
CHRISTIANITY

IS THE FULFILMENT OF

JUDAISM

A Theological expedition

DR. SUDIP K. MANDAL



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RT. REV. BISHOP DR. CYRIL SATYEN CORNILIUS

His Gracious life (1951-2010)

He was Bishop of Lucknow and Bengal Regional Conference

Methodist Church in India (2007-2010)

PREFACE

I am deeply thankful to the almighty for granting me the resilience and patience needed to complete this book. This dissertation serves as a personal source of inspiration. The journey proved more challenging than I initially expected, especially while consulting various books and journals with Hebrew references for research material. Along the way, I encountered thoughts and expressions rich in wisdom. The series of profound reflections on the enduring conflict between science, religion, and philosophy eventually led to fresh insights about the unity of human knowledge, the human spirit, and God Himself. These insights profoundly influenced and motivated me. However, it was difficult at times to distinguish original ideas from the interpolations and commentaries by some authors, which occasionally conflicted. I hope my writing is clear and accessible to readers.

Both Jews and Christians claim to possess God's Word , but do they fundamentally share the same faith? The religion of the most devout Jews is called Judaism, which is the oldest of the world's three major monotheistic religions, meaning those that worship one God. Judaism is the foundation of both Christianity and Islam. It proclaims belief in one God named Yahweh, who is the creator and sovereign of the universe. He revealed His law, the Torah, to the Jewish people (then known as Hebrews) and chose them to be a light for all humanity. Moses introduced 10 commandments from God. These 10 commitments are presently not limited to just 10 . Over the time, the principles of the 10 commitments were progressively expanded upon eventually becoming 613 commandments.

The sacred scriptures of Judaism are categorized into the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (including Psalms and Proverbs). These writings also make up the Old Testament in the

Christian Bible. However, Judaism does not recognize the inspiration or fulfillment claims of the New Testament. Despite this, there are many common beliefs between the two faiths, as Christians also accept the Old Testament as divinely inspired. Both religions agree on fundamental truths such as the perfect creation of the world by an infinite God, the introduction of sin through the temptation of a transcendent being called Satan, God's judgment on sin, and the need for atonement. In Judaism, atonement comes through sacrifices, prayer, righteous living, and God's mercy.

A key difference is that Judaism rejects the central Christian belief that Jesus Christ is the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament. Christianity and Judaism are arguably the most similar major world religions. Both believe in one almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal, and infinite God who is holy, righteous, just, yet loving, forgiving, and merciful. The benevolent aspects of God can sometimes seem overshadowed by the law in Judaism. Both religions share the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) as God's authoritative word, though Christianity also includes the New Testament. Both believe in the existence of heaven for the righteous and hell for the wicked, though beliefs about the eternality of hell may vary. Their ethical teachings largely overlap in what is often called Judeo-Christian ethics. Both see a special divine plan for the nation of Israel and its people.

The fundamental distinction lies in the identity of Jesus Christ. Christianity teaches that Jesus fulfilled the messianic prophecies of the Old Testament (e.g., Isaiah 7:14; 9:6-7; Micah 5:2) and that He is God incarnate, who sacrificed Himself for humanity's sins (John 1:1,14; Hebrews 1:8; Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Judaism firmly denies that Jesus was the Messiah or God, and rejects the need for such a sacrifice. The details of Psalm 22:14-18 vividly align with the crucifixion of Jesus, depicting sufferings that mirror His experience (Luke 23; John 19).

The Apostle Paul, a devoted Jew and strict observer of Judaism, had a vision of Jesus Christ (Acts 9:1-9) and became the greatest advocate for Christianity and author of much of the New Testament. He understood the distinction between Christianity and Judaism better than most. His message was clear: “I am not ashamed of the gospel (of Jesus Christ), because it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile” (Romans 1:16).

Isaiah 53:3-6 offers a poignant description of Jesus: “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Working on this book has brought me great joy. The concepts it explores require careful and respectful treatment. I pray that my efforts will be well received by readers.

All *italicized* words in this book correspond to their original Hebrew and Bengali equivalents.

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I. JUDAISM AT A GLANCE

1. COMPARISON BETWEEN THE “HEBREWS”, “ISRAELITES” AND “JEWS”

All the terms depend upon ancestry, rather than upon where anyone lives. An Israelite is any biological descendent of Jacob, Jacob was renamed “Israel” by God. Genesis 32:28 “And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel : for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed, “Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel whom he blessed in Genesis 49:1-28. Thus, the nation of Israel is often called “The Children of Israel” in the Bible text. Because they are the descendents of the man “Israel”.

The term “Hebrews” is almost identical to “Israelites”, but it is slightly broader, because it includes the fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in addition to all the descendents of Jacob—we know this become was referred to as “Abraham the Hebrew” in Genesis 14:13. Therefore, all Israelites are Hebrews.

In explaining the term “Jews”, it is beneficial to understand some of Israel’s national history. After the reign the King Solomon over all the tribes of Israel around 1000 B.C., the Kingdom was split into two kingdoms as recorded in 1 Kings 12:1-24. The southern two tribes of Judah and Benjamin comprised the Kingdom Judah. The northern ten tribes continued to be called the Kingdom of Israel. Because of the split, there are some occasions where the “Israel” is used only in reference to the ten northern tribes instead of all twelve. But usually, the term “Israel” refers to all twelve tribes, depending upon the context.

About 300 years after the split of the Kingdom in 712 B.C. the Assyrians attracted the northern Kingdom of Israel captive (2 Kings 17:6). The earliest occurrence of the word “Jews” in the

Bible is in 2 Kings 16:6, near the time that Israel was carried away. The term “Jews” refers to those of the Kingdom of Judah, and their descendents. About 100 years later in 660 B.C. the Babylon (2 Kings 24-24). Seventy years later, the Medes and the Persian conquered Babylon (Daniel 5) and released the Jews. However, most of the Jews chose to remain in Babylon, and only a small remnant (Ezra 2:64) of about 42,000 returned to the land of Israel.

Paul said in Acts 21:39, “I am a man who is a Jew from Tarsus, a city in Cilicia”. which is not in the land of Israel. He also said in 2 Corinthians 11:22, “Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I.” This shows that all Jews, whether living inside or outside the land of Israel, are also considered Israelites and Hebrews.

As for the northern ten tribes of Israel, the Bible does not record them returning from Assyrian Captivity. Even though their whereabouts may be unknown to men, God still knows where they are and will use them during tribulation, just like the two tribes of the southern kingdom (Revelation 7:1-8). But during the first century when the New Testament was written, the vast majority of the Israelites referred to in scriptures were from the two Southern tribes. Thus, they are called “The Jews”. But even though “Jews” refers primarily to those of Judah and Benjamin, the term is probably not intended to exclude other Israelites, who were living among them such as Hanna from the tribe of Asher in Acts 26:2-7. Paul defended himself before King Agrippa by saying, “I stand ready to answer for myself today before you, who are an expert in all Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I ask you to listen patiently. From my youth, I have lived in a manner known to all Jews in Jerusalem, my own nation, who can testify that I was a Pharisee, belonging to the strictest sect of our religion. Now, I am on trial because of the hope of the promise made to our twelve tribes, whom I constantly serve day and night by obeying God’s will. It is for this hope, King Agrippa, that the Jews accuse me.”

In this statement, Paul seems to suggest that “our twelve tribes” refers to the Jewish people, implying a broader meaning of the term “Jews” beyond just the tribes of Judah and Benjamin. While Jews are often considered a single self-identifying ethnic group, there are distinct ethnic subdivisions among them. These subdivisions largely stem from geographic dispersal of the originating Israelite population, mixing with local peoples, and independent evolution over time.

2. WHAT IS JUDAISM AND WHY DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT JUDAISM

The very name Judaism sharply differentiates it from the other religions. Whereas Buddhism centers in Buddha, Christianity in Christ, Mohammedanism in Mohammed, Judaism centers in no particular personality, but in the Jew people themselves ... while Christianity is based upon events in the life of Christ.

Judaism is based on occurrences in the history of the Jews. Christians look to Jesus Christ for their salvation and Godliness. In Judaism the centre of gravity is in the Jewish people themselves. Jewish history records a continuous struggle against other nations and their religion ... Judaism has grown out of the soul of the Jews people and has been nourished by their life-blood. Hence it is not called *Mosaism*, *rabbinism*, but *Judaism* – after the Jews people themselves.

Much of today’s Church-believers of Christianity comes from Judaism. They therefore think that they can learn about Christianity by accepting Jewish practices and traditions. They have gradually included many things of Judaism into our Christianity. In most Bible book stores, Jewellery can be found with a six-pointed star over a cross, in spite of the Pagan origin of the six-pointed star.

As a Christian I must say the aforesaid comment is almost true in different countries. But I also realize that those Christians buy this jewellery just like an ornament. It does not mean that those

Christian people accept Judaism with Christianity. We know India is a multi-religious country. I see many Hindus wear a cross with a chain around their neck. I found the Buddha's model in a Christian house. It does not mean that they are worshipping Gautam Buddha. They just put it in their showcases only for beautification.

3. PRINCIPLES OF THE JEWISH FAITH

1. I believe with perfect faith that-God is the Creator and Ruler of all things. He alone has made, does make, and will make all things.
2. I believe with perfect faith that God Is One. There is no unity that is in any way like His. He alone is our-God—He was. He is, and He will be.
3. I believe with perfect faith that God does not have a body. Physical concepts do not apply to Him. There is nothing whatsoever that resembles Him at all.
4. I believe with perfect faith that God is first and last.
5. I believe with perfect faith that it is only proper to pray to God. One may not pray to anyone or anything else.
6. I believe with perfect faith that all the words of the prophets are true.
7. I believe with perfect faith that the prophecy of Moses is absolutely true. He was the chief of all prophets both before and after him.
8. I believe with perfect faith that the entire Torah that we now have is that which was given to Moses.
9. I believe with perfect faith that this Torah will not be changed, and that there will never be another given by God.

10. I believe with perfect faith that God knows all of man's deeds and thoughts. It is thus written (Psalm 33:15), "He has molded every heart together, He understands what each one does."
11. I believe with perfect faith that God rewards those who keep His commandments, and punishes those who transgress Him.
12. I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah. No matter how long it takes, I will wait for his arrival every day.
13. I believe with perfect faith that the dead will be brought back to life when God wants it to happen.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF JUDAISM

Before clarification we should know, what was and what is Judaism. It is in ambiguity that what is the actual holy book of Judaism. Is the Hebrew Bible or the first five books of the Bible.

The first five books in the Hebrew Bible is called 'Torah'

- Torah scroll as used in synagogues
- A religious artefact
- Hebrew letters without vowels

As a religious artefact or prop, Judaism does have large beautiful scrolls, that they called 'Torah'. On it are Hebrew letters (supposedly the first five books of the Old Testament, or the Hebrew Bible). The scrolls are highly valued and honoured as are the Hebrew letters printed on them.

So we could say, called Jews,

- (i) The followers of the 'Torah' are called Jews.
- (ii) A belief that all Israelites are Jews.
- (iii) A belief that Christianity came out of or from Judaism.

- (iv) A belief that Judaism was the religion of the Old Testament.
- (v) A belief that the word “gentle”, in the Bible, means non-Jew.
- (vi) A belief that Judaism and Christianity have a lot in common.
- (vii) A belief that Judaism and Christianity have the same God.
- (viii) A belief that the Jews have their own covenant and do not need to come to God through Jesus Christ as Christians do.
- (ix) A belief that today’s Israel is Biblical.

Israel and that Genesis 12: 2-3 refers to them.

Truly Judaism rests on two pillars, The Talmud and the Kabbalah.

5. WHAT IS ‘TORAH’?

In Hebrew ‘Torah’ means ‘instruction’, ‘law’ or ‘direction’. Though biblically it means something different.

The first five books of Moses in the Hebrew Bible [(i) *Bereishit* / Genesis, (ii) *Shemot* / Exodus, (iii) *Vayikra* / Leviticus, (iv) *Bamidbar* / Numbers, (v) *Devarim* / Deuteronomy] is called “Torah”.

6. WHY TORAH SCROLLS ARE NOT READABLE

The first five books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) of Moses were originally written in Hebrew, without the vowels, as the Torah Scrolls written today. But at first, when it was collected, it was without vowels. The Hebrew Language is constructed in such a way that vowel substitutions can dramatically alter the meaning of a word. It is like

seeing the letters PN as a word, which could be pin, pane, pen, peon, pine or pun.

If we change the vowels in our names, we would become someone else! The traditional explanation says that God dictated all of Torah to Moses. So it is also called *Torah min ha-shamayim* / Torah from Heaven, this was Revealed Truth. Though now it is written law, *Torah She'bi-khetav*.

The written Torah was that which was written in the Bible, the actual words that everybody could see on the pages in the Bible. The Oral Torah was the explanation that the rabbis gave to these words, and also some teachings which were not written down at all. The Oral Torah, the rabbis taught the people, was just as important as the written one, because without the one we could not understand the other. If we do not accept the Oral Torah we cannot understand the written one.

According to Rabbi Cohon, the Oral Torah was whatever the rabbis said the written one side, plus they explained things that were not even part of the written one. It sounds like they just made it up as they went along. He indicates the words of Rabbis and Whids are considered just as important as God's word and that God's word cannot be understood without their words.

Now we would think about, then what is the holy book or books of Jews? Because they are fully dependent upon rabbis Pharisees, who interpreted and explained through Oral Torah.

Now may we accept the explanation of the oral Torah, which was written later by rabbis and Pharisees from the written Torah? We should remember the Written Torah which was written without vowels and the interpreters were different men. Maybe they were / are the rabbis, Pharisees or the religious teachers. So it is possible to explain Oral Torah to deliver God's voice and God's messages and commandments incompletely, because we got only the religious laws and rituals from Oral Torah. We received God's divine love shortly from it. Rather it is saturated with inhumanic

social, psychological and physical or capital punishment. We could not find from the Oral Torah (Talmud) forgiveness, love, for each other. Anyway, later we will come back to this point of view.

Christ made more the ‘frequent allusions’ concerning the teaching of the Pharisees that became what is known today as ‘Talmud’. “In Matthew Chapter 23 from the Holy Bible, we can see what Jesus had to say about the teaching.” We can also see the numerous occasions on which Jesus responds to or addresses the Pharisees.

Oral Torah takes the place of the religious law book of Jews, by the rabbis, whose name is ‘The Talmud’ (The Babylonian Talmud) and ‘The Kabblah’ (from a book called Zohar).

7. THIRTEEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE ‘TORAH’

Hillel posited seven rules of interpretation of Torah. Hillel did not invent these rules —the *soferim* had been using them for many years already—but he was the first to catalogue them as the basis for understanding the words of Scripture.

Rabbi Ishmael, the great teacher of the generation before the Bar. The Kokhba rebellion developed these into thirteen rules. Eventually, Rabbi Eliezer ben Yose Ha-Galili would expand these further to thirty-two, but the thirteen *midday/measures* of Ishmael are so important part of Jewish tradition today that the Orthodox include them in the weekday morning prayers. (Indeed, they were already present in the earliest known as *siddur*.

Here are Ishmael's thirteen *middot* :

1. ***Kai Va-Khomer***. Inference from major to minor or minor to major; an "a fortiori" inference. A simple rule of logic, often framed in terms of leniency and strictness; i.e., if a more lenient case contains a certain stricter prohibition, then a stricter case must all the more; or if a strict case contains a certain leniency, then a lenient case certainly will as well. One of the most commonly offered examples is Moses's argument to God: "The

Children of Israel have not listened to me, how then should Pharaoh hear me?" (Exodus 6:1 2).

Rabbi Meir Zvi Bergman, a contemporary Orthodox *rosh ye-shiva/head of yeshiva* in Israel, notes that the determinations of whether a case falls into the categories of stringent or lenient are "(a) logic; (b) the laws of Torah that pertain to the case." He offers examples of each, drawn from the Talmud. In the first, drawn from tractate Baba Kama, "If one is liable for the damages caused by his animal when it did not intend any harm, then, certainly, he should be liable for damages which the animal did intend to inflict." For the latter category, he cites tractate Kiddushin, "If a Jewish bondswoman, who cannot be acquired by an act of cohabitation, can be bought with money, then a wife, who may be acquired [for *kiddushin*, the first stage of marriage] through cohabitation, may certainly be acquired with money." (This example is true only in biblical law; the rabbis subsequently prohibited this practice.)

2. **Gezerah Shavah.** Drawing of conclusion by word analogy. An interpretative principle based in linguistics, *gezerah shavah* holds when two passages contain words that are similar or have identical connotations, the laws of the two passages are subject to the same regulations and applications. The contemporary scholar Rabbi Abraham Hirsch Rabinowitz offers the example of a famous debate between Hillel and the B'nai Bityra on whether it is permissible to bring the paschal lamb even on Shabbat. The question is settled by a *gezerah shavah*: the passage covering the daily offering says if it is to be brought "*bemo'ado/in its due season*," and this phrase recurs in the passage on the paschal lamb. Consequently, the rule governing the daily offering, which is not brought on the Sabbath, applies to the paschal lamb as well.

3. **Binyan Av.** In this interpretative principle, the meaning of a term is derived from one (*binyan av mi-katuv ekhad*) or two other texts (*hinyan av mi-sheini ketivim*) and applied to a wider range of cases. In short, a law that occurs in one passage of Torah may be

applied in other passages in which there is a structural similarity. Another sage offers an example from Tractate Yebamot: "The school of R. Ishmael taught: Since the Torah mentions 'garments' in connection with several *mitzvot* without specifying their texture, and in one case the Torah specifies 'a woolen garment, or a linen garment'; wherever else 'garment' is mentioned it refers to a woolen or a linen garment."

4. ***K'lat ufirat***. A generalization that is followed by a particular. One of the best-known examples of this principle is drawn from Leviticus 1:2, in which Jews are enjoined to bring an offering "*min habihei-mah/ of the beasts*," a phrase that includes both wild and domestic animals, and "*min habakar u-min hatzon/ from the herd and the flock*," a phrase that suggests domestic animals only. The use of the more restrictive phrase after the generalization is taken to mean that wild animals are not to be brought for sacrifice.

5. ***Perat uk'tal***. A particular followed by a generalization (an inversion of the previous principle). In such a case, the particular is expanded by the more general term that follows it. When the Torah tells us that we must return lost articles to their rightful owners, it specifies "his ass . . . and his garment," then continues, "And you will do so with every lost thing of your brother's. . . ."

6. ***K'lal o-ferat u-k'lal***. A general law, limited by a specific principle, then referred to once again in general terms. In such cases, the law must be interpreted according to the limitation presented by the specific case. Conversely, there is the case of the *Perat u-K'lal u-ferat*, a specification followed by a generalization followed by another specification. In such cases, the generalization is qualified by the specification.

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz (in the Reference Guide that accompanies his monumental English-language Talmud) offers the example of the money used to redeem the second tithe, described in Deuteronomy 14:26. The Torah says that the money must be spent on "whatever you desire—on cattle, sheep, wine, strong drink, or whatever you wish." Drawing from the details listed there,

the Talmud says that the passage indicates that the money is to be spent on items that resemble the ones enumerate that is items that derive sustenance from the ground but do not themselves come from the ground, items that have undergone a process of growth or development.

7. *K'lal shehu tsarikh li-perat or Perat shehu tsarkh li-k'lal.* A general term that requires a specific term to clarify it, or a specific term that requires a generalization. Rashi explains the difference between this principle and *k'lal u-ferat* is that in the latter the general rule is understood and the specific is included to limit its application but in this case the specific is necessary because the general rule is unclear.

8. *Davar shehayah bi-K'lal v'yatsah minha-k'lal li-lamed.* Something is included in a generalization, but was then singled out from the generalization in order to teach a specific lesson. Hence the exception that was offered is applied to the entire generalization (or else its inclusion would have been redundant). Attention is called to the specific instance because it teaches us something new. For example, the Torah states that all work is forbidden on the Sabbath. But it also specifically proscribes kindling a fire on the Sabbath. The Talmud takes this to mean that each category of work is prohibited independently; therefore, someone who performs different kinds of forbidden work during Shabbat should be punished for each transgression.

9. *Davar shehayah bi-k'lal v'yatsah min ha-k'lal lif on shehu k'iniyanu.* Singled out from the generalization in order to discuss a provision similar to the general category. In such cases, the specific instance usually exists in order to be more lenient than the generalization would have been.

For example, Rabbi Meir Zvi Bergman points out, within the discussion of skin diseases designated as *tza'arat/leprous afflictions* in Leviticus 13, the Torah singles out two specific types of *tza'arah*. Ordinarily these would be treated under the general laws of *tza'arat* but because they receive separate attention here,

they are considered to be exempted from two particular, stringent laws governing *tza'afat*, and are covered by the more lenient general regulations of *tza'arat*, even though they are not mentioned specifically in those general rules.

10. *Davar shehayah bi-k'lal v'yatsah min ha-k'lal min ha-k'lal lif on to'an akhar shelo v'inyanu.* A case in which something is included in a generalization but is singled out to discuss a provision not similar to the general category. In this case, the specific instance is brought up because it carries its own set of laws that are different from the ones discussed in the generalization.

In the discussion of the laws of *tza'arat*, the Torah refers to “a man or woman [who] has an affliction of the head or the beard.” As Rabbi Bergman explains:

Even these two afflictions of the skin are implied in the general laws ..., the Torah nevertheless singles them out to tell us that they have neither the stringency of the general category, regarding which white hair in the affected area is a symptom of impurity; and here it is not leniency of the general category—that is, *tza'ara[t]* of the head and beard is indicated by the appearance of yellow-colored hair, while in other forms of *tza'ara[F]* it is not. [Gateway to the Talmud]

11. *Davar shehayah bi-k'lal v'yatsah min ha-k'lal li-don ba-davar hekhdash.* A case in which something is included in a generalization but is singled out so that it will be treated as a new case., In such a passage, the principle of the generalization does not apply to this new case unless the Torah explicitly returns to the generalization. Steinsaitz points to the laws governing *sh'lamin*/peace-offerings. First the Torah discusses them generally. Then it sets forth specific laws of the *todah/offering of thanks*, a type of peace offering. The Talmud concludes from this sequence that the laws of peace offerings don't apply to the offering of thanks except where specified.

12. *Davar ha-lamed me'inyanu v'davar ha-lamed misofoh.*

Interpretation of an obscure word or passage by inference from its context or from a subsequent statement in the passage. The classic example of this principle occurs in the Ten Commandments, although "Thou shalt not steal" would seem to us a clear injunction against theft of property, the other crimes enumerated in this verse—murder and adultery—are punishable by death. Because mere theft was not a capital crime, the rabbis inferred that the verb used here (*tignov*) specifies kidnapping, which is a capital offense.

13. *Shinei v'tuvim ha-mav'khishim zeh et zeh.* In a case in which two verses contradict each other, the meaning can only be determined by using a third text that reconciles them.

8. THE TALMUD

From "Look Magazine", June 17, 1952 in an article entitled, "What is a Jew", by Rabbi Morris N. Kertzer : "The Talmud consists of 63 books of legal, ethical, and historical writings of the ancient rabbis. It was edited five centuries after the birth of Jesus. It is a compendium of law and lore. It is the legal code which forms the basis of Jewish religious law and it is the text book used in the training of Rabbis."

That sustained, systematic exposition, through an instance after another, of the right reading of the Torah in both its media come to Israel now as in the past in a single document, the Talmud of Babylonia... for "Judaism is Rabbinic Judaism, and the Talmud of Babylonia is the authoritative statement of the Torah that Judaism embodies. The Talmud is the prism, receiving, refracting all light ... In the language of the Torah itself : study of the Torah begins, as a matter of simple, ubiquitous fact, in the Talmud ... the Talmud formed the starting point and ending point, the alpha and the omega of truth..."

If we want to know about the teaching of the Talmud, we can also know the teaching of Pharisees that Christ condemned. The Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia said to understand

Pharisaism study the Talmud, but we can learn about the Talmud from the Bible concerning the Pharisees, Judaism and/or Talmudism is the religion of the Pharisees.

We might ask : “Why did the Jews write the Talmud, anyway? Wasn't the Bible enough?” ... The answer is ‘No’. The Bible was not enough. “The early teachers of Judaism began to study the Bible very carefully and to explain it to the people, and these explanations of the Bible that they gave, constitute the Talmud.”

9. THE KABBALAH

The definition of Kabbala varies according to the tradition and aims of those following it, from its religious origin as an internal part of Judaism, to its later Christian, new age; and Occultist / Western esoteric syncretic adaptations. Kabbalah is a set of esoteric teaching meant to explain the relationship between an unchanging, eternal, and mysterious *Elin Sof* (infinity) and the moral finite universe (God's creation). While it is heavily used by some denominations, it is not a religious denomination in itself. It forms the foundations of mystical religious interpretation. Kabbalah seeks to define the nature of the universe and the human being, the nature and purpose of existence, and various other ontological questions; it also presents methods to aid understanding of the concepts and thereby attain spiritual realization.

Kabbalah originally developed within the realm of Jewish tradition, and Kabbalists often use classical Jewish sources to explain and demonstrate its esoteric teachings. These teachings were taught by followers in Judaism to define the inner meaning of both the Hebrew Bible and traditional Rabbinic literature and their formerly concealed transmitted dimension, as well as to explain the significance of Jewish religious observances.

Kabbalah is actually called in Hebrew QBLH and it is the root of the word. So it was also pronounced or written later Qabalah

a long time ago. Some rabbis say that truly the root of the Qabalah is QBL; not QBLH with the time it changed to Kabbalah, which means “to receive”. This appellation refers to the custom of handing down the asterisk knowledge by the oral transmission, and is nearly allied to “tradition”.

Judaism has lots of different claims from Kabbalah. One claim is that it is the wisdom that God taught to the angels in a special school in heaven and that after the fall of some of the angels, the wisdom was given to Adam and then Noah had continued to pass down orally. Another claim is that it is from a book called the Zohar. Others claim that it is black magic of Judaism.

Judaism’s Kabbalah Charms and Pendent : The next sample is listed as for protection and is said to be a multi-purpose Amulet, Pendant and Charm. It is one of the better looking pieces of Judaism / Kabbalah Jewellery, and it is a six point star.

10. THE ZOHAR

Judaism has a lot of different claims about Kabbalah. One claim from a Jews website Zohar is the present forms of Kabbalah. Make no mistake, the Zohar is not merely made of paper and ink. The Zohar is a twenty three volume treasury of wisdom that is also the greatest force of divine energy known to man. Historians are now realizing that Zohar is the authentic Holy Girl. The Zohar is the actual Tree of life spoken by all religions. It is the ultimate instrument for generating endless miracles and promises nothing less that is a world wholly free of chaos, destruction, and death.

In the medieval mystical text the Zohar is written, “All sacred acts require summoning.” *Avraham, Yitzchak, Ya’akov, Yosef, Moshe, Aharon*, and King *David*, these seven great patriarchal figures of Bible history are in the Zohar. In the Zohar, the great medieval mystical work, it is written that these seven great men come to share *Sukkot* with us.

11. SIX POINTED STAR

The religious logo or symbol of Christians is the cross. Just like the logo or symbol of the Jews is a six pointed star. But first we should know the history of the six pointed star. Though Jews and Christians both religions believe in an amorphous God.

Truly the symbol of 'six point star' has a historical clue. In retrospect the six-pointed star was an Egyptian occult symbol which King Solomon adopted when he went into idolatry and witchcraft and built an altar for 'Ashteroth' (Star). It was seen in Arab magic and occultism and ... to the 17th Century when Amschel Bauer used it on his door. Then he changed his family's name to Rothschild, meaning red, incorporating it into his family's coat of arms. Finally, it became the insignia for Zionism.

The six pointed star, truly a hexagram, is made of two triangles, one superimposed on the other. This is used in magic to master spirits. The hexagram's two triangles, one pointed up and one pointed down, combine ABOVE and BELOW, and so it is a symbol to man as God. It is used in SATANIC OCCULTS because it combines male (THE TRIANGLE POINTED UP) and the female (THE ONE POINTED DOWN). These triangles are symbols for FIRE and WATER.

12. THE BOOKS OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

1. Torah (Five books of Moses; Khumash, Pentateuch)
2. *Bereishit* / Genesis
3. *Shemot* / Exodus
4. *Vayikra* / Leviticus
5. *Bamidbar* / Numbers
6. *Devarim* / Deuteronomy
7. *Nevi'im* (Prophets)
8. *Nevi'im rishonim* (Former Prophets)
9. *Yehoshua* / Joshua

10. *Shof'tim* / Judges
11. *Shamuel Aleph* / I Samuel
12. *Shmuel Bet* / II Samuel
13. *Melakhim Aleph* / I Kings
14. *Melakhim Bet* / II Kings
15. *Nevi'im akharonim* (Latter Prophets)
16. *Yishyahu* / Isaiah
17. *Yirmiyahu* / Jeremiah
18. *Yekhezkel* / Ezekiel
19. The twelve Minor Prophets
20. *Hoshea* / Hosea
21. *Yoel* / Joel
22. *Amos* / Amos
23. *Ovadyah* / Obadiah
24. *Yonah* / Jonah
25. *Mikhah* / Micah
26. *Nakhum* / Nahum
27. *Khabakuk* / Habakkuk
28. *Tesfanyah* / Zephaniah
29. *Khaggai* / Haggai
30. *Zekharyah* / Zechariah
31. *Malakhai* / Malachai
32. *Ketuvim* (The writings)
33. *Tehillim* / Psalm
34. *Mishleh* / Proverbs
35. *Lyov* / Job
36. Five *Megillot* / Scrolls
37. *Shir ha-Shirim* / Song of Solomon
38. *Rut* / Ruth

39. *Eiklah* / Lamentations
40. *Kohelet* / Ecclesiastes
41. *Ester* / Esther
42. *Danyel* / Daniel
43. *Ezra* / Ezra
44. *Nekhemyah* / Nehemiah
45. *Divrei Hayamim Aleph* / I Chronicles
46. *Divrei Hayamim Bet* / II Chronicles

13. NAMES OF GOD IN HEBREW BIBLE

According to the revised edition of Frazer's 'The Golden Bough', Theoder Gaster notes that "is primitive thought, a person's name is not merely an appellation, but rather denotes their external identity, distinguishing them from their inner being." This concept is exemplified in the Bible, where the "name of God" is distinct from His inner essence. Consequently, the various "Names of God" in the Bible represent His outward manifestations in the world.

Notably, despite the multitude of divine attributes, God has numerous names in the Hebrew Bible and Jewish liturgy. However, these names have been multiplied due to the inherent inaccuracies of translation. The most frequently used name of God in the Hebrew Bible is the Tetragrammaton יהוה (YHWH), which, devoid of vowel sounds, poses pronunciation difficulties. Over time, the pronunciation of יהוה (YHWH) evolved, and it was eventually transliterated into English Bibles as "Jehovah".

The Hebrew Bible contains numerous names for God, but YHWH is particularly remarkable, appearing over 6,500 times.

The Holy One (God) tells Moses, "I revealed Myself to Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob as *El Shaddai*. But Name Adonai I did not make known to them" (Exodus 6:3). In the Bible and Talmud, God has many more Names : *El* / The Strong One, *El*

Shaddai / God Almighty, *El Olom* / God Everlasting, *El Khai* / The Living God, *El Elyon* / God Most High, *Elohim* / God(s), *Adon* / Lord, *Adonay Tzivaot* / Lord of Hosts, *Abir* / The Strong, *Kedosh Yisroel* / Holy One of Israel, *Melekh* / The Ruler, *Tzur Yisrael* / Rock of Israel, *Elsah* / God.

“For non-Jews, most family names derived from the Hebrew Bible are probably based as Jehovah,” a misteransliteration of the four letter name, *Yud-Hay-Vav-Hay*, the Tetragrammaton or in Hebrew, them Sham Hameforash. This name is actually never vocalized in Hebrew—it is too sacred, too powerful. Reading the four letters Name aloud, a Jew will say “*Adonai*”. (Truly the Jews mystics believed that the Tetragrammaton had unusual significance attached to it). The Tetragrammaton is frequently shortened to *Yah* (*Yud-Hey*), *Yasu*, or *Yeho* (*Yod-Heh-Vav*) especially when used in combination within names or phrases, as in *Yehoshua* (which means “the Lord is my salvation”), *Eliyahu* (it means “my God is the Lord”), and *Halleluhyah* (“Praise the Lord”). A traditionally observant Jew will not vocalize God’s other names outside the context of prayer. Thus, in an Orthodox prayer book or songbook, one will find *Elokeinu* for *Eloheinu* / Our God, *Adoshem* for *Adoni*, or, most commonly, *Haghem* / The Name.

Progressive Jews have brought their own set of concerns and strictures to the naming of the Supreme Being. God has no gender in conventional human terms, but gendered God talk has historically implied a valorization of God’s masculine attributes. Reform, Reconstructionist, and some Conservative Siddurim will avoid using gendered names for God, discarding Lord of King in favour of *Adonai* or Ruler.

Many traditionally observed Jews will not write the vernacular equivalent of the sacred names, preferring God or Lord (although other no less traditional Jews deride this practice because these words are English and therefore not true names of God). This practice, however, has different roots from the ban on uttering the

Shem Hameforash, the proscribed sacred name. Contrary to popular belief this practice does not conform from the commandment not to take God's Name in vain. In Jewish thought, that commandment refers solely to oath-taking, and is a prohibition against swearing by God's Name falsely or frivolously (The word normally translated as "in vain" literally means "for falsehood"). Incidentally, this is why observant Jews serving on juries or testifying in court will affirm rather than swear.

Judaism does not prohibit writing the name of God. But it does prohibit erasing or defacing a name of God. Consequently, observant Jews avoid writing any name of God casually because of the risk that the written Name might later be defaced, obliterated, or destroyed accidentally or by one who does not know better. The commandment not to erase or deface the name of God is derived from Deuteronomy 12:3-4, In Verse 3, the people are commanded that when they take over the promised land, they should destroy all things related to the idolatrous religions of that religion, and should utterly destroy the names of the local deities. Immediately afterward in Verse 4, we are commanded not to do the same to our God. From this, the rabbis inferred that we are commanded not to destroy any holy thing, and not erase or deface a Name of God. This prohibition applies only to Names that are written in some permanent form. Recent rabbinical decisions have held that typing on a computer is not a permanent form, thus it is not a violation to type God's Name into a computer and then backspace over it or cut and paste it or copy and delete files with God's Name in them. However, once we print the document out, it becomes "Permanent".

But we must search in the Old Testament, what is the name of God. It says : "Then Moses said to God, 'If I come to the people of Israel and say to them,' 'The God of your father has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is His name?' 'What shall I say to them?' God said to—Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM,' And He said, 'Say, this to the people of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you, 'God also said Moses, 'Say this to the people of Israel, 'The LORD,

the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. ‘This is my name for ever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations’ (Exodus 3: 14-15).”

So, we can easily observe, the name of God is related with His presence in all ages, like past, present and future.

II. JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

1. DO JEWS AND CHRISTIANS BASICALLY HAVE THE SAME RELIGION

Since Jews and Christians both claim to have God's Word, do they basically have the same religion?

The faith of most religious Jews is called Judaism. It is the oldest of the world's three great monotheistic religions (that is, religions serving one God). Judaism is the parent of both Christianity and Islam. It proclaims that there is only one God, whose name is 'Yahweh', and He is the creator and ruler of the universe. He revealed His law, the 'Torah' to the Jewish people (who were known as Hebrews at the time) and He closed them to be a light for all humanity. The 'Torah' contains some 613 commandments which are summed up in the Ten Commandments.

A very important concept in Judaism is that of the Messiah. Originally the Jews believed that God would send a powerful messenger (the Messiah) who would deliver Israel from her oppressors and usher in a religion of peace and prosperity. Today many Jews no longer hold to a personal messiah, but hope for messianic age of justice and truth. For the Jews the coming of the Messiah or the messiah or the messianic age still lies in future.

The sacred Scriptures of Judaism consist of three groups of documents : 'Law', the 'Prophets' and the 'Writings' (Such as Psalms and Proverbs). These scriptures also form the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. Judaism does not accept the inspiration of the New Testament prophecies.

There are many agreements between the two faiths, for Christians also accept the Old Testament and all its teachings as inspiration. Among the basic truths accepted by both faiths is the perfect creation of the world out of nothing by an infinite God, the

entrance of sin into this world via the temptation of another transcendent being called Satan, the judgement of God on sin, and the necessity of atonement for sin. In Judaism this atonement is accomplished through sacrifices, prayer, righteous acts, and God's mercy.

Judaism, however, does not accept the central Christian teaching that Jesus Christ is the Messiah foretold in the Old Testament. This watershed point is made throughout the New Testament and forcefully stated in Galatians 3:13-14, "But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When he was hung on the cross, he took upon himself the curse for our wrong doing. For it is written in the Scriptures, 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree' (Deuteronomy 21:23). Through the work of Jesus Christ, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing He promised to Abraham.

All the differences in ceremonies, Kosher food, dress, festivals and worship are not as basic as the messianic expectation and fulfilment in Christ. Christianity has received from Judaism its basic understanding of God, His covenant relationship with his children, assembling together for worship. There is a divine plan for history and it is moving toward a wonderful goal when Yahweh will be the King not only of the Jews but of all the earth. Separation from the corrupting influences of the pagan world is important, but Judaism is not a religion that focuses on a spiritual world somewhere down the road. Its focus is on this present world, where life is meant to be rich all full.

Some Jews who have become Christians refer to themselves as "Completed Jews". In fact, the Old Testament is filled with hope, and the fulfilment of this hope is wonderfully described in the New Testament. Text after text relates how Jesus Christ fulfils all that the prophets have told (which I shall mention in a later chapter). In him the great promises of the Old Testament become the inheritance of all who accept His salvation. The stream

of God's favour is broader now to embrace believers from every tribe and nation.

We all owe a tremendous debt to the Jews, we have inherited so much from them, and from them came God's own son, the Messiah. Faith in Him, that is, in His once-for-all death and resurrection is the key to peace of heart now and hope for the future. We can now not only look back on a marvellous history, but forward to the day when His Kingdom enfolds people for every land. In this Messiah also your very own saviour for time and eternity.

2. CLARIFICATION OF ONENESS VERSUS TRINITY DEBATING ABOUT THE GODHEAD

Their major dogmas distinguish Christianity from Judaism : Original sin, the second coming of Jesus and atonement through Jesus death. To Christians, those are needed so solve otherwise insoluble problems. For Jews, however, these beliefs are not needed because the problems do not exist.

“Do two walk together, unless they have agreed to meet?” (Amos 3:3) This is biblical tactfully used for the down step of Jesus through Jews religious leaders.

Judaism does not accept that *Yahshua* (Jesus) Christ is God or Son of God and do not event accept Him as even prophet (“Judaism and Christianity The Differences” by Dr. Trudc Weiss Rosmarin), it states :

Can Jesus then qualify, at least, as a “Prophet” from the Jews point of view? The answer is negative for he did not live up to standards of Hebrew prophecy exemplified by the early Prophets. The Hebrew Prophet was the first and last mouthpiece of God. None of the Prophets of Israel ever taught in his own name and on his own responsibility. The “I” of the prophet is God; the “I” of Jesus, however, is himself. He taught on his own authority,

frequently in opposition to the authoritative teachings of Rabbis of time.

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath the father also” (1 John 2:23).

Now I am going to write a statement against Jesus Christ which was published in a Jewish Press “I have no slight sympathy for Christianity or Jesus. As a believing Jew, now not only is Jesus not ‘God’, but he is neither Messiah nor prophet. For Jew he was a blasphemer, one who attacked the Torah as unchanging divine law and who was a false prophet and heretic.” [On Page 49, “The Jewish Press,” 6th January 1989, New York, NY (Page 827 GCP)].

It is already foretold in the Old Testament that God will send His only son in the world, “I will declare the decree : the LORD hath said unto me, then art my son; this day have I begotten thee” (Psalm 2:7).

We also see God is saying, “I will set up thy seed—after thee...I will be his father and he shall be my son...the throne shall be established forever” (2 Samuel 7:12, 14, 16).

Another place of the Old Testament we see, “Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is His Son’s name, if thou canst tell? (Proverbs 30:4).

In the other place we found in the Old Testament, “Then this marvellous Messianic Psalm concludes with this exhortation : Kiss the Son ... Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” (Psalm 2:12).

Now, we see what the conception of God according to their view is. “Of course, the Jewish idea of God is that He is invisible, of a form that is beyond our imagining, and that He is absolutely one, not zero, not two, not three, but one” (from : “Explaining Judaism to Jews and Christians” by Rabbi Samuel M. Silver, Paragraph 5, Page 105).

Now we must say, Christianity also agreed and approved the conception of Rabbi S.M. Silver—God is one, not zero, not two or three. But we agree to receive a modern reference. We all know about ‘water’ and it is the liquid form. When it is in the gaseous form, we call it ‘water vapour’ or ‘steam’ and when it is in solid form, we call it ‘ice’.

Dear readers, please imagine about these three states. Water, vapour and Ice. Their mobility, their temperature, their visibility, their shapes, their dimension and their uses, all are different. But in the term of Chemistry all are assigned with the same chemical formula that is H_2O .

Let us see in the Old Testament, in the beginning point, “The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the water” (Genesis 1:2). Here we found the word “Spirit of God”. We should think about the Spirit, which is not the evil spirit, but the “Holy Spirit” and this Holy Spirit is God’s spirit, not separate existence.

We also see in the same book of the Old Testament, “The God said, ‘Let us make man in our image’...” (Genesis 1:26). We must concentrate our mind in these two words, “us” and “our”. It is the plural form of God. Now the question is, who is/are the other existence(s)? The Book of Genesis does not clarify or answer the question directly. It may be indicated the Son of God, may be the Holy Spirit or both of them. We may imagine, does God mean two or three existence? The answer is ‘No’. God is one. The Bible says “And the word became flesh and dwelt among us...” (John 1:14). It means God had to come in this world as a human form. He is our saviour, Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand I just already explained, Spirit and God are the same existence.

Jews Rabbis and Pharisees criticise today also if Jesus was God, why he prayed to God (His Father) in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Here we have to understand clearly about both existences of Jesus. It was Jesus' human spirit, or the flesh, that was praying to the Deity, or the Divine Spirit that simultaneously dwelled in the body of Jesus. It is also applicable on the cross when Jesus says 'Father, Father why are you forsaking me?'

Truly Father-Son distinction is a distinction between the way God exists in Himself (Father), and the way He has come to manifest Himself as a man (son).

Until and unless God the Son or Son of God came to the world, we were still in darkness and were out of eternal life. The coming of Jesus is foretold in the Old Testament or in the Hebrew Bible of Jesus a number of times. But Jews could not accept Him for their orthodox mind and fully dependent on their rabbis, Pharisees, and the scribes.

We must search in the Old Testament foretold words of the Prophets about Jesus: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (means God with us)." (Isaiah 7:14)

The coming King Zion (Son of God or God Son) "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! South aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; righteous and having salvation he is humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal or donkey"

We found Jesus was sold with 30 silver coins by Judas Iskariet in the New Testament which was foretold through prophecy in the Old Testament : "Then I said to them, 'If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.' And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. Then the Lord said to me 'throw it to the potter—the Lordly prices at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter.'" (Zechariah 11:12-13).

It also foretold of physical and emotional torture of Son of God in Old Testament, "I gave my back on those who strick, and

my cheeks to those who pull out the beard; I hid not my face from disagree and spitting” (Isaiah 50:6).

The Old Testament shows as a complete picture of crucified Jesus : “Who has believed what he has heard from us? And to whom are the arms of the Lord? For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form of majesty that we should look at him; and no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by man; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we seemed him not. Surely he had borne griefs and carried out sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. By oppression and judgement he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he had cut off the land of the living; stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence; and there was no deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant. Make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore, I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out of his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin for many, the makes intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:1-12).

The Old Testament also tells us about Jesus, when he will be in the cross and he will thirst : “... for any thirst they gave me sour wine to drink” (Psalm 69:21).

It was foretold about Jesus, The Son of God, “They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cost lots” (Psalm 22:18). But it also foretold that, “He keeps all his bones; not once of them is broken” (Psalm 34:20).

We found an opposite picture in the period of crucifixion of Jesus. “Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews’. Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, ‘Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, this man said, ‘I am the King of the Jews’. Pilate answered, ‘What I have written I have written’.” (John 19:19)

It means Pilate approved and acknowledged and believed that Jesus is the king of Jews. The inscription was not an ironic symbol, but approval of the truth and reality.

3. CHRISTIANITY AS “FULFILLED JUDAISM”

Some might think Christianity as a breakaway movement that developed out of Judaism. Not the earliest Christians. The earliest Christians – all of Jewish background—so the events of Jesus as fulfilment of all the Hebrews scripture had told them to look for. In other words, they saw themselves not as a break-way religion but as the continuation of the religion handed down for generations was seen as the fulfilment of promises they had waited to see fulfilled.

In fact, if there was any “breakway” happening in first-century Judaism, Paul saw those who refused to acknowledge Jesus as Messiah as those who had broken away. In Romans 11:17-21 Paul described himself and other Jews who embraced Jesus

messianic claims as the original olive tree. He went on to describe Gentile believers as wild olive shoots grafted into the original space where unbelieving Israelites had broken away.

Far from being an anti-Jewish concept, N.T. Wright points out how consistent of Judaism it would have been for Paul to distinguish some of his countrymen as truly Jewish while others had missed what God was up to. In his massive 1700—page work, “Paul and the Faithfulness of God,” Wright draws parallels between Paul’s claim that Jesus is the Messiah and the claims of other Jewish movements immediately before and after Paul’s day. “If Paul really did believe that Jesus was Israel’s Messiah,” Wright says, “then it is impossible to imagine him, or any second-Temple Jews in a comparable position, supposing that this Messiah could have his followers while “Israel” could carry on as though nothing had happened.”

Wright acknowledges that “there is the strongly would – be ‘pro-Jewish’ post-holocaust reading of Paul” where “anything short of a two covenant solution, in which God is happy for gentiles to be Christians but would prefer Jews to remain Jews – and in which Paul endorses this point of view – is regarded as suspicious.

But “for the first Christians, the point was ... about coming to terms with the fact that if Jesus really was Israel’s Messiah, as they believed the resurrection had demonstrated him to be, then in some sense or other the narrative and identity of Israel had not been ‘replaced’ but fulfilled—fulfilled by him in person, and therefore fulfilled by him in and for all his people. When Akiba hailed bar-Kochba as Messiah, and some of his colleagues objected, would they, or indeed he, have said that Akiba was ‘replacing’ something called ‘Judaism’ with something different? Clearly not.”

“Or consider the rise of bar-Kochaba, a century after Paul’s day. Once again, the dark forces of paganism closed in. The new emperor forbade Jewish practices and threatened to obliterate the nation and its historic, theologically central capital. What was a loyal Jew to do? Somewhere calculates that the renewed ‘exile’

following Jerusalem's destruction (starting with AD 70) has lasted nearly seventy years. Perhaps 'this', after all, would be the fulfilment of Jeremiah's well-known prophecy? (Jeremiah 25:11). Some believed that the emerging young leader, Simeon ben-Kosiba, really was Israel's Messiah, the son of the star. Others sharply disagreed, either because their calculations were different or because they had already decided, following the earlier disaster, that piety was now to be done supersending politics. What was to be done? Those who like Akiba himself, seen by many as the greatest rabbi of this time, or perhaps ever, believed that ben-Kosiba was the Messiah, had no choice. They had to follow him and try to make the revolution happen-facing down the sceptics and scoffers with the challenge to faith and hope and military revolt. If Israel's God was at last sending his promised deliverer. It would hardly be 'Supersessionist' really to his cause and to scorn the Hillelite rabbis who now wanted to study Torah rather than work for the kingdom. This was not a matter of 'repressing' or 'displacing' something called 'Israel' and substituting something else. If ben-Kosiba was the Messiah then his followers constituted the renewed Israel, that was Akiba's position, and he died for it.

"Paul belongs exactly on this map. He believed the God of Israel had renewed the covenant through the Messiah, Jews. He might, of course, have been wrong. He would no doubt have said that the Qumran sectarians had been wrong to suppose the covenant renewal was taking place with them. The post – 135 rabbis declared that Akiba and his colleagues had been wrong to back bar-Kochba. They all might have been wrong; but not un-Jewish, or anti-Jewish."

"Ah-but, say the self-styled anti-supercessionists Paul's message was different. He was bringing in uncircumcised gentiles, so by creating a non-Jewish "Church" he was doing something no other Jewish groups had done. Neither Qumran, nor Akiba, nor one in between had envisaged a 'renewed covenant' which would include non-Jews and thereby displace Jews. Paul ... says – and he is careful always to ground this is some of the most fundamental

Biblical Text – is that Israel’s God always intended and promised that when He fulfilled His promises to Israel then the rest to the world would be renewed as well, and that this is what was now happening through the gentile mission. The extension to non-Jews of renewed-covenant membership was itself, Paul insisted, one part of deep-rooted Jews eschatology.

4. WHY CHRISTIANITY COMES OUT FROM THE BONDAGE OF RITUALS, LAWS AND COMMANDMENTS OF JUDAISM

After reading in the Hebrew Bible that Jews were against Jesus. After receiving so much evidence about Jesus, who was the salvation of all mankind, who believed him, I think they were almost blind about Jesus. They lead their life only to follow the instructions of the then Rabbis and Scribes (the teachers of the law), instructions in their personal, social and religious life.

If we see from the view point of the then Pharisees about Christianity, we find, “The predominance, is responsible for much of the paralysis and importance in the Christ today. The Pharisees; were teaching their own interpretation of the law, they were using the mythical Oral Torah. If they had been just God’s law, the written Torah, Yahshua (Jesus) would have praised them rather than calling them all the names and descriptions that He gave in Matthew 23. “Judaism is a dry well when it comes to insight about God’s word. Its foundation is a man-made concept” (From : Paragraph 6 of ‘The Owner’s Manuel’, Chapter 10 ‘Priests and Levites’).

The scribes (the teachers of the law) and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, so practice and observe whatever they tell you— but not what they do. For they preach, but do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their fingers. They do all their deeds to be seen by others. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long, and they love the place

of honour at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues and getting in the market places and being called rabbi (rabbi means my teacher, or my master) by others. But you are not called rabbi, for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers (brothers or sisters). And call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor, the Christ. The greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted (Matthew 23:1-12).

Truly Christ was an outspoken, fearless person, who protested the hypocrisy of the then Pharisees. They forced the common people to obey the Talmud (Religious law book), which they were rendered from 'Oral Torah', which is without vowels. So the Pharisees' rendering book 'The Talmud' is not absolutely the word of God. The Pharisees translated and wrote on behalf of them, not behalf of Jews. Jesus disclosed their covered character. So they plotted and removed Jesus from their path.

III RITUALS, LAWS AND COMMANDMENTS OF JEWS

1. JEWS RITUALS AND LAWS

(i) *KASHRUT / DIETARY LAWS*

Up to this point, we have been primarily examining *mitzvot* that have an apparently rational basis, *mitzvot* whose purpose should be obvious to anyone. Moreover, these are largely *mitzvot bei adam le-khavero*/mitzvot between humans. However, there is a large body of Jewish law that admittedly is harder to explain in such terms. One area of Jewish law and ritual that is probably the most familiar example of this category and the most problematic for many contemporary Jews is the dietary laws.

Professor Menachem Marc Kellner, a contemporary commentator, refers to Judaism as "a religion of pots and pans in the eyes of those who derogate its concern with actions." Undoubtedly, it was the laws that govern *kashrut*, the Jewish dietary laws, that he had in mind when he offered that phrase.

The laws of *kashrut* are—literally—laws of pots and pans. Also laws of silverware, glassware, refrigeration, sinks, and dishwashers. Not to mention meat, fish, poultry, cheese, milk, and yogurt. Indeed, the laws of *kashrut* even have implications for objects that we don't normally associate with food at all.

The average American—indeed, the average American Jew—may look at a bottle of soda and say, "Why is this labeled kosher? What could be kosher or not kosher about a bottle of soda?" The average American Jew who doesn't observe the dietary laws knows that she isn't supposed to mix meat (*Jleishig* in Yiddish) and dairy (*milchig* in Yiddish). But what is *pareve*? And why two sets of dishes, two sinks, even two ovens? The average

American Jew knows he isn't supposed to eat pork, shrimp, or lobster. But what about goat venison? locusts?

(ii) KOSHER AND TREIF

The term *treif*, commonly used to indicate a food that is not permitted, is a Yiddish variant on the biblical word *trefah*, which actually refers to any meat that has not been killed according to the laws of *kashrut*. The word *kosher* actually means "fit" or "proper" according to Jewish law. If the fringes on my *tallit* are not intact, it's not a *kosher tallit* and I have to get them replaced. If there is a mistake in the writing in the *sefer Torah*, it's not a *kosher* scroll. But how does that apply to food?

In Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14:2—21, God tells the Israelites that there are certain categories of food that they should and should not eat:

- Among land animals, only animals that have cloven hooves and chew their own cud are permitted. Thus, the camel, the pig, the hare, and the rock badger are prohibited, but cows and goats are permissible.
- Among fish (actually sea creatures), only those that have both scales and fins can be eaten. Crustaceans, mollusks, and sharks, for example, are prohibited.
- Among birds, although no characteristics are enumerated, the Torah lists twenty-four species that are prohibited. Most of them appear to be birds of prey or carrion-eaters like the vulture, the hawk, the owl, the ostrich, and others. The permitted birds are chicken, turkey, goose, duck, and dove.
- Among amphibians and insects, anything that crawls on its belly is prohibited, as are "winged swarming things," lizards, and rodents.
- Needless to say, the products of non-kosher animals are themselves non-kosher. No camel's milk, no vulture eggs. The notable exception to this rule is that one can eat honey from

bees—according to the Torah, the real source of the honey is the Bowers from which the bees take pollen.

The Torah refers to all permissible creatures as *tahor*/dean and the banned ones as *tamei*/unclean.

The Torah prohibits the eating of any animal that has died a natural death. In addition, meat animals that are *tahor* must be slaughtered according to the rules of *shekhitah*/ritual slaughtering. (*Shekhitah* does not apply to fish, only to meat and fowl.) In keeping with the *mitzvot* protecting animals from unnecessary suffering, an animal killed by *shekhitah* is dispatched with a quick cutting of the throat that severs the trachea, esophagus, vagus nerves, carotid arteries, and jugular vein in a split second. The animal dies almost instantly and with no pain. Finally, all the blood must be drained from meat before it can be certified as kosher. This can be done by either of two methods, soaking and salting, or broiling on a grill. Incidentally, all raw liver must be broiled; it doesn't come "kashered," that is, in compliance with the dietary laws.

But *shekhitah* has a second purpose, one that takes us back to the ban on eating the flesh of animals that died a natural death. This method of killing makes it possible for the *shokhet*/ritual slaughterer to drain the carcass of its blood. It is forbidden by the Torah to eat the blood of an animal. The *shokhet*, incidentally, is more than just a kosher butcher; he must be knowledgeable in the laws governing *shekhitah* as well as those concerning the condition of an animal's organs. An animal with damaged or diseased organs is *trefah*.

(iii) MEAT AND DAIRY

The prohibition against mixing meat and dairy has a rather more tenuous origin in Written Law than the ban on eating *tamei* and *trejah*, which are stated quite explicitly. The passage from which it is derived occurs in Exodus 23:19 and reads, "The first of the first fruits of thy ground thou shalt bring to the house of

Adonai thy God; thou shalt not seethe [or boil] a kid in its mother's milk." This passage is repeated verbatim in Exodus 34:26; the second half occurs once more in Deuteronomy 14:21. From this sentence the rabbis of the Talmudic period interpolated the proscription on the mixing of meat and dairy. The Oral Law extended the definition of meat to include fowl as well.

From this slender base, the sages erected a considerable edifice of dietary laws. Meat, meat fats, and products containing meat fats or other meat ingredients are considered *jleishig* (*basar* in Hebrew); milk, milk fats, products containing milk derivatives are considered *milchig* (*halav* in Hebrew). Products that contain neither milk nor meat are considered neutral, called *pareve* in Yiddish or *stam* in Hebrew. This category includes everything that is grown in the soil, from fruits and vegetables to coffee, sugar and spices, all kosher fish, eggs, and chemically produced goods. *Pareve* foods may be eaten with either meat or dairy.

The rules against mixing meat and dairy do not stop with dishes that combine the two. It is not permissible to use the same vessel to cook meat and dairy dishes, even if you do so at different times; a vessel that has been used to cook meat may absorb minute amounts of the meat and likewise for a dish used to cook dairy. Consequently, in a traditionally observant household, there will be separate pots, pans, and dishes for meat and for dairy; some houses will include a second sink and even a second refrigerator (although that is more likely in a kosher restaurant or caterer).

After eating a meat meal, an observant Jew must wait between three and six hours before she can eat dairy. This waiting period is designed to allow the fatty residue on the palate and meat particles trapped between the teeth to dissipate. However, after a dairy meal this waiting period is not considered necessary as the fatty materials do not cling to the palate in the same way. (The exception is hard cheeses, fragments of which may become lodged in the teeth.) One may eat meat at lunch and dairy at dinner, but there should be a decent interval between, and the exact nature of

that interval is culturally determined. Dutch Jews, for example, may wait only one hour after eating one category of food before being permitted to eat the other.

The problems of maintaining a kosher kitchen have gotten both easier and harder with the advent of modern technology. On the one hand, the increased availability of truly non-dairy substitutes for butter, milk, and cream has afforded kosher cooks a wider range of possibilities. On the other hand, the ingredients that go into prepared foods are getting more arcane all the time. For example, one of the most bizarre problems to arise recently in the field of *kashrut* is the discovery that certain food dyes are composed of the crushed carapaces of beetles, and therefore are *tamei*, as are any foods that use them. But you wouldn't know that from reading the list of ingredients on the label.

Which brings us to the kosher soda bottle and, in a roundabout way, to the question of kosher certification.

What could be unkosher about a bottle of soda? Suppose the bottling plant workers were having a ham-and-Swiss sandwich for lunch and ate next to the assembly line. Of course, that example is a bit outlandish, but in the complexities of modern industrial food manufacturing, stranger things have happened. What kind of lubricant is used in the bottling machine? If it's petroleum-based, there shouldn't be a problem, but what if it is derived from a food product?

Before a company can proclaim its products to be kosher, they must be certified by a qualified rabbi (invariably Orthodox). There are over 400 different bodies in the United States alone that grant a *hekksher*, the insignia that guarantees that a product is kosher. Kosher certification has become a big business in the United States as more people seek out kosher foods. Seventh-Day Adventists and Muslims observe similar dietary restrictions and know they are safe eating kosher; health-conscious shoppers know that kosher certification is a theoretical guarantee that the food was produced under the most sanitary of conditions.

(iv) *BUYING KOSHER*

If a product has been certified as kosher, the certifying body will give permission for the manufacturer to put an insignia, a *heksher*, on the package, indicating who has certified it as meeting the standards of *kashrut*. The most common symbol is a capital *U* inside a circle—the OU that stands for the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, an umbrella organization of Modern Orthodox congregations, which is the largest certifying body in America. Poultry will bear a *plumba*, a small metal tag indicating that it has been certified kosher.

There are literally hundreds of certifying groups in the United States and Canada alone, each with its own distinctive *heksher*.

In New York state, a restaurant or food shop that is kosher must post a certificate from the certifying body (or rabbi) responsible for ascertaining its status in a visible place. Wherever you live, if you find such a certificate posted, you are probably on safe ground.

(v) *KOSHER WINE*

Because wine is the product of vines, growing from the earth, one might assume that if it is pure it needn't be certified kosher. However, wine is unique among fruit products, no doubt because of its ritual importance in Jewish practice. Because ancient pagans used wine in their rituals as well, it was necessary for Jews to supervise every aspect of the winemaking process, from the growing of the grapes through the bottling and shipping. Today, only wines whose production has been supervised by an observant Jew at all stages—planting, harvesting, winemaking, barreling, bottling—can be certified as kosher. Traditionally observant Jews may even insist that wine be poured by a Jew.

(vi) CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Genesis 9:6 states: "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Proponents of capital punishment have derived their position from this Torah passage and from other passages in which death is ordered for one who kills. How do we resolve the apparent contradiction between the death sentence and the doctrine of *pikuakh nefesh* / saving a life and the ban on vengeance?

The sages of the Talmud were very uncomfortable with the idea of capital punishment. In *Pirkei Avot* it is said that a court that put a man to death once every seven years should be considered excessively bloodthirsty; one of the sages quoted in *Avot*, Rav Eleazar ben Azariah, went further, saying a bloodthirsty court was one that issued a death decree once every *seventy* years. Rabbis Akiba and Tarfon responded that had they been in a court with the power to issue the death penalty, no one would have been put to death.

The Oral Law makes it very difficult, virtually impossible, to execute someone for murder. In order for the death penalty to apply, two witnesses must have seen the perpetrator about to commit the crime and warned him of the potential penalty. The perpetrator must then acknowledge that he is aware of the illegality of his act and its consequences. The witnesses must see the actual murder; circumstantial evidence was not admissible in such cases. A capita! The case could only be heard by a panel of twenty-three judges, but such a panel could only be convened when the Temple was standing. Even then, although a majority of one for acquittal would mean the defendant was found not guilty, a majority of two was needed to convict. Finally, in a case in which the judges voted unanimously for conviction, there still could be no execution; in the legal system of the time, the judges served as both prosecuting and defending attorneys, so if a unanimous decision came down from the court it was considered as if the

defendant had not been provided with counsel. As a result, the death penalty was never used.

It is interesting to note that the State of Israel does not have the death penalty in murder cases. The only criminal ever executed in Israel was Adolf Eichmann; the state does reserve the right to use the death penalty in cases of crimes against humanity. Moreover, in the summer of 2015, the Knesset rejected a bill allowing for the death penalty in terrorism cases by an overwhelming vote

(vii) "AN EYE FOR AN EYE"

The passage of Exodus in which the principle of "an eye for an eye" (known in Near Eastern history as the *lex talionis*) occurs is one of the most controversial in the Bible. Jesus explicitly denies its validity. Others have pointed to it as an example of the vengeful nature of justice in the Hebrew Bible. Many liberal Jews are uncomfortable with the message it sends. Or does it send that message?

In discussing this passage, the Talmud specifically states that it is monetary compensation that is to be sought for an injury inflicted, rather than a comparable wound. Some detractors look upon this interpretation as after-the-fact amelioration.

However, at least one recent commentator, Dr. Avigdor Bonchek, offers another view, one that views this passage of Torah in a startlingly new light. Dr. Bonchek (who is both a rabbi and a clinical psychologist) notes that in a contiguous passage discussing a man who is injured in a quarrel, the law demands a cash payment for "the loss of his time" until he is fully healed (Exodus 21:18—19). But in the passage in which the "eye for an eye" statement occurs, Exodus 21:22—25, the reference is clearly to an accidentally incurred injury: "And if men strive and hurt a woman with child so that she has a miscarriage. . . ."

This juxtaposition, he notes, would be odd enough—the accidental injury leading to a more severe penalty than the deliberate one. But if one refers to the Hebrew, a very different meaning becomes apparent. The passage reads, "But if there be harm then you shall give soul for soul, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise." First, Bonchek notes, the logical wording would be "take soul for soul," etc., but the Hebrew clearly says "give." This diction suggests compensation. What seals the case for him, though, is the use of the Hebrew word *takhat*; this word appears many times in the Torah, he explains, "always with the meaning 'in place of or 'on account of and never 'as identical substitution for." Consequently, he reasons, the meaning of the passage is that recompense must be *given in place* of the injured organ.

Seen in this light, it would appear that the ancient Israelite understanding of the *lex talionis* is considerably less savage than its counterpart in other Near Eastern societies of the time. This is not to suggest that Jewish law in these circumstances was somehow morally superior to that of its contemporaries. However, it is important to understand the drive toward a justice that could be applied meaningfully to real-world situations.

(viii) *TIKKUN OLAM / REPAIRING THE WORLD*

It is clearly the duty of every Jew to seek justice. In a world unredeemed, a world that is damaged, it is the job of every Jew to participate in *tikkun olam*/repair of the world. In areas of social justice, social action, Judaism has set itself clear mandates. "You shall do what is right and good," we are told in Deuteronomy 6:18.

To that end, one's professional conduct is as closely regulated as one's private conduct. Jewish law strives to enact fairness in business dealings between buyers and sellers. The rabbis prohibited the making of excess profits through the setting of excessive prices. The Torah banned the giving of short measures

and the use of rigged weights. Hoarding of produce to drive up prices was forbidden, as was the use of fraudulent business practices.

Both Torah and Talmud are unequivocal in their stance on labor. It is forbidden to delay paying a workman his wages, and a worker is entitled to fair pay for his work. The Talmud recognizes the right of workers to organize unions.

Even the rights of animals are safeguarded under Jewish law. The rabbis prohibited hunting for sport and pastimes that inflicted pain on animals. The Talmud explicitly states, "Man must provide for those animals he has domesticated and must not cause them any unnecessary pain." One is even enjoined to rest animals on the Sabbath.

Jewish law is predicated on our understanding that we are God's partners in creation, that we alone can repair the unredeemed world. The only way that we can do this is through moral behavior. It is no accident that in the secular world Jews have usually been in the forefront of movements for social change and social justice. For many secular Jews, social action is what connects them to their Jewish identity. For all Jews, it is nothing less than what our tradition demands of us.

(ix) *MIND, BODY, AND SOUL*

Judaism as a system (to the extent that it can be characterized as such) is based on the idea that human beings are a unity of mind, body, and soul, what Rabbi Eliezer Berkowitz calls a "biopsychic" entity. If one accepts this notion, this strikingly anti-Cartesian rejection of the mind-body split, then much of what constitutes Jewish ethical thought follows logically, almost inexorably. If mind, body, and soul are one—and are created *b'tselem Elohim*/in the image of God—then it is wrong to abuse the body. But it is also wrong to abstain from certain ordained pleasures. If mind, body, and soul are one, created in the image of God, then it is imperative that one follow a sexual ethic that places

a premium on certain forms of "modesty" and "purity," because what you do with your body reflects and inflects what is in your mind, body, and soul are one, then there is an integral relationship between what we think of as worship, ethics, and social action.

So it is in Judaism: to worship God one must perform not only the obligatory "religious" rituals, one must also behave ethically toward other humans, and work for justice in the world. The *mitzvot* include not only when and how to celebrate the festivals and Shabbat, but also how to behave in a business relationship, and how to pursue the larger social good. Being a "good Jew" involves much more than *davening* three times a day and showing up in the synagogue on all the holidays.

The world is imperfect, unredeemed, damaged. The task of humankind is *tikkun olam*/to repair the world, as Rabbi Boteach said. (As we will see in Chapter 7, for the Jewish mystics, this phrase has a special meaning.) One may believe, as traditionally observant Jews do, that this entails a strict adherence to the *mitzvot* in order to bring *Moshiakh*/the Messiah. One may believe, as do Jews of all stripes, that it is within us to aspire to the perfection of the world envisioned in that messianic vision—through a variety of means. For liberal Jews, that may include the *mitzvot* or not. But almost all Jews—even the vast majority of secular ones—would agree with Rabbi Jacob Z. Lauterbach, who wrote in 1913 that Judaism "aims to accomplish the ethical and religious perfection of [humanity]." The only question is how?

(x) **HALAKHAH: MITZVOT INTO LAW**

Since the days of the Talmud, the answer to the question "How do we follow the *mitzvot*?" has been "*halakhah*." *Halakhah* is the branch of rabbinical literature that outlines the laws of Jewish religious and ethical behavior, how to observe the *mitzvot* and, in turn, virtually every aspect of daily life for traditionally observant Jews. *Halakhah* takes its name from the Hebrew verb *halakh*/walk; *halakhah* might be described as the path down which observant

Jews are guided by some two thousand years of rabbinical wisdom as they walk through this life.

The roots of *halakhah* are in the Torah, in the 613 *mitzvot*, but the branches of this sturdy tree of Jewish jurisprudence extend from the Tal-mudic period through the Middle Ages and into this morning's headlines. To understand the process by which the *mitzvot* gave rise to a vast body of legal literature, one must trace the history of *halakhah* briefly.

In the beginning, if you'll pardon the expression, was the Written Law, *Torah She'bi-khetav*, the Torah as we think of it, the Five Books of Moses. The traditional explanation says that God dictated all of Torah to Moses. Also called *Tonih min ha-shamayim*/Torah from Heaven, this was Revealed Truth. But many of the details of how to apply this Truth are missing from the Pentateuch. For example, we are instructed to marry and permitted to divorce, but not told how to go about either.

The sages of the Talmud held that there was a second set of laws, *Torah She bi-al'peh* / the Oral Law, also given to Moses at Sinai and transmitted by word of mouth from generation to generation. As it says in the opening words of *Pirke Avot*: "Moses received Torah from Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua; Joshua to the Elders; the Elders to the Prophets; and the Prophets to the Men of the Great Assembly." Of course, the rabbis of the Talmud commented, one cannot hand over a written text without some explanation, so we were given the Oral Law as well.

Over the next eight centuries, from about 200 B.C.E. to 600 C.E., the rabbis would expound on the Oral Law, interpreting Scripture by two methods that, when compiled, would become what we know as the Talmud (and related texts). One of these methods, *Midrash Agadah*, doesn't concern us at the moment; addressing questions of biblical narrative, it consists of homilies and folktales by which the sages would offer lessons in Jewish ethics and religious practice. (When someone refers to "*midrash*"

what they usually are thinking of is *agadah*, as distinct from *halakhah*.)

The rabbis' method for interpreting legal Scripture is *Midrash Hal-akhah*. This is the basis of rabbinic Judaism, the historical successor to biblical Judaism.

The rabbis saw Scripture as the basis for a major category of *halakhah*, *d'oraita*/from the Torah. Within *d'oraita*, there are three possibilities: *ha-lakhah* that derives logically from a scriptural verse, such as the prohibition against eating pork; *halakhah* derived from the interpretation of a verse or verses according to prescribed methods ("Thirteen Ways of Looking at Torah," p. 320), such as the rules prohibiting the eating of milk and meat that were cooked together; finally, *halakhah r'Mosheh mi-Sinai* / *halakhah* from Moses at Sinai, strongly held traditions that the rabbis believed were Mosaic in origin and, hence, part of the original Torah *she'bi-afpeh*. Often the rabbis would cite a verse as an *aide-memoire* (called an *asmakhta*, Aramaic for an object joined to another object) in such a case. The rabbis believed that all *d'oraitot* were Sinaitic in derivation; modern scholars and liberal Jews would argue that even these are rabbinic in origin.

In fact, the rabbis did see themselves as a source of *halakhah*, but of a different category. Such *halakhah* were called *d'rabanan*/from the rabbis.

The *Pirke Avot* warned, "Build a hedge around the Torah," and the rabbis responded accordingly, issuing prohibitions called *gezerot* (*gezerah* in the singular). *Gezerot* were prohibitions against behaviors that seemingly contravened the *mitzvot* or could lead to transgressions. For example, the rabbis prohibited horseback riding on Shabbat, because one might violate the Sabbath by breaking off a switch to strike the horse.

There are seven positive *mitzvot* that are derived from the Talmud rather than the Torah. These *mitzvot de-rabanan*/mitzvot from the rabbis include: (1) washing one's hands before a meal; (2)

lighting candles for Shabbat; (3) reciting Halle! on a festival; (4) lighting candles for Ha-nukah; (5) reading the Scroll of Esther at Purim; (6) making an *eruv*, a marked-off area in which it is permissible to carry on Shabbat; and (7) reciting *b'rakhot* before experiencing material pleasures, such as eating or smelling a fragrant plant.

In the *b'rakhot* we say that God commanded us to do these things, even though they are clearly derived from the rabbis; the rabbis derived their authority from the Bible.

With the passing of time, the interpretations of the law by the sages became even weightier, more extensive and detailed than the Written Law.

By the time of the *tannaim*, the rabbinical authorities of the period of Judah Ha-Nasi (approximately 170—220 C.E.), the sheer volume of oral rulings had become so unwieldy that the rabbis reluctantly assented to their recording. The resulting text is the Mishnah, the first compilation of the Oral Law, compiled by Judah Ha-Nasi, Judah the Prince Mishnah, is written in a very compressed style; interpretation and expansion of that text was necessary. In addition, there were other *tannaitic* texts with which it had to be harmonized. And there were also new questions arising from the exigencies of daily life in exile. These materials would be compiled and codified under the name *Gemara*. Taken together, Mishnah and Gemara are what we now know as the Talmud.

The world has changed significantly in the past 1800 years, and Jewish law has had to address those changes. No code of law, no matter how ingenious, can possibly anticipate every problem that will come before its judges, particularly if it is going to be of any practical use for an extended period of time. The Talmudic sages realised that simple fact and made allowances for rabbis in subsequent centuries to issue rulings of their own, called *takanot* (*takanah* in the singular). The establishment of the *ketubah* as the marriage contract for a Jewish union is an example of a *takanah* most Jews are familiar with, although it is unlikely they

know that it is, in fact, a *takanah*. The *takanot* are rulings designed to promote the public welfare and religious practice.

As we will see in Chapter 6, the Talmud is not an organized code of law but a compendium that is seemingly haphazard in its organization. Add to its structure the growing body of *gezerot*, *takanot*, and customs, and the average Jew was faced with an impenetrable wall of chaotic verbiage and *minhagim*. As early as the eighth century C.E., rabbis recognized the need for some kind of manageable codification of the *halakhah*. Saadia Gaon's ninth-century *siddur* was one example of this process, offering not only the texts of prayers but the rules governing them. Maimonides's *Mishneh Torah* is one of the most complete and systematic, but the book of Jewish law considered most authoritative by Orthodox Jews today is the *Shulkhan Arukh*/Set Table, written in the sixteenth century by Joseph Caro. ("Joseph Caro and the *Shulkhan Arukh*," .)

(xi) **JOSEPH CARO AND THE SHULKHAN ARUKH**

Even the most observant Jew in the world couldn't keep all 613 mitzvot and the myriad laws governing them in his head. To sift through the Five Books of Moses and the countless thousands of pages of Talmudic and other rabbinic literature containing this material would be an onerous task for even the most erudite Jewish scholar. Where does a traditionally observant Jew go to get the answer to a question regarding the *mitzvot* in a quick and easily digested form?

Rabbi Joseph Ben Ephraim Caro (1488-1575) created a book that has served precisely that purpose in one form or another for the past four centuries. Caro, a Jew from the Iberian Peninsula, had written a massive tome, *Bet Yosef*, between 1522 and 1554, a commentary on Jacob ben Asher's *Arba Turim* that attempted to trace every law in the Talmud, its history and development. When he had completed this multivolume work, he decided to write a digest version for use by younger students. The result, the *Shulkhan*

Arukh/Set Table, has become the authoritative volume on *mitzvot*, accepted as such by Orthodox Jews around the world.

As great as Caro's achievement was, it was not without flaws. As a Sephardic Jew, he was rather less familiar with the differing *minhagim*/ customs of his Ashkenazic brothers and sisters. A sixteenth-century Polish rabbi, Moses Isserles, wrote a commentary, the *Mapah*/Tablecloth, which codified Ashkenazi *halakhic* writings in a manner designed to be compatible with Caro's work, and today is found as notes in the *Shulkhan Arukh*.

Like the *Turim* that inspired its own model, the *Shulkhan Arukh* is divided into four sections: *Orakh Khayim*, a compendium of the ritual obligations of daily life that includes areas such as waking, sleeping, prayer, blessings, the Sabbath, and festivals; *Yoreh Deah*, which deals primarily with the dietary laws and ritual laws governing mourning, charity, vows, etc.; *Even Ha-Ezer*, which covers the laws of marriage and divorce; and *Khos-hen Mishpat*, which deals with Jewish civil law in the Diaspora.

Even the *Shulkhan Arukh* is too unwieldy for everyday use. There have been many digests of Caro's book prepared and published in the past. The one most commonly used today is probably the *Kitzur Shulkhan Arukh*/ Digest of the *Shulkhan Arukh*, compiled by Rabbi Solomon Ganzfried early in this century.

Today, the fur, the *Shulkhan Arukh*, and the *Kitzur* include only those *mitzvot* that can be performed in the present day. They omit those obligations that relate to the Temple.

Generally, when considering the validity of a rabbinical ruling, the older ruling takes precedence. After all, the further back in history you go, the closer you are to Sinai and the Ultimate Authority. Subsequent scholars are bound by previous ones; however, where the earlier authorities disagree, the later authority is the guiding one within a given time period—for example, Talmudic, *rishonim* (medieval)-, *acharonim* (early modern).

Despite all the rules governing the *halakhic* process, there is still considerable leeway for individual interpretation. A community still can, if it chooses, exhibit some flexibility in *halakhah*, and there is a degree of pluralism within even the most Orthodox community.

Even so, it was inevitable that someone would come along and ask what gave a rabbi the authority to issue a ruling in the name of God at all. Such voices would be heard quickly and insistently.

(xii)OPPONENTS OF HALAKHAH

THE SADDUCEES AND THE KARAITES

Throughout the nearly two millennia in which the process of accretion that is *halakhah* took place, there have been those within the Jewish community who rejected the authority of the rabbis, the validity of *halakhah*, or both. The first such group, the Sadducees, rejected the idea of the "life to come," and the concept of future reward and punishment calculated on the basis of how well one kept the *mitzvot*. The Sadducees came to the forefront in the third century B.C.E., but with the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 C.E. The Sadducees faded from Jewish life.

One might argue convincingly that the most successful opponents of *halakhah* were the early Christians who were, after all, a Jewish sect opposed to what they perceived as the rigid legalism of rabbinic Judaism. The route they took, apostasy and the founding of a new religion, anticipated the path onto which a handful of men like Spinoza were forced.

In the eighth century C.E. Another group driven by opposition to the Oral Law came forward, the Karaites. The Karaites preached a literal interpretation of the Written Law and rejected the very idea of Oral Law. They also rejected rabbinical innovations. For example, the rabbis interpreted the biblical proscription against burning a fire on Shabbat (Exodus 35:3) to mean that one could not *light* a fire on Shabbat, but that it was

permissible to use one that had been lit before the Sabbath; the Karaites, however, interpreted the verse literally and eschewed the use of fire on Shabbat completely. Although they found fertile ground for their ideas in the Middle East, they were met with fierce opposition within the community, led by Saadiah Gaon, and by the twelfth century had effectively ceased to have any influence in the Jewish world, except for small pockets in the Crimea. They continued to exist as a schismatic sect and small Karaite communities can still be found today in Israel and elsewhere.

2. THE ROLE OF SYNAGOGUE

The origin of the synagogue as an institution is uncertain, most experts believe that its roots lie in the Babylonian exile, after the destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E. Over time, the phrase “small sanctuary” was applied to these places of worship, a phrase that is often also applied to the Jewish home. The word “*synagogue*” itself comes from the Greek, meaning assembly or gathering. Although there is no equivalent word in Hebrew. There are several phrases that have been used to characterize the institution in its various forms, *Bet Midrash* / House of Study; *Bet Tefillah* / House of Prayer and *Bet Knesset* / House of Assembly. The Yiddish word *shul* is often used as well.

Whatever its genesis, it is obvious that the destruction of the second Temple and the dispersion of the Jews hastened the growth of the synagogue as an institution. Although there may have been as many as four hundred synagogues in Jerusalem at the time of the Second Temple (According to the Jerusalem Talmud), the necessity for a place of worship in the Diaspora undoubtedly spurred synagogue-building even more rapidly. Where else could Jews go to assemble and to pray? As we have seen, prayer was considered a substitute for the offerings that had been brought at the temple, and the basic structure of worship evolved out of the schedule of sacrifices made at the Temple.

The essential structure of the synagogue today reflects the physical structure of the temple as well. At the front of the sanctuary space is the *Aron Kodesh* / Holy Ark, containing the *Sifrei Torah* / Torah scrolls. Hanging over it is the *Ner Tamid* / Eternal Light, a visual equivalent of the eternal light of Torah, prescribed by God to Aaron and his sons in Exodus 27:20-21. The *bimah* corresponds to the pulpit used by the priests to preside over sacrifices.

The shift from sacrifices of prayers fundamentally from sacrifices to prayers fundamentally changed the nature of Jewish worship, making it a democratic and individual affair. Still, the synagogue is seen as a holy place in which gossip and idle chatter are discouraged, and eating and sleeping are prescribed.

The modern American synagogue has developed beyond the relatively modest buildings of the ancient world and the austere gathering places of the Middle Ages. Today, the synagogue building will usually include not only a sanctuary in which services are held (or more than one sanctuary in the same cases). It will also house classrooms, offices, social balls, auditoriums, and even recreational facilities. As Mordecai Kaplan, the American Theologian who inspired the Reconstructionist movement, envisioned it, the synagogue has become a centre for the Jewish community, a role it had in the Middle Ages as well.

In an Orthodox synagogue today one will find separate seating for men and women, with a curtain, screen, or wall, called a *mekhitzah*, between the sections. The *bimah* frequently will be located in the centre of the sanctuary, usually surrounded on all four sides by congregants, with every facing the same way in most *Ashkenazi shuls*, or with three sides facing the *bimah* but not away from the Ark in Sephardic Congregations. By contrast, gender-segregated seating has been abolished in the synagogues, the *bimah* is generally found at the front of the sanctuary, usually raised above the seating floor, placed in front of the Ark. (Reform synagogues will also have a piano and/or organ and, occasionally, a choir left).

3. THE ROLE OF THE RABBI

For the vast majority of modern practicing Jews since (with the notable exception of certain Hasidic communities;) Judaism is still resolutely non-hierarchical in worship. The distinction between lay leadership and the rabbinate is much narrower practice and theory than in most Christian denominations.

About the only thing a rabbi can do in front of a congregation that can't be done by an ordinary Jew is sign marriage licences, and the power is not granted by a Jewish body but by the state. A layperson can conduct a funeral or a *kiddushin* / sanctification ceremony for a wedding. (However, even the most progressive congregation will not permit a layperson to be responsible for performing a wedding; there are too many legal questions, issues like witnesses, the rings etc., to take the risk.)

This being the case, what exactly does a rabbi do in terms of worship? To some extent, the answer to that question depends on the branch of Judaism to which the congregation belongs, the *minhag* of the congregation, and even its financial situation.

For example, in a prosperous Conservative synagogue, the congregants may expect services to be led by a polished, highly trained cantor, who will *daven* (*Yiddish* 'pray') the entire service, except when there a 'bar mitzvah and the *bar mitzvah* boy or *bat mitzvah* girl will lead portion of the service. The rabbi may do little more during service than announce page numbers and deliver a sermon (although the letter is no small thing!). A less well-to-do congregation may hire a rabbi who can *daven* well.

"The rabbi is necessary as a teacher and as someone to rule on Jewish law, including liturgical questions, but is not needed to lead service", one prominent reform rabbi told the writer "You need someone in the room to make sure that what is done is being done right. There are so many minute details of Jewish law that there has to be someone there who is really learned".

In addition, there are issues of the aesthetic and cultural principles that have to be taken into account in planning worship. “The clergy are still the most educated planning worship”, the rabbi concluded” who knows the most about what you have to do to make worship ‘work’?”

Regardless of what a rabbi knows or does during worship, he or she cannot intercede with God for the congregation. Ultimately every Jew is responsible for his own conversation with God. And what happens in the dialogue is a matter of great concern in Judaism.

A Jew need not invent his own prayers to God (although there is a space within the liturgy to do so at points in the *Amidah*). She need not feel that God’s response to her worship will be based on how eloquent or poetic her words are. The words are the same at each of the day’s services, the same of each Sabbath, and at each festival. An observant Jew who prays everyday, three times a day, will undoubtedly have memorised large portions of the liturgy. A knowledgeable Jew can walk into a synagogue anywhere in the world and know where she is in the service. But even an occasional synagogue-gore can pick up a *siddur* / prayer book and follow the service in Hebrew or in translation.

The great medieval Jewish philosopher and legal scholar Maimonides said that the Torah requires that one pray only once a day. He defined prayer to include, at the least, praise, supplication, and thanks, in that order. Prior to the time of Ezra (fifth century B.C.E.), that is probably what people did. With the Exile after the destruction of the Temple Hebrew ceased to be the only language spoken by the Jews; as its use became more unnatural for Jews Diaspora, it became necessary to establish fixed prayers.

Many of the enchanting tales of the Hasidic rabbis of the eighteenth and nineteenth cent illustrate the supreme importance of *kavanah* in worship. One of the best-known concerns the little boy who came with his father to the *Yom Kippur* service conducted by the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidism and one of the great

figures of eighteenth century Judaism. The boy had with him a small flute. As the service drew to its dramatic close and the shofar was blown to signal the end of this holiest of days, the little boy pulled out the flute and in his excitement he sounded a note of his own, a shrill piercing sound that brought everything to a halt. His father was mortified and infuriated, but the Baal Shem Tov calmed him, saying, “Until that moment there was some doubt if our prayers would ascend to heaven, but at the sound of that flute, the angels held open the gates and all the prayers entered.”

4. AN ASSORTMENT OF BLESSINGS FOR THE JEWS BY THE RABBIS

For the observant Jew, even the most ordinary aspects of life are invested with an area of wonder, of sanctity, Judaism includes blessings for almost anything one can experience during the day (and the rabbis believed that a Jew should offer at least a hundred *b'rakhot* everyday). Here is a selection of blessings for a wide range of occasions and phenomena.

Before eating bread

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam ha-motzi lekhem min ha'aretz / Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Before eating products of wheat, barley, rye, oats, or spelt

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam borei minei mizonot / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who creates many types of nourishment.

Before drinking wine or grape juice

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam borei p'ree ha-gafen / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of Universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Before eating fruit grown on a tree

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam borei p'ree ha-eitz /
Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who
creates the fruit of the tree.

Before eating produce grown in the earth

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam borei p'ree ha-
adamah / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe,
who creates the fruit of the earth.

Before eating or drinking any other foods

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam she-hakol ni-hiyeh
b'dvaro / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of Universe,
through whose word everything came to be.

Upon smelling fragrant shrubs, trees, or their flowers

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam borei atzei b'samim
/Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of Universe, who creates
fragrant trees.

Upon seeing lightning

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'dam oseh ma'asch
b'reisheet / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of Universe,
who makes the work of Creation.

Upon seeing the ocean

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'dam she'aseh et ha-yam
ha-gadol / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of Universe,
who has such in His Universe.

Upon seeing exceptionally strange-looking people or animals

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'dam oseh mishaneh hab'riyot / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who makes the creatures different.

Upon hearing, unusually good news that benefits not only oneself but others

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'dam ha'olam ha-tov v'hemetiv / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who is good and does good.

Upon hearing unusually bad news

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam dayan ha-emet / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, the true Judge.

We should remember as Christians, we complete our prayer with the last line “In the name of Jesus, Amen”. Because we all are sinners. And our God in heaven is fully holy. How did He listen and answer our prayers? But Jesus is Immanuel. He bought us with his precious holy blood. Until and unless Jesus was not crucified, we could not know God completely. Our heavenly Father could not reject our prayer, when we complete it in the name of His son. Because Jesus is our advocate before God. We see in the Bible, “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:1-2), who believe him completely.

5. THE DAILY SERVICE OF JEWS

There are at least three worship services each day, whether it is a week-day, Shabbat/Sabbath, or a festival day : *shakharit* / morning, *minkhah* / afternoon and *ma'ariv* / evening. (On Sabbath and the Festivals, there is a fourth service), *musaf* /

additional, which immediately follows the morning service. On Yom Kippur, there is a fifth service, *he'ilah*. The elements of each service, regardless of time of day or day of the week or year, are fundamentally the same. By following a typical week-day in the life of a traditionally observant Jew, we can see how worship is structured and also understand how it has evolved in the other streams of Judaism : Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist.

BEFORE THE MORNING SERVICE

When a traditionally observant Jew rises in the morning, the first thing he says is : *Modeh ani l'fanekha Melekh khai v' kayam, shekezarta bi, nishmati b'khemlah—rabah emunatekhah* / Thank you, O God, living and Eternal Ruler, for having compassionately returned to within me my soul—abundant is your faithfulness.

He then washes his hands in the prescribed ritual manner : with his right hand, he picks up a vessel of water, passes it to his left and pours water over the right. Then he switches hands and repeats the process. He does this three times for each hand, then recites :

Reisheet khokhmah yir'at Adonai, sekhel tov l'khol osekhem, tehilato omedet la'ad. /The beginning of wisdom is fear of God—good understanding to all their practitioners; His praise endures forever.

Barukh sheim k'vod malkhuto l'olam va'ed / Blessed be His Name forever.

This passage is taken from Psalm III.

A traditionally do servant male Jew will now put on a "tallit katan, a four-cornered undershirt with a set of *tzitzit* / 'fringes' at each of its corners, reciting the following blessing for the wearing of *tzitzit*. He discussed "*Tallit and Tzitzit*" later.

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al mitzvat tzitzit. / Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has sanctified us and commanded us concerning the *tzitzit*.

TALLIT AND TZITZIT

The final paragraph of the Sh'ma is a passage from Numbers 15:38 in structuring the Israelites to wear fringes on any four-cornered garment as a reminder of Adonai's commandments. A male Orthodox Jew, even a small boy, will wear an undershirt *tallit katan* / small tallit with four corners and fringes (*tzitzit*) from the moment he awakens until he undresses at night. Most Jewish men (and many Jewish women in Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform, and even some Modern Orthodox congregations) will wear a prayer shawl, a *tallit gadol* / large tallit, at morning services, *musaf*, all day on Yom Kippur (even into the evening), and for *minkhah* at Tisha b'Av, in recognition of this mitzvah. (The *shaliakh tzibur* will wear a tallit regardless of time or marital status).

The *tzitzit* are tied in a specific way : four threads doubled over, making eight threads; one thread, longer than the others, wound around them and double-knotted, usually with the double knot followed by seven, eight, eleven and finally thirteen windings, leading to a total of five double knots, numbers that have a Kabbalistic significance. The *tzitzit* must be inspected regularly to make sure they are still *kosher* / legal with no tears or the kind of water that creates more than eight threads. If there is damage, they must be replaced.

Usually a tallit gadol will have an embroidered neckpiece to indicate where the collar is. The neckpiece is called the *atarah* / crown and is there, in part, to strengthen the fabric at the point at which it will bear the most strain. To put on a tallit, one holds it spread out in both hands with the neckpiece at the top, then recites the blessing.

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha'olma, asher Kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hitatef b'tzitzit / Blessed are You, Adonai one God, Ruler of the Universe, who sanctified us with His commandments, and commanded us to wrap ourselves in tzitzit.

If they had borrowed another congregant's 'tallit' for only a few minutes, it is not necessary to recite the blessings however, if they are wearing a 'tallit' that belongs to the synagogue and will have it on for an extended period of time—have to say the length of the morning service—they should recite the blessing. Many worshippers like to cover their heads with the tallit while reciting the blessing, fulfilling the commandment by “wrapping” themselves and taking a moment for quiet meditation on the significance of this commandment. The tallit should be dropped over the shoulders, hanging down the front of the body so that the tzitzit lies at the four corners or directions around the person.

Like the priests in the temple in Jerusalem who wear turbans to mark their awareness of the presence of the Almighty, a Jew who wears a tallit adds a sense of formality and solemnity to prayer. At the same time, wearing a tallit adds a sense of formality and solemnity to prayer. At the same time, wearing tallit helps one to feel sanctified in the service of God. Putting the tallit over once head during the Amidah allows a worshipper to experience both the public and private nature of Jewish prayer simultaneously.

In traditionally observant congregations, it is the minhag for many to press the fringes to the eyes and to kiss them three times during the recitation of the last section of the Sh'ma, when saying the word *tzitzit*. When the Torah comes past your seat during the hakafah, they may extend their *tzitzit* to touch it, then kiss them each other. When called to the Torah to read the blessings, it is customary in most congregations for you to touch the *tzitzit* to the place in the scroll where the reader will begin, and then had to kiss each other and to repeat this gesture when the reader finishes.

TEFILLIN

“You shall bind them as a sign upon your hand and they shall be a symbol to your eyes...” “So Jews are told in the Sh’ma. For the rabbis of the Talmudic period, this was an injunction from God to wear tefillin, small leather boxes containing parchment scrolls on which the words of paragraphs from the Torah are written. The Boxes have wider bases and on openings through which leather straps are passed. The Hebrew letter shin is written on the boxes; the head strap is tied with a knot in the shape of the letter daled, the arm strap with a knot is the shape of the Hebrew letter “yud”. These three letters spell Shaddai, one of the names of God. *Tefillin* can be purchased at most Judaica shops.

Tefillin are worn for the daily morning service in orthodox and most conservative synagogues. However, they are not worn on Sabbath or Festivals because keeping the Sabbath and the Festivals is already a sign of God’s covenant, so a further reminder is deemed unnecessary (They are also not worn on the first day of mourning or by a groom on his wedding day)

In the Middle Ages, there was a spirited dispute over the order in which the parchments were to be placed in the tefillin, with the great medieval sage Rashi and his grandson, Robbenu Tam, in strong disagreement. As a result, some Hassidic Jews would wear two sets of *tefillin*, one of Rashi’s and another of Rabbenu Tam’s, in order to be certain of complying with commandments.

The wearing of *tefillin*, say the sages, is one commandment that even God observes. Where Jews wear *tefillin* upon whose parchment is written the Sh’ma, however, Adonai wears *tefillin* containing the verse from I Chronicles, “And who is like unto their people Israel, a nation one in the earth.”

6. THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF THE JEWS’ SERVICE

The daily morning service includes all the key elements of the liturgy, so it makes a good outline.

Birkat Hashakhar / Morning Blessing

P'sukei D'zimrah / Songs of Praise

The *Sh'ma* and its Blessings

Call to Prayer (the Barkehu)

Yotzer

Birkat ha-Torah

The Sh'ma (3 paragraphs)

G'ulah

Amidah / Standing Prayer

Blessing of Praise

Blessing of Petition (omitted on Shabbat but replaced by
a blessing for the Sabbath)

Blessings of Thanks giving

Silent Prayer

Seder K'riat ha-Torah / Service for the Reading of the
Monday, Thursday and Shabbat)

Closing Prayers

Aleink

Mourner's Kaddish

KADDISH

Kaddish is a prayer that should be familiar to even nonobservant Jews. Because it is the prayer of mourners in one of its several forms, it is one prayer that almost everyone has heard at some point in their lives. More than that, it occurs several times in some version during the course of most worship services.

The prayer is a hymn of praise to *Adonai*, calling for the establishment of God's sovereignty. Written in Aramaic, it really exists in four variants: the *Khatsi Kaddish* / half-Kaddish; the whole Kaddish; *Kaddish de-Rabanon* / Kaddish for the Teachers; and the Mour's Kaddish.

THE SH'MA

It is the first prayer a Jewish child learns; the last thing an observant Jew says before sleep each night; the last prayer a Jew says before death; and in a religion noticeably devoid of statements of creed, a religion that has no catechism, it is as close as one who can come to a Jewish statement of essential faith.

Sh'ma yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai ekhad. / Hear, O Israel, our God Adonai is one.

This is the part of the prayer that almost every Jew knows but, in fact, there is considerably more to it than that one sentence, important though that sentence is. In fact, the Sh'ma is three paragraphs long, including not only this essential statement of God's uniqueness but also sections of Deuteronomy (6:4-9; 11:13-21) and Numbers (15:37-41) that prescribe some of the most important elements of Jews ritual, including instructions on when to recite the *Sh'ma*.

THE AMIDAH

It is the first prayer a Jewish child learns; the last thing an observant Jew says before sleep each night; the last prayer of a Jew says before deaths and, in a religion noticeably devoid of statements of creed, a religion that has no catechism, it as close as they can come to a Jewish statement of essential faith.

In traditionally observant congregations, the Amidh is said silently by the congregation, and repeated by the *hazan* in the morning and afternoon (in presence of a minyan), with the congregation answering "Amen" after each of the blessings. The prayer is recited at all three daily services in its full version. On Shabbat the first three and last three blessings are recited, with a middle blessing added in place of the intermediate blessings (for a total seven) : The middle blessing differs depending on which Shabbat service is being davened.

No conversations are permitted during the praying of the *Amidah*. Indeed, the Talmud cautions, “One should not say the *Tafillah* while immersed in sadness or idleness or laughter or light talk or frivolity, but only in the joy of the performance of the *mitzvot*.”

MINKHAH / THE AFTERNOON SERVICE

Minkhah is the shortest service of the day. Its name is derived from the meal offering that was made at midday in the Temple in Jerusalem. The order of the service is quite simple. It opens with Psalm 145 (often called *Asheri*), which is followed by half – *Kaddish*; the *Amidah*; on those days on which it prescribed the penitential prayer called ‘*Takhanun*; *Akinu* and concludes with the *Mourner’s Kaddish*. The *Sh’ma* is not said, as the service doesn’t fall at one of times specified for its recitation in Deuteronomy 6:7. On the Sabbath, the *Torah* is read but the *Haftarah* the reading from the Prophets, is omitted. In addition, on the first days, there is a *Torah* reading (two sections of Exodus, 32:11-14 and 34:1-10) and *Haftarah* (Isaiah 55:6-56:8). *Minkhah* can be prayed for earlier than a half hour after midday, and no later than sunset. In many congregations, *Minkhah* will be prayed as late as can be permitted so that the service may be conveniently into *Ma’ariv* / The Evening Service.

MA’ARIV / THE EVENING SERVICE

The *Ma’ariv* service derives a more commonly used name from one of its opening prayers in which we thank God “*ha-ma’ariv arivim* / Who brings on the evening.” The service is occasionally called *Arvit* / evening, and occurs shortly after sundown.

Ma’ariv is the only one of the three daily services that does not correspond to the schedule of offerings in the Temple in Jerusalem. In fact, because the *Amidah* was considered the equivalent of a sacrificial offering, for many years the standing

prayer was omitted from the evening service. Gradually it was introduced into the service and is now an integral part of the *Ma'ariv* liturgy. The Amidah is still not repeated by the *shaliakh tzibur* at *Ma'ariv* in a traditional congregation.

Before a Jew goes to sleep, there is one last private prayer to offer, the “bedtime” *Sh'ma*. After offering forgiveness to anyone who has wronged us during the preceding day, and asking that our words find favour with God, they pray for protection from harm during sleep, including bad dreams. Then the “*Sh'ma*” is said, including the first paragraph from Deuteronomy 6:5-9 and series of Psalms extolling God’s role as protector, followed by *Hashkiveinu*, and the threefold Priestly Benediction :

Y'varekhekhah Adonai v'yishmerekhah /

May God bless you and guard you.

Ya'er Adonai panav eilekhah viy'khunekah /

May God’s face shine toward you and be gracious to you.

Yisah Adonai panav eilekhah ve-yasem j'kha shalom /

May God’s face be lifted to you and grant you peace.

Finally, Adon Olam is recited, with its final verse : “I place my spirit within His care, when I walk as when I sleep / God is with me, I shall not fear body and spirit are within his care.” Thus a Jew ends the day the same way he began it : by offering praise to God as a Protector and Creator without limits.

THE SHABBAT SERVICE

Kabbalet Shabbat / Welcoming The Shabbat and Ma'ariv.

As the sun disappears on Friday evening, Shabbat begins, Indeed, Jewish holidays also begin with sunset. Why?

The answer is startlingly simple: in the five verses of *Bereshit / Genesis*, God creates light and “there was evening and

morning, the first day". The rabbis reasoned that if the *Torah*, the product of divine revelation, said that the first day began with evening, that must have been God's intention, for "days" to begin at sunset.

So when the sky is streaked with the feeding, Friday sunlight, in Jewish homes around the world, candles are lit, *b'rakhot* are said, and Shabbat is welcomed. And in synagogues, the Friday *ma'ariv* service begins with a series of hymns, Psalms, and blessings collectively known as *Kabbalat Shabbat* / Welcoming the Shabbat.

In orthodox congregations, *Kabbalat Shabbata* consists of Psalm 95 through 99, Psalm 29, the hymn *L'Khah Dodi* / came my beloved, Psalms 92 and 93, a lengthy reading from the Talmud passages governing the Sabbath, placed here to separate *Kebba Shabbat* from *Ma'ariv*, and both the *Mourners Keddish* and *Kaddish* day – *Rabanan*, a *Kaddish* and after learning in a group, in honour of their teacher. In Conservative, Reform, and Reconstruction service, the Talmud passages. Pass and the two versions of *Kaddish* may be omitted, often replaced by a half-*Kaddish* that separates the *Kabbalat Shabbat* the *Ma'ariv* service proper.

Shabbat is a time of Joy, and the six Palms that make up the bulk of the *Kabalat Shabbat* are celebratory, corresponding to the six days of creation; but it is *L'kha Dodi* that many feel is the true centerpiece of this portion of the Shabbat evening service. In the sixteenth century, the small town of Safed, located in the mountains of Galilee in northern Israel, was a centre of Jewish mysticism. Solomonben Moses HaLevi Alkabetz was one of the many mystics who lived and studied there. On Friday nights Alkabetz and his colleagues would dress in white like bridegrooms and joyously dance and much through the fields outside town to greet the Shabbat, which is depicted in both Talmud and in mystical texts as a bride and queen. Around 1540, Alkabetz, a poet, composed a beautiful ode to the Sabbath Bride, '*L'kha Dodi*,

urging Jews to greet the Shabbat and extolling her virtues. The poem quickly became an eagerly awaited part of the Friday night service, adapted by German *Ashkenazim* with him less than a hundred years later. Today, with more than two hundred musical settings of Alkabet's Hebrew text, it is recited or sung in virtually every synagogue in the world as Shabbat is ushered in. In many congregations, when the final verse is sung and the words "Enter, O Bride," are said, the worshippers will turn to the entrance of the sanctuary and bow in honour of the Shabbat Queen. (Incidentally, the initial letter of each of the first eight verses of *L'kha Dodi* from an anacrostic spelling of Alkabets' name, one example of the linguistic cleverness of a poem that is full of biblical allusions, puns and word play)

After *Kabbalat Shabbat* the basic shape of the Shabbat evening service closely resembles that of its weekday counterpart, upto the recitation of the *Amidah*, with the Barekhu, the Sh'ma, and the *b'rakhot* that precede and follow it. Just prior to the recitation of the *Amidah*, however, worshippers recite an injunction to keep the Shabbat, known as V'shamru, moreover, the Shabbat version of the *Amidah* is considerably shorter than the daily version. On a day of joy, a day that reaffirms the covenant between God and the Jewish people, the rabbis thought it rude to ask for special favours. Hence, the middle blessings of the *Amidah*, the blessings of supplication, are omitted. The Shabbat *Amidah* consists of the first three and last three blessings of the daily prayer, with a middle blessing that thanks God for the institution of the Shabbat. The middle blessing includes the biblical verses that refer to God's creation of the Shabbat, in order to fulfill the rabbinic understanding of the command to "remember the Shabbat Day", which appears in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). The rabbis interpreted this verse to include the necessity for verbal testimony to the holiness of the Shabbat, which is done twice on Friday night, during the *Amidah* and again during *Kiddush*, each time with the same verse from Genesis. At the end of the Shabbat *Amidah*, a

short prayer, the essence of (the) ‘*Tefillah*’,” called *Magein Avoit* / Shield of our Fathers, is real.

Although some members of a congregation will have already made *Kiddush* over wine at home before coming to the evening service (or will do so upon returning home afterward), at the point in the liturgy the prayer leader will recite the *Kiddush* again. The historical evidence is unclear as to which came first, the home ceremony or the communal one. However, the rationale behind the duplication is believed to have its roots in the early days of the synagogue as an institution, when it doubled as a temporary place of lodging for travelling Jews; being on the road and away from home, they could count on making *Kiddush* and having a sip of Shabbat wine in the synagogue. The rabbis saw no reason to eliminate either recitation of the prayer and, indeed, in our busy workaday world of the late twentieth century, for many Jews *Kiddush* in the synagogue is the only one they will have a chance to experience on a green Friday night.

With *Kiddush* completed, the evening service moves quickly to its conclusion, with *Aleinu* and the Mourner’s ‘*Kaddish*’, and a final hymn, usually one of the many settings of the hymns *Adon Olam* or *Yigdal*, a hymn based on *Maimonides*’ Thirteen Articles of faith.

SPECIAL SHABBAT

There are several Shabbats that have special names, either because of when they fall in the Jewish calendar in relation to festivals or because of the Torah or ‘*haftarah*’ reading that is prescribed for that Shabbat. The following is a list of them, explaining their content and significance.

Shabbat Mevarekhim : The Shabbat of Blessing, the Shabbat preceding the new moon. In addition to the usual liturgy and Torah readings for the given Shabbat, the prayer for the new month is read, along with *Yehi Ratson*, the prayer asking God to protect the people from disasters and affliction.

Shabbat Makhar Khodesh : Falls on the eve of the new moon. In addition to the prayers for the new moon recited on *Shabbat Mevarekhim*, there is a special half tarah, 1 Samuel 20:18-42, which describes the covenant between Jonathan and David, made on the eve of the Rosh Khodesh.

Shabbat Rosh Khodesh : The Shabbat of the new moon falls on Rosh Khodesh itself. *Hallel* is recited after the morning service and there is a substitution in the *Musaf Amidah*, with the prayer, '*Atah Yatsartah*' replacing *Tikantab* Shabbat. An additional Torah reading is prescribed, Numbers 28:9-15, and the *haftarah* is taken from Isaiah 66:1-24, concluding with a repetition of verse twenty-three.

Shabbat Shuvah : The Shabbat of return is that falls between *Rosa Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*, during the Ten Days Repentance. It is customary for the rabbi to speak on the subject of repentance. The special *haftarot* are Hosea 14:2-10, Joel 2:15-27 in *Ashkenazi* congregations; Hosea 14:2-10, Micah 7:18-20 in *Sephardic*. *Diaspora Ashkenazi* congregations will also read the Micah passage before Joel passage.

Shabbat Khol ha-Moed Sukkot : The Shabbat that falls during the intermediate days of Sukkot is marked by the recitation of *Hallel* and the reading of *Kohelet / Ecclesiastes* in the morning. The Torah reading is from Exodus 33:12-34:26, with a '*maftir*' portion, Numbers 29. The *haftarah* is Ezekiel 38:18-39:16.

Shabbat Bereishit : The Shabbat of beginning or the Shabbat of Genesis is the first Shabbat after Simkhot Torah and marks the opening of the annual cycle of Torah readings once again with Genesis 1:1-6:8. In a traditionally observant congregation, the member chosen on *Simkhat Torah as'khaton Bereishit* will get a special *aliyah* and will provide a special *se'udah* / festive meal or *kidush* to which all worshippers will be invited after the morning service.

Shabbat Hanukah : Falls during *Hanukah* (and because the festival lasts eight days, on rare occasions will fall on both the first and last days). *Hallel* is recited after the morning service. In addition to the regular *parsha*, Numbers 7:54-8:4 if *Shabbat Hanukah* falls on Rosh Khodesh, Numbers 28:9-15 is read before the *maftir*. The *haftarot* are, respectively, Zechariah 2:14-4:7, 1 Kings 7:40-50, and Isaiah 66:1-24.

Shabbat Shirah : The Shabbat of the song occurs when the Torah portion for the week is *Beshalach*, Exodus 13:17-17:16. This *parsha* includes *Shirat ha-Yam*, the “Song of the Sea” (Exodus 15:1-18), sung by Moses, Miriam, and the Israelites when the Egyptians were finally vanquished at the sea. This passage is read with a different, more melodic line. In many congregations special religious poems will be read as part of the liturgy. In *Ashkenazi* congregations the *haftarah* in Judges 4:4-5:31; in Sephardic congregations it is Judges 5:1-31. ‘*Shirat-ha-Yam*’ is also read on the seventh day of Passover.

Four Spring Shabbat : The *Arba Parshiyot* / Four Portions are read on four special Shabbats during the spring. The first two of these occur be four Purim, the second pair after in addition to the weekly Torah portion for each of these Shabbats. It are :-

(i) *Shabbat Shekalim*, (ii) *Shabbat Zakhor*, (iii) *Shabbat Parah* and (iv) *Shabbat ha-Khodesh*.

Shabbat ha-Gadol : The great Shabbat falls immediately before *Pesakh*. Traditionally rabbis give a sermon about the holiday. At the afternoon service, portions of the *Haggadah* are read. The ‘*haftarah*’ is in Malachi, concluding with a repetition .

Shabbat Khol ha-Moed Pesakh : On the Shabbat for the intermediate days of Passover *Hallel* and *Sir-ha-Shirim* / Song of the songs are recited after the morning service. The Torah portions are Exodus 33:12-34:26 and a *maftir*, Numbers 28:19-25. The *haftarah* is Ezekiel 37:-14 (Some congregations start the *haftarah* at 36:37).

Shabbat Khazon : The Shabbat of the vision takes its name from the *haftarah*, Isaiah 1:1-27, in which Isaiah predicts the punishments wear plain clothes rather than dressing up for Shabbat; the Ark may even be covered by a black curtain. The *haftarah* chanted to the Lamentations tune used on *Tisha b'Av*.

Shabbat Nakhamu : The Shabbat of comfort falls on the Shabbat after *Tisha b'Av* and takes its name from the '*haftarah*', Isaiah 40:1-26 in which Isah offers a vision of the final redemption of Israel. The Torah portion for this week is Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11, which includes the Ten Commandments and the first paragraph of the *Sh'ma*, so it too offers consolidation, reaffirming God's covenant with the Jewish people.

SHAKHARIT / MUSAF

It is Shabbat, a day of rest. There is no rush on Saturday morning to finish 'daverning' to head off to work or school. What is in mind, the rabbis who helped structure the 'siddur' knew that day could make the Shabbat morning service a longer one, indeed, in addition to the morning service, they included a *Musaf* / Additional service, a parallel to the additional sacrifice offered on Shabbat and the Festivals in the Temple of Jerusalem.

Sabbath morning begins with *Yigdal* and follows the weekday morning service up to the *P'sukai d'zimrah* omitting the blessing for the wearing of *tefillin* (which are not worn on *Shabbat Tefillin*, p.27). It is during this sequence of Psalms that we find the first additional specifically for Shabbat, *Nishmat Kol Khai* / The Souls of all the livings, which thanks God for his beneficent toward humanity, acknowledging man's inability to adequately praise the creator.

With another service of benedictions, the self Torah is now returned to the Ark, which the congregation singing *Eitz khayim* (The Torah) is a tree of life to those who fold fast on it.

In traditionally observant congregations, the *Musaf* / Additional service follows the Torah reading for Shabbat morning, with a *half-Kaddish* separating them. In the Temple of Jerusalem, there were additional sacrifices prescribed for Shabbat afternoon. *Musaf* is designed to correspond with those offerings.

FESTIVAL SERVICES

By the large, the Festival Services follow the structure of their weekly and Shabbat counters. Of course, each holiday service has features unique to its liturgy, but we will consider those in the chapter on the festivals.

However, the Festival Services include a few prayers that can be found every holiday observance. For each holiday, there is a prayer, parallel to the place *V'sharmu* occupies in the Shabbat service, announcing the festival itself : On the three pilgrim festivals (Sukkol, Pesakh and Shavuot), *Vayidader* Moses; on *Rosh Hashanah*, *Tiku ra-Yom Hezeh*. On the three Pilgrim age Festivals the middle blessing of the *Amidah*, *Kedushat ha-Yom*,⁹ is composed of verses referring to the special qualities of the day. During *Seder kri'at ha-Torah* on Festival morning on a festival morning, the hymn *Adonai, Adonai* from Exodus 34:6-7 which enumerates the qualities of God's mercy is added.

But the most significant addition to the festival liturgy occurs just after the morning 'Amidah' immediately prior to the Torah service. Called by one commentator "the classical expression of joyful thanks giving for divine redemption." *Hallel* is one of the crowning moments of a festival service and is a time for signing with extra joy. In its full form, *Hallel* consists of Psalm 113 through 118. (When recited on the first night of *Pesakh*, this version is also called *Hallel-ha-Mitzri* / The Egyptian Hallel.) *Khastisi Hallel* / The half-Hallel omits the first eleven verses of Psalms 115 and 116. Finally, *Hallel ha-Gadol* / The Great Hallel consists of Psalm 136, and is recited on Shabbat and Festival mornings as part *P'sukei d'zimrah*.

The rules determining which Hallel is recited are straightforward and drive from the era of the Temple in Jerusalem. Shabbat, *Rosa Hashanah*, *Yom Kippur* and *Purim* are holidays for which no pilgrimage to the Temple was made; therefore, ‘*Hallel*’ is not recited on those days. On the first day of *Pesakh* and all the days of *sukkot* and *Shavuot*, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and offerings at the Temple were customary, so on those holidays the full-Hallel is recited, in addition, the full Hallel is recited as part of the observances of *Hanukah* and of the modern festival days, *Yom Haatzma-ut* (Israel’s Independence Day) and *Yom Yerushalayim* (the anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem). (Actually, there are some orthodox authorities who object to the recitation of the full-Hallel on the latter two days because it implies that they are of equal holiness to *Hanukah*). Finally, the half-Hallel is recited on the remaining days of *Pesakh* and on *Rosh Khodesh* (The New Moon, marking the beginning of a new month in the Jewish calendar).

Hallel is recited while standing. In *Ashkenazi* congregations, it is preceded by a blessing in recognition of the “reading of Hallel”. By contrast, in Sephardic congregations the blessing is in recognition of “the completion of Hallel,” and is therefore omitted when a half-Hallel is recited.

With a few minor alterations for the specific holidays, the Festivals are concluded with ‘*Havdalah*’ just as Shabbat is.

7. HOME RITUALS

The synagogue is one of the two centers of Jews life. The home is the others. Throughout Judaism, the home and the family have been the heart of Jewish life.

As we have seen, an observant Jew begins the day and ends it with prayer. Meals are accompanied by prayer and conclude with it. Even practices like *Havdalah* and candle-lighting for Shabbat and the Festivals are more often practiced at home than in the synagogue. Other key elements of Jews life—virtually all the

life-cycle events from birth to death, the observation of dietary laws, the important *mitzvah* of extending hospitality to the way strangers—are home-centered. Indeed, one could pray all the weekday services without leaving the house if necessity demanded (with the notable exception of “Seder krait ha – Torah”, which requires a minyan).

The home worship experience per excellence, though, is the Shabbat evening meal. Candles are lit and blessed. ‘Kiddush’ is said :

“Vayehi erev, veyhi voker, yom ha-shish. Veyekhulu hashamayim veháaretz vekhol tz’va’am, veyekhal Elohim bayom hash’vi’I melakhto asher ash; vayishbot vayom hash’-vi’I mikol melakhto asher asa. Va-yevareikh Elohim et yom hash’vi’ va-yakadeish otoh, ki vo shavat mikol melakhto asher barah Elohim la’asto”. (Hebrew)/

There was evening and there was morning, a sixth day. Now the heaven and the earth were completed and all their hosts. On the seventh day, God completed all the work of creation. God blessed the seventh day and set it apart. For on the seventh day, God rested from all work of creation. (Translation in English)

“Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, borei p’ri ha-gafen.” (Hebrew)/

“Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth the fruit of the vine.” (Translate in English)

“Barukh atha Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha-olham, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav varatzah vanu kod’sho b’ahavah u’ veratson hinkhilanu, zikaron l’ma’asei v’reishit. Ki hu yom tekhilah l’mikrash hodesh zekher litsiat Mitzrayim vanu. Ki vanu vakhartah vertanu kidashtah mikol ha’amim, veshabat hodshekhah u’veratson hinkhaltanu. Barukh atah Adonai, mekadeish ha-shabat.” (Hebrew) /

“Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who sanctified us with mitzvot and takes delight in us. In God’s love and favour the Almighty has made the holy Shabbat our heritage, as a reminder of the work of creation. It is the first among our holy days, and a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt. O God, you have chosen us and set us apart from all peoples, and in love and favour have you given us the Shabbat as a sacred inheritance. Blessed is Adonai, for the Shabbat day” (Translate in English)

In some homes, parents say a blessing over their children, encouraging them to be “like Ephraim and Manasseh ... Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah,” and offering the traditional threefold Priestly Blessing : “May Adonai bless you and keep you; may the light of God’s countenance shine upon you; may Adonai show you favour and grant you peace.”

A husband will sing to his wife *Eishet Khayil* / ‘A woman of valor’, an ode derived from Proverbs 31 that the Kabbalists use to sing to the Sabbath. Queen. Two *khalot* / braided loaves of bread will be eaten and after a warm family meal, the Grace after Eating will be said and Shabbat *z’mirot* / ‘songs’ may be sung.

The nexus of Shabbat and family life brings to the fore two of the most important elements of Jews continuity. As the great Zionist thinker Ahad Ha’am said, “As much as the Jews kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath kept the Jews.” And the family remains, even today in this era of assimilation, a principal site of Jewish identity, passed from fathers and mothers to their children.

8. MEZUZAH

“And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates”—Deuteronomy 6:9.

Thus is it commanded to the Jews in the passage of Torah that is said everyday as the *Sh’ma*. This commandment is the reason for one of the most visible of Jewish ritual objects. The *mezuzah*, a small case affixed to the right hand doorpost of a Jewish

home, containing a parchment scroll on which is written the passage from Deuteronomy governing this commandment.

The *mezuzah* is attached to the upper part of the doorpost, in a slanting position. The choice of the diagonal placement is a compromise resulting from another disagreement between Rashi and his grandson. Rebbeinu Tam; Rashi argued that the *mezuzah* should be placed vertically, while his grandson held out for the horizontal.

Every doorway in a Jewish home which fulfils certain conditions should have a *mezuzah* :

- The room into which it enters must be at least four cubits (two yards) square, and must have a ceiling;

- The doorway must be at least forty inches high and sixteen inches wide, must have doorposts on either side and a lintel, as well as doors that open and close, although even a doorway without a door should have a *mezuzah* affixed.

- The doorway must be for ordinary dwelling, for human dwelling and “dignified” dwelling (a toilet or bathroom, for example, does not have a ‘mezuzah affixed’);

- The dwelling must be a permanent one and

- Gateways leading to a Jewish home, if they are tall enough and have a lintel and doorposts, should also have a *mezuzah*.

The blessing for putting up a *mezuzah* is

“*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh ha’olam asher kid’shann b’mitzvotav vitzivanu lik’boa mezuzah*” (Hebrew) /

“Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who sanctified us by the commandments and has commanded us to affix a ‘mezuzah’.”

Generally one says the balancing before putting the *mezuzah* on the main door of the house, then puts up the rest of the *mezuzot* immediately after.

Many Jews will touch the *mezuzah* with their hand when leaving or entering the house as a way of expressing their fulfilment of the commandment and of expressing gratitude to the Almighty.

9. WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUPS

As women took a more active and visible role in Reform and Conservative Judaism (they had always had such a role in the Reconstructionist movement), it was inevitable that their Orthodox sisters would follow suit in their own fashion. When the progressive denominations began ordaining rabbis and cantors, it seemed highly unlikely that even the most liberally inclined Modern Orthodox institutions would do the same. But Modern Orthodox women were experiencing comparable stirrings of their own.

Those stirrings took the form of women's *tefillah* / prayer groups, the first of which were established in the mid 1970s. Women gather on their own, in private homes and in synagogues, generally once a month, on Shabbat or *Rosh khodesh*, they pray, read Torah, and often celebrate rites of passage specific to women, including the naming newborn girls and 'bath *mitzvah* ceremonies'.

Since the beginning, the groups have traded carefully in the minefield of Jewish law. They do not recite *Kaddish* or the *Barekhu*, both of which require a *minyan* of ten men in an Orthodox setting (many Conservative congregations and all Reform and Reconstructionist congregations count women toward a minyan). Still the Reconstructionist congregations count women resistance and controversy in the Orthodox world.

From almost the outset of the movement's existence, the women's group received an endorsement from Rabbi Avi Weiss, the spiritual leader of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale (Bronx, N.Y.) and controversial figure in his own right for his political activism on Jewish issues. Weiss was one of the only Orthodox rabbis to offer women the use of his synagogue and to support them from the pulpit at a time when few others would take such a public stand. Rabbi Soul Berman, then at Lincoln Square Synagogue in Manhattan, also expressed his support in Public. In 1985, the controversy surrounding the groups, which had been quietly brewing in modern Orthodox circles, burst into public view when a group of five rabbis affiliated with *Yeshiva* University, the flagship of modern Orthodox education and home of the movement's prestigious rabbinical school, issued a *response* – a *halakhic* ruling—prohibiting organised women's prayer groups in any form. Weiss responded by publishing a reply in support of the women.

The women's own response was swift and decisive; they formed an organization to support one another's work, the Women's Tefillah Network. Since then, the growth of the organization has been slow but steady. (As we will see properly, the women's response did not end there.) In 1989, the Network's numbers numbered sixteen groups, in 1997 there were forty four affiliated prayer groups. The organization's growth should continue; when a rabbinical Council in Queens, New York, issued a ruling that year against the prayer groups, it spurred even interest among Orthodox women.

What purpose do these groups serve? *Bat Sheva Marcus*, chair of the Women's *Tefillah* Network and executive director of the women's *Tefillah* Network and executive director of the Union for Traditional Judaism, observes that the prayer groups fill an important educational function, "and the more we women learn the more curious we become and more connected we feel." At the time when the Modern Orthodox community is being squeezed from the right by the ultra-orthodox and the left by the conservative

movement, it is imperative that its women feel more connected if it is to survive. As Marcus wrote in the magazine ‘Sh’mā’, “The women’s *tefillah* groups become a greenhouse where this learning and growing can take place in a safe environment.”

Women’s *tefillah* groups are now turning up all over the world, even in Jewish schools. There are at least seven in Israel at this writing, including our at Dror High School, which is the only group in the entire world that meets everyday.

All of this was exciting, but what followed has been nothing short of extraordinary, with Modern Orthodox women being ordained as spiritual leaders, and Rabbi Weiss playing a major role.

10. THE JEWISH CALENDAR

Month	Number of Days	Special Days
Spring		
Nisan	30	15 – First day of Pesakh 27 – Yom ha-Shoah
Iyar	29	5 – Yom ha-Atzma’ut 18 – Lag b’Omer

Month	Number of Days	Special Days
		28 – Yom Yerushalayim
Summer		
Sivan	30	6 – Shavuot (first day)
Tammuz	29	17 – Fast of 17 Tammuz
Av	30	9 – Tisha b'Av
Elul	29	
Autumn		
Tishari	30	1 – Rosh – hashanah 3 – Fast of Gedaliah 10 – Yom Kippur 15 – Sukkot (First Day) 22 – Shemini Atzeret 23 – Shimkhat Torah
Kheshvan	29 or 30	
Winter		
Kislev	29 or 30	25 – Hanukah (First Day)
Tevet	29	10 – Fast of 10 Tevet
Shevat	30	15 – Tu bi-Shevat
Adar	29 (30 in leap year)	13 – Fast of Esther 14 – Purim
Adar II	(29 in leap year)	14 – Purim (leap year only)

11. THE THIRTY-NINE CATEGORIES OF FORBIDDEN WORKS

The *Talmud* establishes thirty-nine categories of work forbidden on the Sabbath. Ostensibly, these categories were based on the description of the building of the Ark of the covenant found in the *Torah* (From these categories, the rabbis derived numerous other subcategories; they also would add prohibitions of their own in order to protect the Sabbath from desecration.)

- A. Agricultural Work
- 1. Plowing land
- 2. Sowing seeds on the land
- 3. Cutting or harvesting crops
- 4. Binding or gathering crops

(The next four categories each involve Separating the useful from the useless)

- 5. Threshing
- 6. Winnowing
- 7. Selecting
- 8. Sifting
- 9. Grinding
- 10. Kneading
- 11. Baking
- B. Working with Clothing / fabric
- 12. Shearing
- 13. Bleaching
- 14. Carding
- 15. Dyeing
- 16. Spinning
- 17. Inserting thread into a loom
- 18. Weaving
- 19. Taking off a finished product from a loom
- 20. Separating threads
- 21. Tying a (permanent) knot
- 22. Untying a knot (in order to re-tie it)
- 23. Sewing
- 24. Tearing
- C. Working with leather or parchment, writing

25. Catching game / hunting
26. Slaughtering
27. Skinning or flaying
28. Tanning
29. Scraping
30. Making out (e.g., in preparation for cutting)
31. Cutting
32. Writing
33. Erasing (for the sake of writing again)
- D. Construction Work
34. Building
35. Demolishing (for the sake of building)
36. A final hammer blow – any act that completes or makes usable a finished product
- E. Working with fire
37. Kinding
38. Extinguishing (when done for a positive purpose, as in the manufacture of charcoal)
39. Carrying – from the public domain to the private vice versa

12. FORMATION OF SO MANY JEWS LAWS

Before we contrast the Jewish view of Jewish law with the Christian view of Jewish law, we must understand what we are talking about when we say, “Jewish Law.” At the time of Jesus, there was first and foremost, the law of God given to the people of Israel through Moses and found in the ‘Tora’.

When the New Testament writers wrote of “the law”, they would have mainly been referring to these laws found in the Torah, as well as the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures, which were just then

in the process of becoming standardized as the Jewish Bible Canon.

Additionally, Jesus makes references to the earliest laws of the Pharisees, who were the precursor to the rabbis. Besides the laws given by God in the Hebrew Scriptures and the laws that had already been established by the Pharisees, there were no other Jewish laws.

Of all the books in the Christian New Testament, most were written by Paul. Truly, Paul's theology has imparted Christianity more than that of Jesus, as well as we shall see, there seems to be a difference between Jesus' view of Jewish Law, and Paul's view of those same laws.

Reading the laws of God as given to the Jews through Moses, Jesus states in Matthew 5:17-20. In the above verses, Jesus respects Jewish law, as well as the laws of the Pharisees, and does want to change any aspect of either.

Furthermore, Jesus, regarding the laws of the Pharisees (again, the precursors to the rabbis), started in Matthew 23:1-3.

By saying that the Pharisees as well as the scribes, "sit in Moses' seat". Jesus was saying that they hold the same authority as did Moses, and that they should be obeyed. This means that here, Jesus was saying that the laws of Pharisees (who become the rabbis), should be obeyed. Jesus' objection was not against the law of the Pharisees but rather it was not against the fact that the Pharisees themselves did not obey them. Jesus their hypocrisy, and not their laws, he was directing his followers to obey their laws.

As we shall see, Paul had a very negative view of Jesus' law, and it is the views of Paul that have been prevalent Christianity, rather than Jesus' view on Jewish laws. The only people who were at Mt. Sinai were the Jews, Hebrews as well as the Egyptians who left with them and became Jews result. Once Christianity became largely made up of Gentiles, of non-Jews,

there was no reason for them to keep the Biblical Laws since the Gentiles in the first place.

There are many misconceptions that Christianity holds towards Jewish law. Not all of these views are derived from Paul. Many of them might be familiar to the reader.

13. THE 613 MITZVOT (ACCORDING TO MAIMONIDES)

In his *Sefer Ha-Mitzvot*, Maimonides enumerates the 613 commandments that he finds in the Torah. Below is his list of the 248 positive commandments and the 365 negative commandments.

248 Positive Commandments

- | | |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| P 1 | Believing in God |
| P 2 | Believing in the Unity of God |
| P 3 | Loving God |
| P 4 | Fearing God |
| P 5 | Worshipping God |
| P 6 | Cleaving to God |
| P 7 | Taking an oath by God's Name |
| P 8 | Walking in God's ways |
| P 9 | Sanctifying God's Name |
| P 10 | Reading the <i>\$tima</i> twice daily |
| P 11 | Studying and teaching Torah |
| P 12 | Wearing <i>tefillin</i> of the head |
| P 13 | Wearing <i>tefillin</i> of the hand |
| P 14 | To make <i>Tzitzit</i> |
| P 15 | To affix a <i>Mezuzah</i> |
| P 16 | <i>Hakhel</i> during Sukkot |
| P 17 | A king should write a Torah |
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- P 90 To burn Consecrated Offerings that have become *tameh*
- P 91 To burn the remnant of the Consecrated Offerings
- P 92 The *Nazir* (an ascetic who has dedicated himself to Adonai) letting his hair grow
- P 93 *Nozirite* obligations on completion of vow
- P 94 All oral submissions to be fulfilled
- P 95 Revocation of vows
- P 96 Defilement through carcasses of animals
- P 97 Defilement through carcasses of eight creeping creatures
- P 98 Defilement of food and drink
- P 99 *Turn'ah* [impurity] of a menstruant
- P 100 *Tum'ah* of a woman after childbirth
- P 101 *Tum'ah* of a leper
- P 102 Garments contaminated by leprosy
- P 103 A leprous house

- P 104 *Tum'ah* of a *zav* (man with a discharge)
- P 105 *Tum'ah* of semen
- P 106 *Tum'ah* of a *zavah* (woman with a discharge)
- P 107 *Turn'ah* of a corpse
- P 108 The law of the water of sprinkling
- P 109 Immersing in a *mikveh*
- P 110 Cleansing from leprosy
- P 111 A leper must shave his head
- P 112 The leper must be made distinguishable
- P 113 Ashes of the red heifer (a rite described in Numbers 19)
- P 114 Valuation of a person
- P 115 Valuation of beasts
- P 116 Valuation of houses
- P 117 Valuation of fields
- P 118 Restitution for sacrilege
- P 119 The fruits of the fourth-year planting
- P 120 To leave the corners of your fields for the poor to harvest
- P 121 To leave gleanings for the poor
- P 122 To leave the forgotten sheaf for the poor
- P 123 To leave defective grape clusters for the poor
- P 124 To leave grape gleanings for the poor
- P 125 To bring First fruits to the Sanctuary
- P 126 To set aside the great Heave-offering
- P 127 To set aside the first tithe
- P 128 To set aside the second tithe
- P 129 The Levites' tithe for the *Kohanim*
- P 130 To set aside the poor-man's tithe in the third and sixth year
- P 131 The avowal of the tithe
- P 132 Recital on bringing the First fruits

- P 133 To set aside the *khatlah* for the *Kohein*
- P 134 Renouncing as ownerless produce of the Sabbatical year
- P 135 Resting the land on the Sabbatical year
- P 136 Sanctifying the Jubilee year
- P 137 Blowing the *Shofar'm* the Jubilee year
- P 138 Reversion of the land in the Jubilee year
- P 139 Redemption of property in a walled city
- P 140 Counting the years till the Jubilee year
- P 141 Canceling monetary claims in the Sabbatical year
- P 142 Exacting debts from idolaters
- P 143 The *Kohein's* due in the slaughter of every clean animal
- P 144 The first of the fleece to be given to the *Kohein*
- P 145 Devoted thing to God and the *Kohein*
- P 146 Slaughtering animals before eating them
- P 147 Covering the blood of slain birds and animals
- P 148 Releasing the mother before taking the nest
- P 149 Searching for the prescribed signs in cattle and animals
- P 150 Searching for the prescribed signs in birds
- P 151 Searching for the prescribed signs in grasshoppers
- P 152 Searching for me prescribed signs in fishes
- P 153 Determining the New Moon
- P 154 Resting on Shabbat
- P 155 Proclaiming the sanctity of Shabbat
- P 156 Removal of *chametz* on Pesakh
- P 157 Recounting Exodus from Egypt on first night of Pesakh
- P 158 Eating *Matzah* on the first night of Pesakh
- P 159 Resting on the first day of Pesakh
- P 160 Resting on me seventh day of Pesakh
- P 161 Counting the *Omer*

- P 162 Resting on Shavuot
- P 163 Resting on Rosh Hashanah
- P 164 Fasting on Yom Kippur
- P 165 Resting on Yom Kippur
- P 166 Resting on the first day of Sukkot
- P 167 Resting on Shemini Atzeret
- P 168 Dwelling in a *Sukkah* for seven days
- P 169 Taking a *Lulav* on Sukkot
- P 170 Hearing a *Shofar* on Rosh Hashanah
- P 171 Giving half a *shekel* annually
- P 172 Heeding the Prophets
- P 173 Appointing a King
- P 174 Obeying the Great Court
- P 175 Abiding by a majority decision
- P 176 Appointing Judges and Officers of the Court
- P 177 Treating litigants equally before the law
- P 178 Testifying in Court
- P 179 Inquiring into the testimony of witnesses
- P 180 Condemning witnesses who testify falsely
- P 181 *Eglah Arufah* (ceremony for breaking the neck of a calf when a corpse is found outside the city)
- P 182 Establishing six Cities of Refuge
- P 183 Assigning cities to the *Levi'im*
- P 184 Building fences on roof
Removing sources of danger from our dwellings
- P 185 Destroying all idol-worship
- P 186 The law of the apostate city
- P 187 The law of the Seven Nations

- P 188 The extinction of the seed of Amalek (a nation that committed a sneak attack on the Israelites in the Wilderness; God made Moses and his followers pledge to wipe them out)
- P 189 Remembering the nefarious deeds of Amalek
- P 190 The law of the non-obligatory war
- P 191 Appoint a *Kohein* to speak to the people going to war, and Send back any man unfit for battle
- P 192 Preparing a place beyond the camp
- P 193 Including a digging tool among war implements
- P 194 A robber to restore the stolen article
- P 195 To give charity
- P 196 Lavishing gifts on a Hebrew bondman on his freedom
- P 197 Lending money to the poor
- P 198 Lending money to the heathen with interest
- P 199 Restoring a pledge to a needy owner
- P 200 Paying wages on time
- P 201 An employee is allowed to eat the produce he's working in
- P 202 Unloading a tired animal
- P 203 Assisting the owner in loading his burden
- P 204 Returning lost property to its owner
- P 205 Rebuking the sinner
- P 206 Loving our fellow Jew
- P 207 Loving the convert
- P 208 The law of weights and measures
- P 209 Honoring scholars
- P 210 Honoring parents
- P 211 Fearing parents
- P 212 Be fruitful and multiply

- P 213 The law of marriage
- P 214 Bridegroom devotes himself to his wife for one year
- P 215 Circumcising one's son
- P 216 Law of the Levirate Marriage
- P 217 Law of *khatifzah* (see sidebar
"Levirate Marriage," p. 168)
- P 218 A violator must marry the maiden he has violated
- P 219 The law of the defamer of his bride
- P 220 The law of the seducer
- P 221 The law of the captive woman
- P 222 The law of divorce
- P 223 The law of *a* suspected adulteress
- P 224 Whipping transgressors of certain commandments
- P 225 The law of unintentional manslaughter
- P 226 Beheading transgressors of certain commandments
- P 227 Strangling transgressors of certain commandments
- P 228 Burning transgressors of certain commandments
- P 229 Stoning transgressors of certain commandments
- P 230 Hanging after execution, transgressors of certain
commandments
- P 231 Burial on the day of execution
- P 232 The law of the Hebrew bondman
- P 233 Hebrew bondmaid to be married by her master or his son
- P 234 Redemption of a Hebrew bondmaid
- P 235 The law of a Canaanite bondman
- P 236 Penalty of inflicting injury
- P 237 The law of injuries caused by an ox
- P 238 The law of injuries caused by a pit
- P 239 The law of theft

P 240 The law of damage caused by a beast

P 241 The law of damage caused by a fire

P 242 The law of an unpaid bailee

P 243 The law of a paid bailee

P 244 The law of a borrower

P 245 The law of buying and selling

P 246 The law of litigants

P 247 Saving the life of the pursued

P 248 The law of inheritance

365 Negative Commandments

N 1 Not believing in any other God

N 2 Not to make images for the purpose of worship

N 3 Not to make an idol (even for others) to worship

N 4 Not to make idolatrous figures of human beings

N 5 Not to bow down to an idol

N 6 Not to worship idols

N 7 Not to hand over any children to Moloch

N 8 Not to practice sorcery of the *ov*

N 9 Not to practice sorcery of the *yidde'oni*

N 10 Not to study idolatrous practices

N 11 Not to erect a pillar which people will assemble to honor

N 12 Not to make figured stones on which to prostrate ourselves

N 13 Not to plant *ashera* [trees ritually planted by idolaters near a place of pagan worship] in the Sanctuary

N 14 Not to swear by an idol

N 15 Not to divert people to idolatry

N 16 Not to try to persuade an Israelite to worship idols

N 17 Not to love someone who seeks to mislead you to idols

- N 18 Not to relax one's aversion to the misleader
- N 19 Not to save the life of a misleader
- N 20 Not to plead for the misleader
- N 21 Not to suppress evidence unfavorable to the misleader
- N 22 To derive no benefit from ornaments which have adorned an idol
- N 23 Not rebuilding an apostate city
- N 24 Not deriving benefit from property of an apostate city
- N 25 Not increasing wealth from anything connected with idolatry
- N 26 Not prophesying in the name of an idol
- N 27 Not prophesying falsely
- N 28 Not to listen to the prophecy made in the name of an idol
- N 29 Not fearing or refraining from killing a false prophet
- N 30 Not adopting the habits and customs of unbelievers
- N 31 Not practicing divination
- N 32 Not regulating one's conduct by the stars
- N 33 Not practicing the art of the soothsayer
- N 34 Not practicing sorcery
- N 35 Not practicing the art of the charmer
- N 36 Not consulting a necromancer who uses the *ov*
- N 37 Not consulting a sorcerer who uses the *yodo'a*
- N 38 Not to seek information from the dead
- N 39 Women not to wear men's clothes or adornments in order to pass as men
- N 40 Men not wearing women's clothes or adornments in order to pass as women
- N 41 Not imprinting any marks on our bodies
- N 42 Not wearing *Shatnez* (mixture of wool and linen)
- N 43 Not shaving the temples of the head

- N 44 Not shaving the beard
- N 45 Not making cuttings in our flesh
- N 46 Not settling in the land of Egypt
- N 47 Not to follow one's heart or eyes into evil
- N 48 Not to make a covenant with the Seven Nations of Canaan
- N 49 Not to spare the life of the Seven Nations
- N 50 Not to show mercy to idolaters
- N 51 Not to allow idolaters to settle in our land
- N 52 Not to intermarry with a heretic
- N 53 Not to intermarry with a male from Ammon or Mo'av
- N 54 Not to exclude the descendants of Esav
- N 55 Not to exclude the descendants of Egyptians (after four generations)
- N56 Not offering peace to Ammon and Mo'av
- N 57 Not destroying fruit trees in time of siege
- N 58 Not fearing heretics in time of war
- N 59 Not forgetting what Amalek did to us
- N 60 Not blaspheming the Great Name
- N 61 Not violating a *sh'vu'at bittui* (oath of utterance)
- N 62 Not swearing a *sh'vu'at shav* (vain oath)
- N 63 Not profaning the Name of God
- N 64 Not testing His promises and warnings
- N 65 Not to break down houses of worship or to destroy holy books
- N 66 Not leaving the body of an executed criminal hanging overnight
- N 67 Not to interrupt the watch over the Sanctuary
- N 68 *Kohetn Gadol* (High Priest) may not enter Holy of Holies at any but prescribed times

- N 69 *Kohein* with blemish not to enter Sanctuary from Altar inward
- N 70 *Kohein* with a blemish not to minister in the Sanctuary
- N 71 *Kohein* with a temporary blemish not to minister in Sanctuary
- N 72 Levites and *Kohanim* not to perform each other's allotted services
- N 73 Not to be intoxicated when entering Sanctuary
Not to be intoxicated when giving a decision on Torah law
- N 74 *Zar [rNon-Kohein]* not to minister in Sanctuary
- N 75 *Kohein Tamei* (a priest who is impure) not to minister in Sanctuary
- N 76 *Kohein* who is *tevul yom* (lowest level of temporary impurity), not to minister in Sanctuary
- N 77 *Tameh* person not to enter any part of Sanctuary
- N 78 *Tameh* person not to enter camp of Levites
- N 79 Not to build an Altar of stones which were cut by iron
- N 80 Not to ascend the Altar by steps
- N 81 Not to extinguish the Altar fire
- N 82 Not to offer any sacrifice whatever on the Golden Altar [other than the incense at prescribed times]
- N 83 Not to make oil like the Oil of Anointment
- N 84 Not to anoint anyone with special oil except *Kohein Gadol* and King
- N 85 Not to make incense like that used in Sanctuary
- N 86 Not to remove the staves from their rings in the Ark
- N 87 Not to remove the Breastplate from the Ephod
- N 88 Not to tear the edge of the *Kohein Gadof's* robe
- N 89 Not to offer sacrifices outside the Sanctuary Court
- N 90 Not to slaughter holy offerings outside the Sanctuary Court

- N 91 Not to dedicate a blemished animal to be offered on the Altar
- N 92 Not to slaughter a blemished animal as a *korban* (sacrifice)
- N 93 Not to dash the blood of a blemished beast on the Altar
- N 94 Not to burn the sacrificial portions of blemished beast on Altar
- N 95 Not to sacrifice a beast with a temporary blemish
- N 96 Not to offer a blemished sacrifice of a gentile
- N 97 Not to cause an offering to become blemished
- N 98 Not to offer leaven or honey upon the Altar
- N 99 Not to offer a sacrifice without salt
- N 100 Not to offer on Altar the "hire of a harlot" or "price of a dog"
- N 101 Not to slaughter the mother and her young on the same day
- N 102 Not to put olive oil on the meal-offering of a sinner
- N 103 Not to put frankincense on the meal-offering of a sinner
- N 104 Not to mingle olive oil with meal-offering of suspected adulteress
- N 105 Not to put frankincense on meal-offering of suspected adulteress
- N 106 Not to change a beast that has been consecrated as an offering
- N 107 Not to change one's holy offering for another
- N 108 Not to redeem the firstling [of a clean beast]
- N 109 Not to sell the tithe of cattle
- N 110 Not to sell devoted property
- N 111 Not to redeem devoted land without specific statement of purpose

- N 112 Not to sever the head of the bird of Sin-offering during *melikah*
- N 113 Not to do any work with a dedicated beast
- N 114 Not to shear a dedicated beast
- N 115 Not to slaughter the *Korban Pesakh* {offering of the Paschal Lamb) while *khametz* in our possession
- N 116 Not to leave any sacrificial portions of *Korban Pesakh* overnight
- N 117 Not to allow meat of *Korban Pesakh* to remain till morning
- N 118 Not to allow meat of 14 Nisan Festival Offering to remain till day three
- N 119 Not to allow meat of *Pesakh Sheini* offering to remain till -morning
- M 120 Not to allow meat of thanksgiving offering to remain till morning
- N 121 Not to break any bones of Pesakh offering
- N 122 Not to break any bones of *Pesakh Sheini* offering
- N 123 Not to remove Pesakh offering from where it is eaten
- N 124 Not to bake the residue of a meal offering with leaven
- N 125 Not to eat the Pesakh offering boiled or raw
- N 126 Not to allow a *ger toshav* [resident non-Jew) to eat the Pesakh offering
- N 127 An uncircumcised person may not eat the Pesakh offering
- N 128 Not to allow an apostate Israelite to eat the Pesakh offering
- N 129 *Tameh* person may not eat hallowed food
- N 130 Not to eat meat of consecrated offerings which have become *tameh*
- N 131 Not eating *notar* (a part of the sacrifice that is left over beyond allotted time)

- N 132 Not eating *piggul* (a sacrifice brought with improper intentions)
- N 133 A -zor may not eat *terumah* (an offering to the *Kohanim*)
- N 134 A *Kohein*'s tenant or hired servant may not eat *terumah*
- N 135 An uncircumcised *Kohein* may not eat *terumah*
- N 136 *Tameh Kohein* may not eat *terumah*
- N 137 A *khalalah* may not eat holy food
- N 138 Not to eat the meal-offering of a *Kohein*
- N 139 Not to eat Sin-offering meat whose blood was brought into the Sanctuary
- N 140 Not to eat the invalidated consecrated offerings
- N 141 Not to eat unredeemed second tithe of corn outside *Yerushalayim*
- N 142 Not to consume unredeemed second tithe of wine outside *Yerushalayim*
- N 143 Not to consume unredeemed second tithe of oil outside *Yerushalayim*
- N 144 Not to eat an unblemished firstling outside *Yerushalayim*
- N 145 Not to eat sin-offering and guilt-offering outside Sanctuary court
- N 146 Not to eat the meat of a burnt offering
- N 147 Not to eat lesser holy offerings before blood dashed on Altar
- N 148 A *zar* not to eat the most holy offerings
- N 149 *Kohein* not to eat first fruits outside *Yerushalayim*
- N 150 Not eating an unredeemed *tameh* second tithe, even in *Yerushalayim*
- N 151 Not eating the second tithe in mourning
- N 152 Not to spend second tithe redemption money, except on food and drink

- N 153 Not eating *tevel* (produce heave-offering and tithes not taken)
- N 154 Not altering the prescribed order of harvest tithing
- N 155 Not to delay payment of vows
- N 156 Not to appear in Sanctuary on festival without sacrifice
- N 157 Not to infringe on any oral obligation, even if without an oath
- N 158 *Koheiri* may not marry a *zonah*
- N 159 *Kohein* may not marry a *khalalah*
- N 160 *Kohein* may not marry a divorcee
- N 161 *Kohein Gadol* may not marry a widow
- N 162 *Kohein Gadol* may not have relations with a widow
- N 163 *Kohein* with disheveled hair may not enter the Sanctuary
- N 164 *Kohein* wearing rent garments may not enter Sanctuary
- N 165 Ministering *Kahaman* may not leave the Sanctuary
- N 166 Common *Kohein* may not defile himself for dead (except for prescribed family members]
- N 167 *Kohein Gadol* may not be under one roof with dead body
- N 168 *Kohein Gadol* may not defile himself for any dead person
- N 169 Levites may not take a share of the land
- N 170 Levites may not share in the spoil of conquest of the land
- N 171 Not to tear out hair for the dead
- N 172 Not to eat any unclean animal
- N 173 Not to eat any unclean fish
- N 174 Not to eat any unclean fowl
- N 175 Not to eat any swarming winged insect
- N 176 Not to eat anything which swarms on the earth
- N 177 Not to eat any creeping thing that breeds in decayed matter
- N 178 Not to eat living creatures mat breed in seeds or fruit

- N 179 Not to eat any swarming thing
- N 180 Not to eat any animal which is a *nevelah*
- N 181 Not to eat an animal which is a *treifah*
- N 182 Not to eat a limb of a living animal
- N 183 Not to eat the *gid hanasheh* (sinew of the thigh-vein)
- N 184 Not to eat blood
- N 185 Not to eat the subdermal fat of a clean animal
- N 186 Not to cook meat in milk
- N 187 Not to eat meat cooked in milk
- N 188 Not to eat the flesh of a stoned ox
- N 189 Not to eat bread made from grain of new crop (before appropriate sacrifice is brought]
- N 190 Not to eat roasted grain of the new crop (before appropriate sacrifice is brought]
- N 191 Not to eat fresh ears of grain (before appropriate sacrifice is brought)
- N 192 Not to eat or/an (the fruit of a tree borne during the first three years after its planting]
- N 193 Not to eat *kilai hakerem* (produce of mixed breeds and mixed fields)
- N 194 Not to drink *yayin nesach* (libation wine for idol worship)
- N 195 No eating or drinking to excess
- N 196 Not to eat on Yom Kippur
- N 197 Not to eat *khametz* on Pesakh
- N 198 Not to eat an admixture of *khametz* on Pesakh
- N 199 Not to eat *khametz* on the afternoon of 14 Nisan
- N 200 No *khametz* may be seen in our homes during Pesakh
- N 201 Not to possess *khametz* during Pesakh
- N 202 A *Nazir* may not drink wine
- N 203 A *Nazir* may not eat fresh grapes

- N 204 A *Nazir* may not eat dried grapes
- N 205 A *Nazir* may not eat grape kernels
- N 206 A *Nazir* may not eat grape husks
- N 207 A *Nazir* may not render himself *tameh* for the dead
- N 208 A *Nazir* may not render himself *tameh* by entering house with corpse
- N 209 A *Nazir* may not shave
- N 210 Not to reap all harvest without leaving a corner for the poor
- N 211 Not to gather ears of corn that fell during harvesting
- N 212 Not to gather the whole produce of vineyard at vintage time
- N 213 Not to gather single fallen grapes during the vintage
- N 214 Not to return for a forgotten sheaf
- N 215 Not to sow *kilayim* (diverse kinds of seed in one field)
- N 216 Not to sow grain or vegetables in a vineyard
- N 217 Not to mate animals of different species
- N 218 Not to work with two different kinds of animals yoked together
- N 219 Not preventing a beast from eating the produce where working
- N 220 Not to cultivate the soil in the seventh year
- N 221 Not to prune the trees in the seventh year
- N 222 Not to reap a self-grown plant in the seventh year as in an ordinary year
- N 223 Not to gather self-grown fruit in the seventh year as in an ordinary year
- N 224 Not to cultivate the soil in the Jubilee year
- N 225 Not to reap the aftergrowth of Jubilee year as in an ordinary year
- N 226 Not to gather fruit in Jubilee year as in an ordinary year

- N 227 Not to sell out holdings in *Eretz Yisroel* in perpetuity
- N 228 Not to sell the open lands of the Levites
- N 229 Not to forsake the Levites
- N 230 Not to demand payment of debts after *Shemittah* year
- N 231 Not to withhold a loan to be canceled by the *Shemittah* year
- N 232 Failing to give charity to our needy brethren
- N 233 Not sending a Hebrew bondman away empty-handed
- N 234 Not demanding payment from a debtor known unable to pay
- N 235 Not lending at interest
- N 236 Not borrowing at interest
- N 237 Not participating in a loan at interest
- N 238 Not oppressing an employee by delaying payment of his wages
- N 239 Not taking a pledge from d debtor by force
- N 240 Not keeping a needed pledge from its owner
- N 241 Not taking a pledge from a widow
- N 242 Not taking food utensils in pledge
- N 243 Not abducting an Israelite
- N 244 Not stealing money
- N 245 Not committing robbery
- N 246 Not fraudulently altering land boundaries
- N 247 Not usurping our debts
- N 248 Not repudiating our debts
- N 249 Not to swear falsely in repudiating our debts
- N 250 Not wronging one another in business
- N 251 Not wronging one another by speech
- N 252 Not wronging a proselyte by speech
- N 253 Not wronging a proselyte in business

- N 254 Not handing over a fugitive bondman
- N 255 Not wronging a fugitive bondman
- N 256 Not dealing harshly with orphans and widows
- N 257 Not employing a Hebrew bondman in degrading tasks
- N 258 Not selling a Hebrew bondman by public auction
- N 259 Not having a Hebrew bondman do unnecessary work
- N 260 Not allowing a heathen to mistreat a Hebrew bondman
- N 261 Not selling a Hebrew bondmaid
- N 262 Not to afflict one's wife or espoused Hebrew bondmaid
by diminishing food, raiment, or conjugal rights
- N 263 Not selling a captive woman
- N 264 Not enslaving a captive woman
- N 265 Not planning to acquire someone else's property
- N 266 Not coveting another's belongings
- N 267 A hired laborer not eating growing crops
- N 268 A hired laborer not putting of the harvest in his own vessel
- N 269 Not ignoring lost property
- N 270 Not leaving a person who is trapped under his burden
- N 271 Not cheating in measurements and weights
- N 272 Not keeping false weights and measures
- N 273 Judge not to commit unrighteousness
- N 274 Judge not to accept gifts from litigants
- N 275 Judge not to favor a litigant
- N 276 Judge not to avoid just judgment through fear of a wicked
person
- N 277 Judge not to decide in favor of a poor man, out of pity
- N 278 Judge not to pervert justice against person of evil repute
- N 279 Judge not to pity one who has killed or caused loss of limb
- N 280 Judge not to pervert justice due to proselytes or orphans

- N 281 Judge not to listen to one litigant in absence of the other
- N 282 A court may not convict by a majority of one in a capital case
- N 283 A judge may not rely on the opinion of a fellow judge or may not argue for conviction after favoring acquittal
- N 284 Not appointing an unlearned judge
- N 285 Not bearing false witness
- N 286 Judge not to receive a wicked man's testimony
- N 287 Judge not to receive testimony from litigant's relatives
- N 288 Not to convict on the testimony of a single witness
- N 289 Not to murder a human being
- N 290 No capital punishment based on circumstantial evidence
- N 291 A witness not acting as an advocate
- N 292 Not killing a murderer without trial
- N 293 Not sparing the life of a pursuer
- N 294 Not punishing a person for a sin committed under duress
- N 295 Not accepting ransom from an unwitting murderer
- N 296 Not accepting a ransom from a willful murderer
- N 297 Not neglecting to save the life of an Israelite in danger
- N 298 Not leaving obstacles on public or private domain
- N 299 Not giving misleading advice
- N 300 Not inflicting excessive corporal punishment
- N 301 Not to bear tales
- N 302 Not to hate another Jew
- N 303 Not to put another to shame
- N 304 Not to take vengeance on another
- N305 Not to bear a grudge
- N 306 Not to take the entire bird's nest (mother and young)
- N 307 Not to shave the scalp (scaly matter or encrustation on surface of skin)

- N 308 Not to cut or cauterize signs of leprosy
- N 309 Not plowing a valley where *Eglah Arufah* was done
- N 310 Not permitting a sorcerer to live
- N 311 Not taking bridegroom from home during first year
- N 312 Not to differ from a majority (composed) of traditional authorities
- N 313 Not to add to the Written or Oral Law
- N 314 Not to detract from the Written or Oral Law
- N 315 Not detracting from the Written or Oral law
- N 316 Not to curse a ruler
- N 317 Not to curse any Israelite
- N 318 Not cursing parents
- N 319 Not smiting parents
- N 320 Not to work on Shabbat ,.
- N 321 Not to go beyond city limits on Shabbat
- N 322 Not to punish on Shabbat
- N 323 Not to work on the first day of Pesakh
- N 324 Not to work on the seventh day of Pesakh
- N 325 Not to work on Atzeret
- N 326 Not to work on Rosh Hashanah
- N 327 Not to work on the first day of Sukkot
- N 328 Not to work on Shemini Atzeret
- N 329 Not to work on Yom Kippur
- N 330 Not to have (sexual) relations with one's mother
- N 331 Not to have relations with one's father's wife
- N 332 Not to have relations with one's sister
- N 333 Not to have relations with daughter of father's wife if sister
- N 334 Not to have relations with one's son's daughter

- N 335 Not to have relations with one's daughter's daughter
- N 336 Not to have relations with one's daughter
- N 337 Not to have relations with a woman and her daughter
- N 338 Not to have relations with a woman and her son's daughter
- N 339 Not to have relations with a woman and her daughter's daughter
- N 340 Not to have relations with one's father's sister
- N 341 Not to have relations with one's mother's sister
- N 342 Not to have relations with wife of father's brother
- N 343 Not to have relations with one's son's wife
- N 344 Not to have relations with brother's wife
- N 345 Not to have relations with sister of wife (during her lifetime)
- N 346 Not to have relations with a menstruant
- N 347 Not to have relations with another man's wife
- N 348 Men may not lie with beasts
- N 349 Women may not lie with beasts
- N 350 A man may not lie carnally with another man
- N 351 A man may not lie carnally with his father
- N 352 A man may not lie carnally with his father's brother
- N 353 Not to be intimate with a kinswoman
- N 354 A *mamzer* may not have relations with a Jewess
- N 355 Not to be promiscuous
- N 356 Not remarrying one's divorced wife after she has remarried
- N 357 Not having relations with woman subject to Levirate marriage
- N 358 Not divorcing woman he has raped and been compelled to marry

- N 359 Not divorcing a woman after falsely bringing evil name on her
- N 360 Man incapable of procreation not to marry a Jewess
- N361 Not to castrate a man or beast
- N 362 Not appointing a non-Israelite-born king
- N 363 A king not owning many horses
- N 364 A king not taking many wives
- N 365 A king not amassing great personal wealth

IV. JESUS FULFILLS THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

55 OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES ABOUT JESUS AND ITS FULFILLMENT IN NEW TESTAMENT

Some scholars believe that there are more than 300 prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament. These prophecies are specific enough that the mathematical probability of Jesus fulfilling even a handful of them, let alone all of them, is staggeringly improbable—if not impossible.

Peter Stoner, Chairman of the Departments of Mathematics and Astronomy at Pasadena College, was passionate about biblical prophecies. With 600 students from the Inter Varsity Christian Fellowship, Stoner looked at eight specific prophecies about Jesus. They came up with extremely conservative probabilities for each one being fulfilled, and then considered the likelihood of Jesus fulfilling all eight of those prophecies.

The conclusion to his research was staggering. The prospect that anyone would satisfy those eight prophecies was just 1 in 1017. *Science Speaks* that he described it like this:

Let us try to visualize this chance. If you mark one of ten tickets, and place all of the tickets in a hat, and thoroughly stir them, and then ask a blindfolded man to draw one, his chance of getting the right ticket is one in ten. Suppose that we take 1017 silver dollars and lay them on the face of taxes. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state.

Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one?

Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man, from their day to the present time, providing they wrote using their own wisdom." We put 55 prophecies together that cover four specific areas :

1. Jesus' birth;
2. Jesus' ministry;
3. Jesus' death and resurrection;
4. Jesus' role in the church

V. INTERPRETATION OF THE LAWS OF CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. GOD'S LAW IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament cancels the Old Testament but the inheritance remains the same : the promise of abundant life is in a fertile land to those who believe and obey God's instructions (Isa 1:19; John 10:10). These instructions are God's Law (Torah), which is eternal and will never pass away (Psalms 148:6; Matthew 5:17).

Jesus said that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for the smallest point of the law to fail (Luke 16:17), with some exceptions, especially the regulations pertaining to sacrifices and rituals for the atonement of sins, which are no longer needed after Jesus sacrifice, the commandments of the first Pact are still valid.

2. WHAT HAS CHANGED IN THE LAW

In the Old Testament, people followed the letter of the law, in its most literal sense. In the New Testament, people follow the Spirit of the law, which is the guiding force of the law. It is this Spirit that God puts within every believer who converts their heart to Jesus (Act, 9:35).

Only those who have this Spirit are able to understand (Proverbs 1:23) and naturally follow the law (Romans 2:20-23) and they keep that law because they are afraid of the punishment that comes from disobedience. Those who follow the spirit of the law are free to do whatever they want (Galatians 5:1), but the only want to do what pleases God (1 Corinthians 6:12, Galatians 5:13), because they love Him, not because they are afraid of being punished.

You did not receive the spirit of adoption, and through the spirit we cry, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15-16).

3. “PEOPLE FOR THE LAWS” OR “LAWS FOR THE PEOPLE”

After taking baptism by John the Baptist and before starting his mission in this world, Jesus went to a wilderness and starved forty days and forty nights (Matthew 4:1-11). Of which the first verse carries a very important meaning. “Then Jesus led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil” (Matthew 4:1). Here on one side he is being guided by the Holy Spirit, while on the other side he is being tempted by the devil.

Truly speaking, the forty days of starvation was a turning point in Jesus’ worldly life. This is actually a kind of self preparation to start his mission in the world. After this preparation he emerged victorious in three tests taken by the devil.

This temptation period of Jesus marks an important point from the time-zone, which is the starting period of the Eden episode of banishment of Adam and Eve till date. The history before the first part of the time-zone shows, God is cruel, brutal to His children if they violate laws and commandments; but if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, strip for stripe (Exodus 21:23-25) and many more places in the Old Testament.

So this question arises in this second episode of the time-zone, which is prime ‘Laws’ or ‘Human’? “People for the laws” or “Laws for the people”? Before Christ we realized ‘law’ is prime and ‘man’ is minor. But Emmanuel (God is with us) Jesus shows ‘Prime is the man’, not the law. Emmanuel Jesus was always considered human above the laws. So he says, “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth’. But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But ‘if any one slaps you on the right check, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5:38-

39). Jesus also says to love not only our neighbours, but also our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

It is Jesus, who is the human form of God. Who came down on earth to show how much He loves mankind.

Our sage-poet great Rabindranath Tagore writes in one of his devotional songs “*taai tomaar aananda aamaar por, tumi taai esechho neeche, aamaay noile tribhubaneshwar tomar prem hoto je michhe...*” which means—

“You rejoice for me O’Lord;

You come down to earth, to save me.

Without me, O Lord, of the Universe,

Your love for me would have been a lie...”

Though, I humbly say the activities of Jews show the primacy of the law more than humanity. They are still sticking to the Old Testament. They couldn’t accept Emmanuel Jesus Christ. The ten commandments given to Moses by God have increased gradually day by day, through the religious leaders and rabbis. The number is not confined to 10 now. It has increased to 613 commandments to Jews.

I remember the great first Nobel Laureate in Asia, great poet Rabindranath Tagore says in one of his devotional song; which says, “*Tomar pujaar chhole tomaay bhule thaaki*” “While pretending to worship you, I end up forgetting you.”

It’s a line full of irony and devotion — meaning that even in acts of worship, one might lose touch with the true essence of the divine.

From this it can be understood innumerable laws and rituals actually bar the human beings from reaching God. The Bible says, “Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for the righteous shall live by faith” (Galatians 3:11-12). Religious and social rituals have converted Jewish society into a

waveless, currentless, stagnant marshy land. If deviated from the laws and rituals; if violation of commandments, there is a fear of brutal punishment. As it appears that in their life the explosion of commandments, laws and rituals have taken place as sin. Nobody says "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7); No one says, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more" (John 8:11). Or no one says, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17).

We found 'Ten Commandments' of God was given to Moses for the then Jews people (Exodus 20:1-17). But Jews are to follow 613 commandments and so many laws and bye-laws. Besides that they are to accept and follow a large number of forbidden works and social rituals which are also concerned with their religion, which I already pictured.

We can realize from the above picturisation Jews are still saturated with laws and rituals. I think, perhaps they still think, laws take precedence over individuals.

4. CHRIST COMES TO FULFILL THE LAW

"Do not think that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have not come to destroy them but to fulfil them. This is the truth I tell you - until heaven and the earth shall pass away, the smallest letter or the smallest part of any letter shall not pass away from the law, until all things in it shall be performed. So then, whoever will break one of the least of these commandments, and will teach others to do so, shall be called least in the kingdom of the heavens; but whoever will do them and will teach others to do them, he will be called great in the kingdom of the heavens. For I tell you, that you will certainly not enter into the kingdom of heaven, unless your righteousness goes beyond that of the scribes and Pharisees." (Matthew 5:17-20)

We find some reflections of Jesus' Law in the New Testament :

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to the other also.” (Matthew 5:38-39).

Jesus’ Law follows with love, forgiveness and mercy : “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” (Matthew 5:43-44).

He said more—“But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing, in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.

We got an amazing parable by Jesus. It is a story of ‘A King, his servant and fellow servant’ (Matthew 18:23-34). After saying the parable Jesus told Peter and others—“So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.” (Matthew 18:35). ...

“Then Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Like seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say seven times, but seventy times seven’. (Matthew 18:21-22).

We also found a remarkable judgement of Jesus through his own law : “The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and placed her in the midst they said to him, ‘Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law given by Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?’ ... ‘Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her’ ... Jesus stood up and said to her, ‘Woman where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ She said, ‘No one, Lord’ and Jesus said, ‘Neither

do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.’ (John 8:3-11).”

A. THE ETERNAL LAW

At a first reading, it might well be held that this is the most astonishing statement that Jesus made in the whole Sermon on the Mount. In this statement, Jesus lays down the eternal character of the law; and yet Paul can say: ‘Christ is the end of the law’ (Romans 10:4).

Again and again, Jesus broke what the Jews called the law. He did not observe the handwashings that the law laid down; he healed sick people on the Sabbath, although the law forbade such healings; he was in fact condemned and crucified as a law-breaker; and yet here he seems to speak of the law with a veneration and a reverence that no Rabbi or Pharisee could exceed. The smallest letter - the letter which the Authorized Version calls the *jot* - was the Hebrew letter *iodh*. In form it was like an apostrophe - ‘ -; not even a letter not much bigger than a dot was to pass away. The smallest part of the letter - what the Authorized Version calls the *title* - is what we call the *serif* - the little projecting part at the foot of a letter, the little line at each side of the foot of, for example, the letter I. Jesus seems to lay it down that the law is so sacred that not the smallest detail of it will ever pass away.

Some people have been so puzzled by this saying that they have come to the conclusion that Jesus could not have said it. They have suggested that, since Matthew is the most Jewish of the gospels, and since Matthew wrote it specially to convince Jews, this is a saying which Matthew put into Jesus’ mouth, and that is not a saying of Jesus at all. But that is a weak argument, for this is a saying which is indeed so unlikely that no one would have invented it; it is so unlikely a saying that Jesus must have said it; and when we come to see what it really means, we will see that it is inevitable that Jesus should have said it.

The Jews used the expression *the law* in four different

ways. (1) They used it to mean the Ten Commandments. (2) They used it to mean the first five books of the Bible. That part of the Bible which is known as the *Pentateuch* - which literally means *The Five Rolls* - was to Jews the law *par excellence* and was to them by far the most important part of the Bible. (3) They used the phrase *the law and the prophets* to mean the whole of Scripture; they used it as a comprehensive description of what we would call the whole Old Testament. (4) They used it to mean the *oral* or the *scribal law*.

In the time of Jesus, it was the last meaning which was commonest; and it was in fact this scribal law which both Jesus and Paul so utterly condemned. What, then, was this scribal law?

In the Old Testament itself, we find very few rules and regulations; what we do find are great, broad principles which people must take and interpret for themselves under God's guidance, and apply to the individual situations in life. In the Ten Commandments, we find no rules and regulations at all; they are each one of them great principles out of which people must find their own rules for life. To the later Jews, these great principles did not seem enough. They held that the law was divine, and that in it God had said his last word, and that therefore everything must be in it. If a thing was not in the law *explicitly*, it must be there *implicitly*. They therefore argued that out of the law it must be possible to deduce a rule and a regulation for every possible situation in life. So there arose a group of men called the scribes who made it the business of their lives to reduce the great principles of the law to literally thousands upon thousands of rules and regulations.

We may best see this in action. The law lays it down that the Sabbath day is to be kept holy, and that on it no work is to be done. That is a great principle. But the Jewish legalists had a passion for definition. So they asked: 'What is work?'

All kinds of things were classified as work. For instance, *to carry a burden* on the Sabbath day is to work. But next a burden

has to be defined. So the scribal law lays it down that a burden is 'food equal in weight to a dried fig, enough wine for mixing in a goblet, milk enough for one swallow, honey enough to put upon a wound, oil enough to anoint a small member, water enough to moisten an eye-salve, paper enough to write a custom-house notice upon, ink enough to write two letters of the alphabet, reed enough to make a pen' - and so on endlessly. So they spent endless hours arguing whether a lamp could or could not be lifted from one place to another on the Sabbath, whether a tailor committed a sin if he went out with a needle in his robe, whether a woman might wear a brooch or false hair, even if it was permissible to go out on the Sabbath with false teeth or an artificial limb, or if a parent might lift a child on the Sabbath day. These things to them were the essence of religion. Their religion was a legalism of petty rules and regulations.

To write was to work on the Sabbath. But writing has to be defined. So the definition runs: 'He who writes two letters of the alphabet with his right or with his left hand, whether of one kind or of two kinds, if they are written with different inks or in different languages, is guilty. Even if he should write two letters from forgetfulness, he is guilty, whether he has written them with ink or with paint, red chalk, vitriol, or anything which makes a permanent mark. Also he that writes on two walls that form an angle, or on two tablets of his account book so that they can be read together is guilty ... But, if anyone writes with dark fluid, with fruit juice, or in the dust of the road, or in sand, or in anything which does not make a permanent mark, he is not guilty ... If he writes one letter on the ground, and one on the wall of the house, or on two pages of a book, so that they cannot be read together, he is not guilty.' That is a typical passage from the scribal law; and that is what orthodox Jews regarded as true religion and the true service of God.

To heal was to work on the Sabbath. Obviously this has to be defined. Healing was allowed when there was danger to life, and especially in troubles of the ear, nose and throat; but even then,

steps could be taken only to keep the patient from becoming worse; no steps might be taken to make the patient get any better. So a plain bandage might be put on a wound, but no ointment; plain wadding might be put into a sore ear, but not medicated wadding.

The *scribes* were the men who worked out these rules and regulations. The *Pharisees*, whose name means *the separated ones*, were the men who had separated themselves from all the ordinary activities of life to keep all these rules and regulations.

We can see the lengths to which this went from the following facts. For many generations, this scribal law was never written down; it was the *oral* law, and it was handed down in the memory of generations of scribes. In the middle of the third century AD, a summary of it was made and codified. That summary is known as the *Mishnah*; it contains sixty- three tractates on various subjects of the law, and in English makes a book of almost 800 pages. Later Jewish scholarship busied itself with making commentaries to explain the *Mishnah*. These commentaries are known as the *Talmuds*. Of the Jerusalem *Talmud* there are twelve printed volumes; and of the Babylonian *Talmud* there are sixty printed volumes.

To strict orthodox Jews, in the time of Jesus, religion, serving God, was a matter of keeping thousands of legalistic rules and regulations; they regarded these petty rules and regulations as literally matters of life and death and eternal destiny. Clearly, Jesus did not mean that not one of these rules and regulations was to pass away; repeatedly he broke them himself, and repeatedly he condemned them; that is certainly not what Jesus meant by the law, for that is the kind of law that both Jesus and Paul condemned.

B. THE ESSENCE OF THE LAW OF JESUS

What then did Jesus mean by the law? He said that he had come not to destroy the law, but to *fulfil* the law. That is to say, he came really to bring out the real meaning of the law. What was the real meaning of the law? Even behind the scribal and oral law, there

was one great principle which the scribes and the Pharisees had imperfectly grasped. The one great principle was that in all things people must seek God's will, and that, when they know it, they must dedicate their whole life to the obeying of it. The scribes and Pharisees were right in seeking God's will, and profoundly right in dedicating their lives to obeying it; they were wrong in finding that will in their man-made hordes of rules and regulations.

What then is the real principle behind the whole law, that principle which Jesus came to fulfil, the true meaning of which he came to show?

When we look at the Ten Commandments, which are the essence and the foundation of all law, we can see that their whole meaning can be summed up in one word - *respect*, or even better, *reverence*. Reverence for God and for the name of God, reverence for God's day, respect for parents, respect for life, respect for property, respect for personality, respect for the truth and for another person's good name, respect for oneself so that wrong desires may never overpower us - these are the fundamental principles behind the Ten Commandments, principles of reverence for God, and respect for our neighbours and for ourselves. Without them there can be no such thing as law. On them all law is based.

That reverence and that respect Jesus came to fulfil. He came to show men and women in actual life what reverence for God and respect for one another are like. Justice, said the Greeks, consists in giving to God and to others that which is their due. Jesus came to show in actual life what it means to give to God the reverence and to other people the respect which is their due.

That reverence and that respect did not consist in obeying a multitude of petty rules and regulations. They consisted not in sacrifice but in mercy; not in legalism but in love; not in prohibitions which demanded that men and women should not do things, but in the instruction to mould their lives on the positive commandment to love.

The reverence and the respect which are the basis of the Ten Commandments can never pass away; they are the permanent stuff of our relationship to God and to one another.

C. PRINCIPLES OF LAW AND ITS INTERPRETATION IN THE GOSPEL

When Jesus spoke as he did about the law and the gospel, he was implicitly laying down certain broad principles.

(1) He was saying that there is a definite continuation between the past and the present. We must never look on life as a kind of battle between the past and the present. The present grows out of the past.

After Dunkirk, in the Second World War, there was a tendency on all hands to look for someone to blame for the disaster which had befallen the British forces, and there were many who wished to enter into bitter recriminations with those who had guided things in the past. At that time, the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, said a very wise thing: 'If we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future.'

There had to be the law before the gospel could come. People had to learn the difference between right and wrong; they had to discover their own human inability to cope with the demands of the law, and to respond to the commands of God; they had to become aware of a sense of sin and unworthiness and inadequacy. We blame the past for many things - and often rightly - but it is equally, and even more, necessary to acknowledge our debt to the past. As Jesus saw it, it is our duty neither to forget nor to attempt to destroy the past, but to build upon the foundation of the past. We have entered into the labours of others, and we must labour so that other people will enter into ours.

(2) In this passage, Jesus definitely warns the disciples not to think that Christianity is easy. People might say; 'Christ is the end of the law; now I can do what I like.' They might think that all the

duties, all the responsibilities and all the demands are gone. But it is Jesus' warning that the righteousness of the Christian must *exceed* the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. What did he mean by that?

The motive under which the scribes and Pharisees lived was the motive of law; their one aim and desire was to satisfy the demands of the law. Now, at least theoretically, it is perfectly possible to satisfy the demands of the law; in one sense there can come a time when it is possible for someone to say: 'I have done all that the law demands; my duty is discharged; the law has no more claim on me.' But the motive under which Christians live is the motive of love; the one desire of all Christians is to show their wondering gratitude for the love they have received from God in Jesus Christ. Now, it is not even theoretically possible to satisfy the claims of love. If we love someone with all our hearts, we are bound to feel that if we gave to that person a lifetime's service and adoration, if we offered the sun and the moon and the stars, we would still not have offered enough. For love, the whole realm of nature is an offering far too small.

The Jews aimed to satisfy the *law* of God; and to the demands of the law there is always a limit. Christians aim to show their gratitude for the *love* of God; and to the claims of love there is no limit in time or in eternity. Jesus set before men and women not the law of God, but the love of God. Long ago, St Augustine said that the Christian life could be summed up in the one phrase: 'Love God, and do what you like.' But when we realize how God has loved us, the one desire of life is to answer to that love, and that is the greatest task in all the world, for it presents us with a task the like of which those who think in terms of law never dream of, and with an obligation more binding than the obligation to any law.

5. THE COMMANDMENTS CENTRALISED INTO TWO COMMANDMENTS :

DUTY TO GOD AND DUTY TO OTHERS

Matthew 22:34-40 :

“When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. One of them, who was an expert in the law, asked him a question as a test : ‘What commandment in the law is greatest?’ He said to him, “You must love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and your whole soul, and your whole mind.” This is the great and chief commandment and the second is like it, “You must love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments the whole law and prophets depend. (Matthew 22:33-40). I think the ten commandments through Moses or later 613 Jewish laws are all centralised in these two commandments that Jesus mentioned.

In Matthew, the question looks like a return attack on the part of the Pharisees; but in Mark, the atmosphere is different. As Mark tells the story (Mark 12:28-34), the scribe did not ask Jesus this question to trip him up. He asked in gratitude that Jesus proved the Sadducees to be wrong and to enable Jesus to demonstrate how well he could answer; and the passage ends with the scribe and Jesus very close to each other.

We may well say that here Jesus laid down the complete definition.

(1) Religion consists in loving God. The verse which Jesus quotes is Deuteronomy 6:5. That verse was part of ‘Shema’, the basic and essential creed of Judaism, the sentence with which every Jewish service still opens, and the first text which every Jewish child commits to memory. It means that to God we must give total love, a love which dominates our emotions, a love which directs our thoughts, and a love which is the dynamic of our

actions. All religions start with the love which is the total commitment of life to God.

(2) The second commandment which Jesus quotes comes from Leviticus 19:18. Our love for God must issue in love for others. But it is to be noted in which order the commandments come; it is love of God first, and love of others second. It is only when we love God that other people become lovable. The Biblical teaching about human beings is not that we are collections of chemical elements, not that we are part of the brute creation, but that men and women are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). It is for this reason that human beings are lovable. The true basis of all democracy is in fact the love of God. Take away the love of God, and we can look at human nature and become angry at those who cannot make progress; we can become callous to those who are cold and calculating in their actions. The love of humanity is firmly grounded in the love of God.

To be truly religious is to love God and to love those whom God made in his own image; and to love God and other people, not with a vague sentimentality, but with that total commitment which issues in devotion to God and practical service of others.

6. THE GOLDEN RULE OF CHRIST

“So, then, all the things you wish that men should do to you, so do you too do to them, for this is the law and prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

This is probably the most universally famous thing that Jesus ever said with this commandment, the Sermon on the Mount reaches its summit. This saying of Jesus has been called “the capstone of the whole discourse”. It is the topmost peak of social ethics, and Everest of all ethical teaching.

It is possible to quote Rabbinic parallels for almost everything that Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount; but there is

no real parallel to this saying. This is something which had never been said before. It is new teaching, and a new view of life and of life's obligations.

It is different to find many parallels to this saying in its negative form. As we have seen, there were two most famous Jewish teachers. There was Shammai, who was famous for his stern and rigid austerity; and there was Hillel, who was famous for his sweet graciousness. The Jews had a story like this : A pagan came to Shammai and said, "I am prepared to be received as a proselyte [convert] on the condition that you teach me the whole law while I am standing on one leg." Shammai drove him away with a foot-rule which he had in his hand. He went to Hillel, who received him as a proselyte. He said to him, "What is hateful to yourself, do to no other; that is the whole law, and the rest is commentary. Go and learn." There is the Golden Rule in its negative form.

In the Book of Tobit, there is a passage in which the aged Tobias teaches his son all that is necessary for life. One of his maxims is : 'What you hate do not do to anyone' (Tobit 4:15).

There is a Jewish work called, "The Letter of Aristeas," which purports to be an account of the Jewish scholars who went to Alexandria to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, and who produced the Septuagint. The Egyptian king gave them a banquet at which he asked them certain difficult questions. 'What is the teaching of wisdom?' he asked. A Jewish scholar answered : As you wish that no evil should act on the same principle towards your subjects and offenders, and you should mildly admonish the noble and the good. For God draws all men unto himself by his benignity'. [The Letter of Aristeas, 207]

Rabbi Elie came nearer to Jesus' way putting it when he said, 'Let the honour of thy friend be as dear unto thee as thine own.' The psalmist again had the negative from when he said that only those who do no evil to their friends can approach God (Psalm 15:3).

It is not difficult to find this rule in Jewish teaching in its 'negative' form, but there is no parallel to the 'positive' form in which Jesus put it.

The same is true of the teaching of other religions. The negative form is one of the basic principles of Confucius. Tsz-Kung asked Confucius : 'Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?' Confucius said : "Is not 'reciprocity' such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

There are certain beautiful lines in Buddhist 'Hymns of the Faith' which come very near the Christian teaching—

"All men tremble at the rod, all men fear death;

Putting oneself in the place of others, kill not, nor cause to kill.

All men tremble at the rod, unto all men life is dear;

Doing as one would be done by, kill not nor cause to kill."

With the Greeks and the Romans, it is the same. The orator Isocrates tells how King Nicocles advised his subordinate officials: 'What you avoid suffering yourselves, seek not to inflict upon others?' The stoics had as one of their basic maxims: 'What you do not wish to be done to you, do not do to anyone else.' And it is said that the emperor Alexander Saverus had that sentence engraved upon the walls of his palace so that he might never forget it as a rule of life.

In its negative form, this rule is in fact the basis of all ethical teaching; but no one but Jesus ever put it in its positive form. Many voices had said: "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you," but no voice had ever said: 'Do to others what you would have them do to you.'

Let us see just how the positive form of the Golden Rule differs from the negative form; and let us see just how much more

Jesus was demanding of them than any teacher had ever demanded before.

When this rule is put in its negative form, when we are told that we must refrain from doing to others that which we would not wish them to do to us; it is not an essentially religious rule at all. It is simply a commonsense statement without which no social intercourse at all would be possible. Sir Thomas Browne, the seventeenth century author and physician, once said: 'We are beholden to every man we meet that he does not kill us.' In a sense that is true, but if we could not assume that the conduct and the behaviour of other people to us would conform to the accepted standards of civilized life, then life would be intolerable. The negative form of the Golden Rule is not in any sense an extra; it is something without which life could not go on at all.

Further, the negative form of the rule involves nothing more than 'not' doing certain things; it means refraining from certain actions. It is never very difficult not to do things. That we must not do injury to other people is not a specially religious principle; it is, rather, a legal principle. It is the kind of principle that could well be kept by those who have no belief and no interest in religion at all. Such people might always refrain from doing any injury to anyone else, and yet be quite useless citizens to their neighbours. They could satisfy the negative form of the rule by simple inaction; if they consistently did nothing, they would never break the rule. And a goodness which consists in doing nothing would be a contradiction of everything that Christian goodness means.

When this rule is put positively, when we are told that we must actively do to others what we would have them do to us, a new principle enters into life, and a new attitude to others. It is one thing to say : 'I must not injure people; I must not do to them what I would object to their doing to me.' That, the law can compel us to do. It is quite another thing to say : 'I must go out of my way to help other people and to be kind to them, as I would wish them to

help and to be kind to me.' That only love can compel us to do. The attitude which says: 'I must do no harm to people' is quite different from the attitude which says: 'I must do my best to help people'.

To take a very analogy—if we own a car, the law can compel us to drive it in such a way that we do not injure anyone else on the road, but no law can compel us to stop and give a lift to someone who is obviously in need of help. It is quite a simple thing to refrain from hurting and injuring people; it is not so very difficult to respect their principles and their feelings; it is a far harder thing to make it the chosen and deliberate policy of life to go out of our way to be as kind to them as we would wish them to be to us.

It is just that new attitude which makes life beautiful. Jane Stoddart quotes an incident from the life of the ninth-century statesman W.H. Smith. 'When Smith was at the War Office, his private secretary, Mr. Fleetwood Wilson, noticed that at the end of a week's work, when his chief was preparing to leave for Greenlands on a Saturday afternoon, he used to pack a despatch-box with the papers he required to take with him, and carry it himself on his journey. Mr. Wilson remarked that Mr. Smith would save himself much trouble if he did as was the practice of other ministers—leave the papers to be put in an office "pouch" and sent by post. Mr. Smith looked rather ashamed for a moment, and, then, looking up at his Secretary, said: "Well, my dear Wilson, the fact is this : our postman who brings the letters from Henley has plenty to carry. I watched him one morning coming up the approach with my heavy pouch in addition to his usual load, and I was determined to save him as much as I could." An action like that shows a certain attitude to others. It is the attitude which believes that we should treat one another not as the law allows, but as love demands.

It is perfectly possible for people to observe the negative form of the Golden Rule. They could without very serious difficulty discipline their lives so that they would not do to others what they did not wish others to do to them; but the only people

who can even begin to satisfy the positive form of the rule are those men and women who have the love of Christ within their hearts. They will try to forgive as they would wish to be forgiven, to help as they would wish to be helped, to praise as they would wish to be praised, to understand as they would wish to be understood. They will never seek to avoid doing things; they will always look for things to do. Clearly this will make life much more complicated; clearly they will have much less time to spend on their own desires and their own activities, for time and time again they will have to stop what they are doing to help someone else. It will be a principle which will dominate their lives at home, in the factory, on the bus, in the office, in the street, on the train, in their leisure activities—everywhere. They can never do it until self withers and dies within their hearts. To obey this commandment, we must become new men and women with a new centre to our lives; and if the world was composed of people who sought to obey this rule, it would be a new world.

Without those foundational passages and their teaching about who God is and how he related to Abraham and his descendants, it is hard for people to grasp the message that this God has now taken flesh and dwelt among us in the person of Jesus Christ.

7. THE AMAZING COMMANDMENTS OF JESUS CHRIST

“Jesus said, ‘But to you who are listening I say. Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-use you. To him who strikes you on one cheek offers the other cheek also. If anyone takes away your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic, too. Give to everyone who asks you; if anyone takes away your belongings, do not demand them back again. As you would like men to act towards you, so do you act towards them. If you love those who love you, what special

grace is there in that? Even sinners love those who love them. If you are kind to those who are kind to you, what special grace is there in that? Even sinners do that. If you lend to those from whom you wish to get, what special grace is in that? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to get as much back again. But you must love your enemies; and do good to them; and lend with no hope of getting anything in return. Your reward will be great and you will be the sons of the Most High, because he is kind both to the thankless and to the wicked. Be merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful; do not judge and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned; forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and it will be given to you. People will give into your bosom, good measure pressed together, shaken down, running over; for with what measure you measure it will be measured to you back again.” (Luke 6:27-38)

There is no commandment of Jesus which has caused so much discussion and debate as the commandment to love our enemies. Before we can obey it we must discover what it means. In Greek there are three words for 'to love'. There is *eran*, which describes passionate love, the love between the sexes. There is *philein*, which describes our love for our nearest and dearest, the warm affection of the heart. Neither of these two words is used here; the word used here is *agapan*, which needs a whole paragraph to translate it.

Agapan describes an active feeling of benevolence towards other people; it means that no matter what others do to us we will never allow ourselves to desire anything but their highest good; and we will deliberately and of set purpose go out of our way to be good and kind to them. This is most suggestive. We cannot love our enemies as we love our nearest and dearest. To do so would be unnatural, impossible and even wrong. But we can see to

it that, no matter what others do to us, even if they insult, ill-treat and injure us, we will seek nothing but their highest good.

One thing emerges from this. The love we bear to our dear ones is something we cannot help. We speak of *falling* in love; it is something which happens to us. But this love towards our enemies is not only something of the heart; it is something of the will. It is something which by the grace of Christ we may ourselves to do.

This passage has in it two great facts about the Christian ethic.

(i) The Christian ethic is *positive*. It does not consist in *not doing* things but in *doing* them. Jesus gave us the Golden Rule which bids us do to others as we would have them do to us. That rule exists in many writers of many creeds in its *negative* form. Hillel, one of the great Jewish Rabbis, was asked by a man to teach him the whole law while he stood on one leg. He answered, 'What is hateful to thee, do not to another. That is the whole law and all else is explanation.' Philo, the great Jew of Alexandria, said, 'What you hate to suffer, do not do to anyone else.' Isocrates, the Greek orator, said, 'What things make you angry when you suffer them at the hands of others, do not you do to other people.' The Stoics had as one of their basic rules, 'What you do not wish to be done to yourself, do not you do to any other.' When Confucius was asked, 'Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?' he answered, 'Is not reciprocity such a word? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others.'

Every one of these forms is negative. It is not unduly difficult to keep yourself from such action; but it is a very different thing to go out of your way to do to others what you would want them to do to you. The very essence of Christian conduct is that it consists, not in refraining from bad things, but in actively doing good things.

(2) The Christian ethic is based on *the extra thing*. Jesus described the common ways of sensible conduct and then dismissed them with the question, 'What special grace is in that?' So often people claim to be just as good as their neighbours. Very likely they are. But the question of Jesus is, 'How much *better* are you than the ordinary person?' It is not our neighbour with whom we must compare ourselves; we may well stand that comparison very adequately; it is *God* with whom we must compare ourselves; and in that comparison we are all in default.

(3) What is the reason for this Christian conduct? The reason is that it makes us like God, for that is the way he acts. God sends his rain on the just and the unjust. He is kind to the person who brings him joy and equally kind to the person who grieves his heart. God's love embraces saints and sinners alike. It is that love we must copy; if we, too, seek even our enemy's highest good we will in truth be the children of God.

Verse 38 has the strange phrase, 'People will give into your bosom.' It was customary for a Jew to wear a long loose robe down to the feet, and round the waist a girdle. The robe could be pulled up so that the bosom of the robe above the girdle formed a kind of outsize pocket in which things could be carried. So another way of saying this would be, 'People will fill your pocket.'

8. ECHO OF JESUS' COMMANDMENTS

15 to 20 years after the life of Christ on earth (probably between 0031 and 0051 AD) the echo of Jesus's teachings can be found through the letters of the Great Apostle St. Paul. One of these letters written by him is 'The Letter to the Romans'. Here we discover the echo of Jesus' law in rational analysis. Paul is saying

“... 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing so you will heap burning coals on his head'. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:20-21).

To treat people with kindness rather than vengeance is the way to move them. Vengeance may break the spirit; but kindness will break people's hearts. 'If we are kind to our enemies,' says Paul, 'it will heap coals of fire on their heads.' That means not that it will store up further punishment for them but that it will move them to burning shame. How amazing the lesson. It is the opposite way to create pain in the hearts of our enemies. It is the true echo of Jesus' law.

Secondly, we see, to stop vengeance is to be ourselves conquered by evil. Evil can never be conquered by evil. If hatred is met with more hatred, it is only increased; but, if it is met with love, an antidote for the poison is found. As the American educationist Booker T. Washington said, 'I will not allow any man to make me lower myself by hating him'. The only real way to destroy an enemy is to make the person a friend.

VI. INCOMPLETENESS OF OLD TESTAMENT

Of course, to talk about the gospel as the central message of the Old Testament is to assume that the Old Testament was never intended to exist by itself. Instead, it was designed from the outset to belong with the New Testament as part of a single book, the Bible. That is exactly what the book of Hebrews claims. The writer begins by saying, "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son" (Heb. 1:1). He then goes on to assert that this Son is superior even to Moses, the author of the Pentateuch and the supreme prophet of the Old Testament (Heb. 3:3-6). Christ's ministry is better than that of Moses, just as the new covenant is more excellent than the old one since it is enacted on better promises (Heb. 8:6). Quoting Jeremiah 31:31-34, the writer to the Hebrews says, "In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete, and what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8:13).

The writer to the Hebrews is saying that by itself the Old Testament is necessarily incomplete. God's purpose from creation onward was to have a people for himself who would live under his blessing. As Jeremiah pointed out, the problem with the first covenant was sin. God's people broke the covenant and were judged for their sin. This is true in the beginning, in the garden of Eden, and then throughout the history of the people of Israel, who repeatedly broke the covenant God had made with them at Mount Sinai. In the context of that history of sin, only a covenant based on God's free gift of grace to us in Christ could actually achieve God's purpose to make us his holy people.

Notice, however, that the writer of the Hebrews grounds his message about the obsolescence of the Old Testament in the Old

Testament itself! He quotes the Old Testament repeatedly to help his readers to understand the glorious greatness of the new covenant in Christ. In other words, to understand the climactic message of the New Testament properly, you first need to understand the preparatory message of the Old Testament. Only then shall we be ready to understand the mission of the Christ whom God has sent. This is why many missionaries who translate the Bible into other languages do not start with the New Testament, but rather with Old Testament texts such as Genesis and Psalms. Without those foundational passages and their teaching about who God is and how he related to Abraham and his descendants, it is hard for people to grasp the message that this God has now taken flesh and dwelt among us in the person of Jesus Christ.

VII. CONCLUSION

It is a matter of regret that even after two thousand years the Jews find it difficult to accept Jesus as their Messiah. The term "mashiach" literally means "the anointed one," and refers to the ancient practice of anointing kings with oil when they took the throne. The mashiach is the one who will be anointed as king in the End of Days.

It is part of Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith, the minimum requirements of Jewish belief. In the Shemoneh Esrei prayer, recited three times daily, they pray for all of the elements of the coming of the mashiach: in gathering of the exiles; restoration of the religious courts of justice; an end of wickedness, sin and heresy; reward to the righteous; rebuilding of Jerusalem; restoration of the line of King David; and restoration of Temple service.

The word "mashiach" does not mean "savior." The notion of an innocent, divine or semi-divine being who will sacrifice himself to save us from the consequences of our own sins is a purely Christian concept that has no basis in Jewish thought. Unfortunately, this Christian concept has become so deeply ingrained in the English word "messiah" that this English word can no longer be used to refer to the Jewish concept. One of the principles of Jewish faith enumerated by Maimonides is that one day there will arise a dynamic Jewish leader, a direct descendant of the Davidic dynasty, who will rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, and gather Jews from all over the world and bring them back to the Land of Israel.

All the nations of the world will recognize Moshiach to be a world leader, and will accept his dominion. In the messianic era there will be world peace, no more wars nor famine, and, in general, a high standard of living.

All mankind will worship one God, and live a more spiritual and moral way of life. The Jewish nation will be preoccupied with learning Torah and fathoming its secrets.

The coming of Moshiach will complete God's purpose in creation: for man to make an abode for God in the lower worlds- that is, to reveal the inherent spirituality in the material world.

The Rabbis still preach to their congregation that Jesus Christ did not fulfill the Messianic prophecies. According to their belief Jesus did not embody the personal qualification of the Messiah. Many prophetic passages speak of a descendant of King David, who will rule Israel during the age of perfection: according to the Christian belief as recorded in the New Testament, Christians claim that Jesus was the product of a virgin birth, Jesus had no biological father and thus could not have possibly fulfilled the messianic requirement of being descended on his father's side from king David. Though the husband of Mary, Joseph was really a descendant of King David. Jesus was not his biological son. Not only that Rabbis, scribes, Sadducees, Pharisees and religious lawyers believe, Jesus had come to change the 'Torah', so he is immediately identified as a false prophet. "Why don't Jews believe in Jesus?" Let's understand why - not to disparage other religions, but rather to clarify the Jewish position.

Jews do not accept Jesus as the messiah because:

- a) Jesus did not fulfill the messianic prophecies.
- b) Jesus did not embody the personal qualifications of the Messiah.
- c) Biblical verses "referring" to Jesus are mistranslations.
- d) Jewish belief is based on national revelation.

The Scriptures are replete with messianic quotes. In Deuteronomy 30:1 Moses prophesies that, after the Jews have been scattered to the four corners of the earth, there will come a time when they will repent and return to Israel, where they will fulfill

all the commandments of the Torah. The gentile prophet Balaam prophesies that this return will be led by Moshiach (Numbers 24:17-20). Jacob refers to Moshiach by the name Shiloh (Genesis 49:10). The prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Joel and Hosea all refer to the messianic era. Moshiach will be a man who possesses extraordinary qualities. He will be proficient in both the written and oral Torah traditions. He will incessantly campaign for Torah observance among Jews, and observance of the seven universal Noahide laws by non-Jews. He will be scrupulously observant, and encourage the highest standards from others. He will defend religious principles and repair breaches in their observance. Above all, Moshiach will be heralded as a true Jewish king, a person who leads the way in the service of God, totally humble yet enormously inspiring.

Jews anticipate the arrival of Moshiach every day. Our prayers are full of requests to God to usher in the messianic era. Even at the gates of the gas chambers, many Jews sang “*Ani Maamin*”—I believe in the coming of Moshiach!

However, the Talmud states that there is a predestined time when Moshiach will come. If we are meritorious, he may come even before that predestined time. This “end of time” remains a mystery, yet the Talmud states that it will be before the Hebrew year 6000.

One of the principles of Jewish faith is belief in the resurrection of the dead. According to the Zohar—an early Kabbalistic text—the resurrection will take place forty years after the arrival of Moshiach. However, certain righteous individuals will arise with the coming of Moshiach. All the dead will be resurrected in the Land of Israel. Specifically, the Bible says he will:

- a) Build the Third Temple (Ezekiel 37:26-28).
- b) Gather all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isaiah 43:5-6)
- c) Usher in an era of world peace, and end all hatred,

oppression, suffering and disease. As it says: "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall man learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)

- d) Spread universal knowledge of the God of Israel, which will unite humanity as one. As it says: "God will be King over all the world - on that day, God will be One and His Name will be One" (Zechariah 14:9).

If an individual fails to fulfill even one of these conditions, then he cannot be the Messiah.

Because no one has ever fulfilled the Bible's description of this future King, Jews still await the coining of the Messiah. All past Messianic claimants, including Jesus of Nazareth, Bar Cochba and Shabbtai Tzvi have been rejected.

Christians counter that Jesus will fulfill these in the Second Coming. Jewish sources show that the Messiah will fulfill the prophecies outright; in the Bible no concept of a second coming exists. Jews reply that this does not give Jesus any credibility for his "first" coming; the Bible never speaks about the Messiah returning after an initial appearance; and the "second coming" theory is a desperate attempt to explain away Jesus' failure.

Throughout history, thousands of religions have been started by individuals, attempting to convince people that he or she is God's true prophet. But personal revelation is an extremely weak basis for a religion because one can never know if it is indeed true. Since others did not hear God speak to this person, they have to take his word for it. Even if the individual claiming personal revelation performs miracles, they do not prove he is a genuine prophet. All the miracles show - assuming they are genuine - is that he has certain powers. Judaism, unique among all of the world's major religions, does not rely on "claims of miracles" as the basis for its religion.

We need to understand that the Jews do not expect a ‘Final Messenger’ as the Muslims would call Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

They await the coming of the Messiah. Now the word ‘Messiah’ (maseeh in Arabic) is used by Muslims to refer to Jesus (i.e., Isa ibn Maryam, peace be upon him).

Both the Muslims and the Christians believe that Jesus was really the Messiah expected by the Jews. But the Jews reject this idea, alleging that Jesus was a false Messiah.

Christians, on the other hand, give a new meaning to the title ‘the Messiah’ in relation to their concept of the Atonement of the Original Sin by the Son of God.

To them, the Messiah is a Savior who suffers and dies for saving a sinful man from eternal punishment in hell. Muslims accept the Jewish belief that there were prophecies about the coming of the Messiah, on the one hand. On the other hand, they accept the Christian claim that Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary, was the expected Messiah, though this is rejected by the Jews.

But Muslims reject the Christian concept of Messiah as the Son of God, who was to be crucified to atone for man’s Original Sin.

Christians remained the largest religious group in the world in 2015, almost 2.3 billion making up nearly a third (31%) of Earth’s 7.3 billion people, according to a new Pew Research Center demographic analysis. Globally, Muslims make up the second largest religious group, with 1.8 billion people, or 24% of the world’s population, Jews on the other hand number around 0.01 billion. The number is a reflection of the popularity & acceptance of Christianity vis-a-vis the other major religions. Jesus’s teachings are relevant and modern, it is also ideal and dynamic justifying the humanic laws & morality.

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