 Devarim / Deuteronomy
 1:26
 And you rebelled against the mouth of the Lord your God

Aramaic
 Devarim / Deuteronomy
 1:26
 And you rebelled against the Word of the Lord your God.

דברים 18:19

19 אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶעֱוֹנוּ: וְהָיָה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִשְׁמַע אֶל-דְּבַרִּי
 20 אֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר בְּשֵׁמִי אֲנֹכִי אֲדַרֵּשׁ מֵעַמּוֹ: אֵךְ הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר יוֹדֵעַ

יֵט וְיֵהִי גִבְרָא דִּי לֹא יִקְבַּל לְפִתְגְּמֵי דִּי יִמְלַל בְּשֵׁמִי מִימְרֵי יְתְבַע מִנְּהָ: כ בְּרַם נְבִיא

500

The Memra (Word) will require it of him in *Devarim Deuteronomy 18:19*. Comparison of the Targum Onkelos (Aramaic) with the Masoretic text (Hebrew) indicates that the Memra (My Word) substitutes the personal pronoun “I myself” (anochi, אֲנֹכִי) in Hebrew a reference to G-d is replaced by “My Word” suggesting that “the Word” is G-d.

505

Hebrew
 Devarim / Deuteronomy
 18:19
 I myself will require it of him

Aramaic
 Devarim / Deuteronomy
 18:19
 My word will require it of him.

דברים 31:3

3 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא | עֹבֵר לְפָנֶיךָ הוּא-יִשְׁמַד אֶת-הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה
 מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וַיִּרְשָׁתֶם יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הוּא עֹבֵר לְפָנֶיךָ כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה:

ג יֵי אֱלֹהֵךָ מִימְרָה יְעֹבֵר קִדְמָךְ הוּא יִשְׁצִי יֵי עֲמִמָּא קִדְמָךְ וְתִירְתַּנּוּן יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הוּא עֹבֵר קִדְמָךְ כְּמָא-דִּי מְלִיל יֵי דִּי וְיִעֲבֵד יֵי לְהוֹן כְּמָא-דִּי עֹבֵד לְסִיחּוֹן וְלַעֲוֹג מְלָכֵי

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Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:3, HaShem is saying that He will cross ahead of the children of Yisrael into the Promised Land and the Targum Onkelos says that “The Lord your G-d, His Word will pass before you.” The Memra passing before the people into the Promised Land, in comparison to that of the Masoretic text, suggests that the Memra may be a sort of circumlocution for G-d in the Aramaic text. The point that is being driven forward in all of these verses is that HaShem works through the Memra. The reading of the Aramaic text provides us

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Hebrew
 Devarim / Deuteronomy
 31:3
 The Lord your God will pass before you.

Aramaic
 Devarim / Deuteronomy
 31:3
 The Lord your God, his word will pass before you.

525 an indirect understanding of the mindset behind the translators of the text. The Word was in the beginning with G-d, the Word made a covenant with the people, the Word is our redeemer, the Word requires obedience of us before G-d, and ultimately the Word is G-d. The Aramaic and Hebrew texts reveal to us that the gospel of John has accurately portrayed the fully developed concept of the Memra (Word) being with G-d since it was through the Word in which G-d created.

530 3. Discussion

530 Interpretation (hermeneutics) involves more than textual criticism, word studies, syntactical analysis, and evaluation of the structure of sentences. The interpreter must go beneath the surface of what the text says and probe more deeply into what is meant in its ancient Hebraic context. This is the key to
535 understanding what it means theologically of the timelessness of the Scriptures (the people of G-d of all ages and the word of G-d). To appreciate fully the meaning of a text one must understand the historical context from which it is derived and the cultural realities that it reflects and assumes. If we fail to take these things into consideration our use of hermeneutics for the study and
540 interpretation of the text will fall short of what G-d is trying to tell us.

The verses presented above are only a few select examples, there are many more. The vow that was made by Yaakov in *Bereshit / Genesis 28:20-21* reads
545 *“If G-d will be with me and watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and cloths to wear so that I return safely to my father’s house, then the Lord will be my G-d.”* The Targum Onkelos says *“If the Word of the Lord will be with me ... then the Word of the Lord will be my G-d.”* In this text, the Word of the Lord will be Yaakov’s G-d; it is hardly possible to interpret the nature of the Word as being anything other than divine (G-d). Comparing these examples from the Tanach and the Targum Onkelos we discover that Yaakov
550 believes the Lord’s Memra will be his G-d, HaShem says I will save them through the Memra, Avraham was justified through the Memra of G-d, the Memra gave Yisrael the Torah, Moshe prayed to the Memra, the Memra spoke from the burning bush, and the Memra of the Lord created the Word, it is difficult to honestly interpret the Memra (Word) as simply an element of speech or writing.
555 According to early traditions (Targum Neofiti) man was created in the image of the Memra of the Lord. The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, a Targum printed in the Rabbinic bibles called Mikra’ot Gedolot, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:7* in the Hebrew reads *“What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our G-d is near us whenever we pray to him?”* The Targum says
560 *“The Memra of HaShem sits upon His throne high and lifted up and hears our prayer whenever we pray before him and make our petitions.”* The concept of “the Word” obtained from the Jewish translation of the Torah into Aramaic reveals profound truths that open up our understanding of the verses in the book of John chapter 1.

565 Having examined the Hebrew and Aramaic texts and the truth about the Memra (Word) of G-d, let’s go back and look at the book of John, *John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with G-d, and the Word was G-d. 1:2*

570 *He was in the beginning with G-d. 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.* With what we now know, does this text begins to sound very Jewish that may in fact be written in an Aramaic style? Try substituting Word” with “Memra” into the text; it becomes very clear that what John had written is thoroughly a Jewish concept. Living in the first century, this would have been very familiar, the Aramaic concept of the Memra.

575 There is a very important expression the phrase found in *John 1:14* “... the word became flesh and made his dwelling among us ...” the Greek verb for “made his dwelling” literally means “lived in a tent,” which speaks of G-d dwelling in a tent among us temporarily. This brings up another important concept that is taught in the Ketuvei Shelachim, the topic of the “indwelling” of G-d’s Ruach. There is a connection here, a sort of parallel theme, on the Memra become flesh and the indwelling of the Ruach Hakodesh. In order to understand how the Memra can become flesh (*John 1:14*) we need to discuss the Torah’s perspective on the concept of HaShem’s Ruach HaKodesh and the indwelling of His Spirit in our bodies. The indwelling of the Spirit is in fact a principle taught in the Torah that draws a parallel with the Memra making His dwelling place here on earth in Yeshua the Messiah.

585 Yeshua taught us that when he leaves he will send the comforter. This is a designation for the Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) of G-d (see *John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7*). This thought is further developed by the Shelachim (Apostles) that G-d’s Ruach (Spirit) comes to dwell within each believer. As mentioned earlier, in the Ketuvei Shelachim we find many fully developed concepts which are not necessarily well understood today from the Torah. The Ruach HaKodesh and the concept of the indwelling is one of the most important principles in a relationship with HaShem. The indwelling of the Ruach HaKodesh (The Holy Spirit) which is promised to every believer by Yeshua and expounded upon by the Shelachim (Apostles) has in fact been revealed to us in the Torah. The concept of the indwelling may be understood by looking at the letter Vav and the construction of the Mishkhan (Tabernacle).

590 The use of the “Vav” (hooks) occurs only in *Shmot / Exodus 26:32, 37, 27:9-11, 17, 36:36, 38, 38:10-12, 17, 19, and 20* in all the Tanach. The use of the “Vav” refers to the hooks of silver and gold which fasten the curtain (Yeriah) to the posts called “amudim” to enclose the Mishkhan (Tabernacle). The ancient Hebrews understood the Mishkhan as the habitation of G-d while the children of Yisrael traveled in the wilderness. Did you know that the Torah is understood as the habitation of the Memra (Word) of G-d in the rabbinic literature? Believing that the Memra of HaShem resides in the Torah, the scribes developed the idea that the Torah scroll was to be constructed in similar fashion as the Mishkhan. Interestingly, this forms one of the first ancient forms of typesetting. As a result, the Torah scroll was called the Yeriah named after the curtains of the tabernacle.

605 Each Torah scroll was to have approximately 50 yeriot per scroll. The Torah was then organized into columns; each column was called the amud, named from the posts of the Mishkhan (tabernacle). The Leningrad codex, shown below, illustrates this ancient form or typesetting:



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The laws for writing a Torah scroll are called soferut. There are over 4,000 rules for scribes to prepare a kosher scroll. To list a few examples, the Torah must contain exactly 304,805 well-formed letters in 248 amudim (columns). Each Yeriah must come from the hide of a kosher animal that has been specifically prepared for the purpose of writing. Special ink is to be used; when the scribe writes the Name of HaShem he must say the blessing “I’shem k’dushat HaShem” and then dip his quill in fresh ink. A torah scroll must contain no errors of any kind or it is considered passul (פסול, invalid). Each line of every amud is carefully read by the sofer and compared against a working copy called a tikkun. If an error is detected in a Yeriah, it must be removed from the scroll and buried in a Genizah which is a special repository for sacred texts. The most famous Genizah is the Cairo Genizah. The following portion of text contains some of the few places where the “Vav” is literally spelled out in Hebrew.

שמות 38:9-20

9 אָהַל מוֹעֵד: וַיַּעַשׂ אֶת־הַחֲצַר׃
 לַפָּאֵת וַיִּנְבֵּב תִּימְנָה קִלְעֵי הַחֲצַר שֵׁשׁ מִשׁוֹר מֵאָה
 10 בָּאֵמָה: עַמּוּדֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרִים וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרִים נְחֹשֶׁת וַיְוֶי
 11 הָעַמּוּדִים וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף: וּלְפָאֵת צִפּוֹן מֵאָה בָּאֵמָה
 עַמּוּדֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרִים וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרִים נְחֹשֶׁת וַיְוֶי הָעַמּוּדִים
 12 וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף: וּלְפָאֵת־הֵם קִלְעִים חֲמִשִּׁים בָּאֵמָה
 עַמּוּדֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרֵה וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם עֶשְׂרֵה וַיְוֶי הָעַמּוּדִים
 13 וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף: וּלְפָאֵת קֶדְמָה מְזוּרְחָה חֲמִשִּׁים אֵמָה:
 14 קִלְעִים חֲמִשְׁעֶשְׂרֵה אֵמָה אֶל־הַפֶּתַח עַמּוּדֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה
 15 וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה: וּלְפֶתַח הַשְּׁנַיִת מִזָּה וּמִזָּה לְשַׁעַר
 הַחֲצַר קִלְעִים חֲמִשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה אֵמָה עַמּוּדֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה
 16 וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשָׁה: כָּל־קִלְעֵי הַחֲצַר סָבִיב שֵׁשׁ מִשׁוֹר:
 17 וְהָאֲדָנִים לְעַמּוּדִים נְחֹשֶׁת וַיְוֶי הָעַמּוּדִים וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם
 כֶּסֶף וּצִפּוּי רֵאשֵׁיהֶם כֶּסֶף וְהֵם מְחֻשְׁקִים כֶּסֶף כָּל
 18 עַמּוּדֵי הַחֲצַר: וּמִסְדֵּי שַׁעַר הַחֲצַר מַעֲשֵׂה רָקִים תְּכֵלֶת
 וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מִשׁוֹר וְעֶשְׂרִים אֵמָה
 אֶרֶץ וְקוּמָה בְּרֹחַב חֲמִשׁ אַמּוֹת לְעַמַּת קִלְעֵי הַחֲצַר:
 19 וְעַמּוּדֵיהֶם אַרְבַּעַה וְאֲדָנֵיהֶם אַרְבַּעַה נְחֹשֶׁת וַיְוֶי
 20 כֶּסֶף וּצִפּוּי רֵאשֵׁיהֶם וְחֻשְׁקֵיהֶם כֶּסֶף: וְכָל־הַיְתָדוֹת
 לְמִשְׁכַּן וּלְחֲצַר סָבִיב נְחֹשֶׁת:

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Shown above, the Vav (hook) is that which holds the Mishkhan together. Here in *Shmot / Exodus 38:9-20* Vav is literally spelled out in Hebrew 5 times. This form of the Hebrew word “Vav” is used only a few places in the Tanach. The infrequent use of the word “Vav” in the Torah lends itself to have a special significance. Looking at the Hebrew letter “Vav” might help us to understand the significance. The Vav is the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet and thus has the numeric value of six. The picture of the Vav is that of a peg hook. The meaning of the word Vav is “hook” derived from the holding together of the Mishkhan (tabernacle).

Rabbinic sources have something to say about the first “Vav” found in the Torah occurring in *Bereshit / Genesis 1:1*:

Shmot / Exodus 38:9-21

38:9 Then he made the court: for the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twisted linen, one hundred cubits; 38:10 their twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets, made of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. 38:11 For the north side there were one hundred cubits; their twenty pillars and their twenty sockets were of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. 38:12 For the west side there were hangings of fifty cubits with their ten pillars and their ten sockets; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. 38:13 For the east side fifty cubits. 38:14 The hangings for the one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets, 38:15 and so for the other side. On both sides of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets. 38:16 All the hangings of the court all around were of fine twisted linen. 38:17 The sockets for the pillars were of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands, of silver; and the overlaying of their tops, of silver, and all the pillars of the court were furnished with silver bands. 38:18 The screen of the gate of the court was the work of the weaver, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. And the length was twenty cubits and the height was five cubits, corresponding to the hangings of the court. 38:19 Their four pillars and their four sockets were of bronze; their hooks were of silver, and the overlaying of their tops and their bands were of silver. 38:20 All the pegs of the tabernacle and of the court all around were of bronze. 38:21 This is the number of the things for the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, as they were numbered according to the command of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. (NASB)

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ש בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ: וְהָאָרֶץ א

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It is believed the placement of the Vav in the first verse in the Torah has special significance. The first occurrence of the Vav finding itself located between heaven and earth suggest that the Vav makes a connection between the spiritual and earthly matters. It is the 22nd letter from the beginning of the Torah attached to the sixth word “et” (את) indicating that the Vav is that which binds heaven and earth together. It makes sense then that the Vav is used to hold the Mishkhan together being the dwelling place of G-d, the connecting place where G-d is to meet with mankind. The Vav also is represented as the number of man taking from the picture we have laid out here in scripture, (i) man was created on the sixth day, (ii) man works for six days, (iii) six millennia pass before the coming of Moshiach. This is why the beast is identified as the “number of man” with the number six (see *Revelation 13:18*).

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So what can we learn from the Vav that provides insight into the concept of the Memra making His dwelling place among men? The construction of the Mishkhan was unique, this was the dwelling place of HaShem and the place mankind would be able to commune with the Most High G-d. The Vav (Hook) is used to hold the Mishkhan together and is symbolic of man through the number six. This suggests there is a connection between man, through the Vav and the Mishkhan and HaShem. We are uniquely created in that we are a composition of spirit and body. We are unique in that we are capable of having an intimate and personal relationship with G-d. In this way we have the ability to enjoy the most unique kind of relationship with the creator by His indwelling us with His Ruach HaKodesh. With the connection of the Vav, the Mishkhan, Heaven and Earth, and man, a picture begins to form laying down G-d’s ultimate plan. The created purpose of man was to become the living Mishkhan (tabernacle) where G-d’s Holy Spirit could dwell (a principle which is fully developed in the Ketuvei Shelachim). Is it very surprising then that the Memra could dwell among men as Yeshua the Messiah?

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The indwelling of the Ruach is necessary as a result of the nature of mankind. Let me explain. After the fall of Adam and Chavah (Eve) into sin, the essential nature of all mankind, when left to ourselves, we have no hope of salvation, no hope of righteousness, and no hope of finding G-d. The separating mechanism of disobedience creates within us an emptiness which longs to be filled. So, as the Vav becomes the hook which holds together the Mishkhan, each of us should become meeting places of G-d in the world. The concept of the Memra becoming flesh to dwell among us follows this consistent theme of the Torah on the indwelling of the Ruach Hakodesh. The indwelling is the way in which HaShem begins to awaken the soul. According to the scriptures, when HaShem awakens the soul there is a radical change that occurs, the heart is changed, the old man is made new and we are recreated after the image of G-d (see *Romans 6 and Colossians 3*). The radical change that takes place within is what is described as a “new birth” a point has arrived for starting over. This means the Spirit of G-d comes to dwell within the awakened soul and becomes the leading force in the life of a new believer (see *Romans 8:14*). This leading

force causes us to believe in the Memra (Word) of the Lord by faith. The depravity within a person is removed and he/she becomes able to respond to G-d and to His Spirit. Then, the rebellion that was characteristic of a person prior to this point is replaced with a will that longs to please the Lord. As a result, the new believer “*joyfully concurs with the law of God in the inner man.*” (*Romans 7:22*) The sinful nature, that is so ingrained within a believer, changes and he/she begins to have a true desire for pursuing the ways of righteousness, the ways of G-d which is only understood by knowing the Memra (Word) of the Lord. While the rebirth is the work of HaShem, the process of sanctification becomes a partnership with G-d to grow in holiness. *Phili:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. (NASB)* This is the mystery of the divine-human cooperative work in us. There was also a divine-human cooperative work in Yeshua as being the Memra (Word) become flesh. Similarly to the Mishkhan, there was a divine-human cooperative work between the people, the priests, and the Lord. Can you see the consistent theme that the “Word become flesh” is following in the Torah? HaShem has recreated us in such a way that He has enabled us to work together with Him to bring about holiness in our lives similarly to how the Lord works through the Memra (Word).

The Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit) and the indwelling, developed in the Ketuvei Shelachim, are clearly pictured in the construction of the Mishkhan (Tabernacle). According to the Torah and the Ketuvei Shelachim, we are described as the dwelling place of G-d. Does your life picture one that is a habitation of G-d? Yeshua’s life demonstrated a life that was the Memra, the living Word of G-d. If we are fashioned in the manner of the Mishkhan, being a place for G-d’s Spirit to dwell, we need to begin to live accordingly and if Yeshua is the Memra become flesh, we need to believe in Him to be saved!

As we have just seen, the Torah reveals to us that we are designed to be a habitation, a dwelling place for the Ruach HaKodesh, the Spirit of the Most High G-d. The Torah also reveals to us that G-d manifests himself as an Angel in human form. Comparing the Hebrew and Aramaic texts, the Memra (Word) is G-d. The imagery of our being a dwelling place for the Ruach (Spirit) and the Word become flesh (*1:14*) is that G-d pitched his tent among us and temporarily settled in our midst in the flesh (Yeshua the Messiah). The use of the Greek verb in *John 1:14* for the Memra (Word) making His dwelling place among us is an extremely Jewish concept. The Mishkhan (Tabernacle) was a temporary dwelling place the Lord had Moshe construct which provides a type and image of the Messiah in His atoning sacrifice. Yeshua is the living Memra, the Memra become flesh, in order to redeem us by His blood, the perfect atoning sacrifice, our Lord and Savior, the Messiah.

4. Conclusion

If John would have written that “G-d became a human being” it would have not only given us a false impression of who Yeshua is but it would suggest that G-d no longer is reigning in heaven, that he had essentially abandoned His throne to take up residence here on Earth. According to the Torah, the Mishkhan

740 was designed with much symbolism. Symbolism of our bodies, that G-d could dwell among men and yet remain on His throne in heaven, and ultimately alluding that the Memra can make His dwelling here among men. John told us that it was the divine Memra (Word) that had come down to dwell among us. It is through the Word that we can know G-d personally. Examine the following verses from the Ketuvei Shelachim, *Matthew 24:35, Mark 8:38, 13:31, Luke6:47, 9:26, 21:33,24:44, John5:47, 14:24, and 15:7*. Yeshua says “my words” in these
745 verses. Yeshua being the Memra, the living Word of G-d, how much more important are these words Yeshua is telling us? The Memra is the creative work of G-d, the agent by which G-d created the world and even more importantly the agent through whom we are saved, redeeming us from sin. Throughout the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) over and over again Yeshua is portrayed
750 as the one whom the world was created. Examining the Aramaic Targumim, the concept that Yeshua is the living Word of G-d was well understood in the first century. The “Word become flesh” and “the Word being G-d” are expressions that were fully developed in the minds of the first century believers. The Hebrew and Aramaic texts provide evidence for the origin of this doctrine as being a
755 thoroughly Jewish concept. Yeshua is the Living Word of G-d, a very Jewish concept from a very Jewish and Aramaic speaking culture.

John 1:1-14

760 *1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with G-d, and the Word was G-d. 1:2 He was in the beginning with G-d. 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 1:5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. 1:6 There came a man sent from G-d, whose name was John. 1:7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.*

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770 *1:13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of G-d. 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (NASB)*

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