

# COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE



# COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE

An English Version of the *Tanakh* (Old Testament)  
and *B'rit Hadashah* (New Testament)

David H. Stern

“For out of Tziyon will go forth *Torah*,  
the Word of *ADONAI* from Yerushalayim.”  
—*Yesha'yahu* (Isaiah) 2:3



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ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלך העולם אשר נותן תורת-אמת  
ובשורה-ישועה לעמו ישראל ולכל העמים על-ידי בנו ישוע  
המשיח אדוננו

Praised are you, *Adonai* our God, King of the universe, who  
gives the *Torah* of truth and the Good News of salvation to his  
people Israel and to all the peoples through his son Yeshua the  
Messiah, our Lord.



# CONTENTS

Books of the <i>Tanakh</i> Listed in Christian Old Testament Order .....	x
Books of the Bible Listed in Alphabetical Order.....	x

## INTRODUCTION

I. How the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> Came to Be .....	xii
II. Translations and Translators.....	xiv
III. The Bible .....	xvii
IV. Contents of the Bible .....	xx
V. Other Features of the Bible.....	xxiv
VI. Why the Bible is God's Word .....	xxv
VII. Jewish <i>Tanakh</i> Versus Christian Old Testament.....	xxvii
VIII. Original-Language Texts Underlying the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> .....	xxix
IX. Poetry in the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> .....	xxxi
X. The Name of God in the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> .....	xxxiii
XI. The Jewishness of the New Testament.....	xxxv
XII. How the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> Expresses the <i>B'rit Hadashah's</i> Jewishness.....	xxxviii
XIII. Reasons for Certain <i>B'rit Hadashah</i> Renderings .....	xli
XIV. <i>Tanakh</i> Prophecies Fulfilled by Yeshua the Messiah.....	xliii
XV. Synagogue Usage of the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> .....	xlviii
XVI. How to Pronounce the Hebrew Names and Terms.....	l
XVII. Using the <i>Complete Jewish Bible</i> .....	liii
XVIII. Acknowledgements .....	lv

## BOOKS OF THE BIBLE BY SECTION

I. <i>Torah</i> (Teaching, Law)	
<i>B'reshet</i> (Genesis).....	1
<i>Sh'mot</i> (Exodus) .....	60
<i>Vayikra</i> (Leviticus) .....	109
<i>B'midbar</i> (Numbers).....	145
<i>D'varim</i> (Deuteronomy) .....	196
II. <i>Nevi'im</i> (Prophets)	
<i>Nevi'im Rishonim</i> (Early Prophets)	
<i>Y'hoshua</i> (Joshua).....	242
<i>Shof'tim</i> (Judges) .....	270
<i>Sh'mu'el</i> (Samuel)	
<i>Sh'mu'el Alef</i> (1 Samuel) .....	298
<i>Sh'mu'el Bet</i> (2 Samuel) .....	334
<i>M'lakhim</i> (Kings)	
<i>M'lakhim Alef</i> (1 Kings).....	366
<i>M'lakhim Bet</i> (2 Kings).....	400

## CONTENTS

---

<i>Nevi'im Acharonim (Later Prophets)</i>		
<i>Yesha'yahu (Isaiah)</i> .....	435	
<i>Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah)</i> .....	544	
<i>Yechezk'el (Ezekiel)</i> .....	641	
<i>Shneim-'Asar (The Twelve)</i>		
<i>Hoshea (Hosea)</i> .....	707	
<i>Yo'el (Joel)</i> .....	723	
<i>'Amos (Amos)</i> .....	729	
<i>'Ovadyah (Obadiah)</i> .....	742	
<i>Yonah (Jonah)</i> .....	744	
<i>Mikhah (Micah)</i> .....	746	
<i>Nachum (Nahum)</i> .....	756	
<i>Havakuk (Habakkuk)</i> .....	761	
<i>Tz'fanyah (Zephaniah)</i> .....	765	
<i>Hagai (Haggai)</i> .....	771	
<i>Z'kharyah (Zechariah)</i> .....	773	
<i>Mal'akhi (Malachi)</i> .....	785	
III. <i>K'tuvim (Writings)</i>		
<i>Tehillim (Psalms)</i> .....	791	
<i>Mishlei (Proverbs)</i> .....	941	
<i>Iyov (Job)</i> .....	993	
The Five <i>Megillot (Scrolls)</i>		
<i>Shir-HaShirim (Song of Solomon/Song of Songs)</i> .....	1047	
<i>Rut (Ruth)</i> .....	1057	
<i>Eikhah (Lamentations)</i> .....	1061	
<i>Kohelet (Ecclesiastes)</i> .....	1075	
<i>Ester (Esther)</i> .....	1089	
<i>Dani'el (Daniel)</i> .....	1098	
<i>'Ezra-Nechemyah (Ezra-Nehemiah)</i>		
<i>'Ezra (Ezra)</i> .....	1117	
<i>Nechemyah (Nehemiah)</i> .....	1131	
<i>Divrei-HaYamim (Chronicles)</i>		
<i>Divrei-HaYamim Alef (1 Chronicles)</i> .....	1151	
<i>Divrei-HaYamim Bet (2 Chronicles)</i> .....	1184	
IV. The Good News of <i>Yeshua</i> the Messiah, as Reported by		
<i>Mattityahu (Matthew)</i> .....	1223	
<i>Mark</i> .....	1263	
<i>Luke</i> .....	1287	
<i>Yochanan (John)</i> .....	1329	
V. The Acts of the Emissaries of <i>Yeshua</i> the Messiah.....		1360
VI. Letters/Epistles		
<i>Sha'ul's (Paul's) Letters to Communities</i>		
<i>Romans</i> .....	1402	
<i>1 Corinthians</i> .....	1423	



2 Corinthians.....	1441
Galatians .....	1452
Ephesians .....	1459
Philippians .....	1465
Colossians .....	1470
1 Thessalonians.....	1474
2 Thessalonians.....	1478
<i>Sha'ul's</i> (Paul's) Pastoral Letters (to Individuals)	
1 Timothy.....	1481
2 Timothy.....	1486
Titus .....	1490
Philemon.....	1492
General Letters	
Messianic Jews (Hebrews).....	1493
<i>Ya'akov</i> (James).....	1510
<i>1 Kefa</i> (1 Peter).....	1515
<i>2 Kefa</i> (2 Peter).....	1521
<i>1 Yochanan</i> (1 John) .....	1524
<i>2 Yochanan</i> (2 John) .....	1529
<i>3 Yochanan</i> (3 John) .....	1530
<i>Y'hudah</i> (Jude).....	1531
VII. The Revelation of <i>Yeshua</i> the Messiah to <i>Yochanan</i> (John).....	1533
<b>APPENDIXES</b>	
Pronouncing Explanatory Glossary.....	1556
“Reverse” Pronouncing Glossary.....	1605
Index of <i>Tanakh</i> Passages Cited in the <i>B'rit Hadashah</i> .....	1610
Scripture Readings .....	1616
Maps and Map Indexes	
Index and Key to <i>Tanakh</i> Maps (Maps 1–3) .....	1624
Index and Key to <i>B'rit Hadashah</i> Maps (Maps 4–5) .....	1625
Map 1. “The Exodus” (15th–13th centuries B.C.E.).....	1627
Map 2. “ <i>Eretz-Yisra'el</i> (The Land of Israel) in the Times of <i>Y'hoshua</i> , the Judges, <i>Sh'mu'el</i> and <i>Sha'ul</i> ” (c.1400–1000 B.C.E.) .....	1628
Map 3. “ <i>Eretz-Yisra'el</i> (The Land of Israel) in the Times of Kings <i>David</i> and <i>Shlomo</i> and the Divided Kingdoms ( <i>Y'hudah</i> and <i>Isra'el</i> )” (1000–586 B.C.E.) .....	1629
Map 4. .... “ <i>Eretz-Yisra'el</i> (The Land of Israel) in the Time of <i>Yeshua</i> ” (1st century C.E.) .....	1630
Map 5. .... “The Eastern Mediterranean and Near East in the Second Temple Period” (1st century C.E.) .....	1631
About the Translator .....	Facing Back Cover

## BOOKS OF THE *TANAKH* Listed in Christian Old Testament Order

<b>PENTATEUCH</b>	
Genesis . . . . .	1
Exodus . . . . .	60
Leviticus . . . . .	109
Numbers . . . . .	145
Deuteronomy . . . . .	196
<b>HISTORICAL BOOKS</b>	
Joshua . . . . .	242
Judges . . . . .	270
Ruth . . . . .	1057
1 Samuel . . . . .	298
2 Samuel . . . . .	334
1 Kings . . . . .	366
2 Kings . . . . .	400
1 Chronicles . . . . .	1151
2 Chronicles . . . . .	1184
Ezra . . . . .	1117
Nehemiah . . . . .	1131
Esther . . . . .	1089
<b>WRITINGS</b>	
Job . . . . .	993
Psalms . . . . .	791
Proverbs . . . . .	941
Ecclesiastes . . . . .	1075
Song of Solomon . . . . .	1047
<b>PROPHETS</b>	
Isaiah . . . . .	435
Jeremiah . . . . .	544
Lamentations . . . . .	1061
Ezekiel . . . . .	641
Daniel . . . . .	1098
Hosea . . . . .	707
Joel . . . . .	723
Amos . . . . .	729
Obadiah . . . . .	742
Jonah . . . . .	744
Micah . . . . .	746
Nahum . . . . .	756
Habakkuk . . . . .	761
Zephaniah . . . . .	765
Haggai . . . . .	771
Zechariah . . . . .	773
Malachi . . . . .	785

## BOOKS OF THE BIBLE Listed in Alphabetical Order

(Including both the Jewish and the Christian names for the books)

Acts of the Emissaries . . . . .	1360	Deuteronomy/ <i>D'varim</i> . . . . .	196
'Amos/Amos . . . . .	729	<i>Divrei-HaYamim Alef</i> /1 Chronicles . . . . .	1151
<i>B'midbar</i> /Numbers . . . . .	145	<i>Divrei-HaYamim Bet</i> /2 Chronicles . . . . .	1184
<i>B'rsheet</i> /Genesis . . . . .	1	<i>D'varim</i> /Deuteronomy . . . . .	196
1 Chronicles/ <i>Divrei-HaYamim Alef</i> . . . . .	1151	Ecclesiastes/ <i>Kohelet</i> . . . . .	1075
2 Chronicles/ <i>Divrei-HaYamim Bet</i> . . . . .	1184	<i>Eikhah</i> /Lamentations . . . . .	1061
Colossians . . . . .	1470	Ephesians . . . . .	1459
1 Corinthians . . . . .	1423	<i>Ester</i> /Esther . . . . .	1089
2 Corinthians . . . . .	1441	Exodus/ <i>Sh'mot</i> . . . . .	60
<i>Dani'el</i> /Daniel . . . . .	1098	Ezekiel/ <i>Yechezk'el</i> . . . . .	641

'Ezra/Ezra . . . . .	1117	1 Peter/1 Kefa . . . . .	1515
'Ezra-Nechemyah/Ezra-Nehemiah	1117	2 Peter/2 Kefa . . . . .	1521
Galatians . . . . .	1452	Philemon . . . . .	1492
Genesis/B' resheet . . . . .	1	Philippians . . . . .	1465
Habakkuk/Havakuk . . . . .	761	Proverbs/Mishlei . . . . .	941
Hagai/Haggai . . . . .	771	Psalms/Tehillim . . . . .	791
Havakuk/Habakkuk . . . . .	761	Revelation . . . . .	1533
Hebrews/Messianic Jews . . . . .	1493	Romans . . . . .	1402
Hoshea/Hosea . . . . .	707	Rut/Ruth . . . . .	1057
Isaiah/Yesha'yahu . . . . .	435	1 Samuel/Sh'mu'el Alef . . . . .	298
Iyov/Job . . . . .	993	2 Samuel/Sh'mu'el Bet . . . . .	334
James/Ya'akov . . . . .	1510	Shir-HaShirim/Song of Solomon .	1047
Jeremiah/Yirmeyahu . . . . .	544	Sh'mot/Exodus . . . . .	60
Job/Iyov . . . . .	993	Sh'mu'el Alef/1 Samuel . . . . .	298
Joel/Yo'el . . . . .	723	Sh'mu'el Bet/2 Samuel . . . . .	334
John/Yochanan . . . . .	1329	Shneim-'Asar/The Twelve . . . . .	707
1 John/1 Yochanan . . . . .	1524	Shof'tim/Judges . . . . .	270
2 John/2 Yochanan . . . . .	1529	Song of Solomon/Shir-HaShirim .	1047
3 John/3 Yochanan . . . . .	1530	Song of Songs/Shir-HaShirim . . .	1047
Jonah/Yonah . . . . .	744	Tehillim/Psalms . . . . .	791
Joshua/Y'hoshua . . . . .	242	1 Thessalonians . . . . .	1474
Jude/Y'hudah . . . . .	1531	2 Thessalonians . . . . .	1478
Judges/Shof'tim . . . . .	270	1 Timothy . . . . .	1481
1 Kefa/1 Peter . . . . .	1515	2 Timothy . . . . .	1486
2 Kefa/2 Peter . . . . .	1521	Titus . . . . .	1490
1 Kings/M'lakhim Alef . . . . .	366	The Twelve/Shneim-'Asar . . . . .	707
2 Kings/M'lakhim Bet . . . . .	400	Tz'fanyah/Zephaniah . . . . .	765
Kohelet/Ecclesiastes . . . . .	1075	Vayikra/Leviticus . . . . .	109
Lamentations/Eikhah . . . . .	1061	Ya'akov/James . . . . .	1510
Leviticus/Vayikra . . . . .	109	Yechezk'el/Ezekiel . . . . .	641
Luke . . . . .	1287	Yesha'yahu/Isaiah . . . . .	435
Mal'akhi/Malachi . . . . .	785	Y'hoshua/Joshua . . . . .	242
Mark . . . . .	1263	Y'hudah/Jude . . . . .	1531
Mattityahu/Matthew . . . . .	1223	Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah . . . . .	544
Messianic Jews/Hebrews . . . . .	1493	Yochanan/John . . . . .	1329
Mikhah/Micah . . . . .	746	1 Yochanan/1 John . . . . .	1524
Mishlei/Proverbs . . . . .	941	2 Yochanan/2 John . . . . .	1529
M'lakhim Alef/1 Kings . . . . .	366	3 Yochanan/3 John . . . . .	1530
M'lakhim Bet/2 Kings . . . . .	400	Yo'el/Joel . . . . .	723
Nachum/Nahum . . . . .	756	Yonah/Jonah . . . . .	744
Nechemyah/Nehemiah . . . . .	1131	Zechariah/Z'kharyah . . . . .	773
Numbers/B'midbar . . . . .	145	Zephaniah/Tz'fanyah . . . . .	765
'Ovadyah/Obadiah . . . . .	742	Z'kharyah/Zechariah . . . . .	773

# INTRODUCTION

Why is this Bible different from all other Bibles? Because it is the only English version of the Bible fully Jewish in style and presentation that includes both the *Tanakh* (“Old Testament”) and the *B’rit Hadashah* (New Covenant, “New Testament”). Even its title, the *Complete Jewish Bible*, challenges both Jews and Christians to see that the whole Bible is Jewish, the *B’rit Hadashah* as well as the *Tanakh*. Jews are challenged by the implication that without it the *Tanakh* is an *incomplete* Bible. Christians are challenged with the fact that they are joined to the Jewish people through faith in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua (Jesus) — so that because Christianity can be rightly understood only from a Jewish perspective, anti-Semitism is condemned absolutely and forever. In short, the *Complete Jewish Bible* restores the Jewish unity of the Bible. Also for the first time the information needed for the synagogue readings from the *Torah* and the Prophets is completely integrated with similar use of the *B’rit Hadashah*.

## I. HOW THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE CAME TO BE

A bit of personal history will give the reader some insight as to why the *Complete Jewish Bible* exists. Bible introductions are usually more formal, eschewing the use of the first-person singular pronoun, because the seriousness of the Bible seems to call for it — a formal introduction reinforces the authority of the Bible itself. After all, the Bible is God’s Word to humanity, the only completely reliable verbal communication God has given us. It is worthy of acceptance, belief, trust; it is his handbook for faith and practice.<sup>1</sup> Since this is so, the writer of an introduction to the Bible necessarily shoulders a heavy responsibility, one in which informality and focus on oneself seem out of place.

Nevertheless, there is another side: precisely because the Bible deals with such serious topics as sin, judgment, God’s will, repentance and forgiveness, as well as the role in life and history of Yeshua the Messiah (whom Christians call Jesus Christ), readers of translations tend to forget that there is a very specific human input which does not date from Bible times and which both fosters and impedes their understanding of Scripture, namely, the translator. My choice of style for this Introduction, especially in Sections I and II, stems from my desire to have the translator’s role in this Bible version and others better understood. Farther on, I will deal with the content of the Bible itself (Sections III–VIII), the specific features of the *Complete Jewish Bible* (Sections IX–XIV) and how to make the best use of this version (Sections XV–XVII). But here, I am presenting the translator’s story.

I am Jewish, was raised in the Jewish religion by Jewish parents and did not come to faith in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua, until I was thirty-seven years old. As a Messianic Jew (a Jew who honors Yeshua as the Messiah), I saw that the greatest schism in the world is the separation between the Church and the Jewish people; and I experienced it as God’s will for my life that I do what I could to resolve this — it

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<sup>1</sup> For a brief explanation and defense of these assertions, see Section VI below.

would be my contribution to *tikkun-ha'olam* (repairing the world). Although I had a doctorate in economics, I returned to school to learn more about both Christianity and Judaism—Fuller Theological Seminary for the Christian elements and the University of Judaism for the Jewish.

Thus equipped, I set out in 1977 to write a Messianic Jewish commentary on the New Testament; I wanted to produce a single book that would deal with all the “Jewish issues” I could think of in connection with the New Testament—questions Jews have about Yeshua, the New Testament, and Christianity; questions Christians have about Judaism and the Jewish roots of their own faith; and questions we Messianic Jews have about our own identity and role in the light of two thousand years of separation and conflict between the Church and the Jews. But I quickly discovered that much of what I was writing consisted of arguments with the translator of the English version I was using; they took the form, “Our English version says such-and-such, but what it *really* means is so-and-so.” The idea came to me to attempt my own translation of the New Testament from the ancient Greek original; then, obviously, I would have a version I agreed with, so I could focus exclusively on the subject matter. I did a sample and was pleased with it. Thus was born the *Jewish New Testament (JNT)*, which was published in 1989.

I spent the next three years finishing up the *Jewish New Testament Commentary*. Meanwhile, the *JNT* had been well received by Messianic Jews and by Christians open to experiencing the Jewishness of their faith. Bible translation may not be known as a glamorous profession, but I have fans. My fans, who said that they appreciated my re-introduction of Jewishness into the New Testament and that they enjoyed my “informal yet respectful” style of writing, kept asking me, “When are you going to do the Old Testament?” They wanted to have a single book containing the entire Bible that they could bring to their congregational meetings, instead of having to carry the *Jewish New Testament* plus a second book containing the *Tanakh*.

I put them off for three more years but finally bowed to the inevitable and got to work. My delay was due to lack of incentive. In translating the *Jewish New Testament* I had had a strong and directed desire to show everyone, Jews and Christians alike, that the New Testament is a thoroughly Jewish book. But with the Old Testament I had no such motivation—everyone knows it’s Jewish, so what’s to prove? Moreover, at the age of sixty I didn’t care to spend years and years and more years doing a translation from the original Hebrew. Even though I had been living in Israel and speaking Hebrew since 1979, I knew from observing my children that my level of competence in the language was approximately that of a native Israeli fifth-grader. I certainly had no special expertise in biblical Hebrew that would justify my trying to translate the *Tanakh*.

So I set myself a simpler task. Initially my thought was to acquire the rights to some modern translation of the *Tanakh* which would be stylistically compatible with my own English style in the *JNT*. I couldn’t imagine that the owners of any copyrighted Jewish-sponsored translation would permit me to combine it with the New Testament in a single volume having my projected title, so I looked for suitable candidates among the Christian versions. My first choice was rejected by the copyright holders, but my second choice was accepted. However, just as I was ready to move ahead, I realized that if this was to be the *Complete Jewish Bible*, I couldn’t use any Christian Old Testament, because Christians modify the Masoretic text (the Hebrew

text of the *Tanakh* accepted by Judaism) with information gleaned from the Septuagint and other early versions.<sup>2</sup> Elation was replaced by gloom. Suddenly it occurred to me that the old Jewish Publication Society (JPS) version of the *Tanakh*, perhaps the best-known and most used Jewish translation in the English-speaking world, had just gone into the public domain — it had been published in 1917, and copyrights run 75 years. But although it had been published in 1917, for various sociological reasons it sounded as if it had been written in 1617! It was full of King James Bible English and was altogether incompatible with the modern English I had used in the *JNT*.

I tried having this old JPS edition scanned into a computer, with the object of modernizing its English by means of a few global-search-and-replace commands. I wanted to be able to press two buttons and have every “thou” turn into a “you” and “doeth” into “do”; “Abraham” into “Avraham” and “Isaac” into “Yitz’chak.” It proved to be not that simple. Not only the words but the sentence structures were archaic. The more I fiddled with the JPS text the less satisfied I was. It was like restoring an old car with lots of dents. You fix the first three, and the fourth, fifth and sixth stand out. Repair them, and numbers 7, 8, 9 and 10 beg for attention. Eventually you repair all the big dents, and you have a car with thousands of little dents, so it still doesn’t look right.

So I decided to paraphrase the entire JPS *Tanakh* into modern English, typing in the whole thing by hand, as I decided how to express each word, each phrase, each verse. Though a huge project, it would be much less demanding than a translation. And that is how much of this *Tanakh* came into existence.

However, there were many places where I questioned the JPS version’s renderings. In such cases I translated the Hebrew of the Masoretic text myself. I also made use of other English versions to assist me in expressing certain verses in modern English. All Bible translators do this — the people who put together the *King James Version* did it too, acknowledging their debt to those who had gone before them in their famous subtitle, “and with the former translations diligently compared and revised.” So the *Tanakh* you have in this book is something between a translation and a paraphrase; since it is partly one and partly the other, I refuse to define it as either and instead call it simply a “version.” On the other hand, the books of the New Covenant are my translation from the original Greek.

## II. TRANSLATIONS AND TRANSLATORS

**Is There Such a Thing as a “Best” Translation of the Bible?** While on the subject of the translation-and/or-paraphrasing process, I want to make some general remarks about translations. First, it is a common belief that there is such a thing as a “best” translation of a text from one language to another. I question that. Languages have different words, different syntaxes, different sentence structures, different semantics, different cultures out of which they arise and evolve, and many other differences; so that translation cannot be a simple, automated process. Moreover, readers differ. Some prefer a simple style with a modest vocabulary, while others respond to a more elegant or complex style with a larger vocabulary. Even the concept of accuracy is reader-dependent — what scholars might consider an accurate translation might fail

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<sup>2</sup> See Section VIII.

to accurately communicate to less informed readers. If translators fail to consider who their readers are, aren't the translators responsible for the lack of communication? Clearly some translations are, by all reasonable standards, worse, while others are better. But because readers differ, no one version can be best for all.

**Translations and Their Purposes.** Therefore, one has to ask, "What is the purpose of a given translation, and does it accomplish its purpose well?" The *King James Version* is unmatched in the beauty of its language; moreover, English would not be what it is without it. But today not everyone can get the sense of the text from its archaic expressions, and, with advances in historical, archeological and linguistic studies, some scholars believe that a number of its renderings are wrong. The newer JPS translation of the *Tanakh*, from 1985, is particularly useful for noting phrases where the meaning of the original Hebrew is unclear; whereas in my version I have not provided that information. The *Today's English Version* ("Good News Bible") produced by the United Bible Societies makes use of a limited vocabulary so that those for whom English is a second language can understand it. The *New English Bible* has echoes of the great writers — Shakespeare, Milton — which makes it ideal for public reading in Anglican churches. Everett Fox's recent translation of the *Torah* is unique in giving a feel for Hebrew style and thought-forms, as well as the culture of Bible times. *The Living Bible*, originally prepared by Ken Taylor for his teenage children, conveys, at least to young Americans, an unmatched energy and presence. No one version could possibly serve all these purposes at once. The beauty of God's Word is that it can be translated in various ways that serve these purposes and others, without obscuring the Bible's own purpose — which is to show people the truth about God, themselves, relationships and the meaning of life, and to call forth the appropriate and necessary responses.

**Purposes of This Version of the Bible.** Therefore I owe it to my readers to state the purposes of the *Complete Jewish Bible (CJB)*.

- 1) My first purpose is, as I said, to restore the unified Jewishness of the Bible, and, particularly, to show that the books of the New Covenant are Jewish through and through.
- 2) The second aim of the *Complete Jewish Bible* is to express the Word of God — *Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadashah* together — in enjoyable modern English. I want the Bible to be accessible and easy to read, flowing easily from the page into the mind and heart, unimpeded as much as possible by the differences between the environment of the Bible and that of the present.
- 3) My third purpose is to make the *CJB* fully usable in a Messianic synagogue, where the *B'rit Hadashah* would be read in the service along with the *Torah* and the Prophets. (The *CJB* can be used to follow the readings in a non-Messianic synagogue as well.)
- 4) And finally, I am supplying at last what my fans have been asking me for — a single volume containing my version of the entire Bible.

With the above as background, there are three philosophical points raised in translation work that need to be addressed: (1) formal versus dynamic equivalence (“literal translations” versus “paraphrases”), (2) the degree to which a translator’s interpretation of a text’s meaning should be reflected in his translation, and (3) the pluses and minuses of a version produced by a single individual versus one produced by a translation team.

**“Literal Translations” Versus “Paraphrases.”** There is a scale on which translations can be measured. At one end of the scale are “literal” translations, which reproduce in the receptor language (English) the grammatical forms of the source language (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek); translators call these “formally equivalent translations.” The *King James Version*, the *Revised Standard Version*, the *New American Standard Version* and the 1917 Jewish Publication Society version of the Hebrew Bible are examples; an interlinear version (or “pony”), which renders the original-language text word by word, is the ultimate literal translation. At the other end of the scale are “dynamically equivalent translations,” which aim at reproducing in the receptor language not the grammatical forms of the source language but the meanings that the original readers would have understood. Popularly these are sometimes called “paraphrases,” although that term ought to be reserved for documents in which the source and receptor languages are the same (for example, a paraphrase of the Gettysburg Address might begin, “Eighty-seven years ago the founders of our nation . . .”). The *Today’s English Version* (“Good News Bible”) and the *New Jerusalem Bible* (Roman Catholic) are examples of dynamically equivalent translations. The *New English Bible*, the *New International Version*, and the modern JPS edition fall somewhere between.

On this scale the *Complete Jewish Bible* tends toward the dynamically equivalent end of the scale. And at certain points especially related to Jewish issues, the New Covenant portion becomes militantly so. For example, the Greek phrase *upo nomon* (literally, “under law”) is usually rendered “under the law.” But because this phrase has become a buzzword in anti-*Torah* Christian theology, the *Jewish New Testament* and now the *Complete Jewish Bible* spell out the meaning of these two Greek words in thirteen English words: “in subjection to the system which results from perverting the *Torah* into legalism.”<sup>3</sup>

**The Translator and His Interpretations.** This example raises the question of whether the translator should “inject his opinions” into his translation. I cautiously answer in the affirmative, on the ground that it inevitably happens anyhow; so that the translator who supposes he “maintains neutrality,” merely channeling ideas from the source language to the receptor language without influencing the result, deludes both himself and his readers. For necessarily every decision as to how to render a word or phrase from another language into English expresses the translator’s opinion. A translator ideologically committed to not intruding his opinions does so in spite of himself, but without taking responsibility for it.

Therefore, I believe a translator should decide what a word or phrase means—in his opinion—and then convey that meaning as clearly as possible. For example, in the case of *upo nomon*,<sup>4</sup> precisely because wrong meanings have been conveyed in the

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<sup>3</sup> For more on this topic, see Section XIII below.

<sup>4</sup> Discussed above and in Section XIII.



past, I consider it my responsibility to convey what I believe to be the one and only correct meaning in as unmistakable a way as possible. Even when an expression in the original language seems vague, capable of more than one interpretation, I don't think a translator should transfer the ambiguity into English. Rather, he should decide on *one* of the possible interpretations and render that one well. In editions that supply alternative readings, ambiguities can be addressed in a marginal note. This edition does a little of that, but very little; that is not one of its major purposes. A commentary is the right place to deal with such matters fully, and that is one of my purposes in the *Jewish New Testament Commentary*.

On the other side of the picture, this approach lends itself to abuse. The fact that the translator's opinions will necessarily be reflected in his translation does not mean that he should exploit his role, attempting with a partisan rendering to sway his readers toward a partisan position.

Since this is my philosophy and my working rule, I caution readers who want to check whether a word or phrase means what the *CJB* says it means to look at other versions, to use concordances and other Bible helps, and to go back to the Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek originals. To expect that the *CJB* will render perfectly, and with all the necessary nuances for every reader, the sense of every word and phrase in the Bible to ask for more than it or any translation can do.

**Lone Translator Versus Translation Team.** A number of people have asked whether it would not have been better to have had a translation team produce the *Jewish New Testament*, and of course the same question can be raised about the *CJB's Tanakh*. My answer is framed in terms of available resources, both human and financial. Certainly the best known Bible translations have been a team product, including the *King James Version*, the *Revised Standard Version*, the *New International Version*, both JPS versions, and others. Traditionally, even the first translation of the *Tanakh* into Greek, the Septuagint, was produced by a team of seventy (hence the name, which means "seventy") in the third century B.C.E.<sup>5</sup> A team allows for peer review, discussion of problematical texts, and style control; while a single translator may come up with a more unified product (provided he can remember how he translated similar passages). Frankly, I can admit that a team might have done a better job; but I have done the best I can. I hope readers will not be disappointed.<sup>6</sup>

### III. THE BIBLE

**The Central Message of the Bible.** In telling about God, his people Israel, and his Messiah Yeshua, the Bible's constant theme is that human beings need to be saved, and that God provides salvation. The purpose of life and the meaning of history is that God will deliver humanity from the misery of sin and restore the conditions that enable individuals and peoples to relate rightly with him. Morality and happiness are inseparably linked with salvation.

<sup>5</sup> The abbreviations "B.C.E." and "C.E.," which mean "Before the Common Era" and "Common Era" respectively, are used by the Jewish community in place of "B.C." and "A.D.," which signify "Before Christ" and "*Anno Domini*" (Latin for "in the year of our Lord").

<sup>6</sup> More about the original-language texts used for the *CJB* will be found in Section VIII.

**The *Tanakh*.** For according to the *Tanakh*,<sup>7</sup> God created human beings in his image to be in intimate, loving and obedient fellowship with him.<sup>8</sup> But humanity rebelled — people chose their own way instead of God’s<sup>9</sup> — and still do.<sup>10</sup> The name for such rebellion is sin, and the penalty for sin is death<sup>11</sup> — not only cessation of physical life but everlasting separation from God.<sup>12</sup> However, God, who is merciful as well as just, wills to save human beings from the eternal death they have earned and deserve. To this end God chose one person, Avraham, and through him brought forth a people, the Jews, commissioning them to “be a blessing” and “a light to the nations.”<sup>13</sup> Through Moshe he gave them a *Torah* (literally, “teaching” or “instruction,” though usually translated “law”), making known his standards for righteousness. Through judges, kings and prophets he encouraged them, disciplined them and promised that final salvation would come to them and the other peoples through an “anointed one” (Hebrew *mashiach*, which has come over into English as “messiah”; the Greek word for “*mashiach*” is “*christos*,” which evolved into the English word “Christ”).

**The *B’rit Hadashah* and *Yeshua*.** Continuing this chronicle, the books of the New Covenant proclaim that the Messiah of Israel prophesied in the *Tanakh* is *Yeshua*, a real, historical person who, like others, was born, lived and died. However, unlike others, he had no human father but was given birth by a virgin named *Miryam* (*Mary*). Also unlike others, he did not die simply because his life ended or because of his own sin (he had committed none), but in order to redeem us from our sins. Finally, again unlike others, he was resurrected from the dead, is alive now “at the right hand of God”<sup>14</sup> and will come a second time to rule as King of Israel and bring peace to the world. In explaining why he alone was qualified to be the final sacrifice for sins the *B’rit Hadashah* calls him both Son of Man and Son of God. The first term, taken from the *Tanakh*,<sup>15</sup> means that he is fully and ideally human, sinless, “a lamb without blemish.”<sup>16</sup> Since he did not owe his life for his own sins, he could be “God’s lamb. . . taking away the sin of the world.”<sup>17</sup> The second term, hinted at in the *Tanakh*,<sup>18</sup> means not only that God’s Holy Spirit (the *Ruach HaKodesh*), supernaturally caused *Miryam* to become pregnant,<sup>19</sup> but also that “in him, bodily, lives the fullness of all that God is”;<sup>20</sup> so that he is uniquely able to express God’s love to humanity.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The word *Tanakh* is an acronym made from the first letters of the three main divisions of the Hebrew Bible: *Torah* (the “Law,” Pentateuch), *Nevi’im* (Prophets) and *K’tuvim* (Writings).

<sup>8</sup> Genesis 1:26–2:25

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 3:1–19

<sup>10</sup> 1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23

<sup>11</sup> Genesis 2:17, 5:5; Romans 6:23

<sup>12</sup> Genesis 3:22–24; Isaiah 59:1–2

<sup>13</sup> Genesis 12:1–3; Isaiah 49:6

<sup>14</sup> Psalm 110:1; Acts 7:56; and throughout Messianic Jews (Hebrews)

<sup>15</sup> Daniel 7:13

<sup>16</sup> Exodus 12:5; Leviticus 1–6; 1 Peter 1:19

<sup>17</sup> John 1:29, 36

<sup>18</sup> Isaiah 9:5–6(6–7); Zechariah 12:10; Psalm 2:7; Proverbs 30:4

<sup>19</sup> Matthew 1:18–23

<sup>20</sup> Colossians 2:9

<sup>21</sup> John 3:16

**The Messianic Community.** The *B'rit Hadashah* also describes formative events among the early Jewish and Gentile followers of Yeshua and explains how this new Messianic Community or “Church” is related to the Jewish people. Unlike much Christian theology, the *B'rit Hadashah* does not say that the Messianic Community replaces the Jews as God’s people. Nor does it say that the Messianic Community stands alongside the Jews as a second eternal people of God with a separate destiny and separate promises. Rather, the relationship is more complex: Gentiles are grafted as “wild olive branches” into a Jewish “cultivated olive tree,” some of whose branches “fell off” but will one day be “grafted back into their own olive tree,” so that in the end, “all Israel will be saved.”<sup>22</sup> Thus the Jews are not, as many Christians think, and as many Jews fear, annihilated as a people by being “absorbed into the Church.” On the contrary, as Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) states — in the same passage as where he announces that God will make a New Covenant with the house of Isra’el and the house of Y’hudah — the Jews remain God’s people forever, for as long as the sun, moon and stars give light to the earth.<sup>23</sup> But the Jews will become a people who honor the Messiah for whom they have hoped and waited so long: Yeshua. It is on this basis that unity will be restored between the Messianic Community and the Jewish people and the great schism finally healed.

**Breadth of Vision.** The Bible’s concept of salvation is both individual and corporate, so that the *Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadashah* speak to the full range of human activity — family life, class struggle, social concerns, commerce, agriculture, the environment, national identity, government, justice, repentance, forgiveness, interpersonal relationships, personal identity, gender issues, worship, prayer, physical health, emotional well-being, the inner life of the spirit, death, the after-life and final judgment. In all of these areas the Bible informs us that right response to God’s initiatives will bring salvation to every part of our lives — individually, socially, communally, nationally and universally.

**Covenants and Testaments, Old and New.** Christians call the *Tanakh* the Old Testament and the *B'rit Hadashah* the New Testament. But the English word “testament” reflects a tension between the Hebrew language of the *Tanakh* and the Greek of the *B'rit Hadashah*. The Hebrew word *b'rit* means “covenant, contract.” The Greek word for “covenant” or “*b'rit*” is “*diathêkê*.” But “*diathêkê*” can also mean “testament” in the sense of “will.”<sup>24</sup> The Hebrew words “*b'rit hadashah*” can be translated only as “new covenant,” but the equivalent Greek words can also be translated “new testament” — and usually are. So although Jeremiah foretold a new foundational “contract” between God and the Jewish people, not a “will” — a covenant, not a testament — the term “New Testament” has become standard terminology which obscures the meaning of the original Hebrew, “new covenant.” For this reason, in this Introduction, I generally write about the *Tanakh* instead of the Old Testament and the *B'rit Hadashah* or “books of the New Covenant” instead of the New Testament.

<sup>22</sup> Romans 11:16–26

<sup>23</sup> Jeremiah 31:30–36(31–37)

<sup>24</sup> Hebrews 9:16–17 (The Greek text plays on the double meaning.)

Moreover, a “new” covenant implies an “old” one, in this case the Mosaic Covenant made by God with the Jewish people at Mount Sinai.<sup>25</sup> The *B’rit Hadashah* makes this explicit at Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 8:6–13, where, in context, “old” does not imply “bad” but merely “earlier.” Since the books constituting the *Tanakh*, in which the Mosaic Covenant is pivotal, date from between 1500 and 300 B.C.E., Christians call it the Old Testament, distinguishing it from the first-century C.E. writings which constitute the New Testament.

**Two “Testaments,” One Bible.** Nevertheless, the two parts of the Bible, the *Tanakh* and the *B’rit Hadashah*, form one Bible. These two parts deal with parallel material in complementary ways. History, having commenced with the creation of heaven and earth and the sinless paradise of ‘Eden in the first two chapters of the *Tanakh*, ends with the sinless paradise of “a new heaven and a new earth”<sup>26</sup> in the last two chapters of the *B’rit Hadashah*. The *B’rit Hadashah*, continuing the salvation history set forth in the *Tanakh* on the basis of covenants made with Noach (Noah), Avraham (Abraham), Moshe (Moses) and David, presents itself as encompassing the “new covenant” which God promised in the *Tanakh* to make “with the house of Isra’el and the house of Y’udah (Judah)”<sup>27</sup> and presents Yeshua as consummating the systems of kings, prophets, *cohanim* (priests) and sacrifices described therein, as well as being himself the sum and substance of the *Torah*. Thus the New Testament apart from the Old is heretical, and the Old Testament apart from the New is incomplete — two testaments, one Bible.

**The Complete Jewish Bible Presents the Bible’s Unity.** The *Complete Jewish Bible* graphically presents this unity by eliminating all separation between the *Tanakh* and the *B’rit Hadashah*. Most Christian translations insert a special title page to divide the Old Testament from the New and even number the pages separately, so that the book of *Mattityahu* (Matthew) starts on the New Testament’s own Page 1. The *Complete Jewish Bible* divides the entire Bible into seven sections: the *Torah*, the Prophets, the Writings, the Gospels, the Acts of the Emissaries, the Letters, and the Book of Revelation. Pagination is continuous. There is no need to collect the first three-quarters of the Bible into the “Old Testament” and the last quarter into the “New.” Rather, the Bible is presented as a seamless whole, a unified Word of God, a complete Jewish Bible for all humanity.

## IV. CONTENTS OF THE BIBLE

Of the seven sections of the Bible, the *Tanakh* consists of the first three, and the *B’rit Hadashah* the remaining four.

**The Torah.** The first five books of the Bible constitute the Pentateuch, the Five Books of Moshe (Moses), traditionally attributed to Moshe himself; some scholars believe that later writers modified what Moses wrote or even wrote the books themselves. *B’resheet* (Genesis) contains the creation narratives, the story of the Flood and the

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<sup>25</sup> Exodus 19–24

<sup>26</sup> Isaiah 65:17; Revelation 21:1

<sup>27</sup> Jeremiah 31:30–33(31–34)

prehistoric dispersion of the nations. With Genesis 12 commences the story of the Jewish People, first with the Patriarchs Avraham (Abraham), Yitz'chak (Isaac) and Ya'akov (Jacob), and finally with the story of Yosef (Joseph) in Egypt. *Sh'mot* (Exodus) tells of Moshe rescuing the Jewish people from slavery, of the ten plagues, of the exodus from Egypt through the Yam Suf (Red Sea) into the Sinai Desert, and of God, appearing on Mount Sinai, giving the Ten Words and other regulations. There follow God's instructions to Moses as to how the tabernacle was to be constructed. This is interrupted by the apostasy of the people through making the golden calf. Afterwards, the tabernacle is constructed and dedicated, and the system of *cohanim* (priests) is set up. *Vayikra* (Leviticus) gives instructions concerning the sacrificial system and other aspects of life. *B'midbar* (Numbers) describes the people's journeys through the desert for forty years, together with their rebellious ways, as God molds a people for himself. In *D'varim* (Deuteronomy), Moshe conveys additional laws in the context of reviewing the previous forty years of history. He appoints Y'hoshua (Joshua) his successor and concludes with a cautionary poem and blessings for the twelve tribes. The *Torah* ends with the death of Moshe at some point in the 15<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E. (scholars disagree over the dating).

**The Prophets.** The Prophets are generally divided into the Early Prophets (*Nevi'im Rishonim*) and the Later Prophets (*Nevi'im Acharonim*). The first group consists of the four books of *Y'hoshua* (Joshua), *Shof'tim* (Judges), *Sh'mu'el Alef* and *Bet* (1–2 Samuel) and *M'lakhim Alef* and *Bet* (1–2 Kings). The book of *Y'hoshua* tells of the people of Israel under Y'hoshua as they enter the Land of Israel, conquer it and divide it among the twelve tribes. *Shof'tim* tells of the next several centuries under various “judges,” such as Gid'on (Gideon) and Shimshon (Samson). The last of these judges, Sh'mu'el (Samuel), has his name attached to 1–2 Samuel, which describes the rulership of the first two kings, Sha'ul (Saul) and David. Then 1–2 Kings recount the remaining history of the kingship, starting shortly after 1000 B.C.E. with Shlomo (Solomon); continuing with the dividing up of the territory he ruled into the Northern Kingdom, Isra'el, and the Southern Kingdom, Y'hudah (Judah); proceeding with the stories of the prophets Elijah (Elijah) and Elisha and a series of kings to the destruction by Ashur (Assyria) of the Northern Kingdom in 732 B.C.E. and on to the Babylonian conquest of Y'hudah in 586 B.C.E.

The Later Prophets also consists of four books — a book by each of the three “major prophets,” *Yesha'yahu* (Isaiah), *Yirmeyahu* (Jeremiah) and *Yechezk'el* (Ezekiel), and a book containing the writings of the *Shneim-'Asar* (the Twelve), known also as the “minor prophets.” These books contain warnings to the people of Isra'el and ethical advice. Often through these prophets God pleads with Israel to remain faithful to him, to turn away from false gods and wrong aims. Through them God often promises rewards for obedience and punishments for disobedience. How God's love is combined with his holiness is constantly displayed. While sometimes the Prophets make predictions, they are less foretellers than forth-tellers, boldly announcing God's word to people not always willing to hear it.

**The Writings.** The Writings include a variety of different forms. *Tehillim* (Psalms) consists of 150 poems or songs expressing the deepest spiritual yearnings and truths. *Mishlei* (Proverbs) falls in the category of “wisdom literature,” in which wisdom

is encapsulated in pithy sayings, as does *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes). The book of *Iyov* (Job) addresses the question of why bad things happen to good people; its poetry is unsurpassed in any language. Its Hebrew is the most difficult in the *Tanakh*, because it contains a great many words that appear nowhere else. The five *Megillot* (Scrolls) are short books; each “whole *megillah*” is read on a particular holiday in the Jewish year—*Shir-HaShirim* (Song of Songs, called the Song of Solomon in Christian Bibles) at Passover; *Rut* (Ruth) at *Shavu'ot*, because it's a harvest festival; *Eikhah* (Lamentations) on the Ninth of Av, which is a day of fasting in memory of the destruction of both temples; *Kohelet* (Ecclesiastes) at *Sh'mini 'Atzeret*, the festival anticipating winter, which immediately follows *Sukkot*; and *Ester* (Esther) at *Purim*, since the book tells the story of that holiday. *Dani'el* and *'Ezra-Nechemyah* (Ezra-Nehemiah) evoke life in and after the Babylonian Exile, while *Divrei HaYamim Alef* and *Bet* (1–2 Chronicles) review from a priestly viewpoint the history detailed in *Sh'mu'el* (Samuel) and *M'lakhim* (Kings). The beginning of *'Ezra* and the end of 2 Chronicles show that *'Ezra* is the sequel to Chronicles.

**The Gospels.** The twenty-seven books of the *B'rit Hadashah* were written in the first century of the Common Era by at least eight authors.<sup>28</sup> Of these, the first four present four distinct views of Yeshua's life and purpose in “salvation history” (God's involvement in human history for the purpose of saving mankind). The first and fourth Gospels are understood to have been written by two of Yeshua's twelve *talmidim* (disciples), Mattityahu (Matthew) and Yochanan (John). The second is attributed to Mark, who accompanied another of Yeshua's *talmidim*, Kefa (Peter). The author of the third was Luke, an associate of Sha'ul (Saul/Paul).

The old English word “gospel” means “good news.” Therefore, in a significant sense there are not four gospels but one, namely, the Good News of who Yeshua is and what he has done. But each of the four Gospels presents this Good News in its own way, just as four honest witnesses to an event will each have his own version of what happened. Broadly speaking, one may say that Mattityahu has a Jewish readership in mind, while it seems that Luke is writing for Gentiles.<sup>29</sup> Mark's version is fast-paced and filled with human-interest details. Yochanan's never loses sight of Yeshua's heavenly origin, portraying him clearly as not only Son of Man but Son of God.

The first three are known as the Synoptic Gospels (the word “synoptic” means “same viewpoint”), since many of the same incidents are reported in two or three of them, often in similar or even identical language. Scholars have attempted to explain the differences and similarities in the Synoptics, often by postulating that one writer copied from another, or, more sophisticatedly, that two or all three of them had direct or indirect access to some of the same oral or written sources.

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<sup>28</sup> The following material concerning the historicity of the events related in the *B'rit Hadashah* and the authorship and dating of its documents is based on mainstream conservative New Testament scholarship. See the discussion of tradition and scholarship below in Section V.

<sup>29</sup> His emphasis on the universality of salvation and his addressing his book to “Theophilus” (Greek for “lover of God”) suggest that he is writing for the broadest possible audience.

**The Acts of the Emissaries.** Luke is also the author of “The Acts of the Emissaries,” which could as well be called “Luke, Part II” (see the opening verses of both Luke and Acts). This book, in which Yeshua’s emissaries (“apostles”) Kefa and Sha’ul are the chief protagonists, describes the history of the early Messianic Community (that is, the Church) from about 30 C.E. to 65 C.E. The setting is first Yerushalayim, where believing in Yeshua was entirely an internal Jewish matter, and then, as the Gospel spread, “Y’hudah, Shomron, indeed . . . the ends of the earth,”<sup>30</sup> that is, Rome, the pagan antithesis of Yerushalayim. A major purpose of the book of Acts is to prove that Gentiles can become Messianic without converting to Judaism. It is ironic that today popular opinion requires a reverse application of the book of Acts to show that Jews can become Messianic without “converting” to what has become identified as an alien religion, Christianity.

**The Letters.** The rest of the *B’rit Hadashah*, except for the last book, consists of letters. The first thirteen are by Sha’ul, the “emissary to the Gentiles.”<sup>31</sup> Five are to Messianic communities which he founded in Greece — two to Corinth, one to Philippi and two to Thessalonica (modern Salonika). Two are to communities he founded in what is now Turkey — Galatia and Ephesus; and two are to communities established by others — Colosse (near Ephesus), and Rome. These nine letters deal with issues of behavior and belief which arose in the several congregations. Of the remaining four, known as the Pastoral Letters, three are to his trainees Timothy (two) and Titus, and one, to Philemon, requests him to welcome back as a free brother a slave of his who ran away.

Next is “A Letter to a Group of Messianic Jews,” otherwise known as “To the Hebrews.” Though sometimes attributed to Sha’ul, Apollos or Priscilla and Aquila, its authorship is uncertain. Addressing a Messianic Jewish readership, it relates the new dispensation brought by Yeshua to the themes of the *Tanakh*. Following are a letter from Ya’akov (James), the brother of Yeshua and leader of the Messianic community in Yerushalayim; two letters from Kefa (Peter); three from Yochanan (John); and one from Y’hudah (Jude), another brother of Yeshua. As a group these are called the General Letters and are concerned with matters of faith and practice.

**Revelation.** The final book of the *B’rit Hadashah* is “The Revelation of Yeshua the Messiah to Yochanan,” which contains descriptions of visions revealed by the resurrected and glorified Messiah to the emissary Yochanan (John), or, some believe, to a different Yochanan. It is also known as the Apocalypse, since it describes “apocalyptic” events, that is, end-time disasters and interventions of God in history connected with the final judgment of humankind. Containing over five hundred quotations from and allusions to the *Tanakh*, more than any other New Testament book, it resembles and draws on the visions of such writers as Yesha’yahu (Isaiah), Yechezk’el (Ezekiel), Z’kharyah (Zechariah) and Dani’el. Some consider it to be speaking of what today is still in the future, others regard it as describing the whole age of history which began two thousand years ago, and still others believe its primary reference is to first-century events. Its figurative language gives room for such different interpretive approaches or for a combination thereof.

<sup>30</sup> Acts 1:8

<sup>31</sup> Romans 11:13; Galatians 2:7–8

## V. OTHER FEATURES OF THE BIBLE

**Dating.** Traditionally the *Torah* dates from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E., depending on when Moshe lived. The Early Prophets traditionally date from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E., the Later Prophets from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E., and the Writings from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C.E. Many scholars accept later dates, up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C.E.

The earliest *B'rit Hadashah* books, such as Sha'ul's letters to the Galatians, Thesalonians and Corinthians, and probably the letter of Ya'akov, were written around 50 C.E., some twenty years after Yeshua's death and resurrection. Sha'ul's other letters date from the 50s and 60s, the Gospels and Acts in their essentially final form from between 65 and 85, and the other General Letters and Revelation from between 65 and 100. Some scholars believe that some New Testament books underwent final editing in the early second century C.E.

**The Canon.** Scholars agree that the canon of the *Torah* achieved its present form before the time of 'Ezra (around 445 B.C.E.), the Prophets later and the Writings last. But the final review of the canon was made by the Council of Yavneh (Jamnia) convened around 90 C.E. by Rabbi Yochanan Ben-Zakkai in the wake of the destruction of the temple by the Romans twenty years earlier. Several books now included in the *Tanakh* were questioned—Daniel and Ezekiel, because of their startling visions and experiences; Esther, because God is not mentioned in it; Song of Songs, because of its overtly sexual character; and Ecclesiastes, because of its depressed world-viewpoint (except for the last two verses, which redeemed it). Ecclesiasticus (not the same as Ecclesiastes) was rejected by the rabbis of Yavneh but is found in the Apocrypha, a collection of fifteen ancient Jewish books that include Tobit, Judith, 1–2 Maccabees and the Wisdom of Solomon. Catholic and Anglican Bibles include the Apocrypha. Some sixty other ancient books are collectively called the Pseudepigrapha. English-language editions of the Apocrypha<sup>32</sup> and the Pseudepigrapha<sup>33</sup> are available.

Besides the documents which now form the New Testament, there were written other versions of the Good News, other histories of events in the early Messianic Community, other discussions of doctrine and practice and other apocalypses.<sup>34</sup> It was the early Messianic Community which exercised the spiritual discernment necessary to decide which books truly brought God's message to humanity and which were lesser creations, perhaps of historical or spiritual value but not God-breathed. Quotations from *B'rit Hadashah* books are found already in the non-canonical "Teaching of the Apostles" (80–100 C.E.), but the first list including books of the *B'rit Hadashah* was made by the heretic Marcion around 150 C.E. This product of error surely stimulated the development of an orthodox canon, such as appears in the Muratorian Fragment at the end of the second century, while the earliest known enumeration of exactly the twenty-seven books constituting today's *B'rit Hadashah*, with neither additions nor

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<sup>32</sup> For example, *The New Oxford Annotated Bible With the Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973)

<sup>33</sup> See James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 volumes (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1983).

<sup>34</sup> See Edgar Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965).



omissions, is in the Thirty-Ninth Paschal Letter of Athanasius (367 C.E.). Though the list is late, the books themselves were used in Messianic congregations from the time they were written, just as the books of the *Tanakh* were an integral part of Judaism centuries before its canon was authoritatively determined by the Council of Yavneh.

**Tradition and Scholarship.** The above introductory material reflects mainstream conservative Bible scholarship, which confirms most of the traditional views on these subjects. But during the past two centuries all the authorships have been challenged, likewise all the datings, and the historicity of most of the events.

The debate continues but ought to be confined within certain limits controlled by facts and aware of assumptions. For example, there are handwritten manuscripts of portions of the New Testament from as early as the first half of the second century, disproving the more extreme suggestions that the New Testament was written two, three or four hundred years after Yeshua. Also some of the criticism is based on presuppositions which are religious in character but in opposition to the Bible, thus determining a negative conclusion *a priori*, e.g., a world-view of doubt or “scientism” that precludes the possibility of such miracles as the crossing of the Yam Suf (Red Sea) on dry land,<sup>35</sup> or a disbelief in the ability of the ancient writers to distinguish between real and imaginary events, or a too willing confidence that the early Messianic communities altered reports to fit their agenda.

Although there is no lack of unanswered questions, many respected scholars nevertheless believe that the traditional authors are in fact the authors, that the early datings are correct, and, most importantly in the case of the *B’rit Hadashah*, that Yeshua really lived, “died for our sins, . . . and . . . was raised on the third day, in accordance with what the *Tanakh* says.”<sup>36</sup>

## VI. WHY THE BIBLE IS GOD’S WORD

In the first paragraph of Section I, I wrote that “the Bible is God’s Word to humanity, the only completely reliable verbal communication God has given us. It is worthy of acceptance, belief, trust; it is his handbook for faith and practice.” I owe readers who are not convinced of this an explanation of why I believe that behind the several authors of the Bible, the true Author is God; afterwards I will say why it makes a difference to think so.

Theologians call this topic the “divine inspiration of Scripture,” where the word “inspiration” has its literal meaning, “breathing into.” Thus in regarding God as the ultimate Author of the Bible, they do not mean that he dictated every word, so that the human “authors” were really only secretaries, but rather, that the authors often expressed what God had breathed into them through their own personalities in their own words. The alternative view is that the Bible may contain beautiful thoughts, high moral sentiments, wonderful stories and great literature, “inspired” in the ordinary, humanistic sense, “worthy of genius”; but that it is not God himself speaking, telling us about himself, about ourselves, and about how to live.

<sup>35</sup> Exodus 14–15

<sup>36</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:3–4

There are three reasons for considering the Bible inspired by God, God-breathed: it claims to be, it seems to be, and it proves to be.

**The Bible Claims to be God’s Word.** Over and over appear the words, “*ADONAI* says,” or, in the thunderous phrase from the King James Version, “Thus saith the LORD.” These words are found in the Bible some 2,500 times, placed there by numerous authors over a period of more than a thousand years. By itself this claim proves nothing — anyone can write, “God says.” But this claim is not made so very often; hence when it is made — and when many people believe it — it could be worth investigating to find out if it is true.

**The Bible Seems to be God’s Word.** Its breadth of subject matter, its wisdom, its deeply felt honesty, its understanding of the human condition, its expressions of joy, wonder, sadness, anger and every other emotion, its way of dealing with history and politics all delineate as the character underlying the Bible an entity, a person, worthy of being called and honored as God, lover and creator of you and me and the universe. Some readers may find portions which seem less than divine or even contrary to their view of what God ought to say. I suggest that these readers consider changing their concept of God. For only in the Bible will one find the authoritative description of the God of the Bible, who he is and what he “ought” to be. It is there where one should look for the paradoxes to be resolved — and also where it becomes clear that some antinomies (contradictory elements that resist resolution) will not be fully resolved, at least not in this world (two examples: free will and predestination, and Job’s problem — why bad things happen to good people).

**The Bible Proves to be God’s Word.** While not every statement in the Bible can be scientifically verified, some can. Historical and archeological studies are repeatedly providing evidence that places, events and customs the Bible reports about were real. Since I moved to Israel in 1979, the newspapers have reported the discovery at Tel Dan, in the north of the country, of the first independent witness to the existence of King David, an ostrakon from his time inscribed with that name (it proves, of course, only that the name existed, not the king). Another discovery was of one of the pomegranates that hung from the robe of the *cohen gadol* (high priest),<sup>37</sup> and a third was a seal from the sixth century B.C.E. having on it the tetragrammaton — the oldest such evidence. These do not prove the existence of God, but they demonstrate the reliability of the writers and suggest that what they say about the unverifiable might also be trustworthy.

**Why It Makes a Difference to Believe that God “Wrote the Bible.”** On principle I would not give science the last word in determining truth, because I don’t think faith should be relegated to a category of knowledge inferior to science. The philosophical underpinnings of the Western World are centered on two cities — Athens and Jerusalem. The Greeks developed philosophy in a rational manner, but largely at the expense of separating heart and head. Many psychological and spiritual ills stem from this separation (one can also speak of this separation as between body and soul). The

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<sup>37</sup> Exodus 28:33

Jews kept head and heart, body and soul, together, and the Bible reflects this unitary view of human nature. The head has its way of knowing, and the heart has its way of knowing, and neither should be ignored. If head and heart are connected, there is the possibility that what the Bible claims, seems and proves to be will move the heart to respond in faith. If one believes that in the Bible God is speaking, one will be much more likely to take seriously its promises, threats, suggestions and commands; and the result, I propose, will be a better life for oneself and the others one meets.

## VII. JEWISH *TANAKH* VERSUS CHRISTIAN OLD TESTAMENT

The title of this Section of the Introduction may perplex some readers, especially after the remarks in Section V, because it is usual to think of the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish *Tanakh* as the same. Actually, there are important differences; and for purposes of understanding the *Complete Jewish Bible*, these must now be addressed.

**Different Order for the Books.** The most obvious difference, clear from the Table of Contents, is that the books of the *Tanakh* appear in a different order than those of the Old Testament (OT), as any Christian looking for the book of Malachi at the end of the *Tanakh* will quickly discover. As the acronym *TaNakH* reminds us, the Hebrew Bible is divided into three parts — *Torah* (Law, Teaching), *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and *K'tuvim* (Writings). But Christians divide the OT into four parts — Pentateuch, Historical Books, Writings and Prophets. Both OT and *Tanakh* have the five books of Moses first, whether one calls them the *Torah* or the Pentateuch. The Prophets section of the *Tanakh* is divided into the Early and Later Prophets. The Early Prophets correspond to the Historical Books of the OT minus the books of Ruth, 1–2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, which are placed with the Writings. The Later Prophets are the same as the “Prophets” section of the OT, except that the Hebrew Bible places Lamentations and Daniel with the Writings. The *Tanakh*’s “Writings” section is larger than that of the OT, because it includes the eight books which in the OT are located elsewhere. Finally, in the *Tanakh* the Later Prophets come immediately after the Early Prophets, but in the OT the Prophets come last.

Why these differences? Because the Christian OT follows the order found in the oldest manuscripts of the Septuagint, the translation of the *Tanakh* into Greek made by Greek-speaking Jews in Alexandria, Egypt, two or three centuries before Yeshua’s birth; while the *Tanakh* sequence was finalized in the Land of Israel after the time of Ezra. This is the order Yeshua knew, as evidenced by his referring in Luke 24:44 to “the *Torah* of Moshe, the Prophets and the Psalms” (by “Psalms” he referred to the Writings section, which in the *Tanakh* begins with the book of Psalms, not Job, as in the OT).

**Different Number of Books.** A second difference is that by Jewish reckoning the *Tanakh* consists of twenty-four books, whereas Christians count thirty-nine in the Old Testament. This is because the *Tanakh* considers each of the following to be a single book: 1–2 Samuel, 1–2 Kings, the twelve Minor Prophets (so called because their books are short — Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi), Ezra-Nehemiah, and 1–2 Chronicles. Thus what the OT counts as twenty books appears in the *Tanakh* as five.

**Different Names for the Books.** A third difference is in the names. Many of the *Tanakh* books are simply called by their first words. What the OT calls Genesis the *Tanakh* calls *B' resheet* (“In the beginning”); and Exodus (the book about the Jewish exodus from Egypt) is called *Sh'mot* (“Names”), because the books starts out, “These are the names. . . .” Leviticus (about the Levitical priesthood) is called *Vayikra* (“And he called”), from its initial words “And he [God] called to Moshe . . .” Lamentations is called *Eikhah* (“How”); it begins, “How lonely lies the city. . . .”

The reader wanting further clarification on these three points of difference should examine carefully the tables of contents; the main one lists the books of the Bible by both their Hebrew and usual English names in the order followed in Jewish Bibles and in the *Complete Jewish Bible*; the second lists the books of the *Tanakh* by their usual English names in the Old Testament/Septuagint order familiar to Christians; the third table of contents lists all the books of the Bible by all the names, in alphabetical order.

Why did I choose the Jewish order and names for the *CJB*? To emphasize the Jewish unity of the *Tanakh* and the *B'rit Hadashah* — not just the “unity,” which all Christians recognize, but the “Jewish unity,” the fact that both *Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadashah* are Jewish through and through. When the *Tanakh* is dissected, with its parts rearranged and renamed, its Jewishness is also being taken apart. This is, then, just one more way in which the *CJB* reminds Christians that their faith is Jewish.

At the same time, by presenting, as fully as the English language allows, the Jewishness of both *Tanakh* and *B'rit Hadashah* together in a single volume, I am placing the Jewishness of the *B'rit Hadashah* squarely in front of Jewish people who have absorbed the false idea that the New Testament is the Christian Bible and therefore has nothing to do with them as Jews. This is also why I wrote the *Jewish New Testament Commentary* — to deal with the various reservations about Yeshua, the New Testament and Christianity that have become an almost inseparable part of Jewish culture and thinking, and show that they are based on misunderstandings, so that Jewish people can hear what God has to say to them in both the *Tanakh* and the *B'rit Hadashah* — in the complete Jewish Bible.

**Different Chapter and Verse Numbering.** A fourth difference is in the numbering of chapters and verses. The Jewish and Christian chapter and verse numbers differ here and there throughout the *Tanakh*. My general rule is that where they are not the same I include both, the chapter and verse numbers found in the Hebrew Bible first, with the dissenting numberings in parentheses afterwards. Thus the reference, “Psalm 69:9(8),” means that what Hebrew Bibles call verse 9 of Psalm 69 is called verse 8 in at least *some* other Bibles. Similarly, “Joel 3:1–5(2:28–32)” is the consequence of the fact that the Hebrew Bible makes a separate Chapter 3 out of what the OT has as the last five verses of Chapter 2. A number of the Psalms have titles such as Psalm 21's, “For the leader. A psalm of David.” The Hebrew Bible often considers them to be Verse 1, but the OT does not assign them verse numbers at all. In this case, the *CJB* assigns them “Christian” verse number zero: Psalm 21:1(0).

**Different Endings for Four of the Books.** A small detail which nevertheless epitomizes a characteristic of the Jewish approach to life is that in the case of the four books

in the *Tanakh* with a negative-sounding last verse, it is customary to accentuate the positive by printing the next-to-last verse a second time at the end of the book. The *CJB* does this, using brackets and smaller type.

**Different Underlying Texts.** The final difference is that the *Tanakh* consists of the traditionally preserved “Masoretic Text” of the Hebrew Bible, while the Christian “Old Testament” draws on scholarly studies and other ancient texts of the Bible to arrive at a presumed more accurate Hebrew text. The details are discussed in Section VIII below.

**More Alike Than Different.** In spite of these differences, the Christian Old Testament is much more like the *Tanakh* than different from it; and for this reason I will continue in this Introduction to use the terms “*Tanakh*” and “Old Testament” more or less interchangeably.

## VIII. ORIGINAL-LANGUAGE TEXTS UNDERLYING THE *COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE*

**Hebrew/Aramaic Text Used for the *Tanakh*.** Except for the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are more than two thousand years old, the oldest extant Hebrew and Aramaic manuscripts of the *Tanakh* date back to the 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> centuries C.E. The *Tanakh* was written originally with only consonants, and the *Torah* scrolls read today in the synagogue contain only consonants.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> centuries a group of scribes called the Masoretes (the word comes from Hebrew *masoret*, which means “tradition”) developed a system of notation for recording the vowels traditionally used when reading the consonantal text of the *Tanakh*. Without these, the consonants of most Hebrew words could be pronounced in several ways and given several meanings. For example, if English were written with only consonants, how would you pronounce “st”? Would it be “sat,” “set,” “sit,” “sot,” “sate,” “seat,” “site,” “soot” or “suit”? From context you would know. But there developed a need to make the meanings crystal-clear as Hebrew fell into disuse and not all contexts were understood. So the Masoretes recorded the traditional “vowel pointings,” as they are called today; and printed editions of the *Tanakh* all have them. Moreover, Hebrew is taught with them; and while a modern Israeli reads his newspaper without vowel pointings, a new immigrant to Israel learns how to pronounce Hebrew with their aid. Moreover, they continue to be used in published editions of Hebrew poetry and in the Jewish prayerbooks.

In addition, the Masoretes codified a system of punctuation, also included in printed editions of the *Tanakh*. These “cantillation marks” are used when the *Torah* is chanted in the synagogue; but their more important use is to clarify which words of the text go together. For example, in a passage familiar to Christians as well as Jews, because the New Testament makes use of it, *Yeshu‘yahu* (Isaiah) 40:3 says, “A voice cries out: ‘Clear a road through the desert for *ADONAI* [the LORD].’” But at *Mattityahu* (Matthew) 3:3 many translations have something like, “A voice cries out in the desert, ‘Clear a road for *ADONAI*.’” However, the cantillation marks show that “in the desert” tells about the road, not the voice.

The Masoretes modified the written text (the *k'tiv*, pronounced *kuh-teev*) in a number of places, so that what is read aloud in the synagogue today (the *kere*, pronounced *keh-ray*) differs at these points from what appears in the *Torah* scroll. One example comes from Psalm 100:3. The *King James Version*, following the *k'tiv*, reads, “Know ye that the LORD, he is God; it is he who hath made us, and not we ourselves.” But most other versions, Jewish and Christian alike, follow the *kere*; thus the *CJB* has, “it is he who made us; and we are his.” If the Hebrew word *lo* in *lo anachnu* is spelled *lamed-alef* (לא), it means “not we,” but if it’s spelled *lamed-vav* (לו), it means “we are his.” The Masoretes evidently concluded that the author had written “his,” and a scribe had mis-copied the word.

From a Jewish religious point of view, the Masoretic alterations embodied in the *kere* are the only permitted changes to the received written consonantal text, the *k'tiv*. But Christian and non-Orthodox Jewish scholars are not constrained by this restriction. Thus they apply the criteria of historical and linguistic scholarship to the Masoretic text in determining its reliability. Moreover, from ancient versions such as the Greek Septuagint they can infer the existence of alternative underlying Hebrew texts, vowel-pointing or punctuation. Here is a well-known instance of how significant this can be.

In Psalm 22, verse 17 of Jewish versions reads, “Like a lion [at] my hands and feet,” while the corresponding verse 16 of Christian versions says, “They pierced my hands and feet.” If this passage prophesies Yeshua’s crucifixion, as Messianic Jews and Christians believe it does, the prophecy is certainly clearer in the Christian versions, since the *B’rit Hadashah* reports that Yeshua’s hands and feet were nailed to the execution-stake (as the *CJB* calls the cross), but says nothing about lions at his hands and feet. How can two such different meanings arise from the same text? They don’t; the texts are different. The Masoretic text has the Hebrew word *k’ari* (כארי, “like a lion”); while the Christian versions make use of the Septuagint, where the Greek word implies an underlying Hebrew text with the word *karu* (כרו, “they pierced”). The differences — the presence in the Masoretic Hebrew of the letter *alef* (א), and of the letter *yud* (י) instead of *vav* (ו)—are both easily explainable as scribal errors (in one direction or the other). In this case, as in virtually all cases, the *CJB* adheres to the Masoretic text, but a footnote gives the alternative rendering and refers to this paragraph of the Introduction. There are hundreds of similar differences, although few are as important for Messianic understanding of the Bible. In general I have not indicated where these differences are, because that is outside the scope of my purposes in preparing the *Complete Jewish Bible*.

The scholars also use other early versions — Jerome’s Latin Vulgate (430 C.E.), the Syriac, Targum Yonatan, and others dating from the fifth century C.E. or earlier. These offer still more readings which add to the possibilities and to the confusion. Scholars frequently find historical, archeological, literary, theological or logical justification for emending the text itself — that is, correcting it to what they believe it must have originally said. It may well be that the scholars often approach the Hebrew original more closely than the Masoretic text does. However, my choosing to render the Jewish *Tanakh* obligates me to use the Masoretic text; very rarely do I deviate from it.

**The Greek of the *B'rit Hadashah*.** While the *Tanakh* was written largely in Hebrew (portions of *'Ezra-Nechemyah* and *Dani'el* are in a related Semitic language, Aramaic), most of the early manuscripts of the New Testament are in Greek — not the classical language of Homer or of Plato, but *koinê* (“common”) Greek, the *lingua franca* of everyday affairs throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East during the first century.

Nevertheless, there is good reason to think that several of the books of the New Testament were written in either Hebrew or Aramaic, or drew upon source materials in those languages; this case has been made by one scholar or another for all four Gospels, Acts, Revelation and several of the General Letters. Moreover, Sha’ul, whose letters were composed in Greek, clearly drew on his native Jewish and Hebraic thought-forms when he wrote. In fact, some phrases in the New Testament manuscripts make no sense unless one reaches through the Greek to the underlying Hebrew expressions. Here is an example, only one of many.<sup>38</sup> Yeshua says in the Sermon on the Mount,<sup>39</sup> literally, “If your eye be evil, your whole body will be dark.”<sup>40</sup> What is an evil eye? Someone not knowing the Jewish background might suppose Yeshua was talking about casting spells. However, in Hebrew, having an *'ayin ra 'ah*, an “evil eye,” means being stingy; while having an *'ayin tovah*, a “good eye,” means being generous. Yeshua is simply urging generosity against stinginess. And this understanding fits with the surrounding verses: “Where your wealth is, there your heart will be also. . . . You can’t be a slave to both God and money.”<sup>41</sup>

**Greek Text Used for the *B'rit Hadashah*.** There are more than five thousand ancient manuscripts of all or part of the New Testament, more than for any other document from antiquity. Due to scribal errors and other factors, they do not agree with each other at every point. Textual criticism, which sets out to determine the correct reading of a text from disagreeing and imperfect sources, is far beyond the competence of most Bible translators, including me. Fortunately there exist critical editions of the Greek text of the New Testament, wherein specialists have investigated, compared and judged the accuracy of the differing textual readings found in the manuscripts. My translation of the *B'rit Hadashah* is based primarily on the United Bible Societies’ *The Greek New Testament*;<sup>42</sup> but I also consulted a number of English and Hebrew versions and commentaries.

## IX. POETRY IN THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE

**Frequency and Character of the Bible’s Poetry.** About thirty percent of the *Tanakh* is written in the form of poetry, mostly in the Later Prophets and in the Writings. This often surprises people, because many editions of the Bible hide the poetry by layout

<sup>38</sup> For others, consult David Bivin and Roy Blizzard, Jr., *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus* (Austin, Texas: Center for Judaic-Christian Studies, 1984). See also the *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc., 4th edition, 1996) and Section XI below.

<sup>39</sup> Matthew 5–7

<sup>40</sup> Matthew 6:23

<sup>41</sup> Matthew 6:21, 24

<sup>42</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (New York: American Bible Society, 1975).

## INTRODUCTION

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that doesn't show it. Because so much of the power, drama and nuance of what is being communicated is inseparable from the poetic form the writers use, I have given high priority to making it as easy as possible for readers to see and feel the poetry in the Bible. (Apart from *Tanakh* citations, the *B'rit Hadashah* is at most one or two percent poetry, with the book of Revelation having the highest proportion.)

This is why I have chosen to typeset the *CJB* in one column rather than two — it makes it possible for each line of poetry to take only one line of type. When lines of poetry require two lines of type, the reader's attention is taken with determining where a line of poetry ends, leaving him less energy for scanning the line and finding its underlying rhythm. I know that for some the one-column format will make the prose reading more difficult, since the eye must follow a wider line of type across the page. But I decided in favor of easing the more difficult task of reading poetry.

**Aids to Reading the Bible's Poetry.** The key to Biblical Hebrew poetry is not primarily rhythm, but parallelism. The poetry is generally divided into two-line stanzas. The second line usually does one of three things: it expresses essentially the same idea as the first, or it presents a contrasting idea, or it adds to the first line's thought. The table below gives examples of all three.

However, English poetry is characterized by repeated rhythms (except for free verse), and this is what most English-speakers expect from poetry. To this end, I have tried to make it possible to scan every line of poetry into four beats. In the examples below I show where I understand the beats are by placing a superscript number before the emphasized syllable. Sometimes there will be silent beats; these are shown below by superscript-four at the end of the line; in fact these lines have three beats, but it makes the poetry read better to allow them four, with one of them silent. Occasionally you may find that there are too many syllables in a line to squeeze them comfortably into four beats; in this case, I suggest slowing the pace enough to find four main beats while allowing the words to be read without rushing. Moreover, keep in mind that there can be more than one right way to scan a line; for example, see the three ways of scanning Proverbs 2:21b below.

<u>Verse</u>	<u>Type of Parallelism</u>	<u>Location of Beats in the Text</u>
Psalms 38:22(21)	Thought Same thought	<sup>1</sup> Don't a <sup>2</sup> bandon me, <sup>3</sup> AD <sup>4</sup> NA! My <sup>1</sup> God, <sup>2</sup> don't be <sup>3</sup> far from me! <sup>4</sup>
Proverbs 2:21	Thought Same thought (second scan) (third scan)	For the <sup>1</sup> upright will <sup>2</sup> live in the <sup>3</sup> land, <sup>4</sup> the <sup>1</sup> pure-hearted <sup>2</sup> will re <sup>3</sup> main there; <sup>4</sup> the <sup>1</sup> pure- <sup>2</sup> hearted will re <sup>3</sup> main <sup>4</sup> there; the <sup>1</sup> pure- <sup>2</sup> hearted <sup>3</sup> will re <sup>4</sup> main there;
Proverbs 10:2	Thought Contrasting thought	No <sup>1</sup> good <sup>2</sup> comes from <sup>3</sup> ill-gotten <sup>4</sup> wealth, but <sup>1</sup> righteousness <sup>2</sup> rescues from <sup>3</sup> death. <sup>4</sup>
Isaiah 54:10	Thought Contrasting thought	For the <sup>1</sup> mountains may <sup>2</sup> leave and the <sup>3</sup> hills be re <sup>4</sup> moved, but my <sup>1</sup> grace will <sup>2</sup> never <sup>3</sup> leave you, <sup>4</sup>



Proverbs 23:29	Thought Addition to the thought	<sup>1</sup> Who gets <sup>2</sup> bruised for <sup>3</sup> no good <sup>4</sup> reason? <sup>1</sup> Who has <sup>2</sup> bloodshot <sup>3</sup> eyes? <sup>4</sup>
Job 13:5	Thought Addition to the thought	I <sup>1</sup> wish you would <sup>2</sup> just stay <sup>3</sup> silent; <sup>4</sup> for <sup>1</sup> you, <sup>2</sup> that would be <sup>3</sup> wisdom! <sup>4</sup>
Malachi 2:10	Thought #1 Same thought Thought #2  Addition to thought #2	<sup>1</sup> Don't we <sup>2</sup> all have the <sup>3</sup> same <sup>4</sup> father? <sup>1</sup> Didn't one <sup>2</sup> God cre <sup>3</sup> ate us <sup>4</sup> all? Then <sup>1</sup> why do <sup>2</sup> we break <sup>3</sup> faith with each <sup>4</sup> other, pro <sup>1</sup> faning the <sup>2</sup> covenant of our <sup>3</sup> ancestors? <sup>4</sup>

Finally, although awareness of poetry's rhythm will enhance its reading, one should not let it degenerate into singsong that overwhelms the meaning of the text.

## X. THE NAME OF GOD IN THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE

**The Basic Problem: God's Personal Name is Never Spoken.** When Moshe turned aside in the wilderness of Midyan to see the bush that burned without being consumed, God revealed himself to him and told him his own personal Name. That Name in Hebrew consists of the four letters *Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh* (יהוה) and is therefore called the tetragrammaton (four-letter writing). The Bible makes it clear that this Name was not to be used casually. The third commandment prohibits taking God's Name in vain,<sup>43</sup> and the man who used it in a curse was put to death at God's explicit instruction.<sup>44</sup> Already by Yeshua's time, no one ever spoke God's name except the *cohen hagadol* (high priest) when he entered the Especially Holy Place in the temple to make atonement for the sins of Isra'el on *Yom Kippur*. So strictly was this rule enforced that when the Masoretes wrote down the vowel points for the *Torah*, they did not write the actual vowels to be used in pronouncing the tetragrammaton. By then, the word *Adonai*, which is a term for God found frequently in the Bible and which means "my Lord," was said instead of the Name whenever the *Torah* was read; so the Masoretes put the vowel pointing for "Adonai" under the letters *Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh*. To this day, when the *Torah* is read in the synagogue, "Adonai" is substituted for the Name. The English word "Jehovah" is an English representation of the Name (J-H-V-H) combined with the vowel sounds of "Adonai," a hybrid word without historical foundation. Most English translations represent the Name by "LORD," written as it is here, in large and small capital letters. More than six thousand times the *Complete Jewish Bible* uses the Hebrew word *ADONAI* also in large and small capital letters (and italicized, like other Hebrew words) to represent the tetragrammaton.

**Other Problems.** But a number of problems remain. First, there are places in the Bible where the Hebrew text reads, "Adonai *Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh*." To avoid having

<sup>43</sup> Exodus 20:7; Deuteronomy 5:11

<sup>44</sup> Leviticus 24:10–23

the word “*Adonai*” read twice in a row, the Jewish practice in these cases is to say, “*Adonai ELOHIM*”; and the *CJB* does the same in some 270 places. The word “*Elohim*” means “God” and is so translated elsewhere in the *CJB*, as in other Bible versions.

Second, there are three places in the Bible where, in my judgment, it is necessary to present the Name in a form as close to the original as possible—Exodus 3:13–17, 6:2–3, and 34:6–7. In these places the *CJB* has “*Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh*.” Otherwise the force of what is being communicated would be greatly compromised.

Third, Jewish religious practice, especially among the ultra-Orthodox, has withdrawn even from using such words as “*Adonai*” and “*Elohim*” except in specific religious settings. Euphemisms such as “*HaShem*” (the Name), “*Ado-shem*” (a combination of “*Adonai*” with “*HaShem*”), and “*Elokim*” (an intentional mispronunciation of “*Elohim*”) are used instead; and if the tetragrammaton has to be spelled out, it is pronounced, “*Yud-kay-vav-kay*.” I considered using “*HaShem*” but eventually decided against it on the ground that the *CJB* constitutes a justifiable “religious setting.” At the same time, I did not use “*Yahweh*” or “*Yahveh*,” as some versions do, on the grounds, first, that Jews, as explained, don’t pronounce the Name at all; second, that we don’t really know if these are good representations of how the Name was pronounced; and, third, that these words sound too strange in the ears of most Jews, who are not accustomed to hearing them in any context. I avoided “the LORD,” simply because English-speakers have become so used to this phrase in Bibles that, in my judgment, it no longer can be counted on to evoke the awareness and reverence for God that it should. But it won’t hurt my feelings if others say for the Name something other than what the *CJB* has in print.

**The Tetragrammaton in the New Testament.** Finally, the problem of God’s name takes on a further dimension of uncertainty in the *B’rit Hadashah*. There the Greek word *kurios* is frequently ambiguous. It can mean “sir,” “lord” (as in “lord of the manor”), “Lord” (with divine overtones), and “*Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh*.” Most translations, by always rendering *kurios* “Lord,” finesse the issue of when it means “*Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh*.” The *CJB* and the *Jewish New Testament* do not—in keeping with the principle stated in Section II above that translators should decide the true meaning of a word and render that meaning clearly, rather than transfer vagueness from one language to another, the word “*ADONAI*” is used in the *B’rit Hadashah* wherever I, as the translator, believe “*kurios*” is the Greek representation of the tetragrammaton.

In several places this approach brings into bold relief a key theological issue separating Messianic from traditional Judaism, namely, whether *ADONAI* can include Yeshua the Messiah and/or the Holy Spirit. Philippians 2:10–11 informs us that the day is coming when “every knee will bow . . . and every tongue will acknowledge that Yeshua the Messiah is *kurios*.” Since this passage quotes Isaiah 45:23, where it is explicit that every knee will bow to *ADONAI*, *kurios* is here translated “*ADONAI*.” At 2 Corinthians 3:16–18 Sha’ul (Paul) alludes to Exodus 34:34 in writing that “whenever someone turns to *ADONAI*, the veil is taken away”; then he explicitly points out that “‘*ADONAI*’ in this text means the Spirit,” and uses the phrase, “*ADONAI* the Spirit.”

## XI. THE JEWISHNESS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

So much for the differences between the *CJB*'s *Tanakh* and the Old Testament with which Christians are familiar. We turn now to the differences between the *CJB*'s *B'rit Hadashah* and other translations of the New Testament. Given that there were already literally hundreds of English versions of the New Testament in existence when the *Jewish New Testament* came out, why was another one needed? The reason is that my version was the first to express fully the New Testament's original and essential Jewishness; nearly all the other English translations of the New Testament presented its message in a Gentile-Christian linguistic, cultural and theological framework.<sup>45</sup>

And what was wrong with that? Nothing! For although the Gospel is Jewish in origin, it is not only for Jews but also for Gentiles. The New Testament itself could not be clearer about that,<sup>46</sup> so it is appropriate that its message be communicated to non-Jews in ways that impose on them a minimum of alien cultural baggage.<sup>47</sup> And this approach has been successful: millions of Gentiles have come to trust in the God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov and in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua.<sup>48</sup>

**The New Testament Is a Jewish Book.** However, the time came for restoring the Jewishness of the New Testament. For the New Testament is in fact a Jewish book—by Jews, mostly about Jews, and for Jews as well as Gentiles. It is all very well to adapt a Jewish book for easier appreciation by non-Jews, but not at the cost of suppressing its inherent Jewishness. The *Jewish New Testament* expressed this Jewishness first of all in its very name, which, like the name of the evangelistic organization “Jews for Jesus,” unites two ideas that some consider incompatible and would rather keep separate.

But such separation cannot be. For the central figure of the New Testament, Yeshua the Messiah, was a Jew who was born into a Jewish family in Beit-Lechem, grew up among Jews in Natzeret, ministered to Jews in the Galil, and died and rose from the grave in the Jewish capital, Yerushalayim—all in *Eretz-Yisra'el*, the land God gave the Jewish people. Moreover, Yeshua is still a Jew, since he is still alive; and nowhere does Scripture say or suggest that he has stopped being Jewish. His twelve closest followers were Jews. For years all his *talmidim* (disciples) were Jews, eventually numbering “tens of thousands” in Yerushalayim alone.<sup>49</sup> The New Testament was written entirely by Jews (Luke being, in all likelihood, a proselyte to Judaism); and

<sup>45</sup> Exceptions in varying degrees: Sid Roth's *The Book of Life* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1982) and David Bronstein, Jr.'s *The Living Bible: Messianic Edition* (Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House, 1984); both are adaptations of existing English versions made by Messianic Jews. The *Original New Testament* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985) is Hugh Schonfield's revision of his earlier translation, *The Authentic New Testament* (1955); Schonfield (1901–1988) accepted Yeshua as the Messiah in his youth but reneged in later years. *God's New Covenant: A New Testament Translation*, by the Messianic Jew, Heinz W. Cassirer (1903–1979), was published by William B. Eerdsman Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1989.

<sup>46</sup> Romans 1:16, 3:29–30, 10:12

<sup>47</sup> See 1 Corinthians 9:19–23.

<sup>48</sup> These are the Hebrew names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jesus. For guidance in pronouncing Hebrew see Section XVI below and the Pronouncing Explanatory Glossary at the end of the book.

<sup>49</sup> Acts 21:20

its message is directed “to the Jew especially, but equally to the Gentile.”<sup>50</sup> It was Jews who brought the Gospel to non-Jews, not the other way round. Sha’ul (“also known as Paul”),<sup>51</sup> the chief emissary to the Gentiles, was a lifelong observant Jew, as is abundantly clear from evidence in the book of Acts.<sup>52</sup> Indeed the main issue in the early Messianic Community — that is, the “Church” — was not whether a Jew could believe in Yeshua, but whether a Gentile could become a Christian without converting to Judaism!<sup>53</sup> The Messiah’s vicarious atonement is rooted in the Jewish sacrificial system.<sup>54</sup> The Lord’s Supper is rooted in the Jewish Passover. Immersion (baptism) is a Jewish practice. The New Covenant itself was promised by the Jewish prophet Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah).<sup>55</sup> The very concept of a Messiah is exclusively Jewish, and that Jewish Messiah taught that “salvation is from the Jews.”<sup>56</sup> Indeed, as the name *Complete Jewish Bible* suggests, the *B’rit Hadashah* completes the *Tanakh*; so that the New Testament without the Old is as impossible as the second floor of a house without the first, and the Old without the New as unfinished as a house without a roof.

Moreover, much of what is written in the *B’rit Hadashah* is incomprehensible apart from its Jewish context. I gave one example in Section VIII above, in the paragraph on the Greek of the *B’rit Hadashah*, and here is another. At *Mattityahu* (Matthew) 1:21 an angel of *ADONAI* tells Yosef (Joseph) that Miryam (Mary), his betrothed, will give birth to a son, “and you are to name him Yeshua, because he will save his people from their sins.” In English the reason explains nothing — why not name him “George, because he will save his people from their sins”? Likewise in Greek — the name *Iêsous* has nothing to do with *sotêr*, the Greek word for “save.” Only in Hebrew or Aramaic does the explanation explain. The Hebrew name *Yeshua* (ישוע), which is the masculine form of the word *yeshu’ah* (ישועה—“salvation”), is based on the same root (*yud-shin-’ayin*—י-ש-ע) as *yoshia* (יושיע), which means “he will save.”

But the best demonstration of the New Testament’s Jewishness is also the most convincing proof of its truth, namely, the number of *Tanakh* prophecies, all of them centuries older than the New Testament events, which are fulfilled in the person of Yeshua from Natzeret. The probability that anyone could satisfy dozens of prophetic conditions by mere chance is infinitesimal. No pretender to Messiahship, such as Shim’on Bar-Kokhva,<sup>57</sup> Shabtai Tzvi<sup>58</sup> or, more recently, the late leader of the *HaBaD*

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<sup>50</sup> Romans 1:16

<sup>51</sup> The phrase is quoted from Acts 13:9. Some suppose that at this point God changed his name from Sha’ul to Paul as a sign that he “had stopped being a Jew and become a Christian.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Like many Jews in the Diaspora both then and now, he had two names — one suited to the country in which he was living, and the other, his Hebrew name, given at his circumcision.

<sup>52</sup> See Acts 16:3, 17:2, 18:18, 20:16, 21:23–27, 23:5–6, 25:8, 28:17.

<sup>53</sup> See Acts 15:1–29 and the whole book of Galatians.

<sup>54</sup> See especially Leviticus 17:11.

<sup>55</sup> Jeremiah 31:30–33(31–34)

<sup>56</sup> John 4:22

<sup>57</sup> Died 135 C.E.

<sup>58</sup> 1626–1676

<sup>59</sup> 1902–1995

Hasidic movement among ultra-Orthodox Jews, Menachem Schneerson<sup>59</sup> has fulfilled more than a few of them. Yeshua fulfilled every prophecy intended to be fulfilled at his first coming; Section XIV below lists fifty-four of them. The rest of the prophecies he will fulfill when he returns in glory.

Thus the *Jewish New Testament* began to make it normal to think of the New Testament as Jewish.

There are three additional areas in which the *Jewish New Testament* and the *Complete Jewish Bible* can aid in *tikkun-ha'olam* (fixing the world): Christian anti-Semitism, Jewish failure to receive the Gospel, and the split between the Church and the Jewish people.

**Christian Anti-Semitism.** First, a vicious circle of Christian anti-Semitism feeds on the New Testament. The New Testament itself contains no anti-Semitism; but since the early days of the Church, anti-Semitism has misused the New Testament to justify itself and infiltrate Christian theology. Translators of the New Testament, steeped in that anti-Semitic theology, produce anti-Jewish translations, even when they themselves are not anti-Semites. Readers of these translations absorb attitudes which are anti-Jewish and alien to Judaism. Some of these readers become theologians who refine and develop the anti-Semitic character of Christian theology (they may even be unaware of the built-in anti-Semitism); while others become anti-Semitic activists who persecute Jews, thinking that by so doing they are serving God. This vicious circle must be broken. The *Jewish New Testament*, by removing centuries-old anti-Semitic theological biases and positively stressing Jewishness, has contributed to doing so, and now the *Complete Jewish Bible* continues this effort.

**Jewish Misgivings About the Gospel.** Second, while there are between 100,000 and 500,000 Messianic Jews in the English-speaking countries (and possibly twice as many in the world — the figures are very uncertain because they depend on whom one counts as Jewish and whom one counts as Messianic), it is obvious that most of the world's 13-to-17 million Jewish people do not accept Yeshua as the Messiah. While the reasons include Christian persecution of Jews, secular worldviews that allow little place for either God or a Messiah, and, as with non-Jews, refusal to turn from sin, a major cause is the perception by Jews that the Gospel is irrelevant to them. This perceived irrelevancy arises partly from the way Christianity presents itself, but also from the alienation induced by most New Testament translations. With their Gentile Christian cultural trappings and their anti-Jewish theological underpinnings, they lead many Jews to see the New Testament as a Gentile book about a Gentile god. The Jesus portrayed therein seems to bear little relationship to Jewish life. It becomes hard for a Jew to experience Yeshua the Messiah as who he really is, namely, a friend to every Jewish heart. While the *Jewish New Testament* and the *Complete Jewish Bible* cannot eliminate all the barriers between every Jew and his faith in the Messiah, they do remove some of the linguistic, cultural and theological obstacles. A Jewish person reading the *JNT* or the *CJB* should be able to see clearly that Yeshua is indeed the Messiah promised by the *Tanakh* to the Jewish people, that the *B'rit Hadashah* is for Jews as much as for Gentiles, and that the message of the Bible as a whole, both testaments together, is true, important and worthy of acceptance, the key to both individual and Jewish national salvation.

**The Split Between the Messianic Community and the Jewish People.** Finally, centuries of Jewish rejection of Yeshua and Christian rejection of Jews has produced today's conventional wisdom that Christianity is Christianity, and Judaism is Judaism, and never the twain shall meet. Moreover, many Jews and Christians are perfectly satisfied with this arrangement. Most Jews accept the false assumption that receiving Yeshua as the Messiah implies ceasing to be a Jew, so that if Jews do this in significant numbers, it is equivalent to annihilation of themselves as a people and — as Jewish philosopher Emil Fackenheim put it — giving Hitler a posthumous victory. But it was never meant to be so, never God's will that for a Jew to believe in Yeshua meant that he could no longer be Jewish, and never God's will that there be two separate peoples of God, the Jews and the Christians. Yet only in the past two or three decades, with the emergence of Messianic Judaism and this movement's acceptance by significant parts of the Church, has there developed an effective institutional framework for preserving the identity of the Jewish people within the Messianic Community. Gentile Christians who recognize that they have *joined* Israel, not *replaced* it, and Messianic Jews who identify fully with *both* the Jewish people *and* the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua, are now working together to heal the split between the Church and the Jewish people. The *Complete Jewish Bible* with the *Jewish New Testament* are forwarding this great work by presenting Jews and Gentiles alike with the Jewish unity of the *Tanakh* and the *B'rit Hadashah*.

## **XII. HOW THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE EXPRESSES THE B'KIT HADASHAH'S JEWISHNESS**

**Three Ways of Bringing Out the Jewishness of the B'rit Hadashah.** This translation accomplishes its goal of bringing out the Jewishness of the *B'rit Hadashah* in three somewhat overlapping ways — cosmetically (or superficially), culturally and religiously, and theologically.

- **Cosmetically.** Cosmetic changes from the usual renderings are the most frequent and obvious. The names "Jesus," "John," "James" and "Peter" never appear, only "Yeshua," "Yochanan," "Ya'akov" and "Kefa." The terms "immersion," "emissary," "execution-stake" and "Messianic community" (or "congregation") replace "baptism," "apostle," "cross" and "church." Semitic terms which belong to "Jewish English" (see below) substitute for certain English words — for example, "*talmid*" instead of "disciple" and "do *tzedakah*" instead of "give to charity." Many of these alterations replace "church language," in which buzzwords produce automatic responses, with neutral terminology that encourages the reader to think. Although any one of these changes is superficial, the sheer quantity of them impresses on the reader that the *B'rit Hadashah* is indeed a Jewish book, and this true and genuine effect is not superficial.
- **Culturally and Religiously.** Cultural-religious changes strengthen the reader's awareness of the Jewish cultural or religious context in which events of the *B'rit Hadashah* took place. One example is at *Mattityahu* 9:20, where

the lady seeking to be healed touches not merely the “fringe” or “edge” of Yeshua’s robe, but his “*tzitzit*,” the ritual tassel which the *Torah* instructs Jewish men to wear on the corners of their garments as a reminder to obey all of God’s *mitzvot* (commandments).<sup>60</sup> Another is at Acts 20:7, where the evening meeting of Sha’ul with the believers in Ephesus on (literally) “the one of the week,” usually rendered, “the first day of the week,” was probably held not on Sunday but, reflecting the Jewish, biblical way of organizing the calendar, on “*Motza’ei-Shabbat*,” that is, “the going-out of the Sabbath,” which takes place Saturday night.

- **Theologically.** Theological changes are the most penetrating, since New Testament translating has been thoroughly permeated by Gentile Christian theologies which de-emphasize the Jews as still God’s people, the *Torah* as still valid, and God as still One. An example of such a change is at Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 8:6, where the Greek word *nenomothetētai* means not merely that the New Covenant “has been enacted” on the basis of better promises, but on those promises “has been made *Torah*.” Another is at Romans 10:4, where the word *telos* does not mean that the Messiah terminates the Law, but that he is “the goal at which the *Torah* aims.” Theological implications of these and some other *CJB* New Testament renderings are discussed in Section XIII below.

**“Jewish English.”** Besides systematically using the original Semitic names for persons and places in and near the land of Israel the *Complete Jewish Bible*’s New Testament draws on what I call “Jewish English,” defined as Hebrew and Yiddish expressions which many English-speaking Jews incorporate into everyday speech. While meant to bring the Jewishness of the *B’rit Hadashah* into clearer focus, some readers may find this aspect of the translation unfamiliar or anachronistic and therefore exhausting or jarring; or they may take exception to particular decisions — for example, to using the word “*shalom*” instead of “peace,” or “*talmid*” instead of “disciple,” or the Yiddish word “*tsuris*” instead of “troubles” — or to generally *not* using “*Mashiach*” in place of “Messiah.” I expect such objections, because “Jewish English” is an *ad hoc* concept, so that each English-speaking Jew creates his own version of it. Some Jews are unaware of these speech patterns. Some regard certain phrases as second nature but are unacquainted with others. Some who know the expressions may find them uncongenial in a Bible, while others may tire from seeing too many unfamiliar terms scattered through the book. But since “Jewish English” in its manifold variety is widely used, I appeal for tolerance of those elements included in the *CJB*.

However, there are more Hebrew terms and more “Jewish English” in the *CJB*’s *B’rit Hadashah* than in its *Tanakh* because, as I indicated earlier, I don’t need to stress the *Tanakh*’s Jewishness. True, all the names in the *Tanakh* are presented in their Hebrew form, more than three thousand of them; and this may be difficult for some readers. But it shouldn’t be any harder to say “Achazyah” than “Ahaziah” or “Ya’akov” than “Jacob”; and it seems more authentic to point readers toward the actual Hebrew names than toward the English mispronunciations of them! To help

<sup>60</sup> Numbers 15:37–41

out, I have included Section XVI below on how to pronounce Hebrew; and at the end is an Pronouncing Explanatory Glossary which defines the terms, in addition to showing their pronunciation.

***Jewish New Testament Commentary.*** I mentioned in Section I that I wrote the *Jewish New Testament Commentary* as a companion volume to the *Jewish New Testament*. This verse-by-verse commentary, which can be used with the *CJB's B'rit Hadashah*, defends controversial *B'rit Hadashah* renderings and provides background of interest to both Jews and Christians. Passages which are problematical from a Jewish viewpoint are treated, such as *Mattityahu 27:25* ("His blood is on us and on our children!") and Yochanan's remarks in his gospel about "the Jews" (in my translation frequently "the Judeans"). Likewise, present-day points of friction between Jews and Christians are discussed at some appropriate place — for instance, the issue of whether evangelizing Jews is in principle unethical is treated in the context of 2 Corinthians 4:2 ("We refuse to make use of shameful underhanded methods, employing deception or distorting God's message."). Section XIII below deals briefly with a few topics of this kind, providing a taste of what *Jewish New Testament Commentary* readers can expect in its 930 pages.

***Minor Differences between the Jewish New Testament and the Complete Jewish Bible's B'rit Hadashah.*** My "fans," the people who have come to know and like the *Jewish New Testament*, may notice some minor differences between the *JNT* and the *CJB's B'rit Hadashah*. Actually, there would have been more of them had I not felt constrained to make as few modifications as possible for two reasons: (1) there may be public reading at congregation meetings and Bible studies where some will have this book and others will have the *JNT*, so that too many differences would cause confusion; and (2) I want this book to be easily usable with the *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, which is keyed to the *JNT*; again, differences might confuse *JNTC* users. So I limited changes primarily to conforming the spelling of some words to the pattern I decided on for the *CJB's Tanakh*; in particular, no Hebrew names or terms that begin with the Hebrew letter *het* start with "ch"; see Section XVI below. The word "Adonai" is now printed in large and small capital letters, as explained in Section X. I also re-formatted some of the poetry. There are a very few textual changes.

This is also why I did not respond to the desire of a number of readers that I reduce my use of Yiddish words in the text of the *B'rit Hadashah*. For them the Yiddish did not enhance the New Testament's Jewishness but intruded an anachronistic element — it made them think not of Bible times but of the Eastern European *shtetl* (rural Jewish village where Yiddish was spoken). Also, because Yiddish often has a humorous valence for English-speakers, it demeaned for them the seriousness of God's Word. Although there are only eleven purely Yiddish words in the *JNT*, and most of them are used only once, they are admittedly a strong spice. In their favor is the fact that they do convey the sense of the Greek original as well as or better than equivalent English words.

I also left unchanged the names which include the Hebrew words "Bar" and "Ben" (son of) and "Bat" (daughter of), even though in the *Tanakh* I use the English equivalents. Because these words are used so often in the Hebrew genealogies and elsewhere, too many "Bens" would overly disrupt the flow of the English.



### XIII. REASONS FOR CERTAIN *B'RIT HADASHAH* RENDERINGS

A number of the renderings in the *CJB*'s *B'rit Hadashah* differ from those found in most versions of the New Testament and have significant implications for theology. While there is not space in the *CJB* to defend all the controversial renderings and outline their theological implications, the following material is intended to demonstrate that such defenses exist, and it constitutes a sample of what is discussed more fully in the *Jewish New Testament Commentary*. Much of this material is presented topically in my *Messianic Jewish Manifesto*, or its abridgement, *Restoring the Jewishness of the Gospel: A Message for Christians*.<sup>61</sup>

**Did Yeshua “Fill” or “Fulfill” the *Torah*?** The common Greek word *plerōsai* means “to fill.” At *Mattityahu* 5:17 most translations render it “to fulfill.” The theological implication often drawn is that Yeshua fulfilled all the prophecies of the *Tanakh*, so that none remain today for the Jews, and that he obeyed every relevant *Torah* command, so that no one needs to observe the *Torah* today. But these conclusions do not follow logically, and in fact they contradict Yeshua’s immediately preceding statement that he did *not* come to abolish (or destroy) the *Torah*. More fundamental, however, is the translation issue of whether *plerōsai* ought to be rendered “to fulfill” at all. My view<sup>62</sup> is that Yeshua came not to *fulfill*, but to *fill* the *Torah* and the ethical pronouncements of the Prophets *full* with their *complete meaning*, so that everyone can know all that obedience entails. For this reason the *CJB*'s *B'rit Hadashah* says that Yeshua came “not to abolish but to complete.” In fact, this is the theme of the entire Sermon on the Mount;<sup>63</sup> and *Mattityahu* 5:17, understood in this way, is its theme sentence; for Yeshua goes on from there to give specifics. Interestingly, this understanding is concordant with Jewish tradition, which says that when the Messiah comes he will both explain obscure passages of *Torah* and actually change it.

**Binding and Loosing: Who Has the Authority to Determine *Halakhah*?** At *Mattityahu* 18:18 the Greek words usually rendered “bind” and “loose” are translated “prohibit” and “permit.” This reflects the first-century Jewish application of these concepts to their leaders, who were understood as having authority from God to decide what practices should be followed by the community, i.e., to determine *halakhah* (“Jewish law,” although this meaning dates from a later period). In verses 18–20 the Messiah transfers this power from the rabbis to his own *talmidim* (disciples). This authority was not assumed instantaneously,<sup>64</sup> nor was it assumed later when it should have been. But the fact that Messianic Jews and Gentiles have hitherto made little use of Yeshua’s far-reaching grant of authority does not cancel it. Moreover, this understanding gives verses 19–20 a different meaning from what most Christians understand—they say that two or three Messianic Community leaders suffice to determine proper practice (Messianic *halakhah*). The usual Christian application is that when two or three believers pray together, God listens. Though true, it is not the point of these verses.

<sup>61</sup> All these books are published by Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc.

<sup>62</sup> See David H. Stern, *Messianic Jewish Manifesto* and *Restoring the Jewishness of the Gospel: A Message for Christians* (Clarksville, MD, Jewish New Testament Publications, Inc., 1997).

<sup>63</sup> Matthew 5–7

<sup>64</sup> See Matthew 23:2.

**Does the Messiah Bring the *Torah* to an End, or Is He Its Goal?** At Romans 10:4 the *King James Version* gives a translation typical of most versions: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.” But Greek *telos*, which gives us the English word “teleology,” usually means “goal, purpose, consummation,” not “termination.” The Messiah did *not* bring the *Torah* to an end. Rather, as the *CJB’s B’rit Hadashah* renders it, “the goal at which the *Torah* aims is the Messiah, who offers righteousness to everyone who trusts.” This is the point which Sha’ul is making in the entire passage, Romans 9:30–10:13. For this reason the Greek word *de* at the beginning of Romans 10:6 is rendered as a continuative, “moreover,” rather than as an adversative, “but”; for the latter could imply that there are two paths to righteousness — through deeds (i.e., obeying the *Torah* apart from faith, verse 5) and through faith (verses 6–10). However, Sha’ul’s point throughout the passage, and indeed throughout Romans, is that for Jews and Gentiles alike there has never been more than one route to righteousness, namely, trusting God; so that the *Torah* is built on trusting God and from beginning to end has always required faith.<sup>65</sup>

**The New Testament Has Been Given as *Torah*.** At Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 8:6 most translations inform us that the New Covenant has been “enacted” or “legislated” on the basis of better promises. This would be an adequate translation were the subject matter Athenian legislation or Roman decrees. But the Greek word used here, *nenomothetētai*, is a compound of *nomos*, which can mean “law” generally but in the book of Messianic Jews always means the *Torah* specifically, and *tithēmi*, a common word meaning “put” or “place.” The only other appearance of *nenomothetētai* in the New Testament is a few verses earlier, at 7:11, where all agree that it refers to the giving of the *Torah* on Mount Sinai, as do the related words *nomothesia* (Romans 9:4) and *nomothetēs* (*Ya’akov* 4:12).

Therefore the *CJB* says that the New Covenant “has been given as *Torah* on the basis of better promises.” This not only strengthens the theological contention that the *Torah* remains in force, but makes it clear that the New Covenant given through Yeshua is *Torah* just as much as the Sinaitic Covenant given through Moshe.

**“Works of the Law” and “Under the Law”: Is the *Torah* Legalistic?** The Greek phrases *erga nomou* and *upo nomon* were coined by Sha’ul and used by him in three of his letters — Romans, Galatians and 1 Corinthians; each appears ten times in the New Testament. They are usually translated “works of the law” and “under the law,” respectively. This often causes the reader to infer that keeping the *Torah* is bad, and that being within the framework of *Torah*-observance is bad. The *CJB’s B’rit Hadashah*, following the lead of Cranfield,<sup>66</sup> takes these phrases as referring not to the *Torah* itself but to man’s legalistic perversion of it. Therefore *erga nomou* is rendered, “legalistic observance of *Torah* commands,” and *upo nomon*, “in subjection to the system which

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<sup>65</sup> Romans 1:16–17. For more on this, see Daniel P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law: Contrast or Continuum?* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1980), as well as Chapter V of my *Messianic Jewish Manifesto*, mentioned above.

<sup>66</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield, *International Critical Commentary: The Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, Ltd., 1979), p. 853.

results from perverting the *Torah* into legalism.” The reader can then infer, correctly, that according to the New Testament teaching of Sha’ul, legalism — whether Jewish, Christian or other — is bad, but living according to God’s *Torah* is good.

**The Land of Israel in the New Covenant.** The Greek phrase *ê gê* is usually translated “the earth,” but eighteen times in the New Testament it refers to the land of Israel. Two are explicit — *Mattityahu* 2:20–21 calls the Holy Land *Eretz-Yisra’el* (the land of Isra’el). Four are citations from the *Tanakh* — *Mattityahu* 5:5 (Psalm 37:11), *Mattityahu* 24:30 and Revelation 1:7 (Zechariah 12:10–14), and Ephesians 6:3 (Deuteronomy 5:16). Five are based on the *Tanakh* — Luke 4:25 and *Ya’akov* 5:17–18 (1 Kings 17:1, 18:1, 41–45), Messianic Jews 11:9 (Genesis 12, 13, 15, 20, 23), and Revelation 20:9 (Ezekiel 38–39). The remaining eight are implied by the context — *Mattityahu* 5:13, 10:34, 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 12:51, 21:23, 23:44; and Revelation 11:10. In an age when many Christian theologians use “replacement theology” (which asserts that the Church has replaced the Jews as God’s people) in an attempt to prove that the land of Isra’el is no longer promised by God to the Jewish people, it is important to see that the physical land of Israel plays a significant role in the New Testament’s portrayals of God’s plan for the Jews in particular and for humanity in general, past, present and future.

#### XIV. TANAKH PROPHECIES FULFILLED BY YESHUA THE MESSIAH

As noted in Section XI, the most convincing evidence of Yeshua’s being Isra’el’s Messiah is the number of prophecies in the *Tanakh* that he fulfilled at his first coming. Following is a partial list of these Messianic prophecies, along with the New Testament verses verifying Yeshua’s fulfillment of them.

Space does not permit showing why each of these prophecies should be understood as referring to Yeshua the Messiah. Many books discuss this subject in detail, mentioning other *Tanakh* prophecies which point to Yeshua.<sup>67</sup>

Besides prophecies there are incidents in the *Tanakh* which function as pictures in advance, or “types,” of Yeshua. What is known in Judaism as the *akedah* (“binding”), the near-sacrifice of Yitz’chak by Avraham, is explicitly called a type of Yeshua the Messiah at Messianic Jews (Hebrews) 11:17–19. The life of Yosef provides another example: his brothers tried to kill him, but in the end he saved them from death, even though they did not recognize him at first. This does not mean that Genesis 22 contains a “prophecy” that Yeshua would be raised from the dead, or that Genesis 37–45 states that the Jewish people, as a nation, would initially reject their Savior. Rather it shows that God’s salvation plan unfolding itself in history has a unity determined by him from the beginning to be consummated in Yeshua the Messiah. Indeed Yeshua himself explained it this way to two of his *talmidim*.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> See Appendix VII of *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 2nd ed. (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph and Company, 1884), by the Messianic Jew Alfred Edersheim, in which a list of 456 *Tanakh* passages messianically applied in ancient rabbinic writings is supported by 558 quotations from those writings. Also see J. Barton Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

<sup>68</sup> Luke 24:25–27

## INTRODUCTION

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PROPHECY: THE MESSIAH MUST. . .	SOURCE IN THE <i>TANAKH</i>	FULFILLMENT IN THE <i>B'RIT HADASHAH</i>
Be the "seed of the woman" that would "bruise" or "crush" the serpent's "head"	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4; 1 Yochanan 3:8
Be the "seed of Avraham"	Genesis 12:3	Mattityahu 1:1; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16
Be the "seed of Yitz'chak"	Genesis 17:19; 21:12	Mattityahu 1:2; Luke 3:34; Messianic Jews 11:17-19
Be the "seed of Ya'akov" and the "star out of Ya'akov" who will "have dominion"	Genesis 28:14; Numbers 24:17, 19	Mattityahu 1:2; Luke 3:34; Revelation 22:16
Be a descendant of Y'hudah	Genesis 49:10	Mattityahu 1:2-3; Luke 3:33; Messianic Jews 7:14
Be a descendant of David and heir to his throne	2 Samuel 7:12-13; Isaiah 9:6(7); 11:1-5; Jeremiah 23:5	Mattityahu 1:1, 6; Acts 13:22-23; Romans 1:3
Have eternal existence	Micah 5:1(2)	Yochanan 1:1, 14; 8:58; Ephesians 1:3-4; Colossians 1:15-19; Revelation 1:18
Be the Son of God	Psalm 2:7; Proverbs 30:4	Mattityahu 3:17; Luke 1:32
Have God's own name, <i>Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh</i> , applied to him	Isaiah 9:5-6(6-7); Jeremiah 23:5-6	Philippians 2:9-11
Come 69 x 7 years (483 years) after the rebuilding of the wall of Yerushalayim	Daniel 9:24-26	Mattityahu 2:1, 16, 19; Luke 3:1, 23
Be born of a virgin <sup>69</sup>	Isaiah 7:14	Mattityahu 1:18-2:1; Luke 1:26-35

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<sup>69</sup> The Hebrew word *'almah* in Isaiah 7:14 means "a young woman," and in the context of the *Tanakh* always "a young woman of unsullied reputation," which is why the Jewish translators of the Septuagint, the Greek version of the *Tanakh* prepared 200 years before Yeshua's birth, rendered this word into Greek as *parthenos*, "virgin"; this is the word used at *Mattityahu* 1:23.

PROPHECY: THE MESSIAH MUST. . .	SOURCE IN THE <i>TANAKH</i>	FULFILLMENT IN THE <i>B'RIT HADASHAH</i>
Be born in Beit-Lechem, in Y'hudah	Micah 5:1(2)	Mattityahu 2:1; Luke 2:4-7
Be adored by great persons	Psalm 72:10-11	Mattityahu 2:1-11
Be preceded by one who would announce him	Isaiah 40:3-5; Malachi 3:1	Mattityahu 3:1-3; Luke 1:17; 3:2-6
Be anointed with the Spirit of God	Isaiah 11:2, 61:1; Psalm 45:8(7)	Mattityahu 3:16; Yochanan 3:34; Acts 10:38
Be a prophet like Moshe	Deuteronomy 18:15, 18	Acts 3:20-22
Have a ministry of binding up the brokenhearted, proclaiming liberty to the captives and announcing the acceptable year of the Lord	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
Have a ministry of healing	Isaiah 35:5-6; 42:18	Mattityahu 11:5; throughout the Gospels
Have a ministry in the Galil	Isaiah 8:23-9:1(9:1-2)	Mattityahu 4:12-16
Be tender and compassionate	Isaiah 40:11; 42:3	Mattityahu 12:15, 20; Messianic Jews 4:15
Be meek and unostentatious	Isaiah 42:2	Mattityahu 12:15-16, 19
Be sinless and without guile	Isaiah 53:9	1 Kefa 2:22
Bear the reproaches due others	Isaiah 53:11-12; Psalm 69:10(9)	Romans 15:3
Be a priest	Psalm 110:4	Messianic Jews 5:5-6; 6:20; 7:15-17
Enter publicly into Yerushalayim on a donkey	Zechariah 9:9	Mattityahu 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11
Enter the Temple with authority	Malachi 3:1	Mattityahu 21:12-24:1; Luke 2:27-38, 45-50; Yochanan 2:13-22

## INTRODUCTION

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PROPHECY: THE MESSIAH MUST. . .	SOURCE IN THE <i>TANAKH</i>	FULFILLMENT IN THE <i>B'RIT HADASHAH</i>
Be hated without cause	Isaiah 49:7; Psalm 69:5(4)	Yochanan 15:24–25
Be undesired and rejected by his own people	Isaiah 53:2–3; 63:3, 5; Psalm 69:9(8)	Mark 6:3; Luke 9:58; Yochanan 1:11; 7:3–5
Be rejected by the Jewish leadership	Psalm 118:22	Mattityahu 21:42; Yochanan 7:48
Be plotted against by Jews and Gentiles together	Psalm 2:1–2	Acts 4:27
Be betrayed by a friend	Psalm 41:10(9); 55:13–15(12–14)	Mattityahu 26:21–25, 47–50; Yochanan 13:18–21; Acts 1:16–18
Be sold for 30 pieces of silver	Zechariah 11:12	Mattityahu 26:15
Have his price thrown into the Temple treasury	Zechariah 11:13	Mattityahu 27:6–7
Be forsaken by his <i>talmidim</i>	Zechariah 13:7	Mattityahu 26:31, 56
Be struck on the cheek	Micah 4:14(5:1)	Mattityahu 27:30
Be spat on	Isaiah 50:6	Mattityahu 26:67; 27:30
Be mocked	Psalm 22:8–9(7–8)	Mattityahu 26:67–68; 27:31, 39–44
Be beaten	Isaiah 50:6	Mattityahu 26:67; 27:26, 30
Be executed by crucifixion, by having his hands and feet pierced <sup>70</sup>	Psalm 22:17(16); Zechariah 12:10	Mattityahu 27:35; Luke 24:39; Yochanan 19:18, 34–37; 20:20–28; Revelation 1:7
Be thirsty during his execution	Psalm 22:16(15)	Yochanan 19:28

<sup>70</sup> The Septuagint (see footnote 69) has: “They pierced my hands and my feet,” implying the Hebrew word *karu* (כָּרוּ) in its source text. The Masoretic Hebrew text, accepted as standard in traditional Judaism, has *k'ari* (כָּאָרִי), and the line reads, “Like a lion, my hands and my feet.” See Section VIII, paragraph 6.

PROPHECY: THE MESSIAH MUST. . .	SOURCE IN THE <i>TANAKH</i>	FULFILLMENT IN THE <i>B'RIT HADASHAH</i>
Be given vinegar to quench that thirst	Psalms 69:22(21)	Mattityahu 27:34
Be executed without having a bone broken	Exodus 12:46; Psalms 34:21(20)	Yochanan 19:33–36
Be considered a transgressor	Isaiah 53:12	Mattityahu 27:3, Luke 23:32
Be “cut off and have nothing...” 69 x 7 years after rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem	Daniel 9:24–26	Romans 5:6; 1 Kefa 3:18
Be the one whose death would atone for sins of mankind	Isaiah 53:5–7, 12	Mark 10:45; Yochanan 1:29; 3:16; Acts 8:30–35
Be buried with the rich when dead	Isaiah 53:9	Mattityahu 27:57–60
Be raised from the dead	Isaiah 53:9–10; Psalms 2:7–8; 16:10	Mattityahu 28:1–20; Acts 2:23–36; 13:33–37; 1 Corinthians 15:4–6
Ascend to the right hand of God	Psalms 16:11; 68:19(18); 110:1	Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9–11; 7:55; Messianic Jews 1:3
Exercise his priestly office in heaven	Zechariah 6:13	Romans 8:34; Messianic Jews 7:25–8:2
Be the cornerstone of God’s Messianic Community	Isaiah 28:16; Psalms 118:22–23	Mattityahu 21:42; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Kefa 2:5–7
Be sought after by Gentiles as well as Jews	Isaiah 11:10; 42:1	Acts 10:45–46; 13:46–48
Be accepted by the Gentiles	Isaiah 11:10; 42:1–4; 49:1–6	Mattityahu 12:18–21; Romans 9:30; 10:20; 11:11; 15:10
Be the king	Psalms 2:6	Yochanan 18:33–37
Be seen by Israel as pierced <sup>71</sup>	Zechariah 12:10; Psalms 22:17(16)	Luke 24:39; Yochanan 19:34–37 Revelation 1:7

<sup>71</sup> See footnote 70.

**XV. SYNAGOGUE USAGE OF THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE****Reading in the Synagogue from the Torah, the Prophets and the B'rit Hadashah.**

Every Saturday morning, in synagogues all over the world, *Torah* scrolls are ceremoniously removed from arks, carried through the aisles to be touched reverently by the congregants (the custom symbolizes devotion to the Word of God), and then placed on the *bimah* (pulpit). Seven persons are called up to recite blessings before and after they or more experienced readers read the sacred Hebrew text of the *Torah* from the scroll. The practice of public reading from the *Torah* dates back at least to the time of Ezra,<sup>72</sup> if not to King Y'hoshafat<sup>73</sup> or King Yoshiyahu;<sup>74</sup> and the *B'rit Hadashah* attests it as well.<sup>75</sup> The portion (*parashah*) read each week, anywhere between one and six chapters long, is not picked on the spur of the moment but follows a prescribed sequence tied to the Jewish year. Fifty-four *parashot* are read in order, commencing with *B'reshet* (Genesis) 1 on the autumn holiday *Simchat-Torah* (Rejoicing of the *Torah*) and ending with *D'varim* (Deuteronomy) 34 on *Simchat-Torah* the following year, when with great joy the scroll is immediately re-rolled, and *B'reshet* 1 is read again.

Moreover, the reading from the Bible does not end with the *Torah* portion. After the *Torah*, a related section from the Prophets is read; this is called the *haftarah* (completion), since it completes the prescribed synagogue Scripture reading. The *B'rit Hadashah* reports that in Natzeret (Nazareth) Yeshua was invited to read the *haftarah*, which that week was from the book of Isaiah, and he daringly applied the passage to himself.<sup>76</sup> In times past there was also a reading from the Writings section of the Bible, but this custom has fallen away.

Being called up to the *bimah* for the *Torah* reading is an honor. The Hebrew word for such an invitation is '*aliyah*'; it means "going up." (The same word, '*aliyah*,' means "immigrating to Israel," since it is a spiritual "going up" for a Jew to return to the land God gave to our people.) The first '*aliyah* is given to a *cohen* (priest) if one is present, the second to a *Levi* (Levite) if present, and the rest to any Jew. The '*oleh* (the person called up for an '*aliyah*) recites the blessing, stands at the *bimah* while he or the *ba'al-kore* (pronounced *ba'al ko-ray* — the master reader) reads from the scroll; he then recites the closing blessing, remains standing there during the following '*aliyah*, shakes hands all around, and then returns to his seat. In Orthodox Judaism only men are given '*aliyot*; in Conservative and Reform Judaism both men and women may be called up.

**How the Complete Jewish Bible Provides the Necessary Information for Public Reading of the Bible in the Synagogue on Shabbat.** The *Complete Jewish Bible* contains all the information (except Jewish calendar dates) that one needs in order to organize or follow the synagogue readings from the *Torah* and the Prophets. In addition, I have suggested readings from the *B'rit Hadashah* that are related to the

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<sup>72</sup> Nehemiah 8:1

<sup>73</sup> 2 Chronicles 17:9

<sup>74</sup> 2 Kings 22:8–23:3

<sup>75</sup> Acts 13:14–15

<sup>76</sup> Luke 4:16–30



*parashah* for each week. I chose them because they either quote or allude to a passage from the *parashah* or deal with the same subject matter. Since Messianic Judaism is in its formative stages and has not determined “prescribed readings,” I have sometimes suggested more material than is needed. Congregations should choose a portion of appropriate length or substitute another passage if it seems more suitable.

At the beginning of each *parashah* the *CJB* gives its name and its included Bible verses. Like the books of the *Tanakh* themselves, each *parashah* is named for its first words (the English translation of these is supplied). At the end of each *parashah* are given its *haftarah* and *B’rit Hadashah* readings. The table starting on page 1616 summarizes this information for all 54 *Shabbats*.

Within each *Torah* portion are bold-face italicized Roman numerals from “*ii*” to “*vii*” indicating where each of the *‘aliyot* begins (the first *‘aliyah* begins at the start of the *parashah*). Near the end of the seventh *‘aliyah* is the word “*Maftir*”; whoever is to read the *haftarah* starts by reading these final verses of the *Torah* portion from the scroll and then reads the Prophets portion from a printed edition of the Bible.

The prescribed readings differ somewhat between the Ashkenazic (European) and Sefardic (Middle Eastern and North African) Jewish communities; where necessary “*A*” and “*S*” indicate the differences.

The Jewish calendar also enters the picture. The Jewish calendar is unusual in that its months are lunar, but its year is solar. Since a lunar month is twenty-nine or thirty days long, twelve lunar months take about 354 days. To prevent the year from moving through the seasons (as the Muslim year does), there is a system for leap years; however, the leap year doesn’t add merely a day, but a whole month. This happens seven years out of nineteen—every two or three years the month of “Second Adar” is added in early spring. Thus in leap years, there are four or five more *Shabbats* than in regular years; so in leap years each of the fifty-four *parashot* is read separately, but in regular years, with only about fifty *Shabbats*, some of them are read together. The necessary adjustments are indicated where needed by the abbreviations “*RY*” for regular years and “*LY*” for leap years.

**Messianic adaptations.** At the end of the second, forty-eighth and forty-ninth *parashot* I have included a “Messianic adaptation” of the prescribed *haftarah* reading. For reasons not conclusively known, although some have speculated that it was in order to avoid the passage in the *Tanakh* that most clearly prophesies Yeshua as the Messiah, the rabbis of old did not select *Yeshu‘ahu* (Isaiah) 52:13–53:12 to be a *haftarah* reading. The portions before and after are included, but this one is not. I can safely say that it expresses the will and spiritual discernment of the Messianic Jewish community that this passage should not be excluded from the *haftarot* in the synagogue.

**Readings for Jewish Holidays.** In addition, there are *Torah* and *haftarah* readings prescribed for each of the biblical holidays and for some other Jewish holidays and fast-days. The table starting on page 1616 lists these, along with suggested *B’rit Hadashah* readings, and with the same “Messianic adaptation” of two of the *haftarot*. Also it is suggested that the *Torah* readings for *Yom Kippur* add Leviticus 17 because of its verse 11, and that the *haftarah* for Tish‘ah B’Av include Zechariah 12.

The number of *aliyot* is different on the Holidays. On *Yom Kippur* morning there are six (except that if it falls on *Shabbat*, there are seven). On *Rosh-HaShanah* and the

## INTRODUCTION

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three festivals (*Pesach*, *Shavu'ot*, and *Sukkot*) there are five. On *Rosh-Hodesh* (new moon, start of a month) and *Hol-HaMo'ed* (middle days of the *Sukkot* and *Pesach* festivals) there are four. On *Yom Kippur* afternoon there are two plus the *Maftir*.

**Blessings Before and After Reading from the *B'rit Hadashah*.** The blessings pronounced before and after the *Torah* and *haftarah* readings can be found in virtually any *siddur* (Jewish prayerbook). Following is a suggested pair of prayers for before and after reading from the *B'rit Hadashah*:

Before:

*Barukh attah* ADONAI Eloheinu *melekh-ha'olam, asher natan lanu et Yeshua binkha k'meshichenu goalenu moshi'enu kapporatenu va'adonenu, ve'et sifrei B'rit heChadashah le 'amenu ulekhoh ha'amim. Barukh attah* ADONAI *noten yeshu'ah b'Yeshua HaMashiach.*

Praised be you, O LORD our God, king of the universe, who has given us Yeshua your son as our Messiah, our redeemer, our savior, our atonement and our Lord, and the books of the New Covenant to our people and to all the peoples. Praised be you, O LORD, giver of salvation in Yeshua the Messiah.

After:

*Barukh attah* ADONAI Eloheinu *melekh-ha'olam, asher natan et d'varkha haTanakh vaB'rit heChadashah lekhol b'nei-adam. Barukh attah* ADONAI *mevi et hago'el Yeshua l'ma'an sh'mo b'ahavah.*

Praised be you, O LORD our God, king of the universe, who has given your Word, the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Covenant, to all humanity. Praised be you, O LORD, who, for his own name's sake, in love, has brought the Redeemer, Yeshua.

## XVI. HOW TO PRONOUNCE THE HEBREW NAMES AND TERMS

There is a "Pronouncing Explanatory Glossary" at the back of the book which shows how to pronounce and accent each Hebrew name and term, gives the usual English forms of all names, and translates all terms. Its first page gives a brief summary of how I transliterate Hebrew into English.

There is also a "Reverse Glossary" for some of the more common English names and terms, from which the reader can learn that the person he is used to calling Isaac is known in the *CJB* as Yitz'chak, that Mary is called Miryam and that "crucify" is rendered as "execute on a stake (as a criminal)."

But a number of people familiar with the *Jewish New Testament* have complained that they felt overwhelmed trying to cope with its Hebrew. Therefore in this Section, I do what I can to help readers pronounce Hebrew correctly. I know that some will find it tedious, but others will appreciate my attention to the subject. It is the sort of thing one can safely skip and return to at one's convenience.

I transliterate Hebrew names and terms as most modern Israelis would pronounce them. There is a scholarly way to do this very accurately, but I haven't utilized it because it uses a number of signs that would look strange to most people, only adding to their confusion. Following is an explanation of my system.

**Vowels.** In my transliteration of Hebrew, the vowels are pronounced as follows:

<u>Vowel</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>	<u>Examples in Hebrew Words</u>
a	as in “ <b>f</b> ather” (fah-ther)	Adam (ah- <b>dahm</b> )
ai	as in “ <b>a</b> isle,” a long-i sound, like “high,” “pie.” Not a long-a sound	Haggai (hah- <b>guy</b> ) El Shaddai (el shah- <b>die</b> )
e	as in “ <b>b</b> ed,” a short-e sound “er” sounds like “air,” not “ur”	Hesed ( <b>heh</b> -sehd) Peretz ( <b>peh</b> -retz) Gershon (gehr- <b>shone</b> )
ee	as in “ <b>f</b> eed,” long-e	Sheetim (shee- <b>teem</b> )
ei	as in “ <b>w</b> eigh,” a long-a sound like “day,” “main.” Not a long-i or long-e sound.	‘Ein-Gedi (‘ain- <b>geh</b> -dee) Beit-Lechem (bait- <b>leh</b> -chehm)
i	when accented: as in marine, long-e when not accented: as in “ <b>i</b> nvest,” short-i; in last syllable, even if not accented, long-e	cohanim (ko-hah- <b>neem</b> ) Migdal (mig- <b>dahl</b> ) Gershuni (gehr- <b>shoo</b> -nee)
o	as in “ <b>s</b> o,” long-o, like “boat” or as in “ <b>m</b> ore” an “aw” sound	Gat-Rimmon (gaht-rim- <b>moan</b> ) Dor (door)
u	as in “ <b>r</b> ule,” an “oo” sound, like “shoot”	Hizkiyahu (hiz-kee- <b>yah</b> -hoo) Beit-Tzur (bait-tzoor)

’ I use the apostrophe in two ways — to represent the vowel *sh’va* (:) and the consonant *alef* (א—see next paragraph). The *sh’va* is an unaccented dull sort of vowel, an “uh” sound like the “a” in “above,” the second “i” in “similarly,” or the second “o” in “consonant.” Thus Hebrew “G’rar” is pronounced “guh-**rahr**.” The usual representation, Gerar, gets people to say “geh-**rahr**,” which isn’t quite right. Sometimes I represent a *sh’va* by nothing at all; but in this case, “Grar” doesn’t get people to leave quite enough space between the “g” and the “rar.” Similarly, “Y’hudah” should be pronounced somewhere between “yeh-hoo-**dah**” and “yoo-**dah**.” I use the apostrophe to represent *sh’va* only when I feel it’s needed to bring forth the right pronunciation; otherwise, I just leave it out; for example, I write “Gilgal,” not “Gil’gal”; “Shimshon,” not “Shim’shon.” In some cases it’s a hard call whether to stick in an apostrophe or not.

**Consonants.** The consonants are used and pronounced as follows:

- ’ As I said, the apostrophe represents the Hebrew letter *alef* (א) and the Hebrew vowel-sound *sh’va* (˘). *Alef* is considered a consonant, but it’s best described as a slight break in the flow of sound, like the break between the two “uh’s” of “uh-uh,” which people say when they mean “No,” or the break between “umbrella” and “above” in “Put the umbrella above the table.” So in the Hebrew word “Pa’ran,” the apostrophe makes you separate the “Pa” from the “ran” instead of running the syllables together, which you would otherwise do (pah’-**rahn**, not **parrahn**). “Eli’el” is pronounced “elly-’el,” not “ellyell.” “Natan’el” is pronounced “nah-tan-**ell**,” not “nah-tah-**nell**.” When a word starts with *alef* I leave the apostrophe out; thus all transliterated Hebrew words that commence with English vowels start with *alef*; words commencing with a reverse apostrophe followed by an English vowel start with the Hebrew letter ‘*ayin* (אײ—see next paragraph).
- ‘ The reverse-apostrophe represents Hebrew letter ‘*ayin* (אײ—pronounced ‘ah-yin), when it isn’t signifying the start of a quote-within-a-quote. This is a glottal stop, a sound not found in English or other Western European languages. It’s a sound produced deep in the throat, a kind of gagging sound. English sometimes represents this sound by the letter “g,” as in “Gaza Strip” or “Gomorra**h**,” but that’s not really it. Arabic has it, but it’s a hard sound for westerners to produce. However, if nothing else works, make the break-sound for *alef* described in the preceding paragraph, and that will pass. Many Israelis do no better.
- h and ch represent Hebrew letters *heh* (ה) and *het* (ח). The letter *heh* is always represented by “h,” since *heh* is the equivalent of English “h.” At the end of a word it is usually silent, as in English “Hurrah!” and elsewhere it has the ordinary English “h” sound, as in “horse” or “greyhound.” The Hebrew word *Halleluyah* has both kinds of *heh*. The *het* is what causes the problems. It has a guttural sound, like the “ch” in “Johann Sebastian Bach” and “Loch Lomond.” If it occurs in the middle of a word, I represent it by “ch,” as in “Beit-Lechem.” At the beginning of a word, however, I represent it by “h.” My reason is that otherwise, people may give it an English “ch” sound (“church”) or a French one (“Chanel #5”). Thus the reader can’t determine from the *Complete Jewish Bible* whether a Hebrew name starts with *heh* or *het*. This seems a small price to pay for assuring that no one will say that the Jewish wedding canopy (*hupah*) is a “tchoopah” or call the city of Hevron (Hebron) by the name of a gas station (“Chevron”).
- kh represents Hebrew letter *kaf* (כ) when it’s a “soft” *kaf*. It too has the sound of “ch” in “Bach.”
- k, c The letter “k” represents the Hebrew letter *kuf* (ק) and the letter *kaf* (כ) when it’s hard. I use the letter “c” for *kaf* in the word *cohen* (priest) because the name Cohen is so well known in English.

- g represents the Hebrew letter *gimel* (ג) and is always hard, never a j-sound. Thus the “g” in “Gezer” is pronounced as in “get,” not as in “gem.”
- v, b The letter “v” represents both *vav* (ו), when it’s a consonant, and soft *bet* (“vet”—ב), while “b” represents hard “bet” (ב).
- p, f The letter “p” represents hard *peh* (פ), while “f” represents soft *peh* (“feh”—פ).
- z and tz The letter “z” represents zayin (ז); while the two letters “tz” represent *tzadeh* (צ), which has the sound of “ts” in “tsetse fly.”
- r represents *resh* (ר), which ideally one should produce from the back of the mouth, somewhat as the French do, so that it sounds somewhere between “r” and hard “g.” If this doesn’t work for you, don’t worry about it.
- s represents the letters *samekh* (ס) and *sin* (ש); both have the “s” sound.
- sh The two letters “sh” represent the Hebrew letter *shin* (ש).
- d, l, m, n, y These represent, respectively, *dalet* (ד), *lamed* (ל), *mem* (מ), *nun* (נ), and *yud* (י) and present no problems.
- t represents *tet* (ט) and *tav* (ת); both have the “t” sound. Ashkenazic pronunciation treats “tav” differently than Israeli (Sephardic) pronunciation — a “tav” at the end of a word will be pronounced “s” by Ashkenazim, who pronounce *Shabbat* **Shab**-bes, not **Shab-bat**.

**Accentuation.** The last example also highlights the fact that Ashkenazim often move the accent closer to the beginning of a word. For another example, the word *Torah* is pronounced “toe-**rah**” by Israelis, but Ashkenazim say “**toe**-rah,” and some with Polish or other eastern European background say “**toy**-rah.” The *CJB* glossary gives Israeli (Sephardic) accentings in nearly all cases; the exceptions are for words and names that are well-known among Jews in America, such as Moshe, which is pronounced “Mo-**she**” in Israel but “**Mo**-she” in America. In the glossary it appears as “**Mo**-she\*”; the asterisk means, “If you want to say it the correct Israeli way, accent the last syllable.”

## ***XVII. USING THE COMPLETE JEWISH BIBLE***

In this Section, I explain certain conventions I have adopted for the *CJB* and describe a number of reader’s helps.

**Semitic Terms and Names.** Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish terms (including names of God) appear in italics (*bat-kol*, *El ‘Elyon*), but Semitic names of persons and places do not (Shlomo, Ashdod). Thus “*Levi*” when it’s a Levite and “Levi” when it’s a person.

**Textual Notes.** In this edition of the *CJB* discussion of textual issues is kept to a minimum. About twenty passages in the *B'rit Hadashah* regarded as inauthentic by most scholars, none more than two verses in length, are absent from the text and placed in footnotes at the bottom of the page. Three passages — Mattityahu 6:13b, Mark 16:9–20 and Yochanan 7:53–8:11 — are included in the text but given a footnote briefly explaining the textual problem. In the *Tanakh* there are fewer issues of this kind; they too are dealt with in footnotes. This edition offers almost no textual variants or alternative readings.

**Translator's Interpolations.** Words in brackets are explanatory interpolations supplied by the translator and corresponding to nothing in the original text. There are more of these in the *Tanakh* than in the *B'rit Hadashah*; however, two examples from the *B'rit Hadashah* are at *Mattityahu* (Matthew) 1:21; 6:23. Words in parentheses are parenthetical remarks that are present in the original text; for an example, see *Mattityahu* 1:23. Certain words or phrases in the original language may be represented by “expanded” renderings<sup>77</sup> which for philosophical reasons<sup>78</sup> are not distinguished from the rest of the translation. Let me say here that there are places in the *CJB*, especially in the *Tanakh*, where some might consider the rendering so free that it should have been placed in brackets. On such things opinions differ; but in any case, the reader has been warned.

**Other Features.** Following is a summary of reader's helps to be found at the front and back of the book:

**Three Tables of Contents for the Books of the Bible (pages vii–xi).** At the front of the book are three tables of contents to help readers with varying backgrounds to locate Bible books quickly. The first lists the books of the *Tanakh* in the Jewish order found in Hebrew Bibles and Jewish translations, and in the *CJB* itself. The second lists them in the order found in the Septuagint and seen in virtually all Christian translations. The third lists all the books of the Bible in alphabetical order by both English and Hebrew names.

**Pronouncing Explanatory Glossary (pages 1556–1604).** At the back of the book are five items. The first is a comprehensive glossary of Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish words and names used in the *CJB*. Its first page summarizes rules of Hebrew pronunciation (Section XVI above deals with this in more detail). The definitions and explanations vary in length from one line to a paragraph. More information is provided for names and terms in the *B'rit Hadashah* than for those which appear only in the *Tanakh*; this is because these entries already existed in the *Jewish New Testament*, but I decided that providing similar entries for the names and terms in the *Tanakh* would make the Glossary too long.

**“Reverse” Glossary (pages 1605–1609).** Readers acquainted with the Bible in other versions may wish to know what the *CJB* substitutes for names and terms familiar to them. In the Reverse Glossary one may look up words such as “apostle” and “John” to find their *CJB* equivalents (“emissary” and “Yochanan”).

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<sup>77</sup> See, for example, the discussions of *upo nomon* and *erga nomou* in Sections II and XIII.

<sup>78</sup> See Section II.

**Tanakh Passages Cited in the B'rit Hadashah (pages 1610–1615).** In order to highlight the connection between the New Testament and the *Tanakh*, on which it builds, *Tanakh* verses cited in the *B'rit Hadashah* are printed there in **boldface** and their sources given in footnotes at the bottom of the page. The chapter-and-verse numberings and the order of the books of the *Tanakh* within a given footnote are those found in the *CJB's Tanakh*. Where the Christian versions (and some Jewish ones) have a different chapter and verse, these are given afterwards in parentheses, e.g., Joel 3:1–5(2:28–32), Psalm 69:9(8).

The “Index of *Tanakh* Passages Cited in the *B'rit Hadashah*” lists every one of the 484 *Tanakh* verses cited in the text of the *B'rit Hadashah* and shows for each one all the verses in the *B'rit Hadashah* citing that *Tanakh* verse.

**Scripture Readings (pages 1616–1623).** As explained in Section XV above, these two tables list synagogue readings from the *Torah*, the Prophets and the *B'rit Hadashah* for the fifty-four *Shabbats* and for the festivals and fasts throughout the Jewish calendar year.

**Maps and Map Indexes (pages 1624–1631).** The Bible narratives are tied to particular places, but it is beyond the scope of the *CJB* to provide more than the limited geographical information found in the five maps of this section.

### VIII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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May God bless you richly as you read from his Word in this version.

DAVID H. STERN

Jerusalem, Israel  
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