

Messiah, God's presence, and a transformed people

A cumulative argument from Jewish messianic hope

A suggested opening

"Yes, I believe Jesus is divine. I understand that we disagree about what God's unity permits. I don't want to hide that from you, and I don't want our friendship to depend on your accepting it. Would you be willing to explore the relevant Jewish texts together?"

The argument in brief

The Jewish hope for Messiah joins a demanding public mission with God's power, God's nearness and a people transformed for faithful life. The ruler brings justice and restoration; HaShem supplies wisdom and spirit; the people receive renewed hearts; and God dwells among them. Following that whole pattern gives a substantial reason to explore how fully God can be present through the Messiah. Jewish embodiment parallels can sharpen the question of incarnation, while John's Word language supplies one supporting comparison within a much larger argument.

This is an argument for an open, precise conversation. It does not require either person to hide a conviction, agree before studying, or make friendship a reward for religious agreement. The essay develops the positive case first. A separate section then states the logical limits and strongest Orthodox objections.

Reading guide

The numbered references lead to source notes and a bibliography. The appendices reproduce the complete specified classical units, with boundaries and translation editions stated. Modern copyrighted commentary is represented by short quotations, contextual paraphrase and exact references. "Divine" in the suggested opening expresses the reported belief in incarnation, not merely inspiration.

Messiah, God's power, and a transformed people

The question is whether belief in God's nearness through the Messiah can be explored as a serious theological question within a Jewish scriptural world. The most persuasive approach is to follow the sources' own movement: from God's wisdom working in the ruler, to His presence among His people, to renewed hearts, and finally to the relationship between creation and redemption. That sequence provides a richer starting point than an isolated proof-text. It asks what kind of world God intends, how He brings that world into being, and how fully He can make Himself present within it.

1. Begin with what the Jewish Messiah must accomplish

The expected mission is large and public. Isaiah 11 describes just judgment, protection of the vulnerable, a world filled with knowledge of God and the gathering of Israel's dispersed people. Ezekiel 37 joins restored national life, one Davidic shepherd, covenantal faithfulness, enduring peace and God's sanctuary among the people. These are not simply promises that a teacher will inspire a small circle or make individuals feel spiritually reassured. They describe a reordered common life: justice becomes reliable, Israel is restored, and knowledge of HaShem shapes the world. Any Christian-Jewish conversation about Messiah should begin by taking that expectation seriously, including its continuing force for Jewish readers.

This also explains why the question concerns more than the identity of a claimant. What kind of power can accomplish this mission, and what kind of people can live within its fulfillment? The sources answer by joining the ruler's work to God's action and the community's renewal. That connection is the argument's starting point.

2. The mission depends on HaShem's wisdom and power

Isaiah 11 presents the Davidic ruler as the bearer of God's spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge and reverence shape his rule. Rashi explains his discernment through God's wisdom within him. The Messiah is therefore more than an autonomous statesman using exceptional natural abilities. His justice is the expression of wisdom received from HaShem, and his mission belongs to God's own work of restoring the world. The public results matter: righteousness, knowledge of God and the gathering of the dispersed belong to the vision. The first question for shared study is consequently positive: how does God make His own wisdom effective in and through the Messiah?^[1]

3. The God who empowers Messiah also draws near

The sanctuary promise in Exodus 25:8 places God's dwelling among Israel at the center of covenantal life. Solomon simultaneously acknowledges that even the heavens cannot contain Him. These affirmations belong together: God can be genuinely present without being exhausted by, confined within, or reduced to the place where He makes Himself known. Transcendence therefore need not mean absence. The sanctuary supplies a Jewish grammar for speaking of the immeasurable God meeting human beings in a concrete setting.^{[2][3]}

Isaiah 57:15 makes the same movement personal: the exalted God is with the crushed and humble. Rashi speaks of God bringing His Presence near to that person. Megillah 29a extends the pattern to Israel in exile: the Shekhinah accompanies the people in their displacement and returns with them. Divine greatness does not prevent solidarity with suffering. These sources encourage us to ask how far God's self-giving nearness can reach. The question begins inside Jewish accounts of God's faithfulness, rather than from a picture of a remote deity who cannot enter human history.^{[4][5]}

4. Redemption requires a people made different

Ezekiel 36 joins return, cleansing, a new heart and God's spirit. Rashi understands the new heart as an inclination renewed for good. Jeremiah's new-covenant promise places Torah within the people and writes it upon their hearts. Thus redemption reaches beyond institutions into human desire and conduct. Being made like God can be understood ethically: growing in goodness, humility and faithfulness through relationship with Him. God does not merely demand a better people from a distance; He promises to renew them. Ezekiel 37 gathers the pattern into one vision: a Davidic shepherd, faithful people, peace and God's enduring dwelling among them.^{[6][7][8]}

Sotah 14a makes ethical likeness concrete: following God means clothing the naked, visiting the sick, comforting mourners and burying the dead. Read alongside Ezekiel, this supplies a practical picture of renewed life. The connection is a synthesis: the Talmudic passage teaches imitation of divine mercy, while the prophets place renewed conduct within redemption.^[9]

The transformation matters because the promised world must be inhabited, not merely announced. People need to learn to desire and practice what is good: honesty, mercy, justice and fidelity. The prophets locate the remedy within God's renewal of the heart, rather than assuming that a political arrangement alone can produce faithful lives. This does not deny the goodness already present in people. It says that the promised age brings a deeper, shared faithfulness, in which knowing God and living differently belong together.

5. Messiah leads the renewed people among whom God dwells

Ezekiel 37 is especially important because it holds the argument together. The king, the obedient community, the covenant of peace and God's dwelling are not unrelated themes. The Messiah's leadership serves a people whose life has been renewed, and their renewed life becomes the setting of God's abiding presence. This is the central positive picture: God's power is effective in the ruler, God's spirit renews the people, and God is with them. The question of divine nearness through Messiah therefore grows out of the structure of redemption itself, rather than being introduced as an abstract puzzle about what God could hypothetically do.

Creation and redemption belong to one purpose

Bereshit Rabbah reads the spirit hovering over the waters of Genesis 1:2 as the spirit of King Messiah, connecting it with Isaiah 11:2. Rabbeinu Bahya explains this as the end being signaled in the beginning: the purpose of creation is directed toward the messianic age. This is one example of a larger theological pattern, not a solitary hidden key. God's work in redemption completes His intention for creation. The connection makes it reasonable to consider a messianic account that begins with creation itself and asks how God's life-giving action will finally bring the world to its intended fulfillment.^{[10][11]}

6. John's Word language is one supporting comparison

John opens with beginning, Word, creation, life and light, then speaks of dwelling and glory. Genesis begins with God speaking light into being; Psalm 33 attributes creation to His word; Proverbs places personified Wisdom with Him at creation; Exodus describes divine dwelling and glory among Israel. The cumulative resemblance is substantial. John's prologue can be read as a Christian interpretation of how Israel's God creates and makes Himself known, not as vocabulary with no Jewish home. Its incarnation claim is made through a scriptural account of divine action.^{[12][13][14][15][16]}

Ben Sira's Wisdom and Philo's Logos show related Jewish reflection before John. Reinhartz's notes in The Jewish Annotated New Testament also situate the prologue within that scriptural world. This comparison supports the larger messianic argument; it does not replace the questions of restoration, faithful conduct and God's presence among a transformed people.^{[17][18][19]}

7. What range of divine nearness deserves consideration?

The comparison is not limited to ancient agency language. In a 1950 discourse about the previous Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson uses this striking formulation:

Fresh translation of the complete cited sentence: "Since this is the [divine] essence and being itself, as it has placed itself in a body."

The context describes a connecting rather than separating intermediary; it also qualifies the preceding unity formulation as a spiritual feeling and supplies analogies involving angels and Moses. A related 1951 discourse invokes divine essence in connection with the previous Rebbe in a prayer shawl, with complete self-nullification as its context. These are not merely statements that a wise person receives good advice from God. They are genuine Jewish examples of exceptionally strong language about divine presence in a particular human life.^{[20][21]}

Their lateness gives them comparative significance: such language remained possible within a Jewish tradition long after John. The question should be conditional: if you accept this language, what distinguishes it from the incarnation claim you reject? If you reject it, where does your tradition draw the boundary? Is the objection to all human manifestation language, or to particular claims about identity, union and worship? Asking for that distinction respects the diversity of Jewish judgments and seeks understanding rather than a concession extracted by wordplay.

8. Return to the Messiah and the life of his people

In its classical Christian formulation, incarnation means that the divine Son assumes human nature without God ceasing to be God. The claim is not that an ordinary human improves until he becomes the Creator, nor that God's being is reduced to a finite body. For someone who holds that conviction about Jesus, the sources above offer a way to explain the question coherently: might the God whose power enables Messiah's mission, whose spirit renews hearts, and whose presence abides among His people be present through Messiah more fully than the listener has considered? Shared study can then address the actual proposal. The desired first step is willingness to understand it, with friendship remaining freely given even where conviction remains divided.

The strongest objections and the limits of the argument

The central logical distinction must be explicit once: divine power working through someone does not establish that person's divine identity. Isaiah, Rashi and the Shekhinah passages support the earlier steps of the argument; they do not deductively prove incarnation. Bava Batra 75b reinforces the distinction by applying divine-associated naming to righteous people and Jerusalem as well as Messiah. A Christian identification of Jesus and a claim about his divine identity require further evidence and argument.^[22]

The strongest Orthodox objection is that God's indivisible unity and incorporeality exclude the Christian proposal. Maimonides treats bodily language about God figuratively and denies that He is a body. A Christian may reply that assuming human nature need not mean that the divine nature changes or becomes finite; an Orthodox reader may still reject that distinction. The point of serious comparison is to identify that disagreement accurately, not to declare it solved by the assertion that God can do anything.^[23]

Historical claims also need restraint. Earlier Word and Wisdom traditions establish a Jewish conceptual setting. Later midrashic, targumic and Hasidic parallels demonstrate continuing Jewish interpretive possibilities, but their dates alone prove neither independence from Christian contact nor equivalence of doctrines. The Chabad discourse concerns the previous Rebbe, not Jesus; its agency analogies and self-nullification language support readings distinct from Christian incarnation. Reinhartz accordingly describes incarnation as "a major dividing line between Judaism and Christianity."^[19]

Finally, Messiah's public work of justice, restoration and peace cannot be replaced by private spiritual experience; nor can Israel, Judah and Torah be removed from the renewal passages. Those remain substantial questions for any identification of Jesus as Messiah. The positive conclusion is narrower but meaningful: Jewish sources provide real grounds for taking the conversation seriously. Neither agreement nor continued discussion should be made a condition of friendship.

Verification and source scope

Opened and read in Logos: the JPS 1985 text of Isaiah 11:1-3, 57:15 and Ezekiel 36:26-28; Adele Reinhartz's notes on John 1:1-18 in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, second edition (2017); and Philo, *On the Confusion of Tongues* §§144-149, including §146, in C. D. Yonge's *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged* (Hendrickson, 1995). Other classical texts were checked in the linked editions. The complete appendix translations and their editions are identified individually.

The 1950 quotation is freshly translated from the official Hebrew rendering. The reviewed original discourse was Yiddish, published in *Likkutei Sichot* 2:509 ff.; the Hebrew edition includes unrevised additions. The 1951 transcript is expressly unrevised. The modern quotation is intentionally short; the full surrounding texts remain available through their exact references.

Complete Tanakh passages

Translation throughout this appendix: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917. Each numbered verse is reproduced in full. A selected verse range is not represented as an entire chapter or speech. Jeremiah uses Jewish/Hebrew numbering. The following complete source units support the argument; the subsequent appendices provide the Jewish commentary and John comparison.

Isaiah 11:1-3

JPS 1917, Isaiah 11:1-3^[24]

1 And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a twig shall grow forth out of his roots.

2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears;

Isaiah 57:15

JPS 1917, Isaiah 57:15^[24]

15 For thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

Exodus 25:8

JPS 1917, Exodus 25:8^[25]

8 And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

1 Kings 8:27

JPS 1917, 1 Kings 8:27^[26]

27 But will God in very truth dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house that I have builded!

Ezekiel 36:24-28

JPS 1917, Ezekiel 36:24-28^[27]

24 For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land.

25 And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.

27 And I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep Mine ordinances, and do them.

28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God.

Jeremiah 31:30-33 (Jewish/Hebrew numbering; 31:31-34 in many Christian editions)

JPS 1917, Jeremiah 31:30-33 (Jewish/Hebrew numbering; 31:31-34 in many Christian editions)^[28]

30 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah;

31 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; forasmuch as they broke My covenant, although I was a lord over them, saith the LORD.

32 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people;

33 and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying: 'Know the LORD'; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.

Ezekiel 37:24-28

JPS 1917, Ezekiel 37:24-28^[27]

24 And My servant David shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in Mine ordinances, and observe My statutes, and do them.

25 And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, they, and their children, and their children's children, for ever; and David My servant shall be their prince for ever.

26 Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them—it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will establish them, and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for ever.

27 My dwelling-place also shall be over them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

28 And the nations shall know that I am the LORD that sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for ever.'

Complete classical Jewish comments and discussions

The Hebrew/Aramaic follows the specified witnesses. The Talmud units are freshly transcribed from nineteenth-century Romm/Vilna pages; original abbreviations are retained and their translations expanded. Vowel points are omitted; paragraphing is editorial. All English translations in this appendix are freshly prepared for this study. The boundary of each complete comment, baraita, paragraph or indexed section is stated explicitly. Abbreviated biblical citations already present in the classical source are retained rather than silently expanded.

Rashi on Isaiah 11:3. Both complete comments.

Rashi on Isaiah 11:3. Both complete comments.^[29]

Hebrew / Aramaic

והריחו ביראת ה'. ימלא רוח יראת ה', ובלע"ז איראונמירלו"י:

ולא למראה עיניו ישפוט. כי בחכמת הקדוש ברוך הוא בקרבו ידע ויבין מי זכאי ומי חייב:

Fresh English translation

"He will be animated by the fear of the LORD." He will be filled with the spirit of fear of the LORD; in the foreign language: איראונמירלו"י [Rashi's Old French gloss, reproduced as transmitted].

"He will not judge by the sight of his eyes." For by the wisdom of the Holy One, blessed be He, within him, he will know and understand who is innocent and who is guilty.

Textual witness: Sefaria, Rashi on Isaiah 11:3. Hebrew/Aramaic version label: Vocalized Edition. Version-source field: <http://sefaria.org>. Accessed October 17, 2026. https://www.sefaria.org/Rashi_on_Isaiah_11:3

Rashi on Isaiah 57:15. Both complete comments.

Rashi on Isaiah 57:15. Both complete comments.^[30]

Hebrew / Aramaic

מרום וקדוש אני שכן, ומשם אני עם דכא ושפל רוח, שאני מרכין שכינתי עליו:

שפלים. נדכאים, סובלי עני וחליים:

Fresh English translation

"High and holy" is where I "dwell," and from there I am with "the crushed and lowly in spirit," for I lower My Presence upon him.

“The lowly; the crushed”: those who endure poverty and illnesses.

Textual witness: Sefaria, Rashi on Isaiah 57:15. Hebrew/Aramaic version label: Vocalized Edition. Version-source field: <http://sefaria.org>. Accessed October 17, 2026. https://www.sefaria.org/Rashi_on_Isaiah_57:15

Rashi on Ezekiel 36:26. Complete comment.

Rashi on Ezekiel 36:26. Complete comment.^[31]

Hebrew / Aramaic

לב חדש. יצר שנתחדש לטובה (אבות דרבי נתן ד):

Fresh English translation

“A new heart”: an inclination renewed for the good (Avot de-Rabbi Natan 4).

Textual witness: Sefaria, Rashi on Ezekiel 36:26. Hebrew/Aramaic version label: Vocalized Edition. Version-source field: <https://www.sefaria.org/>. Accessed October 17, 2026. https://www.sefaria.org/Rashi_on_Ezekiel_36:26

Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 29a:4. Complete baraita of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai.

Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 29a:4. Complete baraita of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai.^[32]

Hebrew / Aramaic

תניא ר"ש בן יוחי אומר בוא וראה כמה חביבין ישראל לפני הקב"ה שבכל מקום שגלו שכינה עמהן גלו למצרים שכינה עמהן שנאמר הנגלה נגליתי לבית אביך בהיותם במצרים וגו' גלו לבבל שכינה עמהן שנאמר למענכם שלחתי בבלה ואף כשהן עתידין ליגאל שכינה עמהן שנאמר ושב ה' אלהיך את שבותך והשיב לא נאמר אלא ושב מלמד שהקב"ה שב עמהן מבין הגליות

Fresh English translation

It was taught: Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai says: Come and see how beloved Israel are before the Holy One, blessed be He, for in every place to which they were exiled, the Divine Presence was with them. They were exiled to Egypt: the Divine Presence was with them, as it is said, “Did I not indeed reveal Myself to your father's house when they were in Egypt,” and so forth. They were exiled to Babylonia: the Divine Presence was with them, as it is said, “For your sake I sent [Myself] to Babylonia.” And even when they are destined to be redeemed, the Divine Presence is with them, as it is said, “And the LORD your God will return your captivity.” It does not say “He will bring back,” but “He will return.” This teaches that the Holy One, blessed be He, returns with them from among the exiles.

Textual witness: Babylonian Talmud, Romm/Vilna printing, 1880-1886, main Gemara text. Fresh transcription for this study from the historical page image. Accessed October 18, 2026.
https://manuscripts.sefaria.org/vilna-romm/Megillah_29a.jpg

Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 5a:7-8. Complete two-interpretations-and-preference unit.

Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 5a:7-8. Complete two-interpretations-and-preference unit.^[33]

Hebrew / Aramaic

ואת דכא ושפל רוח רב הונא ורב חסדא חד אמר אתי דכא וחד אמר אני את דכא ומסתברא
כמ"ד אני את דכא שהרי הקב"ה הניח כל הרים וגבעות והשרה שכירתו על הר סיני ולא
גבה הר סיני למעלה

Fresh English translation

"And with the crushed and lowly in spirit." Rav Huna and Rav Hisda: one said, "The crushed is with Me"; and one said, "I am with the crushed."

And it is reasonable to follow the one who said, "I am with the crushed," for the Holy One, blessed be He, passed over all the mountains and hills and caused His Presence to dwell upon Mount Sinai; Mount Sinai did not rise upward.

Textual witness: Babylonian Talmud, Romm/Vilna printing, 1880-1886, main Gemara text. Fresh transcription for this study from the historical page image. Accessed October 18, 2026.
https://manuscripts.sefaria.org/vilna-romm/Sotah_5a.jpg

Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 75b:3-4. Two complete indexed segments, including all three names and prooftexts.

Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 75b:3-4. Two complete indexed segments, including all three names and prooftexts.^[34]

Hebrew / Aramaic

ואמר רבה א"ר יוחנן עתידין צדיקים שנקראין על שמו של הקב"ה שנאמר כל הנקרא בשמי ולכבודי בראתיו יצרתיו אף עשיתיו (וא"ר) שמואל בר נחמני א"ר יוחנן ג' נקראו על שמו של הקב"ה ואלו הן צדיקים ומשיח וירושלים צדיקים הא דאמרן משיח דכתיב וזה שמו אשר יקראו ה' צדקנו ירושלים דכתיב סביב שמונה עשר אלף ושם העיר מיום ה' שמה אל תקרי שמה אלא שמה א"ר אלעזר עתידין צדיקים שאומרים לפניו קדוש כדרך שאומרים לפני הקב"ה שנאמר והיה הנשאר בציון והנוותר בירושלים קדוש יאמר לו

Fresh English translation

And Rabba said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: In the future the righteous will be called by the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said, "Everyone called by My name, whom I created for My glory, whom I formed, indeed whom I made." And Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: Three were called by the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, and these are they: the righteous, the Messiah, and Jerusalem.

The righteous: as we have said. The Messiah: for it is written, "And this is his name by which he will be called: The LORD is our righteousness." Jerusalem: for it is written, "All around, eighteen thousand; and the name of the city from that day: The LORD is there." Do not read "there" [shammah], but "its name" [shemah]. Rabbi Elazar said: In the future, "Holy" will be said before the righteous, just as it is said before the Holy One, blessed be He, as it is said, "And whoever remains in Zion and is left in Jerusalem will be called holy."

Textual witness: Babylonian Talmud, Romm/Vilna printing, 1880-1886, main Gemara text. Fresh transcription for this study from the historical page image. Accessed October 18, 2026.

https://manuscripts.sefaria.org/vilna-romm/Bava_Batra_75b.jpg

Bereshit Rabbah 2:4. Complete unit, including Ben Zoma; Vilna 1878, chapter 2 §§5-6.

Bereshit Rabbah 2:4. Complete unit, including Ben Zoma; Vilna 1878, chapter 2 §§5-6.^[35]

Hebrew / Aramaic

רשב"ל פתר קריא במלכיות. והארץ היתה תהו. זו מלכות בבל. שנא' (ירמיה ד) ראיתי את הארץ והנה תהו. ובהו. זו מלכות מדי. שנא' (אסתר ו) ויבהילו להביא את המן. וחשך זו מלכות יון. שהחשיכה עיניהן של ישראל בגזירותיהן. שהיתה אומרת להם. כתבו על קרן השור שאין לכם חלק באלהי ישראל. על פני תהום. זו מלכות הרשעה. שאין לה חקר כמו התהום. מה התהום הזה אין לו חקר. אף הרשעים כן. ורוח אלהים מרחפת. זה רוחו של מלך המשיח. היאך מד"א (ישעיה יא) ונחה עליו רוח ה'. באיזו זכות ממשמשת ובאה. המרחפת על פני המים. בזכות התשובה. שנמשלה כמים. שנא' (איכה ב) שפכי כמים לבך:

ר' חגי בשם ר' פדת אמר ברית כרותה למים שאפי' בשעת שרב רוחה שייפה. וכבר היה ר"ש בן זומא יושב ותוהא. עבר ר' יהושע ושאל בשלומו פעם ושתיים ולא השיבו. בשלישית השיבו בבהילות. א"ל בן זומא מאין הרגלים. א"ל מעיין הייתי. א"ל מעיד אני עלי שמים וארץ שאיני זז מכאן עד שתודיעני מאין הרגלים. א"ל מסתכל הייתי במעשה בראשית. ולא היה בין מים העליונים למים התחתונים אלא כשתיים ושלש אצבעות. ורוח אלהים מנשבת אכ"כ אלא מרחפת. כעוף הזה שהוא מרפרף בכנפיו וכנפיו נוגעות ואין נוגעות. נהפך ר' יהושע ואמר לתלמידיו. הלך לו בן זומא. ולא שהו ימים מועטים ובן זומא בעולם:

Fresh English translation

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish interpreted the verse in relation to the kingdoms. "And the earth was formless": this is the kingdom of Babylonia, as it is said, "I saw the earth, and behold, it was formless" (Jeremiah 4). "And void": this is the kingdom of Media, as it is said, "They hurried to bring Haman" (Esther 6). "And darkness": this is the kingdom of Greece, which darkened Israel's eyes with its decrees, saying to them: Write on the horn of the ox that you have no share in the God of Israel. "Over the face of the deep": this is the wicked kingdom, which cannot be fathomed, like the deep. Just as this deep cannot be fathomed, so too the wicked. "And the spirit of God was hovering": this is the spirit of the King Messiah, as it says, "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him" (Isaiah 11). By what merit does it draw near and come? "Hovering over the face of the waters": by the merit of repentance, which is compared to water, as it is said, "Pour out your heart like water" (Lamentations 2).

Rabbi Haggai said in the name of Rabbi Pedat: A covenant is established with the waters, so that even in scorching heat a breeze glides over them. It once happened that Rabbi Shimon ben Zoma was sitting and pondering. Rabbi Yehoshua passed by and greeted him once and twice,

but he did not answer him. The third time he answered in agitation. He said to him: Ben Zoma, whence the feet [where have your thoughts taken you]? He said to him: I was contemplating. He said to him: I call heaven and earth as witnesses that I will not move from here until you tell me whence the feet. He said to him: I was looking into the work of creation, and there were only about two or three fingerbreadths between the upper waters and the lower waters. It is not written here, "And the spirit of God was blowing," but "hovering," like this bird that flutters its wings, whose wings touch and do not touch. Rabbi Yehoshua turned and said to his students: Ben Zoma has gone. Ben Zoma remained in the world only a few more days.

Textual witness: Hebrew transcribed from Midrash Rabbah, Vilna 1878, vol. 1 (Wikimedia Commons catalog attribution), photo-offset scan, PDF p. 10, chapter 2 §§5–6, corresponding to standard/Sefaria Bereshit Rabbah 2:4. Original abbreviations retained; spacing and typographic quotation marks normalized; commentary reference markers omitted. This print reads "kingdoms" (מלכות; במלכות), where the previously used Torah Emet witness reads "exiles" (גלות; בגלות). Wikimedia Commons identifies the scan as public domain. Accessed October 18, 2026.
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Midrash-Rabbah-1-Vilna-1878-HB14385.pdf>

Rabbeinu Bahya, Genesis 1:2:5. Complete paragraph, beginning "And God separated."

Rabbeinu Bahya, Genesis 1:2:5. Complete paragraph, beginning "And God separated."^[36]

Hebrew / Aramaic

ויבדל אלהים בין האור ובין החשך. כי בו יבדיל הקדוש ברוך הוא בין ישראל שקוו לישועה ובין האמות השרויים בחשך. ואל הענין הזה רמזו רבותינו ז"ל כשהוכיחו מן הכתוב הזה ארבע מלכיות, והוא שדרשו: "והארץ היתה תהו", זו מלכות בבל; "ובהו", זו מלכות מדי; "וחשך", זו מלכות יון; "תהום", זו מלכות אדום; "ורוח אלהים", זה רוחו של משיח. ובאור המדרש הזה כי השם יתברך בפרשה זו מגיד מראשית אחרית, והכתוב כון לרמז סוף הזמן בתחלת הזמן, להורות כי תכלית כונת הבריאה הוא לימות המשיח, וזהו: תחלת המחשבה סוף המעשה.

Fresh English translation

"And God separated the light from the darkness." For through it the Holy One, blessed be He, will distinguish between Israel, who hoped for salvation, and the nations dwelling in darkness. Our rabbis, of blessed memory, alluded to this matter when they derived the four kingdoms from this verse. This is what they expounded: "And the earth was formless": this is the kingdom of Babylonia; "and void": this is the kingdom of Media; "and darkness": this is the kingdom of Greece; "the deep": this is the kingdom of Edom; "and the spirit of God": this is the spirit of Messiah. The explanation of this midrash is that the blessed God, in this passage, declares the end from the beginning. Scripture intended to hint at the end of time at the beginning of time, to teach that the ultimate purpose of creation is directed toward the days of Messiah. This is: first in thought, last in deed.

Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 14a:3-4. Complete ethical-imitation unit.

Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 14a:3-4. Complete ethical-imitation unit.^[37]

Hebrew / Aramaic

ואמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא מאי דכתיב אחרי ה' אלהיכם תלכו וכי אפשר לו לאדם להלך
אחר שכינה והלא כבר נאמר כי ה' אלהיך אש אוכלה הוא אלא להלך אחר מדותיו של
הקב"ה מה הוא מלביש ערומים דכתיב ויעש ה' אלהים לאדם ולאשתו כתנות עור וילבישם
אף אתה הלבש ערומים הקב"ה ביקר חולים דכתיב וירא אליו ה' באלוני ממרא אף אתה
בקר חולים הקב"ה נחם אבלים דכתיב ויהי אחרי מות אברהם ויברך אלהים את יצחק בנו
אף אתה נחם אבלים הקב"ה קבר מתים דכתיב ויקבר אותו בגיא אף אתה קבור מתים

Fresh English translation

And Rabbi Hama son of Rabbi Hanina said: What is the meaning of what is written, "After the LORD your God you shall walk"? Is it possible for a person to walk after the Divine Presence? Has it not already been said, "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire"?

Rather, [it means] to walk after the attributes of the Holy One, blessed be He. Just as He clothes the naked, as it is written, "And the LORD God made garments of skin for the man and his wife, and clothed them," so you too should clothe the naked. The Holy One, blessed be He, visited the sick, as it is written, "And the LORD appeared to him at the terebinths of Mamre"; so you too should visit the sick. The Holy One, blessed be He, comforted mourners, as it is written, "And it happened after Abraham's death that God blessed Isaac his son"; so you too should comfort mourners. The Holy One, blessed be He, buried the dead, as it is written, "And He buried him in the valley"; so you too should bury the dead.

Textual witness: Babylonian Talmud, Romm/Vilna printing, 1880-1886, Sotah 14a. Fresh transcription from the historical page image. Accessed October 18, 2026. https://manuscripts.sefaria.org/vilna-romm/Sotah_14a.jpg

Textual notes on Appendix B

1. Rashi on Isaiah 11:3 contains an Old French gloss. It is retained in the original, and its uncertainty is made explicit in the English rather than supplying an unverified reconstruction.

2. The Sefaria witness of Rashi on Ezekiel 36:26 includes a parenthetical reference to Avot de-Rabbi Natan 4. It is retained without assuming that the reference originated with Rashi.

3. Megillah 29a:4 cites I Samuel 2:27, Isaiah 43:14 and Deuteronomy 30:3. The source itself abbreviates its Samuel quotation. The bracketed [Myself] makes the midrashic reading of Isaiah explicit; it is not offered as an ordinary translation of that verse.

4. Sotah 5a:7–8 cites Isaiah 57:15. The passage does not assign either of the two readings to one named sage. Sotah 14a:3–4 cites Deuteronomy 13:5 in Hebrew numbering (13:4 in many Christian editions), Deuteronomy 4:24, Genesis 3:21, 18:1 and 25:11, and Deuteronomy 34:6. It teaches ethical imitation, not a messianic chronology.

5. Bava Batra 75b:3–4 cites Isaiah 43:7, Jeremiah 23:6, Ezekiel 48:35 and Isaiah 4:3. The interpretation of the Jerusalem name includes wordplay that must remain visible.

6. Bereshit Rabbah 2:4 corresponds to chapter 2 §§5–6 in the 1878 Vilna witness. Its kingdom language replaces the earlier digital witness's exile language. The print gives Jeremiah chapter 4; the verse is 4:23. Other references include Esther 6:14, Isaiah 11:2 and Lamentations 2:19. The separate Ben Zoma narrative is included because it belongs to the indexed unit; it is not additional evidence for the messianic claim.

7. Rabbeinu Bahya's paragraph is indexed as Genesis 1:2:5 although its opening lemma quotes Genesis 1:4. Its historical contrast between Israel and the nations is reproduced as source language, not adopted as a description of present-day people.

Maimonides: complete units on unity and incorporeality

Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilkhhot Yesodei ha-Torah 1:7-9, common printed text. New unpointed transcription checked against the Warsaw-Vilna text in the mechanical reprint scanned as HebrewBooks 39979, PDF pp. 17-18; spelling and punctuation lightly normalized; the abbreviation "הקב"ה expanded. Fresh English translation prepared for this study; biblical locators in English are supplied editorial aids.

Maimonides, Yesodei ha-Torah 1:7-9 (common numbering)^[38]

1:7

Hebrew

אלוה זה אחד הוא ואינו שנים ולא יתר על שנים. אלא אחד, שאין כיחודו אחד מן האחדים הנמצאים בעולם. לא אחד כמין שהוא כולל אחדים הרבה, ולא אחד כגוף שהוא נחלק למחלקות ולקצוות, אלא יחוד שאין יחוד אחר כמותו בעולם. אילו היו אלוהות הרבה היו גופין וגויות, מפני שאין הנמנים השוין במציאותן נפרדין זה מזה אלא במאורעין שיארעו בגופות והגויות. ואילו היה היוצר גוף וגויה היה לו קץ ותכלית, שאי אפשר להיות גוף שאין לו קץ. וכל שיש לגופו קץ ותכלית יש לכחו קץ וסוף. ואלהינו ברוך שמו, הואיל וכחו אין לו קץ ואינו פוסק, שהרי הגלגל סובב תמיד, אין כחו כח גוף. והואיל ואינו גוף לא יארעו לו מאורעות הגופות כדי שיהא נחלק ונפרד מאחר. לפיכך אי אפשר שיהיה אלא אחד. וידעת דבר זה מצות עשה, שנאמר ה' אלהינו ה' אחד.

Fresh English translation

This God is one. He is neither two nor more than two, but one, whose unity is unlike the unity of any of the single things existing in the world: not one as a species that includes many individuals, and not one as a body that is divided into parts and extremities, but a unity unlike any other unity in the world.

If there were many gods, they would be bodies and corporeal beings, because things counted as distinct, while alike in their existence, are distinguished from one another only through occurrences that affect bodies and corporeal beings. If the Creator were a body and corporeal being, He would have a limit and an end, because there cannot be a body without a limit. Whatever has a body with a limit and an end also has a limit and an end to its power.

But our God, blessed be His name, has power without limit and without cessation, as the celestial sphere continually revolves; therefore His power is not the power of a body. Since He is not a body, the occurrences affecting bodies do not affect Him so as to divide Him and

distinguish Him from another. Consequently, He can only be one. Knowing this is a positive commandment, as it is said: "The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

1:8

Hebrew

הרי מפורש בתורה ובנביאים שאין הקדוש ברוך הוא גוף וגויה, שנאמר כי ה' אלהיכם הוא אלהים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת, והגוף לא יהיה בשני מקומות. ונאמר כי לא ראיתם כל תמונה. ונאמר ואל מי תדמיוני ואשוה. ואילו היה גוף היה דומה לשאר גופים.

Fresh English translation

It is expressly stated in the Torah and in the Prophets that the Holy One, blessed be He, is not a body or corporeal being, for it is said: "For the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on the earth below" (Joshua 2:11), and a body cannot be in two places. It is also said: "For you saw no form" (Deuteronomy 4:15), and: "To whom will you liken Me, that I should be equal?" (Isaiah 40:25). If He were a body, He would resemble other bodies.

1:9

Hebrew

אם כן מהו זה שכתוב בתורה ותחת רגליו, כתובים באצבע אלהים, יד ה', עיני ה', אזני ה', וכיוצא בדברים האלו. הכל לפי דעתן של בני אדם הוא שאינן מכירין אלא [הגופות], ודברה תורה כלשון בני אדם. והכל כנויים הן, שנאמר אם שנותי ברק חרבי. וכי חרב יש לו ובחרב הוא הורג? אלא משל והכל משל. ראה לדבר שנביא אחד אומר שראה הקדוש ברוך הוא לבושיה כתלג חיור, ואחר ראהו חמוץ בגדים מבצרה. משה רבינו עצמו ראהו על הים כגבור עושה מלחמה, ובסיני כשליח צבור עטוף, לומר שאין לו דמות וצורה אלא הכל במראה הנבואה ובמחזה. ואמתת הדבר אין דעתו של אדם מבין ולא יכולה להשיגו ולחקרו. וזה שאמר הכתוב החקר אלוה תמצא אם עד תכלית שדי תמצא.

If so, what is meant by what is written in the Torah: "and beneath His feet" (Exodus 24:10), "written with the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10), "the hand of the LORD" (Exodus 9:3; Numbers 11:23; Deuteronomy 2:15), "the eyes of the LORD" (Deuteronomy 11:12), "the ears of the LORD" (Numbers 11:1; 11:18), and similar expressions? All of them accord with human understanding, since people recognize only bodies; the Torah speaks in human language. All of them are figurative designations, as it says: "If I sharpen My flashing sword" (Deuteronomy 32:41). Does He have a sword, and does He kill with a sword? Rather, this is a figure of speech; all of it is figurative.

Evidence for this is that one prophet says that he saw the Holy One, blessed be He, with "His clothing white as snow" (Daniel 7:9), while another saw Him with "crimsoned garments from Bozrah" (Isaiah 63:1). Moses our teacher himself saw Him at the sea as a warrior waging war, and at Sinai as a prayer leader wrapped in a garment. This teaches that He has neither likeness nor form; rather, all of it belongs to prophetic appearance and vision. The human mind does not understand the truth of the matter and cannot grasp or investigate it. This is what Scripture says: "Can you discover God by searching? Can you reach the utmost limit of the Almighty?" (Job 11:7).

Textual note: In 1:9, [הגופות] supplies the evident correction of an apparent print error; the brackets disclose the intervention. Printed divine-title abbreviations are expanded.

Historical context: the celestial-sphere argument is part of Maimonides' medieval philosophical cosmology. Reproducing it faithfully does not present that cosmology as a contemporary scientific claim.

Complete units for the John 1 comparison

These are complete specified verses and sections, not whole books. Translation editions are named separately. Where a selected range ends before a speech or prayer ends, the boundary is explicit. No omission has been inserted inside a specified range. John 1:18 is reproduced in the KJV's textual tradition; this does not settle its well-known "Son" / "God" variant.

John 1:1-18 | King James Version

John 1:1-18 — King James Version^[12]

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.
- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
- 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.
- 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
- 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
- 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.
- 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.
- 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
- 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

Genesis 1:1-5 | JPS 1917

Genesis 1:1-5 — JPS 1917^[39]

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.

3 And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Psalms 33:6 | JPS 1917

Psalms 33:6 — JPS 1917^[40]

6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

Proverbs 8:22-31 | JPS 1917

Proverbs 8:22-31 — JPS 1917^[41]

22 The LORD made me as the beginning of His way, the first of His works of old.

23 I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

24 When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth;

26 While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the beginning of the dust of the world.

27 When He established the heavens, I was there; when He set a circle upon the face of the deep,

28 When He made firm the skies above, when the fountains of the deep showed their might,

29 When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not transgress His commandment, when He appointed the foundations of the earth;

30 Then I was by Him, as a nursling; and I was daily all delight, playing always before Him,

31 Playing in His habitable earth, and my delights are with the sons of men.

Exodus 40:34-38 | JPS 1917

Exodus 40:34-38 — JPS 1917^[25]

34 Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

35 And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

36 And whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward, throughout all their journeys.

37 But if the cloud was not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.

38 For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and there was fire therein by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.

Ben Sira (Sirach) 24:1-12 | World English Bible Classic

Ben Sira (Sirach) 24:1-12 — World English Bible Classic^[17]

1 Wisdom will praise her own soul, and will proclaim her glory in the midst of her people.

2 She will open her mouth in the congregation of the Most High, and proclaim her glory in the presence of his power.

3 "I came out of the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth as a mist.

4 I lived in high places, and my throne is in the pillar of the cloud.

5 Alone I surrounded the circuit of heaven, and walked in the depth of the abyss.

6 In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I obtained a possession.

7 With all these I sought rest. In whose inheritance shall I lodge?

8 Then the Creator of all things gave me a command. He who created me made my tent to rest, and said, 'Let your dwelling be in Jacob, and your inheritance in Israel.'

9 He created me from the beginning, before the ages. For all ages, I will not cease to exist.

10 In the holy tabernacle, I ministered before him. So I was established in Zion.

11 In the beloved city, likewise he gave me rest. In Jerusalem was my domain.

12 I took root in a people that was honored, even in the portion of the Lord's own inheritance.

End of selected unit; Wisdom's speech continues in the source through verse 22. Its opening quotation mark is therefore deliberately not closed above.

Ben Sira (Sirach) 24:23 | World English Bible Classic

Ben Sira (Sirach) 24:23 — World English Bible Classic^[17]

23 All these things are the book of the covenant of the Most High God, the law which Moses commanded us for an inheritance for the assemblies of Jacob.

Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-4 | World English Bible Classic

Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-4 — World English Bible Classic^[42]

1 “O God of my ancestors and Lord of mercy, who made all things by your word;

2 and by your wisdom you formed man, that he should have dominion over the creatures that were made by you,

3 and rule the world in holiness and righteousness, and execute judgment in uprightness of soul,

4 give me wisdom, her who sits by you on your thrones. Don't reject me from among your servants,

End of selected unit; the prayer continues. WEB's note to “servants” in verse 4 gives “children” as an alternative.

Wisdom of Solomon 7:25-27 | World English Bible Classic

Wisdom of Solomon 7:25-27 — World English Bible Classic^[43]

25 For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty. Therefore nothing defiled can find entrance into her.

26 For she is a reflection of everlasting light, an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness.

27 Although she is one, she has power to do all things. Remaining in herself, she renews all things. From generation to generation passing into holy souls, she makes friends of God and prophets.

Philo, On the Confusion of Tongues §146 | C. D. Yonge

Philo, On the Confusion of Tongues §146 — C. D. Yonge^[18]

(146) And even if there be not as yet any one who is worthy to be called a son of God, nevertheless let him labour earnestly to be adorned according to his first-born word, the eldest of his angels, as the great archangel of many names; for he is called, the authority, and the name of God, and the Word, and man according to God's image, and he who sees Israel.

Targum Onkelos, Genesis 15:6 | Aramaic and fresh translation

Targum Onkelos, Genesis 15:6 — Aramaic and fresh translation^[44]

והימין במימרא דיי וחשבה ליה לזכו

Fresh English translation

And he believed in the word of the Lord, and he reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Numbered references

Numbers correspond to the reference links in the argument and appendices. Classical texts are cited by their stable canonical divisions; digital section numbers are distinguished from folio numbers. Print details are given only when verified. Original essay links are comparison sources; the appendix links identify the witnesses actually reproduced in this edition. Original comparison sources were accessed October 17, 2026; publication-edition witnesses were checked October 18, 2026.

1. Rashi, commentary on Isaiah 11:3, Hebrew text in Chabad.org, chapter 11; see Appendix B for the complete Sefaria witness. [Source](#).
2. Exodus 25:8, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
3. I Kings 8:27, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
4. Rashi, commentary on Isaiah 57:15, Hebrew text in Chabad.org; complete Sefaria witness in Appendix B. [Source](#).
5. Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 29a:4. [Source](#).
6. Ezekiel 36:24–28, JPS 1917; Rashi on 36:26 in Appendix B. [Source](#).
7. Jeremiah 31:30–33, Jewish numbering, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
8. Ezekiel 37:24–28, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
9. Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 14a:3–4. [Source](#).
10. Bereshit Rabbah 2:4. [Source](#).
11. Bahya ben Asher, commentary on Genesis 1:2:5. [Source](#).
12. John 1:1–18 — King James Version [Source](#).
13. Genesis 1:1–5, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
14. Psalm 33:6, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
15. Proverbs 8:22–31, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
16. Exodus 40:34–38, JPS 1917. [Source](#).
17. Ben Sira (Sirach) 24:23 — World English Bible Classic [Source](#).
18. Philo, On the Confusion of Tongues §146 — C. D. Yonge [Source](#).
19. Adele Reinhartz, annotations to John 1:1–18, in The Jewish Annotated New Testament, 2nd ed., edited by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler (Oxford University Press, 2017).
20. Menachem Mendel Schneerson, discourse for the last day of Passover 1950, §4, Torat Menachem, p. 25, official Hebrew rendering. Original reviewed Yiddish discourse: Likkutei Sichot 2:509 ff. Hebrew rendering includes unrevised additions. [Source](#).
21. Menachem Mendel Schneerson, discourse of 12 Tammuz 5711 (1951), §12, official Hebrew transcript, expressly unrevised. Chabad.org. [Source](#).
22. Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 75b:3–4. [Source](#).

23. Maimonides, Yesodei ha-Torah 1:7-9, common numbering; Mechon Mamre 1:5-10. [Source](#).
24. JPS 1917, Isaiah 11:1-3 and 57:15; scan-backed Wikisource witness. [Source](#).
25. JPS 1917, Exodus 25:8 and 40:34-38; scan-backed Wikisource witness. [Source](#).
26. JPS 1917, 1 Kings 8:27 [Source](#).
27. JPS 1917, Ezekiel 36:24-28 and 37:24-28; scan-backed Wikisource witness. [Source](#).
28. JPS 1917, Jeremiah 31:30-33 (Jewish/Hebrew numbering; 31:31-34 in many Christian editions) [Source](#).
29. Rashi on Isaiah 11:3. Both complete comments. [Source](#).
30. Rashi on Isaiah 57:15. Both complete comments. [Source](#).
31. Rashi on Ezekiel 36:26. Complete comment. [Source](#).
32. Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 29a:4. Complete baraita of Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai. [Source](#).
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Talmud. Megillah 29a, Sotah 5a and 14a, and Bava Batra 75b are freshly transcribed from the main Gemara text of the Romm/Vilna printing (1880–1886), rather than the modern William Davidson edition. Original abbreviations are retained; spacing and quotation marks are normalized, and boundary punctuation is omitted. English expands abbreviations. Minor spelling variants do not change meaning. Megillah’s Isaiah quotation is now translated “For your sake I sent [Myself] to Babylonia”; the brackets identify its midrashic interpretation. The full original pages are linked in the source notes.

Bereshit Rabbah. The complete unit is transcribed from the 1878 Vilna print, chapter 2 §§5–6, corresponding to standard 2:4. Its “kingdoms” wording replaces the earlier digital witness’s “exiles.” The full Ben Zoma narrative is retained; its final idiom is translated “Ben Zoma remained in the world only a few more days.” The historical print is identified as public domain by Wikimedia Commons.

JPS 1917. All 41 distinct biblical verses were checked against the independent Wikisource witness and visually against twelve original scan pages. The words match the earlier text. Punctuation and typographic normalization are disclosed in the collation; Jeremiah retains the Jewish numbering used in the essay, with the alternative numbering stated. The underlying 1917 translation is public domain in the United States. Wikisource contributors are credited for the digital transcription; the source pages retain their revision histories and licensing notices.

Maimonides and Onkelos. The Maimonides Hebrew is newly transcribed from the old Warsaw-Vilna text in the mechanical-reprint scan cataloged as HebrewBooks 39979, PDF pages 17–18, marked public domain by Wikimedia Commons. The impression date is not asserted. Its full common-numbered units 1:7–9 replace the Mechon Mamre witness. The aligned translation explicitly retains “body” in 1:7 and the statement in 1:9 that the human mind does not understand the truth of the matter and cannot grasp or investigate it. Onkelos follows Abraham Berliner’s 1884 edition, volume 1, page 14; consonantal words and translation are unchanged.

Other sources. The Hebrew Rashi witness is designated CC0 by Sefaria, and the Bahya witness is designated Public Domain. The World English Bible is public domain. The historical Yonge translation of Philo is credited in the bibliography. All newly prepared English translations are identified as such. The short modern Chabad and Jewish Annotated New Testament quotations remain separately credited quotations, not public-domain texts.

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