



Christ and Israel

by Victor Christensen

For 2000 years the Jewish people have continued to reject the teaching that Jesus Christ is the Jewish Messiah according to the Scriptures. Orthodox Judaism regards Christianity as the custodian of myths and fables and heretical ideas based on anti Semitic instincts. In spite of this continuing hostility towards Jesus some Christians claim that the nation of Israel remains in the same covenant relationship with God that existed in the Old Testament. It is also claimed the setting up of a Jewish state in 1948 is a direct fulfillment of Bible prophecy. From a New Testament perspective this belief is indefensible. According to the apostle Paul, since the coming of Christ racial connections count for nothing. As Paul teaches it, under the conditions of the gospel only faith in Christ creates a covenant relationship with God. "There is neither Jew nor Greek...for ye are all one in Christ Jesus". (Galatians 3:28) ***The New Testament is not anti Semitic, what it denies is Jewish racial superiority.***

Paul declared that merely being born of Jewish parents does not give anyone special status in the sight of God. Only those who have authentic faith in God, as Abraham did, are counted as Abraham's offspring. Under the new covenant faith in God now embraces faith in Christ. ***All who reject Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, stand outside of the will of God.*** The gospel that is to be preached to Jew and Gentile alike is this: "The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given ***to them that believe***". (Galatians 3:22) Concerning Jews Paul wrote,

...For ***they are not all Israel, which are of Israel***: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children... That is, ***They which are the children of the flesh, these are NOT the children of God***: but the children of ***the promise*** are counted for the seed.

When Paul declared that it is not the children of the flesh who are God's children he intended us to understand that ***physical descent does not identify any community as the people of God***. Paul taught that since Christ has come only those who have a relationship with God based on faith in Christ are the "Israel of God." Does this mean God has shut out Jews from salvation? Not at all. He has placed Jews and Gentiles on an equal footing. ***As an individual, in reference to salvation, the Jew has lost nothing.*** God once worked through the institutions of Judaism, He now spreads the gospel through the body of Christ. God's new covenant of grace includes Gentiles and is not limited to Jews only.

When the sign of the covenant was circumcision, only those who accepted circumcision were included in the covenant. The sign of the covenant is ***no longer*** circumcision, but

faith in Christ. This means that *only faith in Christ provides an entry into a covenant relationship with God*. Under the conditions of a covenant whoever rejects the sign of the covenant is excluded from the covenant. Under the New Covenant *no Jew or Gentile* can be in a covenant relationship with God *unless they accept Christ*.

This teaching always has been offensive to those outside the Christian faith, but it remains a biblical truth. The New Testament teaches that "salvation is found in no one else, " *for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved*". (Acts 4:12) Historically the truth contained in Acts 4:12 has been repudiated by Jews. The Pharisees instructed Peter, " *Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?*". (Acts 5:28) Peter gave the only answer that can be given, and will always be given. "We ought to obey God rather than men". (Acts 5:30) That which was the point of contention between Israel and Christianity in the first century remains a point of dispute today. Contemporary Judaism maintains the Jewish tradition of hostility towards Christ. If Christ were in Israel today His teachings would be repudiated and His life would be under threat. *Nothing has changed*. Under such conditions Jews and Christians remain competitors in offering to the world an exclusive path to God.

The Message of the Prophets

Through the prophet Jeremiah God declared that the nation of Israel would be rescued from captivity and restored to its own land. Jeremiah wrote, "I will surely gather them from all the lands where I banished them ... *and I will bring them back to this place*". (Jeremiah 32:37) Some apply this prophecy to the setting up of a Jewish state in Palestine in 1948, but that is not what this text is saying.

Jeremiah made his prophecy just before Israel was "handed over to the King of Babylon" (Jer.32:36). According to Scripture the promise was fulfilled *seventy years after it was given*. In a direct reference to Jeremiah's prophecy Daniel wrote, "I, Daniel, understood ... according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet that the desolation of Jerusalem would last *seventy years*" (Dan.9:2). According to Ezra 7:1 the promise given through Jeremiah, "I will bring them back to this place," was fulfilled "during the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia" according to the terms of the following decree.

Now I decree that any of the Israelites in my kingdom, including priests and Levites, *who wish to go to Jerusalem* with you may go. ... And you, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom of your God, which you possess, appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice to all the people of Trans-Euphrates - all who know the laws of your God. (Ezra 7:1,25)

The prophet Daniel declared that Jeremiah 32:37 was fulfilled *seventy years after it was given*. There is, therefore, no bases for identifying Jeremiah's prophecy with the establishment of Israel in 1948.

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9

According to the prophet Daniel a *probationary period* of seventy prophetic weeks, or 490 years, was given to Israel to put its house in order. (Dan.9:24-27) The prophecy predicted that the Jews would reject Christ and that "the Messiah shall be cut off" and be crucified by Israel. The prophecy said also that Jerusalem would be destroyed by "the prince who is to come [who] shall destroy the city".(v.26)

Daniel 9:25-27 is a messianic prophecy that in most modern translations, (such as the NIV) is distorted into an historical reference to Antiochus Epiphanies. However, contrary to modern theological opinion in Matthew 24:15 Christ identified the "prince [who] shall destroy the city" as Imperial Roman. Jesus warned His disciples: "when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet ... then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains". The 490 years of Jewish probationary time ended three and a half years after the crucifixion. At that point Paul said that the nation of Israel was "*broken off because of unbelief*" (Rom.11:19) Israel's eviction from the covenant was demonstrated in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 which symbolised that the Jewish national covenant was rescinded by God. This did not mean God rejected Jews from any hope of salvation, but it did mean that *the religion of Judaism was no longer the divinely appointed means of approaching God.*

When Jesus said to the Jews; "your house is left to you desolate" (Matt.23:38) He was announcing the end of the covenant between Israel and God. The book of Hebrews says, "By calling this covenant new, *He has made the first one obsolete*". (Hebrews 8:13) Because God rejected His covenant with Israel the Romans were permitted to destroy Jerusalem in 70 A.D. in fulfilment of Daniel 9:26. (Matt.24:15)

Through the emperor Hadrian Christ's prediction of desolation was fulfilled in a greater degree than it was in 70 A.D. In 135 A.D. the Romans reduced Jerusalem to a pile of rubble. Not only was the city destroyed, *the entire Jewish population was permanently evicted from Palestine.* The Romans built another city on top of the ruins of Jerusalem which they called Aelia and the entire population was deported, causing the Jews to lose their national identity for over 1800 years. Jesus' fateful words, "your house is left to you desolate," met a complete fulfilment. The fourth century historian Eusebius wrote.

And thus, when the city had been emptied of the Jewish nation and had *suffered the total destruction of its ancient inhabitants, it was colonized by a different race,* and the Roman city which subsequently arose changed its name and was called Aelia, in honour of the emperor Aelius Adrian. (Eusebius *Church History* IV, vi. 1-4)

Why did God punish the Jews so severely? Because the Jewish nation rejected Christ and failed their probationary period of 490 years. Israel's right to occupy Palestine was based on obedience to God. *Because Israel rejected Christ no Jew has a right to Eretz Israel on*

the basis of a covenant. Jesus had warned, "the kingdom of God will be *taken away from you* and given to a people who will produce its fruit". Matt.21:43) The Jewish covenant with God has been abolished, Christ declared that God "*will rent the vineyard to other tenants*" (Matt.21:41) Although Christ announced the annulment of Israel's national covenant, every individual Jew is offered a relationship with Yahweh through Christ.

Because Israel persisted in disobedience God finally rejected Israel as His own nation. *When Israel rejected Christ the Jewish nation passed the point of no return.* Jesus predicted the future of the Jews: "You will be ever hearing but *never* understanding, you will be ever seeing but *never* perceiving". Matt.13:14) Jesus declared Israel will "never" accept Him. He predicted the Jews will "never" accept the gospel, and "never" embrace Christianity. *The word of Christ has not been broken.* What do Jews say of Jesus in their sacred writings? According to the Talmud Jesus is the "bastard" son of a Jewish slut called "Miriam the hairdresser". The Talmud employs insult and bad taste when it criticizes Christ.

Balaam [Jewish code name for Jesus] is raised from the dead *and being punished in boiling hot semen.* Those who mock the words of the Jewish sages and sin against Israel *are boiled in hot excrement.* (57a Gittin, Simon, M. Trans. (1936) London. Soncino Press. p.261)

Hast thou heard how old Balaam (Jesus) was?-He replied: It is not actually stated but since it is written, *Bloody and deceitful men* shall not live out half their days it follows that he was thirty-three or thirty-four years old. (Sanhedrin 106)

The Jewish Encyclopaedia says,

In almost all of his public utterances *he (Jesus) was harsh, severe, and distinctly unjust* in his attitude toward the ruling and well-to-do classes. After reading his diatribes against the Pharisees, the Scribes, and the rich, **it is scarcely to be wondered at that these were concerned in helping to silence him.** (www.jewishencyclopedia.com)

It is an article of faith in the sacred writings of the Jews that the Lord Jesus is the bastard son of a prostitute (see Sanhedrin 106a, Shabbath 104b) and that He is now being punished in hell by being boiled in scalding excrement. The Talmud teaches that Jesus was a "bloody and deceitful man," authoritative Jewish writings say that He was "distinctly unjust" and deserved to be put to death. **How can it be said that while this is being taught, and has been taught for two thousand years, that God is pouring out His blessing on Israel.** Paul was aware of the Rabbinic attitudes now expressed in the Talmud. In response, this is what he wrote: "**Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed'**" (1 Corinthians 12:3)

The Jews have not had a living prophet for two and a half thousand years. Why is that? Other than John the Baptist, and Jesus, there has been no word of prophecy in Israel since Malachi, the last of the biblical prophets, five hundred years before Christ. Why is that? **Why is God not talking to Israel?**

The Last Days

The Scriptures teach that God promised to bless Israel in the "last days." In Hosea 3:5 it is written, "they will come trembling to the Lord and to His blessing in the last days" But in the context of the Old Testament what does the expression "the last days" actually mean?

The expression "latter days" is idiomatic Hebrew which means simply, at a point in the future, it does not mean at the end of world history. The New English Bible interprets the Hebrew correctly as the "**days to come**". In the Old Testament the expression the "latter times" means at a "later time". The Hebrew term *aharit hayamim*, translated in English as "the latter days" and "the last days," means "a long time from now" and the term itself cannot be interpreted as a reference to the end of the world.

The ancient Hebrews had a different concept of time to ours. They did not think of time as an uninterrupted chronological unit, they thought in terms of **blocks of time**. In Hebrew thinking history was made up of a succession of times each with its own beginning and end. **Each block of time eventually came to an end and had its own last days**. From a biblical perspective many "last days" have already come and gone. The New Testament writers spoke of the time in which they lived as "**these last days**." (Hebrews.2:2) What was for them the "last days" is for us ancient history. And we now have **our own** last days. (For the biblical concept of time see The New Bible Dictionary ed. J D Douglas IVP 1962 pp.1277-1279, also A Theological Word Book of the Bible ed. A Richardson SCM 1969 pp.258-267, Vocabulary of the Bible ed. J J von Allmen Lutterworth Press 1958 pp.423,434)

Jewish - Christian Relationships

Apostolic Christianity was in a negative relationship with the Jews over the crucifixion of Christ. Phillip declared, "you stiff necked people with uncircumcised hearts ... you always resist the Holy Spirit" [you] "betrayed and murdered" Christ. (Acts 7:51,33) Paul was equally blunt, he declared that the Jewish leaders "killed the Lord Jesus". He also stated that the Jews "**displease God and are hostile towards all men**". (1Thess 2:15) Jesus did not pamper Jewish sensitivities either, He denounced the Jewish religious leaders as "a brood of vipers" and "a wicked and adulterous generation". (Matthew 12:24,39)

The New Testament indicates the hostilities between Christian and Jew was started on the Jewish side. The Jews had originally accused Jesus of "blasphemy". (Matt.26:65) They also said of Christ that He was, "**demon-possessed and stark raving mad**". (John 10:20) They

accused Christ of being in league with Satan: "it is by **the prince of demons** that He drives out demons". (Matt.9:34) The Jews misrepresented Jesus to the Roman authorities and precipitated His death by falsely accusing Him of sedition. They claimed, "**we have found this Man subverting our nation**". (Luke 23:2) Scripture says the Jewish leaders employed immoral and dishonest means to trap Christ, "then the chief priest and the elders of the people ... **plotted to arrest Jesus and in some sly way kill Him**". (Matt.26:3,4) John 7:1 reads: "After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee; for He was unwilling to walk in Judea, **because the Jews were seeking to kill Him**". For orthodox Jews today, Jesus remains an object of their hatred.

We are told that when Paul "debated with the Grecian Jews ... **they tried to kill him**". (Acts 10:29) Luke says Herod "had James the brother of John **put to death**. ... When he saw this **pleased the Jews** he proceeded to **seize Peter also**". (Acts 12:2,3) We are told, "the Jews incited ... the leading men of the city. **They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas**". (Acts 13:50) Acts 14:1,2 tells us that, "the Jews who refused to believe **stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds**". When Paul preached the gospel in Thessalonica "the Jews were jealous; **so they rounded up some bad characters from the market place, formed a mob and started a riot**". (Acts 17:5) We are told in another place that, "**the Jews made a plot**" against Paul. (Acts 20:3) Also, "the Jews formed a conspiracy and bound themselves to an oath not to eat or drink **until they had killed Paul**".(Acts 23:12)

In 2Cor.11:24 Paul tells us, "**five times I received from the Jews forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned**". Paul's said Christians could not fellowship with the Jews in the synagogue because "**they drove us out**".(1Thess 2:15)

In their worship the Jews recited a daily prayer called the Shemoneh Esreh. Anybody in the congregation could be asked to recite this prayer. In order to stop Christians from continuing their use of the synagogue the Jews added a paragraph at the end of the Shemoneh Esreh which placed a curse on the Minim, or followers of Christ. Because the Jews would single out the Jewish Christians to recite this prayer it became impossible for them to fellowship in the synagogue. Three times a day in every synagogue where ever Judaism was practiced the following curse was pronounced on Christians.

May the apostate not have any hope and may the empire of pride be promptly uprooted in our days. **May the Nazarenes and the Minim [Christians] perish in an instant, may they all be erased from the book of life, that they may not be counted amongst the righteous.**

In the beginning it was not Christians who persecuted the Jews, **it was the Jews who persecuted the Christians**. The hostile attitude of Christians towards Jews down through history has always been inexcusable and must be condemned in the strongest terms. But it

was because **the Jews originated fierce persecuted against Christians** that Christianity and Judaism went their separate ways.

The attitude of the religious Jew towards the goyim (non Jews) has historically been one of hostility. For example, the Yiddish word for a Gentile woman is "shiksa". The Megiddo Modern Hebrew-English Dictionary, published in Israel defines sheqetz as: "**unclean animal; loathsome creature, abomination...**" One Jewish source says: "The more insulting terms for non-Jews are shiksa (feminine) and shkutz or sheketz (masculine). It may be gathered that these words are derived from the Shin-Qof-Tzade, **meaning loathsome or abomination**". (<http://www.mechon-mamre.org/jewfaq/gentiles.htm>)

In 1962 a part of the Maimonidean Code which contains the basic rules of the Jewish faith was published in English and Hebrew. The Hebrew text commands Jews to exterminate infidels, it says: "It is a duty to exterminate them with one's own hands." The Code then goes on to identify the "infidels" who are to be exterminated: "Such as **Jesus of Nazareth and his pupils**, and Tzadoqand Baitos [the founders of the Sadducean sect] and their pupils, may the name of the wicked rot."

Most of what Martin Luther wrote against the Jews in 1543 in his Von den Juden und Ihren Lugen is appalling, and decidedly unchristian. However, Luther gave the following comments to justify his actions. Basically Luther decided that he would treat the Jews the way they were instructed by their sacred writings to treat the "goyim" or Christians. Luther merely adopted an "eye for an eye" policy.

Does not their Talmud say, and do not their rabbis write, that **it is no sin to kill if a Jew kills a heathen**, but it is a sin if he kills a brother in Israel? It is no sin if he does not keep his oath to a heathen. Therefore, to steal and rob, as they do with their usury, from a heathen is a divine service. For they hold that they cannot be too hard on us nor sin against us, because they are of the noble blood and circumcised saints; we, however, are cursed goyim. And they are the masters of the world, and we are their servants, yea, their cattle...

Should someone think that I am saying too much, I am not saying too much, but much too little. **For I see in their writings how they curse us goyim and wish us all evil in their schools and their prayers.**

The following samples taken from Jewish writings are some of the references Luther was referring to.

Accordingly, if we see an idolater (gentile) being swept away or drowning in the river, we should not help him. **If we see that his life is in danger, we should not save him.** (Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, (Moznaim Publishing Corporation, Brooklyn, New York, 1990, Chapter 10, English Translation, p. 184) See also the Hebrew text of the Feldheim 1981 edition of Mishnah Torah .

It is a mitzvah [religious duty], however, to **eradicate** Jewish traitors, minnim, (Christians) and apikorsim, and to cause them to descend to the pit of destruction, **since they cause difficulty to the Jews and sway the people away from God, as did Jesus of Nazareth and his students**, and Tzadok, Baithos, and their students. May the name of the wicked rot." (Maimonides, Mishnah Torah, Chap. 10, p. 184)

A Jew who killed a righteous gentile is not executed in a court of law. It says in Exodus 21:14, 'If a man schemes against his fellow man and kills the man deliberately, take him away from the altar and put him to death.' **But a gentile is not considered a man**, and even more so, a Jew is not executed for killing an unrighteous gentile. (Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Rotze'ach 2:11)

The Talmud refers to Jesus as the "bastard" son of "Miriam the hairdresser" who conceived Jesus when she cheated on her husband and committed adultery with her best man. Jewish hatred of Jesus is very intense. If the Jews want to identify an individual that they hate they attach the name of Jesus to that persons name to signify that they regard him as being obnoxious. Israel Shahak, himself a Jew, writes,

The Hebrew form of the name Jesus--Yeshu--was interpreted as **an acronym for the curse, 'may his name and memory be wiped out,' which is used as an extreme form of abuse.** In fact, anti-zionist Orthodox Jews (such as Neturey Qarta) sometimes refer to Herzl as 'Herzl Jesus' and I have found in religious Zionist writings expressions such as 'Nasser Jesus' and more recently 'Arafat Jesus'. (Israel Shahak, Jewish History, Jewish Religion, pp. 97- 98, 118.)

The orthodox opinion among Jews is that Christians are heretics worthy of death. The Jewish Tractates Soferim 15, Rule 10 says, "This is the saying of Rabbi Simon ben Yohai: 'Tob shebe goyyim harog' ". This translates in English as: "**Even the best of the gentiles should all be killed**". In the Jewish religion as expressed in such authoritative documents as the Talmud it is a religious requirement for Jews to despise non Jews. Christians in particular are pointed out as being offensive. Jews are taught,

While the Christians do generally accept the Hebrew Bible as truly from God, many of them (those who accept the **so-called divinity of Jesus**) are idolaters according to the Torah, **punishable by death**, and certainly will not enjoy the World to Come.

According to Sanhedrin 57a if a Jew steals from a Jew the property is to be returned, but if a Jew steals from a goy or Gentile they can keep the property. Also if a Jew murders a Jew they are to be put to death, but if a Jew murders a Gentile, "there is no death penalty". Sanhedrin 57a reads as follows,

With respect to robbery--if one stole or robbed or (seized) a beautiful woman, or (committed) similar offences, if (these were perpetrated) by one goy [Gentile] against

another, (the theft, etc.) must not be kept, and likewise (the theft) of an Israelite by a goy, **but that of a goy by an Israelite may be retained'** . . . 'For murder, whether of a goy by a goy, or of an Israelite by a goy, punishment is incurred; **but of a goy by an Israelite, there is no death penalty"** (emphasis added).

The Talmud teaches that non Jews are not human beings but merely "animals in human form".

The Jews are called human beings, **but the non-Jews are not humans. They are beasts.**Talmud Babamezia 11b

Even though God created the non-Jew **they are still animals in human form.** It is not becoming for a Jew to be served by an animal. Therefore he will be served by animals in human form. Midrasch Talpioth, p. 255, Warsaw 1855

The souls of non-Jews come from impure sprits and are called pigs. Jalkut Rubeni gadol 12b

It is the law to kill anyone who denies the Torah. The Christians belong to the denying ones of the Torah. Coschen hamischpat 425 Hagah 425. 5

Every Jew, who spills the blood of the godless (non-Jews), is doing the same as making a sacrifice to God." Talmud: Bammidber raba c 21 & Jalkut 772

Shabbath 116a teaches that Jews must destroy the books of the Christians, i.e. the New Testament.

The German newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung (Munich, April 3,1999) reported Sharon Kalimi, a member of a strict orthodox Breslau Hasidim, as saying, "Araber sind tiere keine menschen": In English this reads: **"Arabs are beasts, not human beings"**. Kalimi went on to say that **"Their flesh is the flesh of mules and therefore they should be treated as such"**. It may come as a surprise for Christians to learn that when Kalimi referred to Palestinians as "beasts" and "not human beings" he was doing nothing more than faithfully quoting the Talmud and expressing a fundamental Jewish belief. ([Google Search](#))

Judaism - Bible Based Religion - or Man Made Tradition?

In Jesus' day the Jewish religion was not based on the Old Testament but on the tradition of the elders contained in the Mishnah or oral law. The Judaism that opposed Jesus was not a biblical religion but an apostate religious system. **The very teachings that Jesus opposed are today preserved in the Babylonian Talmud and are the basis of modern Judaism.**

In His disputes with the Jews Jesus was defending a biblical religion and his opponents were defending their own human traditions.

Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, "Why do your disciples break **the tradition of the elders**"? (Matthew 15:2)

Jesus replied, "And why do you **break** the commandments of God **for the sake of your traditions**"? (Matthew 15:3)

Thus **you nullify the word of God** for the sake of **your traditions**". (Matthew 15:6)

So the Pharisees and the teachers of the law asked Jesus, ""Why don't your disciples live according to **the tradition of the elders**"?" (Mark 7:5)

He (Jesus) replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites,: ... "They worship Me in vain; **their teachings are but rules taught by men**". (Mark 7:6,7)

You have **let go the commandments of God** and are holding on to **the traditions of men**". (Mark 7:8)

You have a fine way of **setting aside the commands of God** in order to observe **your own traditions**". (Mark 7:9)

Few realize that **traditional Jewish religion is not based on the Old Testament**, it is based upon the Jewish Oral Law that Jesus opposed which has been written down in the Talmud. **The Talmud enshrines the religious principles that Jesus said set aside the commandments of God**. Herman Wouk, a popular Jewish writer wrote,

The Talmud is to this day the circulating heart's blood of the Jewish religion. Whatever laws, customs, or ceremonies we observe - whether we are orthodox, Conservative, Reform or merely spasmodic sentimentalists - **we follow the Talmud. It is our common law.** (New York Herald Tribune. (1959). Nov. 17)

The Rabbi's openly set the Talmud above the Old Testament and make their tradition more authoritative than the Torah. They also pronounce death on any goyim who reads their sacred writings.

My son, be more careful in the observance of **the words of the Scribes than in the words of the Torah**. (Erubin 21b Soncino edition)

A heathen [Gentile] who pries into the Torah **is condemned to death**, for it is written, it is our inheritance, not theirs. (Sanhedrin 59a, Talmud, Sanhedrin. (1935). Soncino Edition. p.400.)

According to the Karaite Jews Rabbinic Jews claim that the oral law is just as inspired as the Bible and that **the Rabbinic commentary on the Torah is on the same level as the writings of biblical prophets**. This amounts to saying that Luther's commentary on Galatians is just as inspired as Paul's letter to the Galatians.

The Pharisees on the other hand believed that **the interpretation of a particular teacher was divine and elevated these teachings to the level of the Torah itself**. After time this doctrine got carried away and **they claimed that these teachings originated from God himself in the form of a second "Oral" Torah**. They even went so far as to claim that when two teachers taught diametrically opposed interpretations of the Bible that **both** interpretations were from God! <http://www.karaite-korner.org/history.shtml>

Acts 21

The New Testament teaches that within the context of the new covenant gospel "there is now neither Jew nor Greek". (Galatians 3:28) **The Bible repudiates the concept of racial superiority expressed in the Talmudic writings**. According to the New Testament the people of God today are made up of many ethnic groups, including Jews, who are "one body in Christ". The truth is, however, **Christianity began as a Messianic Jewish movement** and the apostolic Church was made up mostly of Jews.

Many Christians fail to understand that the first Christians were also practicing Jew. When Paul went to Jerusalem he was told: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, **and all of them are jealous for the law**". (Acts 21:20) These Jewish Christians saw no conflict between the religion of Judaism and faith in Christ. **Paul himself remained a practicing Jew**. According to Acts 21:20-26 at the request of the Christians leaders in Jerusalem Paul practiced purification rites, shaved his head because of a vow, and offered sacrifices in the temple. Acts 17:2 says: "As his custom was Paul went into the synagogue". When Paul was accused of opposing Jewish customs he declared in his defence that **"I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple"**. (Acts 25:8) Paul taught that Gentiles did not have to accept the Jewish religion in order to be saved, but he never attacked the practice of Judaism by Jews **and neither did he require Jews to give up Judaism in order to accept Christ**. Apostolic Christianity accommodated Judaism as a natural part of itself.

Tensions arose in the apostolic Church because some Pharisees who accepted Christ insisted that the practice of Judaism was an essential path to God. This group required more than the acceptance of Christ, they required from the Gentiles **a compulsory conversion to Judaism**, and this is what Paul rejected. Paul was not opposed to the practice of Jewish rituals in and of themselves, he was only opposed to **the enforcement of Jewish ritual as a condition of salvation**. Some were putting the practice of Jewish rituals on the same level as faith in Christ, Paul wrote: "Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised Christ will be of no value to you at all". (Galatians 5:2)

The Pharisees were basing salvation on faith in Christ **and** keeping the law. That is what Paul opposed.

If we followed the biblical pattern a Jew would not necessarily be required to give up their Jewish faith in order to become a Christian. At the very beginning of Christianity we read: "You see brother how many thousands of Jews have believed, **and all of them are zealous for the law**". (Acts 21:20) The vast majority of the first Christians were practising Jews, including the twelve apostles, **and their Jewish Christianity was accepted as a valid form of Christian worship**. On the basis of the New Testament practice there is no biblical requirement for a Jew who accepts Christ to abandon Judaism.

The only requirement for conversion to Christianity for a Jew, as for a Gentile, is faith in Christ. If Paul could write: "I have done nothing wrong against **the law of the Jews**" (Acts 25:8) and say to the Jews in Rome: "I have done nothing wrong against our people **or the customs of our ancestors**". (Acts 28:17) then we have no business requiring Jews to give up Judaism in order to become Christians.

The Talmudic tradition with its teaching of Jewish racial supremacy is the religion that Christ and the apostles opposed, and the system that persecuted them. **Modern Judaism is not biblical Judaism**.

Talmudic Judaism is a Jewish sect that worked with the Moslem authorities in the seventh century to bring all Jews into subjection to a false religion based on the Talmud. **Any notion that Talmudic Judaism has an organic link to the biblical patriarchs and prophets is pure mythology**. Talmudic Judaism is based almost entirely on what the Pharisees referred to in their dispute with Jesus as "the tradition of the elders" and what Christ called "the traditions of men". There is no link meaningful between the tradition of the elders contained in the Talmud and the Bible. The Karaite Jews, who based their Judaism on the Bible, and reject the Talmud, explain how the Rabbi's got control over Judaism.

In the early middle ages the Pharisees continued to thrive. They began to call themselves Rabbis and only used the name Pharisees when remembering historical events from the Second Temple period. In the 7th century the Islamic Empire swept the Middle-east. The Muslims had no interest in imposing Islamic religious practice on the Jews and gave them a degree of autonomy under a system known as the Exilarchate. The Exilarchate had been founded hundreds of years before under Sassanian rule but until now **only had influence in Babylonia and Persia**. Overnight the Rabbanites turned from a localized Babylonian phenomenon into a political power which stretched throughout much of the Middle-east. **From the 3rd-5th centuries the Babylonian Rabbinate had developed a body of religious law known as the Babylonian Talmud which they now imposed on every Jew in the Empire**.

Resistance to the Rabbinites was fierce, especially in the eastern provinces of the Empire which had never even heard of the Talmud. **The historians tell us of Jewish leaders whose resistance against the Talmud put them in direct conflict with the Islamic government, which had empowered the Rabbis and given them full authority over other Jews.** One resistance leader who refused to accept the Talmud was named Abu Isa al-Isfahani and it is said that he led an army of Jews against the Muslim government. Other attempts to cast off the Talmud were also undertaken but all failed and the Rabbanites and their Talmud seemed unstoppable. (<http://www.karaite-korner.org/history.shtml>)

Conclusion

From our investigation we have learnt that the attitude of the Pharisees toward Christ has not changed in two thousand years. We have also learnt that God has rejected the religion of the Pharisees that is based on the Oral Law and the religious prescriptions that are now expressed in the Talmud. The people of God are those who have received Christ, and no one else. The New Testament teaches that "salvation is found in no one else, **for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we may be saved**". (Acts 4:12) This is the truth for the Jew as well as the Gentile and there can be no compromise. If that means that the dispute with the Pharisees that began with Christ will continue, then that is how it must be. Christianity began as Jewish Christianity, therefore, a Judaism baptised into Christ is an authentic expression of the Christian faith. On the basis of the New Testament pattern any conflict between biblical Judaism and Christianity is entirely inconsistent with how Christianity began.

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, **THAT THOU MIGHTEST BE JUSTIFIED IN THY SAYINGS, AND MIGHTEST OVERCOME WHEN THOU ART JUDGED.** But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, **THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE: THERE IS NONE THAT UNDERSTANDETH, THERE IS NONE THAT SEEKETH AFTER GOD. THEY ARE ALL GONE OUT OF THE WAY, THEY ARE TOGETHER BECOME UNPROFITABLE; THERE IS NONE THAT DOETH GOOD, NO, NOT ONE. THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN SEPULCHRE; WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY HAVE USED DECEIT; THE POISON OF ASPES IS UNDER THEIR LIPS: WHOSE**

MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS: THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD: DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR WAYS: AND THE WAY OF PEACE HAVE THEY NOT KNOWN: THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 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. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law (Romans 3:1-31).

Digitized by truthaccordingtoscripture.com