

# The HEBREW ROOTS® MOVEMENT

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*An AWAKENING!*

By Mike Bacon

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Discover why and how a relatively handful of scattered dedicated people is shaking Christianity and Judaism around the world. Read what the Hebrew Roots® / Hebraic Roots ***Awakening*** / Movement is all about along with some of its teachings, beliefs, and criticisms.

#### **About the Author**

Mike Bacon has been observing God's festivals for over 40 years and has had a career as a city planner and is a licensed landscape architect. As the facilitator for the successful Our Father's Festival ([www.ourfathersfestival.net](http://www.ourfathersfestival.net)), he teaches the building of commonalities among believers and furthering the message that we will be known by the *agape* (love) we have for each other (John 13:35, Matt 25:34-45), overcoming, forgiving others, bearing the fruit of the Spirit, proving all things, and having a good conscience before God—not just our potentially divisive doctrinal positions and proselyting. His inciting questions are to encourage people to explore their modus operandi, prove all things and to further one's responsibility to know their God—not just about Him—to make a difference as salt and a light and to stand in the gap for our nation.

# Preface

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In 2005 I took a motorcycle trip to Tucson on a “get outta Dodge” weekend jaunt to also attend my first ever Messianic conference—upon the recommendation of a friend. I was taken back by the number of people attending. Some 50 people had gathered to hear Brad Scott of Wildbranch Ministry teach at an inn for two days. Plus...he was the only speaker.

After meeting everyone, I was again taken back to discover that only two other people were formerly associated with the Worldwide Church of God—a church that I had been a member for 22 years (and before then a member of another faith). Who were these people? Why did some of them travel a long distance to attend? Why were they keeping the Sabbath, observing the feasts, *and the Torah*? This was the beginning of my investigative journey into the Messianic Movement, and later the Hebrew Roots® Movement.

Sometime before I heard Brad Scott, however, I already had begun a study as to which Old Testament laws were still in effect today, due to the differences in my former church. Not long after that, a friend mentioned to me that one of her friends, another Christian, non-Messianic, non-WCG man, believed that all the OT laws were applicable today. I immediately grasped that simple, logical perspective and perhaps, one could call that the "plain truth".

In 2006 a free Hebrew language class began in my community and overnight about 100 people were attending from different backgrounds. My curiosity led to attending other Messianic conferences, congregations, and searching the internet.

After reading many incorrect criticisms of Hebrew Roots® beliefs on the internet and experiencing the movement for the past ten years, I decided to write this paper on what I have discovered. I discovered that, yes, 1) there is apparently a Heinz 57® assortment of beliefs among people investigating the Bible and trying to live by what they know and believe; however, 2) the HR Movement is coalescing into a core of noted HR teachers who are essentially teaching the same foundational belief structure, and that 3) the Father is awakening, raising and preparing a people for His kingdom who will assist our Savior in implementing and teaching humanity His truth and paths of righteousness.

**Special Note:** I do not claim to be an expert in the continuing story on Hebrew Roots®. This is a dynamic work in progress paper that is updated with new sections and reference sources as needed. More updates will be forthcoming.<sup>i</sup>

Please refer to [http://www.ourfathersfestival.net/hebrew\\_roots\\_movement](http://www.ourfathersfestival.net/hebrew_roots_movement) for the latest issue. This is determined by the publication date on the title page.

All web site links referenced in this paper may be accessed on the internet by clicking on the [blue](#) hyperlink. These links are *not* an approval of all things listed or taught on a specific web site, but only the material directly linked to. We are not all perfect in our understandings in all things that one may find on a web site. We are each responsible for proving all things notwithstanding the links. Your writing to inform me of *any* errors in this paper are appreciated. Please contact me at the festival web site address.

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# I. WHAT IS HEBREW / HEBRAIC ROOTS?

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Hebrew Roots® is a contemporary global spiritual awakening in Christianity that advocates the return and adherence to the first century walk of faith in Jesus Christ (who was God in the "flesh"). Adherents walk as He walked (1 John 2:6) in obedience to His commandments—the *Torah*. This is further accomplished by seeking a better understanding of the culture, history, religious politics and the persecutions of that era which later led to core differences with both the Jewish, and later, Christian communities.

## HEBREW ROOTS PRIMARY BELIEFS

Hebrew Roots adherents hold to three primary beliefs:

- 1) Scripture is the inspired Word of God.
- 2) Acceptance of Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior is required to be saved.
- 3) Adherence/obedience to the Torah (i.e. repentance) and to the Word of God (both Old and New Testaments) brings blessings in this life but does not grant salvation.

These three beliefs serve as the foundational beginning of one's spiritual journey into truth and unity among like-minded believers.

### Basic Foundation of Hebrew Roots®

The foundation of the Hebrew Roots® movement is the belief in Jesus Christ as one's savior "saves" a person from "eternal" death (separation) from our Creator. Before one accepts Christ, it is noted in Scripture that one repents of sin—first.

**Mar 1:15 and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.**

That is no different from orthodox and contemporary Christianity. Yet, HR has been called "non-Christian". Since 41,000 denominations of Christianity cannot agree among themselves, it seems that many do not even know the definition of a Christian. Let other Christian Ministries explain what it means to be a Christian:

"Being a Christian entails more than just "believing in Jesus" or "accepting Jesus in one's heart." A Christian is someone who is an active follower and imitator of Jesus, who has surrendered his or her life, been baptized and has received the Holy Spirit. He or she is working to "put on Jesus Christ," to walk and conduct his or her life as Jesus did when He was on the earth." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mike Blackwell. n.d. What is a Christian? <https://lifehopeandtruth.com/change/the-church/what-is-a-christian/> Retrieved 11/15/15

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"A true Christian is a person who has put faith and trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ, including His death on the cross as payment for sins and His resurrection on the third day." <sup>2</sup>

It is evident that Hebrew Roots is Christian as described above and by these simple definitions given from Christians ministries. The primary difference with mainstream Christianity is HR's adherence to the *Torah*. HR adherents attempt to walk as Christ walked.

**1 John 2:6 he that says he abides in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked.**

Christ walked in accordance with the *Torah*. HR understands that when one repents, one is to stop sinning, obey the Fathers commandments in the *Torah* in order to lead a life filled with blessings and not curses. This is not a prosperity gospel. Life is difficult for *all* of us!

When the believers of the first century received Christ as their savior, they were not confronted with 41,000 doctrinal belief statements to be saved.

Those critical of the HR movement claim that following the *Torah* is legalism and salvation by works.

"Furthermore, as opposed to the gospel of scripture which proclaims the good news of forgiveness of sin, the Hebrew Roots® message is a gospel of law; to wit, that man is to be reconciled unto God not by faith in God, but by keeping the Law of Moses." <sup>ii</sup>

This above claim is made repeatedly on the internet, yet no sources are provided. None of the primary HR ministries—and any other HR ministries for that matter—teach salvation by works.

Many obey thousands of man-made laws and numerous religious laws (e.g. pray and obey) and pagan observances yet find no problem in obeying *them*. Many state that one cannot keep 613 laws (as if there are too many of them). Yet, many find no issues in claiming 1050 laws are to be obeyed in the New Testament with adherence to 9 of the 10 commandments.

Hebrew Roots® adherents believe that through the gift of the Holy Spirit, one is able, today, to pursue the keeping (we are not perfect) of the applicable Torah laws and to walk as Christ, a Jew, walked in obeying the Father's commandments. This paper will summarily document these basic HR Scriptural beliefs and summarily answer many criticisms.

Granted, HR has basic differences with traditional Christianity. The criticizing web sites offer comments that do not reflect many of the actual beliefs taught by the leading HR ministries. Would this be similar to someone labeling Christians on the basis of Jim Jones<sup>3</sup>, David Koresh, or Westboro Baptist? No one can place a specific label on any one of the world's 41,000 Christian denominations<sup>4</sup> and then have it apply to every Christian. Web sites can offer tantalizing questions about another's beliefs which reveal a lack of Scriptural understanding. Some of these questions are addressed in the Criticisms chapter.

The subtitle under *Hebrew Roots*® magazine succinctly states "Exploring the Hebrew Roots® of the Faith Once Delivered". It can be also defined as a *Return to the Roots*<sup>TM</sup> to the walk of faith once delivered *to Jesus Christ, the 12 Apostles, the Prophets, Jacob, Issac, and Abraham*. As Noah was the first person noted in Genesis to receive the grace of Jesus Christ (Gen 6:8),

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<sup>2</sup>gotquestions.org. n.d. What is a Christian <http://www.gotquestions.org/what-is-a-Christian.html>  
Retrieved 11/15/15

<sup>3</sup>Wikipedia. Jim Jones. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim\\_Jones](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Jones) Retrieved 2/9/15

<sup>4</sup>Mary Fairchild. n.d. *Christianity Today*.  
<http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/a/denominations.htm> Retrieved 12/31/14

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Abraham was the first Hebrew to "cross over", to have faith and also keep the Fathers commandments (Gen 26:5). Those who follow the independent footsteps and mindsets of these Hebrew pioneers in the faith courageously step forward in study, faith, and action to receive the call of the Father and to cross over into a new life in Jesus Christ and walk as he walked."

**I John 2:6** He that says He abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

**I Cor 11:1** Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

See also: *Welcome to Ami Yisrael: What is Hebrew Roots®?* <http://amiyisrael.org/>

The growth of the HR movement has now caught the eyes of mainline Christianity. "Google" *Hebrew Roots® Movement* and one will discover numerous web sites critical of Hebrew Roots® (HR) sites on the very first page. Search HR on You Tube and one will also find similar sites. (Google *Hebrew Roots®* to better locate ministries). More people must be actually reading their Bibles<sup>5</sup> and yielding to the Father's call to keep all the 10 commandments (not just 9) and to stop observing pagan holidays because a relatively small grass-roots HR Movement / *Awakening* is gaining attention and being written about—for and against.

### The Movement's Influence

According to one writer "The influence of this movement is working its way into our churches and seminaries".<sup>6</sup> Another writes that the movement is "mushrooming into one of the significant movements of modern Christianity with millions of devotees across the globe"<sup>7</sup>, and another states "It is growing by "leaps and bounds" with an "impact in this end time is being felt in all areas of Christendom".<sup>8</sup> Other ministries have noted the movement as being "dangerous" and "more so than the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses and anyone else".<sup>9</sup> Next to Islam, the Messianic/Hebrew Roots® faith is second in growth in the nation's prison populations.<sup>10</sup> The Hebrew language and Christ's "Jewish Roots" is gaining traction.<sup>11</sup> Pamela Dewey also writes<sup>12</sup> about the Hebrew Roots Movement from her perspective as a former member of the now defunct WCG.

Because the Movement/Awakening is grass-roots driven and has no ecclesiastical superstructure, it is not possible to gauge the numbers of people who are involved in it.

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<sup>5</sup> Cathy Lynn Grossman. 2010, Sept. 29. Most Americans believe in God but don't know religious tenets. *USA Today*. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-09-28-pew28\\_ST\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-09-28-pew28_ST_N.htm)

<sup>6</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. Chery Hauer. Rev. 2011. Hebrew Roots®—Heritage or Heresy. [www.bridgesforpeace.com/il/teaching-letter/article/hebraic-roots-heritage-or-heresy/](http://www.bridgesforpeace.com/il/teaching-letter/article/hebraic-roots-heritage-or-heresy/) Retrieved May 14, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>9</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>10</sup> Dean Wheelock Gives Overview of Hebrew Roots® History on The Hebrew Nation Morning Show. 2015, March 5. <http://hebrewnationonline.com/blog/dean-wheelock-gives-overview-of-hebrew-roots-history-on-morning-show/>

<sup>11</sup> David Van Biema. 2008, Mar. 13. 10. Future Revolutions: Judaizing Jesus Time Magazine.

[http://content.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1720049\\_1720050\\_1721663,00.html](http://content.time.com/time/specials/2007/article/0,28804,1720049_1720050_1721663,00.html)

<sup>12</sup> Pamela Starr Dewey. 2001-2011. *Field Guide to the Wide World of Religion. Hebrew Roots Movement*. <http://www.isitso.org/guide/hebroot.html>



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Hundreds of thousands has been one guesstimate given,<sup>13</sup> but at least tens of thousands worldwide.<sup>14</sup> There are, however, considerably more people attending Messianic-Jewish (MJ) synagogues of which the vast majority are "Gentile" rather than converted Jews. Perhaps the disparity in numbers is due to the counting of both Torah-keeping "Gentile" believers in MJ synagogues and those who label themselves Hebrew Roots.

Is it "dangerous" to be a moral and ethical people<sup>15</sup> who actually read their Bibles and keep all 10 commandments in the face of America's spiritual/ethical/moral decline? Dangerous to believe in Jesus Christ *and walk as He walked*? Dangerous to obey the nation's laws?

When one considers the 1500 Christian denominations in our nation<sup>16</sup> and the past reluctance of mainline churches to speak out and against the decline of our great nation, the injustices, and the inability of the Christian majority (and pastors) to stand up for virtue, why the concern about Hebrew Roots® and its various Heinz 57® varieties when there are far more important national events occurring, today?<sup>17</sup> Why a witch hunt? Especially when pastors report that the "Moral values of a Christian is no different than those who consider themselves as non-Christians."<sup>18</sup>

### Religious Success Today

According to a 2014 Barna Survey, 90% of those pastors surveyed expressed their measure of success as having the "large" number of members, number of square feet in their building, amount of dollars given in offerings, staff, and programs.

What do these pastors think of the key issues in our nation? Here is the Barna response:

"What we're finding is that when we ask them [pastors] about all the key issues of the day, [90 percent of them are] telling us, Yes, the Bible speaks to every one of these issues. Then we ask them: Well, are you teaching your people what the Bible says about those issues? – and the numbers drop ... to less than 10 percent of pastors who say they will speak to it."

"When researchers ask those pastors what else they are willing to do to get their people active in the political process, Barna said "it's almost nothing."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Menachem Kaiser, 2014 Feb.4. *For Some Believers Trying To Connect With Jesus, the Answer Is To Live Like a Jew.* [www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/161086/observing-torah-like-jesus?all=1](http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/161086/observing-torah-like-jesus?all=1) Retrieved Nov 1, 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Mike Bacon, 2014. Guesstimate based on personal attendance at various Hebrew Roots® fellowships, feast sites, and comments from others regarding groups meeting in other communities and states.

<sup>15</sup> This was also found to be the case by Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p11.

<sup>16</sup> Mary Fairchild. n.d. *Christianity Today*. <http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/p/christiantoday.htm> and Christian Denominations. <http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/a/denominations.htm> Retrieved 12/31/14 and Hartford Institute for Religion Research. n.d. Fast Facts about American Religion [http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast\\_facts.html#denom](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast_facts.html#denom) Retrieved 4/23/15

<sup>17</sup> *Persecution*. 2014, Feb. Raising Hostility. [www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org). p5-6. "The Church is silent in the face of legal/social attacks". It is not shouting".

<sup>18</sup> Fuller Institute, George Barna and Pastoral Care Inc. Why Pastors Leave the Ministry. 2009, July 21. <http://freebelievers.com/article/why-pastors-leave-the-ministry>

<sup>19</sup> Chris Woodward. 2014, August 1. Barna: many pastors wary of raising 'controversy'. <http://onenewsnow.com/church/2014/08/01/barna-many-pastors-wary-of-raising-controversy>. See also



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BARNA SURVEY Reasons Why Pastors Do Not Speak Out for Scripture On Controversial Political Issues	
%	Reason
31.86%	Threat of punishment by ACLU or IRS
23%	Believes politics, church are separate
15.78%	Told to do so by elders/deacons
13.15%	Denominational constraints
7.53%	Unfamiliar with those issues

Please especially note the first reason vis-à-vis the persecution of the first few centuries of Jewish believers as noted in this paper.

"You know, you get sick of hearing the talking heads talk about the moral decline and the moral decay and all that. You hear all this talk, it's an awful lot of lip service, but there doesn't seem to be an awful lot of people doing anything about it."—Sam Elliot<sup>20</sup>

Is the Father raising up a people from the grass-roots who are "on fire" to follow Him in truth and the fruit of the Spirit, while the majority of people who call themselves Christian are out playing golf or handheld computers as they prefer to disengage themselves from involvement in the affairs of their communities, nation and faith? <sup>21</sup> If a nation can give up their God and virtue, can they not give up its Constitution as well? Is this indicative of a Laodicean age where people have lost their fire and are neither hot or cold? <sup>22</sup>

### The Definition of "Hebrew"

Before we explore any further, a definition of the term "Hebrew" would be most helpful.

"The word 'Hebrew'—'Ivri'—comes from the word 'Ever' meaning 'the other side.' The *Torah* first uses this term when referring to 'Abraham the Ivri.' Three reasons are given for this:

1. Abraham was a stranger 'from the other side.' Born east of Canaan in Ur Kasdim, Abraham had come from the 'other side' of the Jordan River.
2. Abraham stood 'on the other side' in opposition to the entire pagan world. His recognition of the One G-d, and his adamant refusal to comply with 'modern' ideology set him at odds with the rest of humanity.
3. Abraham was a descendent of Ever. Ever was the great-grandson of Noah's son Shem."<sup>23</sup>

According to *Eastons Biblical Dictionary*, the word Hebrew is defined as follows:

"Hebrew [N] [S] a name applied to the Israelites in Scripture only by one who is a foreigner (Genesis 39:14; Genesis 39:17 ; 41:12 , etc.), or by the Israelites when they speak of themselves to foreigners (Gen 40:15 ; Exodus 1:19), or when spoken of an contrasted with other peoples (Genesis 43:32 ;

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Chuck Baldwin. August 7, 2014, Aug 7. New Research: Pastors Deliberately Keeping Flock In The Dark. <http://chuckbaldwinlive.com/Articles/tabid/109/ID/1213/New-Research-Pastors-Deliberately-Keeping-Flock-In-The-Dark.aspx>

<sup>20</sup> Amy Herdy. 2013. Tombstone Rides On. Legends Outlaws and Lawmen. American Cowboy. p49.

<sup>21</sup> *Persecution*. 2014, Feb. Raising Hostility. [www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org). p5-6. "The Church is silent in the face of legal/social attacks". It is not shouting".

<sup>22</sup> *Persecution*. 2014, Feb. "Is the Western Church a Laodicean Church in desperate need of revival?". [www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org).

<sup>23</sup> Ask the Rabbi: *Who is a Hebrew?* [http://ohr.edu/ask\\_db/ask\\_main.php/80/Q2/](http://ohr.edu/ask_db/ask_main.php/80/Q2/)

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Exodus 1:3; Exodus 1:7; Exodus 1:15 ; Deuteronomy 15:12). In the New Testament there is the same contrast between Hebrews and foreigners (Acts 6:1; Philippians 3:5)." <sup>24</sup>

### Derivation of "Hebrew"

"The name is derived, according to some, from Eber (Genesis 10:24), the ancestor of Abraham. The Hebrews are "sons of Eber" (10:21).

"Others trace the name of a Hebrew root-word signifying "to pass over," and hence regard it as meaning "the man who passed over," viz., the Euphrates; or to the Hebrew word meaning "the region" or "country beyond," viz., the land of Chaldea. This latter view is preferred. It is the more probable origin of the designation given to Abraham coming among the Canaanites as a man from beyond the Euphrates (Genesis 14:13).

"A third derivation of the word has been suggested, viz., that it is from the Hebrew word 'abhar, "to pass over," whence 'ebher' , in the sense of a "sojourner" or "passer through" as distinct from a "settler" in the land, and thus applies to the condition of Abraham (Hebrews 11:13)". <sup>25</sup>

### STOP Lying <sup>26 27</sup>

If one is seeking spiritual truths, one must inculcate truth in every aspect of one's daily life. This means no fibs, no white lies, no "it's for the children's happiness". 90% of children age four understand the concept of lying.<sup>28</sup> Who taught them? Many have grown calloused to the many lies coming from various leaders and our adopted pagan religious traditions. We should consider that this does *not* mean one may be blunt, rude and inconsiderate to others people's feelings. One needs to be gentle, kind, considerate, and perhaps, even quiet at times. These are some of the fruit of the Holy Spirit (gal 5:22-23).

Satan has deceived the entire world (Rev 12:9). Lying is deception. Lying is often tolerated by many if it is to achieve its desired goal (good or bad). This is a gross error. Many are now coming out of this deception through His grace. Yes, gay and lesbian sexual relationships are an abomination, yet many neglect the other 20+ Scripturally mentioned abominations.

Pro 12:22 Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight. Pro 6:16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17... a lying tongue.. 19 A false witness that speaks...

A message to Americans and all others wishing to discover spiritual truth and be blessed is to stop lying.

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<sup>24</sup> Hebrew: Definition" [www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/eastons-bible-dictionary/hebrew.html](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/eastons-bible-dictionary/hebrew.html)

<sup>25</sup> Hebrew: Definition" [www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/eastons-bible-dictionary/hebrew.html](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/eastons-bible-dictionary/hebrew.html)

<sup>26</sup> "Just how bad is it? According to a 2002 study conducted by the University of Massachusetts, 60% of adults can't have a ten minute conversation without lying at least once." Also consider husbands and wives, dating sites, resumes, social niceties, elected government representatives, etc. Kathy Benjamin. May 7, 2012. *60% of People Can't Go 10 Minutes Without Lying*. <http://mentalfloss.com/article/30609/60-people-cant-go-10-minutes-without-lying>

<sup>27</sup> "The average American will tell 23 lies a day". Fuller Institute, George Barna and Pastoral Care Inc. Why Pastors Leave the Ministry. Jul 21, 2009. <http://freebelievers.com/article/why-pastors-leave-the-ministry>

<sup>28</sup> By age four, 90% of children have grasped the concept of lying, and it just gets worse from there." Kathy Benjamin. May 7, 2012. *60% of People Can't Go 10 Minutes Without Lying*.

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**John 3:20-21** For every one that does evil [e.g. 'lies'] hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. **21 But he that does truth comes to the light**, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

**John 8:12** Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world**: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth.**

**Psa 146:6** [YHVH} Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: **which keeps truth for ever:**

Wholesale changes in our nation will occur with obedience and the resultant blessing just to this one commandment. Are we cursed (Deut 28) in government, industry, education, retail, services, and relationships otherwise?

Lies result in one's ultimately deception when one does not oppose them. We can become calloused to lies to the point that others will take advantage of us. It is deception by a thousand cuts which can ultimately result in physical danger to oneself, one's marriage, one's family, community, and in the largest sense—one's nation. Indeed this is now occurring in our nation's social, cultural, economic and political arenas when people begin to believe the "big lies" that are now being promulgated with the assistance and influence of the major media. People become and are immobilized and/or unable to know or pursue truth due to the extent of lying now taking place as it emanates from our nation's leadership in the various arenas of everyday life .

The more one fears, the more one lies. How fearful are we?

**1 John 4:18** There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.

**Rev 14:4** These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found **no guile** (lie—ESB): for they are without fault before the throne of God.

**Rev 21:8** But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and **all liars**, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

### CAPTURED BY RELIGIOUS PARADIGMS

It can be difficult to critically think when we are influenced by paradigms that we have held for many years. They do not just have to be religious. They can also be political, social, cultural, etc.

People are so accustomed to the trappings of what is considered religious and truth as far back as their childhood (see Ezk 14:3-7; 20:16)—not by what Scripture teaches. Hebrew Roots is no exception. Many wear kippas and prayer shawls which are not Scripturally commanded. Nowhere in Scripture does it state that the our current Jewish or Christian worship at Sabbath or Sunday Services is the "way" to worship God. The early church services do not resemble those found today.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, it is true that Satan has deceived the entire world into myriad religions and denominations of which many teach that only their belief system is true. The depth of our individual deception varies.

#### **So slowly count to 10 and give yourselves—and others—a break in life!**

Take it easy! Let go and Let God. Do not be so critical and in other people's faces. You are *not* called to be the Savior of the world. Life is tough for all of us. Growing in the fruit of the Holy Spirit and overcoming are paramount. Believers are called to a higher calling as a *living* sacrifice—not to save their own physical derries. We are instructed to be prepared with an answer. Not to evangelize the world. Only the apostles were privately instructed in to preach the gospel to the entire world for a witness.

Be very wary of those in *any* faith who require you to sign doctrinal statements, make financial sacrifices, submit to their authority not only in spiritual matters but also in many matters of this physical life; accept, promote and/or require non-Scriptural traditions (including Jewish) which conflict with or are not required by Scripture, hold a Jewish tradition of worship to be better, and accept their "rules" and administrative "policies" because God has inspired them. I would not wish to be formally connected to any such dysfunctional group.

On the other hand, where does one go for fellowship and teaching since we are all dysfunctional to some degree? One must surely be wise as serpents and peaceful as doves. If we are looking for the perfect church, we should recognize a church will no longer be perfect once we step into it. HR fellowships are also be subject to the same foibles of power and politics as the world. It takes spiritual maturity, which takes time, to navigate one's journey.

It has been stated that there are many disparate Hebrew Roots groups which bear bad fruit in their interrelationships with family, friends, and society. I am also aware of examples. All religions have small room to talk about bad relationships. Does that excuse HR by pointing fingers to other believers? Absolutely not! **We all** need to grow up spiritually, emotionally and intellectually!

As a former member of the now defunct Worldwide Church of God, I know of about 350+ spinoffs from that one church which only had about 170,000 members at its zenith and whose broken trail of relationships in the name of religious paradigms extends far and wide. There is even a Exit and Support network on the web for its former members.

May you grow in unity (not uniformity) with other believers and have the courage and outreach to gather three times a year with others teaching and observing the feasts!

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<sup>29</sup> Frank Viola and George Barna. 2008. *Pagan Christianity*. 291p. Highly Recommended. The history of church services are discussed among other topics.

# II. HEBRAIC ROOTS HISTORY

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## A. Beginnings

The beginnings of Hebraic Roots Theology is traced back to the earliest Scriptures<sup>30</sup> and to the Nazarenes of the first century who kept both the *Torah* and the faith and testimony of Jesus Christ.<sup>31 32 iv</sup> Other groups during the succeeding centuries have chosen various Old Testament instructions in opposition to the prevailing Christian thought of Sunday keeping and have suffered greatly for their contrary beliefs. In modern times, documentation reveals that the Hebrew Christian Alliance (HCAA) was formed in Britain in 1860 to bring together Jewish Christians,<sup>33</sup> and that other groups having similar beliefs in Jesus Christ and in keeping both the Sabbath and the Holy Days began in 1916 with Messianic-Judaism.

Similar teachings were begun by the then Radio Church of God (founded by Herbert W, Armstrong and later renamed the Worldwide Church of God—WCG) in the 1930s, and the Sacred Name Movement (SCM) in 1937.<sup>34</sup> Among all these groups it has been the WCG (now defunct as a corporate organization) which has had the greatest impact<sup>35 36</sup> in promulgating this teaching and the keeping of many (but not all) of the Old Testament laws (particularly the Sabbath and Festivals) nationally and internationally. Armstrong and his wife kept the feast for several years by themselves without knowing what they were all about. They chose to keep them simply because God commanded them to be kept. Their understanding of the feast days came later in the 1930s. Stephen Jones relates the study of the feast days prior to 1950:

"It was not until about 1950 that any serious study of Tabernacles was made in the context of the New Covenant. Prior to the publication of George Warnock's book, *The Feast of Tabernacles*, in 1952, most studies had been by Jews who viewed it through the lens of the Old Covenant. Few understood that the two sets of feast days (April-May and September-October) prophesied of the two works of Christ."—Stephen Jones<sup>37</sup>

This church had a publishing, radio and TV media impact that far exceeded its small membership. All of its material was given out free of charge. Hundreds of radio stations blanketed the nation with the church's flagship radio program "The World Tomorrow". The program could be heard most hours of the day and especially in the night-time hours when 50,000 watt AM radio station signals could be heard long distances. Radio station numbers

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<sup>30</sup> Gen. 14:13;

<sup>31</sup> William F. Dankenbring. *The Mysterious Relationship of The Early Nazarene Christians and Rabbinic Judaism*

<sup>32</sup> Paul was a "ringleaders of the sect of the Nazarenes" - Acts 24:5

<sup>33</sup> Daniel Juster and Peter Hocken. 2004. *The Messianic Jewish Movement. An Introduction* p12-13.

<sup>34</sup> Sacred Name Movement in *Wikipedia* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacred\\_Name\\_Movement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacred_Name_Movement)

<sup>35</sup> The Worldwide Church of God, and various splinter groups <http://www.religioustolerance.org/wwcog.htm>

<sup>36</sup> John Dart. 1989, April 1. Top Ratings for Schuller, 'World Tomorrow' : Two TV Ministries Rise Above Bible Belt. *Los Angeles Times*. [http://articles.latimes.com/1989-04-01/local/me-920\\_1\\_world-tomorrow](http://articles.latimes.com/1989-04-01/local/me-920_1_world-tomorrow)

<sup>37</sup> Dr. Stephen Jones. 2016, Jan. 7. Revelation 4: After These Things. <http://www.gods-kingdom-ministries.net/daily-weblogs/2016/01-2016/revelation-4-after-these-things/#sthash.07KOossw.dpuf>

## II. HEBRAIC ROOTS HISTORY

were reduced with the onset of its TV telecasts in the 1980s. TV telecasts ceased about 1995 when the church abandoned its core belief structure.<sup>38 39 40</sup>

### B. Sociological Context

In the mid 1960s the beatnik culture was superseded by the anti-Vietnam war sentiment spawned by the hippie phenomenon of the college generation. Many considered themselves anti-establishment and were skeptical towards authority with the results of the Warren Report, the no-win Vietnam War, political assassinations, racial inequality, feminism, and Watergate. They popularized statements such as "make love not war", "peace and love", "don't trust anyone over 30" (years old),<sup>41</sup> sought a higher quality of life, influenced the content of popular TV shows (e.g. *Laugh-In* and the *Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour*), and supported anti-war politicians (e.g. 1968 Presidential candidate Gene McCarthy). It was this "love" sentimentality that spawned the late 1960s *Jesus Movement*—a spiritual revival disengaged from the Christian establishment and which popularized "a wimpy, all-loving, non-confrontational "Jesus" who would rather hang out with the gang smoking pot than to teach ethical mores",<sup>42</sup> as well as eastern religion as popularized by the Beatles. The term "generation gap" became popular as young adults (the baby boomers which comprised as much as 50% of the nation's population under the age of 25 in 1965),<sup>43</sup> became the first generation to be raised on television, and became distanced from the elders in appearance, language (i.e. slang), politics, and religion. The 60s were a turbulent period in American History. The baby boomers were a generation that did not experience much pain, and probably expected to live a life without much pain.

In the early 70s Angus and Batya Wootten became involved in the Messianic Jewish Movement. In 1973 the *Jews for Jesus* organization was born with the emphasis on the "Jewish Roots" (not the Hebraic Roots) of Jesus. Also about this time, a growing number of young Jews who had converted to Christianity, were committed to maintaining a culturally Jewish lifestyle and sought to change the name of the Hebrew Christian Alliance of America to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA), with the official change occurring in June 1975.<sup>44</sup> Both the MJAA and the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations (UMJC) focus on Jewish concerns and evangelizing.

Then, in 1977, the entire nation was enthralled by Alex Haley's *Roots*—a critically and publicly acclaimed television mini-series based on his 1976 book of the same name. This resulted in a heightened interest by many to investigate their own family lineages and

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<sup>38</sup> By 1985, the year before Armstrong's death, Arbitron ranked the World Tomorrow as the number one religious program in the United States accessible to 98.8% of the American population.

[http://www.glendorachurch.org/articles/founders-bio/dev-study-chap1.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.glendorachurch.org/articles/founders-bio/dev-study-chap1.htm#_edn1)

<sup>39</sup> Larry B. Stammer and Denise Hamilton. 1995, Feb 9. Financial Crisis Grips Worldwide Church of God. *Los Angeles Times*. [http://articles.latimes.com/1995-02-09/local/me-30080\\_1\\_church-leaders](http://articles.latimes.com/1995-02-09/local/me-30080_1_church-leaders)

<sup>40</sup> Samuele Bacchiocchi. 1996, Feb Worldwide Church of God: Crisis and Lessons. <http://www.servantsnews.com/PDF/sn9602.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Peter Braunstein. 2004. *The Sixties Chronicles*. p16

<sup>42</sup> David M Rogers. <http://www.bibletruth.cc/MessianicMovement.htm>

<sup>43</sup> Daily Planet Staff. 2000, April 6. Don't trust anyone over 30, unless it's Jack Weinberg <http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2000-04-06/article/759> Retrieved 1/25/2015 Interesting story on why and where the phrase originated.

<sup>44</sup> David A. Rausch. *The Messianic Jewish Congregational Movement*.

## II. HEBRAIC ROOTS HISTORY

origins. Christians were no exception to this exploration and became attracted to Messianic Judaism, since Christ was a Jew and observed the *Torah* with its Sabbath and festivals.

### C. Today

HR is not following any one man or organization. It is growing from the "grass-roots"—from those reading their Bible and seeking spiritual answers and guidance and wishing to obey their Creator. There is no HR college or educational system that administers formal ministerial ordinations or credentials. There is no ecclesiastical superstructure. There is no one overall doctrinal belief system. There is no one "leader" that leads the flocks. Ministries have come from a variety of Christian backgrounds. HR does not meet the Christian definitions of a cult for these reasons.<sup>45</sup> (Please note: there are exceptions in HR as there are in every belief system). HR has a diversification in ministries based primarily on the internet with local home fellowships—which may go unpromoted.

Although a number of people are former Messianic-Jewish and Church of God, no one can accurately state that one organization or church or ministry is the underlying source of HR beliefs. It is Scripture, the calling of the Father, and an individual's personal journey in seeking out and acting upon truth (not just Scripturally but in all facets of life) in order to achieve a dynamic *personal* relationship—not only an intellectual one—with our Creator. True faith is not to be confused with an *intellectual* faith/knowing "about" God and but, instead *knowing* God—and He—you!

While attending a 2007 Sukkot camp-out gathering of about 25 people in Safford, AZ, I learned that the several leaders of that group had left their Christian churches after learning about the pagan backgrounds of Christmas. None of them up until that time had heard of the name Armstrong, Church of God, or attended a Messianic-Jewish congregation. There was not even a Jewish congregation in that area.

Being a grass-roots phenomenon without an ecclesiastical superstructure, people are bring their Christian bag of beliefs with them until they learn otherwise. Hence the current fracturing in HR.

Ministers and believers can turn agnostic or atheist (as occurred in the WCG implosion) because of an intellectual theology based upon men's writings. Growing in the fruit of the Spirit, grace and knowledge, overcoming, and obedience to the Father are key indicators of spirituality.

A general survey of the Hebraic Roots ministries and other web sites reveals that a number of them began teaching about keeping the Sabbath and festivals a number of years before these topics were taught by some in Protestant Christianity; for example, William Dankenbring in 1964, Joe Good in 1978, Dean Wheelock in 1981, Brad Scott in 1983, Bill Cloud in 1988, Batya and Angus Wootten in the 1980s, and Monte Judah in 1995. About 1994-96 the Hebraic Roots *Awakening* significantly increased in scope, coincidentally perhaps, with the implosion of the WCG.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Janja Lalich. *Cult Checklist*. [http://www.anandainfo.com/cult\\_checklist.html](http://www.anandainfo.com/cult_checklist.html) Retrieved 2/9/15

<sup>46</sup> Mike Bacon. 2005 Messianic Conference in Tucson, AZ. When asked when the Messianic Movement took off, the presenter, Brad Scott of Wildbranch Ministries, replied "in the mid-90s".



## II. HEBRAIC ROOTS HISTORY

In April/May 1998 Dean and Susan Wheelock published their first edition of Hebrew Roots®(R) magazine after they had trademarked the phrase "Hebrew Roots®" in 1994. In acknowledgement of this trademark and all the legal rights associated with it, the term Hebraic Roots is hereafter used as much as possible.<sup>47</sup>

Seeing "Gentile" Christians begin to significantly outnumber the converted Christ believing Jews in the Messianic Jewish (MJ) congregations, Batya Wootten was led into further study as to "why". In 1988 she first wrote a book about the two houses of Israel later followed by her 1998 book entitled *Who is Israel?*<sup>48</sup> In it she writes what others describe to be a post-Armstrong/WCG form of British-Israelism with "One Law" for all mankind. The book created controversy within the MJ community and, apparently, also was an impetus for the ensuing HR movement. Although HR believes that the "Lost 10 Tribes" have been dispersed most probably "in the west"<sup>49</sup>, and also keeps the Sabbath and the festivals, it does not consider itself a "Church of God" (COG), nor does it not bind itself to COG teachings. In the majority of instances I have found that HR adherents are not familiar with the Armstrong name.

The Woottens and Moshe Koniuchowsky later founded the Messianic Israel Alliance (MIA) and a name similar to the MJAA). Koniuchowsky later began his own ministry in 2000 and coined the term "Two-House".<sup>50</sup> The MIA<sup>51</sup> and MJAA organizations are on opposite poles in their beliefs on who should keep the *Torah* and the definition and name of Israel. More on that in Appendix B.

The term Hebrew/Hebraic Roots apparently has been adopted to differentiate itself and avoid confusion with the term "Messianic Jewish", although many in HR may still call themselves "Messianic". The creation of the "Hebraic Roots Network" on the internet in 2011 underscores this change in branding.

Because many are reading and studying the Bible on their own, perhaps for the first time, and coming to inaccurate Scriptural interpretations, the HR movement has been referred to as "the wild West" by one Hebrew Roots® teacher. On the other hand, another teacher has stated that "It was the wild West 2,000 years ago when Judaism could not handle the new believers in Jesus."

After experiencing significant growth since the mid-1990s, separations over calendars, the pronunciation of God's name, personal offenses and more are now occurring in the HR movement. These divisions and issues are in the process of being addressed by the primary HR ministries in their teachings (See Chapter VI: Criticisms & Current Issues).

### D. An "Awakening"

In his May 5, 2013 presentation in Peoria, Arizona, Bill Cloud, a Hebraic Roots teacher, stated his dislike of the word "movement", and that he would rather use the word **Awakening**. Scott Diffenderfer, another Hebraic Roots shepherd, was heard to use the phrase about 2009 at a

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<sup>47</sup> <http://www.trademarkia.com/hebrew-roots-78207418.html>

<sup>48</sup> The 4th edition of her book, published in 2006, was renamed *Redeemed Israel: Reunited and Restored*.

<sup>49</sup> Wootten, Batya. 2006. *Redeemed Israel: Reunited and Restored*. p75.

<sup>50</sup> Batya Wootten. 2004. Dec. 22. Letter and Response to Tim Hegg's paper "A Commentary on the 'Two House Theory': Three Fatal Flaws." <http://www.redeemedisrael.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/1Hegg-Response-for-PDF-2013.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> In 2013 the MIA changed its name to Alliance for Redeemed Israel (ARI).

## II. HEBRAIC ROOTS HISTORY

MIA Conference when he stated (paraphrased): "Hey—it's not a movement; it's an AWAKENING!" Several Hebrew Roots®/Messianic leaders nationally also prefer the word "Awakening" rather than "movement" according to a recent survey conducted as part of this research into the history of Hebraic Roots. Some fellowship leaders in Our Father's Festival have also expressed heartburn about using the word "movement".

Although the term "movement" may be correctly applied to those adhering and promoting a belief system, the word may appear to some to be more politically oriented, especially toward those movements occurring since the 1960s; for example, civil rights, environmental, feminist, gay rights, anti-nuclear, peace, pro-choice, etc. than it does to a religion. According to Wikipedia, a Social movement is "a coordinated group action focused on a political or social issue", and a Political movement "is a coordinated group action focused on a political issue." Target oriented movements may be either group focused or individual-focused—the latter being focused on affecting individuals with most religious movements falling into this category.

"Movements come and go, but when you wake up, you're aware of what's happening around you!" stated Tim Kelley of Season of Our Joy. On the other hand, Dean Wheelock of Hebrew Roots®(R) Magazine explains "...there has to be an "awakening"... first. However, many seem to be "awakened" but do nothing with it. Kind of like seeds sown on stony ground. Only when they start "moving" does real change take place."

# III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

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The Hebraic Roots ministries have filtered out of their prior denominational backgrounds to embrace a theology that includes the following seven distinctive core differences with Catholicism, Protestantism (including the Seventh-Day Adventist Church), Rabbinic Judaism, Messianic Judaism, and in several points, the numerous Sabbath keeping Churches of God.

## 1. Obey the Entire Bible

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**Both the Old and New Testaments teach that believers are to follow and obey the entire Torah** (commonly called "the Law" but also translated as *instruction* in Hebrew) <sup>52 53 54 55</sup>

Every word includes both Old and New Testaments.

Luke 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (Also see Matt 4:4 for the similar instruction).

Until the Apostles Paul and John began to gather the New Testament gospel accounts, history (Acts), letters, and prophecy (Revelation), only the Hebrew Old Testament was available for Timothy:

2 Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

**Repentance and Sin.** In order to return to God, one must repent of sin and accept Christ as their savior. This has been a message that has been taught from the gospel account of Matthew, the Apostles (Pentecost in Acts *before* the NT was written and canonized), Paul and Hebrews 6 (repentance is a "principle of the doctrine of Christ") and elsewhere in the NT as well in the OT.

Have you experienced a born-again Christian approach and ask whether you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior? They will state that one needs to repent of their sins. Try asking the person what the Scriptural definition of sin is. (Look it up in I John 3:4).<sup>56</sup> Their minds—including the local minister in the program (as I learned in one experience)—will probably go

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<sup>52</sup> 2 Tim 3:16; Psalms 119:172

<sup>53</sup> The *Torah* comprises the first five books of the Old Testament

<sup>54</sup> Dean and Susan Wheelock. 2009. *Gentiles and the Law?* Vol. I, II, III, IV.

<sup>55</sup> Tony Robinson. *Our True Freedom from the Torah Law.* 27p.

<http://restorationoftorah.org/WeeklyPars/OurTrueFreedomFromTheTorah.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> Technically there are four definitions in the NT for sin, of which I John 3:4 is the all encompassing: Rom 14:23; James 4:17, and I John 5:17.

blank as they attempt to give you an otherwise assortment of general, but non-Scriptural answers.

### QUESTION

Christians are not taught what the Bible definition of sin is. Why not?

#### Putting 1+1s Together

1 John 3:4 **Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law<sup>57</sup>.**

Matt 3:8 **Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.**

Show in one's life the physical changes one is willing to make (e.g. stop lying, killing, etc.)

Acts 2:38 **Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

### REPENT

Repent in Greek is to "think differently or afterwards, that is, reconsider". In Hebrew repent means to "return". One returns to the Father by changing their minds. True repentance results in a sustaining Godly sorrow over sins, not a worldly temporary sorrow (II Cor 7:10).

If one took a 90 degree turn of following his own mind and path (instead of a 180 degree return from where he came) from a Grand Canyon look-out point he would fall over a cliff into a side canyon! Perhaps that is what is happening to the USA because the majority of people have become *lawless*? They are seeking to "return" to their *own way* of thinking and actions which are *not* acceptable to the Creator.

Today, our nation is experiencing the curses of breaking just the basic Ten Commandments (nine according to many). Many evil things are happening and the silence of the mainline churches is deafening as they refuse to speak out. Instead of mobilizing against the broad-based evil, some wish to choose gay rights, immigration and abortion as the trigger points—when lying and the lack of integrity is everywhere. One cannot allow their responsible children to play at a playground or walk home unsupervised by a parent without fearing that Child Protective Services will be notified and arrest the parent—not for breaking any laws, but for raising their child to be independent and responsible.<sup>58</sup>

According to Adrian Rogers, televangelist (1931-2005 and whose TV programs are still rerun on satellite TV) stated:

**"...if just 10% of Christians were educated and on fire...this nation would experience a religious revival."**<sup>59</sup>

A Pew research report finds that 78.4 % of American claim to be Christian.<sup>60</sup> The 2010 census reports that we are a nation of 308.7 million; 78.4% of which would be 242 million; and

<sup>57</sup> Jesus Christ is the creator and the giver of the Torah—also referred to as the Law of Christ and the Royal Law.

<sup>58</sup> <http://www.today.com/parents/children-maryland-free-range-parents-detained-again-child-protective-service-t14646> Retrieved 5/23/15

<sup>59</sup> April 10, 2011. *Love Worth Finding* TV program. He did not state whether this was church attending or all self-proclaiming Christians in the nation.

<sup>60</sup> <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports> Between 2007 and 2014 this percentage decreased to 70.6% according to their most recent Pew survey which revealed the declines occurred mainly among Catholics (-3.1%)

### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

of which 10% would be 24.2 million. When only 40% -63% of Christians vote<sup>61</sup>, one should be aware of Billy Graham's statement that only 10%-15% of people attending church, today, are considered "saved".<sup>62</sup> Consider also Joyce Meyer's statement "that there are probably thousands of people sitting in churches every week who won't go to heaven".<sup>63</sup>

Is it because that many in HR are reading their Bible and are 'educated and on fire', that the HR Awakening influence is being felt today while many in the Christian church are asleep? Do many think that merely accepting Christ and attending church just one hour a week will punch their ticket to heaven for a rapture to escape the tribulation?<sup>64</sup> Read what Corrie Ten Boom, author of *The Hiding Place*, has to say about Western Christianity:

"There are some among us teaching there will be no tribulation that the Christians will be able to escape all this. These are the false teachers that Jesus was warning us to expect in the latter days. Most of them have little knowledge of what is already going on across the world. I have been in countries where the saints are already suffering terrible persecution...

"In China, the Christians were told, " Don't worry, before the tribulation comes you will be translated-raptured." Then came a terrible persecution. Millions of Christians were tortured to death. Later, I heard a Bishop from China say, sadly, "We have failed.

"We should have made the people strong for persecution..."—Corrie Ten Boom<sup>65</sup>

Many coming into Hebrew Roots® bring their religious traditions with them. I know and also have heard reports of Hebrew Roots® adherents *working* on the Sabbath Day. (Please note: Do *not* immediately quite one's job without counseling with another mature believer in the faith. I do believe that our Father does exhibit patience). Overcoming takes faith and effort. Do some think that there is no need to step out in faith to trust God to rest on the Sabbath? Some will not trust God to supply their economic needs, yet sustain a trust that God will whisk them away in the future from tribulation and persecution. What if the rapture does not happen? Will they abandon the faith to another new one yet to arise? It is natural for people to look for an easy way out. The only way out is through a living faith, today, which goes beyond the physical observances of *Torah*. The story of ancient Israel in the wilderness is written for our example, today. (I Cor 10:11).

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and mainline Protestants (-3.4%). The drop was most noted to be the most among young adults, yet still declined among all ages. Atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular" rose from 16.1% to 22.8% and about 67% of Millennials (18-35) identify with a religious affiliation compared to 75% in 2007. Pew Research Center. 2015, May 15. *America's Changing Religious Landscape* <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/>

<sup>61</sup> Melissa Barnhart. 2013, June 30. Interview: David Barton on God, Abortion and Why Christians Must Vote. *Christian Post*. <http://www.christianpost.com/news/interview-david-barton-on-god-abortion-and-why-christians-must-vote-99085/> Retrieved 12/31/14 and Christians Anti-Defamation Commission 2010. Oct 10. The Numbers Don't Lie. <http://defendchristians.org/news/the-numbers-dont-lie/> and David Barton 11/2007. Congress, the Culture, and Christian Voting. <http://www.wallbuilders.com/LIBissuesArticles.asp?id=3930> Retrieved 1/3/15

<sup>62</sup> Michael Tummillo. They'll know we are Christians by our WHAT? August 1, 2008. <http://www.faithwriters.com/article-details.php?id=84332>

<sup>63</sup> Joyce Meyer. 2003, *How to Hear from God*. p194.

<sup>64</sup> Note that Catholics do not believe in the Protestant belief in the rapture.

<sup>65</sup> Corrie Ten Boom on the Rapture of the Church. <http://endtimepilgrim.org/corrie.htm>

### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

Isa 1:16-17 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; :17 Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

#### **WHO'S YOUR DADDY?**

The "who's your daddy" issue starts at the very beginning in **Genesis 3:11**: "Who told thee that you were naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou should not eat?"

In other words, who told you that an all knowing and all powerful Creator later trashed a holy, just, good, righteous law done in truth and uprightness that He made? Could not this God foresee the heart of man that He created with a mind to think and reason?

As adults, **who is it** telling us what should we eat (and drink)—and what "the law" is? Is one reading Scripture on their own when religious surveys continually reveal the Biblical ignorance of Americans. Or is one listening to religious men who teach according to their traditions, political power agendas, egos, definitions of success, and sad to say, even lies which are justified to further a means to an end?

The controversial issue today for many to think about is *which law* do we repent from breaking? The **613** Old Testament "Laws"<sup>66</sup> (many of which are not applicable to everyone) or the **1051** New Testament "Laws"<sup>67</sup> (which are applicable to mostly everyone) or both?

#### **A SIMPLE ANSWER**

The answer to man's religious systems, 41,000 Christian denominations—and the increasing HR divisions—is Scripturally straightforward: God does not change (Mal 3:6). Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Heb 13:8). He has offered salvation to all since the beginning.

Christ did not come to fulfill the law so others may discard it (Matt 5:17-18). (Try explaining to a police officer that your father kept and fulfilled the speed limit and you are no longer obligated to keep it physically—but only in the "spirit") Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. (Luke 10:6 -28). Grow in the fruit of the Spirit. (Gal 5:22-23).

The world's history would have been changed by adherence to these simple answers. There would be no need for man's religious systems and the control they seek to exercise. Relatively few wish to take on these simple answers to solve mankind's ills.

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<sup>66</sup> 613 by Jewish Tradition. (There are actually over 650). Mike Bacon. 2011 . *The '613' Laws—Categorization, Classification, Listing and Applicability*.

[http://ourfathersfestival.net/yahoo\\_site\\_admin/assets/docs/The\\_613\\_Torah\\_Laws\\_1\\_22\\_15.37131816.pdf](http://ourfathersfestival.net/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/The_613_Torah_Laws_1_22_15.37131816.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> Christian Assemblies International. n.d. 1,050 New Testament Commands. <http://www.cai.org/bible-studies/1050-new-testament-commands> Retrieved 6/9/15

## 2. Christ did not do away with the Law

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**Jesus Christ did not come to do away/destroy the Law (i.e. Torah)** <sup>68</sup> **Salvation comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not by the works of the law; however, believers are rewarded according to their fruits and works.** <sup>69 70 71 72</sup>

**Controversial Scriptures and Issues Answered.** Summary answers and sometimes more are provided to those most often incorrectly cited by others to illustrate that the law is “done away with”. Reference sources to ministries which provide more exhaustive answers are footnoted. For easier reference, I have chosen to list Scriptures and issues in alphabetical format.

**Acts 11.** This vision instructs Peter to accept Gentiles into the faith. **Verses 28** reveals that this vision is *not* an instruction that it is now permissible to eat unclean foods.

**Acts 15 and 21.** See Core Difference #3.

**Blessings and Curses: Tithing.** Obeying God brings blessings.

Deut 28:1-2 And it shall come to pass, if thou shall hearken diligently unto the voice of YHVH (the LORD) thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: 2 And **all these blessings** shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shall hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

Deut 6:1-3 Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which YHVH (the LORD) your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: 2 That thou might fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and **that thy days may be prolonged.** 6:3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; **that it may be well with thee...**

What is the opposite of prolonged? A life cut-short by any one of today's maladies and misfortunes. Disobedience brings curses (See Deut 28)—the opposite of being blessed. That is easy to understand. How many curses have been visiting the USA composed of 75% who claim to be Christian?

Deut 6:24 And YHVH (the LORD) commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that **He might preserve us alive** (H2421 *chayah*: to live—*not die prematurely!*)

The issue arises as to how is one rewarded by being blessed. HR believes that it is through keeping the *Torah*. not through abstaining from or following man-made rules and traditions; e.g. dancing, card playing, paying tithes to churches, shunning modern conveniences, etc.

Many speak about "the principle" of tithing in order to be blessed financially, or sowing a “seed”. Let us not forget that Scriptural definition of the seed in **Luke 8:11**

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<sup>68</sup> Matt 5:17-20

<sup>69</sup> Dean Wheelock. 2009. *Gentiles and the Law?*

<sup>70</sup> Eddie Chumney. *Hebrew Roots® 101*. 20p. p20; <http://www.hebroots.com/101notes.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> *Why we Believe What we Believe: 12 points of the Hebrew Roots® of Christianity.* House of David Fellowship. <http://houseofdauidfellowship.com/whywebelievewhatwebelieve.htm>

<sup>72</sup> Brad Scott. Frequently Asked Questions in Lesson Archive. <http://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/lessons/>



### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

“...The seed is the word of God.”

Tithing is an OT law and it is defined as being a product of the land. That is simple to understand. Not all people were anciently directly engaged in agriculture. Salaries are therefore excluded. Although tithing is mentioned in the NT, it is based upon the Levitical Priesthood receiving the tithe—not today's churches (See *Hebrews* below).<sup>73</sup>

Tithing is a *Torah* instruction which is cherry-picked by churches for their benefit. Will one be blessed by giving to others? Yes. But it is a sin to add to the *Torah* (Deut 4:2; 12:32) and claim it is to be paid to someone else (diminish) other than the Levites and from something more than the fruit of the ground.

Only Christ is after the order of Melchizedek. One cannot pay tithes to heaven. Otherwise, perhaps every believing disciple should be a priest. Perhaps every believing disciple is (I Peter 2:9)? (Do church leaders even use the word priest outside of the Catholic church?)

**Prosperity Gospel.** Blessings are not be misconstrued with a "name it and claim it" prosperity gospel.<sup>74</sup> Of course God wishes us to prosper:

**Deut 29:9** Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

**John 10:10b** ...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

**III John 1:2** Beloved, I wish above all things that thou may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers.

As numerous other Scriptures attest, this does not mean that all will become "rich" in this age. Tribulation and trials are given by God to enable us to overcome, grow spiritually, mentally and emotionally, and to be a light to the world in order to fulfill His plan of salvation for all mankind. *Life is tough for all of us. We are* in His hands once we have given ourselves to Him.

**Ceremonial Law.** (see *Law of Moses*).

**Colossians 2:13-22.** There are various interpretations on these controversial Scriptures. Christians believe it is the 613 Old Testament Commandments (the *Torah*). Seventh Day Adventists and Sabbath keeping Churches of God believe it was the handwritten book of the law with its blessings and curses that was placed outside of the ark of the covenant—not the Ten Commandments which were in the ark. Yet both the SDA and COGs pick and choose which of these ordinances in the book of the law are to be kept.

**Deut 31:26** Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD (YHVH) your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.

Perhaps God wished to distinguish His directly spoken words to the people from those words He gave to Moses. The book could serve as a reminder that the people "stood afar off" when they heard God, and then requested that Moses do the listening for them (Ex. 20: 18-20)

Eddie Chumney addresses Colossians **v13-15**:

"This passage is not that difficult to understand if we have an understanding of our Hebraic roots in Messiah. However, many church leaders ignorantly teach that these verses mean something that it doesn't say (the Torah was nailed to the cross) when this verse and the rest of the Bible does not say this. When we sin (violation of the Torah),

<sup>73</sup> Mike Bacon. 2014. *Tithing: Are You Being Taken?* Download the Power Point at [http://ourfathersfestival.net/resource\\_center](http://ourfathersfestival.net/resource_center) and listen to the audio presentation at Sukkot 2010 Messages at <http://www.sooj.org/Resources.html>

<sup>74</sup> Prosperity Gospel. Wikipedia.

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we bring a curse upon ourselves.(Deut 28:15) When we obey God (keep the Torah), we bring blessing upon our lives.(Deut 28:1-14). So, what was nailed to the cross was the PENALTY for sin (which is VIOLATING the Torah) (I John 3:4). The curse was for BREAKING the Torah (Deut 28:15-67). The BLESSING was for KEEPING the Torah (Deut 28:1-14). He [Christ] cancelled the written code with its regulations, that was against us and stood against us (the curse of God and eternal separation from Him for sinning—violating the Torah—and not repenting of our sins) nailing it (the penalty for our sins—violating the Torah), to the cross. However, in traditional Christianity, we have been taught that the curse comes by keeping the Torah when the Bible says exactly the opposite. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 5:17-19 that those who BREAK the Torah/commandments of God and teaches others to do so (most of historical Christianity for the past 2,000 years) will be called LEAST in the Kingdom of God but those who KEEP the Torah / commandments of God, will be called GREAT in the Kingdom of God.<sup>75</sup>

*Mistranslation.* The Greek word for "ordinances" is *dogma* (G1378) which is only used 5 times in the NT and is primarily associated with its usage of Caesar's decrees (Luke 2:1 and Acts 17:7) and a decree of the Apostles.<sup>v</sup> The word decree is not used in v14. The other instances are in Colossians, and interestingly enough, in Ephesians. As we will discover in the commentary on Ephesians 2:15 below, the word *dogma* is indicative of man-made commands and decrees in Colossians. It is *not* "commandments" or "law". (Also explore Numbers 5:23).

To expand this word ordinances as to refer to the OT is an definite mistranslations. Note Luke 1:6 where another Greek word is translated as ordinances:

**Luke 1:6 And they {Zacharias and Elizabeth} were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances (G1345) of the Lord blameless.**  
G1344. dikaiōma dik-ah'-yo-mah. From G1344; an equitable deed; by implication a statute or decision: - judgment, justification, ordinance, righteousness.

This Greek word is used 10 times in the NT for judgment(s) (2x), justification (1x). ordinances (3x), righteousness (4x).

*History.* Let's see what history has to say about Roman crucifixions:

"In our modern justice systems, a parallel to the "handwriting of ordinances" (King James Version) would be a formal written order of a death sentence issued after the evidence against the accused criminal—in this case, us—had been examined." This verse "speaks of a death warrant rightfully issued because we have all sinned by transgressing God's spiritual law (1 John:3:4). Since "the wages of sin is death" (Romans:6:23), we have all earned that sentence. However, the death sentence is mercifully commuted when we repent of sin and seek God's forgiveness".<sup>76</sup>

"The Greek expression translated "handwriting of ordinances" is *cheirographon tois dogmasin*. *Cheirographon* refers to "a hand-written document, specif. a certificate of indebtedness" and can be translated as "account, record of debts" (BDAG Lexicon). So Colossians 2:14 means that the sacrificial death of Christ "cancelled the record of our

<sup>75</sup> Chumney, Eddie. 1999, April 23. Hebraic.Heritage Newsgroup.

[http://www.hebroots.org/hebrootsarchive/9904/9904\\_j.html](http://www.hebroots.org/hebrootsarchive/9904/9904_j.html) Retrieved Sept 19, 2014.

<sup>76</sup> United Church of God. I would like some information, please. In Colossians 2:14 Paul speaks of "ordinances" nailed to a cross. What does this mean? <http://www.ucg.org/bible-faq/i-would-some-information-please-colossians-214-paul-speaks-ordinances-nailed-cross-what-do> Retrieved 1/10/15

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debts"—the death penalty of our sins (Greek-English Lexicon Based on Semantic Domains)".<sup>77</sup>

"Some have mistakenly thought that the law itself was nailed to the cross, and this has been used to justify lawlessness. In fact, it was the list of crimes committed that was nailed to the cross, for this was the usual practice when anyone was crucified. Paul tells us that "the certificate of debt" was paid by Jesus on the cross."

"The "written code" (NIV) or "certificate of debt" (NASB) was a legal document that was nailed to the top of the cross of a guilty person....This document had the person's name and their crime. It read, "Jesus the Nazarene: King of the Jews" (John 19:19).<sup>78</sup>

In other words, Jesus was being crucified for claiming to be the king of the Jews.

"*It is finished*". Jesus cried out "It is finished" (John 19:30) from the Cross. This expression ("It is finished") is the Greek term *tetelestai*, which literally meant "paid in full." NT scholar Edwin Blum writes about the secular meaning for the phrase:

"Papyri receipts for taxes have been recovered with the word *tetelestai* writte across them, meaning 'paid in full.' This word on Jesus' lips was significant. When He said, 'It is finished' (not 'I am finished'), He meant His redemptive work was completed."<sup>79</sup>

Eddie Chumney writes about how the phrase relates to the priests at the temple and the sacrifice of the Passover lamb:

At the time of the evening sacrifice (3:00 p.m.) for Passover (Exodus [Shemot] 12:6), the high priest (Cohen HaGadol) ascended the altar, cut the throat of the lamb with a knife, and said the words, "It is finished." These are the exact words said after giving a peace offering to G-d. At this same time, Yeshua died, saying these exact words in John (Yochanan) 19:30. Yeshua died at exactly 3:00 p.m. (Matthew [Mattityahu] 27:45-46,50).<sup>80</sup>

16 "Let no man condemn you". (note some translations state "anyone judge you"). As with many of Paul's writings, we do not know what questions he was addressing. Somewhat like the television game show *Jeopardy*, we need to ask the questions:

1) Does each believer follow their own conscience and do what they wish to do? If that is the case, then why does it matter if what one drinks, eats or observes? We would be a law unto ourselves.

2) Who is Paul really defending: the *Torah* keeping believers, or the non-*Torah* and pagan believers? Follow the context back to verse 4 (being beguiled by men) and verse to gain the perspective into verse 16.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> United News Editor. Treasure Digest: Question and Answer: Doesn't Colossians 2:14-15 Say the Law Was Nailed to the Cross? <http://www.ucg.org/doctrinal-beliefs/treasure-digest-question-and-answer-doesnt-colossians-214-15-say-law-was-nailed-cr/> Retrieved 1/10/15

<sup>78</sup> Dr. Stephen Jones. 2015, Jan. 10. The Golgotha Inscription. <http://www.gods-kingdom-ministries.net/daily-weblogs/2015/01-2015/the-golgotha-inscription/#sthash.OhW4iltT.dpuf16>. Retrieved 1/10/15

<sup>79</sup> James M. Rochford. The Crucifixion of Christ. <http://www.evidenceunseen.com/christ/the-crucifixion-of-christ/> Retrieved 1/12/15

<sup>80</sup> Eddie Chumney. n.d. The Seven Festivals of the Messiah. [http://www.hebroots.com/sevenfestivals\\_chap3.htm](http://www.hebroots.com/sevenfestivals_chap3.htm)

<sup>81</sup> Ian Hodge. n.d. Colossians 2:16: Who was Paul Defending? <http://messianicpublications.com/ian-hodge/colossians-216-who-was-paul-defending/>

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Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you **through philosophy** and vain deceit, **after the tradition of men** (this could also include Jewish traditions), **after the rudiments of the world**, and not after Christ.

Notice how Paul defended himself in Acts when others claimed he no longer followed Torah:

Act 24:12-14 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: 13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. 14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

His critics offered no proof contrary to the fact. Paul kept and taught the Torah.

Some Sabbath observers teach that the Sabbath mentioned in this verse is the annual sabbaths, but not the 7th day Sabbath. But...does it really say that? The word is the same wherever the word Sabbath appears in the NT.

Continuing on [follow the train of thought here] "...but the body of Christ." (not an individual doing as he wishes). The body is the ecclesia (Matt 18:17)—not a select part (i.e. the ministry) of it. If it is a body of Christ making the doctrinal decision, which one is it out of 41,000 denominations so that one would not be criticized by the remaining 40,999 as not following Christ? 18 The Hebraic Holy Days are a typology—a foreshadowing of things to come. They foreshadow the reality. If you do not know what the reality is, the shadows are a guide. We need to ask ourselves some questions.

#### QUESTIONS QUESTIONS QUESTIONS

If these days are all fulfilled (as many claim)—are we now living in the millennium—as Sukkot pictures?

Has Christ already come the second time—which is what Trumpet pictures? If so, Why the millennium at all?

What about Atonement and the Eighth Day?

Why would these Holy Days be "done away" in order to observe pagan holidays and customs of which there is no future fulfillment—and to which God objects (Deut 12:29-31)?

If the *Torah* Holy days are fulfilled by Christ (as taught by many), have not Easter and Christmas been fulfilled as well?

Prophecy is **dual** in application in many instances. 20 God's commandments are *never* referred to as "rudiments of the world". They are given many positive statements throughout the Scriptures. Note also the question being asked. 21 Note Paul's own answer to his own question. 22 Paul writes about the "**commandments and doctrines of men**", probably either gnosticism<sup>82</sup> or vegetarianism (see v16 "meat", cp I Tim 4:3-5, Rom 14:1-7+)—not clean and unclean foods. Gnostics regarded things involving physical and sensory pleasures, such as eating food (which is what feast days entail) as evil. Though we do not know, Paul could have

<sup>82</sup>119 Ministries. n.d. Colossians 2. [https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Colossians%202.pdf](https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Colossians%202.pdf)

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even been referring to Jewish traditions and commandments as both he and Christ also mention elsewhere:

**Titus 1:14** Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

**Mark 7:7** Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

One thing to again remember about Paul's letters: we only know his responses to issues. We do not know the questions he was addressing.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** Only grace can save, not our works, but we are created to do good works. If there are good works, there are also bad works. As Paul explains:

**Rom 3:20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

**Rom 5:13** (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

**Rom 7:7** What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet.

In the context of Romans 7, Paul then goes on to explain that we have two natures battling between us with law serving as our reference to convict us of bad works.

**Rom 7:10-12** And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. 12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

Read the remaining verses of this chapter to see the battle of these two natures..

James explains the connection between works and faith:

**Jas 2:18** Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.

Paul establishes that the law is "not done away", we need faith in Christ that through His Spirit He can help us keep the spiritual intent of the law:

**Rom 3:31** Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

**Ephesians 2:14-15**. One reason Paul is difficult to understand is that he refers to the Jewish culture and oral traditions (Talmud) of the day. **14**"...brake down the middle wall of partition", In the Jerusalem Temple, there was a small wall; which separated the inner courts from the court of the gentiles. It is important to note that this "middle wall" is **absent** from diagrams of the first temple.

"These two courts were separated by a low wall, as Josephus states, some 4-1/2 feet high...a stone was discovered by M. Ganneau in 1871, built into the wall, bearing the following inscription... "No stranger is to enter within the partition wall and enclosure around the sanctuary. *Whoever* is caught will be responsible to himself for his death, which will ensue"—*Easton's Bible Dictionary*.

The stranger was the Gentile. This reveals the class degree of separation and discrimination between the two peoples (See Gal 2:11-14 and especially Acts 10:28 where the word "unlawful" refers to the "Oral Law" (Talmud)—not the Torah. There is nothing in the Torah regarding the separation of believers and non-believers). **15** "having abolished in the flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances (G1378=*dogma*); that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace;" This verse refers to man-made law(s) (i.e.

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Talmud, the religious systems *dogma* commandments not the *Torah*=instruction) **including** that which was also posted on the temple wall.<sup>83</sup> Note the Greek word *dogma* used again here for the word ordinances which was also used also in Col. 2:14.

The Jewish idea of "Noachide laws" that apply to gentiles/non-Jews is a further reflection of this dividing wall. Their idea that the *Torah* only applied to the Jewish people is contrary to the *Torah*. The Noachide laws represent a cast system that teaches non-Jews are not capable of worshipping God as Jews do and are incapable of attaining a relationship with God as Jew does.

This dividing wall runs against His instructions in Leviticus 19:33-34:

Lev 19:33 And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong.  
34 The stranger that sojourns with you shall be unto you as the home- born among you, and thou shall love him as thyself; for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt: I am Jehovah your God.

These verses bring into remembrance Israel's sojourn in Egypt where they did not like being oppressed as foreigners.

**Faith and Works.** Works of obeying law cannot save. Only by the faith of Christ can one be saved. I underline this to emphasize this point so it is not overlooked by critics. The works, enduring temptation, and overcoming will bring blessings, today (such as a longer physical life), not curses, and will also determine one's reward in the next life. The mere acceptance of Christ, upon repentance, will save, but it will not always excuse oneself from the penalties of a sinful lifestyle or guarantee rewards in His kingdom of which include being His bride. Nor will it make one equal to one who has been grown in grace and knowledge, the fruit of the Spirit, obedience, and overcoming sins much more in his lifetime. Overcoming sin (evil) and doing good involves works of faith, otherwise how could James have written:

**James 2:14** What use is it, my brothers, for a man to say that he has faith, if he does nothing? will such a faith give him salvation? 15 If a brother or a sister is without clothing and in need of the day's food, 16 And one of you says to them, Go in peace, be warm and full of food; but you do not give them the things of which their bodies have need, what profit is there in this? 17 Even so faith without works is dead. 18 But a man may say, You have faith and I have works; let me see your faith without your works, and I will make my faith clear to you by my works.

**Hebrews 11:1+** Read the **works** of faith of others.

Being judged *by our works* is mentioned over 50 times in Scripture.

Can a part of the misunderstanding of faith and works can be attributed to Martin Luther when He inserted the word "alone" after "faith" in Rom 3:28 ("For we hold that a man is justified by faith [alone] apart from works of law")? This would, of course, contradict James 2:24 ("You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone"). Perhaps "Sola Fide"(faith alone) could be used by some just as well as *Sola Scriptura*?

**Faith, Salvation, and the Holy Spirit.** Ancient Israel's failure to believe and have faith in their God to deliver them from their trials is recorded for us in Exodus, other OT books and in the NT. Ancient Israel had Yahushua following and leading them, but did not believe and have faith in

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<sup>83</sup> Kevin Epps. 2005, Feb. "Tear down this Wall". *United News*. <http://www.ucg.org/christian-living/tear-down-wall/>



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the signs (Num 14:11) that they were given. Their example (I Cor 10:6) is a reminder to us not to follow in their footsteps.

**Num 14:11** And YHVH (the LORD) said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed among them?

**1 Cor 10:4** And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. 6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Christianity commonly teaches that the Kingdom of God and the Holy Spirit was not made available until after the crucifixion of Yahushua. Pentecost is then taught as the beginning of the NT church of believers when the Holy Spirit was given to the Apostles. Christianity also teaches that only obedience to the *Torah* was required of the Israelites and that faith is a NT concept. Chapter 11 of Hebrews reveals that this is not accurate on all counts.<sup>84</sup>

Also contrary to Christian teaching, the Gospel was preached to the ancient Israelites. but most failed to have faith in the message (Heb 4:2). How can one have faith without the Holy Spirit when faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22?). Job, who may have lived before Moses and Joseph, had this faith in a future resurrection.

**Job 19:25** For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

The "Faith Chapter" reveals many OT personages who had faith, even though the congregation of Israel, as a whole, lacked it and thus the expression "hardness of heart". Many other OT passages describe the admonition to the Israelite nation to have faith in their God. Only a relatively few in the OT heeded the word and received His Spirit. Many first century Judeans also actively resisted the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51-53; Isa 63:9-10).

OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS	
CHARACTERISTICS	REFERENCES
<b>Believed / Had Faith</b>	Heb 11, Gal 3:2b
<b>Possessed Holy Spirit</b>	Num 11:17; 27:18-19, Deut 34:9, 1 Chron5:20; 2 Kings 18:1-6, Psalm 22:4-5; 25:1-2; 37:3-6; 51:9-11
<b>Gospel Preached to them</b>	Gal 3:8, 3:14b, Heb 4:2
<b>Looked Forward to Christ</b>	John 8:56, Job 19:25
<b>Obeyed and were considered righteous</b>	Gen 26:5, Matt 13:17. Luke 1:5-6, James 2:20

<sup>84</sup> Fulton, Brian. 2015, June 20. *The Role of Faith in the Hebrew Scriptures*. <http://firstcenturyperspective.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Faith-in-the-OT.pdf>



QUESTION

Why could not ancient believers look forward into the future to believe in the sacrifice of Yahushua when we can look backward into the past to accept His sacrifice 2,000 years ago?

They Could!

Salvation through Jesus Christ / Yahusha HaMaschiach was offered 6,000 years ago and has been available *since the beginning* and is recorded in Gen 3:15.

Gen 15:6 And he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

The ancient patriarchs, prophets, and priests were able to believe in a future Savior *before* He came in the flesh (e.g. John 8:56, Job 19:25), even as we look back 2000 years to *after* He came in the flesh. They were able to keep His laws (Torah) and commandments (Gen 26:5); were given God's grace (e.g. Noah, Gen 6:8; Lot, Gen 19:19; Moses, Ex 33:12,17; Gideon, Judge 6:17; All, Ps 84:11); were considered righteous (Ps 119:172; Ezk 14:14, 20; 3:20+; Matt 9:13; 2 Peter 2:7; I Pet 4:18; I John 3:12 etc.) and blameless (Luke 1:6) before God; had the Holy Spirit (Ps 51:11); and exercised their faith (Heb 11)—which can only come by the Holy Spirit (Gal 3:22). *In other words, they were recipients of the New Covenant even before Mt. Sinai!*

Another Question

How can one live by faith in the Old Testament—if faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit?  
(Gal. 5:22-23)

Hab 2:4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Is It about Faith...or Not?

Do we BELIEVE IT...or not...when it states:

**I can do *all things* through Christ which strengthens me. (!) Philip 4:13**

**Act 1:8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me....

**2 Tim 1:7** For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind

**Col 1:11** Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

**Eph 3:20** Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

**2 Tim 3:5** Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Please refer to the ***Old Testament/Torah 613 Laws***, below, for more on this topic.

**Forgiveness.** TV personality Bill Maher asked the question why Jesus needed to make some corrections to the Old Testament laws—such as stoning of adulterous women to death.<sup>85</sup> Ralph Reed's response was that Christians are under the "New Covenant" and that the stoning law is not mentioned in the NT (which probably would be a similar response of most Christians to similar OT questions). Why then do so many Christians wish to invoke capital punishment which

<sup>85</sup> Anugrah Kumar, Christian Post Contributor. 2014, June 9. Bill Maher Asks Ralph Reed Why Did Jesus Need to Come Along to Correct His Dad. <http://www.christianpost.com/news/bill-maher-asks-ralph-reed-why-did-jesus-need-to-come-along-to-correct-his-dad-121133/>

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was required in the OT, but not mentioned in the NT either? Is this why some consider God as capricious.

There are two answers to the stoning question. The simple fact is that believers, as grafted-in believers of the olive tree, along with the lost tribes of Israel, are "in exile" from the land of Israel and its theocratic government, and are under man's political governance—not God's. We answer to and obey God, first, yet submit ourselves to a government's law should there be a conflict. This is why the Pharisees and Sadducees had to take Christ to Pilate for judgment and could not stone Him themselves under the Torah. Furthermore Paul and Christ taught us to render under Caesar and the higher powers. (See criticisms later in this book)

Some of these *Torah* instructions, such as stoning, simply cannot be applied to those *not* under a theocratic government. (see also Torah Ignorance in Chapter 6).

The second answer is that, forgiveness, like grace, is also found in the *Torah*.

"Thou shall not hate thy brother in your heart: thou shall in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. 18 Thou shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself: I am YHVH".—Lev 19-17-18.

In the *Torah*, it was the judge's responsibilities to make a ruling on the penalty when a *Torah* law was broken. The law could not forgive sin, it could only enact a penalty. The victim, however, could exact the penalty (the debt, the compensation due) of the Judge's decision from the *Torah*, or the victim had the right to forgive the person and excuse the debt—unlike today's judicial system. Only Yahushua **can** pay that portion of the debt that is owed to God, but the debtor was still required to make a sacrifice for his offence towards God.

For many New Covenant believers, can this serves as an indictment for their unwillingness to forgive—which was the heart of Christ's message to the adulteress, Pharisees, a reflection of the *Torah*, and the cause of a statement in the famous Our Father's Prayer? <sup>vi vii</sup> Where was the man who was also caught in adultery? Why was only the woman brought before Christ?

Christ's message was the message He gave ancient Israel, as He was the God of the OT (as Paul teaches). Forgive and love one another from the heart! The message of the Royal Law that James 2:8 writes and to which Yahushua states *all* the law hangs (Matt 22:40)—and the same law He also inspired Moses to write:

Deut 6:5 And thou shall love YHVH (the LORD) thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Deut 10:12 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear YHVH (the LORD) thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

Lev. 19:18 Thou shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself: I am YHVH (the LORD).

God has always wanted the tables of the law written on one's hearts.

Exo 24:12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables (H3871) of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou may teach them.

Mat 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written (Deut 8:3), Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

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Prov 3:1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

Prov 3:3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table (H3871 ) of thine heart.

*Remember:* there was *no* NT when James wrote his letter for people to determine the 1051 NT "laws" to obey.

**Galatians 3:9++ v9-10** Is one cursed if they honor their parents? If they do not commit adultery? What is this thing about cursing? Who is really cursed? (See Deut 27:26 for the answer). **11** Only faith in Christ can save us, *not* the works of the law. That does not us give license to sin (Rom 3:31) What is the Scriptural definition of sin? (See I John 3:4). The curse is the result of disobedience to the law, inasmuch as blessings are a result of obedience. **See Deut 11:26-28.** (Is that not what many pastors teach—obedience to the Word?) Christ redeemed us from sin and the law's curse—which would require death of the law breaker.

The "law" is not the "curse". The curse is the penalty for breaking the law.

**12** Compare "live in them" with Lev 18:5 "live in them". **17** Promises were made. The seed is Messiah. **18** A promise is not needed if one is able to perfectly keep the law, but no one spiritual keep them (i.e. in the mind) perfectly. **19.** When is the seed first mentioned? (Gen 3:15). Does the book of Genesis tell about the five sacrifices, unclean foods, tithing, sins of others, the ten commandments, and a reference to Passover? *Yes.* Can sin exist when there is no law? No, according to Paul in Rom 5:13. This was all before the law of Moses which was "confirmed", i.e. accepted by Israel at Mt Sinai with additional provisions made to accommodate an entire nation—not just a family of individuals. These additions, beyond the inferences given in the book of Genesis do *not* nullify the promise given to Abraham. God does not break His Covenants, yet He can add to them.<sup>86</sup>

Some think that the law added was the sacrificial laws (as I once did). Can this really be the answer because all five major sacrifices are mentioned in the Genesis (along with the Ten Commandments and other *Torah* instructions) and begin with Able and Cain?

Some think this was the *Torah* given at Mt Sinai. If so, one is then left with the question:

#### QUESTION

What specific charge, commandments, statutes, and laws (Hebrew=*torah*) did Abraham obey (Gen 26:5)?

The *Torah* gives the answer to this hard question when Gen 26:5 reveals that the word law in Hebrew is *torah*. See **Hebrews 7:12-13** for the rest of this explanation. **24** A school master in Greek culture was a man, hired by the parents, to guard a child on the way to his destination—a school in this case. A Levite could have been such a school master. **25** When faith is come, it goes beyond the literal interpretations of the law and expands the law into mindful actions, not just physical actions.

**Galatians 4:8-10.** *Nowhere* in Scripture does God call his Holy Days *beggarly elements* which brings one into bondage. Psalms, especially 119 brings out the positive attributes of the *Torah*

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<sup>86</sup> I have found these verses to be the most difficult to understand in Paul's writings. The best *detailed* explanation I have found in Avi Ben Mordechi's book on *Galatians* and also offered by another on this web site: <http://www.elijah.com/galatians3kjv.html>.

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and its commandments. For Him to call the law positive words and then call the law beggarly elements reveals He has changed (which he has not) and giving to whim. Israel did *not* come out of the bondage of Egypt only to be placed immediately into another bondage of commandment keeping at Mt. Sinai.

Paul in Romans 7:12 refers to the law and commandments as being holy, just and good. What then, is Paul referring to in these two verses? The context in verse 8 reveals Paul is referring to the former idol worshippers. He is referring to pagan customs and days (Easter? Flora? Saturnalia? Day of the Sun?) and months of which the *Torah* specifically teaches that we are *not* to follow pagan customs in worshipping the true God?

**Galatians 4:24-26. v24** Paul chose an allegory as a means of comparison. Did God bring Israel out of Egyptian house of bondage (Ex 20:2) for the intent of bringing them into bondage, yet again at Mt. Sinai? I answer no. But did Israel go into bondage later in its history as Avi ben Mordechai explains in his book *Galatians*? Yes!<sup>87</sup>

How can this be? Is this a contradiction? No. Israel was given a choice to obey the law of liberty and receive the blessings, or disobey and receive the curses which would result in bondage. Scripture reveals this is just what happened when Israel went into captive bondage as a result of her sins during the time of the Judges and Kings, as later did the Kingdom of Israel into Assyria, as did the Kingdom of Judah in the Diaspora as a result of its continual rebellion against Rome and its rejection of Christ. **v25** Jerusalem and her people at the time of Paul were also in bondage to the Talmudic traditions of the scribes of which Christ spoke and acted against.<sup>88</sup> The penalty of death was the result of disobedience to the myriad commands of the Oral traditions of the elders (called *Takanot*— tack-AN-oat) of the Pharisees and Sadducees:

"My son, be more careful in the words of the scribes than in the words of the Torah...whosoever transgresses any of the enactments of the scribes incurs the penalty of death"—Eruvin21b

"There is greater culpability in respect to the teachings of the scribes than in respect to the Torah..adding to the words of the scribes...he is culpable"—Sanhedrin 88b

A person must not say, "I will not keep the commandments of the elders because they are not from the Torah." The almighty says to such a person, "No my son! Rather all that they decree upon you, observe. As it is written, 'According to the instruction which they teach' [Deut 17:11]. Even I must obey their decree, as it is written, 'You will decree, and He will fulfill it' [Job 22:28]."—Midrash, Pesikta Rabbati

**v26** The allegory of the Pharisees (representing Hagar and Ishmael) with their obedience to the Oral Teachings of the *Talmud* are taunting the *Torah* pursuant believers of the Messiah believing Jews (representing Sarah and Isaac) because of their obedience to the *Torah* of liberty and freedom.

**Galatians 5:1** Verse one establishes the context where Paul speaks of a yoke of bondage. This phrase is mentioned just once in the New Testament and has been described/interpreted as either one of three things:

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<sup>87</sup> Avi ben Mordechai. 2005. *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First Century Hebraic Context*.

<sup>88</sup> e.g. Matt. 15:2 and Mark 7:3 (Traditions of elders and washings of hands: See Mishnah, Sotah 4b and Challah, J, 58:3); Matt 5:43 (Hate your enemy: see Pesachim 113b); Mark 2:23-28, Mark 3:1-2 (Plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath day(See John 7:21-23); Luke 13:14-16 (healing on the Sabbath day; John 9:6 (spat/spit-See Mishnah, Shabbat 108:20) ; Acts 1:12 (Sabbath day's journey: See Eirubin 42a).

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1) Many Christians think the yoke is the written Torah. If it is, then can we agree that the commandments were beyond the ability of ancient Israel and the heart of man to keep? Some may say yes, because:

Deut 5:29. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

But then Scripture also states:

Deut 30:11-14 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that thou should say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou should say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou may do it.

Nor could John state: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous (burdensome—YLT)."—1 John 5:3. Otherwise, along with many other Scriptures by Paul and the *Torah* extolling the "law", the above first interpretation would contradict his Word.

2) The *Talmud's* collection of man-made regulations. This is in references to Acts 15:5 where it refers to circumcision as a formal Rabbinic conversion to Judaism and its oral traditions.

3) Bondage as a form of slavery to sin and its curses.

If "bondage" represents the *Torah* (OT laws), did God deliberately bring Israel **out** of Egyptian bondage to bring them to **another** form of bondage at Mt Sinai? Do you remember the *Ten Commandments* movie with Charlton Heston and your childhood *Bible* stories? Israel came out of bondage.

Exo 20:2 I am the YHVH thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Think about that. The ancient Israelites had to express their faith in the sacrifice of the Passover lamb (a symbol of the Messiah) to be saved from the Death Angel (a literal death) and to go into the wilderness to the mountain. **Then** they received the law.

Indeed, we are at liberty by being out of the *man's* laws of bondage and yokes [e.g. Israel as slaves in Egypt, the *Talmud*, Christianity's man-made prohibition laws (alcohol, cards, dancing, movies, etc.)].

James 1:25 But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

We have our freedoms and *liberty* (remember the *Liberty Bell* and *Liberty Tree* and the *Sons of Liberty*?) in our nation, today, because of the law of the Constitution—which is not considered a yoke of bondage. Is it? <sup>89</sup> <sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Daniel Botkin. 2014, March-April. "If ...Then": Using Our God Given Common Sense To Think Things Through". *Gates of Eden*. Vol. 20. #2. p27.

<sup>90</sup> Paul also speaks of the bondage of corruption of our present body: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Rom 8:21

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1 John 5:2-3 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

Also see the prior explanation for Galatians 4:24-26. v24

**Galatians 5:4** As Paul explains, believers are not justified by the law: but by grace and faith through His blood:

**Gal 5:4** Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law (i.e. thinking that just keeping the oral *or* written law will save you); ye are fallen from grace.

**Acts 13:39** And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

**Rom 3:24** Being justified freely by His grace...

**Rom 5:1** Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

**Rom 5:9** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him

**Rom 3:28** Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

**Eph 2:8** for by grace have ye been **saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not of works, that no man should glory.

However, Paul further explains that grace and faith do not do away with "the law" and good works:

**Rom 3:20** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

**Rom 2:13** (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.)

**Eph 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them

Therefore, putting all these summary verses together, one is still obligated to be a doer of the law—but the law does *not* save, nor are we capable of fulfilling it spiritually without help from the Holy Spirit! Obedience brings blessings.

**Galatians 6 :12-13** Religious politics and hypocrisy is evident in verse 13:

Eph 2:12 As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. v13 For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

This similar hypocrisy is repeated by James:

John 7:19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keep the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

**Grace.** Noah (Gen 6:8), Lot (Gen 19:19), Moses (Ex 33:12), Gideon (Judge 6:17), and all who walk uprightly (Ps 84:11) obtained grace in the OT. Does that mean grace is *not* a NT concept? Correct.

**Hebrews 7:12** This is speaking of the law of the priesthood that was changed to allow Christ, not of the tribe of Judah, to become a spiritual High Priest in heaven, but not on earth where



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the physical Levites are charged with the priesthood **8:13**.<sup>91 viii</sup> The old is in the process of passing away. It will not completely pass away until a point yet in the future (Matt 5:17-18).

Hebrews is not as simple to understand as some may think. It is entitled Hebrews because Paul is writing to Hebrew people who *knew* and kept the law. As mentioned before, many Christians do not even know the New Testament, little alone the Old Testament, nor do they wish to keep "the law". If it was as simple to turn to Hebrews, one should be turning likewise to James, Peter and John to learn what they write about the law and sin (e.g. I John 3:4); however, many do not. The *Torah* Sabbath Days and Feast Days reveal a prophetic foreshadowing of the future.

**Hosea 2:11** Note the difference between the English words *my* and *her*. They are exclusive. God does not call these days "My" Sabbaths, feast days, etc as He does in Leviticus. Ancient Israel changed His days to their days, in as much as Jeroboam did in I Kings 12:32, and as Christians have done in observing the 8<sup>th</sup> day (Sunday) and substituting their man-made commandments (dancing, card playing, shunning modern conveniences, etc)..

**Jeremiah 31:31-33** Literally, YHVH made NO covenant with the Gentiles; therefore He cannot make a "new" covenant with them if none existed previously. Logical, is this not? Nevertheless Gentile believers became part of the Covenant with Israel when they agreed to become converted Israelites by keeping the Torah. Today, this is made possible by accepting Christ as Savior and His Torah. The New Covenant is written in hearts, of which Paul also writes about it in Hebrews 9:15:

**Heb 9:15** And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant, that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance

Under the Old Covenant, the people were not given the Holy Spirit to spiritually obey, nor did they bend their hearts to just physically obey of which they could have. Only selected people, King David and the prophets for example, were given His Spirit.

The promises under the Old Covenant were physical and pointed to a land inheritance with temporal rewards. The promise of the better New Covenant is of eternal inheritance with eternal rewards.

In order to circumvent the literal fulfillment of this New Covenant with Israel the concept of Replacement Theology has to be invented.

**John 8:17; 10:14. "your law"**. One could say, "see this simple statement, Christ is referring to the done away Jewish law which is no longer in effect". Well, let us look at this a bit closer, shall we? In **Luke 4:16-30** we find that Christ is in the synagogue and alluding to who He is. What was the result. **v29**. They wanted to toss him to His death from the brow of a hill. Why would they do that? The *Torah* prescribed death for those who blasphemed (Lev 24:14-16, 23). Tradition prescribed that a sinner, like the Atonement goat, be thrown over a cliff. Christ knew better than to say it "*His Law*". He would have been scheduled for death before His allotted time.

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<sup>91</sup> Eddie Chumney. UNDERSTANDING GALATIANS: THE LAW WAS ADDED....

<http://www.hebroots.org/hebrootsarchive/0404/0404c.html> Be sure to also see the End Note.



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When was his allotted time? Read [Mark 14:53-65](#) to see the blasphemy of which they accused Him.

**Law (Definition).** *Words Mean Things.* We see that the meaning of some words, such as *gay* and *cool* have been changed over the years, as well as some of the meanings of the words used in the 1611 Kings James Bible. For example, *conversation* now means *conduct*. As George Orwell wrote in his famous novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, change the meaning of words and one can change society. Our Constitution is another example whereby changes have been and are being proposed to be made in the meanings of some words. In the first amendment, "speech" (which included the written word) may be now defined as "expression". One is allowed to burn the nation's flag as a freedom of "speech". Much discussion occurs today regarding the meaning of the Second Amendment.

The Bible is consistent from Genesis to Revelation regarding the commandments. Who is the last 2,000 years has changed the meanings of the word "law"? Not God.

**Gen 26:5** Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

**Psa 111:7-8** The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. 8 They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

**Matt 19:17** And he said unto him, Why call thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

**Rev 12:17** And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

**Rev 22:14** Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

**1+1 Definitions.** Let's put some 1+1s together to see the original meaning of the word **law** as defined *Scripturally*—*not* by man's interpretations:

1+1s

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**WORD=GOD**

John 1:3 All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

Col 1:16 For by Him (CHRIST) were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him:

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS**

John 8:12 Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world:

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT**

Psa 119:105 NUN. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=WORD (again)**

Pro 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH**

Isa 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word (i.e. **LAW/TORAH**) it is because there is no light (i.e. **LAW/TORAH**) in them.

Psa 119:142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=TRUTH**

John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Mal 2:6 The law (*Torah*) of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many away from iniquity

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=TRUTH=WORD (yet again)**

1 Cor 10:4 and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ.

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=TRUTH=WORD=ROCK**

Gal 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the *law of Christ*.

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=TRUTH=WORD=ROCK=LAW OF CHRIST**

Psa 119:44-45 So shall I keep *thy law* continually forever and ever. 45 And I will *walk at liberty*: for I seek thy precepts.

Jas 1:25 But whoso looks into the perfect *law of liberty*,

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=LAW OF**

**LIBERTY=TRUTH=WORD=ROCK= LAW OF CHRIST=LAW OF LIBERTY**

Psa 89:31 If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

**WORD=GOD=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=LAW OF**

**LIBERTY=TRUTH=WORD=ROCK=LAW OF CHRIST=LAW OF LIBERTY=MY COMMANDMENTS**

1John 4:8 He that loves not knows not God; for God is love.

**WORD=GOD=LOVE=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT=LAW/TORAH=LAW OF LIBERTY=**

**TRUTH=WORD= ROCK=LAW OF CHRIST=LAW OF LIBERTY=LOVE=MY COMMANDMENTS**

1John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are *not* grievous.

**WORD=GOD=LOVE=KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS=YAHUSHUA/JESUS=LIGHT =LAW/TORAH=**

**LAW OF LIBERTY=TRUTH=WORD=ROCK=LAW OF CHRIST=LOVE=MY COMMANDMENTS**

### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

Please take note of these following supportive Scriptural statements:

**Rom 8:6** For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

**Psa 119:165** Great peace have they which love thy law (TORAH): and nothing shall offend them.

**Rom 8:7-9** Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law (TORAH) of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

**1 John 4:8** He that loves not knows not God; for God is love.

**1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

**Matt 5:19** Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

**Ecc 12:13** Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.

Rom 3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, **we establish the law**

**Deut 6:6** And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in your heart:

**Law of Christ** (From Galatians 6:2) Christ is the Creator of all things—including the Ten Commandments and the "Law of Moses":

**Col 1:16** For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

**Heb 1:2** Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

**Eph 3:9** And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Also see 2+2s.

**Law of Moses (aka Mosaic Law, Ceremonial Law).** To the Pharisees, the Law of Moses was both written and oral, but this is not the belief of Hebrew Roots. First of all, we should remember that Christ spoke to the multitudes and the Pharisees and Sadducees in only parables (Matt 13:34, Mark 4:34, John 10:36).

Second, As Brad Scott explains "It seem "that our Creator is a bit confused about the differences between His laws and the laws of Moshe".<sup>92</sup> Whose law,..really...is it?

**1 Chr 16:40** To offer burnt offerings unto YHVH (the LORD) upon the altar of the burnt offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in **the law of YHVH** (the LORD), which he commanded Israel;

**2 Chr 31:3** He appointed also the king's portion of his substance for the burnt offerings, to wit, for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for the sabbaths, and for the new moons, and for the set feasts, as it is written in **the law of YHVH** (the LORD).

<sup>92</sup> Brad Scott. 2012, April 6. *The Moral Law and the Ceremonial Law*. Part 5  
<http://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/lessons/lesson169.html>

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**Neh 8:1** And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spoke unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of **the law of Moses**, which YHVH (the LORD) had commanded to Israel.

**Neh 8:8** So they read **in the book** in the **law of God** distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

**Neh 8:14** And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:

**Neh 9:13-14** Thou came down also upon mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: 14 **And made known unto them** thy holy sabbath, and commanded them precepts, statutes, and laws, **by the hand of** Moses thy servant:

**Neh 8:18** Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read **in the book of the law of God**. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

God is not confused. It is us.

God spoke both laws. So what does one not being obeyed (the "Ceremonial Law"), today, have to do with the other being obeyed (the Ten Commandments) today? Nothing—unless one does not wish to obey laws—and wish to have the authority to formulate their own.

In Exodus 20:18-22, the people of Israel expressed their fear of God after He had spoken the Ten Commandments from Mt Sinai, and subsequently instructed Moses to henceforth have God speak to him *only*.

The phrase "ceremonial law" and "moral law" are *not* stated in Scripture. They are labels devised by men in order to distinguish the 10 Commandments from the "book of the law" as given by Moses—as if Moses was the author, *not* the transcriber, of the "book of the law".

The phrase "law of Moses" is found throughout Scripture and is even stated by Christ (e.g. John 7:23.) Many erroneously believe that the Ten Commandments (Hebraically the 10 words or *mitzot*) and the Law of Moses are two different laws and that it was the Law of Moses that was nailed to the cross—i.e. the "handwriting of ordinances"—not the law of the Ten Commandments.<sup>93</sup>

The ensuing issue is that if the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross, why do so many denominations now cherry-pick from the *Torah* what "Laws of Moses" to keep?

Which ones that are not repeated in the New Testament; such as bestiality, bribery, blood eating, capital punishment, fortunetellers, incest, marriage restrictions, sanitary disposal, special ministerial attire, tattoos, tithing<sup>94</sup>, offerings, usury, war, and wearing clothing of the opposite sex? (Did I leave any out?) There are yet others; such as, unclean meats (even though they were stated in the book of Genesis, how can one not say they were *not* ceremonial even at that time?); slavery (remember the Civil War and the southern preachers who supported it and did not wish to follow the other laws regarding bondservants and kidnapping); and feast days, including Passover.

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<sup>93</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>94</sup> Mike Bacon. 2014. *Tithing: Are You Being Taken?* Download the Power Point at [http://ourfathersfestival.net/resource\\_center](http://ourfathersfestival.net/resource_center) and listen to the audio presentation at Sukkot 2010 Messages at <http://www.sooj.org/Resources.html>

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We have similar health waste disposal and financial usury regulations in our nation today. Are they also ceremonial? Is anything thinking, or are people just mimicking what others term "ceremonial laws"?

Because Christianity is a *new* religion, inasmuch as Mormonism is with a new additional set of beliefs, new beliefs, not even found in the New Testament, have been added to its faith.

QUESTION WHICH TORAH CEREMONIAL LAWS TO KEEP?	
Torah 603* "Ceremonial Laws"	1051 New Covenant Commands +
Agricultural Harvesting Bestiality Bondservant Bribery Cities of Refuge Clothing of Opposite Sex Fortune Tellers** Kidnapping Marriage Restrictions/Incest Tattoos Tithing Unclean Meats Usury War Restrictions Waste Disposal Wildlife Protection	All of the preceding column's <i>Torah</i> instructions are not permitted since they are not specifically mentioned among the 1051 commands in the New Covenant. <sup>95</sup> Why not?  Choose 41,000 Combinations of the world's Christian Denominations (including 1500 U.S. Denominations) whose Torah Cherry Picking one best finds compatible with their individual beliefs + man's new prohibitions against: Alcohol Cards Dancing Movies TV Modern Conveniences
*The Ten Commandments are excluded. ** Some may say this comes under the first commandment.	

Scientists have discovered that the Vitamin K level, needed to clot blood of newborn babies, is not sufficient until the eighth day of life when circumcision is commanded.<sup>96</sup> Was God just a bit ahead of human-kind scientifically, socially, financially, biologically, culturally, and creatively? Does God know best? Does He know what He is doing? Is He really smarter than man? Not according to many—if they think there is a God at all. So, does He let us devise our own man-made laws and label them as being "inspired"?

<sup>95</sup> Christian Assemblies International. n.d. 1,050 New Testament Commands. <http://www.cai.org/bible-studies/1050-new-testament-commands> Retrieved 6/8/15 See also Finis Jennings Dake's *Annotated Reference Bible* for these commands. These lists wish to leave out Paul's and Peter's commands to "kiss" the brethren (I Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Th 5:26; I Pet 5:14). Who makes this interpretation and why? (HR ministries do **not** think it is commanded to kiss. One must understand both Hebraic / Jewish and Greek cultural contexts. The similar case for understanding "the law" in first century Judaism and resulting Jewish and, later, Roman persecution).

<sup>96</sup> R. K. Sepetjian in *Fides, Scientia*. 2012. June 12. Anticipated Discoveries of the Bible: Circumcision & the 8th Day. <https://sepetjian.wordpress.com/2012/06/12/anticipated-discoveries-of-the-bible-circumcision-the-8th-day/>

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Did you take note that there are now thousands of Christian denominations claiming inspiration for contradictory belief systems/doctrines and rules of men—with many claiming to be the one true church?

God is not capricious nor does He change (Mal 3:6).

He is the same forever and ever (Heb 13:8).

Nor does He contradict Himself (John 10:35).

The misunderstanding and ignorance of the law runs throughout Christianity. As one web site writer stated:

"My understanding regarding the Sabbath in the OT is that its meaning shifted from law based reality to concept/principle-based reality. Love trumped Law when Jesus healed on the Sabbath, for example. The New Testament is full of principle-related and Holy Spirit led instruction instead of specific 'do this—don't do that' instruction."<sup>97</sup>

This quote is illustrative of the ignorance of the Oral Law. Nowhere, *nowhere* in the *Torah* is there a prohibition against healing and doing good on the Sabbath Day.

**Matt 12:11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?**

The criticisms levied by the Pharisees and Sadducees were from their customs, traditions (much later termed the Oral Law) and their jealousies of retaining their positions of power (John 11:48, Matt 23:6). Christ did not need to needlessly repeat the OT verses which He inspired or directly gave in the NT. He walked the walk of obedience in which He set and performed examples of implementing the spiritual intentions of the *Torah*.

The same writer expresses the thought of having to work on the Sabbath to keep one's job, yet expresses no faith (a fruit of the Holy Spirit) that God will provide for those who step out and obey Him. Yet they believe in a rapture to whisk them all away from danger. Nevertheless, the writer is correct in stating it is having a relationship with Him:

"People are not going to be so drawn to God through us because we follow the Torah faithfully . . . they're going to be drawn to God because we love Him and find ways to love them faithfully and in ways relevant to THEM! It's not the observance of the Torah, it's the demonstration of the redeeming power and love of Jesus Christ through the Fruits of the Spirit that will bring the lost into relationship with Him."<sup>98</sup>

One must have a relationship before one establishes rules. Without a relationship, rules become meaningless. Rules are "conditions". The term "unconditional love" is also without meaning, because with the exception of babies, love is always conditional. Even God's love is conditional. Scripture itself states this:

**John 7:39 (But this spoke he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)**

To receive the Holy Spirit one must believe on Him—and that is a condition.

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<sup>97</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>98</sup> Source upon request.

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Neither does it mean a love without further conditions. It is a matter of grace *and* law—not one or the other.

**1 John 2:4** He that says, I know him, and keeps not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

**1 John 2:6** He that says he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

**1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

People in the millennium will seek out the King, the Jew, Jerusalem and the *Torah* because of Him and His blessings.

**Micah 4:2** And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD (YHVH) , and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law (*Torah*) shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (See also Isa 2:3)

**Matt 5:18-19** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

#### LEGALISM

Doug Batchelor, a Seventh Day Adventist pastor, told the following story on his Amazing Facts TV program: As a result of an outreach campaign in a community by the SDA church, a local protestant church member questioned the placement of the Ten Commandments plaques in his church (not a public building). He spoke with his minister. The result of which was the removal of the plaques from the church because the commandments included the keeping of the Sabbath.<sup>99</sup> Transport yourself 200 years earlier into the First Great Awakening. What would people at that time have to say?

#### QUESTION

What is legalism...really?

The definition of legal is "of or relating to law" and "conforming to authority permitted by law or established by law". (Merriam-Webster). Legalism is then defined by defined as a "strict, literal or **excessive conformity** (emphasis mine) to the law or to a religious or moral code". "Excessive" does *not* mean doing away with the basic underlying law, though.

Regarding the latter definition, Christ taught the proper balance where Matthew writes:

**Matt 23:23** Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Anyone—Christians, Jews, Hebrew Roots, atheists.—can become minutia oriented and over controlling (i.e. legalistic according to the above definition) that one cannot see the proverbial forest for the tree rubbing against his nose. Sadly, this has been a lesson of history among all

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<sup>99</sup> Doug Batchelor, Amazing Facts program on AFTV on Thursday, June 11, 2015. This station runs many of his old and new programs on the same day. Plus, since I only had the TV on for background company, I was not able to determine the exact program title when it came on the air.



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religions. Rather than exercising mercy—and faith that God is in charge—people can have a beam in their eye and expect others to be at the spiritual level as they are, when others are *not* yet ready for the next level.

**Matt. 7:5** Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shall thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye

**Eph 2:8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Only Christ can save a person by grace—not law keeping.

**Pray and Obey** is the teaching of many ministries today. Obeying "what" is the controversy. (see **Law Definition**). Christianity teaches that all OT laws were fulfilled by Christ and not applicable, today, unless, they are stated in the NT. How many churches do you know cherry-pick OT laws? Christians are taught to obey 1050 NT commandments, along with submission to and obeying the hundreds of thousands of the nation's laws; yet, are taught it is not possible to obey the 613 OT Commandments. What sense does this make?

So why do people ignorantly and continually make the accusation of legalism? Because they do not know what legalism is and merely repeat what they have been taught by others, along with the definitions of such terms of "sin", "repentance", "law", "works", "bondage" and the "law of Christ".

Christ's who created *all* things (Col 1:15-19), inspires John to write:

**John 14:15** If ye love me, keep my commandments.

Is commandment keeping legalism? Is this NT "law" keeping legalism?<sup>100</sup> If not...what does one call it? Let Scripture answer the question:

**Rev 14:12** Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, **and** the faith of Jesus.

**Matt 7:21-23** Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Gr #458 *anomia* meaning: lawlessness).

Are people thinking this through, or are they just repeating the ignorant teachings of others handed down through hundreds of years of Christian traditions?

Not keeping laws brings curses both individually and nationally:

**Deut 28:2** And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

**Deut 28:15** But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

**Matt 22:36** Master, which is the great commandment in the law (i.e. *Torah*)? 37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (see also Deut 6:5; 10:12) 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (stated also in Lev 19:18). 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Note: it does not say that the remainder of the law has been done away).

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<sup>100</sup> See "In History" section under [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legalism\\_\(theology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legalism_(theology))

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**Legalism is also defined** by religion, today, as following laws rather than having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and letting the Holy Spirit guide one. As one leading TV evangelist explained "...we cannot be led by the Holy Spirit and live simultaneously under the law."<sup>101</sup> In other words Christians do not even have to keep the 10 (or is it 9) Commandments! Amazing! Is that why our nation lacks integrity and is experiencing a moral and ethical breakdown of traditional values? Does this evangelist's statement negate Christ's statement in **John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments."**?

The loss of one's salvation by living by the law has been interpreted to come from Gal 5:4 (See above). In other words, if one lives like Christ and walked as He walked (I John 2:6), one denies Him. This does not make sense.

What does makes sense is that a person *can* live a life that proclaims Him, the Holy Spirit *and* pursuing the keeping of the *Torah*.

He set the example for us to walk in His steps—even though we do not have the fullness of the Spirit to do so and fail many times. Let's face reality: Many people think rule keeping is the end all—in any religion including some in HR—and controlling others through fear. It is also a failure in parenting—when relationships with the child must be built first, then adding rules once a proper and loving relationship is in order. It is a matter of maturity to progress in one's spiritual relationship with their Creator—as in any physical relationship.

#### QUESTION

Since Jesus Christ was able to do both—keep the law and be led by the Holy Spirit—why cannot believers today walk in His steps (I Peter 2:21, I John 2:6) to *not* lie, kill, commit adultery and learn to purify our hearts (our thinking process) with assistance of the Holy Spirit and be considered righteous as the prophets of old?

Scripture leads us to believe that this is possible.

**"The just shall live by faith."** (Hab 2:4, Gal 3:11, Rom 1:17)

It is a living faith that we *can be* overcomers of sin, as Christ overcame sin through the power of the Holy Spirit (Note II Tim 3:5).

Recall the Biblical men who were accounted as being righteous and who walked blamelessly before God in keeping the commandments. If they could do so, yet fall into sin at times, yet rise up to repent and continue to follow God, why cannot we? Here are some examples:

**Luke 1:6** And they [Zacharias and Elizabeth] were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances (G1345) of the Lord blameless.

**Gen 26:5** Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

**2 Kings 20:3** I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

**1 Kings 9:4** And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments:

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<sup>101</sup> Source upon request.

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Prov 24:16 For a just man falls seven times, and rises up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

**Man-made Doctrines, Rules and Traditions.** Church doctrines which are *not* in Scripture but are man-manufactured religious commands. These include (as listed previously), but are not limited to, prohibitions against card playing, dancing, drinking alcohol,<sup>102</sup> gambling, movies/TV, shunning modern conveniences, Sunday and pagan holiday worship, etc. *and/or* various picking and choosing of which OT "laws" to obey.

**Luke 16:16.** Many take this verse to state that the OT was not talking about Yahushua's ministry; that and the OT only prophesied until John the Baptist and the OT only lasted until the same time. Neither does this verse state the law is done away or fulfilled with the arrival of John, otherwise the prophecies of the prophets must be fulfilled as well.

"Luke is simply stating that the Law and the prophets until John was all the Scripture there was at that time...Furthermore, the Book of Luke could not possibly mean that the Law of God was outdated, because it was used constantly by the church after John the Baptizer a minimum of 185 times in the New Testament writings." — Dr. Ron Moseley<sup>103</sup>

Beginning with John, "the Kingdom of Heaven" and "the Kingdom of God" is first reported to be preached:

**Matt 3:1-2** In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**Matt 4:17** From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

**Mark 1:14** Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.

*Remember:* the *context* also needs to be examined. The very next verse plainly explains that heaven and earth have not yet passed away (the stars are still in the heavens); therefore, the law is still in effect.

**Luke 16:17** And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

**Matt 19:17** And he said unto him, Why call thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

Next look at Luke 16:18:

**Luke 16:18** Whosoever puts away his wife, and marries another, commits adultery: and whosoever marries her that is put away from her husband commits adultery.

If the law only lasted until John, why did Christ comment on adultery which is one of the Ten Commandments? Just before verse 16, Christ is reprimanding the Pharisees for coveting. and In Luke 16:31 (context, context, context) Christ even refers to the law of Moses!<sup>104</sup>

**Luke 16:31** And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead

For a description of Shem-Tov's Hebrew translation of the Gospel of Matthew and how it affects the interpretation and translation of 16:16, please refer to the End Notes.<sup>ix</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Daniel Botkin. 2014, March-April. "If ...Then": Using Our God Given Common Sense To Think Things Through". *Gates of Eden*. Vol 20. #2. p27

<sup>103</sup> Dr. Ron Moseley. 1993. *The Spirit of the Law*. Chapter One. <http://www.hebrewroots.com/torahandgrace.htm>

<sup>104</sup> Some might even try to explain this as being a type of Dual Covenant Theology. Dual Covenant theology has too many issues associated with it and is outside the scope of this book. It sure gets convoluted when others try to say Luke 16:16 means the "law is done away"—doesn't it?

**Matthew 5:17-19.**

**QUESTIONS QUESTIONS QUESTIONS**

If all has been fulfilled, including the jots and tittles, why have not heaven and earth passed away?

"How do the concepts of "complete" or "fulfill" equate to "abolished or done away with?"

"And how in the world did intelligent people ever allow themselves to be talked into the arrogant, impudent and rebellious idea that God's law could ever be "a curse"? Or than to "believe in Christ" while we're ignoring His commanded "forever Feasts and instead celebrating man-made "holy days" and traditions completely steeped in paganism." <sup>105</sup>

v17. Think not that I am come to destroy (G2647=*kataluo*) the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil (G4147=*pleroo*).

The Greek word for *fulfill* means to give its fullest expression—to fill something full—as Christ taught regarding our thoughts—not just our actions. In Jewish thought also can mean “to correctly interpret the law”. <sup>106</sup> Because He fulfilled the “law”, this does not mean it is OK for one to commit adultery, murder, etc.—does it? (Or maybe it does, since we are a nation of 76% Christians and lead the world in many skin-clad movies, pornography, incarcerated prisoners, drugs, violent video games, etc. because we do not have to worry about keeping “the law”—all we have to do is believe and accept Christ as savior? I say this in jest to make a point.)

Some common sense is in order.

The rest of Matthew chapter 17 explains how the law was magnified to even include an individual's thinking processes—not only one's physical actions. Christ came to magnify the law and make it honorable:

**Isa 42:21** YHVH (the LORD—KJV) is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make *it* honorable (H142). Strong's: A primitive root; to expand, that is, be great or (figuratively) magnificent:

**Matt 5:8** Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

The influence of the second century heretic Marcion (see Core Difference # 6) can be seen in today's Christian interpretation of Matthew 17. As Alan Lee of Lightenup Ministries explains:

"Marcion read this verse as follows: "Don't think I came to erase the Law and the Prophets; I did not come to erase but to finish." Marcion believed that Yeshua completed the Law making it no longer necessary or essential for followers of Messiah."

...

"Let's say that we don't have access to other manuscripts that bring clarity to the matter, 'what do we do'? We can compare Scriptures and see how this word is used. A non-prophetic use of *pleroo* is found a few chapters earlier in Matthew 3:15 where Yeshua tells John the Immerser to baptize Him in order to *pleroo* righteousness. If we hold to Marcion's definition, then baptism would be finished. No one would ever have to be baptized ever again because righteousness has been *pleroo* by Yeshua. See how that flies in your assembly! "Pastor, I don't think we should be baptizing anyone ever again. Yeshua did it for us and He finished righteousness in that act, so we don't

<sup>105</sup> Carmen Welker. 2013. *Should Christians be Torah Observant?* 208p; p16+.

<sup>106</sup> Carmen Welker. 2013. *Should Christians be Torah Observant?* 208p; p25.

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have to do it." I think with that comment you'd be quietly escorted to the door and asked not to come back."—Alan Lee <sup>107</sup>

"Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments (that which has been done away with), and shall teach men so (to not follow that which has been done away with), he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do (that which has been done away with) and teach them (that which has been done away with), the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."—Alan Lee<sup>108</sup>

**Matthew 5:33-37** The key verse is 34:

**Mat 5:34** But I say unto you, **Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:**

This conflicts with the command in Deuteronomy:

**Deut 6:13** Thou shall fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shall **swear by his name**. See Deut 10:20 for repeat of this command.

Some may say that Christ changed the law. This is not the case. Why? Because we have just learned that in **Matt 5:17-19** above *which is in the context of this verse*. Let's look further into the *Torah*:

**Lev 19:12** And ye shall **not swear by my name falsely**, neither shall thou profane the name of thy God: I am YHVH (the LORD).

Christ is saying in verse 34 is do not swear by His name *falsely*. Did the Pharisees circumvent Deut 6:13 by meaning it was permitted to swear falsely as long as one does not use His name? Yes, according to Nehemiah Gordon, a Karaite<sup>109</sup> Jew, who confirms this interpretation from his research into the Shem-Tov Gospel of Matthew where it reads:

**Mat 5:34** But I say to you, that you must not swear by anything **falsely**. (Shem-Tov)<sup>110</sup>

A vow is not to be taken lightly. In times of trial, men can make a vow to God so that He would deliver them. It would be wise to fulfill it.

**Ecc 5:4** When thou vow a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou has vowed.

**Matthew 23: 2-4**. Could the Savior really be telling men to obey the "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men" (Matt 23:13) with their traditions? Is this a contradiction? Apparently yes, but let's dig deeper...

**Mat 23:2-3** Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

As Nehemia Gordon explains,<sup>111</sup> the Shem-Tov version of the Hebrew version of the Gospel of Matthew casts a new light on the meaning of this verse. He describes the difference between the Hebrew word of "he says" (*yomar*) and "they say" (*yomru*) as one letter—the letter *vav* (one of the smallest letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This possible scribal error changes and transforms the meaning from obeying the Pharisees and scribes to obeying Moses.

The words in Greek are far different.

**Mat 23:2-3** The Pharisees and sages sit upon the seat of Moses. 3 Therefore, all that he (Moses) says to you, diligently do, but according to their (Pharisees and sages) reforms (*Hebrew=takanot*) and their precedents (*ma'asim*) do not do, because they talk but they do not do.

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<sup>107</sup> Alan Lee. 2015, Nov 16, 7:00 am. Fulfilled? Good Morning Studies.

<sup>108</sup> Alan Lee. 2015, Nov 17, 6:11 am. Seriously Funny. Good Morning Studies.

<sup>109</sup> Karaite Jews believe only to the Torah and do not adhere to the Talmud.

<sup>110</sup> Nehemia Gordon. 2006. *The Hebrew Yeshua vs. The Greek Jesus*. Hilkiah Press. p65. A recommended book.

<sup>111</sup> Nehemia Gordon. 2006. *The Hebrew Yeshua vs. The Greek Jesus*. Hilkiah Press. p48

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The word "tradition" in Matt 15:3 is translated *takanot* in the Shem-Tov version. Let's see that verse and how it relates to Matt 23:2-3 and how it is quoted from Isaiah 29:13

**Matt 15:3** But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition (*takanot*)?

**Isa 29:13** And the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw nigh unto me, and with their mouth and with their lips to honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men which hath been taught them; (ASV)

**Matt 15:6** ... Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

**New Testament Law: 1050 Laws?!** The NT letter writings comprise **1050** laws (including the Ten Commandments) of which denominations *may* require the obedience to all of them.<sup>112</sup>

These doctrines established by Christian ministers are not Scripturally commanded—much like the Jewish *Talmud (the Oral Law)* established and written by Jewish Rabbis and of which Christ either broke and/or otherwise referenced in the New Testament. On the other hand, it has been discovered that Christ did adhere to some Rabbinic Oral commands,<sup>113</sup> perhaps out of courtesy and because they were common sense, but *not* as a *requirement*—and provided they were not a yoke of bondage.

Does this mean He was subject to Rabbinic Law? No. Remember He created the *Torah*.

By sheer simple numbers alone, one can determine that 613 is way less than 1050. (Actually 1051 when the Paul and Peter instruct believers to greet each other with a "holy kiss". To exclude this NT commandment to kiss is to cherry-pick what one wishes to believe).

I would therefore have to beg to differ with a leading TV evangelist's statement of "...we cannot be led by the Holy Spirit and live simultaneously under the law." Can we live the law perfectly? No. But does that mean we are not able to keep any of the commandments at any time. If not, why are so many concerned about the murders, stealing, and adultery occurring in our nation if we are not able to live by any laws?

Please note, however, that this does not mean we live in abject fear each day of breaking some aspect of His law. We live by faith. He knows we are not perfect.

One would think that more people reading their Bibles independently, being obedient to ethical and moral Scriptural laws, the nation's laws, changing their lives for the better and loving their neighbor as themselves would cause joy in the nation's churches—rather than being labeled "dangerous". Go figure. Perhaps it is "dangerous" to the nation's churches and its thousands of Christian denominations to see a grass-roots movement without the "churches" oversight and control? Especially when tithing is no longer applicable *today* and that money train is not available.

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<sup>112</sup> <http://www.cai.org/bible-studies/1050-new-testament-commands> Retrieved 6/9/15 See also Finis Jennings Dake's *Annotated Reference Bible* for these commands. These lists wish to leave out Paul's and Peter's commands to "kiss" the brethren (I Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Th 5:26; I Pet 5:14). Who makes this interpretation and why? (HR ministries do **not** think it is commanded to kiss. One must understand both Hebraic / Jewish and Greek cultural contexts. The similar case for understanding "the law" in first century Judaism and resulting Jewish and, later, Roman persecution).

<sup>113</sup> Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian). n.d. The Oral Law (Torah Shebaal Peh) Chapter: Yeshua and The Oral Law. [http://www.betemunah.org/orallaw.html#\\_Toc390097244](http://www.betemunah.org/orallaw.html#_Toc390097244) Retrieved 1/14/15



### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

**Old Testament/Torah 613 Laws.** The Jewish *Talmud* counts 613 Torah laws which can be grouped into 248 "positive" and 365 "negative" (i.e. do's and don'ts) *mitzvot*. Christianity teaches that these *Torah* laws have been done away and also that it is not possible today to keep these 613 laws.

Ancient Israel had Yahushua following and leading them, but did not believe and have faith in the signs that they were given.

**Num 14:11** And YHVH (the LORD) said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have showed among them?

**1 Cor 10:4** And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Prior to 1948 Christianity taught that Jesus must accept Christ before they could return to the land. The establishment of the State of Israel changed their thinking. But then a countdown of seven years started from 1948. When 1955 came and went, church thinking had to go another change. A good number of the 613 *Torah* instructions are **not** applicable today, because of the lack of a Temple, the exile (Diaspora) of Israel about and later Judah (because of their sins), the resulting lack of the theocratic government, the return of Jesus (called Yeshua, Yahushua, etc. in Hebrew<sup>114</sup>), the precedence of local, state, and/or national laws, and/or the applicability to only specific groups of people: (e.g. kings, priests, men, women, widows, children, etc.)

Does this mean that we should observe those commands that apply to others or to a non-existent temple? No. Israel has been sent in exile and has not returned to the land according to Orthodox Judaism and those holding to Two-House Theology. Furthermore, Israel is a secular nation today, does not observe the *Torah* nor believes in Christ. They also find the *Talmud* too difficult to follow.

Do the following statements ring a bell?

**Act 15:10** Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

**Matt 23:4** For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

Should we stone guilty people today, some might honestly or sarcastically ask? No. Even the priests in Jerusalem could not stone Christ because they were under Roman law in which Pilate had to make a ruling. Grafted in believers who become a part of spiritual Israel are in exile and are subject to the laws of the nation that they are living.<sup>115</sup> This is what is meant that some *Torah* instructions (commonly termed "laws") are not applicable today. That is not hard to understand, is it?

**No Double Standards.** Granted there are some interpretative issues for a number of the instructions, such as when it comes to the observance of the Biblical festivals today. One thing

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<sup>114</sup> Gen 49:18 I have waited for your salvation (H3444=Yeshua, Yehusha, etc.) O YHVH (LORD). Yeshua means "YHVH Saves" or YHVH is Salvation"

<sup>115</sup> Special Note: Where government laws conflict with Scriptural teachings, believers are sojourners and/or exiled in another's land. We are instructed to submit to that government's authority and its penalties and live in peace with our neighbor. That does not mean changing one's Scriptural beliefs in God to worship another God (physical or spiritual).



### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

remains clear, however, God is *not* capricious nor does he have a double standard for Jews (i.e. Israelites) and Gentiles. There is no Sunday worship, eating unclean foods, and Gentile gates in the New Jerusalem.

A house divided cannot stand. God did not send ancient Israel into captivity for *breaking* His laws (Jer 16:10-11), only to whimsically change His mind so today's believers in Christ do *not* need to obey them. Will the ancient Israelites at the second resurrection think it was fair to them? Plus the fact that 41,000 denomination religions and traditions of men all differ due to interpretations. There has to be good logical answers built on Scriptural truths, not just good feelings built on a white bearded man in a red suit, a bunny bearing eggs, and fearing the Jewish and Roman persecutions to then establish a new religion.

**Romans 10:4.** "Christ is the end of the law" would contradict Rom 3:3 "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." The Greek word, *telos*, translated "end" may also mean the *goal*, or "the aim or purpose" of a thing" (*Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 1985, "End, Ending").

"in English, end has two meanings. The first is termination, which is the majority usage of the word in English...However, we also have the phrases such as "the ends do not justify the means". In this case, the lesser used meaning is that of goal which applies in both Greek and English." <sup>116</sup>

Consider James 5:11 which uses the same Greek word *telos*. Does this mean that the Lord no longer exists? <sup>117</sup>

**Jas 5:11** Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end (G5056=*telos*) of the Lord;...

Nor does charity end:

**1 Tim 1:5** Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

**Salvation.** The feast days, particularly the Eighth Day, teach that salvation is not limited to those who obey the *Torah*. Keeping the *Torah* brings *blessings*—not salvation. Salvation comes through the Savior of the World. Not keeping *Torah* brings curses. It is a choice. Nevertheless, it is wrong for Hebrew Roots® adherents to think Christians will not be saved—they, ultimately, *will* be! One must consider the messages to all the churches in Revelation (particularly Rev 3:16) and:

**Mat 5:18-19** For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

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<sup>116</sup> Carmen Welker. 2013. *Should Christians be Torah Observant?* 208p; p25.

<sup>117</sup> See also I Tim 1:5, Rom 6:22, I Pet 1:9 where *telos* is also translated as "end". The House of David offers a deeper analysis on their web site: <http://houseofdauidfellowship.com/pdfs/19feb2011.pdf>

**Talmud.** The Jewish *Talmud* is today also called the "Oral Law". It is a multi-volume set that totals 6,200 pages in standard print. The *Talmud* discusses Scriptural interpretations, customs and traditions formalized into laws, new Rabbinic decrees with no Scriptural basis, or prior deeds, actions, and stories as a basis for yet other new commands.

The *Talmud* contains commands *not* recorded in the written *Torah*, but which were said to be orally transmitted secretly to God to Moses and later to Joshua and to the Levites generation after generation.<sup>118 119</sup> During the first

century the Oral Law was referred to in the New Testament as the tradition of men both Jewish (Mark 7:8) and either Jewish or secular (Col 2:8), and traditions of the elders (Matt 15:2). Many Christians are not aware of the *Talmud* and can confuse these traditions mentioned in the New Testament as being part of the "written" *Torah*.

The Gospels record that Christ broke a number of the these traditions. (See *Talmud* and the *takanot* in the New Testament at right) On the other hand, it has been discovered that Christ did adhere to some Rabbinic Oral commands, perhaps out of courtesy because they were common sense relationship rules of the Jewish culture, but *not* as a requirement—and provided they were not a yoke of bondage.<sup>120</sup> Does this mean He was subject to Rabbinic Law? No. Remember...He created the *Torah*.

Following the destruction of the 2nd Temple in 70 AD and the Jewish Diaspora, these customs and traditions were placed into written form and became the *Talmud*.<sup>121</sup> The Jewish people consider the " *Torah*" as being *both* the written and oral. Quoting the written *Torah* is not necessary, because if it is in the Oral *Torah*, it *is* "*Torah*". Many Jews, today, believe that the written OT is not comprehensible without the Oral Tradition.<sup>122</sup>

**The TALMUD and the *takanot* in the NEW TESTAMENT**

**Four Days:** John 11:39—Beresh. Rabba, folio 114c, Tractate Smachot, Yebamoth, folio 120a, 121b, 121b. Yebamoth, folio 120a/Maimonides in Gerushin, cap. 13, from John Lightfoot, Vol. 3, p. 367

**Hate your enemy:** Matt 5:43— Pesahim 113b.

**Healing on the Sabbath day:** Luke 13:14-16— Babylonian Talmud: Tractate Shabbath, Folio 111a

**Plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath day:** Mark 2:23-28, Mark 3:1-2. See John 7:21-23

**Sabbath day's journey:** Acts 1:12— Eirubin 42a.

**Spat/spit:** John 9:6—Mishnah, Shabbat 108:20

**Traditions of elders and**

**Washings of hands:** Matt. 15:2 and Mark 7:3—Mishnah, Sotah 4b and Challah, J, 58:3. Kitzur Shulchan Aruch §40

**Unlawful for a Jew to keep company:** Acts 10:28—Babylonian Talmud, Abodah Zarah, 31b.

<sup>118</sup> Exodus Rabbah §47:1

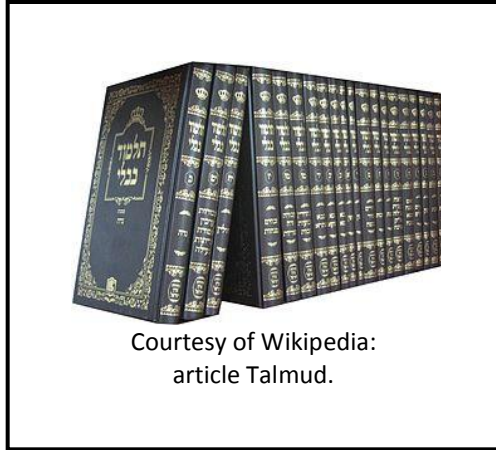
<sup>119</sup> Exodus §Rabbah 47:1§

<sup>120</sup> Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian). n.d. The Oral Law (Torah Shebaal Peh) Chapter: Yeshua and The Oral Law. [http://www.betemunah.org/orallaw.html#\\_Toc390097244](http://www.betemunah.org/orallaw.html#_Toc390097244) Retrieved 1/14/15

<sup>121</sup> The Thirty-nine Melachot (works) Forbidden on Shabbat Shabbath 73a. If you are in Jerusalem, you may notice at a hotel that pressing an elevator button may be considered "kindling a fire".

<sup>122</sup> *The Indispensable Oral Law.* <http://www.beingjewish.com/mesorah/oral-imperative.html>

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The *Talmud* is adhered to by many of the Jewish faith but not Hebrew Roots®. Nor do all Jews recognize the *Talmud* as a spiritual authority. The Karaite Jews, for example, only recognize the what we call the Old Testament as their authority.<sup>123</sup>

The New Testament only uses the Greek word *nomos* for law.

Also see Chapter IV Hebraic Roots Ministries Commonalities.

#### QUESTION

Which law is Paul and others referring to: the *Talmud* or the *Torah*?

**Ten Commandments.** References to the Ten Commandments and many other *Torah* instructions (including the Sabbath, sacrifices, a form of tithing, etc) are given in Genesis. These may demonstrate either that 1) man created a worship system, or 2) that more probably God gave numerous instructions (Gen 26:5) to Abraham and probably to humanity (which subsequently lost or destroyed them—intentionally or otherwise), prior to the selection of Abraham and Israel as His people in Exodus and the formal giving and expansion of His *Torah* from a family to entire nation as the book of Exodus records.

This answers in part the issue promulgated by some critics that the *Torah* was based on earlier secular laws—such as Hammurabi. Historic records and libraries have been intentionally destroyed throughout human history. We need to realize that politics, power, human ego, and the ability to eradicate writings (and burn Elvis Presley records) have not changed throughout recorded history. Human nature has not changed. Yet how many people think otherwise?

**Torah.** The first five books of the Old Testament. In Hebrew *Torah* primarily means *instruction* or *teaching*—and is also translated as "law"—and includes the Ten Commandments (In Hebrew, the 10 words or *mitzvot*). It is a guide to Gods righteousness.

Pro 1:8 My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

Keeping the *Torah* cannot make one perfect. One cannot of themselves keep the spiritual aspects of the *Torah* because of the nature of our being (see Romans 7). Pursuing obedience sets one apart (i.e. the meaning of the word *holy*).<sup>124</sup>

**Under the Law.** What law?<sup>125</sup> The written law (the *Torah*)? The Oral Law (the *Talmud*, i.e. Jewish customs and traditions)? Those NT commands and teachings stated by Jesus Christ? The

<sup>123</sup> The three primary denominations in Judaism are: Orthodox, Conservative, and Reformed (liberal) along with other smaller sects, such as Karaite and Reconstructionist.

<sup>124</sup> John Parsons. Hebrew Word of the Week: *Kadash*. Hebrew for Christians [http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Glossary/Word\\_of\\_the\\_Week/Archived/Kadash/kadash.html](http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Glossary/Word_of_the_Week/Archived/Kadash/kadash.html) Retrieved 2/16/15

<sup>125</sup> 119 Ministries. n. d. Don't Be Under the Law! (Romans 6:14) [https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/](https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/)

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NT teachings and commands later given by the Apostles? The commands (e.g. no dancing, card playing, etc) of Christian Church traditions and others?<sup>126</sup> Imagine the United States being governed not by a Constitution, but personal letters written by Colonial Revolutionary War and other leaders.

Both NT and OT is *all* the Word of God.

2 Tim 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Timothy only had the OT at that time. The NT was not yet compiled.

*Under the law* means succumbing to the penalties (i.e. curses) of the law if one breaks the law. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law—death. We use the similar expression today if one breaks the law. Is one "under the law" when he breaks the speed limit? Yes.

One must also be cognizant of **Marcion's** considerable influence as Christianity acquiesced and accepted a number of his teachings. (See Core Difference #6)

***Yoke of Bondage***. See Galatians 5: 1-3.

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<filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Dont%20Be%20Under%20the%20Law.pdf>

<sup>126</sup> Dean and Susan Wheelock. 2009. 'Which Law?' 16p.

<http://www.hebrewroots.net/hebrewroots/articles/gentiles+and+the+law.asp>

### 3. The Talmud and Pagan Traditions are not followed.

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**Jewish Oral Law (the Talmud) is *not* considered Holy Scripture to be obeyed,<sup>127</sup> nor are Jewish traditions<sup>128</sup> and many Christian traditions.<sup>129</sup> There is some value to be found in many teachings, historic and contemporary; however, as long as they do not conflict with Scripture.<sup>130</sup>**

Investigate the many Rabbinic *do's and don'ts* that are given in the *Talmud (the Oral Law)* in Orthodox Judaism.<sup>131</sup> For example, Scripture says very little on how to keep the Sabbath in comparison to the Talmud.<sup>132</sup>

"For the State of Israel, Rabbinic Judaism is the reason why there is a secular state and not a true Torah state. Vast numbers of Israelis have concluded that the Torah is impossible to keep, because they have been told that the only way to keep Torah is through the Rabbinic halacha".—Avi ben Mordechai<sup>133</sup>

"A certain heathen once came before Shammai and asked him, 'How many Torahs, [i.e. Torahs] have you?' 'Two,' he replied: 'The Written Torah and the Oral Torah.' — Babylonian Talmud at tractate Shabbat 31a.<sup>134</sup>

*Halacha* is a Hebrew word meaning "the path that one walks".

The 6,200 page *Talmud/Oral Torah* is the ***yoke of bondage*** that is being referred to—***not*** the written *Torah* (i.e. the Old Testament laws of which many cherry pick to obey). See Rom 10:1-4 where Paul speaks of the Jew's Israel's righteousness which they based on man's righteousness—not God's righteousness (v4 and Psalm 119:172). (See ***Yoke of Bondage*** above for additional insight).

***Acts 15:5 Circumcision.*** In Acts 15:5 where circumcision is addressed, it was not just a matter of physical circumcision (which Paul *also* preached—Gal 5:11), but a term which expressed a formal Rabbinic conversion to Judaism with a rite of circumcision and embracing the Oral Law and Rabbinic authority. Note Acts 15:1:

**“And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.”**

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<sup>127</sup> Dean and Susan Wheelock. 2009. 'Which Law?' 16p.

<http://www.hebrewroots.net/hebrewroots/articles/gentiles+and+the+law.asp>

<sup>128</sup> Bill Cloud, *Question: What about Jewish Customs?* <http://www.billcloud.com/faq.php>

<sup>129</sup> Sola Scriptura in *Wikipedia*. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sola\\_Scriptura](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sola_Scriptura)

<sup>130</sup> John Lightfoot. *A Commentary on the New Testament From The Talmud and Hebraica*. "John Lightfoot (1602-1675) was an English churchman, rabbinical scholar, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and Master of St Catharine's College, Cambridge. This series of books was probably his most famous written works, and the four volumes were published from 1658-1674. From a review posted on Amazon. A Messianic-Jew stated "This set is interesting, but dripping with anti-Semitic rhetoric...". The book is available free on these web sites: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/lightfoot-new-testament/> [http://philologos.org/\\_eb-ij/](http://philologos.org/_eb-ij/)

<sup>131</sup> Dean and Susan Wheelock. 2009. *What Law?* p15.

<sup>132</sup> The Thirty-nine Melachot (works) Forbidden on Shabbat Shabbath 73a. If you are in Jerusalem, you may notice at a hotel that pressing an elevator button may be considered "kindling a fire".

<sup>133</sup> Avi ben Mordechai. 2005. *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First Century Hebraic Context*. p290.

<sup>134</sup> Avi ben Mordechai. 2005. *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First Century Hebraic Context*. p270.

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Note the phrase "after the custom of Moses" does not mean or say "obedience to the *Torah*". These Jews were teaching that circumcision was required *to be saved*. Keeping the law cannot save anyone! This is explicitly stated in verses Acts 15:11 and Gal 2:16

**Acts 15:11** But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

**Gal 2:16** ... that we might be justified by the faith of Messiah, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Avi Ben Mordechai writes:

"It already had been determined, in the days of Hillel and Shammai, two generations before Paul, that only through Pharisaic decrees and works of the law, could Gentiles be made to qualify for the blessings of Avraham".<sup>135</sup>

These Jews advocating circumcision did not keep the law as Paul further explains in Galatians 6:12-13:

**Gal 6:12-13** As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Messiah. **13** For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

Is this not what Christ said as well?

**John 7:19** Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keep the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

The Jews wished to glory in the flesh of another Greek convert to Judaism and the Rabbinic Authorities. The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:6) did **not** place circumcision as being *required* to attend a Jewish synagogue or to be a convert. Nor did it require or believe in the yoke of the Oral Law that "**neither their fathers nor we were able to bear**" (Acts 15:10).

**Matthew 23:4-5a** "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. **5** But all their works they do for to be seen of men.

**Acts 15:20.** The context of v20 is v5 and v10 (see Galatians 5:1-3 also). Stop. *Critically think* this through. OK? If Gentiles were told to *only* obey four (4) things in Acts 15; therefore, Gentiles are not bound by any other of the 10 commandments and nothing else? Huh? What do I mean? You may say that the rest of the New Testament teaches otherwise. What New Testament? There was **no** New Testament until years later—when it was canonized. Does one sense a contradiction *based* upon how many interpret Acts 15? *Yes!*

One cannot tell Gentiles to do *\*only\** 4 things and then say...but "that is not what it means". Many skip over the context of Acts 15:21 (Maybe because a Levitical Moses has something to do with it?) Read this verse for yourself where the Gentiles were told to go and be taught. <sup>x</sup> (See ***Yoke of Bondage*** above for additional insight).

Regarding these four commands, Tim Hegg has this to say:

"I have shown elsewhere that viewing the Four Prohibitions as representative of the so-called Noachide Laws (a common explanation) is unfounded. Nor can the choice of these four stipulations be adequately explained by appeal to groupings of laws in Leviticus or to those commandments which, in rabbinic *halachah*, must be obeyed even at pain of death (no idolatry, no incest [includes adultery], no murder). The most adequate explanation for the Four Prohibitions is that they prohibit common practices

<sup>135</sup> Avi ben Mordechai 2005. *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First Century Hebraic Context*. p270.



### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

associated with the pagan temples and were therefore understood as such (without further explanation), since Gentiles with a history in the pagan temples would immediately recognize the association.

So the primary purpose of the Four Prohibitions was to assure the believing Jewish community that the believing Gentiles had made a clear and permanent break with their former idolatrous practices".<sup>136</sup>

A thinking person may ask "Why did James instruct the Gentiles to learn the Torah which was "read every Sabbath in the synagogues" (Acts 15:21) when the yoke of the oral customs and traditions were being taught there? Christ gave the answers regarding not to follow the traditions of men. Paul mentioned his teacher Gamaliel and also Christ.

Teachers today teach from books and authorities whether on TV or in the ancient synagogue. It was no different in the ancient times. Questions may be asked of teachers for clarification: i.e. "Whereof do you teach that from, Rabbi, the written Torah or the customs and traditions of the elders?"

How many people do *not* ask questions for the fear of looking dumb? Is it not, instead, a sign of intelligence and being able to think? One may not believe in evolution, but one had to learn evolution and its fallacies. One would not be able to critically refute evolutionary theory if one did not know or understand it. It would be the same in a synagogue where one could learn the difference between the Talmud and the Torah.

**Acts 21:21** Paul, arrives in Jerusalem and learns from the faithful what the unbelieving Jews are saying about him. This verse does not say Paul has forsaken "the law"! The context of the preceding verse 20 informs us that the faithful are "zealous for the law" and the context of verse 23-26 reveals Paul accompanying the men to the temple to keep the law. In verse 27 we discover it is the unbelieving Jews who are making the accusation referred to in verse 21. Later in **Acts 24:13-14** Paul defends himself against the wrongful accusations and affirms his belief and obedience to the law. Remember: the Hebrew way of thinking is action oriented in regarding to one's belief. The Greek way of thinking is having and thinking the correct beliefs but no required actions (i.e. works). In verse 21 Paul states his one exception to his difference in beliefs with the unbelieving Jews: the resurrection of the dead.

**Judaizer.** This pejorative term arose against and among believers in Jesus Christ to separate them from those in the Jewish faith which also used the same Old Testament. The term may also refer to one formally becoming a Jew by keeping the *Talmud*—not the *Torah*.

"Probably the best description of Judaizers is in Acts 15:1: "And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, and said, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you CANNOT BE SAVED.'" (Emphasis mine-Editor)... Circumcision performed for the purpose of being "saved" meant a full, formal conversion to Judaism, complete with a baptism/immersion into Judaism and an embracing of the rabbis' entire Oral Law (probably the law that Peter had in mind when he referred to "a yoke...which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear...The Judaizers believed that this conversion process would turn the Gentile believer into a full-fledged Jew, and that without this the Gentile could not be saved. Without a complete, formal conversion to

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<sup>136</sup> Tim Hegg. 2009, Aug. *An Assessment of the "Divine Invitation" Teaching*. 69p .p40-41  
[http://www.torahresource.com/EnglishArticles/DivineInvitation\\_Response.pdf](http://www.torahresource.com/EnglishArticles/DivineInvitation_Response.pdf)



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Judaism, the Gentile believer could not become a full-fledged member of the saved Messianic Community, the Judaizers said.”<sup>137</sup>

**Christian Traditions.** These include, but are not limited to, Sunday worship, Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, proselytizing, etc. of which many others have already written about.

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<sup>137</sup> For a detailed explanation see Daniel Botkin. 2001, March-April. Who Were the Judaizers? *Gates of Eden*. p4+ <http://www.gatesofeden.org/pdf/GOE%20Volume%2007.pdf>

#### 4. The *Torah* is for Everyone

##### The *Torah* is for both the Jewish and Gentiles. <sup>138 139 140 141</sup>

Christianity has disputed this since the first century.

Paul's writings are greatly misinterpreted by many. Many attempt to understand the calculus of the matter (Paul's letters—the difficult to understand as Peter writes in 2 Pet 3:16) when they have a hard time with simple mathematics (the easy to understand letters of Peter, John and James).

This misinterpretation and misunderstandings have arisen for the most part due to a) the Jewish rejection of Jesus Christ as the Messiah, b) Jewish persecution of Jewish believers in Messiah in c20-c200 AD, c) The Roman requirement for all to renounce their faith and worship the Roman gods—except those of the Jewish faith, d) the Roman persecution of the Jewish and those believing in anything Jewish. e) the resulting Christian adoption of pagan beliefs and rejection of almost everything Jewish in starting a new religion to escape persecution, and comply with the emperor in unifying the empire, f) mistranslations, g) ignorance, h) deception, i) ego, j) peer pressure/conformance to a Christian society k) blindness, and/or l) power/control/politics.

Remember McCarthyism in the 1950s and the WWII years of being Japanese? People could be looked on with suspicion for association with the enemies of our nation—even though they were innocent. Such was the case with the Christ believing pacifist Jews in the first few centuries after Christ.<sup>142</sup> If one adhered to anything Jewish, one was considered a Jew and an enemy of the Roman Empire or the later Christian Church. Better to change religions than endanger one's life, livelihood and family...right?

As Paul teaches in Romans 11, when a wild olive branch is grafted into the natural olive tree of Israel, the branch becomes part of the natural olive tree (Israel) which is nourished by the same root, as Bill Cloud explains.<sup>143</sup> All believers in Yahushua, therefore, become citizens of Israel, spiritually and are subject to the laws (the *Torah*) of the Kingdom of God. This is *not* replacement theology. The *Torah* made provision for the stranger to become part of Israel. There are no Gentile gates in the New Jerusalem.

Some Christians also teach otherwise and may cite Exodus 12:48 as evidence, i.e..

"We see here that in context it is referring to non-Jews who were living amongst Israel wanting to keep the Passover. So the inference is that non-Jews living amongst them could choose NOT to keep the Passover, and NOT be circumcised nor required to adhere

<sup>138</sup> Num. 15:15-16; Lev 24:22; Ex 12:48 and Gen 17:14 all illustrate that the acceptance of Gentiles/ strangers into the body of believers is not a New Testament phenomenon.

<sup>139</sup> Dean and Susan Wheelock. 2009. *Gentiles and the Law?* Vol. I, II, III, IV. Hebrew Roots®.

<sup>140</sup> Monte Judah. 2008, March. *Torah is for All People*. <http://lionlamb.net/v3/YAVOHHeisComing/2008/03>

<sup>141</sup> Carmen Welker. 2013. *Should Christians be Torah Observant?* 208p

<sup>142</sup> Joseph Good. 1998. *Rosh HaShanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come*. Hatikva Ministries. p14.

<sup>143</sup> Bill Cloud. 2014, June 14. *Fullness of the Gentiles*.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation\\_id=annotation\\_2969510581&feature=iv&src\\_vid=jt6kJYmhsFI&v=siWF5eFRXIA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_2969510581&feature=iv&src_vid=jt6kJYmhsFI&v=siWF5eFRXIA)

### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

to all ceremonial customs in the Torah. These verses prove that the Torah was for Israel, and not for the Gentiles (nations)." —Bryan Baker.<sup>144</sup>

It does not take much investigation, however, to realize that Israel was to be a kingdom (i.e. kings, territory, laws and subjects) and priests to the world representing and teaching God's instructions to the nations—the Gentiles—to achieve His blessings for an abundant life. Gentile had a choice to choose pagan Gods or the God of Israel. It was not a matter of living the way one wishes and also claiming the God of Israel.

Examples of future blessing and cursing are made clear in both Isaiah and Zechariah:

**Isa 66:16** For by fire and by his sword will YHVH (the LORD) plead with **all flesh** (does it say all JUDAH or ISRAEL): and the slain of YHVH (the LORD) shall be many. **Isa 66:17** They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, says the YHVH (LORD).

**Isa 66:23** And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one **sabbath** (does it say SUNDAY?) to another, shall **all flesh** (does it say all JUDAH or all ISRAEL?) come to worship before me, says YHVH (the LORD).

**Zec 14:16** And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, YHVH (the LORD) of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. **17** And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, YHVH (the LORD) of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. **18** And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith YHVH (the LORD) will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. **19** This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Note that eating pork, mice, and the feast of tabernacles are considered the ceremonial law by many in Christianity and not the Ten Commandments. Yet, what happens to these people if they do not keep these "Ceremonial Law" instructions written by Isaiah (above)? Would one say they are cursed? Yes.

Nor does it say that the "Moral" Law shall go forth from Zion and Jerusalem in the future (Isa. 2:3; Mic 4:2).

**Noachide Laws.** Messianic-Judaism and Judaism teach that Gentiles are only required to keep the Noachide Laws. The Torah is only for the Jewish people.

"The Noachide Laws are seven laws considered by rabbinic tradition as the minimal moral duties required by the Bible on all men. While Jews are obligated to observe the whole Torah - 613 commandments, every non-Jew is considered a "son of the covenant of Noah" and he who accepts these obligations is considered a righteous person who is guaranteed a place in the world to come."<sup>145</sup>

Gentiles are not to observe the *Torah* according to the Noachide Laws. This is not just a theological point, but it is apparently also an emotional issue evidenced by statements in

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<sup>144</sup>Jewish Virtual Library. *Jewish Concepts: The Seven Noachide Laws*.  
[https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/The\\_Seven\\_Noahide\\_Laws.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/The_Seven_Noahide_Laws.html) Retrieved 5/18/15.

<sup>145</sup> Source upon request.

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formal written rebuttals against Hebrew Roots® which go as far as to claim an opinion that HR has latent anti-Semitic/anti-Jewish elements.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Source upon request.

## 5. The Hebrew Language is Studied

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**The Hebrew language is especially studied in both its ancient<sup>147 148</sup> and contemporary forms<sup>149</sup> to achieve a better understanding of Scripture.<sup>150</sup> Greek words are not ignored.**

One does not have to learn Hebrew (contrary to what one web-site preacher stated and yet another)<sup>151</sup> or Greek. Because it does aid in better understanding Scripture and learning about the various mistranslations, those in HR wish to learn something about these languages. Many in HR, however, place an undo emphasis in the language rather than learning and remembering Scriptures in English. Wouldn't be nice if most church going Americans and those calling themselves Christian would even read and know more about their Bibles—in the *English* language!<sup>152</sup> This is not to exclude the study of Greek. It should be noted that Greek is taught much more often than Hebrew in the seminaries.

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<sup>147</sup> Dr. Frank Seekins. 2003. *Hebrew Word Pictures*. 170p.

<sup>148</sup> Jeff A. Benner. 2005. *Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible*. 615p

<sup>149</sup> Brad Scott. 2009. *The Tanakh: the dictionary of the New Testament*. Chapter: Why do we use Hebrew Words. 231p. See also Hebrew Words Defined. *Why do we use Hebrew Words?*  
[www.wildbranch.org/teachings/lessons/lesson11.html](http://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/lessons/lesson11.html)

<sup>150</sup> "With reading and studying this [Hebrew] text, we cannot interject our own cultural perspectives into the text. To do so would bring about interpretations and conclusions that are far removed from the author's intended meaning"—*The History of Hebrew*. Ancient Hebrew Research Center.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nR5GQ—YNpi&list=PL0E346CF634AD0E30> This would be the same when studying the Greek language

<sup>151</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>152</sup> Cathy Lynn Grossman. 2010, Sept. 29. Most Americans believe in God but don't know religious tenets. *USA Today*. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-09-28-pew28\\_ST\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-09-28-pew28_ST_N.htm)

## 6. Learn the Lessons of History

**The first and second century faith, culture<sup>153</sup>, history<sup>xi 154</sup>, persecution<sup>xii xiii</sup>, and religious politics<sup>155 156</sup>, which led to the core differences with the Jewish and Christian communities and the subsequent Christian acceptance of pagan rituals<sup>157</sup> and observances are critically studied.<sup>158 159</sup> Contemporary scholarship (Jewish, Messianic-Jewish, Protestant, etc.)<sup>160</sup> is also studied in order to continually prove all things<sup>161 162 163</sup> and not be in ignorance.**

Many Christians do not know the Scriptures or history well enough to understand the politico-religio events of the first centuries which led Christianity to adopt syncretism and contrary explanations regarding “the law”.

“To support the Jewish people, or even Jewish customs, was interpreted as not being loyal to Rome...pressure was being put on Jewish believers from three sides: first, from the non-believing pagans who hated anything Jewish; second, from the non-believing Jews who feared their power among the people; and third, within their own congregations by the new gentile believers who were entering the faith already affected by the rampant anti-semitism.” —Joseph Good<sup>164</sup>

“Notwithstanding the deep hatred entertained by the Jews for their enemies (e.g. the Romans) they did not avenge themselves upon such as fell into their hands. It was only against the Jewish Christians who lived in Judea that Bar-Cochba displayed his hostility, because they were considered as blasphemers and as spies. This hatred against the Jewish Christians was increased because they refused to take part in the national war, and were the only idle lookers-on at the fearful spectacle.” —Heinrich Graetz.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>153</sup> "The New Testament is crammed full of idioms, phrases, and concepts known to the observant Jew (Yehudim) living in the time of Yahushua's ministry, but unfamiliar to modern readers. The Scriptures must be read through the eyes and minds of the culture in which it was written."—Brad Scott.

<http://www.wildbranch.org/about/>

<sup>154</sup> William Dankenbring. *A New Look the LXX. The DEAD SEA Scrolls and the Septuagint.*

<sup>155</sup> William F. Dankenbring. *The Mysterious Relationship of The Early Nazarene Christians and Rabbinic Judaism.*

<sup>156</sup> William F. Dankenbring. *The Pharisees, Hasidim, and the Early Jewish Church.*

<http://www.triumphpro.com/hasid-1.htm>

<sup>157</sup> Frank Viola and George Barna. 2008. *Pagan Christianity.* 291p.

<sup>158</sup> Lori Johnson. 2011. *Critical Thinking Class: Parts I and II.*

<http://houseofdauidfellowship.com/pdfs/19nov2011.pdf> and

<http://houseofdauidfellowship.com/pdfs/3dec2011.pdf>

<sup>159</sup> "We shall present evidence from a multitude of sources, including a great many Protestant Christian Scholars of the 20th century as well as the Early Church Fathers, in order to try and reach a reasoned verdict." Lee Miller. *The Weight of Evidence.* House of David Fellowship.

<http://houseofdauidfellowship.com/weightofevidence.htm>

<sup>160</sup> "New Perspective on Paul" in *Wikipedia.* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Perspective\\_on\\_Paul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Perspective_on_Paul)

<sup>161</sup> Lee Miller. *Polycrates, the Gospel, and the Torah.* <http://houseofdauidfellowship.com/articles.htm> 6l *Thess*

**5:21**

<sup>162</sup> M. Mastropaulo. 2011 *Speakers. Take Heed.* <http://www.season-of-our-joy.com/Resources.html>

<sup>163</sup> I Pet 1:14-15

<sup>164</sup> Joseph Good, 1998. *Rosh haShanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come.* Hatikva Ministries. p vi.

<sup>165</sup> Heinrich Graetz. 1891. *History of the Jews,* Vol. II, p411, 412.

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On the other hand, many in HR are studying history (not a popular subject for many). They are fitting together the simple 1+1s of Scripture without having the trained attorneys and trainees of religious life tell them how to do it, without the agenda, prejudices and bias of religions (but no one is perfect), and without the erroneous teachings which can cloud critical thinking. Many, apparently, are coming to similar conclusions. (Recall that hundreds of years ago people were once not even allowed to read the Bible in their native language and/or allowed to read the Bible at all. The schooled religious leader had to teach them).

For those who are short on their history, this 1-2-3-4 explanation is offered:

1. The Jews persecuted the Judeo-Christians/*Talmidei Yeshua* (Heb=students/disciples of Yeshua)/Nazarenes (different names for the same group of people) accepting Christ and obeying the Torah from the time of the apostles especially though the Bar Kokhba rebellion of c132-136 A.D. <sup>166 xiv</sup>
2. The Romans persecuted the Jewish people because of their continual uprisings against Rome. The Judeo-Christians began to suffer the same Roman persecutions even though they were pacifist. To disassociate itself with this persecution, many of the new Christians began to reject things Jewish including the Old Testament. Discover Marcion. <sup>167 xv xvi xvii xviii xix</sup>
3. These new Christians later persecuted the Jews and Judeo-Christians. Constantine, who wished to have a socially and politically stable empire, issued decrees which made Christianity the official religion. The Biblical Passover date was rejected in favor of Easter so as to avoid any similarity with the Jews. In short, one could lose their job and economic security over which days they observed unless they changed their faith. (Similar to the book of Revelation?) Discover the Quartodeciman Controversy. <sup>168</sup>
4. To disassociate itself with anything Jewish and to convert masses of people to "the faith", the Christian church adopted pagan holidays and Sunday as the day of worship. To continue the pagan traditions, the church has had to come up with man-devised explanations of why God sanctions man's proclaimed pagan holidays (which God prohibits). Perhaps that is how the explanation that the Holy Days have been fulfilled and the *Torah* is past history was developed?

One's physical and economic security and his family came to rely on which faith he claimed. Is it any different today? What would you have done to avoid persecution? Would you have been included with 90%-95% of slaves which made up the population of the Roman Empire, who could not read or write, and only wished to live their lives?

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<sup>166</sup> Daniel Gruber. *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah*. 1999. Elijah Publishing. Hanover, NH. 282p

<sup>167</sup> A second century heretic of whom Christianity adopted some of its teachings.

<sup>168</sup> This controversy involved those who wished to keep the original date of Passover versus those who demanded the change to Easter Sunday.



## 7. The Sabbath Days Reveal God's Plan of Salvation

**The 7th Day Sabbath and the Creator's (*Torah*) holy days which picture/foreshadow the 1st and 2nd comings of the Messiah and the Master Plan of Salvation for mankind are observed,<sup>169</sup> not Christianity's adoption of pagan holidays, traditions,<sup>170 171 xx xxi</sup> and other such observances<sup>172 173</sup> of which Scripture expressly prohibits in honoring the Creator by both adults and children.<sup>174</sup>**

One could write on this point until the cows come home. Christendom is not convinced by any reasoning on this subject. This includes the religio-political events of the first few centuries during which Sunday worship came about. It is about 10 commandments—not 9.

God is not capricious. To exempt one law (the Sabbath) and not the other nine reveals a capricious God and/or strains critical thinking. If Christ fulfilled the Sabbath for us, did He not fulfill the other nine and, therefore, it is OK to break any of the other nine today? To later exempt the "law of Moses" as being ceremonial because ancient Israel wished Moses to speak to them, instead of God (Ex 20:19), does not mean God invalidated His laws for Christianity, yet held the Jewish people accountable to obey them. Is that fair?

**Eisegesis**<sup>175</sup> not **exegesis** is the method utilized to claim a change to Sunday as the new Sabbath day when one reads about Paul or others meeting on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).<sup>xxii</sup> Otherwise, one must also claim Paul kept Pentecost (Acts 20:16 and I Cor 16:8) and Passover (I Cor 5:7 and was not just there to proselyte Jews when they meet at their synagogues. An understanding of the Hebrew/culture of the first century reveals that Paul, a Jew was *closing* the Sabbath day with a small ritual called **Motzei Shabba**.<sup>176</sup>

One must recognize and appreciate the Catholic Church for its stand on Sunday. They honestly believe they have the power to change the day of worship from Sunday to Saturday, rather than attempting to change Scripture to mean something else that what it states. Even Martin Luther bowed to the church's authority on this and not *Sola Scriptura*; otherwise, where is his argument? (Perhaps Luther was not totally objective and loving in his thinking about the Jewish people when he did not wish to address Sunday teaching?)<sup>177</sup>

"Regarding the change from the observance of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday, I wish to draw your attention to the facts:

<sup>169</sup> Dean and Susan Wheelock. 2009. *The Fall Festivals*. Hebrew Roots®. 16p;

<sup>170</sup> Watch *A Christmas Video* by Michael Rood for a humorous look at the holiday season. Do your own research on the net to learn about the holiday pagan traditions. 2010, Dec 10.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KD94u3P35K8>

<sup>171</sup> *Catholic Bishop confessed that they changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday*. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrB21mc2fmI>

<sup>172</sup> Frank Viola and George Barna. 2008. *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices*. 291p

<sup>173</sup> Lew White. 2001. *Fossilized Customs*. 210p.

<sup>174</sup> Lev. 18:1-3; Lev. 20:23

<sup>175</sup> Dr. Daniel Botkin. 2001, March-April. A Sunday Sabbath in I Cor 16:2 An Example of Eisegesis. *Gates of Eden*. p9 <http://www.gatesofeden.org/pdf/GOE%20Volume%2007.pdf>.

<sup>176</sup> The closing of the Sabbath is also called *Havdalah* meaning separation and a time to separate the holy from the mundane.

<sup>177</sup> On the Jews and Their Lies [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On\\_the\\_Jews\\_and\\_Their\\_Lies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Jews_and_Their_Lies)

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(1) That Protestants, who accept the Bible as the only rule of faith and religion, should by all means go back to the observance of the Sabbath. The fact that they do not, but on the contrary observe the Sunday, stultifies them in the eyes of every thinking man.

(2) We Catholics do not accept the Bible as the only rule of faith. Besides the Bible we have the living Church, the authority of the Church, as a rule to guide us. We say, this Church, instituted by Christ to teach and guide man through life, has the right to change the Ceremonial laws of the Old Testament and hence, we accept her change of the Sabbath to Sunday. We frankly say, yes, the Church made this change, made this law, as she made many other laws, for instance, the Friday abstinence, the unmarried priesthood, the laws concerning mixed marriages, the regulation of Catholic marriages and a thousand other laws.

(3) We also say that of all Protestants, the Seventh-day Baptists are the only group that reason correctly and are consistent with their teachings. It is always somewhat laughable, to see the Protestant churches, in pulpit and legislation, demand the observance of Sunday, of which there is nothing in their Bible." —Peter R. Tramer, Editor, *The Catholic Extension Magazine*.<sup>178</sup>

Others may believe that any day is a day of worship and/or resting in "the lord" on every day. But therein leads to a fallacy.

A **fallacy** is the result of an erroneous conclusion reached from a syllogism. Let's look at the fourth commandment:

Exo 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Hebrew=*set-apart*). 9 Six days shall you labor, and do all your work; :10 but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God: in it you shall not do any work...11 for in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah (YHVH) blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Note that the Sabbath command takes up one-third of the text of the ten commandments, which by this weight alone indicates significance. Especially note that there are two parts to this commandment. Rest *and* work. If rest is indeed symbolic, then by its corollary, everyday work must be symbolic and spiritual as well. One should be doing "spiritual" (not physical) works seven days a week. If so, where does one have the time to earn a living to feed, cloth, and house themselves?

2 Thes 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

If one does not think this is the case, where is the Scriptural (not extra-Biblical) authority that gives us this distinction. There is none.

**Eisegesis** in Hebrews 3 and 4 is also utilized to believe that one can "rest" on any day of the week. The word *rest* in Hebrews 4:9 is incorrectly translated and should read "keeping of a Sabbath". Words *mean* things. Rather than take the simple explanations all the way from Genesis to Revelation, one has to stretch and change the meanings of words in order to establish the new religion of Christianity.

The NT also speaks of the church as being the spiritual bride of Christ. Is this not also a symbolic, spiritual concept? If the spiritual concepts are to be consistently applied, why is it

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<sup>178</sup> Source upon request.

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then necessary to literally obey the seventh commandment in the flesh: Do not commit adultery?

The vast majority of Christian churches no longer rest even on Sunday. This is contrary to those colonists who founded this nation kept Sunday set-apart as a day of rest, who also came through the Protestant Reformation, and who also promoted various "Blue-Laws" to enforce Sunday business closures. Somewhere in our nation's "enlightened" progression in the past 150 years, has Christianity progressed—or has it further apostatized?

If one believes that the Sabbath day is now symbolic for us today. How would that affect one's thinking about the millennium?

#### **Millennium Viewpoints**

Many TV religious teachers are premillennialists who believe Christ's 2nd coming occurs before the millennium.

*Catholics* "believe in a more allegorical, or symbolic, view which says that we are living in the Millennium now, and Christ is sitting on the throne in Heaven, where He "reigns through the Church". [i.e. there is not literal reign of Christ on earth for 1,000 years (CCC #676 and that we are living in the millennium now ]

"There are also those who believe the millennium is symbolic of the entire age of the Church. They point to Bible verses which speak of Christ reigning in heaven now. This is called amillennialism (no millennium), although some prefer to call it realized millennialism because it doesn't deny the millennium, but merely interprets it as a symbol of the Church age.

"The Catholic Church has never defined which position is correct. Still, most Catholic theologians have been amillennialists or postmillennialists. We can't think of any who have been premillennialists."<sup>179</sup> Catholics generally hold to the Amillennial ("no Millennium") view,<sup>180</sup> condemn "millenarianism" and considers it to be an indefinite long time.<sup>181</sup>

*Jehovah's Witnesses* do believe in a literal millennium, yet believe that any day is a Sabbath Day.<sup>182</sup>

*Seventh Day Adventists*, although believing in the millennium, believe it to be a period of time in which only Satan and fallen angels will be inhabiting the earth.<sup>183</sup>

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These varying beliefs are presented above to reveal the disparity, if not confusion, that arises when Christianity began as a new religion and disassociated itself from the Old Testament Scriptures to avoid appearing "Jewish". The Jewish people, as a whole, lost the

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<sup>179</sup> Catholic Answers Staff. n.d. What is the Millennium the television preachers talk so much about. <http://www.catholic.com/quickquestions/what-is-the-millennium-the-television-preachers-talk-so-much-about> Retrieved 2/7/15

<sup>180</sup> <http://answeringcatholicclaims.blogspot.com/2014/09/the-rapture-and-catholic-eschatology.html> Retrieved 2/7/15

<sup>181</sup> Eternal Word Television Network. Endtimes, Millennium, Rapture. <https://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/endtimes.htm> Retrieved 2/7/15

<sup>182</sup> [http://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/w20001015/what-gods-kingdom-will-do/#?insight\[search\\_id\]=980043cf-8dcc-492b-92f3-7478e2a21d69&insight\[search\\_result\\_index\]=17](http://www.jw.org/en/publications/magazines/w20001015/what-gods-kingdom-will-do/#?insight[search_id]=980043cf-8dcc-492b-92f3-7478e2a21d69&insight[search_result_index]=17) Retrieved 2/7/15

<sup>183</sup> John Seaman. 1998. *Who are the Seventh-Day Adventists?* 64p. p63.

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vision and meaning of the Messiah being represented in all the Scriptural (God's) Holy Days when they rejected the Christ as the Messiah while placing the Talmud as its authority,

**A Big Question.** Why do believers in Christ expect to reign as a bride with Christ (a Jew),

- in a "Jewish" Millennium (which pictures the Seventh Day "Jewish" Sabbath), to walk as Christ walked (not the traditional interpretation of Paul's walk)—1 John 2:6;
- with a "Jewish" temple that all will come to worship in—Ezk 40; and
- when the law (*Torah*) goes out from Zion?—Isa 2:3;
- with sacrifices—Ezk 44;
- keeping of the Hebraic ("Jewish") festivals (such as the Feast of Sukkot)—Zech 14:16+;
- keeping the 7th day "Jewish" Sabbath and new moons—Isa 66:23;
- shunning pork/unclean meats—Isa 66:17—all of which many refuse to keep in **this** age, during **their** lifetimes, and probably know **nothing**, or very little about—because Christ already "fulfilled" the law for them.

Perhaps there will be mind melds? (Spock, where are you? <smile>). It begs the question:

#### QUESTIONS

Why would the Creator go to the effort of creating the Torah feasts/holy days if they were just pretty sermon illustrations and passing stories for us today?

Why are Christians given a free pass not to keep these days?

Do non-Torah observing believers expect to be able to teach others to follow *Torah* in the millennium when they do not know *Torah*?

**A Big Answer.** The Creator calls **His** "feasts" (KJV in Hebrew meaning an *appointment*) as **my** feasts (i.e. appointments in Lev 23:2) and the Sabbath "**my** holy day" (Isa 58:13) all of which will be observed in the millennium (Isa 66:23) along with the dietary laws. They are *not* called "Jewish" sabbaths and feasts. Simply because the nation of Israel (12 tribes including Judah) accepted the covenant from the Creator, it does not make the feasts solely "theirs" or "Jewish".

There is **no** indication of Sunday keeping as a Sabbath day in the millennium—not **one** word. Not Christmas or Easter. There will only be one day of the normal seven day week that the Ezekiel temple will be open.

**Ezek 46:1** Thus says the Lord GOD; The gate of the inner court that looks toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened, and in the day of the new moon it shall be opened.

It *appears* that the majority of professing believers in Christ and active doers of good works along with any other believers who are *not* chosen as the bride, *may* be resurrected to salvation *after* the 1,000 years on the symbolic "8th Day"—not the 7th day Sabbath millennium (Rev. 20:11). They are considered among the righteous and do not lose their salvation. Though...*who really knows the future rewards of all those who have accepted Christ as their Savior?* Only God knows.

If Christians kept the Hebraic Holy Days they would know that there is an annual "Eighth Day" Sabbath (Lev 23:39) that has a profound meaning—which must be gathered from Scriptures in the meaning of the number "8", since nothing is written on the meaning of this day. Indeed, it is a mystery (Rev 10:7) for many. Some in Hebrew Roots® and many Sabbath-

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keeping Churches of God, however do offer an incisive interpretation of the Eighth Day being a *new beginning*.<sup>184 185</sup>

It has been mentioned that although Christians can learn much from the meaning of the festivals, they are not required to be kept.

National surveys continually reveal the Biblical ignorance of Christians.

Who really knows the festival meanings unless one *observes* them and teaches them to their children?

**Pagan Holy Days.** These days (Easter, Christmas, Halloween, etc). with their customs are not observed in HR. The Hebraic festivals are observed. Even Hanukkah may not be observed by HR adherents because it is *not* a commanded *moed* (appointment) and bears considerable influences from Christmas. The original observance of Hanukkah was a delayed observance of Sukkot.<sup>186</sup>

Each year TV and newspaper reporters interview those who state that no one really knows the season or date of Christ's birth. Pastors *do* know the season when Christ was born. Do they really want to acknowledge or teach it? Ask why not. They may reply that "it does not matter which day it is"; i.e. *truth* does *not* matter.

The season is noted right there in Luke Chapter 1 where it describes the temple courses. Right before Luke Chapter 2 that many read each year at Christmas about His birth.

Simple calculations along with historic temple course records reveal that Christ was born during a Hebraic festival season.<sup>187</sup> But will people then wish to know more about those "Jewish" festivals and begin asking more questions? When people discover the tremendous meaning (and the joy) behind each festival, when one can "party" (in a good sense) three times a year (not just once), would they wonder why observe pagan festivals at all just so we can say we are *not* Jewish even though we believe in Christ? Ahhh...now we get into the historic aspects of why people did not wish to identify with the Jewish religion in the first several centuries after Christ.

When people respond with the answer that Christ fulfilled the ancient Holy Days, it begs the question as to why observe Christmas and Easter—since Christ also fulfilled them. Why would so many teach a blatant mistruth? Perhaps they have not received the love of the truth as Paul writes in II Thes 2:10?

Christmas observance was prohibited in the colonies. Church leaders later gave in to the people's embrace of the celebration. It was slowly accepted beginning in the 1840s when waves of new German immigrants carried their winter traditions with them. Nearly two centuries later, resting on any day of the week has been jettisoned (Remember the "Blue Laws"?) Christmas is now fully accepted, but now it is both the people and church giving in to a

<sup>184</sup> Our Father's Festival. *The Eighth Day*. [http://www.ourfathersfestival.net/about\\_the\\_festival](http://www.ourfathersfestival.net/about_the_festival)

<sup>185</sup> William F. Dankenbring. n.d. *The Mystery of Shemini Atzeret—the "Eighth Day"*.  
<http://www.triumphpro.com/shemini-atzeret-eighth-day.htm> Retrieved 5/5/2014

<sup>186</sup> Norm Zion. The First Hanukkah <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-first-hanukkah/>

<sup>187</sup> An argument can be made for either Sukkot, Trumpets, or Passover being the time of His birth. Sukkot or Trumpets are the two most popular dates in the HR communities.

### III. 7 DISTINCTIVE CORE DIFFERENCES

secular government which wishes to replace if not eliminate the "traditional" religious aspects of the day.. Have we really progressed or has Christianity further apostatized?

The *Torah* and the prophets warn against following the teachings of pagans and the gods they worship. prohibition (Deut 12:29-31; 6:14; Ex. 20:3; Jer 10:2; 25:6, Ezh. 11;12, etc). However, if one believes that the Torah is done away with, and the law has been changed in the New Testament, one is able to do almost anything they please.

**Deut 12:29** When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goes to possess them, and thou succeed them, and dwell in their land; 30 Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.

**Ezk 11:12** And ye shall know that I *am* YHVH<sup>188</sup> (the LORD—KJV): for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that *are* round about you.

It is not a matter, today, of not knowing what things are pagan, it is the simple inconvenience of stepping out and being different from others that precludes us from doing so when traditions are so ingrained in a national culture. It is called peer pressure. Is that not what Christ stepped up against with the Jewish customs and traditions (later codified in the *Talmud*) of his time?

The Apostles keeping the Sabbath is noted numerous times in the Acts (see also Heb 4:9).<sup>189</sup> It is also used when one reads about Paul or keeping (note the word *keeping*, i.e. observing) a feast day (e.g. Acts 18:21, 20:16. I Cor 5:8)—not just attending a gathering of Jews for evangelizing purposes. Polycrates, Polycarp, and other early leaders following the apostles have also been recorded as keeping the feasts. Paul writes about the apostasy which began during his lifetime when all in Asia turned against him (2 Tim 1:15). That is no small statement.

As one Christian stated his non-observance of the feasts (and the Sabbath) "the way I see it, Jesus will fulfill the feasts of Israel...it doesn't matter to me much since I am in the Lord..." Hmm.

***Paganism in other forms.*** Believers can carry an extremist agenda against paganism. Not everyone is a believer. Does that mean we cannot read a newspaper or a book without determining if the publisher or chief editor are pagans? I don't think so. Wedding rings have been said to be pagan in origin. Shall we put a ring through our noses to indicate that we are married? If you conscience is against wedding rings (and I use this only as an example) don't use them, or better yet, come up with a better idea and promote its acceptance. Rather than being against something, I think people should come up with an alternative and be *for* something.

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<sup>188</sup> I have substituted the Hebrew letters of His name (also called the tetragrammaton) for the KJV translation of "the LORD". The KJV translators were following the command of King James to follow the Jewish tradition to avoid the mentioning His name. Even today, as in ancient times, one's name is not translate or transliterated...it is given in its native tongue. I have also done the same with the word "God" by substituting the Hebrew word Elohim.

<sup>189</sup> The disciples kept the Sabbath 85 times in the Book of Acts. <http://www.elijah.com/85times.html>



### ***Sacred Traditions, Paganism, and the Catholic Church***

Catholics believe that they adhere to the ancient traditions of the Apostles and church fathers —not paganism.<sup>xxiii</sup> In defending their faith, they correctly ask critical questions on the role and influence of various forms of paganism in all Christianity denominations.<sup>190</sup>

"Definition of Pagan: simply a non-Christian, denotes someone from the countryside (The Romans...from Village to Empire. Oxford Press 2004)"

"Augustine wrote The City of God in 413-426 AD. Augustine answers the pagans, who attributed the fall of Rome (410) to the abolition of pagan worship. If pagans were angry that Catholicism abolished pagan worship it's hard to imagine that the Church adopted paganism".<sup>191</sup>

My response is that the pagan accusers of Catholicism at the time of Augustine could have been opposed to the syncretism of their pagan faith. I do not think God accepts pagan rites, whether it be circumcision or others, as part of worshiping Him. (See Deut 12:29-30 and Ezk. 11:12 above). We do not have all the details of history in Scripture.

Catholics and others have put forth Ralph Woodrow's recanting of his book *Babylon Mystery Religion* since it drew much information from Alexander Hislop's book *The Two Babylons*. Mr. Woodrow was drawn into an honest investigation and replaced his book with *The Babylon Connection*. I have not yet read this book, I just offer the observation that we must be careful. Citing a source as an authority may not be a supportive position when that "authority" is in error.

### ***Critical Thinking***

Who can you trust? Bible reading members of the Worldwide Church of God trusted Herbert Armstrong and his ministry even when they were instructed to prove all things (as Paul instructs in I Thes 5:21). Doing so does not mean proving one's agenda of faith to the exclusion of facts to the contrary. Perhaps a college course in critical thinking (they called it propaganda analysis when I took it in college) would be wise for many people. One must be willing to question, prove *all* things, follow truth and change.

Change (repent) is a message of the NT. Truth should be followed, but most people in the United States accept lying because it is comfortable to do so, and would rather have someone else stick their neck out for truth to have it cut off—not just in religion but in other facets of life as well. Is the *silence of the churches* in our nation with critical national issues a result of not sticking one's neck out?

When one reads the Bible for himself and finds that it is not what his church teaches and raises questions, church leaders could confront him with questions such as "Have you studied hermeneutics?", "Have you attended a seminary?" or a statement such as, "God is leading (place the name of minster here) and we must follow him."

Personal Bible study can unlock truths that relatively few teach. One must be careful, though, to prove all things and bounce discoveries off of friends for confirmation or rejection. As an example, in the early 2000s my personal studies into the meaning of words revealed that

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<sup>190</sup> Robert H. Brom, Bishop of San Diego, August 10, 2004. Is Catholicism Pagan?

<http://www.catholic.com/tracts/is-catholicism-pagan>

<sup>191</sup> Did the Catholic Church Blend Paganism with Christianity?

[http://catholicbridge.com/catholic/were\\_catholics\\_pagan.php](http://catholicbridge.com/catholic/were_catholics_pagan.php)



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there were only three harvest feasts (Hebrew=*chag*)—*not* seven. At the time of my discovery I shared that with a fellow believer who also investigated my claim and also came to the same conclusion. Some few others have now also come to the same conclusion even though many, including HR ministries, still state that there are 7 feasts. Is this a issue that should create division? Absolutely not.

I attended two meetings by an "advanced" HR fellowship who had tithing as their group discussion subject for two consecutive Sabbaths. Not being well-known by the group, I attended as an observer. At the conclusion of the second Sabbath study on the subject, I just offered the question "How does the Bible define tithing—since all other tithing issues were discussed with the exception of this one primary question?" I received the response from the leader that that was a good question. To which no one attempted a follow-up..

#### The 5 W's

One has to ask the 5 W's (who, what, why, when, where) as an investigative reporter should do.

#### Trust God—Not Men.

People place their faith in an organization or man which appears to become the underlying rationale for continuing in their belief system. Name a faith that has not done that. They all have. Otherwise, it would bring into doubt the organization or man (and his divine inspiration) and it/he would become a proverbial house of cards. Are there 41,000 card houses?

Along with this faith in men comes control. An organization expresses control through the element of fear religion. Depart from their church/the true church man-made rules and one will be lost/burn in hell.

Many say that they believe in the Word of God or are Christian. Survey after survey reveals, however, that the vast majority are ignorant of the Bible and their faith. So what they really mean is that they live by the word of their man—the pastor/teacher—organization or man-made traditions, their peer group/friends and/or parent's religion. Was it any different for many in the first century when Christ warned against the traditions of men?

Mercy Aiken, author of *If Hell Is Real*, writes:

"In the time of Christ most of Israel completely missed the Word of God when He was in their midst. They were too busy with their nose in the book, to perceive the Word Himself as He came and dwelt among them! Certainly the masses must have thought..." "But none of the teachers, Pharisees, or priests believe that Jesus is the Messiah! And they know the scripture better than me!" That fact alone kept many Jews from daring to believe in Jesus. To do so was heresy and to admit faith in Him was basically asking for scorn and rejection. We have been quick to point the finger at the Pharisees, and not realize that we as the church follow the same pattern today. Are we going to play it safe and side with the majority, who are clinging to their traditions... or risk it all and step out and follow Him?"

We should fear God, (Ex 20:20)—not the precepts of men.

**Psa 89:7 God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.**

Let's look at some church interpretations:

"The word "Sabbath" does not occur in the book of Genesis.

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"However, there are several things that Genesis does not tell us, although some people have assumed or claimed these things.

- It does not say that humans rested or were told to rest.
- It does not say that humans were told to follow God's example.
- It does not say that God taught Adam and Eve on the Sabbath.
- It does not say God created the Sabbath, or that humans kept it." <sup>192</sup>

It also states:

"Scripture records various commands given to Adam and Eve, but there is no hint of a Sabbath command either before or after they sinned". <sup>193</sup>

All of the above, in the most technically literal sense *is true!* One must read such statements as the above (taken from a Sunday keeping church web page) carefully.

Some might say that Gen 26:5 does not include the commandments given at Mt. Sinai. Yet the same Hebrew word for law is the same word for law in the Book of Exodus. There is also no command to not kill, not steal, not lie, not commit adultery, honor one's father and mother, take His name in vain, eat clean foods, sacrifice animals and tithe in the book of Genesis. So why was Cain punished for Abel's death since there was no command not to kill a human being? "Sin lies at the door" is not a command not to kill. Sin was not defined at this time in the book of Genesis either!

There is no indication that God told Cain what sin is. Let's make sure we understand clearly the nature of this above quotation from a Church that instructs that the Sabbath command is not valid. i.e. if God does not say it—we do not have to do it—unless He punishes us for something specifically we are not told to do (as with Cain killing Abel) or after the fact (as in the case of Abimelech in Gen 20).

*Consider:* The Genesis flood occurred because of man's wickedness, violence, and evil. God does not define those terms. What are they? Were these all man's laws? If so, what were they? It does refer to some things as sin. But what is sin?

**I John 3:4 Sin is the transgression of the law.**

It does not say in the book of Genesis that sin is the breaking of God's laws. Is it the breaking of man's laws? If one takes the literal in the most narrowest sense, one may eliminate God in many places. We need to learn how to connect the dots in Scripture. There is no one marriage book, baptism book (or chapter), once encompassing tell all prophecy book, etc. God states:

**Isa 28:9-11 Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. 10 For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: 11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.**

Let's look at another church interpretation:

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<sup>192</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>193</sup> Source upon request.

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"The prophets described an ideal time in which all peoples worshipped God. To effectively convey this concept to an old covenant nation, the prophets described old covenant forms of worship, including new moon observances (Isaiah 66:23; Ezekiel 46:3) and sacrifices in the temple (Zechariah 14:20-21; Ezekiel 20:40; 45:17; 46:4)." <sup>194</sup>

So is that to say when God does say it, He does not mean what He says?(!) If the words of a prophet do not come to pass, are Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Zechariah really prophets (See Deut. 18:20-22). Only Christ is stated to speak in parables.

The religious explanations and traditions of men for many, today, are not only man devised Rabbinical rules for the Jewish people, but also man devised and pagan ones for Christianity. Truth is turned aside to uphold them. Remember the movie where Dorothy, tin man, scare crow, and lion were cautioned to "pay no attention to that man behind the curtain". Many people rely on religious leaders to explain Scripture. A leader behind the curtain can offer an interpretation that discards the simply stated Scripture of "sin is the transgression of the law". Everyone who simply reads the Bible knows what "the law" states—until they are taught otherwise. Oh, they are only the 10 guidelines. Oh, they are only the 9 guidelines...

Does Christianity take a cue from the Rabbis who obey *Talmud* in receiving some of its man devised authority from Christian ministry teachings and not Scripture? I think so.

**Feast of the Jews.** John uses this interesting phrase a few times in his gospel account, yet at other times he merely mentions the Passover without calling it Jewish. He does not say the "feast of God". Why? This phrase has been in the back of my mind for years; nevertheless, it has not persuaded me otherwise against observance of the feasts. Why is that? Because of the ***preponderance of evidence*** that indicates that we *are* to observe the feasts. One cannot and should **not** make a doctrinal point on one verse (or phrase).

The Gospel of John is said to have been written about 85-90 AD which is about 20 years after the fall of the Temple and 60 years after Christ. As such, he is addressing his historical perspective of a Jewish believer in Christ opposite to those Jews who did not believe in Christ. This is similar to what Paul was writing about unleavened bread in I Cor 5:8 with its new meaning for Jewish believers in the Messiah. John also uses the term "Jew" more frequently than the other gospel writers (e.g. John-69x, Matthew-5x, Mark-6x and Luke-5x).

John was also writing when all Jews came to Jerusalem to keep the feast. Who else were observing the Biblical feasts besides the Jewish believers in Christ except for the Jews? Although, the Jews were barred from Jerusalem until after the Bar Kokhba revolt in c132-136 AD, the Jews were persecuting Jewish believers in Christ prior to that time.

**Hebrews 4:9** King James translators used the word "rest" instead of the actual Greek words which should have been translated "keeping of a Sabbath". One can stretch this to mean anything they want (as many churches have).

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<sup>194</sup> Source upon request.

# IV. HEBRAIC ROOTS MINISTRY COMMONALITIES

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Other than the above core difference from Christianity, one can find a number of other commonalities inherent within and which define the HR Awakening. It is up to you—the reader—to investigate the diversity of the ministries which claim the label of HR or Messianic as part of your spiritual journey. None are perfect, some are exclusive, and some, like Christian churches, are far less spiritual than others.

The following additional commonalities have been gleaned from the most influential HR ministry web sites and writings (listed below) along with my attendance at their fellowships, conferences, and holy days/appointments. It is also my hope that this listing will better acclimate you to the awakening and peace in attending a fellowship.

For more on commonalities see <http://www.isitso.org/guide/hebroot.html>

- There is no ecclesiastical government superstructure which unites the various Hebrew Roots® ministries. It is a grass-roots **awakening**. This lack of a superstructure also reflects many Messianic-Jewish congregations according to Daniel Juster and Peter Hocken in their book *The Messianic Jewish Movement: An Introduction* (2004).
- People come from a variety of individual religious backgrounds. They have begun reading the Bible on their own. The Word they read is not what the mainline religious system is teaching for the most part.
- A commitment to truth. For many people today, lies (including religious lies—like Christmas) enhance a comfortable life. Scripture can be complex to understand at times, yet there are many simple statements which will allow one to connect all the dots—if we commit to truth and stop lying. When one sincerely practices the Word and adheres to Truth—not lies of any type, the Bible becomes easier to understand. For as Paul writes:

2 Thes 2:9-11 "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."

Believing in the truth can set one apart:

2 Pet 2:2b "...by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

- The Gospel is being preached through these ministries to the nation and to the world.
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God and it is through Him that we are saved—**not** through law keeping.

Further Commonalities are now listed in alphabetical order by title for ease of reference:

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- **Bible Versions.** One may use any version of the Bible to study. It is sad to see criticisms which state Hebrew Roots® adherents require only one version be used. This is not to say it "ain't so". Furthermore there is no documentation to indicate which ministry is preaching this and a generalization is concluded regarding all Hebrew Roots® ministries.

None of the major HR ministries that I am aware of promote one particular Bible. With the shoe on the other foot, consider that some Christians promote only the KJV. Some translations are better than others, but that is for you to discover as part of your journey. (E-Sword® is a free, downloadable software program found on the internet and is highly recommended for those who wish to study the Bible in greater detail).

- **British-Israelism.** See *Two-House Theology*.
- **Dancing.** Messianic and Hebrew Roots is not a staid traditional type church service. In larger fellowships it can be a robust atmosphere with respectful energy and exuberance with dancing, standing and raising one hand's in praise, music that is both reverential and upbeat and shofar blowing.

Group dancing is practiced (when there are enough in attendance who know how to dance) as a form of rejoicing and worship at both congregational services and at the annual Appointments and Feasts.

“Davidic (Messianic) Dance is a physical expression of praise, thanksgiving and joy to Elohim (God). The Hebrew word for dance is *rikud* which means to skip or leap for joy. Some of the dances are patterned after traditional Israeli folkdances...They vary from very simple, repetitive steps to more complex. They are meant to be danced as a group without any emphasis on one dancer. The tone of the dances range from reverentially devotional to exuberantly joyful. Dancers include men, women, teenagers and young children”.<sup>195</sup>

Dancing as a means of worship is Scriptural.

“A time to dance”. (Ecclesiastes 3:4)

“Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.” (Psalm 149:3)

“Praise Him with tambourine and dancing”. (Psalm 150:4)

“And David danced before YHVH with all his might...” (2 Samuel 6:14)

The waving of the lulav and the teaching of its meaning is a part of the Sukkot celebration and tradition.

The raising of one's hands in praise is also Scriptural and is not limited to a Pentecostal category.

Psa 28:2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.

Psa 63:4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name.

Psa 119:48 My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes.

Psa 134:2 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

Lam 2:19 ... lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street.

Lam 3:41 Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens.

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<sup>195</sup> [www.davidicdance.com](http://www.davidicdance.com)

#### IV. HEBRAIC ROOTS MINISTRY COMMONALITIES

Heb 12:12 Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees;

• **Denominational Identification and Ministry Names.** Many Hebraic Roots ministries and congregations take Hebrew Names and/or call themselves Messianic. The term "Messianic" and even "Hebrew Roots®" can become confusing with other groups (including Messianic-Jewish) which do not adhere to the 7 Distinctive Core Differences. There are three groups doing basically the same thing: 1) Torah Christians; 2) Jewish Roots; 3) Hebrew Roots, and to a great extent the various Sabbath keeping Churches of God. *Please note:* The definitions of some of the groups listed below can change and are not meant to be definitive!

- **Hebrew Christians.** The Hebrew Christian Alliance (HCAA) was formed in Britain in 1860 to bring together Jewish Christians.<sup>196</sup> In 1915 the HCAA was formed in the United States and changed its name in 1975 to the Messianic Jewish Alliance of America (MJAA).<sup>197</sup>
- **Hebrew Roots®.** Yes, even this name/label can have ministries with different, and perhaps, divergent doctrines. For those keeping the written *Torah* (not the Talmud) and accepting Jesus Christ / Yahushua as their Savior, Hebraic Roots is the term that, in my opinion, *should* be used to describe their belief system. Using the the term *Messianic* should can be associated with and creates confusion with those in the Messianic-Jewish community.
- **Hebraic Roots.** Hebrew Roots believe that there are two "houses" of Israel (Israel & Judah), that YHVH has a use for both houses, and that Jesus came to begin the restoration of both. They also believe that Yeshua's teachings were for the purpose of unifying these two groups. In 2013 the Hebraic Roots Network was formed with the participation of leading Hebrew Roots® teachers. The term Hebraic Roots is now spreading and it may mitigate the identity confusion with the Messianic/Messianic Jewish community. The network was formed after Eddie Chumney was removed from the Light of the Southwest program On God's Learning Channel (GLC) Satellite TV for allegedly teaching Two-House theology on the program—which he had *never* done. Other Hebraic Roots teachers voluntarily removed themselves from this program in support of this injustice to Chumney and formed their own network. This incident highlights the emotional reactions to this theological viewpoint, and which I also have witnessed in a local MJ congregation.
- **Jewish Roots.** This may or may not include both the traditions and teachings of the Talmud back to the 1st century, and that believers should follow *some* Jewish tradition. Jewish Roots believe that all Israelites are Jews and that there was no new religion called "the Church", but instead, Christianity was a sect of Judaism and not a new religion. Many Jewish Roots groups teach that believers should follow some Jewish tradition.

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<sup>196</sup> Daniel Juster and Peter Hocken. 2004. *The Messianic Jewish Movement: An Introduction*. p12-13.

<sup>197</sup> David A. Rausch. *The Messianic Jewish Congregational Movement*.

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- **Messianic Judaism** (The term goes back to the 19th century).<sup>198</sup> Jewish people who accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior, keep the Sabbath and “blend Jewish liturgy with a Christian message.” —Barry Yeoman<sup>199</sup> It is considered by most Christians and Jews to be a form of Christianity with its foundation in evangelical Christianity and with its purpose to proclaim its message about Jesus Christ—especially to those of the Jewish faith.

Those of the Jewish faith oppose Messianic Judaism and believe that the acceptance of Jesus Christ by a Jew no longer makes him/her Jewish. Many MJ congregations are aligned with conservative Protestant denominations and with a national messianic organization. Whereas Christianity teaches salvation comes through the acceptance of Christ as personal savior, Judaism teaches that God forgives repentant sinners and the righteous of all nations are being saved.

From only several in the 1970s, there are currently more than 430 Messianic Jewish congregations in the U.S. over 100 in Israel and a total of about 750 worldwide. About 40%-60% of an individual congregational membership worldwide may be composed of gentiles;<sup>200</sup> however, this percentage can increase dramatically upwards: 90%+ in one Arizona congregation and 95% overall according to one Messianic Jewish writer.<sup>201</sup>

- Groups differ among themselves in keeping or not keeping specific Jewish traditions and the *Torah* (some or all of it). Avram Yehoshua tells his interesting story on these differences in *Goodbye Messianic Judaism!*<sup>202</sup> According to Daniel Juster and Peter Hocken, authors of *The Messianic Jewish Movement. An Introduction*, the following commonalities are found: a) most Messianic Jewish congregations do not celebrate Christian holidays, though individuals may do so (p12-13); b) most celebrate the communion monthly, but a significant minority celebrates weekly; c) no more than ten percent submit to Rabbinic *halakhah* where there is no Biblical contradiction (p30-31); d) the most liturgical congregations are in North America, moderately so in Western Europe and South America, and the least so in Israel; e) dance as a form of worship is widespread. (p34), e) and a major point of friction is the role of *Torah* in the New Testament /Covenant and the appeal to Matt 5:17 (p28-29).
- **Messianic Christian/Gentile/Gentile Christian.** Here is where it can become somewhat confusing. The attendance / membership of the majority of Messianic Jewish

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<sup>198</sup> David A. Rausch. *The Messianic Jewish Congregational Movement*.

<sup>199</sup> Barry Yeoman. *Messianics pray the 'Shema' in 'synagogue,' preach Jesus*.

<sup>200</sup> "A preponderance of Gentile members in Messianic Jewish congregations is a major issue in the United States, but it is also the case elsewhere, as in the Netherlands. "So, for example Jeffrey Wasserman wrote in the year 2000: "For the most part, the majority of members and leaders of American Messianic Jewish congregations are Gentiles." (Jeffrey S. Wasserman, *Messianic Jewish Congregations* (Lanham MD: The University of America Press, 2000), p. 160, adding in a footnote: "My survey reflects 60% Gentile membership with 50% Gentile leadership." (ibid., note 15, p. 164)."

Peter Hocken. n.d. The Relationship between the Messianic Jewish movement and the Charismatic movement.

[http://www.peterhocken.org/mc/home.nsf/0/2C7CD30EF2983F39C1257DAC0033CE50/\\$FILE/Article.pdf?open](http://www.peterhocken.org/mc/home.nsf/0/2C7CD30EF2983F39C1257DAC0033CE50/$FILE/Article.pdf?open)

<sup>201</sup> Stan Telchin, a Messianic Jewish believer. 2004. *Messianic Judaism Is Not Christianity*, Chosen Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2004, p83.

<sup>202</sup> Avram Yehoshua. *Goodbye Messianic Judaism!* <http://www.seedofabraham.net/gmesjud.html>



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congregations includes *non-Jewish* Christians who consider and/or may call themselves "Gentile", do not keep "the law" and the "oral law", and some may also observe Sunday. Others may come because they see the truth in keeping the Sabbath and do not wish to attend Christian churches on Sunday, are Sabbath keepers from other former Sabbath keeping churches, or seek fellowship because of the lack of Sabbath keeping groups in their area. It all depends on who is writing the definition of *Messianic or Messianic Christian* and/or what an individual wishes to call himself. <whew!> They believe all Israelites are Jews.

- **Messianic Israel.** A name used about 1992 and until 2013 by Batya Wootten to describe those who belonged to the Messianic Israel Alliance. The name was later changed to Redeemed Israel in January 2013.
- **Name of Church.** The name "Church of God" is not seen among any Hebraic Roots groups thus far. Perhaps it is because of the desire of the people to emulate the Jewish people by using Hebrew names, and/or they remain ignorant of Paul's use of the term Church of God (of which *church* should be more properly translated as *congregation*). Perhaps another reason would be that a proper distance is needed due to a perceived association with the Worldwide Church of God spinoffs? Who knows? A person's character is more important than a name that is claimed and not lived up to.
- **Netser (Netzim** is plural). When asked the question, "What faith are you?", some believers come up with different terms other than "Christian". This is because of the political and negative baggage that name can carry when more than 70% of the population identifies itself as such, yet does not conduct itself as a spiritual example worthy of that light. Terms such as "believer", "servant of the Lord" and "Netser" are sometimes given as a response.<sup>203</sup>
- **Torah Christians** believe they are gentiles and that the "Church" has replaced Israel.
- **Dietary Laws.** These are kept, not as mindless rituals and rabbit's foots, but as health laws given by the Creator.<sup>204</sup> Clean and unclean animals were distinguished in Noah's ark—before the Jews existed as a people and Israel received the *Torah* at Mt. Sinai. Scripture also describes sanitary practices of sewage disposal. Now imagine if that was just another Jewish ritual. Unfortunately, the many did and ignored it in the Dark Ages and into the Renaissance as streets were disposal areas.
- **Drinking.** There is no prohibition against drinking alcoholic beverage (that I know of) which is contrary to today's belief of a majority of evangelical Christians. (See Gen 27:28; Lev. 23:13; Deut 14:26; etc.) One has to recognize that alcohol prohibition is a 19th century invention by churches which until that time had accepted drinking alcohol as being Scriptural for over 18 centuries.<sup>205</sup> The convolutions one must make to turn the Greek word *oinos* into fruit juice are extraordinary. (see *Defending the King James Bible*, 1996, by

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<sup>203</sup> John Marsing. *Netser vs Messianic*. <http://www.myhebrewbible.com/Blob/Details/808/>

<sup>204</sup> Andrew Hoy. 2013. *Eat Like Jesus*. [http://www.amazon.com/Eat-Like-Jesus-Returning-Christianity/dp/1449791298/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1424650868&sr=8-1&keywords=eat++like+jesus](http://www.amazon.com/Eat-Like-Jesus-Returning-Christianity/dp/1449791298/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1424650868&sr=8-1&keywords=eat++like+jesus)

<sup>205</sup> (See Christian Views on Alcohol in Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_views\\_on\\_alcohol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_views_on_alcohol)).

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Rev D.A. Waite, p 231 for the "juice" explanation). As Paul teaches, though, if one refrains from drinking alcohol we should not condemn them.

- **Fellowshipping.** The primary HR ministries and fellowships are *inclusive*, in contrast to the exclusiveness of some others (which apparently are in the minority). Love sees God, or His potential, in each other. Some groups have many commonalities with HR, yet maintain an exclusive flavor in their fellowship patterns such as the Sacred Name Movement.

"The mark of arrogance is the exclusiveness—defining myself in opposition to some other. The mark of love is inclusiveness. Love recognizes that I am not only capable of being each and every one of those whom I have put outside me; love goes beyond mere intellectual acknowledgment. Love says that I am, essentially, exactly what every other human being is." —Alan Lee

- **Fringes (Tzit-zit).** Many wear them, quite a number do not. The Black Obelisk in the British Museum illustrates the fringes:



The Black Obelisk is a 6.5-ft tall 4-side stone inscription found in the ruins of Nimrud, ancient capital of Assyrian empire, in northern Iraq. The Black Obelisk from Nimrud pictures five different subdued kings, including Israelite king Jehu bowing before Assyrian king Shalmaneser III c251BC. Note the fringes worn by both kings. (Note the photo makes the inscription appear brown when it is black). (Photos courtesy of Wikipedia).

Rabbis differ in their opinions on whether women should wear the fringes or not, however, Scripture is clear on this matter unlike Jewish traditions. There is no ambiguity. The "children of Israel" are required to wear them.

- **[Grow in] Grace and Knowledge.** We are all in various stages of spiritual growth. The fruit of the Spirit expresses our spiritual growth in grace and knowledge in our relationships with others and with a good conscience.
- **Hebrew Thinking versus Greek Thinking.** Hebrew thinking is an Eastern mindset that teaches the definition of faith also requires the priority of the "doing" the right actions. This is not the same as the Western (Greek)/Christian mindset that requires an individual to

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"believe" in the right doctrine without corresponding actions. Hebraic thinking, in other words, emphasizes right action over the Greek right thinking. Does that explain why 78% of America call themselves Christian and yet we are in a state of moral decay?

- **Jewish Traditions** include, the wearing of *kippa* (head cap) and prayer shawl (*tallit*), certain dances, liturgy and ceremonies. These are not Scripturally commanded but may be followed by some as a gesture of respect to the Jewish people, when they exhibit Scriptural teachings or Temple practices which aid in better understanding Scripture. Some traditions, such as the *kiddush* (which is alluded to in Genesis 14:18) predate Judaism.

Certainly such traditions are not an affront to the Creator when Scripturally permissible when compared to Christianity's adoption of prohibited heathen/pagan practices and dress which were accepted for political stability within the Roman Empire.

- **Kabbalah.** See *Talmud*.
- **Name of Church.** See *Denominational Identification and Ministry Names* above.
- **Name of God.** The HR ministries listed below do *not* require the name of Jesus/Yeshua and the Tetragrammaton (YHVH) to be pronounced in Hebrew or in one specific way (unlike the Sacred Name Movement). There is an honest question among scholars and ministries on the pronunciation. This answers the misleading false statements of "Another claim is that there is no salvation under any other name but the Hebrew name of Jesus. This claim is the essence of the Sacred Name Movement, which is also essential to the Hebraic Roots Movement." I think the writer got it wrong on both points,<sup>206</sup> but that does not mean many may believe that that way so as to create divisions. Dr. Daniel Botkin writes a short, insightful article on the SNM in which he dispels the story that the name of Jesus comes from the pagan god Zeus. He also describes the "rotten fruit" of the SNM of a "glaring lack of love for the brethren", and quotes a well known leader of the SNM who similarly states:

"The Sacred Name movement has been characterized by knowledgeable observers as a 'bunch of splintered, divided sects' and this is EXACTLY what I have found" (Emphasis his)<sup>207</sup>

I have had prayers answered in the name of Jesus before I began using his Hebrew name. As in all matters of faith, it is one's personal journey to grow in grace and knowledge. The question is:

#### QUESTION

Do many desire to stop somewhere in their spiritual journey instead of continuing to prove all things—and then require everyone else to stop with them?

- **Prophecy.** The interpretation of prophecy may be as varied as it is among Christian denominations. Unfortunately, as in Christianity, there are least two ministries in this HR Awakening which have implied or set a date for either a city to be punished by destruction or the "world to end". No doubt these ministries are now chagrined to see that this has not happened.

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<sup>206</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>207</sup> Dr. Daniel Botkin. 2015 July-Aug. Linguistic Superstition & the Sacred Name movement. Q&A, How Yeshua Became Yeshu. *Gates of Eden*. p12-21

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- **Replacement Theology.** The teaching that the Gentile Christian Church or that those called today to the Hebraic walk have *replaced* Israel as the “chosen” people—is **not** taught by HR and the COGs. (Note: 1 Cor 12:2 “Ye know that ye **were** Gentiles...” See also Eph 2:11; Rom 2:28-29; Gal 6:15-16). HR teaches that Gentiles become grafted into Israel as Paul teaches.  
**Gal 6:16** And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.
- **Sacred Name.** See **Name of God**.
- **Services.** The weekly readings of Scripture (called *parasha*) are found in many fellowships. Interactive presentations (Q&A among the members during or after services) may be conducted where there are those are present who wish to teach on a topic. This enables many to participate, as in the days of the early church and which Paul also writes.
- **Talmud.** The ministries listed in Appendix A do *not* require the study of the Jewish *Kabbalah* and/or *Talmud*, and do *not* hold either as a spiritual authority and/or recommend that they be studied. (Please note that I am incorrect, please notify me immediately). Only Scripture is considered the spiritual authority). "*Kabbalah* is today known as the mystic teachings of Judaism, and most recently popularized by Madonna"<sup>208</sup> [the rock star]. Do some ministries teach aspects of the Kabbalah? Yes. Do not panic however. One must consider all opinions. Just because some opinions are Jewish does not mean that they have no value in attempting to understand Scripture. Many Christians read other sources if information outside of their denomination. Brad Scott of Wildbranch Ministry explains:  
" {T}he bulk of it [the Kabbalah] gravitates right to the warnings given to us in Devariym (Deuteronomy) 18 . Much of it is esoteric and unprovable. I like provable things, things you can demonstrate scripturally and that have everyday meaning and purpose."<sup>209</sup>  
"I am not totally against Kabbalahism, there are things about Kabbalahistic teaching that are true. There is a good deal about it that is just esoteric nonsense, etc. But, there is a good deal about it that is true. As I have said before in these series, that I get accused of being a Kabbalahist all the time because I teach some things that Kabbalahists teach. I don't know how in the world that makes me a Kabbalahist, but that is the way, some people ignorant of the facts, think."<sup>210</sup>
- **Torah.** The *Torah* is taught in all HR ministries.
- **Trinity/Nature of God.** I have not investigated this, have not seen it discussed (except for Brad Scott), nor do I bring up or make an issue of it. Why? Does this belief give me entrance into the Kingdom? No. I wonder why some are so willing to major in the minors especially, as it seems, with new people in the faith. Even the Apostle gave only four immediate requirements to the Gentiles with their advice to be follow up with the weekly Sabbath teachings in the synagogues. I believe in God the Father and in His Son Jesus Christ as my Savior and the Holy Spirit.

If it is anything that will turn a new person "off " fast, it is the Trinity issue. The average

<sup>208</sup> Brad Scott. n.d. Kabbalah. <https://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/word-studies/47kabbalah.html>

<sup>209</sup> Brad Scott. n.d. Kabbalah. <https://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/word-studies/47kabbalah.html>

<sup>210</sup> Brad Scott. 2015. "*as the days of a tree...*" Audio CD set. Wildbranch Ministry. Vernal, UT. Disc 1 Track 4  
4.10 minute mark



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Christian does not even know his Bible, little along the controversies, and merely and blindly repeat what they have been taught by others (many times since childhood) as explained previously in religious paradigms. Give people time to grow. And if they have a different opinion than yours—just look up the transubstantiation controversy of the Middle Ages to see the fruit of what happens.

I really appreciate Brad Scott's thinking on the Nature of God issue, and that is God can be 37 penguins if he chooses to be. I might add that he also made a donkey speak. We must have a healthy respect for God's power and abilities.

- **Two-House Theology.** Moshe Koniuchowsky coined the term "Two-House" in 2000.

A civil war split the original Kingdom of Israel into the two (2) nations of The Kingdom of Judah (Judah and Benjamin) and The Kingdom of Israel (composed of the northern remaining ten tribes). Many Christians are *unaware* of this simple fact of history and mistakenly think that only Jews comprised the ancient nation of Israel. These Ten Tribes were punished for their rebellion against God by being later scattered among all the nations. In the future they will be physically reunited again with the tribes of Benjamin and Judah—today called the State of Israel.

HR adherents believe that they are grafted into the one olive tree (as Paul teaches in Rom 11) of the yet future reunited entire House of Israel (which will again include the tribe of Judah). Individually their identity as a Gentile ceases when one repents of their sins accepts Christ as Savior and becomes a *spiritual* Israelites as Paul states in **1 Cor 12:2 "Ye know that ye *were* Gentiles"**. (See also Rom 2:28-29). This is consistent with the *Torah* teaching of Exodus and Numbers whereby a stranger may become a citizen of Israel.<sup>211</sup>

**Ex 12:48** And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. 49 One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourns among you.

**Num 9:14** And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

See also Ezekiel 14:7

A stranger/Gentile wishing to accept the blood of the lamb at the Passover acknowledges YHVH as His God.

God in the *Torah* teaches against mixing different seeds. One is not allowed to graft a different species, such as an apple tree branch, into an olive tree.<sup>212</sup> (We are warned of a similar mixed seed tree called the Tree of Good and Evil). A Gentile, pictured as a *wild* olive branch, does not remain a Gentile once he is grafted into the *cared for* olive tree. A

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<sup>211</sup> Adele Berlin, Marc Zvi Brettler, Michael A. Fishbane. 2004. *The Jewish Study Bible: Jewish Publication Society Tanakh Translation*. p131  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=aDuy3p5QvEYC&pg=PA131&lpg=PA131&dq=stranger+becomes+israelite+circumcision&source=bl&ots=YKikUObx5b&sig=p8Nc5MOHRxvgHkLH19Re8VY3Yo&hl=en&sa=X&ei=ACROVcTUJI7FogTsm4DQCg&ved=0CCsQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=stranger%20becomes%20israelite%20circumcision&f=false>

<sup>212</sup> Monte Judah. 2006. The Oil of Anointing <http://lionlamb.net/v3/YAVOHArchives/Volume12/04>  
Retrieved 12/27/14

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transformation takes place when one repents and accepts Yahushua/Yeshua/Jesus as Savior and the Gentile becomes as part of the natural olive tree bearing the same life-giving force from the root and the same fruit. Interestingly, Bill Cloud has stated that it takes 3 days for a graft to begin to bind its fibers with the trunk of the tree. (The graft is called a *scion* in botanical terminology and is pronounced *si-en*. This is very similar to Zion: *zi-en*).<sup>213</sup> As Paul further clarifies:

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise". —Gal 3:28-29.

**British-Israelism** (BI) originally taught that the British Empire is the Kingdom of God. It was comprised by actual physical, genetic, ethnical direct descendents of the Ten Tribes of Israel and that the Empire replaced Israel as the chosen people. The definition of BI, as reported by its critics, has slightly changed over the past 70 years or so and it no longer defines the British Empire as the Kingdom.

Within the COGs, a primary facet of the belief may be retained by the various Herbert Armstrong derived COGs and others. That is the migrations of ancient Israel took the "lost 10 tribes" into western Europe with many physical descendents becoming individual nations of western Europe, America, Australia, Britain and Canada. The COGs believe that their membership are grafted into a Spiritual Israel—as do Hebrew Roots®—of whose members *may* or *may not* be actual physical descendents.

Within Messianic Judaism, Batya Wootten's 1998 book *Who Is Israel* apparently has much influence among the Gentile MJ membership. The book, in conjunction with her teaching on the subject since 1983, her earlier 1988 book, plus hosting conferences since 1990, may have been the genesis of a shift within MJ which helped create the fledging Hebraic Roots Awakening. Unlike the COGs which describe various individual nations as the possible descendents of the lost 10 tribes, Wootten writes little about the possible migration, but simply points the reader in a direction substantiated by Scripture, not BI:

"...we see that the descendents of the twelve tribes could be anywhere and we could not absolutely know the truth of the matter. Moreover, if the truth of the matter were made known, we probably would find a goodly number of Ephraimites in the West, because an "east wind" was sent against Ephraime, and the east winds carry toward the west. So it is that the Father says that in the last days, Ephraim "will come trembling from the west." (Hosea 13:15; 11:9-10)."<sup>214</sup>

Ephraim, in short, is often the name given to non-Jewish believers by the Redeemed Israel Alliance. The name Ephraim is used in conjunction with Judah in Ezekiel 37:16-19 and 47:23). Wootten, by the way, has described her dislike of the term "Two-House".<sup>215</sup>

I am not aware of any HR ministries teaching British-Israelism as it is defined today. *It does not matter* whether one espouses his belief in being a physical descendent or not.

<sup>213</sup> Bill Cloud. 2014. The Fullness of the Gentiles. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation\\_id=annotation\\_2969510581&feature=iv&src\\_vid=jt6kJYmhsFI&v=siWF5eFRXIA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_2969510581&feature=iv&src_vid=jt6kJYmhsFI&v=siWF5eFRXIA) Retrieved 12/27/14

<sup>214</sup> Batya Wootten. 2006. *Redeemed Israel—Reunited and Restored*. Key of David Publishing, St. Cloud, FL. 235p. p75. This is the new title of the 4th edition of her book *Who Is Israel*.

<sup>215</sup> Batya Wootten. n.d. A "One House" or "Two House" Movement? <http://www.redeemdisrael.com/a-one-house-or-two-house-movement/>

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Believers, are grafted in through our Savior Yahushua HaMaschiach /Jesus the Christ/Jesus the Anointed. Jim Staley gives an informative video series on "Identity Crisis" on You-Tube.  
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- **Ancestry/Genealogy.** A number of HR adherents are interested in whether they have a Jewish ancestry. This is probably natural due to their interest in Scripture and the *Torah*, inasmuch as some WCG members had an interest in their genealogies to determine if they had Israelite ancestry. It is a natural human inclination to investigate ones roots. (I also looked into my own genealogy due to my grandmothers maiden name which came, in part, from Scripture). In my WCG experience, I was *not* taught that I was actually a physical descendent of any of the 10 tribes because it did not matter spiritually. I was a believer and grafted into the tree (as HR also teaches). This does not mean that the COGs and HR replace Israel.
- **One-House Theology.** In contrast, Christians, Jews and Messianic Jews claim that the nation of Israel, *today*, comprises *all* of the Twelve Tribes; hence the term "One-House". The present State of Israel may contain some remnants of some of the other tribes—but that is not the same as being a reunited nation of 12 different governing states (to use the contemporary term) which can be likened to the 50 states comprising the United States of America. This would be akin to stating that Texans are Americans, albeit Texans are just one state in the Union and not all Americans are Texans. One might ask whether there are 12 tribal states—or counties—in the State of Israel today, as we have in the United States of America? No. There are none. There is no United States of Israel and no United Tribes of Israel. There is only the tribe of Judah which takes the name the State (singular) of Israel.
- **Controversy.** From what I have been able to gather, Hebraic Roots adherents generally do not find the "Two-House" belief divisive as some in Messianic-Judaism wish to make it so.

"In spite of all the Two-house teachers on board with HRN, there is no mention of the controversial doctrine which they actually teach, and have been teaching for many years. Even Eddie Chumney, nowhere in his bio is there a mention of the Two-house doctrine which he regularly teaches. It is difficult to imagine that this is an unintentional oversight".<sup>217</sup>

The reactions to Two-House theology can be emotional even at the local congregational level. It is wise to steer away from this topic when attending MJ fellowships. It appears that some just do not wish to have non-Jewish people following the basic tenets of the Jewish/Hebraic walk of faith.<sup>218 219</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Jim Staley Identity Crisis (Part 1). 2010, July 29.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzqmhvw-UZo&list=PL3hhkKGtznkDeBsKDFbKhKLZ-3cFzftDz&index=2>

<sup>217</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>218</sup> Brad Scott. 2014. *One Law, Two Sticks Position Paper*.

<http://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/articles/IAMCS.html> Retrieved 12/27/14

<sup>219</sup> Source upon request.



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Batya Wootten emphatically explains:

"Moreover, We do not believe that you have to be a physical heir of the Patriarchs to be "saved" or included in the commonwealth of Israel. Period." <sup>220</sup>

"We believe that genealogy is unprovable, for both houses, and no one can know for certain that they are an heir of the Patriarchs. However, we do not deny those who feel they might be a biological descendant of Israel, and we even offer an abundance of Scriptures that affirm this as yet unprovable, but very probable claim".<sup>221</sup>

I personally do not think feelings have much to do with this, but I know others may disagree. Batya continues:

"The true ekklesia/church/congregation/called-out ones of the New Covenant belong to Messiah Yeshua's Commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:11-22).

That Commonwealth consists of saved Jews and saved Israelites from the lost ten tribes, as well as all of their saved companions – regardless of genetic background" <sup>222</sup>

Apparently, Wootten's attempt's <sup>223</sup> to correct the erroneous statements of others made of her in a conciliatory manner consistent with Matthew 18 has met with resistance. However, in 2003, two HR evangelists met with a MJ leader to discuss these differences and apparently came to the following resolution:

"There are physical descendants from the Northern Kingdom who have accepted the redemptive work of Yeshua / Jesus, the Messiah, in every generation. However, the exact percentage that has done so is unknown. Their percentage within the entire body of Messiah is also unknown."<sup>224</sup>

Do an unknown number of HR adherents believe that they actually are the actual blood-line descendents of the lost ten tribes? I don't know. The HR conferences, holy days, and Sabbath services I have attended have made no mention of this blood-line belief. Nor have I seen it in the primary HR ministry teachings. Even the WCG under Armstrong, as I remember, did not teach that any member was a blood-line descendent. The controversy still continues as of this writing:

"In a nutshell, the Ephraimite theology, that is being propagated around this hot-bed [Kansas City, KS] states that everyone who comes to Messiah through faith is in the bloodline of Israel and the only ones who can come to Messiah

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<sup>220</sup> Batya Wootten. 2004. Dec. 22. Letter and response to Tim Hegg's paper "A Commentary on the "Two House Theory": Three Fatal Flaws." p1 of letter <http://www.redeemedisrael.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/05/1Hegg-Response-for-PDF-2013.pdf> Retrieved 5/25/15

<sup>221</sup> ibid. Batya Wootten. 2004. p8 of response

<sup>222</sup> The Alliance of Redeemed Israel. n.d. We Declare These Truths <http://www.redeemedisrael.com/we-declare-these-truths-to-be-self-evident/> Retrieved 5/25/15

<sup>223</sup> Sandy Bloomfield. n.d. *The Errors of "The Ephraimite Error"*. <http://www.redeemedisrael.com/category/protecting-the-truth/> Retrieved 6/5/15 see also Moshe Koniuschowsky response to "he Ephraimite Error" in his paper "The Truth about Israel" written in 2000. <http://familybible.org/downloads/TheTruthAboutAllIsrael.pdf>

<sup>224</sup> Hebraic Heritage Ministries. 2003. Report To The Body Of Messiah Regarding The Meeting Between Monte Judah And Eddie Chumney With Dan Juster Held March 27, 2003 In Jacksonville, Florida. <http://www.hebroots.org/twohousemeeting.htm> Retrieved 6/7/15

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are those who are direct descendents in the royal bloodline of Abraham. By focusing on controversial statements as though there are emphatic and dogmatic answers, they ignore some of the most fundamental issues to our faith. Namely the gentiles have been grafted into the Olive Tree. Specifically, that we are no longer strangers and foreigners to the covenants and promises given to Israel, but are now a part of them as the one new man.”

—Alan Lee, Lightenup Ministries <sup>225</sup>

Avi ben Mordechai explains that the resistance to Two-House teaching is because "...the movement poses a real threat to their [MJ] missionizing efforts which is primary aimed towards the Jews when in fact the Ephramite, Two-House focus is more centered on educating masses of Gentiles who need to know that they have a divine destiny to fulfill a long standing series of prophecies....The real issue among some modern day Messianic Jewish leaders who are opposed to the Two-House teaching is the strong possibility that they will lose massive donations from their high dollared, high financing, cash heavy Gentile benefactors who support Jewish evangelism and ministries aimed at getting the Jews saved. Coupled with this .....that labels us [Jews] as arrogant...it is a haughtiness of giant proportions....that simply cannot accept the fact that Yahuwa wants to show mercy toward our exiled brothers of the northern kingdom, the Gentiles, and bring them...back into the divine inheritance of the Hebrew Torah, the land of Israel [in the millennium], and the Hebrew Messiah exactly as it was described for us in Jeremiah 3:18" <sup>226</sup> **xxiv**

- Hebraic Roots adherents are *not* associated *nor* subscribe “to the anti-Semitism commonly espoused by the Christian or Israel Identity groups” as correctly stated by Wikipedia.<sup>227</sup> The messages taught by the Hebraic ministries listed below is that the term "Israel" is much more encompassing and inclusive than just being Jewish.

"Another criticism—this one accurate—aimed at British-Israel advocates is that some of their proponents incorporated racism into their beliefs. Prejudicial racist views have tarnished their reasoning, thus discrediting the historical aspects of their teachings. This is both regrettable and biblically unacceptable. Racial bigotry is most definitely not what the Bible teaches. God is not the author of such a point of view. He loves all people and commands us to do the same. The central issues we need to consider are whether many of the descendants of the 10 tribes of Israel reside in the British-descended nations today and, if so, what God expects of them." —United Church of God <sup>228</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Alan Lee. 2015. June 5: theological allusion. E-mail..

<sup>226</sup> Avi ben Mordechai, 2010, May 18. Part 1 - ONE House -TWO House

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H74MkMf4auk>

<sup>227</sup> Article *Christian Identity* in *Wikipedia* [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_identity) Retrieved 5/10/2014

<sup>228</sup> United Church of God. 2011, Feb 16. *Advocates of British-Israelism*. <http://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/booklets/the-united-states-and-britain-in-bible-prophecy/advocates-of-british>

## QUESTIONS

### Is it a Matter of Faith?

In the 1800s the Bible underwent criticism because secular history could not substantiate its writings. Many claim the Bible is mythical stories. In the ensuing years, archeological excavation have proven the Scriptures to be correct.

1. Can one simply believe in the promises to Jacob's descendents for the end days in Genesis 48 & 49 and Abraham's descendents as the sand of the sea in Genesis 32?  
No—state the critics—many Bible believing adherents today. There is no evidence that is acceptable to them.
2. Why are the western democracies richer than the rest of the underdeveloped world?<sup>229</sup>
3. Why does Hosea 12:8 specifically state Ephraim as saying "I am rich" when the USA is the richest nation on the planet?
4. Has the State of Israel which was gathered from the nations ever dwelled safely within her borders since 1948? No. So why does Ezekiel 38:11-12 state that "Israel" does dwell safely at the time of the end? Because Ezekiel is not referring to what is today called the "State of Israel" but to a nation that is known for its cattle raising and "goods"! The USA!
5. Since the churches claim we are in the end-time, who else can fulfill the Genesis 48 and 49 prophecies especially when one considers the warning to the church at Laodicea "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." (Rev 3:17)  
Ancient Israel, ancient Judah, and present day Judah ("Israel") have never fulfilled those promises. The critics offer no reasonable or historically accurate answers to this question.

\* \* \*

This why the Scriptures also state Deut 28:63-64, James 1:1, Matt 10:26, Ezk 11:16-17 (and others) and of the Great Exodus that is yet to come:  
Jer 16:13-15, 23:7-8, Isa. 11:11, Hos 11:11-12<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> To learn more where the USA is mentioned in the Bible, here are a few free download books published by the various COG spin-offs from the WCG:

William F. Dankenbring. 2004 *America and Great Britain— Our Identity Revealed*. 456p. Free. Retrieved 1/15/16 <http://www.triumphpro.com/america-book..pdf>. One has to ignore some of this author's egocentric statements to recognize that he is a good researcher. His ministry leans more to HR than to COGs and differs from the other COGs in that he sees Ephraim as the USA.

John H. Ogwyn. 2015, Sept. *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*. Living Church of God. 48p. Free. Retrieved 1/16/16 <http://www.tomorrowworld.org/booklets/the-united-states-and-great-britain-in-prophecy>  
United Church of God, an International Association. 2001, 2007. *The United States and Great Britain in Prophecy*. 110p Free Retrieved 1/16/16 . <http://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/booklets/the-united-states-and-britain-in-bible-prophecy>

<sup>230</sup> Note the Passover of II Chronicles 30:11 is Hezekiah's second month of the first year of his reign, which occurred before II Kings 18:6,9-10; and 17:18.

# V. HEBRAIC ROOTS DIFFERENCES

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- **Beards.** Few men wear unkempt beards to abide by Lev 19:27. Although this verse appears to command beards, this really does not appear to be the case. Karaite Jews, who take the Bible literally, do not grow beards because of Lev 19:27. History records that some unbelievers shaved their heads and plucked beards to observe pagan rituals and traditions. (Remember the Hollywood movies of monks with a large bald spot on their heads?) Once again, this reveals the need to investigate history, Middle East and ancient customs, and to understand the use of idioms and metaphors.<sup>231</sup>

As a human and a landscape architect, I appreciate good design and beautiful things. The Creator is a designer of beauty. I do not think an unkempt beard or wild hairy sideburns or four hanging threads from the waist is something to be admired as beauty. Just my opinion.
- **Calendars.** Many observe the traditional Jewish Rabbinic Calendar for festival dates. To a lesser extent some observe the Jewish Karaite Jewish Sighted Moon<sup>232</sup>, and to a far lesser extent others observe the Equinox Calendar (termed *Biblical Calendar* by its proponents). The Rabbinic and Sighted Moon calendars generally change the festival dates by one to a few days, whereas the Equinox calendar can change dates by an entire month. All observe the same 7th day Sabbath day of rest. The observance of the day of Shavuot / Pentecost may also vary within those observing the same calendar. The Lunar Sabbath Calendar has significant inherent issues, yet it is observed by some.
- **Dress Attire.** Some (not many) adopt several Jewish customs (e.g. prayer shawl [tallit], *tzitzit*, head cap [kippa]). One sees much more of these, however, in MJ congregations. Although not Scriptural, these are sometimes adopted by both MJ and HR adherents to show solidarity with Jewish people who do not appreciate the wearing of them outside of their faith. The Torah does direct *tzitzit* to be worn (Num 15:38; Deut 22:12). I have seen no one wear *tefillin*. Perhaps this is because of one or two reasons: 1) they are worn during weekday morning prayers by Jews, or 2) they are symbolic and not to be taken literally. (e.g. Prov 6:20, 21, neither is anyone is literally writing commandments on their heart).
- **Feast Days.** There is much information on HR and COG web sites describing and explaining the meanings of the seven "feast" days. No matter which calendar is

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<sup>231</sup> David Rogers. 2007. *The Truth About the Beard: Should Followers of Messiah Grow Their Beards?*

<http://www.bibletruth.cc/4dead.htm>; and Psalm 119 Ministries. n.d. *Can We Shave Our Beards?*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mz2jfRQGil8>

<sup>232</sup> Joseph Good. 1991. *No Man Knows the Day or Hour.*

<http://hatikva.org/no-man-knows-the-day-or-the-hour.html> Retrieved 6/14/2013.

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observed, the feast day meanings and explanations generally remain the same; however, there are two, perhaps four major differences:

1) The Hebrew word for appointment (*moed*) has been mistranslated as *feast* in the King James Version, and that error has been repeated by many in HR, MJ and COG groups. There is a separate Hebrew word for "feast" (*chag*); therefore, only 3 harvest feasts (*moedim*) are commanded. Each feast, nevertheless, remains designated as one of the 7 appointments.

2) The appointment of the Eighth Day is combined with the Feast of Sukkot (aka Tabernacles) when they are two separate appointments, and Unleavened Bread is separated into two appointments when it is only one.<sup>233 234</sup> (Passover being the other moed). The total number of appointments (7) remains the same, but the meaning of the Eighth Day, which is highly significant, may go unnoticed and perhaps, unobserved, by many Messianics when it is combined with Sukkot.

3) Pentecost/Shavuot may be observed on a different date dependent on the day the "count" begins.

4) Fellowships may not meet on all of the Feast Days and Appointments. I am in wonder why some HR ministries promote conferences in various cities around the nation, and yet do not promote Feast locations on their web sites. (Huh?) Some adherents are more willing to travel to a conference than to observe a feast day together.

- **God's Name.** The name of God (YHVH in Hebrew) can take various renditions in pronunciation. The ministries listed in Appendix A do not require that His name be pronounced in any specific manner and do not make it a source of contention to my knowledge.
- **Head coverings** (women). Very few do. Scripture does not require head coverings, but they can be culturally defined as distinguishing the married women from the single women, believers from non-believers,<sup>235 xxv</sup> and believers from temple prostitutes.<sup>236</sup>
- **Head coverings** (men).<sup>237</sup> *Kippas* / *yamakas* may be worn by some men as a show of support for the Jewish and Messianic Jewish community. There is no Scriptural prohibition against covering the head while praying.<sup>238 xxvi</sup>
- **Liturgy.** I have not seen Messianic Jewish liturgy performed in HR home fellowships but only at a HR Sukkot site and local MJ congregations. Some people enjoy structure and a religious feeling associated when attending a worship service. (We should feel good when attending a worship service). I do not see anything wrong with liturgy; however I

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<sup>233</sup> Levitt, Zola. 2012. *The Seven Feasts of Israel*. 31p.

<sup>234</sup> Biltz, Mark. 2014. *Blood Moons*. 188p

<sup>235</sup> 119 Ministries. n.d. Headcoverings. [https://s3-us-west-](https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Headcoverings.pdf)

[1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Headcoverings.pdf](https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Headcoverings.pdf)

<sup>236</sup> Wheelock, Dean and Susan. 2015, April-August. Iron Sharpens Iron. Covering the Head. *Hebrew Roots*. p27.

<sup>237</sup> Please note that this explanation is a correction from an earlier writing.

<sup>238</sup> Wheelock, Dean and Susan. 2015, April-August. Iron Sharpens Iron. Covering the Head. *Hebrew Roots*. p27.

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do not prefer it. It is a matter of apples and oranges. There is something inherent in me that does not appreciate facing east toward Jerusalem when a prayer is made. I think that mention of Daniel's example may ease the qualms of some like me.

- **Salvation.** Many new adherents in Hebrew Roots® have yet to come to the realization of the Plan of Salvation revealed through the Festivals and the appointments—particularly the Eighth Day. It is not for believers to reach a fearful emotional concern for others (family, friends, Christians, the world) who are not keeping the Torah yet are living the best they can Scripturally. Christ will save them, but in His own time and according to His plan of salvation as evidenced in His appointments.

1 John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be **the Savior of the world**. 1 John 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the **sins of the whole world**.

- **Torah Walk/Procession.** I have noticed this performed at a HR feast site and a MJ congregation. Leaders at both have explained that this tradition is not meant to be idol worship but following God as He is the Word. I have not seen the walk performed at home fellowships. It inexplicable why HR leaders, especially any of those of a former WCG background, encourage or promote this Jewish tradition and especially when HR are drawing primarily "gentiles" into the faith. If there are Jewish believers, they too will be believing in both "Testaments". *Why not use a regular Bible in a walk—or just skip the walk entirely?* Frankly, I see no place in the HR faith for this Jewish tradition. Jewish people also do not appreciate this being performed by non-Jews.
- **Worship Services.** They vary in terms of structure and songs. Enjoy the variety!

# VI. CRITICISMS & CURRENT ISSUES

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## CRITICISMS

As indicated at the beginning of this paper, various generalized criticisms are made on the internet. Some of them reflect the 7 Core Differences that have been described previously. HR adherents in this grass-roots awakening can hold to a theological Heinz 57® of beliefs. Persons new in the faith may navigate their new roles of leadership of which they may not be well equipped. Perhaps that is why Rico Cortez stated that it is "the wild West" out there. Perhaps this also may be compared to the numerous Christian denominations.

The Awakening has now coalesced into a core of HR ministries which teach the essentially commonly held beliefs. I submit that one should go the trunk of the tree, not the numerous individuals taking the name of "Hebrew Roots®" (which is a trademarked name) when exploring the roots of the faith among the many named ministries on the internet.

□ "The problem isn't the appealing, lively Jewish-style music that can be found in many Hebrew Roots and Messianic settings. It isn't in the quaint decorations or pleasant customs for the annual Feasts." <sup>239</sup>

This interesting comment reveals the appeal of being joyful in song and dance in the presence of God while worshipping not only among adults but teens and children. Perhaps these type of comments reveal a staid appeal of the traditional Christian melodies along with the disappearance of teens and young adults from some churches? True, there is no harm in quaint decorations, but perhaps other festival keeping groups should adopt such decorations and customs to add to their Sabbath and festival joys? One can build new traditions and memories. Some customs are *not* "Jewish" but Scriptural, such as the menorah and dancing in worship. The issue for Christians is not wishing to identify with anything appearing "Jewish"—which recalls the issues of the early church.

□ "What most of these people don't seem to realize is that the religion of Judaism, whether as it was practiced in the first century or as it is practiced in the 21st century, is not "the religion of the Bible....The problem is in some of the unspoken assumptions underlying the idea that true Christianity has its roots firmly in, not just the Bible, but first century Judaism." <sup>240</sup>

These writers are *quite correct* in their criticism. HR and Messianic have adopted the outward appearances of Judaism: changing their names and naming their fellowships in Hebrew, prayer shawls, music, the liturgies of prayers (instead of prayers from the heart) and observing Jewish traditions without much questioning of the "why's". It is not necessarily wrong, but why do them? Hanukkah and Purim are not *Torah* commanded feast days. Hanukkah contains myths

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<sup>239</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>240</sup> Source upon request.



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that Jewish commentators even acknowledge with contemporary observances adopted to compete with Christmas. To show support for the Jewish community is laudable; however, the Jews do not like non-Jews practicing elements of their faith. I offer the hope that HR adherents are reading these criticisms and asking the 5 W's as they read and follow His Word.

□ There are various flavors of HR with beliefs which range "from the least problematic to the greatest."<sup>241</sup>

1. Some HR ministries are not harmful when they connect the OT and NT with the Hebrew/Jewish background of Jesus with that first century Hebrew culture.
2. Some ministries research Jewish writings to make discoveries that can benefit the Christian life and belief, including Rabbi speculations. Some warn against Jewish literature because it can contain non-Biblical and pagan material.
3. Some may encourage the outward appearances and study into ancient Jewish customs obtain a deeper spiritual understanding and closeness to God.
4. Some go beyond encouragement to require the outward appearances and study of Jewish customs including Jewish " 'blessings' throughout the day."
5. The last type has "its goal is to totally undermine the faith of believers in both Jesus and the New Testament". I am unaware of such a group or is any such group named by some critics.

Two HR teachers (of which I never heard of) are named in the above source book. What I find interesting is that *not* one positive comment is made by either author (both of whom are former WCG members) on these groups keeping the Sabbath, the festivals and the desire of these people to read and follow God's word to the best of their understanding.

□ "More often than not there are no distinctions made between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant or between the Bible....."<sup>242</sup>

As Paul instructed Timothy:

2 Tim 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Core Difference #1 also explains why there is no distinction.

□ "It is obvious in much of the HRM that it's not just the study of the first century for interpretation, information, and illumination that carries the day but keeping the traditions and practices of the Jewish Talmud, which was completed long after Jesus in the years 400-500."

Core Difference #3 reveals there are distinctions between the Bible and Talmud. When I asked the writer providing the above statements, I received the response regarding the wearing of the kippas and the tallits for following the *Talmud*. Although some, but *not* many, in Hebrew Roots® wear kippas and tallits, this does *not* mean they are following the Talmud. MJ congregations allow Gentile members to wear these items to show solidarity with the Jewish people. The wearing of these garments outside MJ congregations (particularly the fringes or *tzitzit* in other venues of worship apparently only then attracts criticism from both Christians and Jews. (See Appendix B: MJ and HR Differences.) Tallits contain the fringes which are commanded Scripturally. Though I do not wish to wear a kippa, I think the tradition of the

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<sup>241</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>242</sup> All of these blue-texted sources upon request.

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Jewish garb is innocuous. A Christian minister may wear attire which is also traditional and not Scriptural.

❑ "In practice, many promoters of the HRM draw their content more from Talmudic Judaism than from Old or New Testament Judaism".

Frankly, I do not know what this writer is attempting to say without any examples, because HR does not believe in the Talmud as a Scriptural authority.

❑ "There is an almost total ignoring by the Hebrew Roots® Movement teachers of two-thirds of the New Testament...

"...the Epistles are neglected and ignored, and Galatians is skipped over..."

Core Difference #2 not only refutes these two erroneous statements, but it appears that no investigation of HR web sites<sup>243</sup> of the leading and most influential HR ministries has been undertaken which would dispel this erroneous statement. Avi ben Mordechai, a leading HR teacher, has authored a 505 page book which analyses in detail the book of *Galatians*.<sup>244</sup> I e-mailed the critic to advise him of this error in accordance with Matthew 18 and was rebuffed.

Note that these and the above assertions are all unsourced and not referenced with the the criticism that "all" HR teachers are placed into this category. Internet critics can make generalizations without providing sources for their criticisms. I would suggest that referencing the stated *beliefs* of the primary Hebrew Roots® teachers would be a good start. The 5 W's required of any good newspaper reporter are also required of critics.

On the other hand, some of these internet sites *do explain* some things correctly.

Indeed, the growth of the HRM has resulted in diverse beliefs among its new adherents as they spiritually mature. Many can construct fine looking internet web sites for their teachings. Remember, there is no Hebrew Roots® college or umbrella organization. As one mainline (for a lack of a better term) HR teacher, Rico Cortez has stated: "It's the Wild West" [out there]. These new adherents are bringing along their Christian ideas, including evangelism to win souls—even when a number are not Scripturally grounded; but, *neither* are most American Christians.

A source in the Wikipedia article on Hebrew Roots®<sup>245</sup> states:

"Geoffrey Grider. "The Hebrew Roots® Cult Movement". Retrieved 2013-11-12. The movement usually hides their beliefs and presents itself as simply seeking to educate Christians concerning their Jewish heritage. As they become acclimated to the Jewish orientation the more aberrant doctrines are slowly introduced."

Can a grass-roots movement somehow, somewhere, by someone be organized by a mass teaching system so that all of these independent home fellowships are following secret guidelines to indoctrinate people invited to their homes?

Another source, however, in the same Wikipedia article correctly states:

"What is the Hebrew Roots® movement?". Retrieved 2013-11-12. "The premise of the Hebrew Roots® movement is the belief that the Church has veered far from the true teachings and Hebrew concepts of the Bible.

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<sup>243</sup> e.g. Brad Scott on Galatians and the NT: <https://www.wildbranch.org/teachings/lessons/>  
Eddie Chumney: <http://www.hebroots.org/galatians.htm>  
Monte Judah: <http://www.messianicmarketplace.org/collections/monte-judah/products/galatians-as-taught-by-a-pro-torah-messianic-jew>

<sup>244</sup> Avi ben Mordechai 2005. *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First Century Hebraic Context*. 505p.

<sup>245</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew\\_Roots](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_Roots)

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Another source in the same article states:

The movement maintains that Christianity has been indoctrinated with the culture and beliefs of Greek and Roman philosophy and that ultimately biblical Christianity, taught in churches today, has been corrupted with a pagan imitation of the New Testament gospels. [...]

This is also correct, and most all Christian churches even acknowledge the facts of major Christian holidays being pagan in origin.<sup>246</sup> Christianity is a *new* religion.

Many affirm the existence of an original Hebrew-language New Testament and, in some cases, denigrate the existing New Testament text written in Greek. This becomes a subtle attack on the reliability of the text of our Bible. If the Greek text is unreliable and has been corrupted, as is charged by some, the Church no longer has a standard of truth."

King James Version-only believers take the stance that there are no mistranslations in the King James and other Bible versions. HR adherents do not.

□"Two-House theology and British-Israelism both take the focus off the redemptive work of Jesus Christ."<sup>247</sup>

I, partially, have to agree with this assertion based upon my experiences in the WCG—not HR. It is about growing spiritually. One can become involved in genealogies as Paul warned against, or about warning the American and British peoples about the curses for disobedience, but then—one may not. As mentioned previously, HR does not teach BI. Taken in the context of his criticism of Two-House, one would receive the impression that one's genealogy is foremost in the minds of HR adherents. I do not find this to be the case. If one is looking for differences in beliefs to criticize, a critic can make it an issue.

I would like to have seen the Messianic author of the above criticism include Hebrews 11:9 (of which Wootten writes<sup>248</sup>) in his claim that Romans 4:16-17 and Galatians 3:7-9 state the Gentiles are from Abraham and not from Isaac and Jacob (which Hebrew 11:9 apparently states otherwise).<sup>249</sup> <sup>250</sup> It seems to be an obvious omission from a dedicated Messianic teacher. We are all human, and I am not perfect—either!

The *Wikipedia* article on the "Two-House Theology" explains this controversy in greater detail.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Frank Viola and George Barna. 2008. *Pagan Christianity*. 291p.

<sup>247</sup> Source upon request

<sup>248</sup> Batya Wootten. 2006. *Redeemed Israel—Reunited and Restored*. Key of David Publishing, St. Cloud, FL.

235p. p7

<sup>249</sup> Source upon request.

1945 edition of Herbert W. Armstrong's book (of which I could not locate) of the *United States and Britain in Prophecy* is referenced instead of one of most widely disseminated editions from the 1970s onward. The first edition of the book was first published in 1954 as noted by Stephen Boston in his 2002 book *The Essential Teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong*. 284p. p141. The change in title of British Commonwealth to Britain did not occur until the 1980 edition of the book to the best of my knowledge. "Grow in grace and knowledge" is given for good reason. We may not all believe the same as we grow wiser and older in the faith. Why chose from an earlier source when a author is know by his most popular edition?

<sup>250</sup> Source upon request.

I can only wonder why the author uses the very first 1998 edition of *Who is Israel* and which of which he acknowledges is dated when the 4th edition was already published in 2006— far enough in time for his/this book

<sup>251</sup> Wikipedia. Two-House theology. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two\\_House\\_theology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two_House_theology)

❑ "One of the things that is really important to be aware of regarding this and other heretical movements is that they engage in the re-definition of terms. Once that is accomplished, those re-defined terms become fields in which seeds of questionable doctrine can be cultivated...

Redefining terms is a generalization and one can make of the above criticism pro and con. Even in newer Bible translations the underlying Hebrew and Greek words have undergone considerable change. The good example is the word "hell" in the Old Testament where it should be more properly translated as "grave". The primary and most well known Hebrew Roots teachers are not using these one-man written translations of the word, but reference the original Greek and Hebrew.

"One way that the Hebrew Roots Movement does this is to first cast doubt on the canon of Scripture that we have had from the earliest days of the Church (Body of Christ) until today. To think! No one has gotten it right until the HRM came along!

I have not seen anyone casting doubt on the canon. Casting doubt on men's interpretations of the underlying Greek and Hebrew is another matter.

"Due to their suspicion of our current Bible, some in the HRM have worked to provide us with new "translations", such as the "Restoration Scriptures", "The Hebraic Roots Version", the "Ancient Roots Translinear Bible", and the "Complete Jewish Bible".<sup>252</sup>

This is a constructive critical comment that needs to be considered by HR. The majority of Bibles I have seen used in HR meetings are the popular translations (KJV, ESV, etc) although I have seen the Complete Jewish Bible used by a clear minority. I have continually recommend the KJV because of its widespread use and the vast number of supportive writings geared to it. One must consider, however, the criticisms leveled against other new versions of the Bible over the past 30 years, cleaned up mistranslation words (such as "hell"), and how they have engaged people to read the Bible—not run away from it.

❑ "I'll give them [HR] one point: Jews and Gentiles grafted into the Root are all subject to the same Law, but it isn't Mosaic Covenant Law, it is the Law of Christ!"<sup>253</sup>

The author of this criticism gives a good explanation of grafting, however this explanation is not germane. The author does not explain that all grafting in the nursery trade is done by the manner that the article presents. The olive branches of the Jewish apostles and disciples that believed and followed Christ in the New Testament did not\* have to be cut out from the tree. The example of a completely sawn-off stump is not accurate. Do you now see the improper application of this grafting example? To make their example work, they must misinterpret the "Law of Christ" of which we learned is the same Mosaic law!

❑ Hebrew Roots teaches the Kabbalah and the Talmud.

These critics are both right and wrong—but mainly in error.

There are Jews and non-Jewish leaders/teachers in HR who have provided references to the *Talmud* as an indication of what Jewish leaders in the past have thought or taught. The same is with the *Kabbalah*.

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<sup>252</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>253</sup> Source upon request.

## VI. CRITICISMS & CURRENT ISSUES

I have personally heard two HR leaders (Brad Scott and Avi ben Mordechai) state there is a mixture of good and bad in both. Brad Scott has stated at one of his conferences is that if he agrees with something he has found in it, he will teach it. John Lightfoot (1602-1675). was an English churchman, rabbinical scholar, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and Master of St Catharine's College, Cambridge, England, had this to say about the study of the *Talmud*:

"Among all those, who have either published their own chorographical tables of the land of Canaan, or have corrected others—you can hardly find any, that have consulted with the writers of the Talmud in this matter... Let us reason, therefore... Whether, among all the means used for the correcting and polishing this, the means that the Talmud affords, should, with any merit or equity, be only refused? Why the Jewish chorography of the Jewish country should not be admitted? Certainly, it is unjust, out of prejudice, to reject, or out of ignorance not to entertain, those things, which might either yield us the profit of the chorography of that land, or stir up no unprofitable search into it... surely it is very fit, that he should... consult those authors, as being the nearest witnesses, inhibitors of the country, and such as most studiously and most religiously describe it... When, in the reading of these writers, I... compared them with the maps and tracts already published, I plainly saw... that very many things might be fetched and drawn out of these authors, which might correct the maps.... Which might some way or other hold out a light to chorography." —John Lightfoot <sup>254</sup>

Because some HR leaders teach "PaRDeS" (an acronym)—a form of Jewish Exegesis <sup>255</sup>—which does come from the *Kabbalah*—they are viewed as being heretical. PaRDeS consists of four levels of Scriptural interpretation of which no level contradicts the base meaning. <sup>xxvii</sup> It is a form of critically thinking that challenges the reader to examine Scripture from different perspectives.

Mark Biltz has been cited <sup>256</sup> to teach hidden *Kabbalah* messages in his 2014 book *Blood Moons*. Mr. Biltz simply reveals the hidden or deeper ("sod") messages of the Hebrew and the paleo-Hebrew languages. Christians from any one of the many denominations similarly expound Scripture (e.g. 666, the mark of the beast, 153, the Book of Revelation, etc.) and give their interpretation types different names when it comes to explaining hidden Bible verse and messages. One must consider truth wherever it is found; otherwise, how can we ever learn...*anything*?

Another writes than HR leaders should not be speaking at conferences hosted by those who have far-out thinking (in my diplomatic words). I agree that certain associations could cast a negative light and caution is needed, but then, should Christ not have associated with the prostitutes, winebibbers and tax collectors in his ministry? Perhaps it is the judgmental minds and eyes of others who *also* should be cautioned?

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<sup>254</sup> John Lightfoot (1602-1675). *A Commentary on the New Testament From The Talmud and Hebraica*. From his preface in the first volume. This four volume series of books (available on Amazon) was probably his most famous.

<sup>255</sup> Pardes. *Wikipedia*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pardes\\_\(Jewish\\_exegesis\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pardes_(Jewish_exegesis))

<sup>256</sup> Source upon request.

## TORAH IGNORANCE

The ignorance of the applicability of the Torah is widespread. Additionally, too many people, including religious leaders, cannot separate and distinguish the House of Judah from the House of Israel. Critics ask...and I respond:

☐ "If somebody is telling you he is a Torah observant, try to randomly pick a few commandments and see if he really observes them or not, for example, you may ask them:

☐ "Do you keep your diet 100% animal fat free, as in accordance with Leviticus 3:17?"

Where does it say 100% in this verse? The definition of fat is stated in verses 15-16, that is, if one reads the context (which is what most Christians are cautioned to do).

☐ "Do you stone your children if they curse you, as in accordance with Leviticus 20:9?" (also in Deut 21:18-21)

In the United States taking judgment into one own hands is illegal and is called vigilante justice. Judgment is reserved for the judiciary system as it was in ancient Israel. Does this question reveal that people are not cognizant of our nation's law(s)—not just the Torah? An individual cannot take judgment into his own hands. Recall the principles in Deut 17:6; 19:15.

As in ancient Israel, judgment belonged to the Levites and later the kings of Israel and Judah. God expelled the nations of Israel and Judah from their lands because of their sins. They are in exile, scattered among the nations, and except for the Jewish people (who refused to give up the Sabbath day) have lost their identity as they assimilated into the cultures of the nations that took them captive. The exiled are outside of His direct governance on a national level until they return to the promised land under His governance.

Many religious groups wish to enact their own laws but are not allowed when they conflict with our Constitution. Interestingly, Jewish writings record no significant instance where the stoning law was ever implemented.

The Jewish Virtual library in its article *Rebellious Sons*<sup>257</sup> further explains:

"There is no record of a rebellious son ever having been executed, except for a dictum of R. Jonathan stating that he had once seen such a one and sat on his grave (Sanh. 71a). However, it is an old and probably valid tradition that there never had been, nor ever will be, a rebellious son, and that the law had been pronounced for educational and deterrent purposes only, so that parents be rewarded for bringing their children up properly (ibid.; Tosef. Sanh. 11:6).

"In our times, we pay no attention to gluttonous and defiant sons, and everybody covers up the sins of his children; even where they might be liable to flogging or to capital punishment under the law, they are not even reprimanded. Many such children are leading purposeless lives and learn nothing—and we know that Jerusalem was destroyed because children loafed around and did not study" (Shab. 119b; Samuel Eliezer Edels, *ʿiddushei Halakhot ve-Aggadot*, Sanh. 71a).

☐ "Do you never shave your facial hair, as in accordance with Leviticus 19:27?"

Translations do not always convey the culture or intent of the time Scripture was written. This question is answered under "beards" topic.

☐ "Do you support the killing of gays and lesbians, as in accordance with Leviticus 20:13?"

<sup>257</sup> REBELLIOUS SON. [https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0017\\_0\\_16525.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0017_0_16525.html)



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This is explained above under the second question. Perhaps believers in Christ should be asked how they have demonstrated love to the gays and lesbians (and Jews) since the time of Christ, and even again in the past 100 years?

❑ "During the Shabbat, do you not drive or BBQ? (and if you lived before the nineteenth century, will you not turn on lights nor start the heating in the winter if you are cold?), as in accordance with Exodus 35:3?"

Where does it say this in Scripture that one cannot drive or BBQ or turn on electric lights? It is **not** in Scripture. So why do people ask this question when they claim to know the Bible? Perhaps because they are really not familiar with the Bible and repeating what everyone says or what the Jews believe? Interpretations of Exodus 35:3 have been established by the Jewish rabbis in the Talmud. Some of these same oral traditions are mentioned in the Gospel accounts. People confuse Torah with the Talmud. Look further at the Exodus account. It is referring to the gathering of wood on the Sabbath day, and may also infer the performing of one's daily labors in building a fire on the Sabbath Day. Keeping a fire lit in the ancient home on the Sabbath day by adding previously cut and gathered wood to the fire from time to time is not the same as gathering and chopping wood (no easy task) to start a fire on the Sabbath day.

❑ "Do you always wear only one kind of fabric on your body so not to mix between linen and wool, as in accordance with Deuteronomy 22:11?"

The person asking should know how many garments are actually made that way if this is such a popular method to manufacture clothing today. Would they be hard-pressed to answer? (pun intended). Some state that wool (an animal fiber) and linen (a plant fiber) do not wear well and wash well as a single garment, that the materials have different electrical properties, and/or a specific dress type of the Levitical priesthood of which no one else is to wear. The point is that this is not just a physical principle of everyday wear. But do we believe that God is smarter than us, or do we seek to prove Him wrong by our limited understanding and deny His ways of instruction? I personally believe that this refers to a prophetic spiritual principle stated as a metaphor in Ezekiel 44:17.

Perhaps some should be more considered about the ignored command of the "holy kiss" that Peter and Paul teach believers to do than what people wear?

❑ "Do you never buy fruit in the supermarket as their producers do not wait until the 5th year to start selling them? (not to mention the fact that the majority of today's supermarket food products includes corn or soy), as in accordance with Leviticus 19:23-25?"<sup>258 259</sup>

May I ask the question of where corn and soy are mentioned in these verses and how they relate to fruit trees? All believers in Christ, including Hebrew Roots adherents need to be careful of what they state and teach, do not add or take away from His Word (Deut 4:2), and to not let their conscience be defiled. Paul warns about the responsibilities of a being a teacher when one is not grounded in the Word.

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<sup>258</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>259</sup> Rather than provide an inadequate summary explanation, please refer to *Meat Sacrificed to Idols* by 119 Ministries to this question. [https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Meat%20Sacrificed%20to%20Idols.pdf](https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Meat%20Sacrificed%20to%20Idols.pdf)



### CURRENT ISSUES IN THE AWAKENING

The nineteenth century humorist Artemus Ward got it about right with his dry assessment of the Pilgrim Fathers and their motivations: 'The Puritans nobly fled from a land of despotism to a land of freedom. where they could not only enjoy their own religion, but could prevent everyone else from enjoying his.' "The New England Congregationalists who set up the Massachusetts Bay colony (1629) and other communities had no intention of building a society in which religious freedom could flourish; they wanted, instead, to establish a theocracy, a 'City upon a Hill.' As their descendent Cotton Mather later wrote, Massachusetts was "the spot on earth, which the God of heaven spied out for the seat of such evangelical, and ecclesiastical, and very remarkable transactions." The residents of the Massachusetts Bay colony believed they had a covenant with God--Anglicans, Quakers, Catholics, Baptists, not to mentioned Jews--were unwelcome in the community and vigorously persecuted if they had the temerity to settle there. Anglicans returned the compliments: Puritans who moved to Virginia were seen as a threat to the colony's peace, and were harassed accordingly." — Brooke Allen.<sup>260</sup>

What has changed in the past 2000 years among religious groups? If Hebrew Roots bears these same characteristics, will they receive the same reward as these other groups? I just ask the question.

#### *Peace within the Body*

As other denominations, the Hebrew Roots® Awakening is no longer a stranger to internal controversial issues. These issues include calendars, the pronunciation of God's name,<sup>261 262</sup> <sup>xxviii xxix</sup> new moon observances, calendar types, personal offenses, and others. After experiencing significant growth since the mid-1990s separations have now developed.

Many of these disagreements can emanate from any number of reasons: ignorance, newness in the faith (immaturity among these independent thinkers and truth seekers who are now reading their Bibles intently for the first time), a lack of a trained ministry in the local area, egotism/pride/control, favoritism, totting spiritual Babylon theological baggage, the need for more fruit of the Spirit, combining national politics (e.g. Constitution activism) with religion, etc. For those seeking to escape physically, there is nowhere to run to "come out of Babylon". The grass-roots evolution of HR brings human nature and it's wish to control and set oneself above others.

Some disagreements, such as the counting of Pentecost, are honest difficulties in understanding and apparently will not be resolved until Christ returns. Until such time, it is *not* a case for separating when 99 commonalities outweigh *one* difference.

Children and teenagers need the opportunity to have ethical and moral mature mentors in the faith that they could learn from and emulate just by observation. They are denied this when

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<sup>260</sup> Brooke Allen. 2006. *Moral Minority*. 235p; p149-150.

<sup>261</sup> More than any other belief, the name of God is probably the most emotionally charged. May I add that significant answers to my prayers in the past, *before* I became aware of the Hebrew pronunciation, have come through using the name of Jesus Christ—not His Hebrew name. The mere adoption of using a Hebrew version of the name can label a Christian pastor a Hebrew Roots® adherent.

<sup>262</sup> The name stands for character. Dennis Prager. n. d. *The Fourth Commandment: Do Not Misuse God's Name*. <http://www.prageruniversity.com/Ten-Commandments/Do-Not-Misuse-Gods-Name.html#.VNJI2c5DIU>  
Retrieved 2/4/15

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fellowship groups devolve and dissolve. As much as possible, we need to live in peace with each other (II Cor 13:11) and not discontinue fellowshiping (Heb 10:25).

**Leaders Speak Out.** Since about 2010, an increasing theme among the primary HR teachers (e.g. Eddie Chumney, Bill Cloud, Rico Cortez, Brad Scott, Dean Wheelock, etc) and various Sukkot sites (e.g. Season of Our Joy and Our Father's Festival) have been that of peace and commonalities within the faith. Unlike some ministries which are begun by ministers initiating the divisions, the primary HR teachers *are all apparently in unison* in instructing believers to remain in unity, to avoid breaking fellowship with other *Torah* observers and to continue fellowshiping together on the Sabbath days.

It is a clear, yet gentle, message which they are communicating which can be interpreted and distilled in three simple words: Please *stop it!*

In 2013 Evangelist/Teacher Brad Scott produced a CD series entitled *Six Things YHVH Hates, Yea Seven...The Imploding Hebrew Roots® Movement* in which he addressed the fragmenting. Evangelist/Teacher Rico Cortez shares the same thoughts when he commented in a speaking engagement in Glendale, Arizona in March 2014 (paraphrased): *that after two years in the Hebrew Roots® Awakening people start dividing among themselves.*

As Eddie Chumney stated in his October 8, 2014, presentation at Sukkot:

"In people's zeal for the *Torah*, wanting to follow the *Torah* and wanting to follow what is true and right...In their zeal for wanting to do things right, their overzealousness is actually causing them to violate the *Torah*. Because there are things that is and has separated those who wish to follow the *Torah*, especially in their local congregations and fellowships, because there are those that say [that one is not doing this or that *Torah* command correctly]...then they say, 'oh because you do not do it or see the way I do it or see it, I cannot have fellowship with you' ".<sup>263</sup>

Paul states:

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: ....enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions..." Gal. 5:19-20

"I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able; 3 for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men? 4 For when one says, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men? 1 Cor 3:2-4

**Change Oneself.** We are all in different classrooms in the faith (i.e. at different stages of spiritual growth and knowledge). We all have been *captured by the religious paradigms* of our past spiritual lives: either from our parents where we first received our beliefs (in the faith or otherwise), from our peers and teachers (in the faith or not) or from our own making through the idols of our hearts (Ezk 14:3-5). Let us not force-feed those younger in the faith and choke them, insist on one being right and winning a debate.

"Whether one is on the first rung of the ladder, or rung number 50, it is critical that we understand that so long as we are in Messiah, we are on the same ladder progressing in our relationship with the same God. We should expect to see far more confusion and error on the part of the believer who finds himself on the lower rungs of the ladder. If only we could spend less time being critical of where others are on the ladder, and spend more time recognizing the kinship we enjoy with all who are part of the family of

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<sup>263</sup> Eddie Chumney. 2014, October 9. Love: The Heart of Following the *Torah*.  
<http://www.sooj.org/Resources.html>

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God—even if we don't all look, act, or sound exactly the same. It is with differences that God designed the Body of Messiah, and it is this diversity that He expects us to embrace and use to His glory." —Ken Rank<sup>264</sup>

Only the Father can call and draw people. It is the Holy Spirit which will teach us (John 14:26) and them. It is critical that one's witness stand on personal example in demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit in marriage, family, work, place of worship, and community—not preaching. How can one be a "light" if we are still in the darkness of divisions? We are called to be a witness to the world—*not* to convert it. Yahushua is the Savior of the world (John 4:42). Yes, do many take it upon themselves to go out to be the savior and convert people?

What type of witness is the example of your lifestyle revealing to everyone?

Shalom or Schism?

Remember Psalm 133:1 when the feasts and Sabbaths arrive. It is not about uniformity.

We are in the times of Noah and days of Lot. Where exactly is anyone's guess. Events are now happening so fast in the world they can make my head spin.

There is a difference between a believer in Christ (knowing about God) and a disciple (or "follower") of Christ (knowing God intimately and He you)..

"Yet, how many Christians do you know who seriously pay attention to developing character like that in themselves? Not many; but of course self-development is not very exciting work for most compared to going out as an evangelist or engaging in doctrinal debates. Because of such distractions from this focus, too many Christians wind up having the same fruits that the world around them does or the same fruits, character or works that they had when they were unbelievers.

"For example, some are so intent on sharing about Jesus or arguing what they believe the Bible teaches, that they mistreat, verbally abuse, or otherwise forget to love the person. It happens commonly whether it be in person or especially over the Internet in chat rooms, message boards or email. By acting so, we have lost focus on the fruit that Jesus said identifies someone as his disciples. **[John 13:35, Gal 5:22-23 and *not* Gal 5:19-21]**

"Some Christians dismiss this problem with the claim that people with those behaviors are not "true Christians" anyway but "false Christians." Put another way, no true Christian would do such things (in the pattern of the old logical fallacy ("No True Scotsman"). Unfortunately, this explanation misses the sad fact that really all someone needs to do to be a Christian or follower of Christianity is to accept and profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior (and most would add to that requirement the need to join a church or to be baptized). Thus, people acting unlovingly do indeed fit the definition of a Christian—and therein lies the problem. **The bar to be a Christian is pretty low and different than the bar to be a follower of Jesus.** Certainly this is a shocking suggestion for a Christian reader to hear, but as we are seeing in this book, Christian theology does not always line up with the words of Jesus that it claims to follow. (This is a big reason why so many verses bother us when we read the Bible or why so many sayings of Jesus are so difficult to understand.)

"If we are tempted to dismiss the importance of this fruit or works focus, Jesus' warning about bad fruits should be considered. It contains advice on discerning individuals who come to us appearing as prophets, but it applies to fellow Christians and

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<sup>264</sup> Ken Rank. n.d. A House Divided. <http://messianicpublications.com/ken-rank/a-house-divided/>

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ourselves as well." (Matt 5:15-20) — Tim McHyde.<sup>265</sup> (above emphasis and Scriptural references are mine).

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It is clear that believers must grow in changing themselves, *not* others. It takes spiritual maturity to navigate the ongoing divisions, fellowship with others that one does not totally agree with, and grow in the fruit of the Spirit as a disciple. May you have the courage to step out to *grow* in your own spiritual lives: to *grow* in **grace and knowledge** by **proving all things**, to *grow* in **bearing spiritual fruit** (Gal 5:22-23; Matt 13:23), to *grow* in **being an overcomer** (Rev 2 and 3), to **forgive** others, to have a **good conscience** towards God, and to **stand in the gap** for our nation. It is more than just knowing "about" God, but *knowing* God—and He *you*—in a personal relationship!

### Judaism

Unfortunately, there are some in Hebraic Roots who are embracing Judaism and forsaking the Messiah.<sup>266</sup> A Hebrew liturgy and special dress attire can reflect a type of religiosity that some find appealing from the similar attire found in Christian ministries and Catholicism. Is it because they find this allure, along with that of Jewish heritage, Sabbath worship structure and rituals, so rewarding, fascinating and their Christian Scriptural foundation unknowingly weak that they desire to embrace Judaism? Critics have also noted MJ Gentile Christians forsaking the faith for Judaism. I do not know if the core HR ministries are actively addressing this issue.

### Enthusiasm and Spiritual Immaturity

Many new to the HR walk of faith emphasize *Torah* and shunning sin and for good reason. They may have their heads in the Scriptures for the first time in their lives. It is natural to be filled with an enthusiasm for His Word that others shout "legalism"—when these others do not even know their own Bible as national surveys have pointed out time after time.<sup>267</sup> As in any faith without a pastor to actively lead them, individuals can embrace beliefs from A to Z. Based upon the criticisms on the internet, HR can also be a smorgasbord of beliefs.

### Judging Others

On the other hand, overzealousness can lead to Pharisee attitudes<sup>268</sup> by judging others. Are they observing the feasts? Are they doing this? What about that? Do many gain their level of spirituality by marking off on their own personal checklists as to what they have done to fulfill the Torah and others have not? Have they forgotten that is about His saving grace? Not their righteous works which save?

As an example, I have been told that an occasional motorcycle ride out into the country is not Sabbath keeping, while another has been told the same about their horseback riding. Hmm. Others, when hosted as guests, have searched for leavening in a host's private home without the host's knowledge.

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<sup>265</sup> Tim McHyde. 2015. *Know the Future*. 8th Ed. Revised. 185p; p167-168.

<sup>266</sup> Mike Bacon. 2009. Phil Ohst, co-leader of B'nei Avraham Congregation, Phoenix, AZ. 2009, personal statement about people forsaking the Messiah in the Messianic Movement for Judaism.

<sup>267</sup> Cathy Lynn Grossman. 2010, Sept. 29. Most Americans believe in God but don't know religious tenets. *USA Today*. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-09-28-pew28\\_ST\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2010-09-28-pew28_ST_N.htm)

<sup>268</sup> Zac Poonen. 2010. *Fifty Marks of the Pharisees*.  
[http://www.cfcindia.com/web/mainpages/book\\_window.php?book=fifty\\_marks\\_of\\_pharisees](http://www.cfcindia.com/web/mainpages/book_window.php?book=fifty_marks_of_pharisees) Retrieved 2/23/15

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In lieu of love and the fruit of the Spirit, some may condemn Christians for not repenting and adhering to Torah. Let us be reminded that many are *not* called during this age. The lessons of the God's Feasts reveal that there is more than one harvest of souls along with the tremendous meaning of the *moed* of the Eighth Day. These lessons need to be learned and understood in the HR community of believers. We are not sent to convert the world as Christianity attempts to do. Yet how many in HR have not learned this?

Believers today need to overcome and grow in the fruit of the Spirit—and hearing His voice. What do I mean by hearing His Voice? Rather than describe my personal experiences, watch and listen to what Norman Willis has to say on this subject.<sup>269</sup>

### **My Way or the Highway**

One Arizona HR fellowship of about 25 people evaporated in 2014 because the gracious hosts of the weekly home Sabbath wished and insisted everyone arrive *on time* and let them know if they were coming or not (a lunch was always prepared). Continuous late or non-arrivals by a number of attendees were creating increasing disruptions in the services. The departing individuals did not like this control and packed their bags. Currently they are not meeting anywhere. Sad, if not silly, but true story. Yet, I have heard another similar story in two Arkansas fellowships where meetings cannot begin on time. Lateness is permitted out of "love" to the latecomers. Why is tolerated to no end?

People write about the increasing rudeness occurring across America in the past 20 years, yet some (many?) people who believe in God think they are exceptions to the (or any) rule. Does it seem that only other people are rude—not we God-fearing individuals?

Sometimes such a minor issue may be the result of a larger elephant in the room which no one has the courage to address. What is the story in your fellowship / congregation? It does not have to be Hebrew Roots®; it might be Christian. Is the fruit of the Spirit evident? <sup>270 271 272</sup>

### **Extending Shalom**

Since being involved in Hebrew Roots® now for several years, I learned that theological fractures that are dissolving friendships are increasing.

In one instance, it was the visit of a leading Messianic leader to his former congregation of which he pastored just a few years previously. The present congregational co-leaders denied him the opportunity to speak before his old congregation because of the former pastor's doctrinal change in *Torah* applicability for both Jew and Gentile. He no longer taught that the *Torah* was applicable to both Gentile and Jew.

Old friends and members were denied the opportunity of old times and fellowship for fear of the former pastor insidiously introducing his new theology into his message to his former congregation.

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<sup>269</sup> Norman Willis. n.d. *Spirit and Truth: Hearing Yahweh's Voice*

<http://www.nazareneisrael.org/media/video/spirit-and-truth-hearing-yahwehs-voice/>

<sup>270</sup> Watch this short minute news report on the prevailing lateness trend in the nation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1QCak0toFcY> Retrieved 2/4/15

<sup>271</sup> Greg Savage. 10/28/2013 Updated: 01/23/2014 How Did It Get to Be 'OK' for People to Be Late for Everything? Retrieved 2/4/15

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-savage/lateness\\_b\\_4169441.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/greg-savage/lateness_b_4169441.html) Retrieved 2/4/15

<sup>272</sup> Laura Schocker. 11/07/2013 This Is Why You're Late All The Time (And What To Do About It) [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/07/psychology-lateness\\_n\\_4229057.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/07/psychology-lateness_n_4229057.html) Retrieved 2/4/15

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I have and had an issue with this. This is **not** Shalom. I do not doubt that many do not agree with me on this.

Since his appearance apparently was a friendly, hello, how ya'll doing visit, why could this former pastor have been approached to gain his acquiescence to not speak "here nor there" on this topic, and allow him to enjoy the fellowship of his former congregants? There are many other topics to speak on which the co-leaders could have approved. Why were the co-leaders so fearful of what he would say if the congregation was strong and knew their own theological stance on the subject. Is this not the duty of co-leaders to adequately teach their congregants?

To forgo "he said, she said" controversies that could later arise, could not he and the co-leaders had a agreement to confirm his non-divisive message and a resultant audio recording made of the message? After all, *both organizations are teaching about covenants...right?!* Breaking one's word would definitely place one in a ministerial corner for breach of trust.

The MJAA and the UMJC prohibit messianic musicians to play at their event if they play at MIA events (even though the MIA<sup>273</sup> has no such prohibition).<sup>274</sup>

This reminded me of the WCG spin-offs which did not allow a COG minister to speak before another COG congregation without the approval of the visiting ministers COG hierarchy. Otherwise the minister was reprimanded notwithstanding the content of his message or the group he was speaking to. The religious politics, control, and concern over people's tithes were still evident.

### **On a More Personal Note**

Although my father took me to the weekly Catholic Sunday School for communion and confirmation teachings, I was not given any home religious teaching. I began reading the red-lettered Bible about the 7th grade. In my senior high school year I began keeping Sunday as the Sabbath by not doing my chores and not mentioning anything to my parents. Not that I was ever given chores by my parents, I had just assumed them without being asked so they did not know the difference. I was not comfortable talking about religion with my parents because mom did not wish to go to church even after being repeatedly asked.

I first heard Garner Ted Armstrong in 1967. This is where I learned that the 7th day is not Sunday. I became "gung--ho" about what he and this church was teaching. In 1972 I was baptized and in 1986 I moved to California. Within the year upon my arrival, I had made friends with a sharp attorney and his wife in a local church of about 350 people. As I would initiate spiritual conversations with him, he later asked me (paraphrased), "What is going on, Mike? No one wishes to engage in a spiritual conversation (at church)." I responded "I know". My experience over the years was this was not happening only in Southern California.

In 1990 I mentioned to God that "the Work" could not go on any further. It was *not* that I disagreed with the primary doctrinal basis of the WCG. The divisive doctrinal changes did not occur until 1995. I did not wish to see any more unmarrieds come into the organization and have their lives impacted negatively, as mine, because of the church's policies and actions towards them along with other actions taking place. The spiritual stagnation and the spiritual disengagement of the ministry and members were disheartening and frustrating for me to further engage in. Hardly anyone wished to engage in a spiritual conversation. The ministry

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<sup>273</sup> The MIA is now called the Redeemed Israel Alliance (RDA).

<sup>274</sup> Messianic Israel Alliance. 2011, August. Boot Camp 2. *The Messianic Israel Alliance Herald*. p3

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refused to answer my non-doctrinal questions when asked in a respectful manner. Why was I coming to church at all when I was no longer learning much, hardly anyone wished to speak about the Bible, and I was merely warming a seat without being able to be of much service in California?

By about 1991 I had left the Worldwide Church of God. But there was no where else for me to attend a church. My departure, perhaps, may have been unlike most others. I did not formally terminate my membership from the church. Nor did I create any fuss. Without telling anyone, I quietly and gradually left the church which had been a primary focus and involvement in activities from A-Z for some 22 years. No one called to inquire about my absence (as I later learned when others also departed). The hardness of heart and lack of support by many (but not all) church leaders for the unmarrieds others continued until 2012<sup>275</sup> until which time I lost track. When the church needed help, members were to be there for the leadership. When unmarrieds needed help, it was interpreted as a hand-out and laziness even when they had good jobs. When I saw the signs outside my train window being posted by the new church administration that the bridge was out, I thought it wise to depart yet keep the faith. The train wreck occurred in 1995.

This is mentioned because members of the WCG, including myself, were taught many good things: Sabbath, feasts (hallmark beliefs of the church), love, loyalty, service, commandment keeping, forgiveness, dedication, etc. When the slow moving coup occurred and collapsed the doctrinal foundation, people did not rally to one remnant church, they fractured into about 400 today. Many wondered "what happened?" and became discouraged and a number angry.

Today, I do not know of one instance where the larger ministries of these COGs encourage the regathering of members at a common site even at any one of the hallmark feast days. I know Christ allows these divisions for a reason. Perhaps it is to give people the opportunity to spiritually grow and mature individually by establishing a stronger relationship with Him through the crisis of the church's fracturing?

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What happened to those ideals that the WCG taught?

Members in the former WCG were instructed that if they did not *do* what they were supposed to "do", that God would raise up another people to *do*.

Is there a lesson here for HR? I think so.

What is HR supposed to "do"? Become another big organized church with a publishing and media empire to spread the gospel?

Or something else?

Can the Hebrew Roots® Awakening be compared to the first two Great Awakenings?  
We will all find out down the road as prophecy and God's Plan of Salvation unfolds for both HR and the COGs.

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<sup>275</sup> Source upon request.



# VII. CONGREGATIONS

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Being a grass-roots *awakening*, most believers fellowship and worship in homes, while others may prefer to rent meeting rooms or other local church buildings if available. The average size of a fellowship is about 25 people.<sup>276</sup> Holy Days and Feast typically see higher attendance with more than one congregation and/or fellowship coming together from different localities.<sup>277</sup> According to a definition by Monte Judah, a congregation has a leader; while a fellowship does not have a designated leader; however, the hospitality of the hosting homeowner is respected with him/her in authority to insure order and respect is adhered to for the benefit of everyone. A fellowship also rotates leadership.<sup>278</sup>

There is no formal estimate available as to the number of adherents to the Hebraic Roots theology or the number of fellowships / congregations. One investigative writer reports 200,000 to 300,000.<sup>279</sup> Batya Wootten mentioned 250,00 in the MJ faith in 2004,<sup>280</sup> and another detracting web site reports "millions of devotees across the globe"—no doubt in hyperbole regarding the rapid rise of the Awakening and its impact on traditional Christian theology. It is most probably closer to the former than to the latter. It is international in scope with Hebraic Roots Ministries scheduling presentations at overseas locations on six continents. The numbers of HR fellowships are not known, although there are about 750 Messianic Jewish Congregations worldwide with about 350 in the US and 150 in Israel.

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<sup>276</sup> Mike Bacon. 2007. Bnei Israel leadership meeting in Paulden, AZ, 2007. Response by the presenter, Boaz Michael of the Fruits of Zion Ministry, when asked the question. It was an indefinite answer as to the applicability between MJ and HR groups, since I was not aware at that time, of the Two-House theological issue..

<sup>277</sup> Season of Our Joy <http://season-of-our-joy.com/> and <http://www.ourfathersfestival.net>

<sup>278</sup> in part: Monte Judah CD series *How to Start a Messianic Congregation*.  
<http://www.redeemedisrael.com/wpcontent/uploads/2013/05/1Hegg-Response-for-PDF-2013.pdf>

<sup>279</sup> Menachem Kaiser, 2014 Feb.4. *For Some Believers Trying To Connect With Jesus, the Answer Is To Live Like a Jew*. <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/161086/observing-torah-like-jesus?all=1>

<sup>280</sup> Batya Wootten. 2004. Dec. 22. Letter and response to Tim Hegg's paper "A Commentary on the "Two House Theory": Three Fatal Flaws."

## Appendix A: HR Ministries

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These Hebrew / Hebraic Roots ministries exhibit many commonalities and probably exhibit the conservative middle of the road in the HR *Awakening*, rather than those on the fringe which may gather more attention—and criticism—for their beliefs (e.g. exclusionary based upon sacred name pronunciation, calendar, etc), personal issues and which may focus on the minors not the majors of the walk in the faith. Some Christians, including church pastors unrelated to Hebrew Roots®, have been labeled as HR just for using the name *Yeshua* instead of Jesus, and *Yahweh* or *Yahuwah* (etc) instead of "God" or "the LORD" or "Adonai". Labels and ignorance can be so dividing.

These ministries may comprise the most influential within the HR Awakening and are listed in alphabetical order. Those **names** highlighted in blue are recommended for providing free literature for a foundation in Hebraic Roots teachings:

Daniel Botkin: <http://www.gatesofeden.org/>

Eddie Chumney: <http://www.hebroots.com/>

Bill Cloud: <http://www.billcloud.com>

Rico Cortes: <http://wisdomintorah.com/>

William F. Dankenbring: <http://www.triumphpro.com/> Formerly of the WCG, he is recommended for his dedicated researched writings which are mostly available for free on his web site. One has to ignore some of his egocentric statements..

Joe Good: <http://hatikva.org/>

Monte Judah: <http://lionlamb.net/v3/>

Hebrew Nation Radio: <http://hebrewnationradio.com/>

Hebraic Roots Network: <http://hebraicrootsnetwork.com/>

Tim Kelley: <http://amiyisrael.org/>

Lee Miller: <http://houseofdauidfellowship.com>

Brad Scott: <http://www.wildbranch.org/>

Season of Our Joy: <http://season-of-our-joy.com/>

Dean & Susan Wheelock: <http://www.hebrewroots.net/>

*I have not been able to explore these HR ministries in depth; however, they do express commonalities.*

119ministries: <http://119ministries.com/index.aspx>

Avi Ben Mordechai: <http://www.m7000.com/>

Mark Biltz: <http://www.elshaddaiministries.us/> Although he is not a believer in Two House Theology, his ministry has valued teachings on the Torah.

Diana Dye: [www.foundationsintorah.com](http://www.foundationsintorah.com)

Tony Robinson: <http://www.restorationoftorah.org/>

Michael Rood: <http://aroodawakening.tv/>

Jim Staley: <http://www.passionfortruth.com/>

Angus and Batya Wootten: <http://www.redeemedisrael.com/who-we-are-2/>

# Appendix B: MJ, Jewish and HR Differences

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Messianic Judaism and Hebrew Roots® have many affinities;<sup>281</sup> however, there are significant differences. This appendix is prepared separately and not included within the core differences.

## Liturgy

Liturgy plays an important role in MJ as contrasted with smaller HR home fellowships.

## Torah

Judaism considers the *Torah* as their heritage belonging to no one else. It teaches that Gentiles are not obligated to observe the Torah. They only need observe the Noachide Laws.<sup>282</sup> In other words, Christians *should not even keep* all of the Ten Commandments. So there we have a major difference with Christianity, little alone Hebrew Roots®.

Jewish people do not consider HR Torah observant when the written Torah is not observed as Jews observe it in accordance with the *Talmud*.<sup>283</sup>

Messianic Judaism, as an evangelical effort of Christianity, follows in the steps of Judaism by teaching two laws: the New Testament/Covenant for Christians (i.e. Gentiles) and the Torah/Old Covenant for Messianic Jews. The reason is that the Jews are still a special covenant people who are still required to keep the *Torah*. Messianic teacher Boaz Michael explains Jewish thought:

"Furthermore, Jewish dietary laws, religious apparel, and distinctive customs have always identified the Jewish people as a distinct people group and prevented them from being completely assimilated in the cultures and peoples among whom they have been dispersed.

"Any challenge to this identity is likely to be perceived, from a Jewish perspective, as an attack on the Jewish people themselves."<sup>284</sup>

Revealing a contrasting viewpoint, Batya Wootten explains:

"Boaz Michael (First Fruits of Zion), Hegg, and much of Messianic Judaism seem to think that descendants of Judah have a greater right to be acknowledged as heirs because most of them know about Torah and their heritage. Conversely, they believe those who feel they are heirs of brother Joseph are not to be regarded in the same way because their heritage is "unprovable." It is essentially argued that they have not obeyed Torah and have not kept the feasts, and thus are disqualified."<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p11.

<sup>282</sup> Jewish Virtual Library. *Jewish Concepts: The Seven Noachide Laws*.

[https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/The\\_Seven\\_Noahide\\_Laws.html](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/The_Seven_Noahide_Laws.html) Retrieved 5/18/15. The seven laws of Noah's time are listed in Midrash Genesis Rabbah 16:6 (Soncino edition, p. 131), Sanhedrin 56 a, b; and Midrash Song of Songs Rabbah 1:2(5) (Soncino edition, pp. 26-27).

The sabbath is not one of them. They are commonly listed as seven, however, others say there could others.

<sup>283</sup> Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p19.

<sup>284</sup> Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p38.

However, as Monty Judah and Eddie Chumney state:

"Therefore, those joining with Judah in the Messianic movement should observe the custom and culture with proper protocol rendering no disrespect to anyone. We also believe there is a difference between commandment and custom and teaching the observance of commandment while honoring custom."<sup>286</sup>

The WCG and its splinters, without calling itself Torah Observant, do keep most of the OT "laws" and believe in BI to one degree or another. Perhaps a reason they have not come under such severe criticism by the MJ or Jewish community is because they do not adopt Jewish customs/traditions and are non-proselyting.

### Replacement Theology

Replacement Theology is commonly defined where Christianity considers itself to have replaced the Jewish people as God's chosen people and that the New Covenant replaces or supercedes (called supersessionism) the Old Covenant.

The Jewish people, however, have a different definition: *Replacement Theology is those that teach obedience to Torah other than the Jewish people.*

...their [Hebrew Roots®] "Israel-obsession" is driven by the common idea, whether stated or implied, that they ARE Israel. The idea is based on replacing the Jews as the true Israel, through the keeping of the law given at Sinai.<sup>287</sup>

There is nowhere in Hebrew Root literature, that I am aware, that teaches HR adherents replace Israel by keeping the Torah. As Dan Juster, pastor for 27 years, founding President (1979-1986) of the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregation (UMJC) and General Secretary (1996-1998) further explains:

"Monty [Judah] and Eddie [Chumney] are not encouraging Christians to move to Israel or claim their inheritance in the present Israel."<sup>288</sup>

### Two-House Theology

Boaz Michaels again explains the Jewish perspective:

"Two-House, like traditional succession Christian theology, makes no distinction between Jew and believing Gentile....it claims that believing Gentiles are actually Israelites (a term that in Judaism is restricted to Jews). The effect, though, is the same: being Jewish doesn't matter anymore. It is not special, unique, distinctive status, for it

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<sup>285</sup> Batya Wootten. 2004. Dec. 22. Letter and Response to Tim Hegg's paper "A Commentary on the 'Two House Theory': Three Fatal Flaws." <http://www.redeemedisrael.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/1Hegg-Response-for-PDF-2013.pdf> p5

<sup>286</sup> Hebraic Heritage Ministries. 2003. Report To The Body Of Messiah Regarding The Meeting Between Monte Judah And Eddie Chumney With Dan Juster Held March 27, 2003 In Jacksonville, Florida. <http://www.hebroots.org/twohousemeeting.htm> Retrieved 6/7/15

<sup>287</sup> Source upon request.

<sup>288</sup> Dan Juster. 2003, July 18. Reply To Eddie Chumney And Monte Judah's Position Paper On The Two Houses of Israel in Hebraic Heritage Ministries. 2003. Report To The Body Of Messiah Regarding The Meeting Between Monte Judah And Eddie Chumney With Dan Juster Held March 27, 2003 In Jacksonville, Florida. <http://www.hebroots.org/twohousemeeting.htm> Retrieved 6/7/15

means nothing to be Jewish if anyone can make a legitimate claim to being Jewish. The net effect is that Jews are no longer considered a distinct people, In essence Jews become extinct." <sup>289</sup>

He is correct in stating that Hebrew Roots® rejects the *Talmud* as a spiritually authority. (He combines HR with the term Two-House).

"Two-House proponents, though, largely reject Judaism and its traditions. They make claim on the rights and responsibilities of the Jewish people without taking the steps to be recognized by the Jewish people as Jews..." <sup>290</sup>

His statements reveal that the Jewish people *own* the name of Israel and the Rabbis have the rights to interpreting the *Torah*—which is established by the *Talmud*.

"...Two-House theology grants its followers... entitlements to the name "Israel", entitlement to interpret the Mosaic Law independently of Jewish (and Christian) exegetical tradition, even entitlement to the Right of Return—and while Ephraimites believe they are practicing a biblically sanctioned religion in solidarity with the Jewish people, the fact that the Jews do not accept their claims will almost inevitably result in a negative stance taken toward the Jewish people." <sup>291</sup>

I would again direct the reader to the book *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah* by Daniel Gruber (and the End Notes) to discover the authority that the Jewish Rabbi's have assumed, and from whom Christianity has taken a number of their beliefs.

Dan Juster clarifies a relationship reached in 2003 regarding Two-House theology:

"My concern with some of the Two House views had to do with their being border line heresy or even actual heresy because the N. T. emphasis on the Gospel being offered to all peoples was down played and the N. T. was interpreted to mean that the preaching of the Gospel today is mostly an offer of salvation to Judah and the lost northern tribes of Israel. In addition, it was of concern that there was teaching that Christians should claim their part in the land of Israel, which could be understood in a way of displacement.

"Monty and Eddie do not hold these views and **should be treated as brothers with whom we are in fellowship**. This does not mean that I agree with all their emphases, but that is a different matter than heresy..."

"Monty and Eddie hold that the Body of Believers is gathering people who are physical descendants from the lost tribes in significant numbers. They do not claim to know the numbers. They embrace that the Body includes multitudes from all nations as well. However, they see the Body of Believers as having an "Israeliteish" character. While I do not agree with the emphasis on the lost tribes, I do not see this as heresy." <sup>292</sup>

### Orthodox Jews and the Ten Tribes

In contrast, the "Ingathering of the Exiles and the reuniting of Ephraim (Ten Lost Tribes) with Judah and Ephraim returning to *Torah* is a fundamental and foundational belief of Orthodox Judaism. It is one of the 13 articles of Jewish faith and a prayer for the Messianic Redemption /

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<sup>289</sup> Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p38

<sup>290</sup> Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p39.

<sup>291</sup> Boaz Michael. 2012. *Twelve Gates*. Firstfruits of Zion, Marshfield, MO. 75p. p39.

<sup>292</sup> Dan Juster. 2003, July 18. Reply To Eddie Chumney And Monte Judah's Position Paper On The Two Houses of Israel in Hebraic Heritage Ministries. 2003. Report To The Body Of Messiah Regarding The Meeting Between Monte Judah And Eddie Chumney With Dan Juster Held March 27, 2003 In Jacksonville, Florida. <http://www.hebroots.org/twohousemeeting.htm> Retrieved 6/7/15

Restoration of both houses of Israel is prayed THREE times a day by Orthodox Jews...<sup>293</sup> The orthodox “Jewish view of the Ten Lost Tribes is that they would have the status of Gentiles in the end of days] to Orthodox Judaism (Yebamoth 16b).<sup>294</sup>

“It is the Orthodox Jewish view (and also the view of the *Torah* and the Prophets) that the future Messianic redemption (restoration and reunification of both houses of Israel at the advent of the Messianic Era—Ezekiel 37:15-28) will be a parallel of the historical Egyptian redemption but on a GLOBAL scale....

“In popular literature and also in popular Orthodox Jewish Literature you may sometimes come across references to all of the Israelites as "Jews" but this is obvious in its meaning. The present day Jewish people consists mainly of people from the Tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi with many from Simeon and some minority representation of the other tribes. It is recognized that most of the northern Ten Tribes were exiled and "lost" their identity but in the future will return. Abarbanel in "Mashmia Yishua" says that belief in the return of the Lost Ten Tribes is the same as belief in the Bible: if you deny one you deny the other.” —Eddie Chumney.<sup>295 296 297</sup>

### The Name "Israel"

The Kingdom of Judah was taken captive to Babylon along with some other Israelites from the Ten Tribes who migrated down from Kingdom of Israel prior to their deportation to Assyria. Judah returned to the land 70 years afterwards, was later assimilated into the Roman province called Judea, scattered and persecuted throughout the nations for 2,000 years after the Bar Kochba rebellion in c135 A.D, and called themselves Jews as they were likewise called by others for all of these years.

In 1948 the Jewish homeland was named Israel. Aharon Reuveni (1886-1972), a Hebrew writer, has claimed it was his idea in a letter dated in 1947, not David Ben-Gurion, to name the Jewish homeland as Israel—not Judea.<sup>298</sup>

## A FAIR QUESTION

*Who took whose name and now claims it is as theirs?*

<sup>293</sup> Eddie Chumney personal correspondence with Yair Davidy -

[http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0102/010201\\_g.html](http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0102/010201_g.html)

<sup>294</sup> Eddie Chumney. [http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0103/010312\\_d.html](http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0103/010312_d.html) Retrieved 5/4/2014. This and Eddie Chumney personal correspondence with Yair Davidy

[http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0102/010201\\_g.html](http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0102/010201_g.html)

and Bill Cloud. 2014. The Fullness of the Gentiles.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation\\_id=annotation\\_2969510581&feature=iv&src\\_vid=jt6kJYmhsFI&v=siWF5eFRXIA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_2969510581&feature=iv&src_vid=jt6kJYmhsFI&v=siWF5eFRXIA) Retrieved 12/27/14 This source also reproduces the same articles from the Chabad (Chassidic Orthodox Jews) which explains their aforementioned belief in the end times reunification of the Lost Ten Tribes.

<sup>295</sup> Eddie Chumney. [http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0103/010312\\_d.html](http://www.hebrewroots.org/hebrewrootsarchive/0103/010312_d.html) Retrieved 5/4/2014.

<sup>296</sup> ArtScroll Tanach Series says of the noted Rambam (Moshe Ben Nachman), in his comments on Ezra: “Rambam maintains that the Ten Tribes did not return to the Land...The Jewish settlers in Jerusalem consisted only of members of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin and a few representatives of other tribes.” [Ezra, Mesorah, 1984, p 151.]

<sup>297</sup> “Belief in the continued existence of the ten tribes was regarded as an incontrovertible fact during the whole period of the Second Temple and of the Talmud.” (Encyclopaedia Judaica, “Ten Lost Tribes.”)

<sup>298</sup> Haaretz. 2008, May 7. why not Judea? Zion? State of the Hebrews? <http://www.haaretz.com/why-not-judea-zion-state-of-the-hebrews-1.245441>

The messages taught by the Hebraic ministries listed in Appendix A is that the term "Israel" is much more encompassing and inclusive than just being Jewish.

### **Provoke Jews to Jealousy**

This is a phrase that I first heard mentioned among Messianics. The phrase is taken from Rom 10:19 and 11:11. Is it happening—*today*?

"Gimme Back My Messiah! Let's understand what it means to make them jealous for Messiah. As God is jealous when something takes His people away from Him, so Israel is to be made jealous by Gentile believers enjoying Israel's blessings. But we only get jealous about what is ours to begin with. If someone kisses his own wife, it doesn't bother me one bit. But if someone tries that with my wife, look out, I get jealous! As Jewish people, we don't get jealous over Easter eggs, Santa Claus, etc. But when we see Gentiles praying to the God of Israel, speaking personally of Messiah, enjoying the blessings of His promises, that which we once rejected... this gets us jealous!" —Sam Nadar.<sup>299</sup>

### **A Caveat**

I do not think it is wise to not mention the term Two-House or any one of the HR teachers who espouse the viewpoint when attending a MJ congregation. It could elicit an immediate emotional reaction by others.

### **Conclusion**

At the conclusion of this present age, HR adherents with their Torah observant beliefs will be labeled as "Jewish" and an unknown number will suffer persecution for being categorized with their Jewish Torah keeping brethren. Perhaps only then will the Jewish community, as a whole, recognize the sacrifice that is being made by those who wish to be Torah observant.

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<sup>299</sup> Sam Nadar. Jewish Evangelism and Discipleship: The Gentile Great Commission.  
<http://www.messianicassociation.org/ezine18-sn.gentilegc>



## Appendix C: COG and HR Differences

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Hebrew Roots® and the various Churches of God that separated from the Worldwide Church of God have many affinities. They are brothers and sisters in the faith and within the Body of Christ. Yet...there are several significant differences that exist. Any relationship between the COGs and HR rests on their ability and willingness to reach unity through common ground. This is questionable at the present time due to the number (350+) of spin-offs from the former WCG, the "baggage" of these spin-offs, and the ability of new people to associate with these COGs.

### Church of God Name

The name "Church of God" (taken from New Testament epistles) is not seen among any Hebraic Roots groups thus far.

### COG Teachings

For those without regular fellowship and wishing to learn the Bible, attending a COG is significantly edifying. The presentations/sermons can be compared to a classroom teaching and one can see many taking notes. One may have fellowship for years in a COG body and learn much.

In spite of his later difficulties in life in administrating the WCG, Herbert W. Armstrong and his wife were pioneers in the returning to the roots of the faith in the 20th century as they began keeping the feasts and Sabbaths in the 1930s—far before many any gentile influx into Messianic Judaism. Many members of the spin-off COGs have likewise been keeping the feasts for scores of years. These COGs have continued to teach the observance of the feast days. The four main pillars of any COG are 1) sabbaths, 2) feasts, 3) unclean foods, and 4) tithing. For many, it may also include a fifth pillar: church government.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of any of its leaders,<sup>300</sup> the Living Church of God and the United Church of God, and probably other COGs, can be recommended and commended for their publications and TV programs. These have continued the former WCG's excellent educational TV telecasts, sermons and writings. Many COGs continue to offer free literature which in many instances provides a basic Scriptural foundation for those new to the HR walk, and also educational tools for successful living in this evil world. Take advantage of the free literature available for free on the internet or by mail request.

### Attending a COG

If fellowship with HR adherents is not available, one should definitely consider attending a COG. Even if a small HR fellowship is available, I would still recommend attending a COG on an occasional and individual basis (if that COG allows it) especially on a feast day when the Body of Christ should assemble as one body.<sup>301</sup> Remember, many of these people have been keeping

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<sup>300</sup> The Philadelphia Church of God has an excellent flagship publication of even which I occasionally read; however, this church is reported in tight control of the lifestyle of its members.

<sup>301</sup> The ministry of Dave Havir of the Big Sandy, Texas Church of God, is one COG that strives to achieve a spiritual and Scriptural balanced approach and recognizes the errors of the "old" WCG.

the feasts for many years and can offer a complimentary balanced approached to Jewish traditions. Please note, however, the COGs do not observe Jewish traditions, liturgy, and songs.

The following comments are advisable no matter what fellowship one attends.

1) It would be considerate not to discuss HR differences with members as it could possibly be considered divisive and reported to the ministry. Build on commonalities of which there are many. Ask questions of a COG minister privately. Unless members hear it *first* from *their* ministry, your study information may not be warmly received—no matter if it is 100% correct. Many COG members may believe they have all the answers (which they do not). But then, many with a strong religious faith think they have all the answers.

There is enough drama with the ongoing divisions in the COGs (let's not exclude HR for the present time, either) for one in HR (especially those new in the faith) to think they have to make a declaration of truth to point out and correct the sins of others, whether in HR or in someone else's house—the COGs in this case—whom they barely know. Remember the fruit of the Spirit that Paul teaches (Gal 5:22-23).

2) Peacefully move on once one discovers the need to move to another level of growth in grace and knowledge. One may not move on for years when attending a COG. Do not be discouraged when people do not wish to initiate and/or engage in spiritual conversations. We are not perfect individuals and there is no perfect church.

3) Tithing is no longer required today, yet it is a *major* COG doctrine and for some COGs there is emphasis on financially giving offerings again (and again). COG members pay two tithes on their income every year plus a third tithe every three years in addition to feast day offerings seven times a year for the benefit of "the work" (i.e. the costs of preaching the gospel). Little, or if at all, do they mention the definition of "the work" in John 6:28-29.<sup>302</sup>

4) The majority of COGs have a hierarchical church government and cling to the writings of Herbert W. Armstrong (similar to others who hold Seventh Day Adventist Ellen G. White in high regard). It is not wrong to hold such writings in high regard, however, people are not perfect, though it does communicate an appearance of a cult. This is not an excuse, however, to refuse to attend a COG. No doubt many in HR wish have a preference to follow their own favorite HR teacher. One can be captured by the paradigm of their teacher and refuse to change even when he and they are in error. The greatest hindrance to truth is that we already have it.

5) Simply be aware that many teenagers have left the COG when they are of age even though teen programs were instituted in the mid 1970s. Single members have not had much support in the past. Have these changed? I do not know.

6) Many, if not all, teach that one should "prove all things" (I Thes 5:21)—and rightfully so. This changes, however, in a number (but not all) COGs when one becomes a member and then is instructed to obey "church government" (right or wrong) and follow administrative policies. COGs state they follow the Bible (and who does not state this?), but one finds out otherwise when one differs in the official doctrinal interpretation or administrative policy (even if one is otherwise correct). This can result in a controlling dictatorial atmosphere (as many ex-

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<sup>302</sup> e.g. Roderick C. Meredith. 2011, May-June. What is the "Work" of God? *Tomorrow's World Magazine* p4+. This magazine article confirms that these verses are still not taught or mentioned years after my leaving the WCG, especially in light of the fact that the COGS continually make mention of such simple Scriptural definitions (e.g. I John 3:4) in their publications. This article also reveals the hierarchical nature of many COGs.

COG members report in Exit and Support Sites on the internet). Tight control is still evident in a few, perhaps, more COGs. On the other hand, many people can be ego-driven and seekers of leadership when they are untrained and unequipped to lead and counsel people. Yes, people should have training in counseling. Ask your minister if has had such training.

On a more personal note, I took Paul's teaching of I Thess 5:21 to heart in my search for truth when I first heard it taught in the WCG. This meant recognizing that all men, including religious teachers such as Herbert Armstrong, over the course of history have shown themselves to be imperfect, fallible human beings who do not know it all. Placing one's faith in a man as being inspired by God in all facets of life is a dangerous undertaking which leads to a label as being a cult. Messianic-Jewish rabbi's do *not* have all the answer either! Single unmarried people who contribute much money to the church still do not find the church extending a helping hand to them. In the past, singles could not even organize their own activities without church approval and oversight which was not always given. How much of this is true to today should be investigated by any single man or woman.

Upholding Jewish customs because it *feels good* without any thinking on where these customs come from is as much in error as well! Please, do not tolerate others taking control of your personal life and severing family relationship because of a church or supposedly Scriptural doctrine. Step back, count to ten, and prove all things. It is the role of the husband to lead and to directly correct his family—not a minister. We are all on this journey called life. Life is difficult for all of us. We are all looking for soul mates and good friends. It (life) is a journey of faith.

I remember being taught the ten signs of a cult in the WCG Sabbath Service in California. The presenter then stunned me by simply concluding the presentation by stating, "of course, you know we are not a cult". (They just call it church government).

Are past examples of past ministerial abuses generally taught so they are not repeated? I don't know, but I can wonder if they are. The WCG was very good at teaching its membership the role of history, except for a number of bad things in its own closet. I still remember the WCG teachings in a *Plain Truth* article in the mid-80s on other faith's failed prophecies. Yet no mention of WCG failures.

Aside from some doctrinal differences and negative reports on the internet, a reason for the many COG splinters is that ministers wish to be their own authority (are you listening HR adherents?) even when they were taught in their former WCG and taught others the need for unity, cooperation, and the results of divisions.

It is interesting to note that the WCG (now Grace Communion) leadership which was chosen to carry on the doctrinal leadership of its founder, Herbert W. Armstrong, eventually abandoned it, and instigated the move to a Christian denomination. A move that is acknowledged to be without precedent in theological circles. The WCG name was later changed to Grace Communion Church as a means to formally break from its past heritage. This church, however, retained the same authoritarian leadership structure in order to maintain control. In short, it may be said to have resembled a coup/palace revolution in its beliefs, conducted by a few men in leadership, which resulted in the majority of the membership deserting the WCG (before it changed its name) to their own hundreds of tents.

Former COG members may be found in HR fellowships as they have kept the faith (Sabbaths feast days, many *Torah* instructions) from the WCG and have continued to grow in grace and knowledge.

## A Graying Church

The church membership has been graying for many years. This reveals a lack of retention among its teenagers. The church has grappled for years to cope with this leakage but its modus operandi appears to be church government centered rather than parent centered. I was the coordinator for over 15 teen activities at one of the largest Hebrew Roots Sukkot sites for several years. I have witnessed the dedication of many teens in the feast activities as a fruit of the parenting.

## Festivals

The lack of an ecclesiastical superstructure in HR (as well in Messianic-Judaism) presents noticeable differences with the COGs at the annual feasts and appointments. HR adherents appear to be more ready to travel to HR conferences than attend feast sites. They may not observe some annual appointments as a group even though they may gather on Sabbaths. Sukkot attendance may be relegated to weekends due to their need to work—and personal vacations may be taken at other times during the year rather than at Sukkot. I found myself (as many others did in the WCG) using my vacation time for festival observances.

Volunteerism at feasts is decidedly higher with COG adherents than HR. This can be a result of the COG emphasis on teaching service to others, but also peer pressure (good, not bad) as being part of the church body and blending in with others of like-mind. It is something that HR adherents should note and learn.

## Miscellaneous Differences

*Baptism* by an ordained elder in the COG may be considered the only valid baptism, notwithstanding a baptism by a Hebrew Roots® teacher following Scripture.

*Dancing* (Scripturally referenced) and the *kiddush* (Scripturally appropriate and a Jewish tradition) are not performed.

*Hebrew Words*. The occasional use of Hebrew words in conversation and messages is not heard, except perhaps for the seasonal greeting of *Chag Sameach* made popular by the leadership. The word *Torah* is almost never heard in a COG service.

*Fringes (Tsitit)*. Although *Torah* directed, they are not worn and are considered "Jewish". The COGs desire to separate themselves from any outward dress of anything appearing Jewish. Many times the COGs cite Matthew 5:17-18, although their actions offer the evidence that they pick and choose various Torah commands akin to Christianity.

*Head cap/covering (kippa), Prayer shawl [tallit]*. They are not worn or accepted in the COGs. The prayer shawl is part of Jewish tradition, not Scripture.

*Home Bible Studies*. I do not know if this has changed or not. I gathered with my friends (while in the WCG) to discuss the Bible on Friday nights. I later learned that home Bible Studies were either frowned or prohibited in some WCG church areas unless a minister was giving them.

*Lost Ten Tribes*. Various COGs place an emphasis on a form of British-Israelism where the ten tribes were *scattered* into today's specific nations, such as, the United States and Britain (believed to be descended from Manasseh and Ephraim).

*Music/Songs*. Words are taken directly from the *Psalms* which is quite inspirational and lends to learning of Scripture. This music was written by Dwight Armstrong—the brother of Herbert Armstrong, and set to traditional religious music flavor. In my opinion, singing the inspired words of God brings a heightened sense of praise and spiritual enrichment. Messianic

music is generally much more upbeat in tempo than COG music and considered "praise" music. It is similar to Christian praise music which *may* take some verses in Scriptures, and then expands upon it with the words of those writing the song. One will not find the upbeat popular praise HR and MJ songs in the COGs—even though the words are inspirational with many taken from Scripture and are do not present conflicts in beliefs.

*Parsha.* COG sermons are traditional presentations. The Parsha is not performed either in congregations or home Bible Studies.

*Services.* Sabbath Services are conducted in a similar regimented format with the same songs sung wherever one visits a COG. The raising of hands in prayer and praise (also Scriptural) and the occasional saying of "Amen" to a statement during service may be viewed as "Pentecostal" by some and frowned upon. (My, how we use labels).

The *tetragrammaton* (YHVH) nor the Hebrew pronunciation of the Messiah is not used.

The *Torah Walk* is not performed.

### Replacement Theology

The COGs do **not** teach it and are in agreement with HR on this matter.

The COGs may be viewed by others as having Hebraic Roots<sup>303</sup> since they keep the Sabbath, Holy Days, and many other Old Testament "Laws".<sup>304</sup> HR critics do not list the COGs, however, on their HR ministry lists and do not, generally, cite COG influences on the movement with the exception of British-Israelism. The COGs do not profess to be "Torah Observant" (*pursuant* is a better word since no one is perfect) as does Hebrew Roots®. One might say it is a matter of labeling and structural differences. HR is grassroots and the COGs—generally speaking for the larger groups—corporate organizations.

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<sup>303</sup> Apologetics Index. Living Church of God. <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/l/l43.html>

<sup>304</sup> COGwriter (Bob Thiel).n.d. Which Laws/Regulations Are Superseded/Done Away? Which Remain? What About the 613 Mitzvot?. <http://www.cogwriter.com/lawsdoneaway.htm>

<b>GENERAL DIFFERENCES CHURCH OF GOD, HEBRAIC ROOTS AND MESSIANIC JEWISH</b>			
	<b>COGs</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>MJ</b>
<b>Blessing of Children</b>	At Sukkot	At Sukkot	Every Week
<b>Calendars</b>	Rabbinic	Rabbinic (primary) and Sighted Moon	Rabbinic
<b>Dancing</b>		X	X
<b>Evangelism</b>	X	X	X
<b>Government</b>	Hierarchical	Host of Meeting (1)	Varies
<b>Interactive Conducive</b>		X	
<b>Liturgy</b>	(2)		X
<b>Lost Tribes (3)</b>	Specific Nations	In the West	Already in Israel
<b>Parsha</b>		X	X
<b>Singing</b>	X COG Psalms (4)	X Messianic	X Messianic
<b>Tithing</b>	X		(5)
<b>Tzit-Tzit</b>		X	(6)
<b>Torah Observant</b>	(7)	X	Only for Jews

(1) The host of the meeting ensures that all things are done in order and peace.  
(2) A regimented format for Sabbath Services and Feast Days.  
(3) COGs place an emphasis in this belief. HR does not.  
(4) Smal COG fellowship may include other inspiring music.  
(5) Jews do not tithe.  
(6) Gentiles may wear kippas and tzit-tzit/fringes on tallits/prayer shawls. Otherwise Jews dislike Gentiles wearing any Jewish religious items outside their place of worship.  
(7) Does not specifically make this claim but keeps most of the Torah.

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The **bold** type in the above index is a word processing glitch that will be rectified in a later update to this paper.

# End Notes

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<sup>i</sup> The January 16, 2016 update and all subsequent updates have removed all potential and actual negative references and sources to persons for the following reason: In Matthew 24:25+ Christ instructs what the ruler of the household should *not* be doing. Galatians 6:10 and Ephesians 2:19 define the household. My sources of references will be provided for those wishing to do further research.

<sup>ii</sup> Source and End Note upon Request.

<sup>iii</sup> Mary Fairchild. n.d. *Christianity Today*.

<http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/p/christiantoday.htm> and Christian Denominations.

<http://christianity.about.com/od/denominations/a/denominations.htm> Accessed 12/31/14

Hartford Institute for Religion Research. n.d. Fast Facts about American Religion

[http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast\\_facts.html#denom](http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/fastfacts/fast_facts.html#denom) Accessed 4/23/15

"Q: How many denominational groups are there in the United States?"

"A: This is a very tough question, because it depends on how a denomination is defined. There were 217 denominations listed in the 2006 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches. But there may well be other groups that function as a denomination but do not regard themselves as such. The single largest religious group in the United States is the Roman Catholic Church, which had 67 million members in 2005. The Southern Baptist Convention, with 16 million members, was the largest of the Protestant denominations. The United Methodist Church was the second-largest Protestant denomination with 8 million members. In third and fourth spots were the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, known as the Mormon church, with 6 million member, and the Church of God in Christ, a predominantly black Pentecostal denomination, with 5.5 million members...

"However, since the RCMS 2010 study we now know that the grouping of nondenominational churches, if taken together, would be the second largest Protestant group in the country with over 35,000 independent or nondenominational churches representing more than 12,200,000 adherents."

Anderson Cooper. 2006, Dec 14. What is a Christian? ANDERSON COOPER 360 DEGREES.

<http://www.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0612/14/acd.02.html> Retrieved 11/15/15 "According to a Baylor University study, about 34 percent of us — fully 100 million Americans are Evangelical. That's an umbrella term covering dozens of denominations, as well as hundreds of independent churches." Twenty-two percent of which belong to mainline Protestant denominations (such as Episcopal and Presbyterian).

<sup>iv</sup> "Abhorred and publicly execrated by the Jews for their attachment to Christianity, and despised by the Christians for their prejudice in favor of the Mosaic law [with its weekly and annual sabbaths, kosher diet, etc.] they were peculiarly oppressed and unfortunate. Traces of this sect [the Nazarenes] appear as late as the fourth century."—Hugh Smith, *History of the Christian Church*, p72.

<sup>v</sup> "Bishop Pearce contends that τα δογματα, the decrees, is a gloss which was not in the text originally; and that the τα κερκιμενα, the judgments or determinations of the apostles, was all that was

originally written here. He supports his opinion by a reference to the word κρινω, I judge, used by James, Acts 15:19." —*Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible on E-Sword* ®

<sup>vi</sup> Dr. Stephen Jones. 2007, Dec 12. The Law of Forgiveness. weblog Dr. Stephen Jones, a Christian teacher and minister, tells his story on actively attempting to change the nation's laws on criminals to a more Scripturally based system:

"In March of 1981, I teamed up with Ty Hardin (the actor) to walk the halls of the Senate in Washington D.C. and essentially to lobby for God's law. I recall we went to Senator Kennedy's office and asked him to look more closely at restitution programs, rather than prison sentences, in our judicial system. Kennedy was the chairman of the Judiciary Committee in the Senate at the time. His response was this: "I would love to do this, but every time I suggest it, I get hate mail from the Christians."

"That was an eye opener to me. Up to that time, I thought the "liberals" were the problem. I discovered that it was the good ol' Christian conservatives that were the main opposition to the Kingdom of God. Why? Because Christians generally do not know the law, or if they do study it, they misunderstand it. Those who do study it often do so by going to a Jewish rabbi, who gives them an Old Testament perspective, rather than understanding it as Jesus taught it."

<sup>vii</sup> Today we have a larger percentage of our nation's population in prisons than any other nation in the entire world—including Russia and China! Many are in solitary confinement which is inhumane. And when released, the law-breakers are generally not forgiven by a nation or its people, even if the offenders have paid their legally required debt to society! And many claim to be New Covenant Christians? It is sad to report that not only is the silence of the nation's largest churches deafening, but only about 40% of Christians care enough to vote in our nation. What does Scripture have to say?

Ezek 16:49-50 Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, fullness of bread, and prosperous ease was in her and in her daughters; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. 50 And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.

<http://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/> and [http://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/mental\\_health/](http://www.prisonpolicy.org/research/mental_health/)

<sup>viii</sup> The Priesthood has changed 3 times since Genesis:

1st Change. Exodus 13:2 Sanctify unto me all the firstborn....

2nd Change. Num 8:14-16 Thus shall you separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine. ...16 For they are wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel...

3rd Change. Hebrews 7:1 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. What Law? (See 2 above). This was the law that was added to. Mike Bacon. 2014.

*Tithing: Are You Being Taken?* Download the Power Point at

[http://ourfathersfestival.net/resource\\_center](http://ourfathersfestival.net/resource_center) and listen to the audio presentation at Sukkot 2010 Messages at <http://www.sooj.org/Resources.html>

<sup>ix</sup> Shem-Tov Ibn Shapnut, a 14th century Jewish rabbi during the time of the Spanish Inquisition, wrote a 1380 treatise (entitled Even Bocan="Test Stone") refuting Catholicism. Included as an appendix was a Hebrew version of the Gospel of Matthew. It has been determined that the gospel was no translation from Greek. One of the defining elements were the use of Hebrew word puns.

"The purpose of a word pun is to beautify the text" (p42)

"A word pun is a play on words that builds on similar sounding Hebrew words used multiple times with different meanings...For example, the first man is

named Adam because he is taken out of the earth which in Hebrew is *Adamah*. There is actually and other Hebrew word for "earth" *aretz* which could have been used in Genesis. But the word *Adamah* ("earth") is used repeatedly throughout Genesis 2 as a word pun which contrasts with Adam." —Nehemia Gordon' 2006. *The Hebrew Yeshua vs. The Greek Jesus*. Hilkiyah Press. p39. A recommended book.

One example of a number of word puns is found in Matthew is 18:9

**Matt 18:9** And if thine eye causes thee to stumble (*Hebrew=tachshilcha*), pluck it out, and cast it from thee (*tashlicheha*): it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire. (ASV).

And another one in Matthew 16:18 which is notable as it is the same word for stone in Psalm 118:22

**Mat 16:18** And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter (*Greek=Petros; Hebrew='even*), and upon this rock (*petrai; 'evneh*) I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

**Psa 118:22** The stone (*'even*) which the builders rejected Is become the head of the corner.

As Mr. Gordon asks the question:

"How did Hebrew word puns get into a book translated from the Greek?"

The telling of Shem-Tov and word puns descriptions are told because the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew 11:13 presents a different translation. The Hebrew words for "until" and "concerning" is only one letter (*'ad* vs. *'al*) , unlike the Greek words which are very different. As Gordon continues...

"So, if Shem-Tov's Hebrew Matthew were just a translation from Greek, then the Greek text on which it was based had a substantially different reading from the Greek Matthew known today"

**Matt 11:13** For all the prophets and the Torah spoke concerning John. (Shem-Tov)

**Matt 11:13** For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. (ASV)

Mr. Gordon presents other information and provoking questions with the conclusion that the Shem-Tov's Matthew is not the "original" Matthew.

I do not take a stand on whether the NT was originally written in Hebrew because I have not studied it nor am I an expert in languages. I do find the following sources interesting in giving more information on this issue:

"...Revelation was written in a Semitic language, and that the Greek translation...is a remarkably close rendering of the original." - C. C. Torrey; Documents of the Primitive Church 1941; p. 160

"We come to the conclusion, therefore that the Apocalypse as a whole is a translation from Hebrew or Aramaic..." - R. B. Y. Scott; The Original Language of the Apocalypse 1928; p. 6

"When we turn to the New Testament we find that there are reasons for suspecting a Hebrew or Aramaic original for the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, John and for the apocalypse." - Hugh J. Schonfield; An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel; 1927; p. vii

Sakae Kubo.1963, April. The Original Language of the New Testament. Retrieved 1/16/16.

<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1963/04/the-original-language-of-the-new-testament>

Aramaic New Testament. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aramaic\\_New\\_Testament](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aramaic_New_Testament)  
Hebrew/Aramaic Origin of the Brit Chadash (sn- New Testament). n.d. Retrieved 1/16/16

<http://www.promotethetruth.com/id23.html>

James Scott Timm. n.d. Hebrew and Aramaic Origin of the New Testament. Retrieved 1/16/16

<http://nazarenespace.com/page/hebrew-and-aramaic-origin-of>

<sup>x</sup> "The Scriptures, with the normal use and meaning of language, offered no basis for the doctrine of Oral Law, nor for the authority of the Rabbis. However, the rabbinic claims are not based upon the normal use and meaning of the language. They are based upon Rabbi Akiba's unique method of interpretation." p61. R. Akiba's authority was significant, even with other Rabbi's conflicting views. It was he who changed the name of Simon Bar Kokhba and proclaimed him as "messiah" in without substantiation of Scripture. Consider this: Rabbis are *not* Levites. The Diaspora was a result of disobedience and rejection of the Messiah. Was the Creator about to change His Scriptural commands because of the Diaspora? Just asking.

According to Gruber (p111-112), five major lessons are conveyed by the Talmud:

1. Miracles are not accepted by Rabbis to determine truth.
2. Heavenly voices (or inspired men) after Mt. Sinai are ignored.
3. A majority of rabbis determine truth in a matter—not Scripture
4. "God laughs when men outwit him"
5. Rabbis have the power to excommunicate those who do not submit to their decisions.

Daniel Gruber. *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah*. 1999. Elijah Publishing. Hanover, NH. 282p. HIGHLY Recommended.

The authority of the Rabbis is stated in the Midrash: "Even if they instruct you that right is left or left is right, you must obey them". (Sifer §154 on Deut 17:11 [Finkelstein, ed. p207 compare Hammer Translation p190.] in The Hebrew Yeshua vs. The Greek Jesus. 2006. Nehemia Gordon. p14.

<sup>xi</sup> "One properly exegetes Scripture using a correct hermeneutic, historicism (hermeneutical historicism not eschatological historicism). Historicism is the primary mode of hermeneutics; it assigns a central and basic significance to a specific context, such as historical period, geographical place, political and social backdrop of the period, and local customs and culture. As such it is in contrast to individualist theories of knowledge such as empiricism and rationalism, which neglect the role of traditions. Historicism, therefore, is strictly within the camp of hermeneutics..." —Shea Bernard, Shea. 2014, July 12. The Fallacious Arguments of the Homosexual Agenda: John 8:7 - "He who is without sin, let him cast the first stone..." <http://freedomoutpost.com/2014/07/fallacious-arguments-homosexual-agenda-john-87-without-sin-let-cast-first-stone/#54xvDqRtqxYh6wxF.99>

<sup>xii</sup> "To support the Jewish people, or even Jewish customs, was interpreted as not being loyal to Rome...pressure was being put on Jewish believers from three sides: first, from the non-believing pagans who hated anything Jewish; second, from the non-believing Jews who feared their power among the people; and third, within their own congregations by the new gentile believers who were entering the faith already affected by the rampant anti-semitism." —Joseph Good, 1998. *Rosh haShanah and the Messianic Kingdom to Come*. Hatikva Ministries. 204p; p vi HIGHLY Recommended.

<sup>xiii</sup> Watch the first minute of this funny yet insightful video to understand what happens when most people are faced with persecution. *Sister Strikes Again!: Late Nite Catechism* 2 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Jrh\\_uuPmd0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Jrh_uuPmd0) Notwithstanding, the vast majority of Christianity has learned and even desired the heathen's practices. These were primarily adopted in the first few centuries after Christ's death when the church and secular leaderships attached the name of Christ in order to achieve political stability within the Roman Empire, differentiate itself from Judaism to avoid guilt by associations with past rebels of the empire, and to convert unbelievers. One had to choose between their Hebrew Roots® faith (being labeled a Judaizer) in making a living or saving one's skin, or worshipping Roman Gods, or become a Christian and fully accept syncretism, Sunday keeping and giving up the *Torah*.

<sup>xiv</sup> Daniel Gruber. *Rabbi Akiba's Messiah*. 1999. Elijah Publishing. Hanover, NH. 282p

The *Talmidei Yeshua* rejected Rabbinic authority, were ostracized from public life, their books burned, and legal rights abrogated, and turned over to Roman authorities to be killed.

"When the *Talmidei Yeshua* were kicked out of the synagogue by the Rabbis, they could no longer establish before the Romans the Jewishness of their religion. That put them on trial for their lives". p161.

They were the only group in Judea which refused to fight in the Bar Kokhba Rebellion, and were brought before the Sanhedrin where they were considered traitors and deserters and put to death. p154

"The nature of the Church began to change radically after it was cut off from its Jewish roots. Jewish input became unwelcome." p185

<sup>xv</sup> Comparatively few Christians know about Marcion, a widely influential heretic who was excommunicated from the Roman church in 144 A.D. For two centuries his churches would rival Catholicism with a number of his heretical ideas eventually taking hold in Christianity. Marcion not only constructed his own Canon consisting of only 11 books (Luke and 10 of Paul's epistles. One must ask why and why Peter's, John's and James are excluded. ("*The game is on!*"—*Sherlock Homes*). He also edited these books to his own liking by eliminating references to the Old Testament God and the creation as His act, and that the law should be followed, edited the first two chapters of Luke, edited Paul's letters to remove God references in the OT, placed Galatians at the beginning of Paul's letters, and coined the terms "Old" and "New" Testament (among other things!)

<sup>xvi</sup> "Marcion founded his own church which merged Gnosticism and orthodox Christianity, creating a theology that was sharply dualistic, violently antagonistic to Judaism, strictly ascetic, celibate, and yielded a wide and destructive influence in Christendom. Unfortunately, some modern Christians have unknowingly endorsed his ideas...

"Later Augustine, a Roman Catholic monk, championed Marcion's ideas about grace opposing God's Law and made it a major part of church theology. At the time of the Reformation, men such as John Wycliffe with his first manuscript English Bible, and Miles Coverdale the English translator of the first printed English Bible were heavily influenced by Augustine." —Dr. Ron Moseley. 1993. *The Spirit of the Law*. Chapter One. <http://www.hebroots.com/torahandgrace.htm>

<sup>xvii</sup> Avi ben Mordechai writes: "Notice here, that Marcion edited the text in the first half of Galatians":

Galatians 3:10a

English: For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.KJV

"Greek: For as many as are of the **works of the law** are under the curse. —Nestle-Aland 26th Edition *Greek New Testament*.

[Peshita] **Aramaic:** For those who are **servants (workers) of the law** are still under a curse. [— Andrew Gabriel Roth translation].

**Marcion:** for as many as are **under the law** are under the curse...

[Karaite Jew Nehemiah] "Gordon looked at this from the Greek..and said, "here's a smoking gun." **Works of** (Greek: *ergon*) was physically cut out and removed, permitting the text to imply that "this thing" called "**the Law**" of Moses is the curse"...

"...we would not be amiss in asking the question, *What else was changed in Paul's letters?*"

"If Marcion, whose fame and influence spread far and wide, could brazenly make these kinds of changes, then did this also impact the one-sidedness of later "New Testament" orators and copyists, particularly associated with the Church of the West? I think yes,..." Avi ben Mordechai 2005. *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First Century Hebraic Context*. 505p; p92-93.

<sup>xviii</sup> "But Marcion removed whatever he judged were interpolations – that is, anything that did not agree with his understanding of what Paul should have written. For example, Galatians 3:16-4:6 was



deleted because of its reference to Abraham and its descendants. More examples may be found in [Evans] (pp. 643-6). Metzger, Bruce M. 1987. *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance*. Clarendon Press. Oxford.. in Glenn Davis, 1997-2010. *The Development of the Canon of the New Testament*. Marcion and the Marcionites (144 - 3rd century CE).

<http://www.ntcanon.org/marcion.shtml>

<sup>xix</sup> Constantine's Christian Creed: "I renounce all customs, rites, legalisms, unleavened breads and sacrifices of lambs of the Hebrews, and all the other feasts of the Hebrews, sacrifices, prayers, aspirations, purifications, sanctifications, and propitiations, and fasts and new moons, and Sabbaths, and superstitions, and hymns and chants, and observances and synagogues. absolutely everything Jewish, every Law, rite and custom and if afterwards I shall wish to deny and return to Jewish superstition, or shall be found eating with Jews, or feasting with them, or secretly conversing and condemning the Christian religion instead of openly confuting them and condemning their vain faith, then let the trembling of Cain and the leprosy of Gehazi cleave to me, as well as the legal punishments to which I acknowledge myself liable. And may I be an anathema in the world to come, and may my soul be set down with Satan and the devils." (Stcfrano Assemani, *Acta Sanctorum Martyrum Orientalium at Occidentalium*, Vol. 1, Rome 1748, page 105). <http://natzrim.blogspot.com/2011/04/constantine-creed.html>

<sup>xx</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, "There is no trace of the celebration of Easter as a Christian festival in the New Testament or the writings of the apostolic fathers...The first Christians...continued to observe the Jewish festivals...as commemorations of events of which these had been the shadows. The Passover, ennobled by the thought of Christ the Paschal Lamb, continued to be celebrated..., and became the Christian Easter" (Ninth Edition, article "Easter")

<sup>xxi</sup> "Yet they [the Protestants] not only reject the observance of the Sabbath enjoined in the written word, but they have adopted and do practice the observance of Sunday, for which they have only the tradition of the [Catholic] Church." —Archbishop Reggio, Council of Trent, 1562. In more recent times, The Catholic Church reaffirmed their Council of Trent opinion in response to the widespread Protestant protests against the 1892 World's Fair in Chicago being open on a Sunday. The *Catholic Mirror* of Sept. 2, 1893 ran a series of editorials refuting the false claim that the New Testament taught Sunday keeping. The *Mirror* was the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons representing the Roman Catholic Church in the U.S.

<sup>xxii</sup> Arguments refuted that from earliest apostolic days Christians kept Sunday in honor of Christ's resurrection. This is clearly revealed in two scriptures, Acts 20:7 (where they were participating in *Motzei Shabba*: meaning the "going out of the Sabbath" which refers to the evening immediately following the Sabbath Day). Carmen Welker. 2013. *Should Christians be Torah Observant?* 208p; p25 and 1 Corinthians 16:2. <http://www.sabbathtruth.com/fag/arguments-refuted/id/1773/from-earliest-apostolic-days-christians-kept-sunday-in-honor-of-christs-resurrection-this-is-clearly-revealed-in-two-scriptures-acts-207-and-1-corinthians-162>.

<sup>xxiii</sup> "Sacred Tradition is the oral teaching of Jesus Christ handed down to his apostles, who in turn handed it down to their disciples (the early Church Fathers), and then to the next generation, and then finally to us...

"Sacred Tradition does NOT refer to individual practices and customs, such as the language of the Mass, kneeling or standing for Holy Communion, eating or not eating meat on Friday, etc. Rather, it is the oral teaching of Jesus Christ handed on to the Apostles and the Church, which carries equal weight with the Church's book, the Bible."—Sacred Tradition. [www.Catholic Bible 101 - Sacred Tradition.mht](http://www.CatholicBible101.com/SacredTradition.mht)

Notwithstanding the Talmudic teachings, the blessing of children, lighting the menorah candles, etc are all considered traditions which do not violate or contradict Scripture. Traditions may be instituted today among believers providing they do not contradict Scripture.

Catholics further explain their position in upholding traditions by citing Scripture, such as:

Act 20:35 I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Jud 1:9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. (The statement is not found in the OT)

Mat 2:23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Mat 23:2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: (Moses' seat is not found in Scripture)

1 Cor 10:4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ. (CHECK. Nor is this found in the OT)

2 Tim 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. (These men are not mentioned in the OT).

Heb 11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: (This is a direct reference to 2 Maccabees 7 which is in the Catholic Bible but not the KJV).

1 Cor 11:2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances (G3862 - traditions) , as I delivered them to you.

2 Thess 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions (G3862) which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

2 Thes 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the tradition (G3682) which he received of us.

<sup>xxiv</sup> I would like to note that that the wife of a MJ pastor excitedly (emotionally?) remarked to me that it is the "pride of the Gentiles" when other believers regard themselves to be part of the "lost tribes".

<sup>xxv</sup> 119 Ministries. n.d. Headcoverings. [https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK\\_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Headcoverings.pdf](https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/faithnetworkuserfilestore/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/FAITHNETWORK_USERFILESTORE/filecabinet/ministries/00f06fd7-4de2-4d8d-922d-ccd4a82bb1a9/Scripts%20-%20PDF%20English/Headcoverings.pdf)

"Paul teaches that a wife that prays or prophesies without having her head covered (being under her own husband's authority) dishonors her head and brings shame upon herself.

"Please remember, however, that this is a custom and not a commandment. Should married women wear a covering over their heads at other times? This is a matter of personal choice...

"It was, however, a cultural practice that a married woman kept her head covered in public as well as during prayer. A married woman's head covering was understood as an act of modesty and respect for her husband. Young single women would allow their hair to be seen, whereas married women covered their glory (hair) and reserved its sight only for their husbands. As Paul states, a woman's long hair was her glory. A young woman looking for a husband would let her glory fly in the breeze in hopes of attracting a husband. Once the young woman was betrothed, however, she would cover her hair lest others think she was being flirtatious. Thus, a woman's head covering was seen as a public declaration that she was now under the covering of her husband. We may see a beautiful example of this

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declaration in the Torah. When Abraham's servant returned from the East with a wife for Isaac, Rebekah sees Isaac at a distance and asks her who she is. When the servant reveals that it is her betrothed, Rebekah steps down from her camel and covers herself." Wheelock, Dean and Susan. 2015 April-August. Iron Sharpens Iron. Covering the Head. *Hebrew Roots*. p27.

<sup>xxvi</sup> I Cor 11:14-15 Covering the Head. "The key to solving this dilemma is understanding who Paul was writing to concerning this particular topic. The city of Corinth was a major pagan center at that time. There were numerous pagan temples with the aid of temple prostitutes — both men and women. History shows that it was the practice of the male prostitutes to let their hair grow long while some of the women cut their hair short like men. Apparently, those hairstyles became common in the regular community as well. As Gentile men were being converted to the Messianic faith, some were accustomed to wearing their hair long — while some of the women were cutting their hair short like a man.

"Thus Paul was teach against hairstyles that imitated pagan temple prostitutes — not against a man wearing a tallit or some other head covering when he prayed in the synagogue."

<sup>xxvii</sup> The Four Levels of Interpretation(PaRDeS):

1. **Pashat** (pa SHOT)—in Hebrew, the "simple" or plain sense meaning; i.e. the literal meaning. Protestant call this "Gramatical Historical Exegesis" which is also similar to Protestant Hermeneutics called "the Literal Principle". One must also consider the Biblical definition of the word as it appears to be used elsewhere in Scripture. According to Brad Scott, one should not go right to the sod. We cannot grasp the sod until we see the Pashat. (Brad Scott. 2015. "as the days of a tree..." Audio CD set. Wildbranch Ministry. Vernal, UT. Disc 2 Track 1 5:39 minute mark)

2. **Remez** (REH mez)—in Hebrew "hint"; i.e. the implied meaning.

3. **Drash**—in Hebrew "search"; the allegorical (symbolical representation), typological or homiletical application of which the Pashat meaning is always retained. The Pashat meaning cannot be discarded because the Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35); otherwise one could fit meanings that fits only their understanding—not others.

4. **Sod** (sewed)—in Hebrew "hidden"; the secret or mystic meaning which may involve gematria and paleo-Hebrew word pictures.

<sup>xxviii</sup> People may refer to Exodus 9:16 as the rationalization for using the *correct* name. The Hebrew word for name in this verse (*shem*) means more than just a name; it means character. What better reflects his character than the fruit of the Spirit and the Arronic Blessing expressed in Numbers 6:24-26? Are we representing the character of Christ in the world, or are we creating needless divisions by force-feeding our beliefs on others who are have not yet matured spiritually, and using His name to further personal purposes?

<sup>xxix</sup> No matter how one pronounces "the name", it must be recognized that the Hebrew language was resuscitated by Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922, [see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliezer\\_Ben-Yehuda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliezer_Ben-Yehuda)); therefore, one cannot be *absolutely* certain regarding the correct pronunciation of the "name" and whether the Hebrew language has changed since the first century, or even since the time of Moses. As Jeff Benner teaches, there are certain rules in the Hebrew language and grammar that must be adhered to, and of which certain pronunciations, such as Jehovah, do not follow.. The Pronunciation of the Name (YHVH) 2012, April 9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRsbSLU9oFA>