



# Oral Torah

## Proof of its legitimacy and necessity

### The New Testament "testifies" of the legitimacy of oral Torah

Let's discover how

Evidence that the concept of "oral Torah" (*verbal instruction*) is legitimate and its use is absolutely essential for understanding the Bible (*including the New Testament*).

Introduction:

The opinions presented herein are also found elsewhere with a bit less detail within the volume of website material. Some of it is a direct duplication or slight modification of text within those other discussions; however, if a person does not read those other discussions this material would be missed. The duplication is necessary due to the subject's utmost importance. It is so crucial that I decided to specifically prioritize the topic by dedicating this article to the subject.

This article is not meant to be a replacement of those other articles which focus upon entirely different objectives and there is much more in them that one needs to understand. Therefore, please do not refrain from reading the other material when you come across the duplication since, if you do so, you will miss the other facts presented.

Within this discussion I will prove that "oral Torah" is a legitimate and necessary concept for proper interpretation of Scripture. In short, I will prove that without "oral Torah" it is impossible to fully or correctly understand the teachings of the Bible.

Please note that my primary focus is upon the **concept** of oral Torah. Specific teachings found within that oral Torah are not the subject of this discussion. My focus here is to irrefutably prove the "oral Torah" **concept** to be absolutely sound and in fact necessary for a correct understanding of the Bible, **including the New Testament**.

It must also be understood that the material presented herein is from my own personal perspective and should not be assumed to represent what many within orthodox or ultra-orthodox Judaism perceive as "oral Torah". They often define "oral Torah" primarily as the more legalistic and pedantic aspects of Torah. That is, they focus upon *halacha* (legal aspects) and rabbinic decrees (laws enacted by rabbis that are not actually part of what is considered to have originated from Moses). Therefore, please do not judge this material against what the more legalistic elements of Judaism may define as "oral Torah". I, unlike some of them, add *aggadah* (non-legal) teachings to my definition of "oral Torah" as well as *hashkafa* (important fundamentals of God and how His Divine Plan works within creation), which you will discover when I define "oral Torah" later within the discussion.

The point is this: I am not defining "oral Torah" as it may be defined by various elements of Judaism; however, I am defining it as some may within Judaism. If you wish, you could consider this material as representing my own personal definition; therefore, I reject any claims that my definition is faulty since I am openly stating that I differ with the *halacha*-only definition of some within Judaism. I define "oral Torah" to be a combination of both legal and non-legal teachings.

A secondary issue that presents itself and naturally evolves within this article is the application of oral Torah to accurate Biblical interpretation, including

the New Testament. This secondary theme becomes an unmistakable truth within the discussion. The facts prove that scrutiny of Judaism's oral Torah and use of those elements that are applicable – most of which are in my opinion – is the key to a proper understanding of not just the New Testament in general, but particularly of the actual person and mission of Yeshua the Messiah and the coming Kingdom of God. It is the means by which centuries of Torahless Christian error which shamefully misrepresents the New Testament and the Messiah introduced therein can be exposed and corrected.

Clarifying Note: Within the Torah based faith "Messiah" is actually a process in which there are two distinct and crucial Messiahs: 1) Messiah ben Yosef (Messiah son of Joseph), and 2) Messiah ben David (Messiah son of David). General speaking, a major role for Messiah ben Yosef is "*tehorah*" (purification), and a major role for Messiah ben David will be to elevate levels of "*kedusha*" (holiness) during his Messianic reign as King on earth. It is taught that Messiah ben Yosef must appear first. I will not elaborate within this discussion although I may in future articles show how Judaism's own teachings provide substantial evidence to support that Yeshua, as he is actually presented in the New Testament instead of as Christianity presents him, was and is Messiah ben Yosef. By the way, it all comes from oral Torah as does virtually everything that comprises Messianic concepts. Please be aware that whenever I refer to Yeshua as Messiah within this discussion I am identifying him as Messiah ben Yosef. I also believe he will return as Messiah ben David.

Within this discourse I will utilize clearly presented deductive reasoning. I will state premises, clarify those premises with definition and expansion, and then deduce from them the undeniable fact that "oral Torah" is necessary and legitimate and that Judaic oral Torah is crucial to understanding truth. In the end, for a Christian to deny this would be equivalent to their denial of the very methods they use and had used on them to arrive at their own beliefs as well as the very "scripture" they claim to revere.

I will state five premises and from them logically deduce the conclusion that oral Torah is a legitimate and useful component of Biblical interpretation, and that interpretation most definitely includes a correct interpretation of the New Testament. The premises are listed below and will be elaborated upon within various sections of the article.

**Premise 1: Christians do not know what "Torah" and "oral Torah" are.**

**Premise 2: Christianity regularly and always has utilized "oral Torah".**

**Premise 3: The New Testament supports and is, itself, a small presentation of some basic "oral Torah".**

**Premise 4: Further evidence of "oral Torah" will be presented from Scripture.**

**Premise 5: Evidence will be shown proving Christians to be incorrect in their thinking that the New Testament condemns "oral Torah".**

This discussion exposes what may be the most fundamental of all bias and error practiced by those who reject it. With Christianity this is particularly true because of its staunchly anti-Torah foundation that enslaves well meaning Christians in a prison of profound errors and spiritual lawlessness.

A perfect example of the profound errors of Christianity just mentioned is the hideously corrupt and profane "once saved, always saved" or "eternal security" teaching that literally gives a license to sin to those unwise enough to accept it. Of course, since it requires absolutely nothing from those who do accept it, it is a very popular Christian belief. There is a minority of sincere God fearing and loving individuals who may occupy pews in such churches. Notwithstanding, "Christians" who believe such sin-enabling wickedness are free to do whatever they want whenever they wish. It is anti-God and pro-sin in virtually all respects. Often it is the fools who want no responsibility and wish to "do what is right in their own eyes" that cling to such sickening dribble. It is for that reason that the most insincere and ignorant hypocrites of Christianity generally populate churches that promote "eternal security" wickedness.

Of all teachings that come to mind, few or none are more disastrous or more distancing from God than is the "once saved, always saved" doctrine. It is no accident that those who adhere to such error are generally the most Bible illiterate since by being "eternally secure" they do not see the need to study or seek to learn the ways of God. All motivation for seeking truth is removed by such grotesque doctrines, as is all fear of God, true love of God, and efforts to transform oneself from selfish to selfless. I utterly and completely despise such teachings, and I assure you so does God and Yeshua the Messiah. Satan (the evil inclination), on the other hand, absolutely loves it. It is literally as far from Torah (God's Eternal teachings) as is possible to go since it implicitly promotes sin!

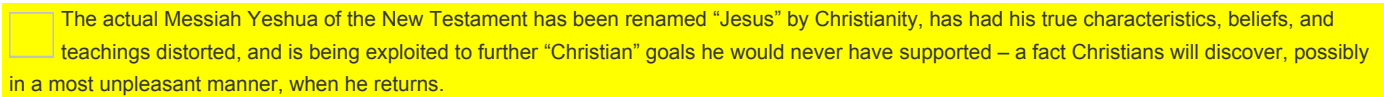
The lawlessness teachings common to Christianity resulting from its anti-Torah basis are a direct affront to God's pleas to mankind for obedience and a change of heart and lifestyle. Errors such as those show just how far Torahless Christianity has taken mankind away Biblical truth, or more specifically, from the Eternal teachings (Torah) of The Creator.

Many issues discussed on this site are disagreeable to Christians, but perhaps none more so than the one discussed within this article since it strikes at the central support pillar of Christianity. Indeed, the anti-Torah pillar upon which Christianity began to be solidly built after its tragic apostasy beginning primarily in the fourth century is THE fundamental error of that great religion which gives birth to numerous other errors.

As I say elsewhere, if you think "Jesus Christ" is the central pillar of Christianity then you are innocently deceived. By utilizing a faulty "Christ" representation – a counterfeit image used to conceal the true Hebraic Messiah Yeshua presented in the New Testament – the "Jesus" of Christianity becomes nothing more than a tool used by Christianity to advance its primary agenda, which is to rid the world of God's Eternal Torah. This actual

agenda is hidden behind the deep affection and worship Christians are taught to have towards Christianity's flawed portrayal of "Christ Jesus", whose true name, Yeshua, Christianity's leaders intentionally refuse to use. It has been done so well for so long with such shrewd cunning, fear tactics, emotional fervor, and masterful trickery that very few Christians ever see through the charade.

Virtually everything in Christianity is an outgrowth of its predominant anti-Torah motive. Christianity's faulty representation of "Jesus" and preposterously incorrect definition of a corporeal "God in the flesh" are actually the result of Traditional Christianity's foundational anti-Torah perspective and the resulting plague of Torah ignorance among Christians.

 The actual Messiah Yeshua of the New Testament has been renamed "Jesus" by Christianity, has had his true characteristics, beliefs, and teachings distorted, and is being exploited to further "Christian" goals he would never have supported – a fact Christians will discover, possibly in a most unpleasant manner, when he returns.

Please note that within this article and elsewhere on the site I utilize Messiah's actual true name, Yeshua, and refrain from use of the false name given him by Christianity unless I deem it necessary for purposes of clarity. I have a [separate article](#) in which the name issue is discussed.

Few Christians or others who reject oral Torah will even complete a reading of this article once they see its title, and I am very much aware of that. Most stop long before completion or read it with such strong bias that nothing I share is absorbed into their minds. Even worse, despite the clear truth of the opinions I share, those in disagreement utterly refuse to consider them. Instead, they cling to their indefensible anti-Torah stance while stubbornly refusing to think for a even a second that they could be wrong.

If I lived in London, England for over twenty years and entered into a conversation with someone about London who had never lived there or even visited, that person would not hesitate to view my opinions as authoritative. At the very least they would realize that my experience with London is greater than their's and, thus, certainly more likely to accurately represent the facts of that great city. Many such analogies can be drawn. The same applies to sports, medicine, engineering, farming, etc. In each and every case of virtually any secular topic one can imagine "experience" and "study" of the topic is viewed as a justification for the less experienced to heed what the more experienced speaker has to say.

Such is most definitely not the case with a topic such as this. I have studied this topic for well over 20 years. Despite the usual complete absence of experience or Torah study within Christianity and among Christians, they almost always reject any opinion that proves Torah should be studied and practiced by legitimate followers of "Christ". This rejection is multiplied when "oral Torah" is discussed. The very fact that such instant rejection among those ignorant of the topic occurs when the same instant rejection almost never occurs regarding other topics is proof of their extreme bias. Such people are being foolish and are, therefore, fools – plain and simple fools. There is no better way to describe them, and it fits their mindset exactly.

I hope you are not such a fool. I hope you at least sincerely consider what I share.

When I first began my intense search for truth in the early 1990s, I never imagined that it would lead me to my present condition. I simply wanted to be a more devoted Christian and had no intention whatsoever of forsaking modern day Christianity. Perish the thought! Such a thing never entered my consciousness. I knew nothing about "Torah" and did not care to find out. I, like virtually all Christians, considered "Torah" to be the "Law" that was "nailed to the cross" and "nullified through Christ". Worse still was my view of the "oral Torah" of Judaic Sages. I considered it little more than demonic garbage created by "enemies of Christ" to bring us back into the "bondage to the Law". I was of the same mindset of those who generally reject what lies within this discussion; therefore, I know precisely what they believe and why they believe it.

Well, I was wrong on all counts. In fact, I was not not simply wrong, I was VERY wrong.

It is amazing how God will answer prayers for understanding of His ways if they are asked with sincerity, determination, steadfastness, and most of all without any remnant of bias or predetermined conclusions which are housed in our individual selfish egos. Denial of "self" is necessary if you truly wish to understand the ways of God. I had the proper mindset as I asked for understanding, and He took me to a place I had never imagined – a total upheaval of my spirituality. It did not happen quickly and took years of study, but The Eternal's answer to my prayers occurred and continues to this day as my eyes are opened more and more to additional truth.

Be careful for what you ask from God, you may not realize what the answers to prayer may bring. Those answers may be completely different than you assumed they would be.

Though I am eternally grateful for His answers, it does not come without great cost to friendships, family, and my life in general. The path of truth for a person forsaking Christianity's anti-Torah mentality while also refusing to participate in Judaism's elitist and exclusive club run by authoritarian rabbis is a path of loneliness, isolation, persecution, and continual damnation from Christianity's tragically ignorant masses. This is especially true for those like myself who continue to accept Yeshua as Messiah and the general reliability of the New Testament since Judaism is not a real option for such people. Judaism frowns upon or forbids the study and practice of Torah by "gentiles" while, which means those such as myself – a non-Jew (*I think. Don't really care.*) – are "worthy of death" according to some of Judaism's *halachic* dictates (legal decrees) because I dare to study Torah without converting to Judaism and submitting to the authority of the rabbis.

Do not think that I am embraced by Judaism anymore than I am by Christianity for my opinions. I am instead “between a rock and a hard place” – the “rock” of Judaism and the “hard place” of Christianity, and both would prefer to see those like myself crushed.

Christians must detoxify themselves from Christianity’s anti-Torah poison before they are capable of partaking in and benefiting from the spiritually nutrient-rich truths of Torah’s infinite garden. And Judaism must rid itself of its deeply entrenched sage/rabbi worship and spiritual elitism, end its instant rejection of what the New Testament teaches, realize it does not have all the answers despite it having more than Christianity, and humble itself into recognizing it may be wrong about its wholesale rejection of what the New Testament actually teaches, which is far different than what Christianity claims it teaches.

How things change. Now, one of my ultimate goals is to guide a person to one destination – the destination of Torah study – an objective that will allow Christians to escape the serious false teachings of Christianity by more accurately understanding the person and mission of Messiah (Christ). That destination, if truly achieved, requires discarding the severe errors Christians have absorbed from the anti-Torah foundational positions of Christianity – teachings that are actually anti-God in the purest sense, and I seriously mean that without hyperbole.

If a Christian or ex-Christian reaches the goal I wish for them to achieve then the journey has not ended, instead it has only just begun. All they have done up to that point is free themselves of the heavy burdens of error that may hinder their journey to truth. Only then are they at a point to really begin to learn and absorb truth – truth that is impossible to absorb as a Christian since Christianity furiously opposes it and has ever since the fourth century CE.

It is at that point I find myself lacking the expertise to properly guide them much further by instructing in Torah: a subject of unparalleled lofty and Divine criticality. I am not a Torah teacher. At best I am a poor excuse for a student who is too unworthy, too unrighteous, and too lacking in the necessary wisdom to dare pose as a Torah teacher. I lead to the teachers. The rest is up to the one who wishes to be led to decide if they will figuratively sit at the feet of those teachers and learn.

Furthermore, there is no need for me to attempt to instruct one in Torah since The Eternal One has provided us a vast wealth of sublime instruction through the writings of past Torah masters – inspired men of purity, devotion, and wisdom (*yet still fallible*). Thus, I am simply a guide for those seeking the gateway into the realm of Torah study. Once I have accomplished that goal it is up to the individual to choose whether or not to enter the gate, and I then return to guide others while continuing my own much needed studies.

Since I am an ex-Christian and thoroughly familiar with the mindset of Christians, my primary targeted audience is Christians allegedly searching for truth. Sadly, very few of them reach the destination to which I wish to guide. Most are too biased, deluded, and sealed in error due to the evil success of Christianity’s Torah hatred foundation. Though they may be truly loving and sincere individuals, they nevertheless have no idea how extremely ignorant of truth they are (*just as I once was*). The typical Christian considers those like myself to be damned for daring to totally separate ourselves from the severe errors of Christianity and, therefore, from contemporary Christianity itself.

So be it. In the afterlife they will realize their mistake and hopefully be corrected and admitted into the promised blissful world to come because of God’s great mercy or (*God forbid*) possibly suffer eternal death because of their willful decision to reject Torah. I know many truly loving, compassionate, caring Christians whom I have no doubt will live eternally; however, such an outcome is not because Christianity’s anti-Torah teachings are correct. It is because God is extremely merciful and forgiving of their ignorant acceptance of Christianity’s errors and because, whether they know it or not, Christians are actually being taught some Torah since the New Testament is filled with a minimal level of basic Torah teachings. (*I will discuss that last point within this article.*)

I will define “Torah” within this discussion. I will also define and prove that “oral Torah” (*the teachings of the Sages*) is an inseparable component of the totality of Torah. Without its “oral” component Torah is both incomplete and impossible to fully understand. But first a few words regarding my approach to this and other topics on which I share my opinion.

## Method of approaching this topic and others

I am firmly convinced that the most crucial factor necessary to grasp truth is a proper mindset – a correct context from which to approach Scripture. If a person has the wrong mindset there is no way they will ever learn truth. No matter how much debate, arguing, or presentation of material, without a correct mindset it is all for naught.

I often get correspondence from people who have been taught that the Torah has been nullified or abolished through “Christ”. In each case they will present one and usually numerous alleged “proofs” that “the Law” is no longer in effect. They request or demand that I respond. In the past I did, and all it generated was an endless stream of such communication with them rarely changing their minds because, generally, they never intended to open their minds to even consider my opinion anyway. For them it was simply a sparing contest with their bias preventing them from pondering the possibility that they could be wrong. I eventually realized that the problem is not the proofs or lack thereof; the problem is a severely flawed contextual mindset being

applied by them.

Therefore, I realized it was time to change my approach. Obviously, batting away pitch after pitch of ignorant Torah hating arguments thrown my way only caused more pitches to be thrown. It was and is fruitless and a waste of time. That is why I will no longer participate in discussion with those who obviously need to totally restructure their entire mindset or who are biased beyond the point of sincere reasoning. It is also why I refuse to engage in debate.

Such people are quite literally in need of a complete overhaul of how they think. They need to change the way they think by learning the correct contextual mindset that should be applied to Scripture.

If the mindset is improper, any time spent refuting their arguments is wasted. As the saying goes, "a man convinced against his will is a man of the same opinion still." The "will" is driven by the contextual approach – the mindset. That must first be corrected before truth can be conveyed.

So, the problem with such people is that they approach the New Testament in general and the apostle Paul's material in particular with a terribly defective mindset. It is true for Christians and also for anti-Paulists whom I discuss in a separate discussion. In both cases their mindset regarding what they think the New Testament is teaching is severely flawed and drives them to extreme errors in their understanding.

I briefly explained the origins for this faulty mindset in my "[It is Time](#)" article. As I state in that article:

*"It was shrewdly accomplished when the emperors, for the purpose of strengthening their political security and power, consolidated the various heathen religions of the empire into what is now called "Christianity". The foremost of those emperors was "Constantine the Great", the emperor from 306 to 337CE and also know as "Constantine I". It was he who first craftily devised the plan in the fourth century. That newly amalgamated religion was declared the religion of the empire by him in 324CE. It is therefore no accident that he was declared a "saint" of the "church" and is revered as such within the Christian world despite his loathsome personal character revealed by the facts of history. And of course the emperor made himself the head of that synthesized religion, a position that eventually evolved into what is now known as the "Pope" of Roman Catholicism, from which virtually all current Christian denominations originated. It is to that fourth century period in history we can point as the time in which the true faith described in the New Testament was derailed, kidnapped, perverted, and entirely redefined.*

*It is time to correct that error and return "Christianity" to its rightful and Biblical truths!"*

The mindset debacle became a permanent fixture of Christianity in the fourth century and has remained so to this day. It is time for it to change, and the current proliferation of Torah teaching due to there finally being translations of writings into languages that are more common than those in which they were written is causing the correction to slowly occur. In particular the growth of so many English translations is having an impact since it opens the door to millions upon millions of potential readers searching for truth. This article you are reading is only a tiny part of an end-time movement that is slowly but surely correcting the intentional Spirit of Delusion inspired Roman instigated mindset change of the fourth century by proclaiming and promoting how Scripture should actually be studied and exposing the monstrously defective standard Christian approach.

The tactic I apply is to try and correct the mindset of people so that if they are true "students", which is what "disciple" and the Hebrew equivalent "*talmidim*" means, they will be able to grasp truth on their own without having to rely so much on persuasion from others. A proper Torah mindset – the traditional and actual New Testament mindset – is crucial. Christians do not have it and neither do most "Messianics" even though they think they do. This is proven by the fact that most Messianics believe and teach the same idolatrous pagan "God in the flesh" error as does their mother faith, Christianity – an error that strikes at the very heart of fundamental Torah truth. They think that by having reverence for Torah their mindset is correct. They are wrong even though they are at least heading in the right direction. Revering Torah and having the Torah mindset are not the same!

Therefore, my approach is not to refute specific arguments. Instead, I aim to illustrate how their incorrect mindset is the root of the entire problem regarding whether or not the New Testament, and specifically Paul's epistles, are anti-Torah. If a person corrects their approach to HOW they study Scripture and repairs their faulty mindset they apply to those studies then the problem resolves itself. However, this is true only if one is sincerely seeking truth and willing to undertake what may be a lengthy series of study. It will require dedication – the likes of which most people rarely pursue. And it will require the reading of books – possibly numerous books – to finally decipher and discover the mindset necessary. If you are unwilling to do that, then please do not claim that you love God or Messiah since if you are not even willing to study a few books you obviously do not love them.

The sages wisely state, "*Study is the highest form of worship.*", and they are absolutely correct. Willingness of a person to undertake intense study in their search for truth is the most powerful evidence existing of one's devotion to The Eternal Father. Unwillingness is evidence of the opposite.

Whether or not a person is willing to apply themselves to the extent necessary is not my problem. It is theirs. They will have to answer to the Eternal

Creator for themselves. I will have done my job in service to The Most High regardless as I strive to assist them in their search for Eternal Truth.

## A Brief Disclaimer ...

Before going further I must state a disclaimer so that my opinions will not be misconstrued. This disclaimer identifies why I am not welcome in Jewish synagogues or other Judaic spiritual gatherings.

Contrary to what some may think, I am not a practitioner of what is commonly known as traditional Judaism and have no intention of ever becoming one. (*Please note the descriptive term "traditional" in that last sentence.*) I embrace the New Testament and its general reliability. I also accept Yeshua (falsely named "Jesus") as the promised Messiah (*Messiah ben Yosef, and to return as Messiah ben David*). I detail my beliefs elsewhere on this site.

In this and other discussions in which I share my opinions I speak positively about the "oral Torah". I definitely do not want people to think that I blindly accept all the teachings of the rabbinic Torah sages. Some of the material to be found in the oral Torah is quite objectionable or elitist. It also often appears to be unnecessarily legalistic or may directly contradict the written Torah or violate basic common sense reasoning. I disagree with such elements of oral Torah. It is just such traditions that Yeshua the Messiah and others in the New Testament record probably opposed, which is why there is often argument and hostility recorded in those writings from some of the Jewish authorities of that day towards Yeshua and his followers.

I hasten to add, however, that such examples represent only a fraction of what is found within the oral Torah, despite the slanderous, anti-semitic ramblings of Torah haters – who are primarily Christians. Yeshua (Jesus) and his followers would actually have agreed with the overwhelming number of opinions voiced by Jewish authorities within the oral Torah, despite what may be taught by most Christian leaders.

I view the "oral Torah" of the rabbinic sages as being similar to a gold mine – a resource or excellent reservoir of knowledge in which to search for truth. When mining for the precious metal various amounts of the material extracted during the process of mining and refining the gold is good-for-nothing and dumped into a refuse pile. There is definitely gold to be found, but it must be separated from the worthless rocks and mud within which it is trapped.

Likewise for oral Torah. Within some writings it will be as if you have come upon a rich vein of pure gold, and with intense spiritual exhilaration you will follow that vein as far as it will take you, which may be multiple books. At other times, however, it will be as if you are in a coal mine or perhaps even foul smelling mud with very little gold to be found. The "gold" of Torah truth must be painstakingly sought and then separated and refined to eliminate the "rocks and putrid mud" of rabbinic error.

I do not accept all that comprises what Judaism defines as oral Torah. Although I have far to go before I have studied most that is within the teachings of the Sages (oral Torah), it is correct to say that I disagree with some of it. I also differ with the blind acceptance of *mitzvot d'rabbanan*, rabbinic decreed commandments which many within Judaism practice. Just because a rabbi commands something does not and will not compel me to follow the decree if I do not see any hint of it from a common sense reading of Torah based upon the words themselves, from an application of historic facts, from comparison to the foundational *hashkafa* principles (defined later), or from the application of logic utilizing the fundamental "God is impartial" message of "Yeshua Judaism".

DEFINITION: "Yeshua Judaism" is the true Torah faith Yeshua (Jesus) brought down from heaven as he sought to reform what was and has since become a perversion of Torah. He sought to re-instill the true intent of God's Torah within Israel, reinvigorate it by ridding it of its severe elitism which had occurred due to the extremely elitist mindset of Judaism's leaders, and spread it to all nations and peoples of the world instead of among only "the Jews" as is taught by those elitist leaders. His efforts to reform, re-instill, reinvigorate, and spread Torah universally is the true reason why, then and now, he was and is hated within the "Judaism" which was birthed by those leaders.

What is commonly called "Judaism" today is a faith that is actually based upon the biased opinions of a specific highly esteemed man (rabbi Akiva) and a small number of his followers whose opinions are found within the "**Mishnah**". One of those followers individually acquired, parsed, and ultimately compiled the **Mishnah**. The "**Gemarah**" (or Gemara, Gemora, etc.), which is also based upon the biased opinions of that Akiva-based sect within Judaism and which represents commentary on the **Mishnah**, was subsequently added to the **Mishnah** to ultimately become the "**Talmud**", upon which Judaism is totally based. Today's "Judaism" could legitimately be called "Akiva Judaism" or "Akivaism". More on that topic in separate discussions.

So, please do not assume as you read my opinions that I have lost my intellectual reasoning ability, am under the spell of rabbinic ideology, or that I am defending the error that is sometimes found within oral Torah. My very positive comments are limited to discrete aspects of "oral Torah" – primarily (but not exclusively) the non-legal teachings known as "*aggadah*" or "*hashkafa*" – and even among them it is assumed that discernment will be practiced when they are studied. I do, however, also agree with many of the opinions found in *halacha*. (*All italicized terms will be defined later.*)

I am not among those who blindly accept whatever the rabbis teach and whom I believe worship their sages. The Torah sages of old are often viewed as infallible. Their words are considered sacred as though they are direct instructions of The Most High God, acceptance of which is generally required

and rejection of which is often condemned. That is actually another aspect of Judaism that betrays the double-standard they apply to their writings versus the authority of the New Testament.

Whereas I do accept much that they teach and also consider it to usually be a reliable representation of The Eternal One's teachings, I do not support or agree with the sage-worship situation as it stands which often eclipses even the ludicrous sacrilege of Papal infallibility.

There really is a Sage worship mentality within Judaism, and I do not agree with that mindset. Such a mindset is among the reasons that I have not considered converting to Judaism. It is also one reason why I am despised by many within Judaism every bit as much as I am among Christians – maybe even more.

Having said that, I am most definitely not a *Karaite Jew* or Messianic *Karaite Jew*, even though I agree with some of their beliefs such as their belief that ethnic “Jewishness” is passed from the father and not the mother as is taught within most other forms of Judaism. I am, however, open to change on that subject as I am all other subjects.

*Karaitism* vehemently rejects the “oral Torah” and promotes itself as the only legitimate Judaism. In my opinion, the alleged “proof” they put forth as part of their claim that oral Torah is illegitimate is very weak and completely avoids some of the issues I reveal within this discussion.

Basically, *Karaitism* limits The Infinite Creator by explicitly stating that all of the The Eternal Creator's teachings were written in the Bible.

It is sad how those who claim to revere Torah can restrict His teachings by confining them to borders they, themselves, stipulate. Their stance actually violates basic common sense. It also removes a primary means by which one can properly understand New Testament teaching, a fact I prove in this article.

*Karaite* Judaism is definitely not the most legitimate form of Judaism. It is better than Reform Judaism, but I would consider Orthodox Judaism and Conservative Judaism as unquestionably more legitimate. *Karaite* Judaism would be a distant third since it rejects oral Torah – a rejection that dramatically limits its grasp of Torah truth. Then there is Reform Judaism, which is so secular as to be absent from any list of legitimate Judaism. Reform Judaism has no real reverence for Torah and is little more than an extremely liberal secular organization that embraces “Jewishness” with no regard for Torah, which actually erases the “Jewishness” they wish to embrace.

Now on to the discussion.

## Premise 1: Christians do not know what “Torah” and “Oral Torah” are

Within this section I will define “Torah” and its various components, including “oral Torah”

Christians do not know what constitutes “Torah” because Christianity has for centuries misrepresented its definition. They literally do not know what “Torah” is! Most would limit their definition of Torah to the first five books of Moses or the entire Tanakh (Older Testament). Some do not even know that. Still worse is the belief among many Christians that “Torah” is defined as “traditions of men” that were never applicable or that lost their application after the death and resurrection of Messiah (Christ).

Ignorant of what Torah is, most Christians and Christian leaders arrogantly and irreverently take it upon themselves to explain and define the teachings of Scripture from scratch and without Hebraic context instead of utilizing, if we start from the literal beginning, the almost 6000 years of wisdom and knowledge from Torah Sages (4000 before Messiah plus 2000 since). The result is a gross failure in their actual grasp and understanding of those Scriptures.

“Torah” is more – much more – than simply what is written in the Tanakh, and the reason is simple. Unless we have insight into the historic, social, and spiritual context of the Tanakh (irreverently called the “Old” Testament within Christianity) we cannot possibly interpret it correctly. Anyone who thinks otherwise is hopelessly naive and egotistical. Unless we were there with them when Torah was given and explained by Moses and the Divinely inspired prophets and Torah sages who followed we cannot possibly grasp the extent of its teachings. Nevertheless Christianity largely ignores, discards, and even condemns the teachings of those great men of antiquity.

Torah is also not simply “laws” or “legalism” as widely believed within Christianity. “Torah” means “teachings” or “instructions”. It does not mean “law”. There is an entirely separate term that is used to distinguish the “laws” within the Torah. Torah represents the “teachings” of God. What Christians call “law” is only one aspect of Torah, as will be defined shortly.

Most Christians have actually never – seriously, NEVER – read the entire Bible. This is something I need not prove since all Christians if they are honest with themselves know this to be true. (*But then the same can probably be said of most Jews.*) If you doubt it, then go around and ask your fellow Christians to sincerely and honestly tell you if they have ever read the entire Bible. If you do this you will discover very few have, and this fundamental ignorance of the Bible even includes those who view themselves as sincere and knowledgeable.

Because of the dumbing down and victimization by their leaders, many Christians are too ignorant of Scripture and history to realize – or too biased and arrogant to admit – that Torah, which is the eternal Divine teachings from God given to mankind, covers all aspects of faith: the characterization of God and how He interacts with His creation, repentance, faith, grace, ethical and moral teachings, the concepts of reward and punishment, the correct understanding of atonement, the responsibility of mankind, judgment and the afterlife, and every other aspect of spirituality that is possible to name. Torah has it all, and Christianity through its rejection of Torah has basically corrupted and distorted it all.

Christians have been fed a load of pig manure from their Torah hating and ill-informed leaders who define Torah as simply legalistic “law” or “traditions of men”. Deceived Christians do not realize that by rejecting Torah they are rejecting every single aspect of Biblical faith that existed throughout all Biblically recorded time previous to the redefinition of “faith” by the early “church fathers” who excluded the true Torah sages from their evil cabal. That’s almost four THOUSAND years thrown into the trash heap by the early Greco-Roman biased “church fathers” of the 4th century and following, and another two thousand can be added to arrive at the present day.

Having been duped by their leaders and lead down a road of falsehood, Christians fail to realize that Christianity, as it has been practiced since the fourth century, is a religion that began with the complete discarding of the entire knowledge base of faith that had existed before they redefined it. The Torah hating leaders of early Christianity, after obtaining a majority following Rome’s devastation of the Holy Land, then drove off, censored, or killed those who sought to promote the actual Torah-centric Messianic faith began by the original followers of Messiah Yeshua in the first century. Afterwards they proceeded to unscrupulously erase from Christian teaching all the accepted pro-Torah understandings of the true faith’s details and to replace it with their anti-Torah garbage.

Almost six thousand years of Biblical faith practices and teachings are unknown to Christians because of their blind and foolish acceptance of the deceit and Torah hatred of their leaders, many of whom sincerely yet wrongly are convinced they are correct. The early church leaders and many who followed threw away the previous four thousand years of that knowledge as a first step in the creation of the Christian religion as it now stands.

They used the pagan religions of the Roman empire as their template for a counterfeit “Biblical” faith. Constantinian Christianity (the religion began under emperor Constantine in the fourth century) is a completely fabricated and fraudulent faith that has a raw hatred for the Torah based faith preceding it – the Torah-centric faith that was believed and taught by all the great prophets of the Tanakh, Yeshua the Messiah, and all his original followers.

Contemporary Christianity, and Christianity in general since the fourth century CE, is a counterfeit faith that bears only a slight resemblance to the actual faith of Messiah Yeshua’s original followers.

So Christianity since the fourth century is a recreated faith that began with the discarding of the true Messianic faith of Yeshua and all his original followers. And worst of all, most Christians do not care or have the desire to study to find truth, particularly if that truth differs with their own biased beliefs! Not even my own family members care. It is so very sad. I should say they currently do not care. They most certainly will care when the Heavenly court is called into session to pronounce judgment, but then it will be too late to repent.

Similarly, it is an obvious fact (or it should be) that there is more to God’s teachings than what it written in the Bible. The Eternal One is infinite and, therefore, so are His instructions. There is no end to The Eternal Creator’s Torah (teachings). Those who think otherwise are sorely lacking in their understanding of the Infinite “Cause of all causes” – The Almighty Creator – and are limiting Him to their unlearned feeble-minded reduction of His glory. Were this not so, why would the gospel of John close with the following words regarding the teachings of one particular man, Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah, in a way that directly contradicts those who claim that anything not specifically written in the Bible is illegitimate?

[John 21:24,25](#)

<sup>24</sup>This is the disciple who testifies about these things and has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. <sup>25</sup>There are many other things that Jesus did. If every one of them were written down, I suppose **the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.**

The NET Bible.

And that passage refers to the teachings of one man, Yeshua the Messiah, over a short time span of just a few years. What does that obviously suggest about numerous inspired prophets and men of God over a time span of almost six thousand years?

The written Torah testifies to this also in places when it instructs that the priests, Moses, the prophets, etc. are to be consulted in matters that need further clarification or judgment. (*Today’s rabbis arrogantly and illegitimately claim they possess the same authority, but I don’t see any prophets, Temple priests, or elders of the tribes of Israel among them.*) Such passages present explicit evidence of an obvious and extensive “oral Torah” (verbal instruction) presence that is not written down. Common sense dictates the necessary existence of explanations and clarifications that were not codified in the Bible but which were (and are) present among those chosen worthy of such exalted status.

## Torah defined ...

The actual "Torah" (teachings) of The Eternal Creator is composed of the following:

1. **The literal "Torah"** – five books of Moses
2. **The entire Tanakh** (Older Testament)
3. **Aggadah** – In general, *Aggadah* is a collection of rabbinic discussions and lessons that incorporates folklore, historical anecdotes, moral exhortations, and practical advice in various spheres, from business to medicine.
4. **Hashkafa** – A system of ideas which attempt to explain fundamental and essential concepts regarding The Eternal Creator and His creation. Such concepts include, but are not limited to, the following examples. These and other concepts are addressed by a brilliant teacher of *hashkafa*, rabbi Shimon Kessin, who includes in his *hashkafa* definition:
  - Answers to the questions: What can we know about the nature of God? Who and what is He? What can we know? What can we not know?
  - Answers to the questions: What is the composition of all reality? What is it made of?
  - Answers to the questions: What type beings inhabit all reality and all creation (material and spiritual)? What is their purpose?
  - Answers to the questions: Why, or for what reason, did God create? What is the purpose of all creation?
  - Answers to the questions: What is mankind? Why was he made? What is his purpose?
  - Answers to the questions: How does mankind go about accomplishing his purpose? What are the details by which this is done?
  - Answers to the question: What is the inner meaning of an individual's life?
5. **Mussar** – This is often defined as a subset of *hashkafa* or perhaps even *aggadah*. It is a term used for didactic (educational or improving) Jewish ethical literature which describes virtues and vices and the path towards perfection in a methodical way. *Mussar* can mean "correction" and discusses how one can improve or correct themselves to be more pleasing to God and more effective in their Divine Service. It is often described as ethical or moral teachings and is very often included among the writings that are *aggadah*.
6. **Kabbalah** – This is also often defined as a subset of *hashkafa* or perhaps even *aggadah*. *Kabbalah* is teaching regarding the "inner essence", "intent", or "wisdom" of Torah. It is often included among the writings that are *aggadah*. Contrary to common thought, there are different forms of *kabbalah*, and much that abounds today is illegitimate New Age garbage promoted by those who wish to profit from the current heightened interest in *kabbalah*. Among the legitimate forms is "Theoretical" *kabbalah*, and it is the primary type referred to in this discussion. There are also other legitimate forms such as "Meditative" and the much more mystical "Practical" *kabbalah*, but it is not my intent to refer to them for the purposes of this discussion. Frankly, I avoid and have no interest in pursuing meditative and practical *kabbalah* because of the very real spiritual dangers caused from dabbling in such extremely deep and dangerous spiritual practices.
7. **Halacha** – (*Distinctly different than hashkafa and aggadah*) The collective body of religious laws for Jews, including biblical law (*the 613 mitzvot or commandments*) and later Talmudic and rabbinic law, as well as customs and traditions. This is what is commonly known as the "legal" or "legalistic" aspects of Torah. Perhaps a better way to describe it is as the more "technical" component of oral Torah.

The definition of "Torah" could be simplified as:

1. **The written "Torah"** – The Tanakh, which is sometimes referred to as *Torah she-bee-khtav* (Torah which is written) and which of course includes the five books of Moses.
2. **The "oral Torah"** – which is sometimes referred to as the unwritten *Torah she-be'al-peh* (Torah which is spoken) composed of:
  - Halacha* – The collective body of legal teachings (law), some of which if instituted by rabbinic decree I consider to be nonsensical, elitist, and very burdensome. It represents the more technical aspect of oral Torah.
  - Hashkafa* and *aggadah* – Non-legal teachings – basically anything that isn't *halacha*. It is from this aspect of "oral Torah" that I feel much truth can be found, especially hashkafa; however, even then discernment and common sense need to be applied along with sincere prayers to God for Divine guidance. As suggested above, this includes *mussar* and *kabbalah*.

*Halacha* or *halakhah* commonly comes to mind when "oral Torah" is mentioned; therefore, allow me to briefly elaborate upon the meaning of *halacha*. I provide links from the "JewFaq.org" website if you wish further study and have basically adapted this quick elaboration from the material found on that site in a reduced form so that no one within Judaism can claim that my definition is false.

*Halacha*, as defined by Judaism, comes from three sources:

- from the written Torah (Torah she-bee-khtav) and which is know as mitzvot d'oraita (defined in the next paragraph),
- from laws instituted by the rabbis know as mitzvot d'rabbanan (defined in the next paragraph), and
- from long-standing customs know as minhag that sometimes vary among Jewish groups.

## Commandments "from the Torah" vs commandments "from the rabbi"

Judaism refers to *halacha* from any of these sources as *mitzvot* (commandments; singular: *mitzvah*). The word *mitzvah* is also commonly used in a casual way to refer to any good deed. Because of this imprecise usage, sophisticated *halakhic* discussions are careful to identify *mitzvot* as being *mitzvot d'oraita* (an Aramaic word meaning "from the Torah") or *mitzvot d'rabbanan* (Aramaic for "from the rabbis"). A *mitzvah* that arises from custom is referred to as a *minhag*. Judaism teaches that *mitzvot* from all three of these sources are binding, though there are differences in the way they are applied.

I personally differ with what I strongly believe to be illegitimate supreme authority given to rabbinic decrees and consider it to be a major error of Judaism which implicitly (and actually explicitly) elevates the laws or decrees of the rabbis above those of The Creator God. The burdensome rabbinic decrees (*mitzvot d'rabbanan*) and customs (*minhag*, defined later) are in my opinion precisely what Yeshua (Jesus) was referring to when he criticized the rabbis of his day for "binding heavy burdens..." upon the people.

Included among the rabbinic edicts or decrees (*mitzvot d'rabbanan*, sometimes simply called *rabbanan*) – the rabbinic laws set forth by an "authorized" Rabbinic court – are what is termed *Takkanah* (singular form) or *Takkanot* (plural form). Technically speaking, *Takkanot* represent the positive rabbinic decrees or legislation and *Gezayrot* or *Gezerot* (singular form is *Gezerah*) represents the negative or preventative rabbinical legislative decrees. However, both the positive and the negative decrees are often referred to with the term *Takkanot*. For the purposes of this discussion I will use *Takkanot* to refer to all such Rabbinic decrees regardless of whether they are positive or negative.

Briefly stated, *Takkanot*, which are often referred to as the "fences of Torah", consists of:

***Takkanot*** – Positive Rabbinic decrees commanding an activity or practice not directly based on Torah and promulgated to meet the needs of the times or circumstances. It is instituted to promote the common good or to foster spiritual development for those under its authority. They are sometimes used to correct an error that has developed.

***Gezerot*** – Negative Rabbinic decrees forbidding an activity or practice, lest it lead to a prohibited act that, itself, would directly violate Torah. There is nothing added to the actual "Torah". It simply places a "protective fence", so to speak, around a Torah commandment in order to keep people from transgressing it.

Unfortunately, these rabbinic decrees as well as the *minhag* are what most Christians and others mistakenly think is "Torah" though they actually are not necessarily included in a legitimate definition of pure God-given Torah. Despite what Judaism teaches, rabbinic originated decrees are not infallible and, therefore, should not be considered Divine "Torah".

### *Minhag* (customs)

*Minhag* is treated as a category of *mitzvot d'rabbanan* (from the rabbis), mostly because it is clearly not *d'oraita* (from the written Torah), but *minhag* is generally not the sort of rule that is created by the same sanhedrin-like reasoned decision-making as are *takkanot*. A *minhag* is a custom that developed for worthy religious reasons and has continued long enough to become a binding religious practice. For example, the second, extra day of holidays was originally instituted as a *gezerah*, so that people outside of Israel, not certain of the day of a holiday, would not accidentally violate the holiday's *mitzvot*. After the mathematical calendar was instituted and there was no doubt about the days, the added second day was not necessary. The rabbis considered ending the practice at that time, but decided to continue it as a *minhag*: the practice of observing an extra day had developed for worthy religious reasons, and had become customary.

It is important to note that some rabbi Judaism considers these "customs" as a binding part of *halakhah*, just like a *mitzvah*, a *takkanah* or a *gezerah*. I strongly differ with that.

The word "*minhag*" is also used in a looser sense, to indicate a community or an individual's customary way of doing some religious thing. For example, it may be the *minhag* in one synagogue to stand while reciting a certain prayer, while in another synagogue it is the *minhag* to sit during that prayer. It may become an individual's *minhag* to sit in a certain location in synagogue, or to walk to synagogue in a certain way, and under appropriate circumstances these too may become *minhag*. Even in this looser sense, these customs can become binding on the individual, it is generally recommended that a person follow his own personal or community *minhag* as much as possible, even when visiting another community, unless that *minhag* would cause the other community discomfort or embarrassment.

### Legitimate or illegitimate "oral Torah"?

The reason I did not include *takkanot*, *gezerot*, or *minhag* as part of my definition of what constitutes sure and legitimate "oral Torah" is simple – because I very definitely feel they should not be considered as such despite the insistence from some Judaic rabbis that they are. "Oral Torah" is viewed as obligatory – teaching that dates all the way back to Moses and is binding since it is "Torah". *Takkanot*, *gezerot*, and *minhag*, however, should

not be obligatory or binding though they are not necessarily bad and in many cases are useful as a person seeks a closer relationship with The Eternal Creator. Each *mitzvot d'rabbanan* (rabbinic law or decree) should be judged individually instead of all being discarded.

The problem is that the rabbis have decreed such an enormous number of such edicts and customs that it is virtually impossible for most people to distinguish between what is Torah Truth and what is rabbinic legalistic or burdensome or sometimes elitist nonsense. They have so corrupted and expanded Torah into a monstrosity of legalistic, formalistic decrees that trying to discover the legitimate Torah among their expansive decrees is like trying to find a pure and lovely Torah needle in a rabbinic haystack.

As implied earlier, to avoid confusion and unnecessary text, from this point forward I will use the term *takkanot* or *rabbans* as terms referring to the combination of *takkanot*, *gezerot*, and *minhag*. Just remember the actual differences as stated in the previous paragraphs.

As stated earlier, *Takkanot* (or actually since we are here referring to prohibitions, *gezerot*) are sometimes called the “fences of Torah” which in my opinion should still definitely **not** be considered “Torah”. Nevertheless, the concept is legitimate and has very real practical value and often such *rabbans* contain much useful truth.

What is meant by the “fences” of Torah? I will explain by way of example.

**“Fences” of Torah:** Imagine if you had a deep pit in your backyard. Imagine also that you have small children who enjoy playing in the backyard. You have two choices: 1) you could strictly forbid your children to enter the backyard to play or 2) you could build a sturdy “fence” around the pit to prevent them from falling into it.

Well, if you are a parent who cares for the mental and physical health of your child you know that exercise is needed for your child's development. Therefore, unless you are extremely lazy and care not for your children's happiness you would likely spend a day or two carefully constructing a fence around the pit to protect those you so deeply love. Additionally, you would probably not build the fence on the very edge of the pit, but would instead construct it a conservatively safe distance away from the pit's dangerous edge. Afterwards your children could play and you could rest assured of their safety.

The Rabbinic decrees or ordinances (*Takkanot*) are exactly the same thing but in a spiritual context. They, particularly the preventative decrees (*Gezerot*), are instituted to allow God's “children” to “play” in His created world with “fences” carefully placed to help insure they do not fall into the many “pits” of sin which plague this world. The positive edicts (*Takkanot*), on the other hand, help insure a positive, healthy, and thriving spirituality by instituting practices that enhance one's spiritual growth and nearness to God.

A curious or rebellious child may attempt to climb the fence in your backyard, but once they do the danger increases dramatically. They could probably go right to the edge of the pit and still be safe, but accidents do happen; therefore, it is strongly advised – often with the threat of punishment – that they dare not climb the fence.

Likewise with the “fences of Torah”. Regardless of the supreme importance many rabbis place upon these “fences,” I believe that they absolutely do not have the same importance as Torah; therefore, it should not be required that they be obeyed. However, due to the protection the preventative decrees provide from falling into the “pit” of sin and the spiritual benefits obtained from the positive decrees, it is advised, depending upon the specific “fence”, that they be honored.

## Ambiguity and confusion creates barriers and despair and sometimes complete rejection of Torah

Much ambiguity is generated by the fact that, as mentioned a few paragraphs earlier, the non-binding *mitzvot d'rabbans* are more often than not mixed in with the pure *mitzvot d'raita halacha* Torah fundamentals even though the *rabbans* should not be obligatory in my opinion. It is difficult to know which *halacha* are considered binding and which are not, i.e., which are legitimate oral Torah *halacha* and which are *rabbans*.

This unfortunate mixture of *rabbans* within oral Torah frequently encourages Torah illiterate people such as Christians or anti-Paulists to ridicule, scorn, or even harshly condemn **all** oral Torah. Actually because of their ignorance, they fail to realize that their disagreements are usually with the *rabbans*, which often are unnecessary rules and traditions that are at times burdensome, elitist, or ridiculous. They wrongly define the *rabbanan* “fences” as being the “oral Torah” and do not realize that such is not how Yeshua and his original followers would have defined the authentic and proper “oral Torah” even though they may not have differed with all *rabbans*. Such Christians, anti-Paulists, and others do not realize that “oral Torah” is broadly categorized and needs to be scrutinized and studied instead of instantly discarded as wholly illegitimate.

It would be extremely useful and far less confusing if there was more of an obvious, crystal clear distinction between the legitimate oral Torah and the *rabbans* within Judaic and New Testament writings. Sadly, unless the literature specifically clarifies the matter the perception of “oral Torah” legitimacy and authority is damaged in the minds of the unlearned because of the legalistic and sometimes absurd “fences” being mistaken for oral

Torah.

This is clearly the case among readers of the New Testament in which we find examples of “traditions” being derided or harshly attacked by Yeshua (Jesus) and other New Testament characters. What is really being derided and attacked? Is it the legitimate “oral Torah”, or is it the non-binding, restrictive, elitist, and often burdensome rabbinic decrees (*rabbanans*)? Can we always really know for certain which is being referenced in those New Testament passages in which the specific doctrine being discussed is not clearly defined?

The honest answer is no. We cannot be certain, and anyone who tells you otherwise is being deceitful or excessively arrogant. How can we know what is unmistakably being discussed if the doctrinal details are never mentioned in the text? Though I would never be so bold or presumptuous to state it as absolute fact, I nevertheless feel strongly with a high level of confidence that in virtually all such vague cases the disagreements are definitely not directed towards oral Torah in general, but instead target various non-binding *takkanot* (rabbinic decrees) with which those New Testament personalities disagreed.

## How can we identify legitimate oral Torah?

If details of the teaching or custom is revealed in the text, all one needs to do is reference Judaic sources to determine if it is actual oral Torah or non-binding *rabbanans*. Of course that may entail a lot of work which most people either do not wish to undertake or do not have the resources available to find out. If the details are not revealed, which is unfortunately often the case within the New Testament and oftentimes even within Judaic material, then it becomes much more difficult. However, I am of the opinion that a clue may exist in such circumstances that will assist in determining whether it is “Oral Torah” or “*rabbanans*” that is the subject of the recorded discussions. That clue lies in the force of the various English terms that are used (in English translations of course).

Since *rabbanans* should be non-binding Rabbinic decrees, edicts, etc., I personally believe that less forceful terminology such as “traditions”, “customs”, “practices”, etc. suggests the issue being referenced in the New Testament texts is quite likely a *rabbanan*. On the other hand, when more forceful terms such as “commandment” or “law”, or perhaps “teaching” or “instruction” and such like are used, the issue is likely referring to legitimate oral Torah – usually *halacha*.

I believe this because “oral Torah” is not “customs” or “traditions” – terms which are less forceful since they imply a lesser sacredness. Yeshua the Messiah and his original followers would have never diminished Divine oral Torah by referring to it as “customs” and “traditions”. In my opinion, they knew that calling Torah a “custom” or “tradition” is irreverent and, frankly, wrong. Oral Torah is Divine God-given instruction, commandment, or teaching. It is very sacred since it originates from The Eternal Creator.

Therefore, the “**force of sacredness**” in the terms used may hold the key to help resolve the puzzle regarding whether it is legitimate oral Torah or non-binding rabbinic decrees erected as a “fence” around Torah (*rabbanans*) that is the subject of what is written in such indefinite examples. This “force of sacredness of the terminology” method, however, is not perfect and will not always insure a correct determination.

Given the presence of uncertainty in the compilation of the New Testament from the thousands of often differing manuscripts and manuscript fragments that exists and the even more direct and obvious presence of biased or incorrect translation, the method of deciphering just mentioned will not guarantee success. At least, however, it does possibly allow for a bit of clarity when attempting to distinguish authentic oral Torah *halacha* from *rabbanans*. I realize it is not a perfect procedure, but I think use of it will probably lead to more accuracy in determining the type *halacha* being discussed than is otherwise available.

The crucial point to remember is that *rabbanans* (*takkanot*, *gezerot*, and *minhag*) should not be considered part of the actual oral Torah *halacha* even if they are categorized as such within Judaism. They differ from the actual obligatory *halachic* Torah elements even though they often tend to be listed among them. This is a fact you must understand as you consider the relevance of “oral Torah”.

To further the confusion, however, the various *rabbanans* should also not be automatically rejected or condemned since there is absolutely nothing wrong with going beyond what is required to please or draw near to God. In fact, such a mindset is good and shows a person to be truly devoted to God. If people wish to observe and practice them, they should be allowed to do so unless they puff themselves up with arrogance, self-exaltedness, and self-righteousness while looking condescendingly or with contempt upon those who do not practice them.

Therefore, the issue isn't always whether or not such rabbinic decrees are legitimate, even though at times they obviously are not, particularly those which promote elitism, snobbish and at times uncaring exclusivity, and casuistic, hair-splitting burdens. Instead, the issue is with regard to how Judaism requires people to observe them. THAT – the obligatory “binding” of such decrees – was the error that Yeshua and his original followers sought to correct.

Now let us continue with the definition of “Torah”, and please remember “Torah” does not include “*mitzvot d'rabbanans*”. The “fences of Torah” and

various customs should not be part of "Torah" regardless of what some rabbis may say.

## The *midrash* component of oral Torah and *PaRDeS*

The simplified two-part definition of Torah I presented earlier avoids the difficulty of figuring out what type of *aggadah* is being considered, which can become a complex undertaking since there is no clear line which separates, for instance, *mussar* from the fundamentals of *kabbalah*. It becomes even more complicated when "*midrash*" and "*mishnah*" (or *mishna*) material is being defined.

*Midrash* (plural *Midrashim*) is the body of homiletic stories told by Jewish rabbinic sages to explain passages in the Tanakh (irreverently called the "Old" Testament). *Midrash* is a method of interpreting biblical stories that goes beyond simple distillation of religious, legal, or moral teachings. It fills in gaps left in the biblical narrative regarding events and personalities that are only hinted at. The purpose of *midrash* was to resolve problems in the interpretation of difficult passages of the text of the Hebrew Bible. Basically, *midrash* is very much like common preaching techniques where examples, definitions, analogies, stories, and sometimes humor are used to explain the issue being discussed.

There is no doubt that "*midrash*" is a legitimate concept since the Bible, itself, references two distinct "midrashim". In [2 Chronicles 13:22](#) the "treatise [*midrash*] of the prophet Iddo" is mentioned, and we find mentioned in [2 Chronicles 24:27](#) the "treatise [*midrash*] of the Book of Kings". Other English Bible translations render the word variously as "book" or "story" or "inquiry" etc., but the Hebrew word in both those verses is "*midrash*". If you doubt me, click on the note next to the word "treatise" in each passage on the BibleGateway.com link. It states that the actual Hebrew word is "*midrash*". Therefore, unless you want to reject direct Biblical texts, you have no choice but to accept that "*midrash*" is definitely a legitimate element of Biblical teaching.

The "*Mishnah*" is the first part of the Talmud, the second being "*Gemara*" which is simply commentary on the *Mishnah*. So basically the *Talmud* is composed of the *Mishnah* and its commentary. *Mishnaic* literature is dominated by legalistic, pedantic, often lengthy discussions.

Generally speaking, *midrashic* literature is far less "doctrinal" or "legalistic" than is *mishnaic* literature, although the *Talmud* contains a lot of *midrash* to help explain its teachings.

There is a definite history of evolution from primarily *midrashic* discussions, which were the standard method of teaching before and during the first century CE, to *mishnaic* literature afterwards with the *mishnaic* eventually winning out after the destruction of the Second Temple as a result of the ultimate publication of the *Babylonian Talmud* (there is a separate *Jerusalem Talmud*) and the successful massive power grab by a small number of elitist Pharisaic rabbis who survived. Those rabbis benefited enormously from the religious vacuum that was created as virtually all other competing "Jewish" faith systems were eliminated by Rome. Those newly empowered rabbis totally restructured "Judaism" by creating "Rabbinic" Judaism in which they (rabbis) and they alone exercise absolute and unchallenged dictatorial control.

Yes. The "Judaism" of today is **not** the "Judaism" that existed before the first century.

"*PaRDeS*" is an acronym for the four typical methods used in Judaic Biblical interpretation. According to this standard "*PaRDeS*" approach to exegesis, interpretation of Biblical texts in Judaism is realized through

*Peshat* (literal or plain meaning, lit. "plain" or "simple"),  
*Remez* (deeper meaning, lit. "hints"),  
*Derash* (comparative meaning, from Hebrew "*darash*" – "to inquire" or "to seek"), and  
*Sod* (the deepest hidden meaning or philosophy, lit. "secret" or "mystery").

The "*midrash*" literary method concentrates somewhat on *remez* but mostly on *derash*. Some people prefer to distinguish *PaRDeS* into *pshat*, *remez*, *din* (to judge or to execute judgment), and *sod*; however, in order to try and reduce the already complex nature of this topic, we will ignore that understanding.

OK, I know ... It gets crazy trying to decipher and define all the various types Torah literature.

The simplest way to grasp it is to use the simplified Torah definition shown earlier and to understand that the New Testament would primarily be classified as historic records of events along with elements of *hashkafa* and *aggadah* (non-legal Oral Torah). It also contains a bit of *halacha* (legal elements of oral Torah).

Those in Judaism might disagree, but their disagreement would have more to do with some of what the New Testament contains than it would what type literature it represents. To make it easier for you I will restate that simplified definition.

The "Torah" is composed of:

1. **The written “Torah”** – The Tanakh, which is sometimes referred to as *Torah she-bee-khtav* (Torah which is written) and which of course includes the five books of Moses.

2. **The “oral Torah”** – which is sometimes referred to as the unwritten *Torah she-be'al-peh* (Torah which is spoken) composed of:

*Halacha* – The collective body of legal teachings (law), some of which if instituted by rabbinic decree I consider to be nonsensical, elitist, and very burdensome. It represents the more technical aspect of oral Torah.

*Hashkafa* and *aggadah* – Non-legal teachings – basically anything that isn't *halacha*. It is from this aspect of “oral Torah” that I feel much truth can be found, especially *hashkafa*; however, even then discernment and common sense need to be applied along with sincere prayers to God for Divine guidance. As suggested above, this includes *mussar* and *kabbalah*.

As suggested earlier, at the time the New Testament was being written there was no **Talmud**. *Midrash* was the dominant mode of teaching with *Mishnah* not really overtaking it until the later publication and dominance of the **Talmud**, which occurred a few hundred years later. This seemingly insignificant fact is yet another historic bit of evidence that Judaic based counter missionaries do not explain. Basically, they fail to mention that the common Talmudic supremacy of today, and even of “Rabbinic” Judaism, is a post-Second Temple occurrence and that “Judaism” at the time of Yeshua was far broader, consisting of numerous sects. The Pharisees, most of which did not accept Yeshua as did the apostle Paul, and from whom Rabbinic Judaism ultimately originated, were but one of many sects in first century Judaism and even among the Pharisees there were variations.

Most of the other Judaic sects eventually perished. Among those were the original followers of Yeshua, known in some literature as the “*Messianists*” or “*Messiahists*”. You will find them, for instance, mentioned within **Rodkinson's Abridged Version of the Talmud** in the section in which he discusses the history of the Talmud. In Greek their identity would have the equivalent term of “Christians”. They were generally composed of Pharisees who [Adoptionists](#), did not accept Yeshua's deity, and revered all of Torah. The reason their opinions and those of others with whom the specific *Mishnah* compilers disagreed were not included in the **Talmud** is because those compiling it who rejected Yeshua as Messiah, most notably *Rabbi Yehudah haNasi* (*rabbi Judah the prince*), the very wealthy compiler of the *Mishnah* and a personal [friend of Emperor Antoninus](#), purposely chose to disregard them.

In other words, the opinions of the *Messianists* were intentionally ignored, censored, and thus made to appear as though they never existed. The belief of those biased *Mishnah* and **Talmud** compilers was that the best way to defeat the *Messianists'* opinions was to ignore them and watch them dissolve away in the course of time. Sadly they largely did, but what replaced them – the severe anti-Torah and antisemitic teachings birthed by fourth century Christianity – proved far worse for the anti-Messianist Talmud compilers and their followers.

Here we have an amazing irony as well as a sign of the awesome power and wisdom of God. Both Traditional Christianity and Judaism strove to expel and censor all remnants of opinion and teaching from the original Torah-centric followers of Yeshua. In the case of Christianity, they wanted to rid the world of all vestiges of Torah, and they continue that effort to this very day. Yet in the case of Judaism, they wanted to rid the world of all traces of **Yeshua Judaism**, Yeshua's Messiahship, and the openness to Torah and God's Kingdom offered to all nations (gentiles) through the teachings of the original Messianic Torah teachers who were among Yeshua's followers. That effort also continues to this very day. They both appeared to have succeeded, but ...

Praise be to God! They did not succeed! Today we are living in the time for the rebirth of those original Messianic truths! Blessed be The Most High! We are living in – quite literally – the time of a miraculous rejuvenation of truth that lay dormant for centuries awaiting the time when God would Divinely decree its resurrection from the ash heap of history.

That time has come, and it will not be stopped! God's truths cannot be erased, cannot be overcome, cannot be replaced! Here in these final days He is providing a latter rain of truth before the time when the great and awesome “day of the Lord” arrives. You are living in an incredible and unprecedented time, but it is also a time of final reckoning and choice. God is showing Himself to be victorious over those who struggle to suppress and destroy His Eternal instructions.

Any of the original Torah-centric *Messianists* who survived Constantinian Christianity's efforts to eradicate Torah were certainly killed, forced into hiding, or simply pushed aside by the later church as part of its evil effort to rid Christianity of any pro-Torah opinions. I am of the belief that specifically within the epistles of Paul, IF they are properly interpreted, we can see elements of that *Messianist* belief system – a pro-Torah system which stands in stark contrast to the anti-Torah foundations of Christianity that evolved later.

Concluding this section we ask, what really is “oral Torah”? It is really simpler than you think.

**“Oral Torah” simply means “verbal teachings” that were not explicitly written down in Scripture (the Bible). That is all it is.**

Oral Torah represents teachings, lessons, sermons, parables, examples, analogy, and any other form of instruction or methods used as tools to help explain the intended meaning of the Holy Scriptures.

## Premise 2: Christianity regularly and always has utilized “Oral Torah”

Now that “oral Torah” is defined and understood to be as stated in the previous section, it becomes obvious that Christianity and all other religions regularly utilize “oral Torah” (verbal teachings) as a standard practice. Even though this is undeniable, I realize that hardcore anti-Torah Christians will deny it nonetheless; therefore, I will present further evidence within this section.

The New Testament includes a portion of every single one of the Torah elements defined within the previous section – all of them. Besides its obvious documentation of history, it is filled with *mussar*, *midrash*, elements of *hashkafa*, *aggadah*, and even includes some halacha. Without the dominance within its writings of those Judaic based oral Torah components the New Testament would not exist and the Christian religion would have never materialized.

It is quite the oddity that the sacred writings of Christianity, The New Testament, if properly interpreted from a correct context, are largely Judaic oral Torah even though Christianity judges Judaic oral Torah as being unacceptable and even damnable. Despite that, the ignorance of Torah within Christianity causes Christians to consider all elements of “oral Torah” to be illegitimate. If that were true, then the New Testament would also be illegitimate.

The New Testament is “oral teachings” that were written down, and with very few exceptions all those teachings actually originate from Judaic oral Torah and can still be found there today throughout Judaic literature.

### Obvious New Testament use of *kabbalah* and *mussar*

I'll briefly suggest one of numerous additional examples of the error of Christianity's rejection of oral Torah by showing specifically how its rejection of *kabbalah* and *mussar* is the epitome of hypocrisy. First with regard to *kabbalah*, note the following quotes taken from Deuteronomy 29:29 and 1 Corinthians 2:6,7.

#### [Deut 29:29 \(NET\)](#)

<sup>29</sup> **Secret things** belong to the LORD our God, but **those that are revealed** belong to us and our descendants forever, so that we might obey all the words of this law.

Biblical Studies Press. (2006). The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English

#### [1 Corinthians 2:6,7 \(ESV\)](#)

<sup>6</sup>Yet among the mature we do impart **wisdom**, although it is **not a wisdom of this age** or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.

<sup>7</sup>But **we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God**, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

The Holy Bible: English Standard Version. 2001. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.

These two passages clearly imply that there are various Biblical truths that are “secret” or “hidden”. This obviously leads one to conclude that the truths of God are not as simple and open to everyone's understanding as many seem to think. Such teachings are said to contain the “sod”(secret) level of Torah. This sod level is what constitutes *kabbalah* – a word that simply means “received” – as in “received” truths from God that were given to Moses and others counted worthy but never explicitly written in the Bible. It represents the deeper and often hidden meanings or additional meanings of various passages of Scripture. Those teachings are among the “oral Torah” (verbal teachings).

Note also Paul's use of the term “wisdom”. That term is commonly used among Torah sages to refer to *kabbalah* – frequently called the “wisdom” of God. In fact, “wisdom” is one of the most common terms used in reference to *kabbalah*. Paul clearly implies that such “wisdom” is only given to those “mature” enough to understand and accept it, which once again precisely follows the common practice among Torah sages regarding the transfer of the *kabbalah* since spiritual maturity is absolutely necessary.

Before *kabbalah* would be transferred to a Torah student he would have to demonstrate extensive knowledge of Torah basics and possess an exceptional emotional and mental aptitude. It is for this reason that many Judaic leaders and others are greatly dismayed with the ease with which a person can find and study *kabbalah* literature today. I, myself, am a bit dismayed since much of the material being marketed as *kabbalah* is illegitimate or cheap knock-offs of the truth and most people do not know how to determine what is authentic and what is New Age garbage or distortions. Additionally, even the legitimate *kabbalah* is being drastically distorted to fit whatever bias an individual may hold.

Among the very worst of the corrupt distortions to be found are those being spewed from the deceitful mouths and pens of counterfeit Messianic self-anointed “rabbis” as they grotesquely warp and deform *kabbalah* to allegedly prove Messiah's deity. I have little respect for such agents of deceit. They are despicable charlatans who show no respect for God's “wisdom” as they twist it to suit their idolatrous and sometimes ego-maniacal motives. It is for that reason that I loathe much that is found in the counterfeit Messianic faith system. It is nothing more than Christianity with “Jewishness” added as a facade. It is to such people that I feel Revelation refers when it mentions “those who say they are Jews but are not”. They are false teachers who desecrate Torah and the Giver of Torah through their promotion of blatant idolatry. As I say elsewhere, “The Pope can parade around with a Torah

*scroll and wear a tallit, but he is still the Pope*". Such a vision of deceit aptly applies to them.

Legitimate *kabbalah* most definitely does NOT support a corporeal "God in the flesh", but their unyielding bias blinds them to truth as they fashion together their "God incarnate" Messiah idol from material that they slice-and-dice from among *kabbalistic* literature.

Anything you see listed on the "[Bookshelf](#)" page is legitimate since it originates from supremely revered and trusted Torah masters.

Paul, as a highly educated Torah scholar, undoubtedly knew to what the term "wisdom" refers and did not use it casually. Unfortunately, I have yet to meet a Christian who meets this "mature" quality even though many may consider themselves qualified. The primary reason they fail to qualify is because they are taught to reject Torah – specifically Judaic oral Torah. Until they undertake Torah study they will never achieve the level of the wise.

The "secret", "hidden" or "mystery" aspects of the work of Messiah are often mentioned in the New Testament. Within Paul's epistles it is a common topic, and that is likely because Paul was probably the most Torah knowledgeable of all the original followers of Messiah due to his extensive training as a student of the top Torah scholar of his generation, *Rabban Gamaliel I*. Therefore, Paul was the one among Yeshua's followers most able to discuss such matters. But it is not just within Paul's epistles that the issue is found. I will leave it to the reader to discover all the passages in which the New Testament discusses it. Among the passages in which it is mentioned in the letters of Paul are the following:

[Romans 16:25,26 \(NET\)](#)

<sup>25</sup>Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the **mystery that had been kept secret for long ages**, <sup>26</sup>but **now is disclosed**, and through the prophetic scriptures **has been made known** to all the nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith

[Ephesians 3:4-9 \(NET\)](#)

<sup>4</sup>When reading this, you will be able to understand my **insight into this secret of Christ**. <sup>5</sup>Now **this secret was not disclosed to people in former generations** as it **has now been revealed** to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, <sup>6</sup>namely, that through the gospel the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>I became a servant of this gospel according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the exercise of his power. <sup>8</sup>To me – less than the least of all the saints – this grace was given, to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ <sup>9</sup>and **to enlighten everyone about God's secret plan – a secret that has been hidden for ages in God who has created all things**.

[Colossians 1:26,27 \(NET\)](#)

<sup>26</sup>that is, **the mystery that has been kept hidden from ages and generations, but has now been revealed to his saints**. <sup>27</sup>God wanted to make known to them the glorious riches of **this mystery** among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Christianity openly rejects *kabbalah* and other things they call "mysticism" or "mystery religion".

Such rejection by Christianity is rather astounding (and hypocritical) since the New Testament repeatedly refers to things that were "mysteries" and "hidden" until the time of Messiah. The passages just quoted from the New Testament go even further by claiming that a "secret and hidden wisdom" was kept hidden until that time. Therefore, if Christianity rejects such things then it would not even exist since by rejecting "secret" and "hidden" teachings Christianity would have to reject the "Christ" and his atoning work. Wake up folks! That very atoning work is directly stated as being a "secret and hidden wisdom" and, elsewhere, as a "mystery".

And most assuredly, if Christianity truly rejects mysticism and mystery then it better erase the book of Revelation from the New Testament since there is no writing found that is of a more "mystical" nature. Even *kabbalistic* literature is sometimes more understandable than is Revelation.

It is a simple fact that Christianity, because of it being based on the "mystery" of Christ, is itself a "mystery" religion. Anyone denying this is ignoring the obvious. In Roman Catholicism you can find many "mysteries" mentioned. They even directly refer to them as "mysteries"! (*And guess where all other Christian denominations came from?*) The very bedrock foundation of Christianity – the work of "Christ" – is explicitly stated in the New Testament to have come from "secret" and "hidden" truths of God. Therefore, for Christianity to reject *kabbalah* is beyond hypocritical and falls within the domain of moronic ineptitude.

This is even more the case with regard to "*mussar*". The New Testament is absolutely filled with ethical and moral teachings that instruct a person how to improve themselves and become a more effective servant of God, which is what constitutes *mussar*. Like "mystery" and "hidden" teachings, without *mussar* Christianity would also not exist. The *mussar* within the New Testament is nothing more than a tiny subset of a much more comprehensive ethical and moral set of teachings found within Judaism's oral Torah. Therefore, even while rejecting oral Torah, Christianity unknowingly follows some common oral Torah precepts!

The parallels, duplication, and general likeness of most of the New Testament's teachings to Judaic oral Torah are too numerous to mention. All one

has to do is study a few Judaic books on *mussar* and they will be seen. But more than that, those Judaic teachings within the New Testament would be expanded upon and more clearly explained. If Christians refuse to read such books then they have no basis for disagreeing with the position of this article since by refusing to actually study the issue they are too untaught to form a sound or admissible opinion. All that they prove is that they possess a close minded bias and refusal to search for truth.

Regardless of what Christians may think, the very religion they revere is based upon some of Judaism's most fundamental oral Torah teachings that in critical areas have been wholly upended, reinterpreted, and presented in a way that is far removed from their actual meanings – meanings that can be usually be found through the study of Judaism's oral Torah.

Of course, there are a few crucial areas, particularly with regard to the identity of Messiah, the openness of the Kingdom of God to gentiles, and the impartiality of God, in which the New Testament deviates somewhat from Judaic oral Torah; however, such examples are few in number when compared to the volume of teachings found in the New Testament and are not the subject of this discussion.

As stated earlier, "Torah" is simply a Hebrew word which means "teachings" or "instructions". That is all it is. It is simply a Hebrew word with a simple English translation of "teachings" or "instructions". I realize many people idolize the word "Torah", but it is simply a word for goodness sake. The word, itself, is not important. The importance lies in what those teachings (Torah) contain. So, the term "oral Torah" simply means oral teachings that were not specifically written in Scripture.

The term "oral" in "oral Torah" simply means "verbal". It refers to teaching and instructions that were not specifically codified in the Bible but were transferred verbally or in written form. That is literally all it means. Christianity rejects oral Torah; therefore, their stance explicitly causes them to actually be rejecting "verbal" teachings.

Oh really? Is it true that Christianity rejects verbal teachings (oral Torah)?

No! It is not true, and Christians are lying if they claim otherwise.

What do they think they are studying and reading in all the thousands of volumes of Christian books and literature? What do they think they are saying whenever they open their mouths to express an opinion or "teaching"? I can tell you a place to go where you will find thousands upon thousands, perhaps millions, of pages of Christian "oral teachings". It is called a Christian book store! What do Christians think they are hearing from pulpits, home studies, or gatherings whenever "teaching" is being transferred verbally or in text form from anyone? What insanity folks! Christian claims that they reject "oral teachings" is outrageous.

Anytime you or anyone else discusses the Bible and uses anything other than pure Scripture you are partaking in "oral teaching". It is literally impossible to refrain from oral Torah unless you never open your mouth, listen to any Biblical opinions, or read any religious material other than strictly the Bible passages. Even the thoughts in your mind as you consider and attempt to make sense of what you read from the Bible are "oral teachings" of a sort.

Bluntly stated, rejection of "oral Torah" by Christians or any other religious group is the very epitome – the highest form – of hypocrisy. Even as they claim to reject oral Teachings they are, themselves, swimming in their own version. They are hearing it, speaking it, praying it, and reading it on a daily basis. Thus, those who claim to reject "oral Torah" are utterly deceitful and hypocritical.

So, the simple fact is that Christianity constantly utilizes "oral Torah" while hypocritically claiming to give no regard to it.

Therefore, since every faith system on earth, including Christianity, actually does participate in a form of "oral Torah", it is obviously proven to be legitimate. No religious system is possible without it. **Without verbal teachings (oral Torah) to accompany any official written Scriptures, practice of any faith system is literally impossible.**

**Premise 3: The New Testament supports and is, itself, a small presentation of some basic "Oral Torah"**

This subject is one of many examples of issues for which enormous value can be found within Judaic literature. It is evidence of the urgent need for believers in Messiah to repent of their desecration of The Eternal Creator through their rejection of His eternal teachings (Torah). It exemplifies the need for Christians to lay aside forever their extreme bias against anything "Judaic" and to embrace Torah since only by doing so will advancement of the coming Kingdom of God, Yeshua the King-Messiah, and the true teachings of the New Testament succeed. Until then all that will be advanced is continued Christian error and desecration of The Eternal through outright rejection of His teachings.

This is particularly true of the "oral Torah" of Judaism, which Christians and most anti-Paulists basically despise and consider "traditions of men". They take specific negative references in the New Testament to "traditions of men" and then wrongly expand them to assume those negative comments apply to anything and everything within Judaism's oral Torah. They do not, and to claim that they do is to misread and misapply those few New

Testament verses.

Exact proof of this is found in [1 Corinthians 11:2](#) and [2 Thessalonians 2:15](#) in which Paul directly states that those to whom he is writing should adhere to the “traditions” he taught them. Likewise, in [Acts 28:17](#) Luke records that Paul, as part of his defense against those accusing him of being anti-Torah, specifically stated that he had not violated the “customs” (“traditions” in some Bible versions) of his Jewish ancestors.

These New Testament passages which are found in two of Paul’s letters and applied to him in the Acts account authored by Luke prove that Paul agreed with and utilized many of the “traditions” he had learned as part of his Judaic schooling under the guidance of the exalted *Rabbi, Gamaliel the Elder (Rabban Gamaliel I)*. This fact is even more obvious from his words in [Galatians 1:14](#) where he states he was ‘extremely zealous’ for the traditions and his advanced position relative to Torah knowledge. Paul was a Torah genius, which is something anti-Paulists, Judaic based counter missionaries, and other haters of the New Testament deny or refuse to admit. (Yes, *anti-Paulists* are counter missionary haters of the New Testament despite their ignorant and disingenuous claims to the contrary.)

All of Paul’s clear references to the usefulness of traditions need to be weighed when passages such as [Philippians 3:3-10](#) are read in which he appears to conclude that such traditions are useless. Obviously, if this assumed interpretation were correct he would be directly contradicting what he says elsewhere. It is, therefore, simply a reference to the superiority of faith versus “works”, particularly faith in the atonement discussed in a separate article. His Philippians statement is one for which similar teachings exists in Judaic literature. Yet, as with Paul, in none of those cases is the reader to assume the writer is anti-Torah. They are all simply communicating the necessity to always consider faith as the supreme ingredient in one’s relationship to God and His Torah.

Judaism’s literature is filled with references to the fact that practice of Torah without faith and purely to receive eternal reward is defective and a harmful spiritual state in which to reside. In fact, it is a basic teaching of Judaism. Paul and all other authors of the New Testament clearly revered many of the “traditions” which were and are found within Judaism’s “oral Torah”.

## New Testament's "faith vs works" agrees with oral Torah and Judaism

I will present an example of Judaic Torah-centric thought regarding the central importance of “faith versus works” from the many examples that exists with which the apostle Paul and the New Testament would agree. To the untrained oral Torah ignorant person this example definitely appears to be anti-Torah just as do some of Paul’s words.

I will quote from page 107 of the book, *In the Shadow of the Ladder*, by Mark and Yedidah Cohen. That book is a translation of some of the writings of *Rabbi Yehudah Lev Ashlag*, a highly revered Judaic sage of the twentieth century (may his name be for a blessing). *Rabbi Ashlag* is a profoundly gifted man – a tzaddik of merit – through whom much benefit to mankind has been provided. The same can be said of many other gifted Torah scholars, such as *Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto*, *Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan*, *Rabbi Bachya ibn Paquada*, *Rebbe Nachman of Breslov*, etc. The list of such men is long. May all their names be for a blessing!

*“... but the measure of the strength of the light of Torah directly accords with the degree of a person’s belief. But for those who lack this faith, the reverse happens: ‘For those who use it wrongly, it becomes the drug of death,’ for they receive darkness from Torah and their eyes are dimmed.”*

Note that *Rabbi Ashlag* refers to a situation in which Torah can be a “drug of death” and that from Torah one can “receive darkness” and have “their eyes dimmed”. Note also the focus on “belief” and “faith”. Note the “faith versus works” implication, and this is from a rabbi of twentieth century speaking on a fundamental doctrine of Judaism!

Wow! A rabbi of Judaism claiming that “Torah ... for those who lack ... faith ... becomes a drug of death”, that Torah can cause “darkness” and result in one’s eyes being “dimmed”? There is nothing Paul writes that exceeds the apparent “anti-Torah” statements from that Rabbi.

Well, if you think the Rabbi’s words are anti-Torah, then you are wrong. *Rabbi Ashlag* is most certainly not anti-Torah, and neither is the apostle Paul. Can Torah be a “drug of death”, etc.? Indeed it can be, but only if studied and practiced with the wrong intent and in an improper manner, and you can find numerous similar faith-focused statements within Judaism’s writings that to the untrained eye could be wrongly judged as anti-Torah.

From chapter two of the the aforementioned book, *In the Shadow of the Ladder*, we find further proof of parallels to Paul and the actual New Testament teachings (versus what Christianity falsely claims it teaches). On page 27 of that book we find:

*“Rabbi Ashlag emphasizes the importance of allowing our study to affect our behavior in practice. Without the constant attention on our inner intentions, our work in Torah and mitzvot (i.e. good deeds, commandments) has little meaning. He decried the misuse of Torah and the empty practice of the mitzvot so common among the religious establishment. Outer ritual carried out without the intention of service is the drug of death, he declared. This attitude stirred up opposition but he did not react, preferring to continue his true work of writing and teaching.”*

Note how there was and is opposition to what this Torah loving rabbi said just as there was opposition to what was said by two Torah loving characters within the New Testament: Messiah Yeshua and the apostle Paul. The same applies to all New Testament authors.

So here we have a two statements of many similar statements found within Judaism's literature that basically says much the same thing the apostle Paul said within a few scattered verses of his epistles. In both cases the focus is on faith and not on attacking the Torah. In fact, the "faith" discussions within Judaic writings are much more comprehensive than are the limited teachings found in Paul's epistles or the rest of the New Testament.

Since it is important to note, I will restate that just like Paul, Messiah Yeshua, and Yeshua's other followers mentioned in the New Testament, *Rabbi Ashlag* was often opposed by his contemporaries. The same can be said for other rabbis who went against the status quo of Judaism's often more legalistic establishment. Such information shows that Judaic writings actually prove crucially useful in properly interpreting Paul's words (*and the entire New Testament*).

Of course, very few Christians ever reference such material to better grasp the intent of Paul's epistles, and because of that for almost 2000 years Paul has been misrepresented by Christianity. Now he is not only misrepresented, but he is also slanderously and savagely attacked by anti-Paulists. And in both cases the reasons are identical: a severe ignorance of Paul's intent because of Torah illiteracy.

There are lots of similar examples found all throughout Judaic writings, and I list books among the first of those shown on the "[Bookshelf](#)" page of this site in which numerous Judaic parallels to Paul's epistles can be found. Ponder this example. Many such books exists if you care to reference them.

## Yeshua (Jesus) called oral Torah "Scripture"

There is even evidence of Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus) referencing the oral Torah. For instance, in the gospel of [Matthew 22:23-33](#), we find Messiah Yeshua in a conversation with some Sadducees. Parallel passages are found in Mark chapter 12 and Luke chapter 20.

Matthew 22: 23-30 (NET)

<sup>23</sup>The same day Sadducees (*who say there is no resurrection*) came to him and asked him, <sup>24</sup>"Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and father children for his brother.' <sup>25</sup>Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children he left his wife to his brother. <sup>26</sup>The second did the same, and the third, down to the seventh. <sup>27</sup>Last of all, the woman died. <sup>28</sup>In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had married her." <sup>29</sup>Jesus answered them, "You are deceived, because you don't know the scriptures or the power of God. <sup>30</sup>For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ..."

Biblical Studies Press. (2006). The NET Bible First Edition

From where did Yeshua obtain this information? Did it come from the Tanakh (*irreverently called the "Old" Testament*)? No. Actually he is referencing from oral Torah – evidence of which I present as follows:

**Mishneh Torah** is a pivotal work of grand achievement by *Rabbi Mosheh ben Maimon (RaMBaM or RAMBAM)* also called *Moses Maimonides*. It is a very extensive writing in which *Maimonides* sought to present the **Talmud** in a more understandable format. Anyone who has read the **Talmud** will realize the need for such a writing. He accomplished his goal exceedingly well. Within the English translation of **Mishneh Torah**, published in 29 volumes by Moznaim Publishing Corporation, we find the following in the **Pirkei Avot** volume, appendix B, page 166. It is actually a quote worded slightly differently from *Berachot 17a* of the **Talmud** to which it is referring:

"... our Sages said; 'In the World to Come, there is neither eating, nor drinking, nor bathing, nor anointment, nor sex. ...'"

Note that the Sages of the oral Torah taught that there will be no sex in the Future World; thus, there will obviously be no marriage. Therefore, Yeshua is simply pointing out to those Sadducees, who were apparently unschooled in knowledge of oral Torah due to Sadducean rejection of it, that their ignorance of "the scriptures" was evident from their query. Had they known those "scriptures" they would not have posed such an ignorant question.

The "scriptures" to which he is referring is the traditions of the Sages (oral Torah), which is necessary and, thus, somewhat inseparable from the **Holy Scriptures** to which they apply as a means of interpretation, explanation, and clarification. So, beyond simply referencing oral Torah, Yeshua may have actually been equating it to Scripture!

So there we have very strong evidence - basically irrefutable proof - that Yeshua (Jesus) revered the oral Torah so much that he literally labeled them "Scriptures"!

There is much more evidence in the words Yeshua spoke that we have recorded in the New Testament since virtually everything he taught is found in Judaism's oral Torah.

There is actually very little that is “new” in the New Testament other than the identity of Messiah, a new level of openness to non-Jews as future citizens of God’s Eternal Kingdom, and rebuke of the elitism and exclusivity then and now present in Judaism. (*That last “new” item was and still is a major point of contention between the original followers of Yeshua and what is commonly considered today as “Judaism”. Yeshua’s followers taught the impartiality of God, but Judaism then and now dogmatically rejects that.*) Other than these “new” items, most of the New Testament which references basic “Christian” teaching is simply a small fraction of a much larger set of teachings that can be found in Judaism’s oral Torah, but Christians are generally too anti-Torah and thus Torah ignorant to know this basic fact.

### Apostle Paul’s teaching regarding food offered to idols:

As a final example of oral Torah being present in the New Testament, I will use the apostle Paul’s (Shaul) rather extensive discussion of “food offered to idols” that is found within the first epistle to the Corinthians. I present this specific example, in part, because of the widespread confusion and incorrect interpretation of Paul’s intention regarding this issue that can be found within contemporary Christian teachings. It is also an issue used by anti-Paulists to allegedly “prove” him to be promoting teachings that are anti-Torah.

As you will see, Paul’s statements align almost perfectly with the established teachings from oral Torah regarding food offered to idols. The anti-Paulists are wrong, and so are those Christians who follow the foolish path of anti-Paulists.

The primary, and really only, difference in Paul’s teachings and those found within Judaism’s oral Torah is the perspective from which the teaching is presented. Paul approaches it from a more simplistic, basic perspective due to the fact that those to whom he was writing were less schooled in the technicalities of oral Torah *halacha*. His approach was to emphasize the absurd idea of worshiping idols along with the need to consider the conscience of those who may be influenced by poor spiritual practices. You can see this in how he appeals to basic concepts of the senseless worship of idols and how even our eating habits carry a message to those who may be influenced by even the most mundane thing as what we eat.

The oral Torah quote, however, which will be shown following the quote from Paul’s epistle, approaches the issue from a more technical perspective. The reader of that material was and is people who are more aware of the details of Torah.

Thus, what we have in Paul’s epistle to the Corinthians and the quotes from Judaic oral Torah is the same teaching approached from two distinctly different directions.

We will first consider Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians. I will quote from the NET Bible and will include in *red italicized letters* and within brackets “[...]” some of the more useful translator notes from that excellent Bible translation since they assist in properly understanding Paul’s message.

#### [1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 10:14-33, 11:1 \(NET\)](#)

8:1 With regard to food sacrificed to idols, we know that “we all have knowledge.” [*sn “We all have knowledge.” Here and in v. 4 Paul cites certain slogans the Corinthians apparently used to justify their behavior (cf. 6:12-13; 7:1; 10:23). Paul agrees with the slogans in part, but corrects them to show how the Corinthians have misused these ideas.*] Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup> If someone thinks he knows something, he does not yet know to the degree that he needs to know. <sup>3</sup> But if someone loves God, he is known by God.

<sup>4</sup> With regard then to eating food sacrificed to idols, we know that “an idol in this world is nothing,” and that “there is no God but one.” [*sn “An idol in this world is nothing” and “There is no God but one.” Here and in v. 1 Paul cites certain slogans the Corinthians apparently used to justify their behavior (cf. 6:12-13; 7:1; 10:23). Paul agrees with the slogans in part, but corrects them to show how the Corinthians have misused these ideas.*]

<sup>5</sup> If after all there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), <sup>6</sup> yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we live, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we live. <sup>7</sup> But this knowledge is not shared by all. And some, by being accustomed to idols in former times, eat this food as an idol sacrifice, and their conscience, because it is weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup> Now food will not bring us close to God. We are no worse if we do not eat and no better if we do. <sup>9</sup> But be careful that this liberty of yours does not become a hindrance to the weak. <sup>10</sup> For if someone weak sees you who possess knowledge dining in an idol’s temple, will not his conscience be “strengthened” [*tn Or “built up”; This is the same word used in v. 1b. It is used ironically here: The weak person is “built up” to commit what he regards as sin.*] to eat food offered to idols? <sup>11</sup> So by your knowledge the weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed. <sup>12</sup> If you sin against your brothers or sisters in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup> For this reason, if food causes my brother or sister to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause one of them to sin. ...

10:14 So then, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. <sup>15</sup> I am speaking to thoughtful people. Consider what I say. <sup>16</sup> Is not the cup of blessing that we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread that we break a sharing in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup> Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all share the one bread. <sup>18</sup> Look at the people of Israel. Are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? <sup>19</sup> Am I saying that idols or food sacrificed to them amount to anything? <sup>20</sup> No, I mean that what the pagans sacrifice is to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. <sup>21</sup> You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot take part in the table of the Lord and the table of demons. <sup>22</sup> Or are we trying to provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we really stronger than he is? [*tn The question in Greek expects a negative answer (“We are not stronger than he is, are we?”).*]

<sup>23</sup> “Everything is lawful,” but not everything is beneficial. “Everything is lawful,” [*sn “Everything is lawful.” Here again Paul cites certain slogans the Corinthians used to justify their behavior (cf. 6:12-13; 7:1; 8:1, 4). Paul agrees with the slogans in part, but corrects them to show how the Corinthians have misused these ideas.*] but not everything builds others up. <sup>24</sup> Do not seek

your own good, but the good of the other person. <sup>25</sup> Eat anything that is sold in the marketplace without questions of conscience, <sup>26</sup> for the earth and its abundance are the Lord's. <sup>27</sup> If an unbeliever invites you to dinner and you want to go, eat whatever is served without asking questions of conscience. <sup>28</sup> **But if someone says to you, "This is from a sacrifice," do not eat**, because of the one who told you and because of conscience – <sup>29</sup> I do not mean yours but the other person's. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? <sup>30</sup> If I partake with thankfulness, why am I blamed for the food that I give thanks for? <sup>31</sup> So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. <sup>32</sup> Do not give offense to Jews or Greeks or to the church of God, <sup>33</sup> just as I also try to please everyone in all things. I do not seek my own benefit, but the benefit of many, so that they may be saved.

11:1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

Biblical Studies Press. (2006). The NET Bible First Edition

Please note in the previous quoted passages that I placed 1 Corinthians 10:28 in bold letters because it is a one sentence summary of all that Paul discusses regarding the topic of food offered to idols. He directly states, "... **do not eat**" such food.

Please pay attention to the translator notes I chose to include. You will see that for the purpose of relating to his audience, the citizens of Corinth, he utilized phrases that were common to their understanding. Although he partially agreed with the phrases, he used them to emphasize how their understanding was incorrect and was leading them to improper conduct. This is one of numerous examples in Scripture where we are supposed to always be aware of others and strive to avoid offence or something that will cause them to stumble. The improper conduct they were considering or practicing was the eating of food that was knowingly offered in a temple of idolatrous worship. He then proceeded to correct that error.

Basically, in Paul's typically verbose manner he was clearly teaching to avoid the eating of food that was knowingly offered to an idol in a pagan temple.

Note that I said "knowingly" offered to the idols. That is an important point. If it was not known to have been officially and literally offered to an idol, then it is permissible to eat according to Paul. That means that even if it was carried into a pagan temple for the purposes of being offered but the offering did not actually occur, then the food could be eaten. Only when it was known that the pagan offering of the food had been accomplished was the food forbidden to eat. The status of the food – whether it could be eaten or not – changed only when the pagan offering of the food was carried out.

You will see that this detail regarding when the food was permitted or forbidden to be eaten perfectly matches oral Torah, and so it should since Paul was an eminently schooled Torah scholar.

Now let us compare Paul's statements to the more direct and slightly more technically presented discussion of food offered to idols that is found within the oral Torah of Judaism.

I will utilize the *Mishneh Torah* – a multi-volume work of oral Torah that is highly exalted and revered within Judaism. I will be quoting from the volume "*Hilchot Avodat Kochavim*". There is much said within that writing which deals with various aspects of idolatry; however, I will present only a small portion of the material, specifically that which impacts the current topic of when eating food offered to idols is permitted or forbidden.

I will first present the quotes within italics, after which I will briefly summarize the evidence which proves the direct parallels they have to the primary thrust of Paul's epistle to the Corinthians.

The first statement comes from Chapter 7, *halacha* 2, and is found on page 114.

*2. It is forbidden to benefit from false deities, their accessories, offerings for them, and anything made for them, as [implied by Deuteronomy 7:26]: "Do not bring an abomination to your home." ...*

The just quoted *halacha* along with *halacha* 1 which precedes it within *Mishneh Torah*, serves as the foundation for all the laws discussed in chapter 7 of *Hilchot Avodat Kochavim*. Since *halacha* 1 does not impact our current discussion, it is not included.

The teaching is clear. It is forbidden to benefit from false deities or, with respect to this discussion, forbidden to benefit from offerings to such pagan deities. But please note that the term "offerings" implies that an offering has been officially performed.

Next we have *halacha* 3.

*3. It is forbidden to benefit from an animal which was sacrificed to false deities in its entirety – even its excrement, its bones, its horns, its hooves, and its hide. It is forbidden to benefit from it at all. ...*

Once again, it is clearly stated that it is forbidden to benefit – at all – from pagan offerings.

The final statement from chapter 7 which directly relates to the issue of food sacrifices to idols is found in *halacha* 15. It directly addresses the issue.

15. *It is not forbidden to benefit from meat, wine, and fruits that were prepared as offerings for idols. Although they were brought into the temple of a false deity, [they are not prohibited] until they are actually brought as offerings.*

*Once they are brought as offerings, [their status changes] and they remain forbidden forever, even if they were later removed [from the temple].*

...

In the last quote we begin to see the direct parallel to what Paul taught in his epistle. So long as the offering of meat, wine, etc., was not officially performed, it is permitted to partake of it. As stated, this is even true if the meat, wine, etc., had already been taken into the pagan temple. If, before being offered, it is removed from the temple, it is permissible to eat it. **The actual performance of the ritual of offering the meat is where the change in status occurs. At that point, it changes from being permissible food to being forbidden food.**

Finally, we read the following from chapter 8, *halacha* 1.

*1. It is permitted to derive benefit from anything that has not been manipulated by man or that was not made by man, even though it was worshiped [as a deity]. Therefore, it is permitted to benefit from mountains, hills, trees – provided they were planted originally with the intent of harvesting their fruit – springs which provide water for many people, and animals, despite their having been worshiped by pagans. It is permitted to partake of the fruits that were worshiped in the place where they grow and to partake of such an animal.*

*Needless to say, it is permitted to partake of an animal that was set aside for the purpose of idol worship or to be sacrificed [to another deity]. When do the above statements permitting the use of an animal apply? When a deed involving it was not committed for the sake of idol worship. If, however, any deed whatsoever was committed involving it, it is forbidden; for example, to cut one of its signs (windpipe and esophagus) for the sake of an idol. Should one exchange it for an idol, it is forbidden. Similarly, it is forbidden if it was exchanged for an article that was itself exchanged for an idol, since the latter article is considered to be “payment for an idol.”*

*When does the above apply? Regarding one’s own animal. If, however, one slaughtered a colleague’s animal for the sake of a false deity, or exchanged it for an idol, it does not become forbidden, because a person cannot cause an article that does not belong to him to become forbidden....*

The final quote from **Mishneh Torah** once again strongly implies that until the actual ritual offering is done, the food is permissible to eat. Furthermore, the final sentence of the quote actually suggests somewhat less of a stringent requirement than what Paul teaches since it implies that so long as the animal being offered is not your own, you can benefit from it. However, the translator’s commentary for that last statement that is found within the **Mishneh Torah** suggests the straight forward reading can be misunderstood and that there is a variation of opinion regarding its actual meaning. Since it does not directly impact the current topic under discussion, I will not delve into that commentary.

Summarizing the issue of “food offered to idols” we find that Paul’s teachings from his first epistle to the Corinthians is virtually identical to what is found in the oral Torah of Judaism. Any deviation that may exist is trivial. Therefore, we have proof within the New Testament of yet another of the many existing connections to Judaic oral Torah.

The New Testament is Messianic oral Torah! Moreover, it is largely composed of precisely the same oral Torah that can be found within Judaism’s own writings.

The New Testament writings are filled with basic teachings also found in Judaism’s oral Torah and could be enormously more useful and instructive for Christians if they would study Judaic thought to determine the correct intent of much within the New Testament that is wrongly interpreted by their Torah ignorant Christian leaders. It was not, is not, and never will be official “Holy Scripture,” a fact I prove in a [separate discussion](#). However, it can be and in my opinion is a form of oral Torah (verbal teachings). It is oral or verbal teachings that were written in letters and various other documents of communication to edify the original followers of Yeshua.

Therefore, it is indeed quite odd and profoundly hypocritical for Christianity to claim to reject “oral Torah” even though the very New Testament they revere is a form of “oral Torah” that is largely based upon and often utilizes established oral Torah found within Judaism.

#### Premise 4: Further evidence of “Oral Torah” found in Scripture

We find further direct support for “oral Torah” (unwritten teaching) and even historic proof of its use in the book of Nehemiah. I will quote three separate Bible versions: The New English Translation, the King James Version, and the Holman Christian Standard Bible. Within these passages you will see the use of the oral Torah method of “*midrash*”, of which I spoke earlier.

##### [Nehemiah 8:7-12 \(NET\)](#)

<sup>7</sup>Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiiah- all of whom were Levites – were teaching the people the law, as the people remained standing. <sup>8</sup>They read from the book of God’s law, **explaining it and imparting insight. Thus the people gained understanding from what was read.**

<sup>9</sup>Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priestly scribe, and the Levites **who were imparting understanding to the people** said to all of them,

*"This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people had been weeping when they heard the words of the law. <sup>10</sup>He said to them, "Go and eat delicacies and drink sweet drinks and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared. For this day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."*

*<sup>11</sup>Then the Levites quieted all the people saying, "Be quiet, for this day is holy. Do not grieve." <sup>12</sup>So all the people departed to eat and drink and to share their food with others and to enjoy tremendous joy, for **they had gained insight in the matters that had been made known to them.***

Nehemiah 8:7-12 (KJV)

*<sup>7</sup>Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused — the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. <sup>8</sup>They read out of the book of the law of God, translating and **giving the meaning so that the people could understand what was read.***

*<sup>9</sup>And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites **that taught the people, said unto all the people,** This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.<sup>10</sup>Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.*

*<sup>11</sup>So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved. <sup>12</sup>And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because **they had understood the words that were declared unto them***

Nehemiah 8:7-12 (HCSB)

*<sup>7</sup>Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah, who were Levites, explained the law to the people as they stood in their places. <sup>8</sup>So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and **gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.***

*<sup>9</sup>Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites **who were instructing the people** said to all of them, "This day is holy to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep." For all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the law.<sup>10</sup>Then he said to them, "Go and eat what is rich, drink what is sweet, and send portions to those who have nothing prepared, since today is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, because the joy of the Lord is your stronghold."*

*<sup>11</sup>And the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, since today is holy. Do not grieve." <sup>12</sup>Then all the people began to eat and drink, send portions, and have a great celebration, because **they had understood the words that were explained to them.***

Recall that these people had just returned from captivity during which some had forgotten the use of the previous Hebrew language; therefore, there was translation needed. But beyond that, from these verses we see a clear and direct reference to the presence, use, and need for explanation and clarification of Bible passages. It is actually an obvious need, and any Christian – or anyone else – knows this. So why then does Christianity declare invalid the "oral Torah" since its use is a common sense necessity?

As I say elsewhere, if Christians reject the oral Torah of the Judaic sages then to be consistent they must reject the New Testament since the New Testament is largely composed of that very thing! In fact, just about every teaching in the New Testament is taken from fundamental Judaic teachings – specifically, fundamental oral Torah. And as a separate article proves, even the teaching of [atonement through Messiah](#) has Judaic origins and is, itself, oral Torah. There are, of course, elements of teaching within the New Testament that differ with the Torah of Judaism, but such things are actually rare if the New Testament is correctly interpreted from its proper Torah-centric context.

The issue is not really that Christians reject "oral Torah". Instead, they simply reject the oral Torah that they choose not to follow – the "oral Torah" that differs from their ignorant and minimalist version. Those who cling to their own personal form of oral teachings which differ with Judaism's will likely never see the New Testament as what it is – a thoroughly Judaic composition of writings which differs only slightly with the traditions of Judaic sages. Oral Torah is a legitimate concept and anyone thinking otherwise is either intellectually deficient, a hypocrite, or both.

Despite their deceitful claims to the contrary, the fact is Christians and others do not actually reject "oral Torah", they simply reject those verbal teachings (oral Torah) that conflict with their own.

The Torah definition I presented earlier represents only a minimum accounting of the components of the "Torah" of God. There are actually subsets of the above elements or additional ones, but those listed are all that is necessary to really understand the definition of "Torah". It should be clearly understood that ALL of the above are "Torah" and that if but one is missing then the Torah is not complete.

Do I accept all that is considered "oral Torah"? No, I do not. However, that is not the issue being discussed at the moment. Suffice it to say I do consider much of it to be a legitimate and correct transfer of God's instructions to mankind and of extreme importance if one wishes to grasp the teachings of The Most High God.

## A brief analogy to clarify the importance of Oral Torah

Basically, the written Torah – the Tanakh – is considered somewhat of a "covering" or "clothing" for the deeper aspects of Torah. The terms "covering"

and “clothing” are a mystical term which refers to something that “serves and protects” that which it covers. It is, in a sense, a protective shell housing the heart of whatever is clothed.

An excellent analogy is an egg. The egg shell (the covering for the egg) is there to primarily serve and protect the embryonic material within the shell. Likewise, the basic commandments and teachings of the Tanakh function as the most basic elements – and a covering or shell – for a much deeper and meaningful set of teachings that actually present the final intent of those teachings. Those deeper aspects are what is known as the “Oral Torah”, which is composed of what I described and defined previously. It is from those teachings that the true intent of The Eternal’s instructions are understood.

The egg is again a good analogy with regard to how one learns truth. During a bird’s formation within the egg it feeds upon material within the shell until such time as it matures enough to emerge. It is not birthed from the outside in, but from the inside out. Birth in the natural world always starts from inside some form of protective shroud, and the first food or nutrition of any creature comes from within that covering of protection – be it a bird’s egg or a human mother’s womb.

Such is a physical parallel for spiritual birth. The crucial oral Torah inner aspects (inner egg material) of the written Torah (the egg shell) are absolutely crucial nutrition for a person to reach a level of spiritual maturity from which they can then “break forth” healthy enough to proceed furthering their maturity (just like the bird).

Sadly, since Christianity is extremely anti-Torah and even more severely anti-oral Torah, Christians are never able to receive the most fundamental, embryonic truths of God’s ways. They, therefore, never mature spiritually because they utterly refuse to enter the egg to partake of the elements necessary for their true spiritual birth. Just like the physical world, corruption or poisons within the egg or womb can kill, sicken, weaken, or deform what is being formed within, and the corrupt anti-Torah mindset of Christianity does, indeed, spiritually weaken and deform those being nurtured by it.

Of course the egg shell (protective covering) is essential for the health of that which is inside it. Without the shell there is no egg. So it is with the written Torah (protective shell) and the oral Torah (inner meaning). That inside depends completely upon its protective shell to provide its basic structure during the embryonic maturing process.

The oral Torah is dependent upon the written Torah for its structure, and the written Torah is dependent upon the oral Torah to provide definition, clarification and deeper, inner meaning. If that which is inside a bird egg is corrupt or wrong, that which is birthed will not be a bird. Likewise, if the “deeper” meaning of Torah is corrupted by error and false teaching, the spiritual birth will not be based upon God’s truth and will be heretical in various ways.

## Premise 5: Christians are incorrect in thinking that the New Testament condemns “Oral Torah”

I have already presented evidence to support that Yeshua the Messiah supported and even used “oral Torah” in his ministry. He is not alone since his followers “followed” his example, and there is far more evidence that could be presented proving this. However, since Christianity actually follows an incorrect interpretation of the apostle Paul more so that it does Messiah – a fact I prove in a separate article – let us talk of what Christianity defines as the alleged anti-Torah mindset of the apostle Paul. I discuss this in greater detail in a [separate article](#) from which the following material was taken.

Among Paul’s supposed “anti-Torah” mindset was a limited level of difference with regard to the “*halacha*”, which are the true legalistic “laws” produced by the rabbis. He, along with Yeshua and others in the New Testament, definitely had issue to a finite extent with the legalism that is found within *halacha*. And no wonder! If you review the *halacha* of Judaic sages you will find numerous examples of things that seem rather extreme and – if I may say so – at times ridiculous and elitist.

So, whereas Paul was apparently against some of the *halachic* teachings of his day, there is no evidence I’ve found that suggest he was really against anything else other than his opinions regarding the very few “new” items found within the New Testament. His opposition was very limited, and the common practice of expanding upon his opposition to include additional Torah elements is wrong. Therefore, to extrapolate Paul’s limited opposition to a scant few specific aspects of Torah so that he is portrayed as opposing all of Torah is grossly incorrect and, frankly, slander of Paul. There is no evidence that Paul’s opposition included the entire Torah or even a notable percentage of it. From what we have to study, when one considers all of Torah his differences are shown to be minimal.

Let me state a fact few Christians know and that Christian leaders hope they never discover. It is common for there to be differences of opinion between Judaic Sages. Sometimes those differences are quite severe and often represent completely opposite views. There are instances recorded in Judaic history and literature of very harsh rebukes being hurled back and forth between Rabbis – rebukes every bit as strong as anything found in the New Testament. Anyone willing to do a little reading will find this to be true. Those too lazy to do so will continue to accept the ignorant ramblings of their anti-Torah Christian leaders.

So why are Paul's limited disagreements used by Christians to allegedly "prove" Paul was anti-Torah even though disagreement is so common within Judaism? There are many disagreements regarding Torah within Judaic thought, and yet in every case those disagreeing were united in their reverence for Torah. In no cases were they anti-Torah as unlearned Christians foolishly assume was the case with Paul. They simply disagreed on various specifics. The history of Judaism proves this to be so time and time again!

In the case of *Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto* for instance, Judaic leaders forbade him from even publishing some of his material and forced him to destroy it. Although since the name of God was in it they actually forced him to bury it instead since destruction of anything that includes the sacred name of God is forbidden from being destroyed. Nevertheless the intent was for it to be permanently removed from ever being seen. His case is not an isolated one. There have been extreme disagreements among the Rabbis and various groups throughout the history of Judaism, some of which verged on violence.

It is incredibly frustrating for me to witness so many people being so ignorant of basic facts that are so easily discovered if they would simply apply a small amount of effort studying.

Therefore, if you consider that even within Judaic writings we find numerous differences of opinion among the Sages, then Paul's disagreement with some religious leaders of his day becomes nothing more than typical opinion variation. It is proven to be a normal and often seen occurrence! How often do you hear anti-Paulists or anti-Torah Christians mention that? My guess is never since if they do it would destroy the bulk of their arguments regarding Paul.

The New Testament is basically a set of writings composed of *mussar*, *aggadah*, "wisdom" literature (basic theoretical *kabbalah*), hashkafa, and even a touch of *halacha*. It is thoroughly Judaic. I have a large Judaic library – basically an entire wall of shelves full of books – and study the material extensively; therefore, I am not making this up. It is a fact that anyone who devotes themselves to enough study will discover, but most are too lazy to undertake such study.

And yes, Paul's alleged writings include the above Torah elements. His writings are very Judaic. Virtually everything he says can be found worded slightly differently scattered within Judaic literature, thus proving he is not the anti-Torah swine that so many claim him to be.

Anti-Paulists and Christians are simply ignorant of what Torah really is and too lazy to find out. They are truly fools – often biased, arrogant, prideful, and stubborn fools. They also are very sinful since by misrepresenting Paul (as do Christians and deceitful Judaic counter missionaries) or by also so harshly attacking Paul (as do anti-Paulists and deceitful Judaic counter missionaries) they commit one of the worst of all sins – *lashon hara* (evil talk). *Lashon hara* is an extremely damaging and wicked transgression, but Christians, anti-Paulists, and openly deceitful Judaic counter missionaries continually practice it as they misrepresent and slander Paul by claiming he was anti-Torah.

The reason few see this is because very few Christians – or anti-Paulists who suffer from the same ignorance of Paul's intent as most Christians – have any idea what "Torah" is and do not realize that virtually everything found in the New Testament is also found – and expanded upon greatly – in Judaic material. All those ingredients – *mussar*, *aggadah*, *kabbalah*, and *halacha* – are legitimate components of the Torah (instructions) of The Eternal One.

Anti-Torah Christianity poisons the minds of Christians so much that they usually will not even consider that the New Testament is actually pro-Torah in all respects. The same poison affects anti-Paulists since they are usually ex-Christians. A perfect example is *kabbalah*. Few Christians dare to even consider for a second that it could be useful even though the New Testament is dripping with basic *kabbalah* and *mussar*. They know nothing about it yet generally harshly condemn it. They are simply ignorant. If they reject *kabbalah*, *mussar*, etc., then they need to burn their New Testament because that's largely what it is! And that is indeed what most of Paul's teachings are also.

They could discover the Torah-centric core of the New Testament and Paul's letters, but their bias and the poison of the "church" keeps them distanced from even trying to sincerely learn Torah. The anti-Torah foundations of Christianity result in a complete upheaval of what the New Testament actually teaches. It is a sad situation. And of course, Judaic based counter missionaries are either ignorant of Torah themselves or bear false witness regarding the New Testament's thoroughly Judaic foundations. Anti-Paulists are also counter missionaries even though they refuse to admit it, and they also bear false witness – a witness based in gross ignorance and ego.

### Ignorance of Paul's rabbinic method leads to the Christian anti-Torah mindset ...

Christians display a particularly high level of ignorance when it comes to understanding the Rabbinic method. This is a fundamental flaw in their understanding. Paul was a Pharisee, taught under the guidance of Gamaliel the Elder, the foremost Rabbi of his generation and Nasi (President) of the Sanhedrin who is supremely revered to this day within Judaism. Paul followed typical rabbinic teaching methods.

Yeshua the Messiah did the exact same thing in his teachings. In rabbinic writings it is very common – effectively a standard technique – for a verse or set of verses to be mentioned and then great flexibility to be used in an expansion of application for that verse(s). When one looks at the verse(s) it is sometimes difficult to ascertain how the rabbi arrived at his conclusions since, often, the specific original context of the verse(s) does not appear to

support his point and may specifically refer to something entirely different. In many cases the verses are combined from different areas of Scripture for the purpose of the teaching being given.

This is very similar to the universal approach all readers and teachers of Scripture utilize. We all sometimes select verses that may not exactly apply yet still generally applies to what we hope to convey. Christians are generally ignorant of rabbinic methods. So are anti-Paulists. Both wrongly believe Paul taught against the Torah because of their ignorance of Torah and the rabbinic methods.

Anti-Paulists who are often beyond the reach of reason demand that when Paul teaches something any verses utilized must perfectly match the original context from which they were taken and their own personal and possibly incorrect interpretation of those verses. They refuse to allow any flexibility in Paul's case as they display gross ignorance of rabbinic methods, ineptness, and an fundamental lack of simple common sense; or, as is likely the case, they so despise Paul and his teachings that they refuse to apply their common sense or allow him any rabbinic flexibility.

Furthermore, in Judaism you will also constantly find instances of where the rabbis will literally change the words in a passage to convey the intent of various parts of scripture – scripture that sometimes has more than one application in the same context. It will have a simple, obvious application and also a hidden, deeper application that is not readily apparent. To the unschooled such actions would appear to be sneaky, heretical, or irreverent, but the guys who do it are not unschooled. They know what they are doing and do it only when they feel sure of their opinion or as part of a quote from a past exalted Sage. The passage will be quoted as written then you will read them saying something like *“it should be read as ...”* or *“read it as ...”* and then a portion will be entirely rephrased. At times the change will seem a bit odd and perhaps even illegitimate. It happens all the time in Judaic writings. It is part of the rabbinic method of discussion.

So why would they do this? Well it may helpful to understand **“the language of the branches”** since it helps to somewhat explain this oddity within Judaic discourse.

The concept is that all things on earth have a heavenly *“root”*. It is best to think of it as an upside down tree – the roots are in heaven and the branches hang down to us here on earth. Those *“branches”* have a heavenly *“root”*. All of them. **E V E R Y T H I N G** in the physical realm has its own *“root”* in the spiritual realm. There are no exceptions. God communicates in the *“language”* of those *“branches”*.

The greatest of the Sages, based upon thousands of years of intense Torah study and tradition passed down all the way from Moses and even beyond, are skilled in the knowledge of the *“branches”* and their respective *“roots”*. It is one of the deeper mystical aspects of Torah. Since the eternal realms of the heavens do not have words available in any language with which to properly describe or discuss them, the Sages use *“the language of the branches”*, which means they use earthly, normal language, items, or descriptions common to mankind's intellectual grasp. This is further described by the foundational Scripture interpretation principle of **“The Torah is written in the language of man.”**

This earthly corporeal language – God's means of communicating to humans in a manner they can begin to understand – uses equivocal terms that must usually be explained and clarified in order to properly interpret and apply the Scripture's *“language of man”* or *“language of the branches”* to their actual intended meanings. Those intended meanings are spiritual ethereal issues that are, themselves, impossible to precisely describe. This is especially true of the highest of those spiritual realms approaching the level of the **“Ein Sof”** (*Without End*) – The Incomprehensible, Infinite Creator and *“Cause of all causes”*. The outstanding writing, ***The Guide Of The Perplexed***, by the aforementioned Moses Maimonides and listed on the [“Bookshelf”](#) page, is an excellent resource for anyone seeking to begin a study in how to properly interpret various terms used in Scripture.

What this means is that there is what can best be described as a *“code”* composed of common terminology which is used to actually refer to spiritual and heavenly things which are not, themselves, able to be described properly due to their supremely exalted existence. It is one of many ways in which Judaic thought shows their extreme reverence and awe for The Eternal and His unimaginable, incomprehensible wisdom and glory. Without knowledge of the various *“code”* words and phrases a person has no idea what is being discussed. It is not done to really hide anything, though with regard to the more mystical things it is used as a form of concealment. The primary reason, however, is just to provide a viable means to discuss heavenly things that are otherwise not able to be properly described.

This *“code”* issue is one reason an unschooled person would be a fool to even attempt to read various *kabbalistic* writings such as the **Zohar**, **Sefer Yetzirah**, or **Bahir**. I dare not attempt such a reading since I, like most others, have far to go to understanding even the *“language of the branches”*. It is literally impossible to understand such reading unless and until *“the language of the branches”* are, themselves, thoroughly and completely understood. And that task takes many years of studying introductions and fundamental aspects of *kabbalah*, possibly under the tutelage of a legitimate and gifted Torah Scholar of high status, if the goal is to advance further into the deeper fundamental texts.

Personally, since there are no such scholars of whom I am aware who accept Yeshua, those of us who do accept him are forced to spend those years of study prayerfully seeking The Most High's direct guidance to assist us. If we seek the guidance of such Yeshua rejecting scholars, we are at high risk of allowing their strong bias against Yeshua and the New Testament to lead us away from our faith in Messiah. I do not advise seeking the direct guidance of anyone who rejects Yeshua, but I do advise studying material from Judaic sources while practicing discernment during your studies.

Regardless folks, I am not exaggerating when I say YEARS of study – decades even – is required before a person should dare attempt reading the

three *kabbalistic* books mentioned. If you are too impatient, overly exalt yourself, consider yourself as wise beyond what is probably true, and can't resist, then do NOT assume that you are understanding what is written and approach it with extreme humility while maintaining flexibility in the sense of knowing you are probably wrong in your understanding of what is written. By all means do not be so arrogant as to think that your likely disagreement with certain things written is proof they are wrong when, in fact, it is almost certainly proof that you are not properly understanding the material due to your ignorance of the "language of the branches".

So why do I bring this up? I do so because it is a hint, though not necessarily a precise explanation, of why you will sometimes see rabbis completely change the wording of a verse. They do this partly because of their intimate knowledge of the linkage between the heavenly and earthly AND the conceptual linkages within the Torah itself. The idea is that their understanding of the complex linkages between the heavenly roots and worldly branches (and between heavenly concepts and the worldly written text) allows them to link concepts into a passage that are not readily discernible as being legitimate.

Whether you agree with it or not, it is simply another aspect of the rabbinic method. Therefore, those who may complain about passages in Paul's epistles or anywhere else in the New Testament that do not appear to exactly match the Tanakh passages from which they came or that seem to be talking about something else other than what they appear to explicitly apply in the context from which they were taken are simply ignorant of the rabbinic technique just described. In other words, it is very common in the "Torah talk" of the rabbis for passages to appear strangely used in ways that are not obvious and, perhaps, even odd or wrong. But for the unlearned who have not been schooled in such things as "the language of the branches" or who have not undertaken Torah study to the depth of the Sages (and Paul) to judge such things is arrogant and presumptuous.

Remember, Paul was taught by THE premier Sage and Torah Scholar of his generation – *Gamaliel the Elder*. He was the "Nasi" (*president*) of the Sanhedrin, which means he was the greatest of the great among the Torah scholars of his time. To this day he is still enormously respected within Judaism. Such Sages do not casually accept just anyone into their fold; therefore, like it or not, it is highly probably that Paul was a supremely gifted and educated expert on all aspects of Torah.

So, any odd uses the apostle Paul may appear to make of Tanakh (irreverently called the "Old" Testament) passages is simply more evidence of his Judaic Torah focused approach. It is his use of what I earlier referred to as "Torah talk". It is not, as anti-Paulists claim, evidence of his being stupid, tricky, or anti-Torah. All it is, if it is done, is evidence of his Torah genius and use of standard rabbinic techniques.

I will not attempt to educate Christians or anti-Paulists on the rabbinic method. There are numerous books or examples they can consult if such is their desire. Suffice it to say that they need such educating, but it is not my job to provide it. It is theirs if they care and love God enough to undertake it.

This is yet another reason the sages say "*Study is the highest form of worship.*" Study proves whether or not a person truly loves God enough to seek Him with their whole heart, mind, and soul. It is the quintessential bit of evidence that determines if one truly loves The Eternal Creator and His Chosen One, Yeshua the Messiah. Without study, things such as the rabbinic methods are impossible to understand and, therefore, writings such as the New Testament are also difficult to properly interpret.

## Conclusion: "Oral Torah" is a legitimate and necessary component of Biblical interpretation

In the previous sections I presented five basic premises from which proof of the legitimacy of the concept of oral Torah is shown to be blatantly obvious. For Christians to deny this they must deny their own religious practices and even their own religious beliefs since those beliefs were instilled in them using "oral Torah" (verbal teachings).

Premise 1: Christians do not know what "Torah" and "oral Torah" are.

Premise 2: Christianity regularly and always has utilized "oral Torah".

Premise 3: The New Testament supports and is, itself, a small presentation of some basic "oral Torah".

Premise 4: Further evidence of "oral Torah" was presented from Scripture.

Premise 5: Evidence was shown proving Christians to be incorrect in their thinking that the New Testament condemns "oral Torah".

Despite the claim by Christians and Christianity to rejecting "oral Torah", to be truthful Christians must admit they actually just reject the oral Torah they choose not to follow – the "oral Torah" that differs from their version which originated from the foundational institutional Torah hatred of fourth century Christianity. Those who cling to their own personal form of oral teachings invented in those early centuries of Christianity specifically to counter the true Torah and which differs with the legitimate Hebraic based oral Torah will likely never see the New Testament as what it is – a thoroughly Judaic composition of writings which differs only slightly with many of the traditions of past Judaic Torah sages.

As I stated earlier, oral Torah is a legitimate concept. Anyone thinking otherwise is either ignoring the obvious, or a hypocrite, or both. Despite their deceitful claims otherwise, the fact is Christians and others do not actually reject "oral Torah", they simply reject those verbal teachings (oral Torah) that conflict with their own.

The concept of “Oral Torah” is legitimate and, in fact, necessary.

Those who deny this prove themselves to be lacking even the most basic intellectual capability or to be biased and deluded beyond the reach of reason. It is my hope that you do not fall into either of those categories.