

Part 2

The Jewish Halachic and Oral Torah foundations of the New Testament

Chapter 4

Hidden and misinterpreted true Jewish foundations in the Gospels

Traditionally, the general understanding among many New Testament readers has been that much of its content rejects Judaism, the Torah and Rabbinic authority. I suggest that much of what is considered by Christians as anti-Rabbinic and anti-Semitic in the NT, is merely a misunderstanding of the Hebraic and historic context in which it was written.

As I will show, irrespective of the great opposing forces that the Gospels unleash between Judaism and Christian Messianism, there is common ground. Notwithstanding that the Gospel writings form the constitution of the new Christian religion, which is partially in contradistinction to Judaism; they also conceal astounding proof that the Orthodox Oral Torah is alive and well and generating life and Truth within the Gospel texts. Jewish scholars can recognize traditional Orthodox Judaism and Oral Torah in many Gospel statements, when taken within the context of their original Hebrew background. These realities, hidden in the Gospel writings, confirm traditional Jewish religious principles which some ardent Christian Messianic followers reject outright.

The Gospels clearly direct its readers to authentic Torah observance as part of the ingathering of the “lost sheep of Israel”:

Luke 6:46 And why do you call me 'Lord, Lord', and not do what I say?

John 14:15 If you love me you will keep my commandments.

John 15:10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love...

1 John 3:4 Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

2 John 6 And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments.

Some two hundred times the word 'law' is mentioned in the NT. Almost all the time the Greek word *nomos* is used, referring to 'the law of Moses'.

Obedying His teachings and instructions (laws) will sanctify you. Will we remain 'His own possession' if we disobey and break His Covenant? Here are some benefits for obeying:

Luke 11:28, "But He said, 'On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.'"

James 1:22 "But prove yourselves doers of the Word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves..."

v25 "But the one who looks intently at the perfect Law, the Law of Liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer, but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does."

2 Cor. 6:17, 'Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate' says the Lord, 'and do not touch what is unclean and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me.' Says the Lord almighty."

These guidelines merely echo the Tanach and Jewish Halacha:

Deu 28:1, "... if you will diligently obey... HaShem your G-d will set you high above all the nations of the earth."

Eze 20:19, "I am HaShem your God; walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and observe them. And sanctify my Sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am Hashem your God."

1 Kings 8:57 "...that He may incline our hearts to Himself, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His ordinances, which He commanded our fathers..."

v60 "... so that all the peoples of the earth may know that HaShem is our God; there is no one else."

Chapter 5

The Christian Messiah was a Jew

The NT proclaims that the way to righteousness is to keep the Torah of the historic Torah Sages. Matthew 23 cries out, "For the Sages (Scribes) sit in the seat of Moses!" Not a dot was to be changed, and the prime directive was to be kind and to love your G - d with all your heart, soul and strength (James 1:22-26, Matt 7;20-24, etc.). Jews are therefore simply doing what these true NT teachings always meant them to. Thus, there never was, neither should there be a justification for Christians to harass or missionize Jews.

When the Jewish NT writings are torn from the Hebrew cultural environment in which they were composed, all that remains is a vile form of anti-Semitism.

Eusebius, under Constantine's directives, had to create one brand of Christianity according to Eusebius' discretion. Constantine needed to create a new brand of religion because the initial followers of the Nazarene were Jewish or had Jewish inclinations. The Roman Catholic Church was anti-Semitic and wanted to minimize any Jewish references and to deny the Jewishness of the Gospels. Therefore, Eusebius chose the texts he felt should be in the Gospels, thus eliminating obvious Jewishness. Eusebius himself explains this at length in Latin. All good religious libraries contain volumes of all that he did and said to canonise

the Gospels. One can look up 'Canonisation of the New Testament' in the Catholic encyclopaedia. Take a look also at the 'Vatican II Conference'. Prepare to be shocked.

Further evidence of Christianity's historic evolution into anti-Judaism and anti-Rabbinism is provided throughout this book. For example, the writings of Paul were donated to the early church in 140 CE by Marcion, a rich Greek fishing merchant, who was excommunicated three years later for heresies. However, it is **his** version of the epistle that made it into Canon. Scholars recognize the anti-Semitic statements contained in the Gospels as being of Marconian origin, and the pro-Jewish statements as being of authentic Paulinian origin. There is no other explanation for this paradoxical canon.

Chapter 6

The Jewish Halachic principles underlying the New Testament

The New Testament's position on Circumcision

G-d told Avraham to circumcise himself and all his men (an Oral Torah insight). The term circumcision, for Avraham, was both a covenantal phenomenon and a medical-surgical procedure. Now he was being told to do this thing to himself! But where in the entire Written Torah is it defined?

Remember, whatever it is, it has a covenantal and medical definition and it's not that simple. There are details that, if left out, would not fulfil the Biblical requirement. There were also medical complications which could be life-threatening. Both in ancient and modern societies there are several possible interpretations of the procedure. This is a serious issue - we must have a proper definition and an operating manual.

What does the ancient Hebrew word mean exactly? To me, to you, to all of the Jews and Gentiles, in this modern day, it may be patently clear what it means. But what is the source of the definition that makes it so clear? Where did Avraham get his information in ancient times when there was no written word of G-d? It is not in the simple text of the Bible. Read it and if you are intellectually honest and can detach everything that you've heard, seen, and studied previously from the plain simple text, you will be left with many questions.

So, what was Avraham to do? He did not have access to our 3600+ years of knowledge of those words when they originally rang in his ears. What did he do? Did they have medical practitioners and institutions at the time? Could he pop into the local Jewish hospital? So, where was Avraham to find the exact application and detailed definition of this covenantal term - a term which had medical, anatomical, biological and surgical implications?

The answer my friend, is flowing from the Oral Torah. There was no Written Torah in Avraham's time. The Written Torah (Bible), which came about much later, would completely rely upon the Oral Torah for this complex, technically detailed definition. G-d communicated to

Avraham that entirety of what he needed to know. Much later, at the Sinai revelation, the divine stipulations were written down, though only in brief, summarized format. The detailed application of the circumcision process remained in the realm of, and relied completely upon the Oral Torah of the time. In other words, there is no book of the Bible that gives in any revealed way, all the scores of details on how to perform a ritual circumcision.

According to the Gospels of the NT, the Nazarene was circumcised by his parents. John the Baptist was circumcised by his parents. It was such a commonly accepted practice, that certainly all the apostles were circumcised in accordance with Rabbinic Oral directives.

According to the NT record, the Nazarene child not only conformed to the traditional Jewish obligations of circumcision, but all else that goes with it. The following chapter from the book of Luke in the NT, carries with it a boatload of evidence of compliance to Oral Torah which is such an intrinsic and inseparable part of Judaism. In scrutinizing this extract, please consider the evidence to Oral Torah inherent in the dedication of the witnesses mentioned in this portion, viz. Jews who were totally dedicated and who spent all their time, "eating and sleeping," Oral Torah!

Luke 2:

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Miriam took him (the Nazarene child) to Jerusalem to present him to the L-rd ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the L-rd (Torah), "Every firstborn male is to **be consecrated** to the L-rd" (Exodus 13:2,12) ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the L-rd: 'a pair of doves or two young pigeons.'

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, **who was righteous and devout**. He was waiting for the comforting of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ...

²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child **to do for him what the custom of the Law required**, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised G-d, ...

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. **She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.** ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very

moment, she gave thanks to G-d and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Miriam had **done everything required by the Law of the L-rd**, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth."

All these ceremonies performed on the Nazarene child were more specifically and more broadly defined by the Oral Torah, undoubtedly more so in this case because of the dedication of the role players here!

Paul spoke of circumcision in the NT and debated whether or not it was required for Messianic believers. But never did he question the authority, interpretation and application that the Command entailed for Jews - a Command that begs definition, which is only obtainable in an extensive detailed Oral Jewish tradition, which has been passed on from time immemorial. We are not going to digress here to explain *milah* (circumcision). This would require an entire separate book.

New Testament's position on tzit tzit (fringes) to garments

The Book of Numbers 15:38 tells the Israelites that they should "put fringes" on their four-cornered garments (Deut. 15:38). The scores of details necessary for the fulfilment of the above, once again, were dependent upon the Oral Torah. Archaeological digs have found fringes of years gone by, identical to the same fringes that Jews wear today. There has never been a debate amongst Jews as to what those fringes are all about, e.g. how to make them, where to put them, what blessings to make, who has to wear them, etc., etc. For all these topics, the Written Torah offers no specifications whatsoever.

We read in Matthew 9:2 "... a woman came from behind him (the Nazarene) and touched his garment" and further on in Matthew 14:35, 36 "... that they might only touch the hem of his garment." The word hem refers to the tzit-tzit, tassels or fringes which Jews are required by Torah to wear on the "corners of our garments". The Greek word used in the NT is "kraspedon", meaning fringes. The Septuagint and Strong's Dictionary interprets "kraspedon" to refer to the Biblical Command for the fringes on the hem corners of a four-cornered garment.

Speaking of a yet-future time, the prophet defined a time when "...many people and strong nations shall come to seek the G-d of Hosts

in Jerusalem and to pray before Him. Thus says HaShem of Hosts: ‘In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men out of all the languages of the nations, they shall take hold of the garment (robe) of him that is a Jew, saying, ‘We will go with you (*plural*) for we have heard that G-d is with you (*plural*) ’” (Zechariah 8:22,23.) We see this happening today, as millions of sincere Bible students are leaving their churches in what they themselves refer to as a process of “discovering and returning to their Hebraic Roots”. It can be no coincidence that the text uses the figure ‘ten’, no doubt referring to the prophesied return of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel after their exile of some 2800 years.

New Testament’s position on phylacteries

In the Gospels, Matthew 23:5, the Nazarene chastises people who flaunt their religiosity, “by all their works they do to be seen of men. They make broad their phylacteries (tefillin), and enlarge the borders on their garments (fringes).”

First, the Gospels accept the traditional, historic Rabbinic explanation of the commandments as accurate and worthy of fulfilment. The Nazarene did not reject this concept but criticized their **intentions**.

The same applies to phylacteries – the NT simply accepts this physical tradition as applied by the Jews of the time. This assumes and accepts the hundreds of detailed stipulations which are only available through the Oral traditions of Judaism. Just the inscriptions on the parchment, which is contained within the phylacteries in order to be accepted as sacred and acceptable to G-d (kosher), involves hundreds of detailed directives – none of which are specified in the Written Torah (Bible). The same applies to the procurement of the leather used in the manufacture, etc. The Written Torah only gives the instruction to “lay phylacteries”. The comprehensive and necessary details come from the Oral Torah, throughout the Jewish generations right back to Moses.

The word ‘phylacteries’ comes from the Greek translation that means ‘an amulet that protects and brings good fortune’. The original Hebrew word used in the Oral (note, not written) Torah is ‘Tefillin’, which is the plural form of the word ‘tefilah’ (prayer). A kind of prayer clothing. The original written scriptures (Torah) do not answer or define any of the multitudes of questions which arise from the basic statement to: “bind them (the laws) on your foreheads ... place them on your doorposts (the mezuzah)...” etc. These finer details are left for **Oral**

interpretation by G-d's mandated Torah interpreters – the spiritual leaders and teachers of Judah (Gen. 49:10). Just the fact that the Gospels accept the Rabbinic understanding of “a sign upon your hand and frontlets between your eyes” proves that the NT Gospels accept Rabbinic Oral Torah.

The Gospels were written by Jews in a Jewish religious environment. It would have been assumed that any Jewish teacher was living a life in harmony with the Rabbis' guidance and the oral tradition. It would be taken for granted, with no need for explanation, that the teacher's general behavior was in conformity with the Oral tradition's requirements. It would be unnecessary to go into the details of all that teacher's actions, for purposes of recording the New Testament. Hence the NT's silence on these issues, which the anti-Jewish influences interpreted and presented as a “doing away with Torah and law requirements”.

Christian and Messianic interpretation in some groups may hold that the Nazarene, with his statements regarding the length of the fringes on their garments (tzit tzit), actually condemned the wearing thereof. But if we go a step further and deeper into his criticism of the ‘length’ of the tassels, we will see that he was involved in a famous historic intellectual debate between two schools of legitimate Rabbinic thought and rule about the required length of tassels, i.e. the School of Shammai versus Hillel, which debated a specific variation of 3 vs. 4 threads and their required lengths.

Whose side was the Nazarene on with his criticism of the excessive length of these tassels? Rather than a rejection of the entire tradition, a closer analysis of the Shammai-Hillel dispute will prove that he was in fact siding with Hillel and normative Orthodox position in terms of length and modesty. Shammai would dispute the ‘showing off’ by claiming that they really try and understand and follow the original intent of the Scriptures. The Gospels, like all religious and Rabbinic literature, were concerned with the possibility of flaunting religiosity through the ritual “but all their works they do to be seen of men”. This was not in the literal sense that everybody was running around showing off their fringes, but as a corrective instruction not to fall into such a trap of exhibitionism. All Rabbinical literature preached against religious arrogance and vanity, as Hillel forewarned, “Do not make a worldly use for personal interest or social status of the Crown of the Torah.” (Ethics of our fathers, Mishnah 1/13; Talmud Menachot 41).

New Testament's position on Vows

In Mark 7:11- and in Matthew 15:1-9, the Gospels criticize certain members of the Jewish community. What was the problem or activity that drew such censure? It was when a certain fellow vowed everything to the Temple, thereby leaving his parents destitute.

People from time immemorial made vows to their gods and offered sacrifice as a direct result of these vows. The Jewish people, individually and collectively, have always vowed things to their G-d to show their devotion, dedication and thanksgiving. Remember, back in the time of Moses, how the women ran ahead of the men to donate their jewelry for the building of the Tabernacle, the "Shrine of the Desert" as per Rav Winefsky. In fact, in the 2nd century CE, the famous scholar, Yose ben Yoezer, who was just and kind, actually vowed all his assets to the Temple because he feared his son would do harmful things with the inheritance (Baba bat Basra 133 b). This fellow was the first of the pair of Sages who passed on the Torah from Antigones to Sokho. One of his famous statements was: "Your home should be open to the scholars. Sit at the dust of their feet and drink their words with thirst."

The Oral Torah recalls another vow where everything was given away. In the Talmud section of Shabbat 122, a follower of Shammai gave everything away, leaving no money to pay an employee. This was frowned upon by the Talmud

There is a remedy for this. The Bible has a process to release people from their vows - Numbers 30. Some of the Shammai School rejected this process of nullifying vows concerning Temple giving. According to the Hillel school, the vowing process may be undone even including vows made to the Temple. Shammai agrees wholeheartedly, that indeed there is a dispensation (remedy) for revoking vows. Nevertheless, in the case of nullifying oaths made to the Temple, the process would not be operative. Shammai takes the Biblical example of the people giving gifts and vows to the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. There was no mention of anyone regretting their generous, spontaneous offers to that Shrine of the Desert. Hence, Shammai concluded that the normative process for releasing one from a vow was incompetent, immaterial and irrelevant, and thus did not apply to Temple vows.

In this context, the meaning of the Gospel now becomes clear, "You reject the Command of G-d (namely the possibility of release from

one's vows) and keep your own traditions." This simply corresponds with Shammai's understanding of relevant Biblical directives, that you cannot get released from your Temple vows. However, at this time, the Gospels sided with the School of Hillel, which rejected the Shammai understanding in favor of releasing vows, even if made to the Temple.

The Gospels point out an academic and extremely rare potential problem, namely, the vowing of one's worth to the Temple that would have possible negative results – a problem that was theoretical, at best. The Gospels still, to some degree, would be a reflection of Rabbinic Oral Torah's thinking and practice. The Gospel in this instance merely echoes the lively debate that existed between faithful, loyal Temple-loving good Jews.

The problem that Mark raises in Mark 7:11-13 is one that we have zero historical record for, so we are not sure that it ever existed. The way these lines have been detached from their context makes them come out warped and makes them sound like a vicious anti-Semitic attack on all Jews and Judaism, putting their own traditions ahead of the written Commandments of the Bible. However, when taken within its historical standing, it is really another approach of Jews who love G-d and each other. The lines of Mark, seen in their original frame, will simply show you an insight into the struggle of the individual and his G-d: how much, how fast and how well to express his extreme and overwhelming love of G-d. In his spontaneous ecstatic gesture of vowing to G-d his possessions, does he need to pause and limit it? Does he best inhibit this fiery love with earthly practical considerations? ... The narrowness of the social economic situation he presently is in? His ecstasy is clouding his economic condition, with hopes of G-d showering him with His abundance as a result of his spiritual enthusiasm to donate all his assets. The Gospels merely present one of the attitudes prevalent amongst the religious, good, Temple-tuned-in Jews.

Thus, the criticism should be understood as follows: this case is of an individual, crazy in love with and dedicated to G-d and the Temple, who vows all of his worth to the service of the Temple. So what? - if that is his choice?

The Gospels reflect numerous possible, ascetic expressions of divine service. If you don't give all your possessions away, you cannot be a good follower of the Nazarene. "You must hate your father and mother." (Matt 10:37) "Resist not evil in order to follow Him," - sounds rather extreme, not so? So why can this Jew not serve G-d in the

extreme? True Rabbinic Judaism is based solidly on the Bible and prefers the golden mean “moderation, not mediocrity or going to the extreme.” Nonetheless, exceptions do exist, e.g. the Nazarite vows of abstinence from wine and haircuts (like Samson, Paul).

The Gospels are addressing here, the very limited question of specific spontaneous generosity. The problem: what if this fellow vows ‘all’, and his parents are dependent on him? In this fellow’s extended family there must be other relatives with the means to support the poor parents? In this solitary exception to the rule, we have a person who vows all, when his parents are just getting by. Their son’s generosity to the Temple could very well impinge upon his parents’ survival. There are many assumptions being made:

- They were totally dependent on him; without any other relatives to care for them; the son now being as destitute as they were.
- When G-d will decide to reward him for his benevolence to the Temple is anyone’s guess.

All this was merely representing the normative, established Judaism of those times. The law on this issue was as Hillel stated, namely, it being wrong to vow everything to the Temple in such a way that the donor may himself become needful of charity to exist.

There are many ways and levels of charity in Judaism, all based squarely on Biblical notions. All authorities agree that a very high form and valuable expression of charity is that which is given to G-d’s Temple. The Bible stipulates many tithes that must be given to the Temple. A vow to give more was totally in harmony with numerous verses. For example, even though there is a command to go up to the Temple on the pilgrimage festivals, there was no set limit on it. Or the elevation offering (*olah Reeya*) no specific maximum amount was fixed for it.

Leviticus 8:11, mentions three classes of flexible offerings: the peace, thanksgiving and free-will offerings (Psalms 103:1-5). We have a whole sacrificial system; the hallmark of several sacrifices was their voluntary dimension. Thus, vowing of charity, property and livestock to the Temple was an honourable tradition. But we have very few examples, if any, of people vowing everything they have in their lifetime.

The Talmud applauds charity (over and above tithing). Jacob vowed 10% of his profits to charity (Gen. 28:22). From Jacob’s vow we understand that the minimum that must be given of one’s profits is ten

percent, for the Hebrew, tithing means ten percent. Generous giving is considered twenty percent and above. If one is rich, he/she may give much more. The only stipulation is that one does not give so much as to endanger oneself and so become dependent on charity.

In the Hebrew society of a standing operative Temple service, it is highly unlikely that the over-vowing zealot would be left to starve. On the contrary, in a Jewish society, everyone would be Biblically obligated to assist the extravagant giver and his parents. Free loan societies have been a documented feature of every Jewish community.

Hasty or shallow interpretation of this remark in the book of Mark has provided anti-Jewish opinion-makers with tools to berate the world's documented most charitable people, without rival. That leaves Judaism with the age old cliché, "You're damned if you do, and damned if you don't." Thus, "those Jews don't give enough," or "they kill their parents financially." The use of this text is a cynical inversion of the love, generosity and Biblically valid vows to the Temple. In reality, Mark was just expressing harmony with normative, Orthodox, Hillel Judaism in contradistinction to Shammai's perfectionism and strictness. The way that Mark's comments were misrepresented and misunderstood, was that this Jew was attempting to comply with the law at the expense of his financial obligation to his parents.

Divorce – incompatibility vs. adultery in the New Testament

According to Matthew Ch. 19, a man may not divorce his wife unless he has found something unseemly in her. Where did this idea come from? It was born out of the orthodox Torah studies on this topic that predated the Gospels by many, many years. Shammai rules that the word in question implies unchaste, lacking in chastity. Apparently, the Gospels now side with the ancient school of Shammai, since in Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 the Nazarene said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the case of fornication, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries her, then commits adultery." Here again, the Gospels agree with Shammai when it comes to rules of evidence. Shammai held that a woman cannot remarry without rigorous evidence of the death of her first husband. Hillel was more lenient with these rules of evidence.

In addition, when Hillel looked at the verse in Deut. 24, he did not understand it to mean unchaste, but rather something that was obnoxious

in her. As Hillel said, “he may divorce her, even if she spoils a dish for him.” Rabbi Akiva emphasizes another phrase in the very same verse, “and she does not find favour in his eyes.” This implies that incompatibility is a basis for divorce.

Matt 19:3 criticizes divorce “for every (any) cause”, and the Greek translation of the Hebrew verse is ‘pornia’ (fornication, i.e. adultery). So, the debate was not against good guys and bad guys, nor against conservatives and liberals, but merely how to relate to a verse in G-d’s Word and how to interface a legal contingency in real time. Each view merely emphasizes a different part of the verse. The Gospels simply disregarded the segment that read, “She finds no favour in his eyes.”

What Hillel and Akiva were saying is that a man’s love should be so strong towards his wife that he would find a tasty side to whatever she cooks, and no other woman would be better-looking than she in his subjective eyes. They were setting up a standard that people should strive in their marriage relationship for mutual compatibility, appreciation, passion and love. That should be the hallmark of their relationship. If a couple senses a shortcoming in this respect, it sounds an alarm that the marriage is in trouble, and then immediate steps should be taken to rectify it and rescue the marriage. It seems that the red flag of warning is only raised, and perhaps not raised at all, in Shammai’s point of view, until an act of unchastity or immorality has already transpired. If you remember, the students of the Nazarene (Matt 19:10) were upset with the Gospel’s ruling along the lines of Shammai. Why? Because the Gospels usually were interpreted according to the positioning and reasoning of Hillel. This entire debate reflects a Jewish in-house, Oral Torah debate.

Sabbath restrictions and allowances in the New Testament

If you read through the entire Sermon on the Mount, you will find that the Gospels did not advocate disobedience to the Jewish law, but in fact confirmed the Rabbinic Oral interpretation of what is often derogatorily referred to as “the Rabbinic man-made Oral laws.”

Thus, the Nazarene’s statements waxed symbolic and philosophical in total agreement with the Oral Torah, e.g. adultery is symbolically committed by simply lusting sexually; murder by simply embarrassing

someone. These statements by the Nazarene are virtual quotes from earlier Talmudic discussions.

When the Nazarene was accused of violating the Sabbath, Mark 12:23-27, we read:

23 “One Sabbath the Nazarene was going through the grain fields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. 24 The Pharisees said to him, 'Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?' 25 He answered, 'Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? 26 In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of G-d and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions.' 27 Then he said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.'”

Christian interpretation joins the Pharisees in accusing the Nazarene and his followers as rejecters of the ‘Jewish Sabbath,’ or, at best, that he relaxed ‘the strict letter of the Law’ regarding Sabbath observance. The Nazarene’s defensive and corrective response to the accusation of the Pharisees was not a quotation from the Torah or from the Word of G-d, but a direct quotation from the Talmud, which states, “Man was not given to the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was given to man.” (Talmud - Mekilta 103b, Yoma 85b). The Pharisee School of Hillel was famous for that quote.

The Nazarene did not say that one no longer must keep the Sabbath; he did not propose to relax the Sabbath law as Christians would like to believe. He did not challenge them on the grounds that they were expecting. Instead, by quoting a Talmudic principle, he confirmed that his behaviour was consistent with Rabbinic law interpretation. The famous Talmudic dictum that underlies this statement validates that the possibility of saving of a life pushes aside the Sabbath prohibitions, e.g., not reaping from your fields. In this incident under discussion, his disciples were hungry (as confirmed in Matthew 12:1). To eat raw grain indicates that they must have been truly ravishingly hungry, as was David, who entered the sacred Tabernacle and ate consecrated food.

Even in ultra-Orthodox Jewish hospitals, doctors perform operations on the Sabbath. The saving of life pushes aside the prohibitions of Sabbath. Righteous kings in Israel continued to war on a

Sabbath. In 1973, when Israel was attacked on its most sacred holy day, Yom Kippur, the Israeli army was mobilized by calling soldiers out of the synagogues. All of oral tradition confirms these actions.

The proof in this NT-related incident is in the text: his accusers were silent at his response; they understood and accepted his response, namely that his students were extremely hungry and thus within the parameters of Rabbinic Judaism, allowing them to pick the corn on the Sabbath because of the emergency situation.

Another accusation that could be raised against them is that of invading private property and stealing off the lands. The legal response to this comes straight from Biblical and Rabbinic interpretation, namely, that in the 7th Sabbatical year anyone is allowed to freely take of the left-over produce on the fields (Exodus 28:10; Lev. 25; Nehemiah 10:32). Furthermore, the Torah makes allowance for the poor to take from the corners of the fields and leftovers after reaping. (Mishnah Seder Zeraim, Tractate Peah).

Another example would be performing a circumcision on the eighth day even if it falls on a Sabbath. Under normative conditions, certain acts employed in the circumcision would be forbidden on the Sabbath. The power of the positive commandment “thou shalt circumcise on the eighth day”, pushes aside the negative commandment, “Thou shalt not ... break the Sabbath”, thus allowing its performance on the Sabbath.

We have another Talmudic principle: “if needed, it is better to break one Sabbath in order that you may keep many Sabbaths.” The Oral Torah perspective is clear: the Sabbath is subservient to the needs of the Hebrew people; the Jewish people are not subservient to some absolute standard of the Sabbath. In the Temple on Shabbat, certain physically creative acts of work were permitted regarding the sacrificial services, whereas outside the Temple, they would be absolutely forbidden. There are no detailed written Torah directives to rule in these situations. This statement may draw a reprimand from the anti-Rabbinists, “See – they make their own laws in contravention of the Written Law and its spirit.” These critics need to be reminded that the Nazarene, by pointing this Oral Talmudic ruling out to the Pharisees, was in fact upholding the Oral Torah and basing his own actions on its prescriptions.

G-d searched His treasure house, and came up with the gift of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was not given to the Jews to be burdened by it, but as a special spiritual gift – as “A Sign between Me and My People”.

The NT regarding swearing by His NAME

Deut. 6:13 “You are to fear HaShem your G-d, serve Him and swear by His Name.” (Also Deut. 10:20). Then we also have the following prohibition: Lev. 19:12 “Do NOT swear by My Name falsely, which would be profaning the Name of your G-d.”

Thus, not the use of the Name, but the swearing falsely is what profanes it. We have a practical example in Scripture in Joshua 9:1-20 of Joshua taking such an oath (verse 19) and refusing to break it for fear of the G-d’s anger falling on them.

Some other examples of Scripture are:

G-d personally expresses His Will that other nations should learn from Judah and “swear by His Name” (Jer. 12:14 -16).

Avraham made his servant swear “by HaShem, G-d of Heaven” (Gen. 24:3).

The angel swore by “Him that liveth forever” (Daniel 12:7).

Christians maintain that the Nazarene contradicted this notion by saying that we should not swear an oath at all.

Matthew 5: 33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to HaShem.’ 34 But I tell you, ‘Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is G-d’s throne; or by the earth, for it is His footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. 37 Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.”

The Nazarene though, was not changing Torah. He was simply standing behind the Oral traditions that were also based on Biblical verses. For example, Leviticus 24:10-23 takes a very serious stand on the penalty of death for desecrating G-d’s Name. The Talmudic Sages had long discussions about this Mitzvah and determined that we *could* swear by HaShem's Name, but in so doing we might swear falsely, and then we would have misused the Name. Then, we would have broken two Mitzvot - one of which demanded the death penalty.

To prevent us from falling to this much greater violation of Torah, it was decided that we should not swear at all using His Name - even though the Torah had given us permission to do so. They simply upheld the rabbinical ruling that served as a protective degree, as a hedge of roses. The Jewish Sages also forbade the taking of oaths in HaShem's Name, lest the entire world be brought to destruction by the sinners who swear falsely. (Hilchot Shavuot 11:13).

The Torah calls on us to protect and guard G-d's Name. The Jewish Sages had an obligation to make protective decrees, a hedge to insure that people do not trample on Biblical prohibitions; to help keep them far away from sin. Here however, is a case of applying the original intention of Scripture to protect the Divine Name.

Many times the Bible calls upon us to avoid any desecration of the Divine Name on the one hand and the need for super sanctity on the other hand, when approaching the Name, which is so unusually holy.

In Exodus 3:15, G-d said to Moses, "So shall you say to the Children of Israel. 'HaShem, the G-d of your forefathers, the G-d of Avraham, the G-d of Isaac, the G-d of Jacob, has dispatched me to you.... this is My Name forever and this is my memorial unto all generations.'"

Since the Hebrew word for 'forever' - *L'Olam* - is spelled here without the customary and important 'vav', it sets off alarm bells and flashing lights. The word, as written in the text here, is missing a crucial vowel (the vav). This obviously means that there is a deeper meaning without the vav. The word in question now needs to be pronounced '*L'Alem*', meaning to conceal. You see, the literal text, the simple meaning of the Scripture and the way you would have read the text without an Oral tradition, is *L'Alem*, meaning to conceal. In absence of the Oral tradition, one would thus have had to read it: 'to conceal His Name', implying that the Divine Name should not be pronounced as it is spelled out. Oral Torah says it should be read with the 'vav' to teach the additional message of saying how indeed it needs to be said.

Christian translators, e.g. St. Jerome and others would have had to translate this text as 'to conceal His real name', not pronounce it as it is written, if they truly just followed the Hebrew written text. It is ironic that people rejecting the Oral tradition have accepted at face value the replacement translation of 'forever' for the word "l'Alem" rather than 'to conceal'. In this, the translators thus chose to follow the Rabbinic Oral tradition.

There is something to be realized and appreciated by today's Hebraic Restorers who discover all these original Bible truths which had been guarded throughout the ages by Judaism. Accordingly, they should realize and admit, that the Sacred Name has been concealed according to Divine ruling and admonition and not, as the accusation from these Restorers often go, that "the Rabbis have changed the Written Word of G-d and hidden the pronunciation of the Sacred Name, thereby causing it to go 'lost'." The Rabbis have simply acted according to their divine mandate to take care of His Oracles (even from the NT perspective in Romans 3:1, 2) and to conceal His Name as a protective measure.

As the Talmud says, recalling ancient Oral Torah (Eruvin 13a, also Mishnah Torah, Book of Love, Laws of Torah Scrolls 10) warning a Rabbi Scribe, "Be very careful in your work, for it is the work of heaven. One mistake (i.e. omission or subtraction of a word or letter) and you can ruin the world."

This concealing is also the motivation for Judaism's great respect for His Name. For instance if a prayer book is dropped by a Jew by accident, the book is to be kissed – because G-d's Name appears all over in that prayer book and has thus been desecrated. If a Torah Scroll is accidentally dropped in synagogue, the entire congregation has to fast for 40 days and charity, good deeds, and Torah learning have to be increased. The reason why these things are done is out of respect for the Sacred Name of G-d.

The word "name" in Hebrew ("*shem*"), also means, "noun" or "word" in general. This is a further indication that G-d has given Himself to us in every word of the Torah (as explained by Rav Ginsberg, Shlita).

We already pointed out that the 4-letter Name of G-d is written 1820 times in the five books of Moses. $1820 = 70 \times 26$, 26 is the simple numerical value of the Hebrew letters for his Name. 70 is the value for the Hebrew word 'secret' i.e. hidden and foundation. A foundation is usually hidden and not easily accessible. Amazing, the numerical amount of times that the Name appears, equals 70 times its numerical value, which means hidden or secret. The issue about the unpronounceable Name now all makes much more sense.

Do you know that the Sacred Name appears 725 times in the book of Jeremiah. That is more than in any other prophetic book. The 29th chapter has it written the most times – 18 times, which is the numerical value of the word *chai*, meaning life in Hebrew.

The Command of Torah regarding ‘swearing by His Name’, should be understood in its correct context, just as the Nazarene’s directives in this connection should be understood in its correct context. Matthew 15 confirms that he, far from annulling the Torah (as modern churches and even most Messianics claim), actually confirmed Torah and even emphasized its implication, e.g. murder entails even being angry with someone (verse 21); and adultery is even looking with lust (verse 28). This likewise, is in line with Rabbinic thinking. We have the Law, and then we have Biblical directives going beyond the letter of the Law to deal with even more abstract ethical, righteous and moral implications of the Law. The Gospels are therefore totally in line with the Pharisaical approach of looking at both the internal and external ramifications of the divine imperatives.

If we apply this same emphasis to the issue of taking an oath, then the Nazarene’s directive here is that we should not need to ‘swear by His Name’, but simply let our ‘yes’ be yes. This is in harmony with normative Orthodox Judaism as interpreted by the Rabbis. There are numerous actual accounts of righteous Orthodox Jews who, in legal proceedings, preferred to be found guilty, face conviction and public humiliation, rather than swear by His Name (their innocence was later proven anyway). So the Nazarene’s position here was totally in line with normative Judaism and Rabbinic Oral Torah interpretation.

Rev. Prof. David Biven has pointed out that the Gospels often use euphemisms for G-d: e.g. a common word for G-d was ‘Heaven’. Throughout Matthew the Kingdom of Heaven is used for his group of disciples. In Mark and Luke, the phrase ‘Kingdom of G-d’ is used, probably, because the Greek readers would not have understood the euphemism for ‘G-d’. G-d is called “the Name” (HaShem), the Place, the High, the Tongue, Heaven and more. He is referred to in many ways e.g. Judge, Reviver, Healer, Divine Presence, which in no way implies that there are many gods.

In summary, all of the words of the Torah combine to become one Name of G-d. First, they are seen to fall into four distinct categories, corresponding to the four letters of the Sacred Name Yud – Hey – Vav – Hey, which join together to become one. Finally, they combine as one long word composed of hundreds of thousands of letters (without spaces between the words, unlike the way they presently appear in the Torah), one essential Name of G-d, with no relation to the individual words at all. This final revelation is the “new Torah” that the Messiah will reveal to

the world, the revelation that “G-d is all and all is G-d.” (HaRav Itzhak Ginsberg).

The conclusion of all this, is that the Written Word is a lot deeper than any translation or superficial interpretation could ever indicate. It requires a Hebrew mindset, using ancient analytical tools of transmission – the Keys that unlock G-d’s Wisdom, in order to draw the correct conclusions. Proper analysis of the NT shows that it was basically in harmony with this traditional Jewish mindset and interpretation.

Love your enemy as yourself

‘Love your enemies’ is considered the apogee of the Sermon on the Mount. This concept is heralded as an example of the new faith of Christianity’s superiority over ‘old’ Judaism. In fact, when understood within the correct philosophical categories, this line fits in comfortably with Pharisaic Orthodox Judaism. First, in Lev. 19:18 we read: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” and in Proverbs 25:21 it says: “If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.” In Psalms we read: “Those who love good, hate evil. Hate evil and not the evildoer.” The Talmud proclaims: “Who is strong? – he who can make an enemy into a friend.”

A heathen once came to Hillel and asked to be converted, but only on condition that Hillel could sum up the whole Torah while standing on one leg. To which Hillel responded: “What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow man. This is the entire Torah. The rest is commentary. Go and study.”

Again, we mention Rabbi Akiva who insisted that loving your **neighbor** as yourself is the main principle of the Torah. For as Ben Azzi comments: “The main principle is found in the book of Genesis: ‘This is the book of the generations of Adam’” thus stressing our common ancestry.

Some religions go from simplicity to complexity. Everything in Judaism goes from complexity to simplicity, when dealing on adult intellectual scholarly learning levels, as opposed to children’s learning levels. “Love your enemies” is indeed a correct conclusion, but only after one has gone through several stages of intellectual scholarly contemplation. This also applies to all other conclusions of Truth.

In brief, this process would go as follows: "Indeed, we are to hate evil. But as for the evildoer, specifically our fellow Jew and/or spiritual brother, one would contemplate upon this fellow's divinely given pure soul. Several channels of intellectual analysis open up. We realize that this sinner's soul is comparable to the daughter of the king bound in chains, captured and sitting alone in a dark dungeon. In other words, that fellow's pure soul has been taken over, as a result of a series of wrong choices, by his evil inclination. It is as if his pure soul, the daughter of the king, has been captured by the serpent's skin, meaning the forces of the "evil inclination", egotism, and heathenism. All of those present obstacles to service of HaShem.

Now, after you've had this insight into the spiritual and metaphysical situation of the sinner, a strange thing starts to occur. From your cold, intellectual, analytical examination of this enemy, an emotive response starts to emerge before you. You now begin to feel a sense of mercy and compassion over the plight of this poor pure soul because of the bad choices of that individual - and the sense of mercy and compassion grows within you, fanned by the intellectual understanding of the plight of the soul: alone and tortured in the dungeon created by the wrong exercise of the freedom of choice. Now this flaming feeling of pity, compassion and mercy grows and turns into love for that respective enemy. But it is a love that came from complexity to simplicity. It is not a compromise with evil, nor is it surrender to your enemy. By merely understanding the nature of this cosmic war between good and bad, and a human role and trauma, pity was aroused over the poor soul, which turned to love. But it is, indeed, a highly qualified love.

Thus the Gospels' statement of "love your enemies" is far from being superior to Pharisaic Judaism, as well as not being a naive and unrealistic request to make of real human beings. It can be seen as a result of deep, structured, Orthodox Pharisaic philosophy (32nd chapter of The Tanya).

Also in this context, the word 'enemy' does not mean Amalek or Hitler, Arafat or Ahmadinejad. In the context of the Hebrew mind, and the lecture being given to an audience of Jewish people, the word 'enemy' would be synonymous with your fellow Jew with whom you are at your wits' end. And that is precisely the message of the book of Proverbs: feed your enemy. And in the book of Leviticus, this includes even your enemy's animal. This is not about the Philistine that is attacking you, nor the Egyptian warrior on horseback who has stumbled on his way to plunder the fleeing Hebrews. These many laws contained

in the Oral Torah concerning your enemy refer to your pain-in-the-neck neighboring Jewish or brotherly enemy. Lev. 19:17: “You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but should surely rebuke him.” Rebuke means to lovingly reach out, touch and teach him and guide him back to the proper path. You should not avenge or bare a grudge against one of your own people.

We have the famous command of loving your neighbor as yourself. Torah Law forbids taking vengeance or holding a grudge against one of your own. It is absolutely clear here that we are talking about a co-religionist, or at least someone within the greater community.

Within Orthodox Judaism, there has always been tension between the universal and sectarian aspects of the faith. In fact, the Commandments, in general, vary between these two dimensions like a pendulum. For example, at the festive meal on Shabbat, the first part of the service starts out with a universal declaration that He is the G-d of Avraham, Isaac and Jacob! G-d is not Aristotle’s ‘Unmoved Mover’, who created a world and walked away, but a G-d who relates to a specific, particular people within the fabric of history.

The second half of the sanctification service speaks of G-d taking the Israelites out of Egypt. Rabbi Dr. Shlomo Riskin who teaches the above, never tires of saying that it is through recognizing the fatherhood or “creator-hood” of G-d, we will come to recognize the brotherhood of humankind.

Shammai and Hillel reflected this dilemma in coming to terms with the nitty-gritty of Jewish-Gentile relationships. Shammai took a more rigorous and protective approach and favored law and customs that would seek to stop assimilation and acculturation, whereas Hillel, while sharing Shammai’s concerns over heathen assimilation, generally presented a more open attitude. His was a less-fearing and had a more-encompassing attitude of interaction with the Gentile, who also could be a future righteous convert.

The Gospels likewise reflect these trends in openness or closedness as regarding the Gentiles who lived within the greater Jewish community. An appreciation of this division will also bring a better understanding of the background underlying the NT recorded statements of the Nazarene to the Samaritan woman in John 4, and his reference to ‘dogs’ in Matthew 15, when talking with a Canaanite woman. These comments are normally contorted by NT interpreters to indicate Jewish exclusiveness.

What sounds to the non-Jewish outsider as an almost racist remark should be understood as concern for Jewish survival. In its correct historic and Jewish Halachic contexts this understanding serves to further confirm the Halachic influence of the New Testament.

The Gospel literature presenting the writings of a Jewish Messianic sect contains that same cultural Hebrew mindset: the community at large. Hence, 'love your enemies' sounds far less radical and much more sane and culturally acceptable with this new information presented above, rather than endeavoring to buy peace from your international enemies by kindness and giving in to their irrational demands.

Yud or Tittle

Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I have come to abolish the Law and the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill them."

Christian theology generally interprets this as meaning that, "because he fulfilled the Law, therefore the Law has been done away with". This conclusion, despite the fact that a double statement of non-abolishment of the Law precedes the statement of 'fulfillment'.

In Hebrew, the word 'fulfill' (Greek: *plerosai* as used in the Gospels) does **not** mean that now you have done that Commandment and you don't have to do it anymore. It means that you complied with and satisfied the legal requirements of Torah for that specific requirement, at that specific time, in that specific circumstance and that you are entitled to the eternal reward associated with that Commandment. That means you bring down G-dly light into this lower world, thereby elevating it to a higher plane. It means you did an act or had a thought that allows you to participate with the covenantal faith community's destiny. It does not mean that you are exempted from fulfilling that commandment again - such as observing the Passover Commandments, the Festivals, Tithing, agricultural laws, civil, criminal, etc. The very sentence in that Gospel statement says that the Commandments are NOT to be abolished or destroyed.

So whatever interpretation you want to give for the word 'fulfill', it cannot have as its bottom line the nullification of those said laws. Many times in the Gospel text it speaks about preserving, protecting, sustaining and living up to the righteousness of the law-abiding community (Matthew 23:3).

Further proof is in the very next sentence, where the Gospels say: “Not a dot or a tittle will ever pass away.” This refers to the ‘yud’ which is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet. It looks like the shape of a single inverted comma. (Prof. David Biven). Do you know what the ‘tittle’ represents? Well, first of all, in Greek it was called the ‘keraia’ meaning ‘horn’, based on the Hebrew ‘kots’, meaning ‘thorn’. It was translated into English as ‘tittle’. In brief, it was a decorative barb or spur (*Ittur Sofrim*) added to various letters in the original Torah scrolls by the traditions received through the generations of Rabbinic Sages. These little decorative attachments were laden with secret, mystical, and legal vitality or meaning. For example, Rabbi Akiva drew out nuances of the Law from these signs on the holy letters of the Torah. This entire department as well as the shapes and sizes of the regular letters in the written texts, are under the exclusive authority of the Sages of the Oral tradition.

This is an amazing confirmation of the Nazarene’s qualifications. Anyone using this insight would necessarily have in-depth knowledge and recognition of Oral Torah and tradition. Here we have an example par excellence, a confirmation of faith by the Gospels in the authority of the Oral Torah’s transmission of the true form of the Written Torah.

Fulfilling the Law

The Nazarene claims in Matthew 5:20, “For I say unto you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Pharisees, you shall in no way enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”

The sentence did **not** say the Pharisees **won’t “get to heaven”**, but rather, in the tradition of the Mishnah, (a moralistic style presenting high goals), the Nazarene asks from his students that they strive for **even higher righteousness than that of the Pharisees.**

This is in step with many Jewish teachers who hope and pray that their students will be shining examples for the rest of the righteous Scribes and Pharisees, just as parents demand a higher standard from their children than from other people in the play yard. G-d says that He judges His beloved righteous ones strictly, down to a hair’s breadth. And He chastises those whom He loves.

The Nazarene simply stresses and demands more from His followers, as any coach would expect more from his star athletes. He

thus confirms that the Scribes and Pharisees are indeed righteous. He reminds his followers in Matthew 23:2-3, that the Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat and admonishes them to "listen and do what they tell you".

It is incorrect to think that the directives set by the Nazarene in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:20-48), are giving a newer and higher righteousness than what was previously required. He is merely using a Hebraic method of teaching, which keeps the student interested and contrasts different important ideals. "Ye have heard that it was said to them of old: 'You shall not murder', but I say unto you, anyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger ..." According to Prof. Freedlander, the Nazarene as a teacher of inwardness, wanted to show that the true fulfilment of the Law implied an enlarged interpretation of leading moral enactments. (Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels* and *Benjamin Jowett lectures*).

This was the work of the Scribes, Pharisees and Sages who, although they were not called by Montefiore "prophetic teachers of inwardness", would agree with the sentiments of the Gospel's interpretation of the 6th Commandment. The Rabbinic Jew has nothing new to learn from the sermon but would agree with it.

The Gospels, in imitation of the Rabbis, made 'a fence' to protect the essential Law, viz. they broadened the stipulations of the Law in order to protect the outer parameters between breaking and observing the Law, even before actual transgression occurred, e.g. controlling your anger will keep you from murdering someone. The Torah says in many places you should protect and guard the Torah. Thus, you need to make protective decrees, erect fences around the Biblical prohibition, to keep people from violating the Biblical injunction. As Rabbi N. Lamb, president of the Yeshiva University says, "we are making a hedge of roses to protect the Torah injunctions."

Observance of Chanukah

It is the Nazarene's observance of the Jewish festival of Chanukah which presents probably the strongest confirmation of his sanctioning of Jewish Oral Torah. Nowhere in the written Torah is Chanukah referred to as a mandated observance. It is a purely Rabbinical enactment. Yet, the NT relates the Nazarene's observance of this festival as a major metaphoric indicator of his purported mission.

The Jewish Chanukah feast is often hidden in various versions of the NT under its alternative titles as the Festival of Lights, the Feast of Dedication, or the Feast of Maccabees.

A search of the Tanach for the term Chanukah (Hanukah, Festival of Lights, Feast of Dedication), the popular Jewish Rabbinical mandated festival which often coincides with Christian Xmas!) will yield no results at all! The Tanach has scant Biblical references for the observance of Chanukah. Yet, the NT, the followers of which reject Rabbinic “man-made” rules and festivals, has the most explicit reference to it! It is a profound fact that the observance of Chanukah appears only in TWO sources, viz. the NT and the Talmud!

Many Jewish scholars see a deeper spiritual meaning to Hanukkah, as the editors of the popular Jewish *Artscroll Mesorah Series* states: “Then, the light is kindled to give inspiration, for the light of Messiah must burn brightly in our hearts.” (Chanukah, Mesorah Publications, Brooklyn, 1981, p. 104). Hanukkah is a celebration of deliverance, of re-dedication of the Temple, of a Return to Torah. Thus, it has become a time to express Messianic hope, just as the Maccabees were used by God to redeem Israel,

This underscores the Nazarene’s celebration of the feast 2000 years ago and his subsequent statements to the enquiring Jews (after his true identity) as presented by the NT in John 10:22 onwards. His answer to this very appropriate question is contained in the Nazarene’s Hanukkah message as recorded in this chapter. He uses this occasion to metaphorically reiterate his claims to Messiahship (John 10:25–39).

This is a firm recognition by the Nazarene of the Rabbinic authority to institute times, dates and festivals.

Chapter 7

Hidden Message in the Gospels about “The Kingdom”

Undoubtedly, the greatest confirmation of the Jewish Halachic foundations which underlie the NT, must be found in its Message regarding the Restoration of the Kingdom of G-d. Commonly well-known and accepted topic in Judaism, this is also the most hidden Message of the NT, notwithstanding the fact that it is the Main Theme of the entire Bible and of the Purpose of G-d for mankind, viz. the “Good

News of the Kingdom”. As such, it also is the very reason for the timely publication of this book.

Though the true Kingdom of Israel Restoration Message has laid hidden and undiscovered in the NT, for Christians, right until the last decade, it seems that the Roman Church was well informed of the matter. Consider what Pope Benedict XVI stated about this great insight into the Hidden mysteries of the NT.

The Pope wrote regarding The Eucharist and Eschatology – and for those who are not conversant with these Church terms, let us provide the definitions first:

Eucharist - the Christian ceremony in which people eat bread and drink wine as a way of remembering Jesus Christ's last meal at The Last Supper, before his crucifixion. In some Christian churches, this ceremony is called Communion or Holy Communion.

Eschatology - the body of religious doctrines concerning the human soul in its relation to death, judgment, heaven, and hell

“31. Reflecting on this mystery [of the Eucharist], we can say that Jesus' coming responded to an expectation present in the people of Israel, in the whole of humanity and ultimately in creation itself. By his self-gift, he objectively inaugurated the eschatological age. Christ came *to gather together the scattered People of God* (cf. Jn 11:52) and clearly manifested his intention *to gather together the community of the covenant*, in order to bring to fulfillment the promises made by G-d to the fathers of old (cf. Jer 23:3; Luke 1:55, 70). In the calling of the Twelve {Apostles}, which is to be understood *in relation to the twelve tribes of Israel*, and in the command he gave them at the Last Supper, before his redemptive passion, to celebrate his memorial, Jesus showed that he wished to transfer to the entire community which he had founded the task of being, within history, the sign and instrument of the eschatological *gathering* that had its origin in him. Consequently, every Eucharistic celebration sacramentally accomplishes the eschatological *gathering of the People of God*. For us, the Eucharistic banquet is a real foretaste of the final banquet foretold by the prophets (cf. Is 25:6-9) and described in the New Testament as "the marriage-feast of the Lamb" (Rev 19:7-9), to be celebrated in the joy of the communion of saints (100). (Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, Sacrament of Charity, 30-31).”

We have tried to show through the use of italics in this statement, that the Church has been well aware of the ‘hidden’ Promise of the Ingathering of the Tribes of Israel. Whether they deliberately hid this message from the masses, or whether it was due to their own lack of insight – fact is, that it took all these centuries (2000 years) for the Ten Tribes exiled within Christianity, to wake up to their Hebraic Roots. The evidence of this spiritual transformation, which forms the Main Theme of Biblical Prophecy, i.e. the re-identification and return of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel to their Hebrew Roots and even to the physical Land of Israel, abounds across the entire earth today. Millions of sincere and seriously searching non-Jewish Bible students are reverting to what they regard as their “Hebraic Roots” and in the process “coming out” of the Churches.

As emphasised in our overview of the phenomenon of the Hebraic Restoration Movement across the world, a publication like this would not have been called for without the real prevalence of such a Movement.

This Restoration Movement is the very foundation of the Kingdom Message:

- Without a physical Return of the Lost House of 10-Israel, there can be no Kingdom
- Without a spiritual Return (by repentance) to the original Hebraic Roots and Torah principles of this re-identifying House, there can be no physical Return.

We will now investigate why it is such a hidden topic for NT students and readers and what the NT records reveal about the approach of the Nazarene towards this well documented Jewish Halachic topic.

The Nazarene’s revelations about the Kingdom to Come.

It is significant that all four Gospels disagree about what was written above the Nazarene on his cross. Yet, all four recorded the phrase “King of the Jews” identifying his Jewishness. In Revelations 15:3, he is called “King of the nations.” Despite the numerous variances in the resurrection accounts in the Gospels, we find that when the disciples met him, their first question was, “Master, will you restore again at this time, the Kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6).

As the Hebraic Restoration movement today becomes more and more aware of the longstanding belief of Judaism in the return of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel and their reconciliation with Judah into one nation (Ezekiel 37:18 etc.), they also start realizing the deeper meaning of Gospel texts like these. They are beginning to understand that the “Messianic Kingdom” refers to a re-united 12-Tribed Kingdom of Israel which has to be restored according to the main theme of the Jewish Bible (derogatorily claimed to be the “Old” Testament by Christianity). Thus, this question posed to the Nazarene was the focal point of their clear understanding of the prophecies - the ingathering and reuniting with Judah of the Ten Lost Tribes who were exiled among the nations.

As a youngster, who was pushed by non-Jewish friends to read the NT, I automatically understood the gist of the writings about the prophesied Redemption. In other words, to my Jewish kid’s mind, the Good News of the NT meant the overthrow of Rome, reunification of the Kingdom of real Israel. Not hocus pocus, up in the air, pie in the sky, spiritual stuff. That's why everyone was disappointed and kind of surprised that an immediate restoration of the Jewish Kingdom did not occur.

Restoration of the Fallen Tabernacle of David

Before we embark on a review of this revealing phrase, it is important that the non-Jewish reader becomes aware of the awe and love that Jews hold for the historic King David. This awe compares with that which the Messianic believer holds for the Nazarene – and perhaps even for Paul.

Amos 9:11. “May the compassionate One reestablish for David his fallen Succah (Tabernacle, booth).”

Allow me to share the following song of my own heart in the spirit of the above text:

“This verse is a heartfelt prayer and a song to always be with David and never to be apart. King David lives and exists for us in our every part.

He is thought of, spoken of, sung about and very much a part of everything we do and everywhere we go.

We dream of his re-established Kingdom and the defeat of the foe.

King David, King David lives and exists!”

“He prepared the construction materials, the plans, the musical instruments, wood, stone, fabric and gold. For HaShem’s House that he was prevented from building; the work fell upon his wise son. King David removed the shame being dumped on our G-d and nation; when he removed Goliath’s head and defeated the Philistine time after time. Oh, King David lives and exists for us in so many ways!”

“He is a source of inspiration that pushes and pulls us onwards and upwards!

He helps us through his life and Psalms to try to fulfill the Commands of HaShem, that we may say:

‘Every day and in every way, we’re getting better and better’”.

“He is the Rebbe and teacher for all repentant sinners. He is our guide in the day of battle and shows us a light in the night, his words both comfort and inspire. They are a delight.”

King David is synonymous with the Kingdom of G-d. With the Kingdom of Israel having split 2800 years ago, and the resultant exile of the nation (both Houses), the ‘Tabernacle of David’ had fallen, tumbled, was demolished. The Hope of Judah is in a Restored future Kingdom.

Amos 9:11, “In that day will I raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.”

The NT affirms this return of the Lost House of Israel from amongst the Gentiles when, in a meeting of the Apostles, James said in:

Acts 15:14, “Simon has described to us how G-d first intervened to choose a people for His Name from the Gentiles. ¹⁵ The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written:

¹⁶ “After this I will return and rebuild David’s fallen Tabernacle. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it,

¹⁷ that the rest of mankind may seek the L-rd, even all the Gentiles who bear My Name, says the L-rd, Who does these things’-

¹⁸ things known from long ago.”

With this statement, the NT underwrites the entire Message of the Bible as it was Halachically understood by the Sages and teachers of Judah: viz. the Return, Restoration and establishment of the re-united 12-Tribed Kingdom of Israel based on Covenantal compliance with the Law of G-d. Numerous verses of the Prophets foretell this Return and how the whole World will fall under the Reign of the G-d of Israel.

This World Vision is also recited in the concluding prayer of every Jewish worship Service daily, three times a day and at other ceremonies in addition, throughout the year – the Aleinu Prayer:

This Prayer concludes with the universal Kingdom Message:
“Therefore we put our hope in You, HaShem our G-d,
to soon see the glory of Your strength, to remove all idols from the Earth,
and to completely cut off all false gods; to repair the world, Your holy Empire. And for all living flesh to call Your Name,
and for all the wicked of the Earth to turn to You.
May all the world's inhabitants recognize and know
that to You every knee must bend and every tongue must swear loyalty.
Before You, HaShem, our G-d, may all bow down,
and give honor to Your precious Name,
and may all take upon themselves the yoke of Your rule.
And may You reign over them soon and forever and always.
Because all rule is Yours alone,
and You will rule in honor forever and ever.
As it is written in Your Torah:
"HaShem will reign forever and ever."
And it is said: "HaShem will be Ruler over the whole Earth,
and on that day,
G-d will be One, and His name will be One.”

David was promised that his Kingdom and Davidic dynasty would one day be restored. The *Succah* of David - the very word comes from a root meaning safety and protection. Here it likewise means the Holy Temple, a source of blessing and protection. The very same Temple that David worked to make the preparations for, that which he dreamed of, desired and helped so much to plan. The Temple to be made out of cement and star dust, so to speak, the same spiritual building materials used to re-establish settlement in Israel today; cement and star dust.

This inspires the powerful emotional attachment that Jews have with our teacher and King David Ben Yishai. His father, Yishai, was counted as one of the few people who never sinned.

The image of his reunited Kingdom is deeply ingrained upon us. In fact, this passion is expressed in all our religious art work from time immemorial. All our Synagogues, Study houses, Yeshivas and a host of Judaica are decorated with the motif of the re-established Kingdom of David, in other words the re-established and re-erected fallen Succah.

Let us cite a few verses that indicate this return.

“It shall come to pass that HaShem will set His hand again the second time (the first time was the Exodus from Egypt) to recover the remnant of His people who are left...” After the time of ‘Jacob’s trouble’ Isaiah 10:20 says “that a remnant of Israel, and such that have escaped of the house of Jacob...”

The prophet Hosea likewise points out that after educational punishments and exile they will return, at least a remnant.

Jeremiah chapter 30 clearly shows “that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah!” Then the Prophet goes on to ch. 46:27 to say “Do not fear, O my servant Jacob, and do not be dismayed, O Israel! For behold, I will save you from afar, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return, be at rest and no one will make him afraid. Do not fear O Jacob My servant....”

According to Jer. 23 G-d will gather His flock and will set shepherds who will feed them.

Again in Ezekiel 20:33, it is clear that He will bring the Tribes of Israel back from the countries where they have been scattered. In chapter 39, “Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob and have mercy on the whole House of Israel”

In the Addendum to this book (Chapter 23), we feature a comprehensive compilation of the multitude of Prophetic Scriptures of the Tanach which deal with this Return and Reconciliation.

Getting back to the verse in Amos, we need to understand that he was a prophet of great importance to the Northern Kingdom of Israel (i.e. the ‘House of Israel’). As Dr.Hertz says in the Soncino Pentateuch and Haftorahs: “After pronouncing judgment on the surrounding peoples for

their violation of the dictates of universal morality and their participation in barbarous practices, Amos turns to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, judging its inhabitants with the same standard and in the very same words as the heathens”.

Now let us ask, what is so special about using the imagery of the Succah (Booth) for the restored Kingdom of David? What is so special about the Festival of Succot? The four species which we are commanded to take on this Festival, symbolize all the different types within the nation. The Theme and main Goal of the Succot Celebration is to establish **unity** amongst these various factions within the nation of G-d. It symbolizes the Unity which is so dearly required between the two estranged Houses of Israel today. Without unity of all these species, the commands of the Festival cannot be fulfilled.

The etrog (one of the four species) is a fertility symbol; the willows show our dependence on water (Torah); the myrtle is a symbol of success and immortality and the Lulav is symbolic of victory. Also, the same four species represent the body of the individual and nation of Israel. These species represent our patriarchs and subsumed within, also the matriarchs - our covenantal men and women!

Remember, way back in the beginning, G-d promised Abraham that his descendants would become a multitude of nations with numbers as countless as the sand of the sea and the stars. Our Fathers and Mothers, our Mammās and Pappas treasured this Promise and carried it forward in faith.

Now we can understand better the intent of the original Jewish writers of what became NT texts. The book of Acts is speaking of the Restoration of the Kingdom of all 12 Tribes. As Matthew 19:6 says “TO GO TO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL,” proclaiming the “Gospel of the Kingdom,” meaning the gathering of our lost tribes, helping them come back home to Judah.

The Gospel of love and of the Kingdom now makes sense. When will love guide the planet? When the Kingdom of G-d rules the earth in a manifest open way through the re-united Tribes.

The Parables – Key to revealing the Hidden Message of the Kingdom

The Gospel of the Kingdom regarding the re-uniting of the House of Judah with 10-Israel (the House of Israel), underlies several Parables of the NT.

- The Prodigal Son – portraying the remaining "faithful son" who has faithfully been safeguarding his father's Faith (which represents Judah), and the returning prodigal (which represents the House of 10-Israel).
- The Ten Bridesmaids and Oil for their lamps – representing the Ten Lost Tribes awaiting their Bridegroom. Oil = used in the Temple's Menorah = light = Torah wisdom, Kingship (1 Sam. 10), Priesthood (Lev. 8:30), and anointing of the Prophet (Isa. 61), closeness and care under G-d's protection (Ps. 23, Ps. 45, Ps. 92), healing (Psalms 23), prosperity (Job 29:6, Joel 2:24), Oil is also connected to those coming back to the land for pilgrimage (Ps. 133) and in general, there is a strong Land of Israel symbolism (2 Kings 18:32, Jer. 40, 1 Kings 17:12, Deut. 11). Thus, they were found wanting, not involved in a dynamic relationship with G-d and a return to country and hence they will not be ready to greet the Bridegroom when he comes. Many of them will not be up to the tough tests, John 15, Matthew 6, John 14:13-22).

Matthew 5 speaks of obeying Commandments, light which equals Torah, treasures which equal Torah and a personal relationship with G-d who is very close. All of this reflects the language and spiritual requirements needed to help 10-Israel come on home.

Francisco Mateo Gago of the Catholic Church insisted that Jews are cursed and in exile according to the Gospels because of their failure to embrace the Church. However, the Jews were already in exile in Babylon for 70 years, more than 500 years before there was any kind of Church. Their exile therefore can have no bearing on whether they rejected the Church and its Message or not. This claim is also disqualified by the fact that the Ten Lost Tribes, who formed a great proportion of those who accepted the Church and its Message, were also exiled – as far back as 900 years, almost a millennium before there was any Church!

In the words of Rabbi Avraham Joshua Heschel, "...there is nothing in the words of Jesus that leads us to believe he envisioned desolation that would endure to the end of days..." He also states, "According to the book of Acts, the disciples ... asked him: '...is it at this time that thou

restorest the Kingdom to Israel?' And he answered, 'No one can know the times and seasons which the Father fixed.'" (Acts 1:6-7).

At that time, Rome ruled the Holy Land. But there was a hope, a hope of deliverance from the pagans. There was the promise offered by the prophets, of returning to Jerusalem, to the Kingdom of Israel. It was the most urgent question. So when they saw the Nazarene for the first time in these extraordinary circumstances, it is understandable that this was the first question they would ask. Their supreme concern: "Is it at this time that thou restorest the Kingdom?" In other words, they asked the question about the Restoration of the Kingdom of Israel (*Israel, An Echo of Eternity*, A.J. Heschel, Farrar, Straus and Giroux New York copyright 1967 p. 163-164).

"To 'restore' in this passage, means to set up again that which was broken down and disfigured by many ruins ... for out of the dry stock of Jesse should spring a branch, and the tabernacle of David which was miserably laid waste should rise again." (*Calvin's Commentaries, The Acts of the Apostles*, (Edinburgh, 1965), p. 29).

Returning to the words of Rabbi Doctor Heschel, "But of that day or the hour (of the parousia) no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32). A similar awareness is common in Rabbinic literature. "Nobody knows when the house of David will be restored." According to Rabbi Shimeon ben Lakish (ca. 250), "I have revealed it to my heart, but not to the angels." (Ibid, Heschel, p.164). The Nazarene with these statements regarding the unknowable quality of the exact times for Redemption, is echoing Oral Torah.

According to the Torah and the Gospels, the twelve tribes have a unique calling and a special connection to HaShem.

Malcolm Hedding, Director of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, in *The Basis of Christian Support for Israel* states: "...the Avrahamic Covenant is a one-sided covenant. (There is an irrevocable nature of the Avrahamic Covenant, Jer. 31:35-37). There were no conditions attached. Nowhere in the cutting of the covenant with Abram, and through him the nation of Israel, is there a condition attached – "if you do this, then..." Instead, we read that G-d undertook to do everything required to enact this Covenant. All the promises begin with "I will ...I will ... I will..." Four times in Gen. 12:1-3 G-d engages Abram and tells him what He will do

as the Covenant Maker. Avraham is merely the Covenant acceptor...."

The apostle Paul, himself a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin, has this to say about Israel's unique calling in his letter to the Gentile Church in Rome: "What advantage then has a Jew? Much in every way because to him were committed the Oracles of G-d" (Rom. 3:1-2).

Malcolm Hedding, has this to say about the reason for Israel's existence: "So herein lies the chief reason why the nation of Israel came into existence. They came into existence to be the custodians of world Redemption, the vehicle by which G-d would bring His message of eternal salvation to the world." (Hedding, M., *The Basis of Christian Support for Israel*, Pg 9). (Examination of the Biblical Texts that Form the Basis of Evangelical Christian Support for Israel, with Special Reference to the Response of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, as yet unpublished, by J.E. Carstens, July 2008, Pg. 29, 30).

According to the Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, "...the image of Israel is of a people who enjoys the status of a uniquely advantaged minority under G-d: 'Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the Law, the Temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is G-d over all, forever praised!'" (Rom. 9:3-5 NIV).

Paul reminds Gentile Christians of G-d's Promises and long-term relationship with Israel. In the extended image of the Olive Tree (Rom. 11:16-21), Israel makes up the root, trunk and branches of G-d's cultivated olive tree, and Gentiles are only wild branches grafted in. If G-d prunes some Israelite branches from this tree to make room for wild branches, the Creator G-d can just as well graft in the pruned branches at a later time." (*Dictionary of Biblical Imagery...*).

Chapter 8

Examples of Judaism and Oral Torah in the Gospels

Let's give examples of Judaism and Oral Torah within the Gospels that demonstrate the true intention and underlying meaning of the written text. From these examples, the Gospel texts can be seen in a new light, which is really the ancient light, and the way it was experienced by the Nazarene and his original apostles.

A Sanhedrin court of 23 to 71 judges which condemns one person to death in a seventy-year period, is considered to be a murderous court (as they would say in the western U.S.A., "a hanging judge"). Rabbi Eleazar, the son of Azaryah, said, "Even one person in seventy years." Rabbi Tarfon and Rabbi Akiva said, "If we had been sitting on the court, no one would ever be put to death." (Mishnah Makkot Chapter 1, Halacha 10).

With the above in mind, let's discuss the court system during the time period of the Nazarene.

We had courts of 3, 23 and 71. During the Nazi-like Roman occupation, the Romans decided to interfere with their workings. The Torah court (Sanhedrin) went into self-imposed exile 40 years before the destruction of the second Temple. Rome ruled with an iron fist and wanted a Jewish court to rubber stamp their unpopular verdicts. There was no Torah Sanhedrin in Jerusalem at the time of the Gospels, because of this Roman interference. The word "Sanhedrin" in Greek is "Synedrion," which is the word for "council, committee, or court". Israel was divided into at least four such council/court zones for the administration of Roman civil and criminal law.

There also were the Sadducees, who held to heretical views, e.g. they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, in the Messianic age, angels, or Oral Torah. Whereas a large majority of the people did believe in the above and were loyal to the Oral and Written Torah, the Sadducees were loyal only to the Romans.

In general, the Sadducees were assimilated Hellenists: in other words, secular. They did not meet the standards of the rigorous Rabbinic order of the time, simply because they were partially Hellenized and were not interested in such intensive and advanced Torah study. They were not interested in upholding the many Commandments.

The Sadducees owed their positions in various courtroom settings to the interference of imperial Rome. On the Temple Mount there was a Sadducee priestly court which was completely dominated by Roman dictatorial rule. The Romans always wanted representatives of various conquered people to make nasty legal decisions which only Rome could carry out. This was to create the illusion of some kind of autonomy among their oppressed, conquered peoples. The Sadducee priestly court was a puppet of and a rubber stamp for Roman imperial rule.

This Sadducee puppet court met at night to rule on the capital case of the Nazarene. For the court to meet at night was illegal, according to Torah Law. They met on the eve of Pesach, a major Jewish Sacred holiday, which would not have been the case for a Torah court. And, they found a Jewish man, the Nazarene, guilty of sedition: political activity against the tyranny of Rome. From a Torah Orthodox Pharisaic view, Rome was like a pagan Nazi death machine. Again, from a

Pharisaic Orthodox Jewish perspective, any activity against Rome would constitute heroism, righteousness, and goodness.

Messiah means “anointed king”. In the mind of the Romans, a messiah king was a political reality. Thus, if someone thought he was king, or even if other people looked toward him as some sort of king, then in the eyes of Rome, it equaled treason and deserved immediate execution. The job of the collaborating, heretical sect of Sadducees was to immediately and swiftly approve of Roman State executions. The Romans executed hundreds of thousands of Jews. The Sadducees justified their collaboration with Nazi-like Rome by saying, “it is better that one man should die than a whole nation” (John 11:51). Similarly, the Vichy French collaborated with the Nazis and sentenced French freedom fighters (e.g. Charles De Gaulle) to death.

These Sadducee puppets met at a place called Gabbatha (John 19:13), which was a small court next to Roman high command (Antonia Fortress). Probably not more than a hundred Jews could have crowded into that spot. And who would have been allowed there by the Romans? Only members of the heretical, collaborating Sadducee sect would have had access. By the way, many of these priests were not Halachic priests; they were simply put there by Rome. In addition, the high priesthood was often purchased at that time. In the eyes of the entire Orthodox Jewish nation, the Sadducee priesthood was entirely corrupt. To a great extent, they were traitors to the Jewish people as collaborators with the Roman oppressors, and as a result they were almost all killed by the Jewish Orthodox community during the revolt against Rome. After the destruction of the second Temple the Sadducees no longer held political and organizational power, and soon became extinct.

Pontius Pilate was an arrogant, murderous monster. However, the Roman Church put such a spin on the Gospel text, that people to this day are fooled into a completely erroneous interpretation of the text surrounding Pilate’s participation. Luke 13:1 testifies that “he mixed the blood of the Galileans with their sacrifices”. Roman Emperor, Vitellius, ultimately sent Pilate back to Rome for fear that his indiscriminate murdering would incite full rebellion. Why would they let Barabbas, who allegedly murdered members of their own Sadducee sect, go free? Obviously, so as to prove their abject loyalty to Rome. Caiaphas (a Sadducee) and the other Sadducees served Rome and were held responsible for any rebellions that might break out. It was the kingship issue for which the Nazarene was finally convicted by the Roman puppet collaborating Kangaroo court, comprised completely of Sadducees. So

again, better that one fellow die (who is accused of being king, meaning a spiritual, political rival to Roman power) than an entire nation be destroyed (threatening their own position of political and economic control and leadership).

From a Jewish perspective, it does not need prophetic insight to know that anyone making claims on 'kingship' (messiah-ship), would be marked for death under Roman rule. From a 10-Israel 'return' point of view, here we have an absolute proof text that the NT is serving the function of a reach-out to the Lost Tribes of Israel, NOT to Judah (who were not lost or dispersed at that time).

John 11:52, "He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that the Nazarene would die for the Jewish nation,⁵² and not only for that nation **but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.**⁵³ So from that day on they plotted to take his life."

The NT confirms this 'crime of rebellion against Rome' by stating on the inscription above the convicted Nazarene: "**this is the king of the Jews**" Luke 23:38.

You, my dear readers, must understand that Pilate was mocking and humiliating the Sadducee pseudo-court. He was taunting them. For example, Pilate said, "He is your king?" (John 19:14) - which made them grovel at his feet and beg him to believe them, that they had no king, except the king in Rome. We are dealing here with a very high stake encounter. If the Sadducees failed to prove their absolute loyalty to Rome, the outcome would have been disastrous for them. Their possessions, wealth, homes, animals, positions and honor would have been immediately lost! All of their material comforts would have gone down the drain, after which the Roman death machine would have torturously, methodically, and efficiently murdered them and their families.

To digress momentarily, I have often wondered at, and been amazed by the success of the Roman spin on the Gospel text. Here were the Hellenized, relatively secular Sadducee Jews trying to survive against the brutal, crushing iron boot of the Roman Empire. However, the Church dumped all the blame on one of Rome's victims, the Sadducee court. They victimized the victim. The whole point of the passion play should have been against Rome, who was the true pagan bad guy. They made Pontius Pilate look as if he was a good Christian churchgoer.

If Rome thought you were a bad guy, that meant you were a good guy in the eyes of the Pharisaic people of Israel. According to all Torah sources, someone killed by a Gentile pagan military because of being a Jew, or because of their Jewishness, dies a heroic death and is called holy, a saint, and a martyr. Torah sources agree that the death of the righteous brings atonement (Moed Katan 28A). Rabbi Ami says, “Why was the death of Miriam juxtaposed with the section of the red heifer? To teach us that just as the red heifer atones, the death of the righteous atones”. Rabbi Elazar says, “Why was the death of Aaron juxtaposed with the section of the priestly garments? To teach that just as the priestly garments atone, the death of the righteous atones.” Bava Batra 10B, Pesachim 50A, Taanit 18B are a few sources in the Talmud that explain, that Jews who were murdered (by Gentile forces) in Lod, those who die in Israel’s wars, and under occupation of foreign invaders, are like the Holy of Holies. They shall experience the most honored place in the world to come.

So, the Sadducees knew in their hearts that it wasn’t right for Nazi-like Rome to rule in Israel, just as the Vichy French knew in their hearts that Nazi rule of France was unnatural. The Roman rule was ruthless, cruel and totalitarian to the extreme. The Sadducees needed to act as a cheering section for imperial Roman decrees and actions for what, in their minds, equaled their own prosperity and survival. The Sadducees, which were less than 3% of the population, had a huge number of relatives who were good, religious, Pharisaic Jews. They knew someone executed for being Jewish (or a possible king-like savior) was really a righteous and saintly being. Such a person would have the status of a heroic, righteous individual and his death would bring atonement.

Again, the Sadducees were cheering Rome and proclaiming their absolute loyalty to Roman rule, motivated by fear for their own safety and the prosperity of themselves and their families. Both Paul (1 Cor. 2:8) and Luke (18:31-33) put the responsibility on the Romans (rulers/Gentiles) and not the Jews. The Greek word used for Gentile in Luke 18:32, is “*ethnos*”, which means, according to Strong's #1484, “a *race* (as of the same *habit*), that is, a *tribe*; specifically a *foreign (non-Jewish)* one (usually by implication *pagan*): - Gentile, heathen, nation, people”.

Because some Jews, according to NT were looking at the Nazarene as a kingly figure, the Roman rulers felt threatened and had the puppet Sadducee court condemn the Nazarene to death. When in Luke 23:34 the

Nazarene said, “they know not what they do,” he was referring to this situation. If the Sadducees had been properly versed in Torah, they would have known they were wrongly ruling against the Nazarene. At an earlier time, when the Sadducees tried to trick the Nazarene with their questions, the Gospel records that they were very ignorant of the Torah. As it says in Matthew 22:29, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of G-d.”

For example, here is a way in which the Sadducees were mistaken because of their lack of Torah expertise: the Sadducees, being secularized, Hellenized, and ignorant of Written and Oral Torah set Rome rules, Rome is our government. Therefore, someone who may be heralded as a possible rival to Rome e.g. a Messiah figure, is guilty of treason and of betraying the law of the land. However, in Jeremiah it says the law of the land is your law“. So what is the problem that they didn’t care for the Written and Oral Torah? They were lacking in Rabbinic ordination. They were put there by Rome living the life of Riley, enjoying living high on the ham, and worried only about losing their position of relative power. Had they been good Yeshiva students, Jeremiah’s directives would have been very clear. The Written and Oral Torah never advocate accepting immoral, criminal, or pagan laws of the “powers that be”. The Torah advocates the respect of neutral laws needed to run a quiet, stable society, nothing more. The secular forces have no right to tell us how to serve or not serve G-d. And there is nothing wrong with heroic Jews in each generation struggling against despotic rule over our exiles wherever we find ourselves.

According to Oral Torah, if someone is under great duress, it changes an intentional sin to an unintentional sin. If a person or group feels they are under tremendous pressure and are coerced, that reduces significantly the measure of guilt of their actions. See Acts 3:17, which states that the Jews who were involved, were ignorant and thus a lot less guilty.

Finally, now we can understand what it meant in Matthew 27:25, when the Sadducees said, “his blood be on us and on our children.” In Greek the word, *epi*, (on) in Hebrew is “*al*”, which means over us or upon us, or a covering on us. What that would mean to a Hebrew mind is: “his blood be atonement upon us”. Atonement is the whole idea of something covering or being upon the sinner. Since the Nazarene was being killed because he was Jewish, he died a righteous death; as such, it served as atonement for sins. Thus, Matthew 26:28, “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins,” should

be understood in the spirit of the above-mentioned sources of the Oral Torah.

Just to remind our dear readers, the death of the righteous brings atonement. For example, Rabbi Aryeh Levine, a student of Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak HaCohen Kook, says of the death of the tzaddikim, "They ascend upward to the root of life and the essence of their lives brings an encompassing value of goodness and blessing to the overall structure of the world, in all of its values and nuances." (*A Tzaddik in Our Time*, by Simcha Raz, Pg 108).

Remember in Biblical times, the death of the high priest achieved atonement and freed the people who had killed accidentally, from the cities of refuge. In the Talmud, in Tractate Moed Katan 28, it says anyone who cries over the death of the righteous person, achieves a measure of atonement, meaning a degree of forgiveness of their sins.

What the Sadducees were really saying, which the ignorant Romans missed, was a coded praise, an acknowledgement of the supreme sacrifice that this young Jewish hero was making, in defiance of the tyranny that was pagan Rome. The Romans murdered many hundreds of thousands of Jewish people. The worst crime a Jew could possibly commit, in Roman eyes, was not paganism (they were pagans themselves), nor adultery, nor robbery, nor even murder of their fellow countrymen, but rather laying claim to or being considered a possible Messianic leader. The mere possibility that a want-to-be-Messianic fellow was around, would get instant attention from Rome. In the case of the Nazarene, the claims involved being possibly Messiah, which to Rome was a threat of anointed king. This was a geopolitical position in addition to any spiritual implications it may have.

Remember, the Romans had on their books for over 400 years a law which demanded the death penalty for any Jew who might be considered as being of the seed of David. This law stood even after Rome became Christian, simply because in their minds, any Messianic aspirations were equivalent to rebelling against Roman authority. Even if the potential leader clearly did not consider himself a candidate for such a role, as long as other people did, he would become an immediate target for elimination by the Romans who had zero tolerance for potential political rivals.

This kangaroo court could make up false rulings. The Nazis imitated Rome with a Vichy French rubber-stamp of false approval. The

French who collaborated with Nazi tyranny, used a fake court system to justify Nazi rule. The Third Reich did, with a tiny portion of Vichy French, exactly as Rome did to the Jews by way of the tiny (less than 3% of the population), heretical Sadducee cult. All this was to create an illusion of autonomy, thus neutralizing the spirit of revolution.

Another example of Judaism and Oral Torah in the Gospels, is found in Acts 8:2 where G-d-fearing men buried Stephen and “made great lamentation over him”, a phrase used often in connection with funerals, where it is a mitzvah (a very good and truly kind deed) to honor the deceased. However, the Mishnah in Sanhedrin 6/5 forbids eulogies and public lamentations for people legally executed! Therefore, the people surrounding this riotous crowd were not Pharisees, but Sadducees, because if a person was really guilty of heresy, he was not mourned publicly. This proves that Stephen was unjustly condemned to death by a Sadducee puppet court. First, it was very hard to receive a death penalty from a Torah court. Second, there were no such functioning courts of at least 23 saintly judges in that area and time.

Remember, the Torah 71 Sanhedrin had already gone into self-imposed exile and again, it was never the habit of legitimate Jewish courts to kill Jews over ideology. Third, nothing Stephen did or said would have so upset a Torah (pro-Pharisee party) crowd. They would have simply brushed him off, or ignored him, or have taken some words of correction, but not condemned him. Keep in mind also that according to the NT, Gamaliel was to make clear that Paul was OK and these folks were not to be annoyed. Any regular Jew, i.e. affiliated with the Pharisee party, would have had Gamaliel’s attitude, as they do today. Stephen did not say anything that would warrant his death. What warranted Stephen's death was the public allegiance to another king, namely a Messiah, which again means anointed king! This was a serious crime against imperial Rome. The job of the Sadducees was to maintain order and if they failed, they very well may have paid for it with their lives and the lives of their families!

The only thing Stephen did wrong was to not pay attention in Bible class. Perhaps whenever his teacher was speaking, he took a snooze or he forgot some information. However, this was not illegal, or criminal, or immoral or unethical! He confused a few verses. He said that Jacob was buried in Shechem, but any Israeli child in cheder (religious school) could tell you that Joseph was buried in Shechem and Jacob was buried in Hebron. Stephen confused the people from whom Avraham purchased the burial plot for Sarah, with a different bunch of Canaanites from the

Shechem area. He also said that Avraham came to Israel after his father died, but any rendition of the math in that section would show you that his dad lived for many years after his son Avraham had made aliyah. And, Stephen said the Torah was given by angels, but Exodus 19 states the Torah was given straight from G-d to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

Again, nothing in these mistakes was illegal or criminal or would get anyone upset or arouse anger. It was the king issue that got him in trouble. Stephen was only guilty of confusing texts, which is not a crime in law! At worst, he could have looked silly, which is how the Hebrew mind views most off-beat polemics. When our father Avraham, after having given a lovely meal to an elderly pagan, told him to praise G-d for the food, the pagan insisted on thanking the sun god! Whereupon Avraham corrected and chastised him, which the old pagan rebuffed. Avraham abruptly asked him to leave. In a later dialogue with HaShem, G-d chastises Avraham saying, 'I put up with this fool for 70 years and you could not put up with him for one meal.' The emphasis is on the fact that Avraham had to be less zealous for the honor of HaShem and more concerned for the dignity of his fellow man!

As a side point, for an example of another riotous crowd, I would like to share with you the following. Daniel Gruber, in his book *Copernicus and the Jews*, remarks, "the Greek word used to describe this riotous mob in the city theater is *ekklesia*. 'The *ekklesia* was in confusion. Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there.' (Acts 19:32). Whether or not that accurately describes some Church to which you have been, Luke simply used '*ekklesia*' to refer to an assembly of people." This assembly was not a Jewish house of prayer, meeting, or study. When the Pharisaic-oriented Jewish people refer to the theaters of the Greek and Roman oppression they are quite negative! Torah Jews would not be found at the Roman theater, for they were places of assimilation of Hellenistic Roman pagan immorality (as many are today)! Who would hang out there? First of all, pagans, and if there were any Jews they would be of the Sadducee sect, because they were relatively secular and pro-Hellenization and enjoyed Roman everything, or at least had to pretend they did

At the crucifixion, the Nazarene indorses forgiveness for the Sadducees, "for they are ignorant and do not know what they do!" As explained earlier, people acting under terrible duress (fear of Roman retribution) have a much lower level of spiritual guiltiness.

Oral Torah inherent in the New Testament refutes anti-Rabbinic interpretation of the Gospels

Under Roman influence, every single passage in the Gospels was read and twisted to remove or excise the Jews out of the Bible – to reduce the influence of Judaism – to disengage the Gospel from its Hebraic roots – simply put, to discredit Jews and Judaism. The divine intent underlying the return to Torah of the re-identifying Ten Lost Tribes in “the End Time” and their peaceful Reconciliation with the House of Judah will therefore entail the reversal of this process of demonizing Judaism, Jews and the Torah.

Again, the purpose of this book is to reveal the Oral Torah which lies inherent and concealed in the New Testament, in order to bless and encourage this process of Reconciliation. Consequently, it could serve as a reminder to the Hebraic Restorer in this wonderful re-enlightening age, of the importance and necessity of sober minded Rabbinic Oral interpretation of the Torah and of G-d’s requirements for would-be citizens of His Eternal Kingdom.

The ‘Jewish’ Sabbath

Nowhere is there a clearer sign that the “End Time” restoration of all things entails a reversal of the process of anti-Judaism and anti-Rabbinism, than in the acceptance by millions of modern-day non-Jewish Hebraic Restorers of the ‘Jewish’ Sabbath as the True Biblical Sabbath. This commonly is one of the first main issues of Restoration that these sincere Bible students apply ON THEIR PROGRESSIVE Way of Return.

A church official in Jerusalem said to me in a personal discussion: “What have the Jews to do with the Bible?” While infiltrating neo-Nazi groups in the USA for a research project, I was often confronted with the statement that “The Nazarene was not a Jew. It’s merely Zionistic propaganda.”

Clifford Goldstein, editor of a Christian magazine, criticizes Adventists who reject a Jewish connection to the Sabbath. They say they received it from a spiritual remnant (for which there is no historical proof) or, they are the heirs to the spiritual remnant and do not owe the Sabbath to the rejected Jews. The problem here is that every circumstance where Christians have adopted the Jewish 7th Day Sabbath

has been done by virtue of “the Jewish Bible” (the Tanakh or ‘Old Testament’). Throughout the centuries the Jews have been a living testimony and witness to observance of the Sabbath. Others would say that the Sabbath has nothing to do with Jews but it comes straight from G-d. Apart from thereby confessing the ‘righteousness’ of Jews in sticking to Torah, this is merely a subtle way to disguise the anti-Semitic repulsion to the idea that they could possibly be seen as reverting to Jewish customs.

Goldstein uses the term: “Supersessionism” (from Latin ‘supersede’ – sitting in the place of). The generally accepted term is ‘Replacement Theology’. (Tertullian, in his book, *Against Marcion* 4.12.7, Note *10).

Marcion reasons that the Church replaced the Jews – Tertullian does not. This idea was first in ecclesiastical terms in the 4th century Catholic Church, i.e. that the Church, being the ‘New Israel’, has replaced the synagogue of the ‘old Israel’. Five hundred years ago the Protestant Reformation claimed that it was the new spiritual Israel, with the grace of the Gospel, and had replaced the Israel of the flesh bound to the Law of Moses.

Franklin H. Little in *The Crucifixion of the Nazarene* speaks of the red thread that ties Justin Martyr to Auschwitz and describes Hitler’s Final Solution as a logical extension of the theology of supersessionism. In other words: I am the true Israel, and you are not, and you do not deserve to live as Israel.

Replacement theology ignores the statement by Paul that “to the Jews pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of G-d and the promises” (Romans 9:4). To paraphrase Goldstein: In the beginning of the Christian era, the Church separated itself from its Jewish roots in order to gain the world. Could it be that, at the end of its course, the Church will gain the “World to Come” by “returning” (teshuvah) to the Jewish face of its identity?

In the Jerusalem Talmud Nedarim, Rabbi Aha in the name of Rabbi Huna said: “Asaf (Esau) the wicked will put on his tallith with the tassels and sit with the righteous in Paradise in the time to come, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, will drag him and cast him forth from there.” What is the meaning? “Though thou mount on high as an eagle, and though thy nest be set amongst the stars, I will bring thee down from there, says the Lord” (Obadiah 1:4). The ‘stars’ mean the righteous.

Daniel 12:3, “They that turn many to righteousness (shall shine) as the stars forever and ever.”

The above passage contains an unmistakable allusion to Christianity becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire. “Asaf” is a stock phrase in the Scriptures to denote the Roman Empire. That Asaf should wrap himself in this prayer shawl, worn by Jews when praying, means that the Roman Empire which had now become Christian, pretended to be the true Israel (Galatians 3:7). The claim of the Christian church was very exasperating to the Jews. Asaf, in a certain way, was related to the Jewish people. We see that from our own distant relatives comes forth much hatred against us. As Amnon Goldberg, a wise man of Tzfat explains of the verse in Leviticus 26:17, “Those that hate you shall rule over you.” And our Oral Torah explains, “I will set up enemies only from your own ranks.” And Isaiah 49:17: “Those who destroy you and waste you will emerge from you.”

The Zohar 1-25 says that there are five categories amongst the Erev Rav (the mixed multitude of Egyptian proselytes who were incorporated into the Hebrew nation at the time of the Exodus). In the generation before the Redemption, the Jews will be ruled by this tiny minority of corrupt officials (the Erev Rav), and some will ally themselves with the Edomites and Ishmaelites and even with Gog and Magog (Zohar 4-246). The Zohar even talks of this minority (a mixed multitude) of Jews who appear to be religious but act contrary to G-d’s will.

This disturbing phenomenon is clearly evident today in the way that the government of Israel reacts to world pressure against Jews “occupying” the Promised Land. Their actions, under the banner of ‘Peace’, favour and benefit their declared enemies and restrict and persecute the righteous, loving and loyal in Israel today who believe in the Promises of Torah and the Prophets.

Perhaps the same must of necessity be true of the re-awakening and re-identifying 10-Israel. Their greatest opposition will come from within their own ranks: those who profess to be returning to Torah and Hebraic Israel identity but who oppose the spiritual leaders of the Torah, the divinely mandated guardians of His Torah, the Rabbonim. Those who want to physically live in the Land of Israel but who oppose complete physical identity with Judah; those who want to change Judah to their own brand of anti-Halachic Judaism are the accusers of the nation who, throughout the ages, clung to their Hebraic heritage.

Only by recognizing these two striving spirits in each other, and striving for the prophesied goal of peaceful Reconciliation between the two divided Houses of Israel, can peace be attained in Zion. The uncovering of the original Oral Torah foundation of the New Testament, which for 2000 years has been wrapped in anti-Jewish disguise, will go a long way amongst both sides to promote this Reconciliation.

In brief, the Gospels are confirming the authenticity, sanctity and obligations of both the Written and Oral Torah.

The scholar, Mordechai Alfrandry uses more or less the following metaphor to explain the above: imagine that, through G-d's wisdom, the traffic laws were imparted to the minds of men. G-d then sees that His various laws, meant to preserve life and safety, were being trampled on by the children of man when those lousy human beings were not coming to a full stop at stop signs; and they were not yielding at yield signs. They were running red lights. They were exceeding maximum speed limits – making a total mess of the way He had planned and had wanted the world to be: an orderly, safe place for humans. So G-d decided to send His only begotten son John to live amongst men, to grow up, pass his theory and driving test, get a license, and show how the highways and by-ways of the world should really be traveled. John would simply fulfill all of those traffic laws – and then dies in a fatal crash while keeping those selfsame traffic laws. Now all of those lousy drivers are living in grace by virtue of John's proper fulfillment of those traffic safety laws – and the huge debt which has accumulated over the years of unpaid traffic tickets, fines and penalties, will now be paid retroactively and into the future by virtue of John's proper driving habits, e.g. never forgetting to signal that right turn, or come to a full stop.

Foolish – you say? I agree. But yet, this is the stuff that the whole Christian Grace theology is based upon. It wouldn't help the world to have one good driver and say that everyone is now living in the grace of his good driving. Traffic laws of safety apply to all drivers at all times, as long as there will be cars. Similarly the Creator's laws cannot be abrogated while the heavens as we know them exist. The Nazarene in Mathew 5:18 (in the very verse about the “yud and tittle” discussed above, confirms: “I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear,” the Law will stand. As the Rabbis comment on the book of Leviticus, “Even if all the nations of the world would come together to uproot or cancel one word of the Torah, they would not be able to accomplish it.” Again we are not picking a fight here merely giving an insight of how the Hebrew mind set would look at things in the Gospels and come up

with an entirely different spin than that given it by the Greco Roman controlled Church.