

# PARABLES

Bringing Hidden Things to Light



Psalms 78:2-4

I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old... We will not conceal them.

## Parables Bookshelf - Series 1.20.1

This edition of the Parables Bookshelf Newsletters begins a new book. The subject is the Hebrew Roots Movement.

The number of Christians involved in this movement has ballooned in the past couple decades. Even if you have never been involved with Hebrew Roots, you are sure to find much information in this book that is pertinent to your own life.

The reactions I have been met with as people have read this book reveal that many Christians don't know Jewish history, and are astonished when they discover what Orthodox Jews really believe.

### ATTRACTIVE DECEPTION



THE FALSE HOPE OF THE  
HEBREW ROOTS MOVEMENT

Joseph Herrin

### Food for Thought

*If the whole church goes off into deception, that will in no way excuse us for not following Christ.*

Leonard Ravenhill

*The best way in the world to deceive believers is to cloak a message in religious language and declare that it conveys some new insight from God.*

Charles Stanley

### Scripture Memory

Colossians 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men...

#### Parables Newsletter

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# Attractive Deception— The False Hope of the Hebrew Roots Movement

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## Introduction

Authentic Christianity! That is the heart's desire of many believers today who have become discouraged with the sensuality and materialism of the prosperity churches; the dubious spirituality of the prophetic and apostolic congregations; and the vapid trendiness of the rock and roll, seeker-friendly, coffee-swilling, and doctrinally-flimsy houses of worship that dot the landscape of our nations. Many sincere people of God have at some point despaired of ever finding a group of fellow believers who see through the vacuity of popular modern Christianity, and who have set their hearts to walk with Christ in truth and obedience. The no-cost (and no-transformation) gospel that appeals to church-members' desire to be entertained and reassured of heaven when they die, has produced a spiritually empty parody of Christian discipleship that has led to a mass exodus from the churches.

In an hour of apostasy, there have been increasing numbers who have recognized that somewhere along the line the church has departed from the original faith of Christ and His apostles. They have wanted to return to first century Christianity that they might reconnect with lost truths, and thereby restore spiritual health and vitality to their own lives and the lives of believers with whom they fellowship. Many look to the book of Acts, to that first church which was birthed in Jerusalem. They observe that all of the apostles were Jewish men. Indeed, for a number of years the church consisted entirely of Jewish men and women. Yahshua had declared that He was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He informed His disciples that there was a divine order to the spread of the kingdom of God. The gospel of salvation through Yahshua must be preached first in Jerusalem, then Judea and Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth.

Recognizing the Jewish foundation from which the church sprang, many Christians have concluded that a more authentic Christianity must of necessity require a return to the Hebrew roots of the first church in Jerusalem. In one sense they are quite correct, for the Law and the Prophets were given both to the Jews and to all mankind to guide them to Christ. The Old Testament foreshadows that which is brought into full view in the New Testament. All who would be disciples of Christ should be students of both covenants, for ALL SCRIPTURE is inspired by God and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness that the man of God might be thoroughly equipped and furnished (II Timothy 3:16).

From the time I was a child I have given as much attention to the 39 books of the Old Testament as I have the 27 books of the New Testament. Over the course of many years of ministry I have found the TaNaKh, the Torah, the Nebium, the Kethubim (which are also referred to as the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings which make up the Old Testament) to be as rich and valuable a teaching source as the New Testament writings. I cite both divisions of the Bible with equal familiarity, authority, and value. Christians who have judged the Old Testament to be a Jewish book that has no benefit for their lives are acting foolishly. All 66 books of the Bible are "God-breathed." All of them are pregnant with revelation, instruction, and encouragement for the people of God, whether they be Jews, Christians, or Jewish Christians.

Jesus Christ/Yahshua the Messiah did not arrive in this world 2,000 years ago without an introduction. 1,500 years before He died on a cross to serve as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of mankind, He was foreshadowed in the Passover lambs that Moses instructed the people of Israel to slay on their last night in Egypt. 430 years before that first Passover, Yahweh promised His friend Abraham that a Seed would one day be given to him who would be a

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source of blessing to all nations. That Seed is Christ, whose genealogy is reckoned back to Abraham. Yahshua's genealogy is also traced back to David, the King of Israel who had a heart after God.

What do these men, Moses, Abraham, and David have in common? They are all Hebrews. They were all members of a nation chosen by Yahweh to be His peculiar possession in the earth. Abraham is the father of the Hebrew nation. This nation is frequently called by the name of his grandson Jacob whose name was changed to Israel. From Jacob/Israel came twelve sons. One of those sons was Judah, whose lineage was destined to bear the scepter of rule over the nation. Yahshua the Messiah, the King of Israel, was born of the tribe of Judah. He is in all ways the legitimate heir to the title "King of the Jews."

It takes only an elementary understanding of the Bible to understand that Christianity arose out of Judaism. The Hebrew people had their beginning when Yahweh called Abram to leave his home in Aram, to depart from his father's household, and to follow Him to a new land that would be given to Abram's descendants as a possession. 2,000 years later Yahweh sent His only begotten Son to the earth to call out a further elect from among mankind. Yahshua chose twelve men, all Jewish, to lay the foundation for His church. This church, referred to as "the body of Christ," was not to be made up only of Hebrew men and women. It would encompass a great multitude of Gentile believers. The word "Gentile" is a reference to "the nations." In this sense, the phrase "the nations" indicates any who are not natural born Israelites, descendants of Abraham.

It would be folly to suggest that those members of the body of Christ who came from "the nations" have no need of, or would derive no benefit from,

learning about Yahweh's dealings with the Hebrew people, the descendants of Abraham. Yahweh spent two millennia dealing with this nation prior to calling the Gentiles to be part of the people of God. It would be equally foolish for the Jew to suggest that the Gentiles, those who are not the natural descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, have no part or portion with them. Through His Son, Yahweh has reconciled both Jew and Gentile into one people.

Matthew 8:11

"And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven..."

Acts 10:45

And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also.

Romans 2:28-29

For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter...

***Recognizing the Jewish foundation from which the church sprang, many Christians have concluded that a more authentic Christianity must of necessity require a return to Hebrew roots...***

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Ephesians 2:11-21

Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision,"... remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Yahshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Yahshua Himself being the corner stone...

Hebrew and non-Hebrew are now one in Christ. Those who were once far off (the people of the nations) have now been brought near to God through the blood of the Jewish Messiah. The apostle Paul contends that both Jew and Gentile were sinners. Both needed a Savior. Both were reconciled back to the Father in the same way, the way of faith.

Romans 3:9, 28-30

What then? Are we (Jews) better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews

and Greeks are all under sin... For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. Or is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one.

The body of Christ is comprised of men and women from all tongues, tribes, and nations of the earth. There is no distinction. All have been made one in Christ. Nevertheless, Yahweh dealt specifically with the Hebrew nation for 2,000 years prior to sending His Son to draw all men unto Himself. The Hebrew people have a rich history of Yahweh dealing with them. The apostle Paul was a Hebrew, born of the tribe of Benjamin. He testified the following.

Romans 3:1-2

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

What were these oracles? They are the 39 books of the Old Testament, the books which the Jewish people call the Tanakh. When someone speaks of the Hebrew roots of Christianity, it is these books, and all that is revealed in them, that I deem to fit the words "Hebrew Roots" most aptly. Should not the Christian disciple, whether Jew or Gentile, give themselves enthusiastically to the study of these "oracles of God" that they might learn as much about their Creator and Redeemer as possible? Indeed, there is no excuse for those who neglect so great an opportunity when it is before them. From the first line of the book of Genesis, unto the last line of the prophet Malachi, there is much wisdom, revelation, and

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instruction to be gleaned by those who love truth.

Now, if the study of the Old Testament, and familiarity with all the words Yahweh has delivered to mankind through Hebrew men, were in fact what was in focus when people speak of the Hebrew roots of Christianity, I would be all for it. If adopting Hebrew roots meant no more than embracing all 66 books of the Bible as divinely inspired and profitable for Christians, then I would be judged as one of the most ardent proponents of Hebrew roots today. I have devoted major portions of my books and writings to discerning the types, shadows, and various parables contained throughout the Old Testament. I have sought wisdom in the historical accounts of patriarchs, kings, and prophets. I have delved deeply into the types and shadows of the Law delivered to Israel through Moses. I was even destined by God to bear the name Joseph, one of Israel's twelve sons. Adding to the remarkable nature of this last fact is the knowledge that my parents were not even Christians at the time of my birth.

There is a growing faction among Christians at this hour called the Hebrew Roots Movement. Those who are the main actors in this movement, those who serve as teachers to tens of thousands of men and women across the world, intend much more when they speak of Christians returning to the Hebrew roots of their Christian faith than the mere study of the Old Testament. Many are stating that Gentile believers should conform themselves to the lives of their Jewish brethren. By this they mean that the Gentile believer should become Torah observant, taking upon themselves the Law as schoolmaster and guardian after the manner determined by Yahweh for the Hebrew people *before* the time of their promised Messiah.

In speaking of returning to the Hebrew roots of

Christianity, some are suggesting that the Gentile believer should begin to study the Talmud and Midrash, giving equal or even greater weight to these rabbinical interpretations of the Scriptures than they do to the Bible itself. Some are suggesting that Gentile believers should keep the dietary laws, observe Sabbaths, new moons, and Feast days. They are even leading the Gentile believers to embrace Jewish traditions that are extra-Biblical, such as wearing the kippah and the tallit, reading the daily parashot and haftarot, observing non-Biblical holidays such as Hanukkah, and adopting Jewish practice such as never writing out the name of Yahweh, replacing it with "God," and even when using this title to not spell it out, but rather to omit the vowel as in "G\_d." People who are joining Hebrew Roots fellowships are adopting many Hebrew words in place of English (or their native language), as if speaking, singing, or writing in Hebrew is a sign of spirituality, bringing them closer to Christ and a return to authentic Christianity.



In adopting many of the traditions and symbols of Judaism, these Gentile Christians and Messianic Jews are unwittingly embracing many profane things which derive from the Kabbalah. Kabbalah is Jewish mysticism that is traceable back to Babylon. It is infused with Satanic deception. There are signs, symbols, traditions, even

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the observance of specific holidays, that are Luciferian and are being embraced by Christians who are seeking a more authentic Christian faith and experience. Truly, Satan is the great deceiver who deceives the entire world. Sincere believers who are fleeing from the carnality and spiritual bankruptcy of modern Christianity, are running headlong into further deception in the Hebrew Roots Movement, mistaking it for the true faith.

In this book I will address many of these components of the Hebrew Roots Movement. I will present evidence from the Scriptures, from history, and from current sources that the reader can evaluate and test for themselves. My desire is not to offend my brothers and sisters in Christ who have embraced the Hebrew Roots Movement, but rather to help them to escape the snare of the devil. My heart's desire is expressed by John, the beloved disciple, who wrote the following:

### III John 4

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

I would that all of God's people might serve and worship Yahweh in Spirit and in truth.

In closing out this introduction I would speak somewhat of the intended scope of this book. One of the most profound and grievous effects of the Hebrew Roots Movement is that it is leading a large number of Christians away from a life submitted to, and guided by, the Spirit of Christ. It is leading them back to life under the Law of Moses. This book will NOT focus on this aspect of the Hebrew Roots Movement, as it would take an entire book in itself to address this subject responsibly and thoroughly. Such a book already

exists, as I was led previously by the Spirit of Christ to write the book titled *Laying Down the Law*. I would urge the reader to consider this present writing to be a companion book to *Laying Down the Law*. I would further encourage the reader to study carefully my earlier book on the Law BEFORE reading this one which will primarily focus on the traditions, symbols, and various Hebraisms that many Christians are adopting today. The book *Laying Down the Law* is available to be freely read, downloaded, or printed out, at the Heart4God website.

Many of my brothers and sisters, having been informed of the intent of this present writing, and of the book *Laying Down the Law*, will be inclined to dismiss both of them out of hand, having made up their minds that observing the Law and adopting Hebrew traditions, symbols, and practices, is the will of God for all Christians. To such ones I would make the following entreaty. ***Please hear my testimony before you reject it.*** Although you may believe you have heard every possible argument on these subjects, and are satisfied that none of them are worthy, I am confident that you have not yet "heard" what I have set forth on these subjects.

In the book *Laying Down the Law* I have presented evidence and arguments that I have encountered from no other man. I spent many years entreating the Father to show me the truth about the role and duration of the Law that I might teach accurately and effectually His mind on this subject. Over the course of more than a decade the Father unveiled to me much of His thought on this subject. In sincerity, and humility, I declare that I have been taught of God, and have not followed the teaching of man.

I urge you also to consider the wisdom declared

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by King Solomon.

Proverbs 18:13

He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him.

Before you reject my message without giving it a hearing, I would entreat you to remember the words of Nicodemus as he addressed the chief priests and pharisees.

John 7:51

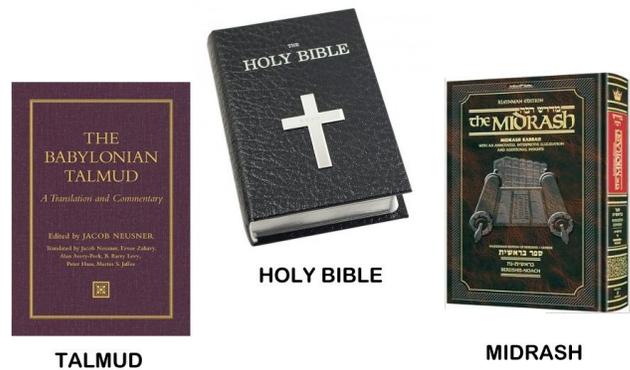
“Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?”

If you believe you are to keep the Law, then does not the Law say you should hear before you judge? If you will hear what I have to say, and afterward you still believe that it is God’s will for you to be governed by the Law, or to conform yourself to various Jewish customs, then you have lost nothing. You will have spent only a little of your time in exercising the fruits of the Spirit which include patience, gentleness, and humility. You will have treated a brother in Christ with love, and that is a far weightier matter in Yahweh’s sight than a great many things. If, on the other hand, you find that the Spirit of Christ is speaking to you through what is written, you will have gained much.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days,

Joseph Herrin

## Between Two Thieves

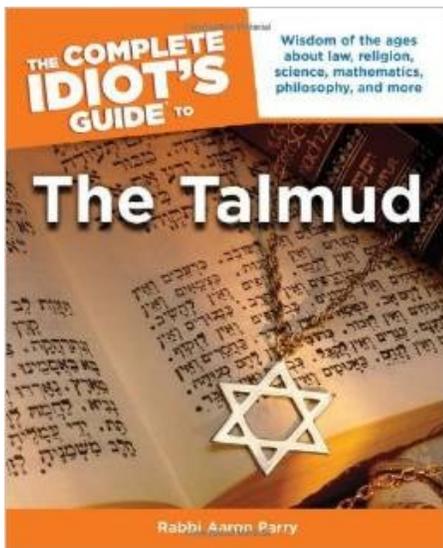


If you are like many Christians, you likely do not know the difference between the Talmud and the Torah. You may think that a Midrash is something you get from rubbing poison ivy on your stomach. Many of the words associated with Jewish religion are unfamiliar to Gentile Christians. It can seem daunting to get a firm grasp upon the terminology and concepts associated with Judaism, but there can be great profit in putting forth the effort. The focus of this and the following chapter of *Attractive Deception* is to make the identification of the Talmud and Midrash (and the Jewish people’s attitudes towards them) readily comprehensible. This present chapter will focus upon the Talmud, with the following examining the Midrash.

In popular culture, this chapter might be titled *Talmud for Dummies*, though I think the label would be unfairly demeaning to the reader. Doing a quick search on Amazon, I did discover the following book exists.

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### The Complete Idiot's Guide to the Talmud

Undoubtedly Rabbi Aaron Parry has a very different focus to his writing than I have in mind. In order to bring to light the error of the Hebrew Roots Movement, it is necessary to demonstrate the character of Hebrew religious life, both ancient and modern. Many of the traditions, doctrines, rites, and observances which the Hebrew Roots Movement has embraced derive from an attempt to imitate and incorporate elements of Hebrew religion and culture into the faith and practice of Christianity. What many do not realize is that a great number of these traditions arise from apostate Judaism, rather than from authentic apostolic Christian faith. The Talmud and the Midrash, hold significant responsibility for leading astray the Jews. The same result is often met by the Christian believer who embraces Hebrew Roots.

Most Christians today, even those with considerable knowledge of the Bible, are unfamiliar with many of the basic concepts relating to Judaism. This is NOT because Christians are *Dummies*, or *Idiots*. Rather, it is due to an absence of focus on

Judaic practice among the majority of churches which comprise the body of Christ. My parents took me to church faithfully from the time I was a small child. When I was old enough I continued the practice on my own. Yet, in all the churches I attended, I do not recall a single sermon or Sunday School lesson teaching us about the Talmud or Midrash. I am not suggesting that churches should teach *from* the Talmud and Midrash. What would be profitable is to teach the body of Christ *about* them.

My problem was not that I was a shirker. I knew the Bible. I read the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. From childhood I could cite the names of all 66 books of the Bible, and quote a large number of Scripture verses. I was familiar with the content of the Bible, but I never encountered the words Talmud or Midrash in all of my Scripture reading. There is good reason for this. These words do not appear in the Bible, at least not in the English translations from which I was reading. The absence of these words, however, does not infer that the Talmud and Midrash are not spoken of in the Bible. Christ was speaking of the precursor to the Talmud (the Oral Torah) when He uttered the following words.

Mark 7:6-9

“Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” He was also saying to them, “You nicely set aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition.”

The Son of God was citing the prophet Isaiah

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who wrote in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.. The Jewish people spent a large portion of their history in an apostate condition. The years in which they walked in truth are few and far between. The Hebrews quickly developed traditions and interpretations of Yahweh's word which led them into apostasy and kept them there. At the root of this apostate teaching is the claim that, in addition to the Law which Yahweh delivered to Moses which was inscribed on tablets of stone at Mount Sinai, Yahweh delivered a second body of teachings to Moses consisting of interpretations of the Law. The Jewish rabbis refer to the Law written on tablets as the *Torah Schebichtav* (Written Law), while they call the unwritten interpretations of the Law that Yahweh delivered to Moses as the *Torah Shebeal Peh* (Oral Law). The rabbis postulate that Yahweh could have inscribed the written Law on tablets of stone in a single day, but that it required the rest of the forty days Moses was on Mount Sinai to teach him the interpretations of the Law.

A Christian believer may quickly dismiss the claim of Yahweh delivering to Moses a second Law as nothing more than Jewish myth. Yet to the religiously observant Jew this story is taken very seriously, and the Oral Law is assigned a higher honor and authority than the Written Law. According to Jewish tradition, Moses taught the Oral Law to Joshua; Joshua taught it to the seventy elders of Israel; These seventy elders taught it to the Prophets, and the Prophets in turn passed it on to "the Great Synagogue," that body of Jews who lived after the period of the Prophets in what is largely considered the Persian period of Israel's history, or the time from the Babylonian exile forward. Bear in mind that a great many Jews remained in Babylonia after their seventy years of exile were finished. Only a remnant returned to Jerusalem.

This tradition of how the Oral Torah passed from Moses down to the Jewish religious leaders many centuries later is a Jewish fable, though the Orthodox Jews do not see it as such. Such fables have been prevalent for the entire history of the Christian church. The apostle Paul warned Titus about them.

Titus 1:13-14

For this cause reprove them severely that they may be sound in the faith, not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

In these words of the apostle Paul is a reference to the Oral Torah whose man-made traditions would be set down in writing as the Talmud about two centuries later. The Oral Torah, like the Talmud and Midrash, consists of Jewish Myths and the commandments of men which turn people away from the truth. The Scriptures speak nothing of Yahweh delivering to Moses anything other than the Law written on tablets of stone. There is no Biblical support to the claim that Yahweh taught Moses a second Law, an oral one. It is ever the practice of disobedient men to add to the word of God, thereby altering and rendering null and void the commandments of Yahweh.

*The Oral Torah... consists of Jewish Myths and the commandments of men ...*

The earliest mention in the Scriptures of the Jews giving heed to vain traditions that stood in contradiction to the divinely inspired word of God is in the book of Isaiah. Isaiah began to prophesy around 740 B.C.. He wrote at that time of the Jewish people teaching "the precepts of men" as if they were the doctrines of God. This was un-

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doubtedly a reference to the Oral Torah. Consequently, we can deduce that the Oral Torah was in existence as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.. Moses received the true Law of God in the 15<sup>th</sup> century B.C.. Somewhere in the time between the original transmission of the Law at Mount Sinai and the time of Isaiah's writing, the Oral Torah had its origin.

The Oral Torah most certainly was NOT delivered to Moses, adopted by Joshua, then passed along by the seventy elders of Israel, or the prophets. Isaiah was a prophet of Yahweh. He rejected and cast scorn upon the precepts and doctrines that the religious leaders of Israel were teaching as if they were divine commandments. There has been no greater prophet than Jesus Christ/Yahshua the Messiah. He repeated the words of His Father that Isaiah had recorded, and set before us an example of the error contained in the Oral Torah.

Mark 7:10-13

“For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death’; but you say, ‘If a man says to his father or his mother, anything of mine you might have been helped by is Corban (that is to say, devoted to God),’ you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.”

***The Oral Torah is rife with man-made additions and interpretations of the Law of God .***

The Oral Law/Torah had much to say about corban, and the Talmud which is the written form

of the Oral Law does as well. We can determine from this that both Christ, and Isaiah's references were to the Oral Torah. These inventions of men were subverting and overturning the commandments of Yahweh, as they continue to do unto this very day. Yahshua added “and you do many things such as that.” The Oral Torah is rife with man-made additions and interpretations of the Law of God that lead the student of the Oral Torah away from divine truth.

Reverend I. B. Pranaitis, in his scholarly book *The Talmud Unmasked* (published 1892), shares a concise history of the Talmud. Following is an excerpt from his book.

*The Talmud gets its name from the word Lamud - taught, and means The Teaching... it is taken to mean the book which contains the Teaching, which is called Talmud, that is, the doctrinal book which alone fully expounds and explains all the knowledge and teaching of the Jewish people...*

*In the second century after Christ, Rabbi Jehuda who, because of the sanctity of his life, was called The Saint, and The Prince, realizing that the learning of the Jews was diminishing, that their oral law was being lost, and that the Jewish people were being dispersed, was the first to consider ways and means of restoring and preserving their oral law. He collected all the lists and charts and from them he made a book which was called the Sepher Mischnaioth, or Mischnah - a Deuterosis, or secondary law. He divided it into six parts, each of which was divided into many chapters...*

*The Mischnah is the foundation and the principal part of the whole Talmud. This book was ac-*

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cepted by the Jews everywhere and was recognized as their authentic code of law. It was expounded in their Academies in Babylon - at Sura, Iumbaditha and Nehardea - and in their Academies in Palestine - at Tiberias, Iamnia and Lydda.

As their interpretations increased with the passing of time, the disputations and decisions of the doctors of the law concerning the Mischnah were written down, and these writings constituted another part of the Talmud called the Gemarah.

These two parts are so disposed throughout the whole Talmud that the Mischnah serves first as a kind of text of the law, and is followed by the Gemarah as an analysis of its various opinions leading to definite decisions...

In interpreting the Mischnah of Rabbi Jehuda, the schools of Palestine and Babylon followed each their own method, and by thus following their own way gave rise to a twofold Gemarah - the Jerusalem and the Babylonian versions. The author of the Jerusalem version was Rabbi Jochanan, who was head of the synagogue in Jerusalem for eighty years. He wrote thirty-nine chapters of commentaries on the Mischnah which he compiled in the year 230 A.D.

The Babylonian Gemarah, however, was not compiled by any one person, nor at any one time. Rabbi Aschi began it in 327 A.D and labored over it for sixty years. He was followed by Rabbi Maremar about the year 427 A.D., and it was completed by Rabbi Abina about the year 500 A.D. The Babylonian Gemarah has thirty-six chapters of interpretations.

This twofold Gemarah, added to the Mischnah, makes also a twofold Talmud: The Jerusalem version, which, on account of its brevity and obscurity, is not much used; and the Babylonian version, which has been held in the highest esteem by Jews of all times.

The Gemarah is followed by additions called Tosephoth(8). It was thus that Rabbi Chaia first styled his opinions on the Mischnaioth. He and Rabbi Uschaia were the first to explain this book publicly in the schools. Commentaries on the Mischnah which were made by the doctors outside the schools were called Baraietoth(9), or extraneous opinions.

**the Jewish people began to develop man-made interpretations of the true Law...**

(8) From Tosepheth, or Tosiphta, meaning addition.

(9) From Baria, extraneous, or Baraietha, extraneous teaching.

These Commentaries were further supplemented by other decisions called Piske Tosephoth, short theses and simple principles.

For nearly five hundred years after the Babylonian Talmud was completed, the study of literature was greatly hampered partly due to public calamities and partly owing to dissensions among the scholars. But in the eleventh century others wrote further additions to the Talmud. Chief among these were the Tosephoth of Rabbi Ascher.

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*Besides these there appeared the Perusch of Rabbi Moische ben Maimon, called by the Jews Rambam for short, by the Christians Maimonides...*

*Thus, the Mischna, Gemarah, Tosephoth, the marginal notes of Rabbi Ascher, the Piske Tosephoth and the Perusch Hamischnaioth of Maimonides, all collected into one, constitute a vast work which is called the Talmud.*

[End Excerpt]

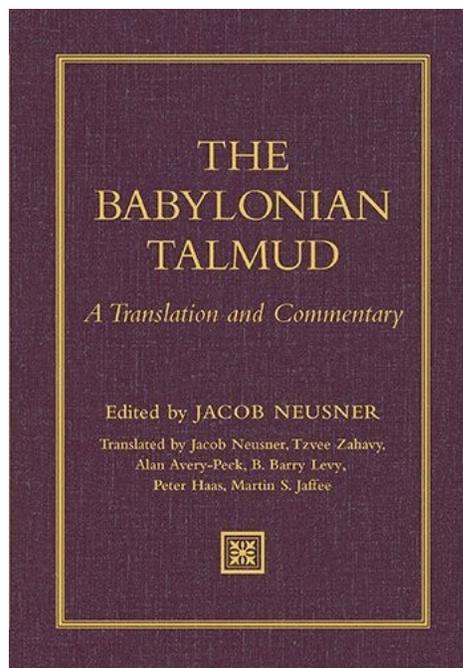
To recap, the Jewish people began to develop man-made interpretations of the true Law which Yahweh had delivered to Moses at Mount Sinai. In the centuries after Moses these traditions and precepts of men were passed along from one generation of Jewish people to the next. This Oral Law became so expansive that lists and charts had to be drawn up in order that the rabbis should not forget some part of the Oral Torah, yet it was not codified as a written body of instruction until Rabbi Judah the Prince took up the task two centuries after Christ.

This original work by Rabbi Judah is known as the Mishna. The word Mishna is a Hebrew word meaning “study and review.” The Mishna (Mischna, Mishnah) is the first section of the Talmud. It is the first work of Rabbinic literature, being an early effort to take the Oral Torah, and put it in writing in order to preserve the Rabbinical explanations and applications of the Hebrew Scriptures.

After Rabbi Judah preserved the Oral Torah in writing, the rabbis of ensuing centuries studied the Mishna extensively. These rabbis produced a large amount of analysis and commentary on the

Mishna. Their recorded thoughts became known as the Gemara. The word Gemara (Gemora, Gemarah) is derived from the Aramaic noun “gamar,” which translates as “study.” The Gemara is the second section of the Talmud.

There are two versions of the Gemara, the first originating in Palestine, while the latter was developed in Babylonia. Depending on which version of the Gemara is coupled to the Mishna, the resulting body of teaching is referred to either as the Jerusalem Talmud, or the Babylonian Talmud. The Babylonian Talmud holds a place of ascendancy, and is what is primarily being referred to today when Jewish people refer to “the Talmud.”



### The Babylonian Talmud

It strikes me as significant that the Talmud would come to have the word “Babylonian” attached to it. The word Babel, from which the name Babylon is derived, means “confusion.” Truly, no better description could be given to this body of

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man-made traditions than “confusion,” for it leads people away from the truth of God’s word.

It is important to understand the tremendous veneration the Jewish people have given to these man-made traditions over the centuries. For nearly a millennia prior to Christ, and up to 200 A.D., the Oral Torah was accorded great honor. When it was codified as the Mishna two centuries after Christ, and expanded through the addition of the Gemara in following centuries, it was regarded by Orthodox Jews as being more valuable than the Tanakh (Old Testament). Nesta Webster, in her book *Secret Societies and Subversive Movements*, writes:

*The Talmud itself accords to the Bible only a secondary place. Thus the Talmudic treatise Soferim says: 'The Bible is like water, the Mischna is like wine, and the Gemarah is like spiced wine.'*

Reverend I. B. Pranaitis adds to this testimony.

*An important point to note is that [the Talmud] has always been regarded by the Jews as holy. They have always held it, and still hold it, as more important than the Sacred Scriptures. The Talmud itself shows this very clearly:*

*In the tract Babha Metsia, fol. 33a, we read:*

*"Those who devote themselves to reading the Bible exercise a certain virtue, but not very much; those who study the Mischnah exercise virtue for which they will receive a reward; those, however, who take upon themselves to study the Gemarah exercise the highest virtue..."*

*The following is a well-known and highly praised*

*opinion in the writings of the Rabbis:*

*"My son, give heed to the words of the scribes rather than to the words of the law."*

*The reason for this is found in the tract Sanhedrin X, 3, f.88b:*

*"He who transgresses the words of the scribes sins more gravely than the transgressors of the words of the law."*

*Also when there are differences of opinion between the Law and the doctors, both must be taken as the words of the Lord God.*

*In the tract Erubhin, f.13b, where it is related that there was a difference of opinion between the two schools of Hillel and Schamai, it is concluded that:*

*"The words of both are the words of the living God."*

*In the book Mizbeach, cap. V, we find the following opinion:*

*"There is nothing superior to the Holy Talmud."*  
[*The Talmud Unmasked* (1892)]

Men and women who are partakers of the Holy Spirit should perceive the abject evil of the words above. To state that those who study the words of man (the Mishna and Gemara) are acting more virtuously than those who study the divine words of Yahweh, is blasphemy. To instruct children to give greater heed to obeying the Scribes than to obeying the Law of Yahweh is folly and rebellion. To place the Talmud above the holy Scriptures is idolatry. Is it any wonder that Yahshua

## Attractive Deception— The False Hope of the Hebrew Roots Movement

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renounced the actions of the Pharisees, and the experts of the Law with such vehemence? Pretending to understand God’s Laws, and instructing others on how it should be observed, they stole the truth from God’s people.

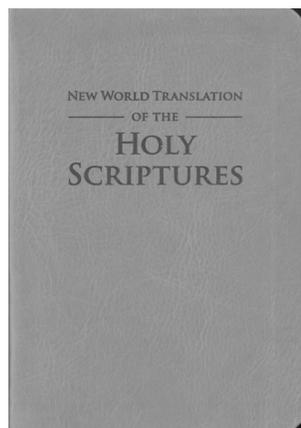
Luke 11:42

“But woe to you Pharisees! For you pay tithes of mint and rue and every kind of garden herb, and yet disregard justice and the love of God...”

Luke 11:52

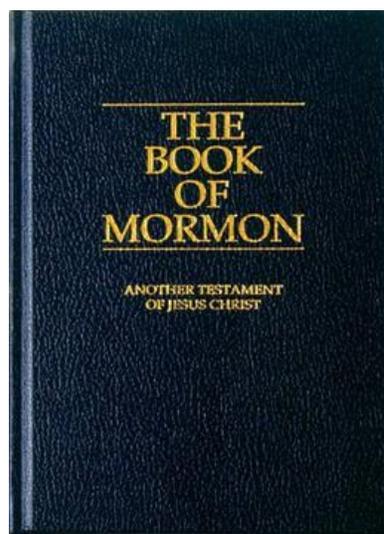
“Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.”

In more recent times, Christians have observed how Satan has been able to lead men and women away from truth, and mire them in deception and falsehood, through altering, or making additions to, the Word of God. The Jehovah’s Witnesses created their own Bible version, and they are required to study ONLY the teachings that flow from their headquarters in New York State.



**New World Translation Bible of the Jehovah’s Witnesses**

Similarly, the Mormons have produced their own book to read along with the Bible. The *Book of Mormon* has been advertised for decades as “Another Testament of Jesus Christ” and a “Companion to the Bible.” Yet its teaching suborn and corrupt the true gospel of Christ.



**Another Testament of Jesus Christ**

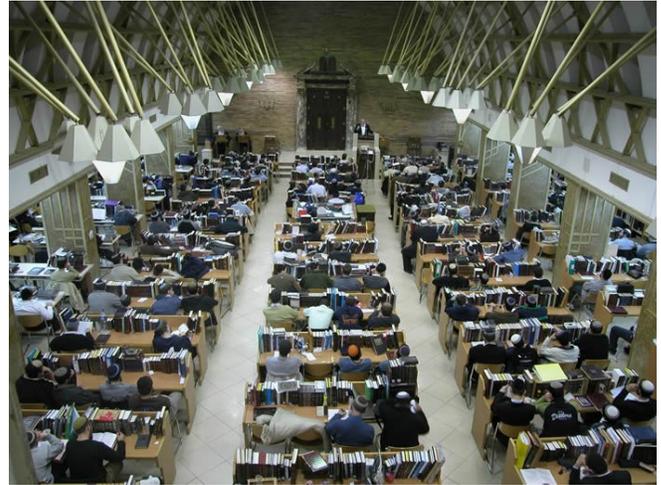
It is telling that the founders of both of these religious organizations were Freemasons. Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, is buried in a Masonic Cemetery where a Pyramid marks his burial plot. The Pyramid is inscribed with the symbol for the Knight’s Templar (the cross and crown), the highest order in York Rite Freemasonry.

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**Charles Taze Russell's Grave Marker**

The pyramid is a Luciferian symbol, embraced widely by Freemasonry, and appearing on the back of the U.S. one dollar bill. This association with Freemasonry and both Charles Taze Russell of the Jehovah's Witnesses and Joseph Smith of the Mormons, reveals one of the chief tactics Satan uses to corrupt the word of God in order to hinder humanity from arriving at the knowledge of the truth. He will alter, or add to the word of God, ultimately leading men to place a higher emphasis upon these corruptions than they do upon the Scriptures themselves. It should surprise no Christian to discover that this practice goes much further back, even pre-dating Christianity. Satan used the same scheme to lead the Jewish people away from truth by having them adopt a second Torah that ultimately redefined the original and stole away from men the key of knowledge.



Today there are Yeshivas, schools of Jewish religious instruction, where men (and some women) devote their lives to the study of the Jewish religion. Yet, it is not the Holy Scriptures that captivates their attention and demands their devotion. Rather, it is the study of the Talmud and the Midrashic writings of various Hebrew sages and rabbis throughout the centuries. These writings include numerous passages which defame the Son of God. He is always spoken of as illegitimate, a worker of forbidden magic, and one who suffered a disgraceful death. To deny Yahshua the Messiah to be the Son of God and the Savior of mankind is a manifestation of the spirit of anti-Christ. The Talmud, for this reason and others, must be considered to be a work of Satan. It has no divine legitimacy.

Despite the lying claims about the Talmud's origin, its enmity toward the truth of God's word, its claim of being superior to the divinely inspired Scriptures, its denouncement of the Messiah, and the rejection of these manmade traditions by Isaiah, Yahshua, and the apostles, there are many among the Hebrew Roots Movement who are advocating that Christians study the Talmud in order to properly understand their Bibles. They are inviting believers to engage in a vain, and poten-

## Attractive Deception— The False Hope of the Hebrew Roots Movement

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tially harmful, activity. Can a man gather figs from thorns, or pick grapes from a briar bush?

The Talmud is a thief. It steals away the key of knowledge from mankind. It is a rebel, asserting its own will and ways above those of the Creator. It is full of pride, claiming to be superior to the words of Yahweh. It is a destroyer, casting down all that is true and holy, blinding men to the truth, and suffering none to challenge its authority. Are these not the characteristics of that being whom Yahshua said “comes only to kill, steal, and destroy”?

As I was perusing various websites looking for information for this study, I came across the website [www.thetorah.com](http://www.thetorah.com). An article was posted there by a woman named Shani Tzoref who holds a Masters degree in Jewish History from Yeshiva University and a Ph.D. in Ancient Jewish Literature from New York University. Among other biographical facts, it was mentioned that she was awarded a Rothschild Fellowship at Hebrew University in 2006. Ms. Tzoref posted an article on the transgression of Reuben when he lay with Bilhah, his father’s wife. After the article there was an exchange of comments between her and a young man. Following is an excerpt from that exchange.

**Shani Tzoref:** *Do you think that "Torah" requires us to believe that Reuben had intercourse with Bilhah?*

**Alex Schindler:** *Insofar as it requires us to believe there was a person named Reuben and a person named Bilhah.*

*Avoiding the much more meta- question of*

*whether Torah narratives are given to be understood as historical or literary or something in between, it is rather clear what the narrative intends us to think the \*character\* Reuben did. It is no more ambiguous than what Absalom did in the light of day on the roof of his father's palace with his father's concubines.*

**Shani Tzoref:** *The point of my question is that you say yes, Torah requires us to believe that Reuben slept with Bilhah. And yet, the dominant view in the Talmud seems to be that Reuben did not sleep with Bilhah. As Orthodox rabbinic Jews, are we not committed to following talmudic interpretations over literal readings of the Biblical text?*

*My real point being - I don't think we are obligated to have a particular belief about what really happened historically. I suppose if I had to choose a stance about what Orthodoxy would mandate, I guess it would be to say that the Biblical text meant to convey what the rabbis say it meant - and so I must conclude that Reuben did not sleep with Bilhah, but it was considered in some ways as though he did. But I don't actually think a belief about the story is mandated.*

[Source: <http://thetorah.com/did-reuben-lie-with-bilhah/>]

This frank exchange of views reveals the elevated regard the Orthodox Jews have for the Talmud. They place the opinions of the rabbis above the testimony of the Torah (the Scriptures). If there is an apparent contradiction between what the Torah declares and what the Talmud advises, the Jews are expected to follow the talmudic interpretation over the plain meaning of the Bible. It is important to understand this elevated position occupied by the Talmud in Jewish life. By under-

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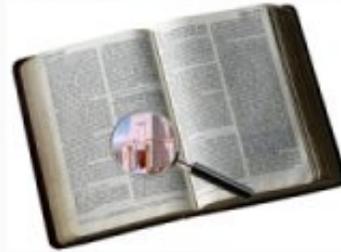
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standing the veneration of the Talmud, we can discern how the Jewish people have become apostatized, having departed from the divine intent of the Scriptures.

Now, in the Hebrew Roots Movement, there are “Christian” ministers who are directing the people of God to give heed to the Talmud, this book of lies. Additionally, there are a multitude of doctrines, traditions, legal observances, customs, and symbols that derive from the Talmud that are being embraced by Christians who mistakenly believe they are returning to the Hebrew Roots of the faith of Christ and His apostles when in fact they are embracing Jewish apostasy. Many of these items will be addressed individually as this writing progresses.

*The Talmud is a thief. It steals away the key of knowledge from mankind. It is a rebel, asserting its own will and ways above those of the Creator. It is full of pride, claiming to be superior to the words of Yahweh. It is a destroyer, casting down all that is true and holy, blinding men to the truth, and suffering none to challenge its authority.*

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### PARABLES PRECEPT— Famous Hymns: At the Cross

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Alas! and did my Savior bleed  
And did my Sov'reign die?  
Would He devote that sacred  
head  
For such a worm as I?

Refrain:

At the cross, at the cross where I  
first saw the light,  
And the burden of my heart  
rolled away,  
It was there by faith I received  
my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day!

Thy body slain, sweet Jesus,  
Thine—

And bathed in its own blood—  
While the firm mark of wrath  
divine,  
His soul in anguish stood.

Was it for crimes that I had done  
He groaned upon the tree?  
Amazing pity! grace unknown!  
And love beyond degree!

Well might the sun in darkness  
hide  
And shut his glories in,  
When Christ, the mighty Maker  
died,  
For man the creature's sin.

Thus might I hide my blushing  
face  
While His dear cross appears,  
Dissolve my heart in thankful-  
ness,  
And melt my eyes to tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er re-  
pay  
The debt of love I owe:  
Here, Lord, I give myself away,  
'Tis all that I can do.

Written by Isaac Watts, 1707