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OBEDIENCE TO THE ORAL LAW IS A COMMANDMENT

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We are about to go on a short journey into the realm of the legitimate keepers of the Torah. Those who put their minds, hearts, souls, and shoulders to learning the Holy Torah will discover that the landscape is vast and beautiful. Enjoy.

Once a non-Jew asked the great and saintly Shammai: "How many Torahs do you have?" "Two" he answered. "One Oral and one Written, as it says: **"THESE ARE THE STATUTES AND JUDGMENTS AND LAWS [Hebrew: "Torot" or "Toros" i.e. the plural of Torah], WHICH THE LORD MADE BETWEEN HIM AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL IN MOUNT SINAI BY THE HAND OF MOSES" [LEVITICUS 26:46].**

The non-Jewish fellow said, "I believe you concerning the Written but not in regards to the Oral Law. Convert me on condition that you teach me only the Written Law." Shammai became indignant and sent him away. The man then went to the equally great and saintly Hillel who accepted him for the conversion program. On the first day Hillel taught the person the alphabet: Aleph, beth, gimmel, dalet, etc. On the second day Hillel reversed the letters. The prospective convert disagreed and said: "Yesterday you taught me a DIFFERENT sequence." Hillel answered, "My son, you are relying on me anyway so rely on me concerning the Oral Torah too."

In other words we would not know how to pronounce the Hebrew Alphabet if not for the Oral tradition. Similarly in order to understand the Laws we have to rely on oral tradition. Without such a tradition even the written law would not be accessible.

Listen to this, my beloved friends, - our Rabbis and scribes only started putting vowels to Hebrew consonants between the 6th and 10th centuries. This is the opinion of archaeologists today. The earliest vocalized texts, 895 C.E., are the Cairo Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and 12 minor prophets). The twenty-four books of the Bible were vocalized in the Aleppo Codex, 930 C.E., almost ruined in the anti-Jewish pogroms in 1947. Also, the Leningrad Codex with the Hebrew Bible was dated at 1000 C.E. (Biblical Archaeology Review * (s, 1982)

Lawrence Keleman, Permission to Receive (Four Rational Approaches to the Torah's Divine Origin), Targen Press.)

Torah scrolls were written from the Torah's revelation at Mt. Sinai and throughout the 40 years of wandering without vowels during the time of the prophets, as well. Complete, utter, absolute reliance was on the Oral Tradition. In the case of the Torah extra-textual, knowledge is crucial to determine the simple meanings of many texts and elucidation of G-d's wishes. Three times, for example, the Bible says not cook meat with the three-letter Hebrew word chalav (milk). Chalav can be just as easily pronounced cheylev (animal fats). Without any authoritative Oral Law, we would not know the Divine command was not to cook with some

animal fats. This passed on through many millions of people having no questions or doubts because of the clear Oral Bible, which specifies the three letter word to be milk.

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz once went to visit his uncle Rabbi Avraham Yaffeu who was the head of the Novhardok Yeshivah. This Yeshivah was a college of higher Rabbinic studies that emphasized a particular type of Musar. "Musar"

means "reproval" and is the name applied to a rigorous ethical-spiritual movement in the Torah world. The aim was to hunt out and remove even the slightest hint of ulterior motivation in the service of God and humanity. Rabbi Chaim asked the Rosh Yeshivah (i.e. dean) who amongst his amazing student body was the most outstanding. Rabbi Chaim first showed him various brilliant students with high IQs and photographic memories. He then singled out one boy who was not absolutely the most brilliant. This young man, said Rabbi Chaim, is the greatest searcher. Namely he tries with every fiber of his being to seek out and know God's words, wisdom, and will. He puts all his heart and soul into this search and so will excel beyond the others. The student in question became Rabbi Yisroel Kanievsky ("The Stiepler") who was renown for his Torah scholarship, community concern, and ability to perform miracles. He passed away only recently. This is the ongoing tradition that has never ceased.

Maimonides (Rambam) carefully records the generations since the Giving of Torah at Sinai until his own time 800 years ago. There had passed only 120 generations. We can even list them exactly.

UNBROKEN CHAIN OF TRANSMISSION
1. Moses 2. Joshua 1312 BCE THE ELDERS 1260-860 BCE 3. Pinchas and the 70 Elders 4. Eli the Kohen 5. Samuel the Prophet 6. King David
THE PROPHETS 860-360 BCE
7. Achiya 8. Elijah the Prophet 9. Elisha 10. Yehoyda the Priest 11. Zechariah ben Yehoyda 12. Hosea 13. Amos 14. Isaiah 15. Micah 16. Joel 17. Nachum 18. Habakuk 19. Zephania 20. Jeremiah 21. Baruch ben Neriah
THE GREAT ASSEMBLY 360-260 BCE
22. The Great Assembly consisted of 120 Elders, including Ezra, Zecharia, Daniel and Mordechai 23 Shimon the Tzaddik

TANA'IM MISHNAIC ERA 260 BCE 200 CE

24. Antigonos of Socho
25. Yose ben Yozer, Yose ben Yochanan
26. Yehoshua ben Perachiah, Nittai of Arbel
27. Yehuda ben Tabbai, Shimon ben Shatach
28. Shemaya and Avtalyon
29. Hillel and Shamai
30. R'Shimon ben Hillel, R'Yochanan ben Zakkai
31. Rabban Gamliel the Elder, R'Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, R'Yehoshua ben Chananiah, R'Shimon ben Netanel, R'Elazer ben Arakh.
32. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel I, Rebbe Akiva, Rebbe Tarfon, R'Shimon ben Elazar, R'Yochanan ben Nuri.
33. Rabban Gamliel II, Rebbe Meir, Rebbe Yishmael, Rebbe Yehuda, Rebbe Yose, R'Shimon bar Yochai
34. Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel II
35. Rabbi Yehuda the Prince*
(*Codifier of the Mishnah in 190 C.E.)

AMORA'IM TALMUDIC ERA 200-500 CE

36. Rav, Shmuel, Rabbi Yochanan*
(*Compiler of the Jerusalem Talmud)
37. Rav Huna, Rav Yehuda, Rav Nachman, Rav Kahana, Rabba bar bar Channa, Rav Ami, Rav Asi
38. Rabbah, Rav Yosef, Rav Chisda, Rabba bar Huna.
39. Abaya, Rava
40. Rav Ashi, Ravina*
(*Compilers of the Babylonian Talmud in 500 C.E.) And onwards. 120 generations of unbroken transmission up until today.

Thanks again to the Discovery booklet of Aish HaTorah.

EVIDENCE FOR THE ORAL LAW

When God gave the Laws of Booths (Succoth) to Moses (Leviticus chapter 23) He did not only say you should dwell in the Succah for 7 days. He explained what would comprise a valid succah; the minimum measurements, what materials are suitable for the roof, and what are not, etc. Would God order you to sit in something, pray, eat, sleep in something and not define what that something is? God explained to Moses that the full legal obligation to actually be in the Succah, sleep there, etc., actually applies to men and not to women. Yet women still receive reward for doing so. That the obligation to sleep in a Succah is not operative on someone in the middle of a journey and all the other details (Rambam, Introduction to Zeraim).

We have numerous terms, nay - whole instructions that are left undefined by the written Torah. We have entire legal institutions the basis of whose existence is derived from the Oral Law. These crucial institutions, legal categories, practical systems are not clarified, explained, or elaborated upon in the written tradition. Almost complete reliance is placed upon the Oral Tradition for the application, details, implementations, and specific details (Kuzari 3/35,

Yehudah HaLevi). The indisputable fact is that the Bible often involves itself with the exceptional situation rather than with generalizations and principles. This shows that Scripture relies on other statements of direction and law. The Oral Law fulfills this need.

The Bible introduces the Hebrew Civil and Criminal Statute with this verse:

"NOW THESE ARE THE JUDGMENTS WHICH THOU SHALT SET BEFORE THEM" [EXODUS 21:1].

The Bible then goes on to the slavery laws:

"IF THOU BUY AN HEBREW SERVANT, SIX YEARS HE SHALL SERVE: AND IN THE SEVENTH HE SHALL GO OUT FREE FOR NOTHING" [EXODUS 21:1].

What happened to the "Judgments" that had to be set before them? They were included in the Oral Teaching. The laws of slavery are discussed without concern with the issues of individual freedom. These are included in the

Oral Tradition. This is the way of the world and will always be: Teacher-student, Professor-disciple, Rabbi-Talmid. Thus in the areas of crafts, dance, martial arts, history, science, music, arts, information, and knowledge, etc., is always passed on with an oral dimension. This oral transmission is crucial in all fields of endeavor, -be it sheep farming or riding class V rapids, there is a crucial dimension of oral transmission involved. The Torah, too was passed on by the relationship between student and teacher. This is the way of the world, the way G-d created it, and intended for His word to be passed on.

Whom did Abraham need to believe in order to take his son on that covenantal journey and offer him up? He had of course to believe in G-d. Who did Isaac need to believe in? Isaac also believed in God but he needed in addition to respect and believe in the integrity, sanity, and wisdom of his father Abraham. In every generation we are bidden to likewise respect and believe in the sages that will be in our time.

[DEUTERONOMY 17:8] IF THERE ARISE A MATTER TOO HARD FOR THEE IN JUDGMENT, BETWEEN BLOOD AND BLOOD, BETWEEN PLEA AND PLEA, AND BETWEEN STROKE AND STROKE, BEING MATTERS OF CONTROVERSY WITHIN THY GATES: THEN SHALT THOU ARISE, AND GET THEE UP INTO THE PLACE WHICH THE LORD THY GOD SHALL CHOOSE;

[DEUTERONOMY 17:9] AND THOU SHALT COME UNTO THE PRIESTS THE LEVITES, AND UNTO THE JUDGE THAT SHALL BE IN THOSE DAYS, (we have only the sages of our present day) AND ENQUIRE; AND THEY SHALL SHEW THEE THE SENTENCE OF JUDGMENT:

[DEUTERONOMY 17:10] AND THOU SHALT DO ACCORDING TO THE SENTENCE, WHICH THEY OF THAT PLACE WHICH THE LORD SHALL CHOOSE SHALL SHEW THEE; AND THOU SHALT OBSERVE TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THEY INFORM THEE:

[DEUTERONOMY 17:11] ACCORDING TO THE SENTENCE OF THE LAW WHICH THEY SHALL TEACH THEE, AND ACCORDING TO THE JUDGMENT WHICH THEY SHALL TELL THEE, THOU SHALT DO: THOU SHALT NOT DECLINE FROM THE SENTENCE WHICH THEY SHALL SHEW THEE, TO THE RIGHT HAND, NOR TO THE LEFT.

"TEACH THEE", "SHALL TELL THEE", means Oral Communication. The Written Law is to the Oral Law like short notes or a formula are for a lecturer. For those who have not heard the lecture from the Master, such notes would be

completely useless. Words and marks which serve those scholars who had heard the lecture as instructive guiding stars to the wisdom that had been taught, stare at the uninitiated as unmeaning sphinxes. The wisdom and truths, which the initiated reproduce from them are sneered at by the uninitiated, as being merely a clever or witty play of words and empty

dreams without any real foundation (Rabbi Samson Rafael Hirsch Exodus Commentary 21/2). In Physics, we have the formula $E=mc^2$ meaning energy equals mass multiplied by the speed of light squared. The explanation of the formula is comparable to the Oral Tradition that brings the concept down to the physical world and makes it applicable to everyday life. For those who are uninitiated and have not heard the explanation the short notes or formulae appear to be mere markings or plays on words. The Oral Law is in fact expressed in the Written Torah. If one persists with the right Hebrew language tools (its rules and structures) he would reveal the Oral Law deep in the Written Law.

Jews studied and pondered the Divine words. They cherished, loved, honored, and revered the Oral and Written Torah. All of this existed centuries before Christianity or Islam existed, while most of the world was illiterate and ignorant.

This is so simple, true, logical, and pure. No field of activity is devoid of a teaching tradition that involves some oral communication to clarify and define itself. In any field if a question arises one naturally goes to the experts in that field at the time. Our sages and wise men have been charged with passing on the Oral Tradition.

<THESE ARE THE STATUTES AND JUDGMENTS AND LAWS [Hebrew: "Toros" i.e. the plural of Torah], WHICH THE LORD MADE BETWEEN HIM AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL IN MOUNT SINAI BY THE HAND OF MOSES> [LEVITICUS 26:46]. These laws were given at Sinai to the Children of Israel through Moses> God did not make a covenant with Israel except by virtue of the Oral Tradition (Gittin 60b). Both Torahs were communicated by the same prophets, and derived from the same source. The Torahs are God's words which in part were written in the Bible, and in part derive from the authoritative statements of the righteous teachers of the Oral Tradition (Hoffman, Die Erste Mischna, Berlin, 1882, p. 3).

Jewish leaders of scholarship and piety were inspired by Divine Inspiration ("**So they not err in Judgment**" **Leviticus Rabah 29**). This tradition existed from time immemorial and will continue into the future. The Bible set up a system to deal with the possibility of error on the part of the elders, sages, Judaism never claimed infallibility for its spiritual leaders and Rabbis. (Rabbi Dr. Jacobovots, "Journal of a Rabbi", NY 1966). The system worked and always protected the integrity, truth, and faithfulness of our traditions. We were never left adrift in the Ocean without sexton or compass. G-d in His wisdom gave us a Torah that would stand the test of time and the vicissitudes of Exile and persecution, of redemption, and return.

Indeed, Dear Friends, any objective view of the Scriptures would yield much evidence that an Oral tradition was the mode of transmission from parents to children. **"AND YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN"**

[DEUTERONOMY 6:7]. This means that the teacher must clarify the axioms with decisiveness and not allow the listener to remain in doubt. The Hebrew root "shnay" connotes the meanings of 'the number two, repeat, and teach'. From

this we learn that the Oral and Written Law must be taught not once but over and over again. Before telling us to teach our children diligently the Torah says, **"THESE WORDS WILL BE UPON YOUR HEART" [DEUTERONOMY 6:7].** This means that we can teach diligently only if we are ourselves convinced in our own hearts that the Torah is true and is the right way of life (Sforno, Rabbi Don Yistchak Abarbanel, Rabbi Moshe Alshik). It has always been the students, the Torah bearers, that received most support in the religious communities, not the athletes or entertainers. The Talmud has always said after describing a host of good deeds, that the study of Torah is equal to the sum of them all (Shabbos 127a). Where do we know that the Torah must be taught until we know it fluently. The Torah says, **"THAT THE LORD'S LAW MAY BE IN**

YOUR MOUTH" [EXODUS 13:9] - which is Oral transmission. Where do we know that the teacher must also explain the reasons behind the Torah? EXODUS 21:1 says, "THESE ARE THE ORDINANCES THAT YOU SHALL PUT BEFORE THEM". The Hebrew expression "put before them" implies something similar to a table spread out with food ready to be partaken of.

"AND YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR CHILDREN" [DEUTERONOMY 6:7]. G-d directed that the Torah be transmitted to future generations by means of Oral teachings. Every age has a next generation; so the generation that was freed from Egypt and received the Torah has a next generation until the end of time.

[DEUTERONOMY 6:7] AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY UNTO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT TALK OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THINE HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP.

G-d commands us to speak of the words of the Holy Torah when you sit in your house, walk by the way, when you lie down and when you rise up. This is a major priority of the Bible, namely its transmission to the present and future generations. The first blessing given to a child is that they grow up in Torah, to marry, and do good deeds. The minute Torah learning slowed down acculturation and assimilation grew rampant. When a Jewish town stopped learning Torah they vanished. We also believe that the state's military prowess is ultimately determined according to the number of children chirping like little birds in the study house of Torah learning. Once, God forbid, they are interrupted then we are open to physical annihilation by the enemy. To paraphrase Rabbi Emmanuel Feldman in 'On Judaism', Beyond all the good, rational reasons, Torah is the mysterious bridge connecting the Jew with G-d and by extension all of humanity.

Through the Torah we interact and communicate. This is the means by which G-d fulfills His covenant with His people, to sustain and protect them.

THE SAGES - GIANTS OF MIND AND SPIRIT

The sages of our Oral tradition had impeccable character; they were honest, wise, devoted, compassionate, and good hearted. Look at some of the qualities demanded of them:

[DEUTERONOMY 16:18] JUDGES AND OFFICERS SHALT THOU MAKE THEE IN ALL THY GATES, WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE, THROUGHOUT THY TRIBES: AND THEY SHALL JUDGE THE PEOPLE WITH JUST JUDGMENT.

[DEUTERONOMY 16:19] THOU SHALT NOT WREST JUDGMENT; THOU SHALT NOT RESPECT PERSONS, NEITHER TAKE A GIFT: FOR A GIFT DOTHTH BLIND THE EYES OF THE WISE, AND PERVERT THE WORDS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

[DEUTERONOMY 16:20] THAT WHICH IS ALTOGETHER JUST SHALT THOU FOLLOW, THAT THOU MAYEST LIVE, AND INHERIT THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.

Josephus said thousands of Jews declared their readiness to be trampled upon by Roman cavalry rather accept symbols of a man's divinity as ordered by Caligula. Rather than allow the outrage of belief in the absolute unity of G-d, the Jewish sages and ordinary folk suffered martyrdom. As Fuerst points out in the worldwide Roman Empire it was the Jews alone who refused to pay homage to the "divinity" of Caligula. They thereby saved the honor of the human race. The rabbis always defended the Unity of God against pollution be it the Gnostic

or Zoroastrians who claimed a duality of godhead or the doctrine of three in one. (Dr. J. H. Hertz).

The People of the Book were, after all, closer to explain and pass on the torch of tradition of Oral Law to the next generation. Remember the scribes and Rabbis sat in the seat of Moses (according to Matthew 23). This meant that they retained the Oral Law that Moses had received. The form this has taken today is the Talmud and its commentaries.

Excerpts from
THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN ANCIENT ISRAEL
Rabbi Dr. Herzog
(former Chief Rabbi of Israel)

<<Justice is one of the key-notes of the entire system of Judaism. The Torah lays the greatest possible stress upon the right administration of justice, free from all bias and favor, whether for the rich or for the poor. The slightest deflection from the truth on the part of the judge is censured with the utmost severity. Justice forms, in fact, and integral element in the G-d-idea of Judaism and the Almighty himself is represented as the Supreme Judge, 'the judge of the whole earth.' The human judges are, as it were, His deputies, and they are actually designated by the term *elohim*, whose whose ground-meaning is Power, but which is so frequently used of G-d as the All-Powerful. The Court of Justice is called *adat el* the congregation of G-d.

<<The great prophet Micah, in reducing religion to three leading principles, places justice at the forefront. When foretelling the approaching fall of the Jewish State, all the prophets unite in pointing to prevalence of injustice as largely responsible for the impending doom. Our sages, the mental heirs of the Prophets, echoing the voice of the Torah, the Prophets and the Psalmists, never tire of accentuating the paramount importance of the right administration of justice which they regard as one of the three pillars supporting the entire edifice of civilized society.

<<And yet, it is only shallow thought that will envisage Judaism as merely a religion of justice, or law. Judaism enjoins us to go, at times, beyond the boundaries of sheer justice *lifnim meshurot haDin*. It recognizes a kind of higher law issuing from *hesed* loving-kindness, love and it often bids us waive what is due to us by mere law, or allow to our fellow man, with whom we happen to have a dispute, what he is not entitled to by the letter of the law, or by mere forensic justice. And this is quite distinct from charity in the ordinary sense. Forensic justice is not the maximum: it is the minimum that the Torah demands from us in our relations with our fellow-men. It is not so much justice that is extolled, as injustice that is condemned. When the Torah contemplates the courts established for administering the law, it insists upon strict justice without favor even to the poor and the lowly. Yet even here the higher law, the law of *hesed*, is sometimes allowed to exercise very considerable influence upon the law.

<<It is in keeping with the great importance attached to justice in the economy of Judaism that we find the necessity of courts of law coinciding with the birth of Israel's religion. At first, Moses himself takes charge of the administration of justice. Later on, yielding to the sage counsel of Jethro, he institutes tribunals of various orders, reserving to himself the power of deciding difficult cases beyond the ken of his subordinate judges. For the future, a divine command ordains that 'judges and officers of justice' shall be appointed in all the cities of Israel. But all this is only of a general nature. Neither in the Torah nor in the Prophets are we given specific rules governing the constitution of the courts or their functioning. The Torah only indicates in a general way the qualities and virtues that one must possess to become eligible for the judiciary. Again details, real life, real time, was left to the Oral Torah. The actual

administration of the law would appear to have been chiefly vested in the heads of the clans rashei batei abot and the city-elders or city notables zekenim whether Levites or non-Levites. How one attained the rank of an elder or zaken and thus became eligible for the office of judge we are not told in the Bible, but instead relied upon the Oral Torah. The Levites, more especially the priests, owing to their expert knowledge of the law and of the national customs and traditions of which they were, in a sense, the hereditary custodians, were indeed from the time immemorial closely associated with the courts of law (DEUT. XVII, 9, 12; *ibid.* XXI, 5 etc.). In fact, even at a much later date, when the knowledge of the Torah had long ceased to be the special charge of the priesthood, it was still thought desirable that the court of law, at all events, the Supreme Court, should include priests and Levites among its members; but this was not deemed essential (Sifre, section Shofetim. Cf. II, CHRON. XIX, 5-11. Cf. also YOMA 26a).

<<Ezekiel, in his plan of the future theocracy, still represents the priests as functioning in the capacity of experts at every law-case (EZEK. XLIII, 24, cf. MIC. III, II, which shows that the priests acted chiefly as experts and interpreters of the law and not necessarily as the actual judges). Even in the messianic times we still will have Rabbis to help clarify law. This must have been so at the commencement of the Second Commonwealth; but, in the course of time, the regenerators of Judaism, inspired by the fervor a zeal of Ezra, succeeded in spreading the knowledge of Torah to such an extent that the priests ceased to figure distinctively in connection with the judiciary and eventually the only vestige of their pristine juric eminence became embodied in a special Priestly Court Bet Din Shel Kohanim(KET. 12: Yerushalmi, KET. Ch. I.) endowed with a very limited specific jurisdiction.

<<The judges Shofetim or rather national chiefs of the pre-regal epoch, exercised judicial authority among the ancient Hebrews. So did the Kings in Israel after them. But both the Shofetim and the Kings seem to have constituted courts of appeal charged with the duty of righting local judicial errors.

<<From the Scriptural data it would hardly be possible, as already remarked, to evolve any definite idea of the judicial system actually in vogue among pre-exilic Israel. It is only when we pass from the Bible to the Oral Torah are we enabled to glean information which affords us knowledge, more or less detailed, of the way in which the law was administered in the period contemporary with those sources and long before their date. It is in the period of the Second Temple that the Jewish Court first appears under the collective designation of Bet Din, or House of Judgment, and it is by this term that it is still known to the present day. In Biblical times the court was often called sha'ar gate, because of the fact that sessions were usually held over the city gates. This practice seems to have maintained itself until a very late date; for, in the well-known post-Talmudic prayer Yekum Purkan which is still recited in the synagogue on the Sabbath, reference is made to the 'judges of the gate'. The term Bet Din probably dates from the Age of Judges.

<<The Return from Babylon marked the beginning of a new era in Jewish history. It initiated the reign of the Torah, the written and the oral, in Jewish life, private and public. The Torah became the very life-breath of the nation and the Bet Din the agency for administering justice in accordance with its principals and laws. Henceforth we but rarely hear complaints about the perversion of justice and the corruption of judges so often echoed by the prophet during the earlier period (MAL. III, 5 'those that turn aside the stranger' (i.e., from justice) probably dates from a time before Ezra had reorganized the Jewish Courts in Judea. And, quite apart from this, it does not reflect a state of things anything near that which the pre-exilic prophets denounced in thundering words). The fiery admonitions of the prophets, scarcely heeded during their lifetime, now burnt themselves into the consciousness of the Jewish people. It is

highly significant that the Anshei Kneset haGedolah the Men of the Great Assembly (who included prophets) laid down the foundations of the new-old order. Unlike the prophets of old, did not deem it necessary to warn it against the perversion and corruption of justice. 'Be patient in judgment' was the only admonition which they addressed to their disciples.

<<The over-towering figure among the regenerators of Judaism in the period immediately following the return from Babylon is undoubtedly Ezra, whom teachers later likened to Moses. His arrival in Palestine (about 457 B.C.E.) inaugurated the reconstitution of the judiciary upon the basis of the Torah. He came armed with a Royal Charter which invested him with plenary powers to appoint 'judges and magistrates' and to enforce the law. It is from this moment that we may date the institution of the Bet Din, as the Mishnah and the Talmud know it. The name did not occur. The Book of EZRA still speaks of 'the elders and the judges of each city', while the term Bet Din had it already been current, would have been more convenient. But the institution itself was, without doubt, already operating as an agency which took charge of the whole of the Torah and whose function it was to declare the law, to adjudicate disputes, to watch

over the observance of the commandments of the Torah, to look after the interests of the poor, of the stranger, the widow and the orphan and, in addition to all these, to spread the knowledge of the Torah among these people. Many measures would not all be specifically attributed to Ezra. They were not new enactments, but merely the resuscitation of institutions ordained by the Torah as traditionally interpreted.

<<The success which attended Ezra's salutary activities at the beginning, would seem to have waned for some years. The courts established by him continued to hold their sittings and to act up to the standard set by him. When Nehemiah arrived upon the scene thirteen years after the advent of Ezra, he had occasion to complain of many abuses, but we hear no charges made against the honesty or competencies of the judiciary. Yet it is manifest that the law, while vested in the hands of men of honor and ability, had in the meantime lost much of its power. For otherwise, the abuses of which Nehemiah complains so bitterly would never have become rampant. Would a Bet Din armed with real power have allowed the public desecration of the Sabbath in Jerusalem and in the cities of Judah? The same applies to the civil law. Political currents weakened the Jewish courts, but never succeeded in abolishing this crucial agency of transmission and practice of Judaism.

<<The Great Assembly Keneset haGedolah is said to have consisted of 120 members. Whatever the critics may say, the historicity of that body cannot be questioned by sound, really scientific, criticism. The Great Assembly was not a court invested with a definite jurisdiction. It was rather a kind of academic-legislative assembly charged with the reorganizing of Jewish life, private and public, in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Torah and the Prophets.

<<The number 120 has puzzled inquirers. A possible solution: $120=12 \times 10$, that is a congregation - ten is the minimum number for constituting a 'congregation' edah for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The tribal divisions were no longer maintained in the Second Commonwealth, but the reminiscence of the division of Israel into twelve tribes was still quite fresh in the minds of the people who rebuilt the Jewish National Home in Palestine after the Return. At the dedication of the Second Temple 'twelve atonement sacrifices' were offered up 'according to the number of tribes of Israel.' The Great Assembly consisted of twelve congregations representing the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

<<Access to any of the bodies of judgment and law was open to anyone willing and talented enough to learn all of general studies and Torah. Quite egalitarian for those days.>>

We have profound principles for explaining the Law passed on until this very day from generation to generation. These principles have been listed in the name of Rabbi Yishmael son of Rabbi Elisha. Rabbi Yishmael was a colleague of Rabbi Akiva, of Israelite and convert stock, both died martyrs' death. If it were not for these principles we could not understand the plain meaning of Scripture. We need them to understand the clear directions of God's will, commandments, and love.

You know what they say. Where you have two Jews, you have three opinions. Let us apply our Torah rules or principles of logic. For example, to the concept of eye for an eye, not a single disagreement exists among 2,000 saintly Rabbis of the Talmud. All agree it means in every application only monetary compensation for injury. Not a single, solitary case was ever decided in any way but money compensation.

Take a look at the clear prohibition of accepting money compensation for malicious murder. **"Ye shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer." (Numbers, 35/31).** You see, for anything less than murder, compensation is in order. The Torah asks for compensation which would not be accomplished by merely damaging the offender. Also, the Eye for an eye means compensation. If my eye was 20/40, and yours 20/20; if mine was the hand of a piano player and yours is not, it would not be a fair exchange. Clearly the impossibility of literal application is obvious. The language is such to convey a moral standard, namely the enormity of causing personal injury and it is as if you should lose your corresponding body part. But that is merely a moral lesson, as the Torah never tires of making statements so as to set moral standards. The practical application is to compensate and make good, not to create more pain and loss in the community. The actual Hebrew shows this by using a term that means to complete, make peace, make up and compensate. Also, the word 'for' (tachat), in the expression 'eye for an eye,' means under, beneath, implying that the very letters of the Hebrew word for 'eye' fall underneath significant letters, which in fact, spell the three letter word for money - kesef(k-s-f-) is literally found next to the three letter word for eye, showing literally that monetary compensation was the intention. In the Hebrew Biblical mind, the term 'life for life' is only a term meaning fair compensation. Look at the parallel verse:

[LEVITICUS 24:18] "HE THAT SMITHETH A BEAST MORTALLY SHALL MAKE IT GOOD 'LIFE FOR LIFE'."

Again, this simply means fair compensation, otherwise anyone who killed an animal would have to forfeit his life in return to take away all doubt as to the intent of this technical legal term 'life for life.' The same paragraph **[LEVITICUS 24/21]** says, **"HE THAT KILLS A BEAST SHALL MAKE IT GOOD; AND HE THAT MURDERED A MAN SHALL BE PUT TO DEATH."**

The sages regard eye and tooth as typical and list twenty-four organs of the body which come within operation by the law. In computing compensation, the actual damage, loss of time, cost of cure, pain, disfigurement, and

embarrassment, were all taken into consideration (Hertz Pentateuch). The whole gist is,...
"SHALL MAKE IT GOOD, HE SHALL GIVE MONEY", [EXODUS 21:34].

To paraphrase the Rabbi Dr. Herzog (the late chief Rabbi of the British Empire), nothing can illustrate the difference of ancient legal system better than the application of the law of taliation. Today the evocation of life for life, etc., is recognized as one of the far-reaching steps in human progress. It has always meant the substitution of legal due process in place of wild revenge. One eye not two, one tooth not ten, one life not a whole family. For the founders of International Law Hugo Grotius, Jean Bodin, and John Seldan all maintain that 'eye for an eye' enjoins that a fair and equitable relation must exist between the crime and punishment and that all citizens have merit before the law. John D. Michaelis (pioneer of modern Bible exegesis) said, "This rule is appropriate for free peoples, in which the poorest member has the

same right as his most aristocratic assailant, the tooth of the poor peasant is as valuable as the nobleman's, even if the peasant must bite crust while the nobleman eats cake." All of the above scholars were at varying levels of common sense.

Come; Let us learn together for a while. Examples of these principles that serve as laws of Exegesis include the following: One of the ancient principals is that an inference (conclusion) can be made from a minor premise (lenient law) to a major premise (strict law) and vice versa. This concept in Hebrew (a very precise and beautiful language) is communicated in two words: "Kal veChomer". Now say we have an act that is forbidden on a regular festival (holiday), then it would be so much more forbidden on a special stricter holiday such as The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). However if a certain action is permissible on Yom Kippur then so much more so should it be permitted on an ordinary festival. In other words logic shows that a lenient case has a strict dimension and the same stringency would be relevant in a much stricter case.

Let us go on to another principal through which the Torah is elucidated. When we have a tradition from a similarity of phrases and words in various contexts it can be inferred that what is meant in one passage can clarify and be applied to the other. Hebrew succinctly expresses this rule of logic in two words: "Gezera Sheva". Now for several examples that will enable us to see the dynamics at work here. The verse fragment concerning a "[Hebrew slave](#)" [[Exodus 21:2](#)] is unclear.

["IF THOU BUY A HEBREW SERVANT, SIX YEARS HE SHALL SERVE: AND IN THE SEVENTH HE SHALL GO OUT FREE FOR NOTHING" \[EXODUS 21:2\].](#)

This could conceivably apply to a pagan slave owned by a Hebrew or else it could perhaps be a slave who is Jewish (Hebrew). It cannot be both. We know that it is referring to a Jewish slave because of a reference to "your Hebrew brother" in [[Deuteronomy 15:12](#)]. ["AND IF THY BROTHER, AN HEBREW MAN, OR AN HEBREW WOMAN, BE SOLD UNTO THEE, AND SERVE THEE SIX YEARS; THEN IN THE SEVENTH YEAR THOU SHALT LET HIM GO FREE FROM THEE" \[DEUTERONOMY 15:12\].](#)

This is the same case as that in Exodus 21:2 and here it clearly refers to "your brother, a Hebrew man." Thus the two verses clarify each other.

Another pertinent example is found in the Book of Numbers. [[NUMBERS 28:2](#)] [COMMAND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, AND SAY UNTO THEM, MY OFFERING, AND MY BREAD FOR MY SACRIFICES MADE BY FIRE, FOR A SWEET SAVOUR UNTO ME, SHALL YE OBSERVE TO OFFER UNTO ME IN THEIR DUE SEASON" \[Hebrew: BeMoado\].](#)

[\[NUMBERS 9:2\] LET THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL ALSO KEEP THE PASSOVER AT HIS APPOINTED SEASON " \[Hebrew: BeMoado\].](#)

We find the same word "in its time" (i.e. due season, appointed season, Hebrew: BeMoado). Used regarding the daily-continual ("tamid") sacrificial offering. This offering had to be sacrificed on the set time even on the Sabbath. A positive commandment (thou shalt) commandment (here to bring the "tamid" continual daily offering) pushes aside the negative ("thou shalt not") of the Sabbath. With some reservations this principle (of positive commandments overriding negative ones) held throughout all our history. The same goes for the holy act of circumcision that must be performed on the eighth day even if this falls on the Sabbath. Similarly exactly the same expression "in its time" (Hebrew: BeMoado) is used concerning the Passover sacrifice. We learn from one case to another. These expressions

serve to clarify our obligations and G-d's will. Likewise if one was to be in a state of ritual impurity "in its time" (Hebrew: BeMoado) would tell us to offer the sacrifice despite the status of otherwise not being allowed to offer sacrifices in a ritually impure state.

Are you still here? Good, take a deep breath. Relax, and let's continue to learn.

A general principle learned from one verse and a general principal derived from two verses. In other words a general rule expressed in two Biblical Law will be applicable to all similar related laws. For example:

[DEUTERONOMY 24:6] NO MAN SHALL TAKE THE NETHER OR THE UPPER MILLSTONE TO PLEDGE: FOR HE TAKETH A MAN'S LIFE TO PLEDGE.

We are here told that no man should take a hand mill or millstone [general rule] to pledge [as security for a loan/debt] for he would be taking a life [livelihood] in pledge. This Sinaitic rule of logic would dictate that generally, the just established principal applies to all similar issues. The conclusion of the Rabbis is that everything that is necessary for the preparation of food is forbidden to be used as a pledge. The Torah says that a man cannot marry the daughter of his mother by another father (maternal half sister). There is also a law against marrying the sister of your father. The general principle demands that the law against marrying your maternal half sister apply to the maternal half sister of your father. The Torah says that if a man strikes the eye or knocks out the tooth of his slave he must let him go free. Based on the above principle of application to related cases the Rabbis concluded whenever any part of the body of a slave is mutilated by the master then the slave must be set free.

Now one more of the more simple rules of Biblical exposition. Two similar passages that contradict one another can be harmonized by a third passage that reconciles the others. In Genesis 22:2, Abraham is told to offer up his son. God however had already told Abraham that his son Isaac would become a great nation (Genesis 21:12). The answer is that the command was to place Isaac as an offering but not to slaughter him (the literal Hebrew said merely to raise him up). Thus there was no contradiction.

In Exodus 13:6, the Israelites are told to eat unleavened bread for seven days whereas elsewhere they are told six days:

[DEUTERONOMY 16:8] SIX DAYS THOU SHALT EAT UNLEAVENED BREAD: AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY SHALL BE A SOLEMN ASSEMBLY TO THE LORD THY GOD: THOU SHALT DO NO WORK THEREIN.

To solve the problem of an apparent contradiction all that is needed is to apply the exegetical principal:

[LEV 23:14] AND YE SHALL EAT NEITHER BREAD, NOR PARCHED CORN, NOR GREEN EARS, UNTIL THE SELFSAME DAY THAT YE HAVE BROUGHT AN OFFERING UNTO YOUR GOD: IT SHALL BE A STATUTE FOR EVER THROUGHOUT YOUR GENERATIONS IN ALL YOUR DWELLINGS.

[LEV 23:15] AND YE SHALL COUNT UNTO YOU FROM THE MORROW AFTER THE SABBATH, FROM THE DAY THAT YE BROUGHT THE SHEAF OF THE WAVE OFFERING; SEVEN SABBATHS SHALL BE COMPLETE:

This is the law of new produce. It was forbidden to eat new grain of the season until the second day of Passover (called "Sabbath" on the verse Leviticus 23:15 above) when the Omer barley offering was sacrificed. If the unleavened bread (matzah) was made of new grain it could only be eaten on six days of the Passover week. Therefore the verse in Exodus 13:6 about eating unleavened bread for six days refers to unleavened bread made from new grain.

Exodus 19; 20 says that God came down: **[EXODUS 19:20] "AND THE LORD CAME DOWN UPON MOUNT SINAI, ON THE TOP OF THE MOUNT: AND THE LORD CALLED MOSES UP TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNT; AND MOSES WENT UP"**.

In Exodus 20:22 it says that God spoke from heaven: **[EXODUS 20:22] "AND THE LORD SAID UNTO MOSES, THUS THOU SHALT SAY UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, YE HAVE SEEN THAT I HAVE TALKED WITH YOU FROM HEAVEN"**.

Deuteronomy makes peace between the two versions by explaining that out of heaven did He make his voice heard to take you under the bond of His discipline and on the earth He let see his great fire from the midst of which you heard His words.

[DEUTERONOMY 4:36] "OUT OF HEAVEN HE MADE THEE TO HEAR HIS VOICE, THAT HE MIGHT INSTRUCT THEE: AND UPON EARTH HE SHEWED THEE HIS GREAT FIRE; AND THOU HEARDEST HIS WORDS OUT OF THE MIDST OF THE FIRE".

These are but a few simple examples of how the written Torah is predicated on the Oral Torah through logical rules of exegesis. The same Oral Torah decides how the rules are utilized. No one has authority to use these principles in just any old way. Only the path given by the Oral Law can be used to apply these principles in a way that does. The Oral Torah saves us from gross violation of Gd's true intentions. For example, the concept of eye for an eye means equally fair compensation is the proper literal understanding. This policy is clearly felt, understood and learned with any sensitivity to the texts as a whole. But it takes the guidance of the Oral Tradition to protect, guide, nurture this sensitivity.

The Written Torah would be comparable to hard earth and all the fruit and vegetables which are growing from it is comparable to the Oral Torah. The Written law appears fixed, rigid, unchanging. The Oral Law is moving, alive, dynamic, flexible and has the potential to deal with categories, define, analyze, adjust, and raise the times to the Torah's standards. The Written Law is similar to the magnificent skeleton of the human body. The Oral tradition fills out the body, gives skin, eyes, and hair-coloring, personality and healthy body systems. The Oral and written tradition together is what makes the Hebrew people and the Bible together the longest living faith,. It exemplifies the covenant which is in a continual state of renewal and rejuvenation. Just as is the dynamic ongoing discussion energized by the tensions of debates whose purpose is to reveal G-d's will desire and directives. This is both exciting and depicts the ongoing revelation and dialogue between Gd and Israel.

There is much evidence for the antiquity of the Oral Tradition. For example we have laws in the Mishna which only make sense and were relevant to the times before the Land was conquered and settlement commenced. The inheritance question of the daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 27;1) The Mishna said they had rights to the portion of both their father and grandfather. The land was split up according to the families that went out of Egypt upon their death their immediate descendants inherited their portions. This is Oral Law at the very beginning of Israelite History. The prohibition of orlah (which limits the use of trees before their fifth year) and how it influenced the Israelite settlers. What was the law of an already planted tree, etc. The Mishna says it did not apply.

As with the example of an eye for an eye all of our important institutions assume the existence of an Oral Torah. The written law never stood alone. It was always accompanied and elucidated by the Oral Torah. This does not require a leap of faith but merely looking over the Torah one is immediately struck with the absolute necessity for the Oral Law.

Arguments, decisions, as to the six cities of refuge where accidental manslaughter could stay and be rehabilitated and safe. three cities on each side of the Jordan River: the Mishna tells us that even though three cities were already set up on the east side in the time of Moses they only went into operation when all the six cities had been established (Makot 3b). A Mishna in Negaim occupies itself with a person afflicted by special spiritually-generated type of leprosy that broke out before the monumental revelation at Sinai. The Misha lays down the law that in

such a case those particular signs of leprosy did not make a person ritually unclean even after the revelation at Sinai. We see how the Oral Teaching was delivered, functioning, and cleaning up issues from the dawn of Jewish history. Thus the Oral Tradition clarifies difficulties in understanding and implementing the Biblical words from the earliest times of manhood. The Oral Law would not need to legislate and enact laws that applied to situations that were not in existence. No one

would need a legal enactment for folk with leprosy even before the Torah was revealed except for the real people and their families immediately affected at that time. We see that the teachings which came to us from the Mishna of the Sages have identical date and origin with that which is derived by interpretation of the Scriptural word. All is given by the One God and communicated by the one same Prophet Moses. Moses, and thereafter the Elders, Prophets, Sages, down to our own times. The principles by which the sages in future generations deduced the laws applicable to any generation (Sifra, Behar, Exodus Rabah 41), Rabbi Akiva asks, "Did Moses learn the whole Torah?" To which he replies, "NO." God only needed to teach him the principles.

To paraphrase Professor Nicholai Berdyaev (The Meaning of History, London, Moscow Academy of Spiritual Culture, 1936), the Jewish people and the Jewish Torah's survival seems absolutely inexplicable. Its survival is a mysterious and wonderful phenomenon demonstrating that the life of this people is governed by a higher special process transcending the processes of adaptation expanded by materialistic interpretations. All of this points to the particular and mysterious foundations of their destiny. Scientific criticism applied to traditional Biblical history can neither discredit the universal role played by the Jews nor offer a satisfactory explanation of their mysterious destiny. Nor does this criticism grapple with their extraordinary intense feeling for history.

As Blaise Pascal said, "This people are not eminent solely by their antiquity, but are also singular by their devotion, which has always continued from their origin, until now. In spite of all the endeavors of many powerful kings who have a hundred times tried to destroy them, as their historians testify, they have nevertheless been preserved (and this preservation has been foretold), their history comprehends in its duration all our histories."

Ellis Rivkin points out in his The Dynamics of Jewish History, "In any given century, Jews would be living simultaneously in as many as three or four radically different societies, each of which demanded a distinctive form of Jewish adaptation if survival was to be sustained. Not only was this challenge met, but it was met without annulling a distinctive Jewish identity."

This continuity was made possible by the unique combination of meshing of the Oral and Written Torah. "YOU ARE THE ONES WHO HAVE BEEN SHOWN SO THAT YOU WILL KNOW," says the Torah, "THAT G-D IS THE SUPREME BEING AND THERE IS NONE BESIDES HIM." [DEUTERONOMY 32:40]. The same chapter links this personal G-d with a practical transmission.

You might inquire about times long past, going back to the time that G-d created man on earth, exploring one end of the heavens to the other, see if anything as great as this has ever happened. G-g related and relates to His people within history and through His Torah. A living process of transmissions highlighted here and there with miracles. "REALIZE IT TODAY AND PONDER IN YOUR HEART G-D IS THE SUPREME BEING IN HEAVEN ABOVE AND ON EARTH BENEATH THERE IS NO OTHER. KEEP HIS DECREES AND COMMANDMENTS THAT I AM PRESENTING TO YOU TODAY." [DEUTERONOMY 4.] Decrees and commandments that are to be kept in a real time practical way; the only way was, and is, with a living Oral Torah explanation enabling us to do so.

Here we have cited passages and scholars pointing out the importance of history and the survival across time of the Jews. What, may I ask you is history and time made of? One response is the rising and setting of the sun. The orbit of the moon around the earth. The Earth around the sun. Years, months, days, hours, minutes, and seconds are the nitty gritty building blocks of our earthly time perception. That is exactly what is needed for every human society in general and for the Jewish faith community in particular.

All of the timing for the Biblical holidays were entrusted to the Rabbis. Biblical law demands that the month of Nissan (Passover) must occur in the spring and the month of Tishri, with the harvest festival of Succoth, must be in fall, hence the necessity for a solar and lunar calendar. Deuteronomy 16:1 demands that Passover be in the spring, **'FOR IN THE MONTH OF SPRINGTIME THE L-RD, YOUR G-D TOOK YOU OUT OF EGYPT.'** Numbers, 9/1-3 tells us that the Passover offering needs to be offered on the 14th day of the 1st month (Nissan). **'THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL SHALL MAKE THE PESACH OFFERING IN ITS APPOINTED TIME. ON THE 14TH OF THIS MONTH, IN THE AFTERNOON SHALL YOU MAKE IT, IN ITS APPOINTED TIME, ACCORDING TO ALL OF ITS DECREES AND LAWS SHALL YOU MAKE IT.'** Not only the exact style and nature of the offering was dependent on oral explanation of 'decrees and laws', but the very fixing of the calendar was completely dependent on our oral tradition.

[EZEKIEL 13:9]: 'MY HAND WILL BE AGAINST THE PROPHETS WHO SEE VANITY AND DIVINE FALSEHOOD. THEY SHALL NOT SHARE THE SECRET OF MY PEOPLE AND IN THE SCROLL OF THE FAMILY OF ISRAEL SHALL THEY NOT BE WRITTEN, AND TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL SHALL THEY NOT ENTER. THEN YOU SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE L-RD G-D. THEY SHALL NOT BE IN THE COUNCIL OF MY PEOPLE...' This refers to the council of the calendar inter-calculation. When G-d said to Moses and Aaron, **"THIS MONTH SHALL BE FOR YOU THE BEGINNING OF THE MONTHS"**, **[EXODUS 12:1-2]**, G-d also transmitted to them the rules of calculating a new month. How to establish the year and month were made known to him Moses in order to fulfill the explicit command. 'Observe the spring month and offer a celebration of the Passover sacrifice.' (Rosh Hashana 25a) This necessitated us having both a solar and lunar year.

According to the Torah, the time between one new moon and the next is "29.5 days plus 793 parts of an hour." An hour is divided into 1080 parts.

The preceding are modern calculations for the time which elapses between one mean conjunction of the moon and the next. The prophets, the sages, scribes, and the Rabbis have had the sole jurisdiction and direction over the calendar. They have preserved it and synchronized it now for 3300 years. Compare the logic, order and correctness of the Rabbis to the chaos, gross errors and arbitrariness of other world calendars. According to the Discovery booklet from Aish HaTorah, Years of research based on calculations using satellites, hairline telescopes, laser beams and super computers, scientists at NASA have determined that the length of the "syndic month," i.e. the time between one new moon and the next is:

Let us add the words of Rabbi J. David Bleich, (ArtScroll-Mesorah Pub., pp. 47-48). The origin of the calendric system in general use today the Gregorian calendar can be traced back to the Roman republican calendar, which is thought to have been introduced by the fifth king of Rome, Tarquinius Priscus (616-579 BCE)...

By 46 BCE the calendar had become so hopelessly confused that Julius Caesar was forced to initiate a reform of the entire system. Caesar invited the Alexandrian astronomer Sosigenes to undertake this task. Sosigenes suggested abandoning the lunar system altogether and replacing it with a tropical

year of 365.25 days. Further, to correct the accumulation of previous errors, a total of 90 intercalary days had to be added to 46 BCE, meaning January 1, 45 BCE, occurred in what would have been the middle of March. To prevent the problem from recurring, Sosigenes suggested that an extra day be added to every fourth February. The adoption of such reformatory measures resulted in the establishment of the Julian calendar, which was used for roughly the next 1,600 years. During that time, however, the disagreement between the Julian year of 365.25 days and the tropical year of 365.242199 gradually produced

significant errors. The discrepancy mounted at a rate of 11 minutes 14 seconds per year until it was a full 10 days in 1545, when the Council of Trent authorized Pope Paul III to take corrective action. No solution was found for many years. In 1572 Pope Gregory III agreed to issue a papal bull drawn up by the Jesuit astronomer Christopher Clavius. Ten years later, when the edict was finally proclaimed, 10 days in October were skipped to bring the calendar back in line.

Is the point here clear? The Bible orders us to keep the holidays in a certain way and establish a calendar. This command necessitates an oral body of tremendous information, topics of astronomy, math, seasons, etc., all of which are not to be found in the written Torah by any regular examination.

Textual references abound to the oral tradition where the text did not specify procedures, obvious reliance on procedures etc. were described orally. In [Numbers 29:1](#), 'THE 7TH MONTH (again here is our Rabbinically supervised calendar), ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH, YOU SHALL HAVE A HOLY CONVOCATION, YOU SHALL DO NO MANNER OF WORK, IT IS A DAY OF BLOWING FOR YOU.' Blowing what? A French horn? A flute? The answer, my friend is not blowing in the wind. No, my friend, the answer is flowing in the Oral Torah. Without debate or contradiction the Torah is talking about the Shofar, the ram's horn. Leviticus 16/31, on the day of the atonement we are told, 'you shall afflict your soul'. That this refers to fasting and other minor discomforts has been clearly defined in the Oral Law. The Torah says to circumcise on the 8th day and it is serious. What kind of operation is this? A heart operation, perhaps? For heavens sake, we are talking about a possible medical procedure which demanded a thorough oral explanation.

The prophet Zechariah 8/19 lists four fast days which only through the oral tradition would be clear to us. So said HASHEM, (G-d) of Hosts, 'the fast of the 4th (month), the fast of the 5th (month), the fast of the 7th (month), and the fast of the 10th (month) shall be for the house of Judah for joy and gladness for joyous holidays, for love, truth and peace.' Here is an undisputed prophet mentioning fasts for which knowledge of the Oral Law was crucial. For the crucial institution of Sabbath observance again you need to check in to understand the matter with the oral tradition. We learn out from the juxtaposition of prohibition of work next to the work required in the building of the Tabernacle. We learn of 39 categories of prohibitive creative work. From these verses emerge the authoritative definition of work and a Shabbat that has been kept faithfully without debate by millions of Jews for thousands of years. Rabbi Tuvia Singer's insightful tapes point out that folk who have not had the opportunity to learn about the Oral Torah sometimes say it's an invention of the Rabbinic Sages. To say the holy sages have invented something foreign and have no authority regarding the Bible, is like saying the Jewish Israelis occupying Jerusalem are foreign and invented their authority over the city. Jewish Israelite presence in Jerusalem is an expression of Biblical truth and G-d's desire. Just as the elders, Rabbis, scribes, and sages of the Oral Torah express Biblical truth and G-d's desire. Groups arose and disappeared who rejected Judaism and its guardianship of the oral tradition. Still, they were at their wits ends to apply the written law without the Oral Law and had to invent their own version. They did indeed, and each and every one of them admit to the absolute necessity of the oral tradition,

but merely rejected the age old commitment, devotion, and transmission of the sages. The Christian world lost complete contact with the Oral Law for a host of reasons. Firstly, because the early Church, after the council of Nice had no access to the oral tradition in terms of their total lack of schooling and experience. Hence, since they were lacking access, they demonized it and rejected it. They also never even tried, according to their theology, to fulfill the Written Bible. Without an attempt to keep the written laws, there arose no need to understand in depth how to apply the various written laws. We can go one step further and deeper; even in times of the Messiah, non-Jews will not be obligated in the 613 commandments of the Bible, but rather the 7 universal commandments given to Noah at the revelation of the rainbow, 10 generations before the first Hebrew, Abraham. Gentiles, even in messianic times, won't need as thorough a comprehension of the oral tradition as your average, Bible keeping, religious Jew.

PROPHETS KEEPING RABBINIC JUDAISM

Daniel and other outstanding, brilliant, young Jews were recruited by Nebuchadnezzar to be trained to serve Babylon. The King sent the finest foods and drinks for these up and coming scholars, but they could not eat or drink of this kingly spread. Why? It was not pork or shellfish. Because there is a general Rabbinic prohibition not to eat gentile produces food that did not have Jewish supervision. You don't know for sure if its permitted food with some non-kosher ingredient. However, specifically here, by Daniel and company, there is a Rabbinic decree created to inhibit assimilation and intermarriage, which forbids eating and drinking wine and bread products by gentiles. This is a non-Biblical, strictly protective Rabbinic decree, which Daniel and friends kept, risking their lives. Daniel and friends and the nation of Israel have been guided by the same Torah injunction.

[DEUTERONOMY 17; 8] 'IF THERE BE A MATTER CONCEALED FROM THEE IN JUDGMENT, BETWEEN BLOOD AND BLOOD, BETWEEN DECISION AND DECISION, AND BETWEEN PLAGUE AND PLAGUE, (EVEN) MATTERS OF CONTROVERSY WITHIN THY GATES, THEN THOU SHALT ARISE, AND GET THEE UP UNTO THE PLACE WHICH THE L-RD THY G-D SHALL CHOOSE.

(VS.9) AND THOU SHALT COME UNTO THE PRIEST THE LEVITES, AND UNTO THE JUDGE THAT SHALL BE IN THOSE DAYS; [Even if he is not like other judges who were before him, you must listen to him; you have only the judge of your own time (R.H. 25)] AND THOU SHALT INQUIRE; AND THEY SHALL DECLARE UNTO THEE THE SENTENCE OF THE JUDGMENT.

(VS.10) AND THOU SHALT DO ACCORDING TO THE TENOR OF THE SENTENCE, WHICH THEY SHALL DECLARE UNTO THEE FROM THAT PLACE WHICH THE L-RD SHALL CHOOSE; AND THOU SHALT OBSERVE TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THEY SHALL TEACH THEE.

(VS.11) ACCORDING TO THE LAW WHICH THEY SHALL TEACH THEE, AND ACCORDING TO THE JUDGMENT WHICH THEY SHALL TELL THEE, THOU SHALT DO; THOU SHALT NOT TURN

ASIDE FROM THE SENTENCE WHICH THEY SHALL DECLARE UNTO THEE (TO THE) RIGHT (HAND), NOR (TO THE) LEFT. (VS.12) AND THE MAN THAT DOETH PRESUMPTUOUSLY, ON NOT HEARKENING UNTO THE PRIEST THAT STANDETH TO MINISTER THERE (BEFORE) THE L-RD THY G-D, OR UNTO THE JUDGE, EVEN THAT MAN SHALL DIE; AND THOU SHALT EXTERMINATE THE EVIL FROM ISRAEL. (VS.13) AND ALL THE PEOPLE SHALL HEAR, AND FEAR, AND DO NO MORE PRESUMPTUOUSLY.'

Take a good look at Daniel 1/3-16. Miracles were performed for Daniel and his friends because of Rabbinic decrees. The Torah gives the sages the power to protect the Torah, to erect fences around the Torah. Much like a guardrail protects cars from falling off a highway or into a ravine below or a hedge of roses is to a garden. Numerous times the Torah says to guard and protect the Torah. Hence the erecting of protective degrees of Rabbinic origin is in harmony with Biblical demands. A Rabbinic

law made to protect a Biblical law is not adding on the Bible. Just the opposite it is fulfilling the Biblical injunction of protecting and guarding the Bible.

The oral tradition makes protective degrees to keep Jews from intermarrying. These included a ban on gentile produced wine and cooked foods. Daniel, Chanayah and Mishael risked their lives not other than transgress Rabbinic ordinances. Also, Daniel 3/6-13, Daniel was found praying three times a day, just as he had done before - it has something to do with the law. What law? Not so much Biblical law, but a Rabbinical law encouraging regular prayer. Yet Daniel, a prophet keeps it.

Many times the prophets exhort the people to keep the non-Biblical laws that emerge from the Oral Bible. As safeguards, these non-Biblical laws serve to protect, guard, and preserve Biblical laws. All of our tradition agrees that Divine inspiration did not leave the sages. In other cases, the prophets are discussing the applications of Torah laws. They support the explanations and elucidations of cryptic, vague, and otherwise non-intelligible Biblical commands. Again and again, the Torah tells us to listen to prophet or sage. Deuteronomy 17/8-11 and Leviticus 26/46 clearly implying there will always be sages to go to. Our oral tradition tells us that all that was, is, and shall be, is hidden in the Torah. Not only in a general way, but in a specific way. Concerning this secret truth, which we have not the ability to completely understand, the book of Job says, 'Its measure is longer than the world.'

The following will give you a brief insight into one of the mysterious levels of understanding G-d's eternal love letter, the Torah. I'd like to thank Aish HaTorah's Discovery booklet for the form of the wisdom to follow.

THE NUMBER 7 is considered one of the most significant numbers in Judaism:

- Shabbat is the 7th day of the week.
- The Sabbatical Year (Shmita) takes place every 7th year.
- When someone passes away, relatives sit "Shiva" for 7 days.
- At a traditional Jewish wedding, the bride walks around the groom 7 times.
- Gentiles are required to observe the 7 Laws of Noah.
- There are 7 major holidays.

THE NUMBER 49, being 7- times - 7, has great significance in Judaism.

- Between the holidays of Shavuot and Pesach, we "count the Omer" for seven weeks, or 49 days.
- The Jubilee Year occurs after 49 years, following 7 cycles of the 7-year Sabbatical.
- The Zohar reports that the spiritual world contains 49 levels of spiritual elevation and decline.

RESEARCH OF IVAN PANIN MATHEMATICIAN AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Ivan Panin was a Russian immigrant known at the turn of the century as a brilliant literary figure, multi-lingual scholar, and mathematician at Harvard University. He was also a devout Catholic. Panin knew Hebrew, and began studying the Bible in its original language. Aware of the numerical values of the Hebrew alphabet, Panin experimented one day by replacing the letters with their corresponding numbers. Suddenly, his trained scientific mind picked up an elaborate mathematical pattern: In the first verse of the Torah alone, Panin discovered over 50 patterns of the number seven. According to Panin, the statistical odds of this pattern being an accident are one in 33 trillion 0.00000000000003.

Following this discovery, Panin devoted his entire life to the study of Bible Numerics, and eventually submitted to the Nobel Research Foundation over 43,000 sheets of his research. In

this verse (the first verse of the Torah), Prof. Panin found over 50 combinations of "seven." Below are a few examples.

Number of words on the verse.....	7 (7 x 1)
Number of letters in the verse.....	28 (7 x 4)
Numeric value of the one verb.....	203 (7 x 29)
Numeric value of the three nouns.....	777 (7 x 111)
Numeric value of first-and-last letters, in the first-and-last words.....	497 (7 x 71)
Numeric value of the first-and-last letters of every word	1393 (7 x 199)

TORAH CODES

Suppose we eliminate all spaces in the Torah, and consider the text as one long sequence of 304,805 letters. A computer is then instructed to look for hidden words, encoded at equal skips of letters. For example, the distance between the letters comprising the word "HaShoa" (Holocaust) is 49. Statisticians call this phenomenon and ELS short for "equidistant letter sequence."

Once the computer has revealed an encoded word, we then format the long list of the Torah's letters into an line-length that best graphically depicts the encoded word. For example, if a code was found at a skip sequence of every 49 letters, we would format the Torah into lines of 50 letters each. Not a single letter is added, deleted or changed; the new **line-length simply enables us to view the encoded word more easily.**

THE RAMBAM CODE

Maimonides is recognized in the four corners of the globe as one of the most famous of all Jewish commentators. Acclaimed author, esteemed philosopher, renowned physician, and master Talmudist this is his legacy. Maimonides is known more popularly as the "Rambam," an acronym for his Hebrew name, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon. The Rambam, who lived in Egypt, was a much sought-after medical expert, and he served as the personal physician for the royal Egyptian court. But most of all, the Rambam was a prolific writer on the most important topics of Judaism. His magnum opus, Mishne Torah, ("Review of the Torah") on the subject of the 613 mitzvahs, is revered until this day as the most authoritative, comprehensive codification of Jewish law. It is a marvel of Jewish scholarship, and was composed in Egypt. In fact, so revered is Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, that he is popularly mentioned in the same breath with the Moses who led the Jews out of Egypt and brought them to Mt. Sinai. As the ancient Jewish maxim goes:

"From Moses until Moses there was none as great as Moses." It was stated by the Vilna Gaon, every person is alluded to in the Torah. When the Vilna Gaon was challenged to locate the Torah's reference to the Rambam, he pointed to this verse. 'G-d said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My marvels may be multiplied in the land of Egypt."

Exodus 11/9. Here, the acrostic RaMBaM is formed by the first letters of each word in the phrase "My marvels may be multiplied in the land of Egypt" (Ribot Moftai B'erezt Mitzraim). Mishne Torah, his marvel of Jewish scholarship, was composed in Egypt. When the computer searched the entire Torah to find any other appearance of four consecutive words which form the acrostic RaMBaM, it was discovered that this was the only occurrence. Out of approximately 80,000 words, this is the only place in the entire Torah where we find the acrostic "RaMBaM."

"GREAT RABBIS" EXPERIMENT

For this experiment, great rabbis' names were taken from the Encyclopedia of Great Men in Israel, edited by Professor M. Marglioth in 1961. The criteria for selection was that an entry contain at least three columns of text, and that the date of death ("yahrtzeit") be specified. Thirty-four rabbis qualified for the test.

In the second experiment, we employed exactly the same methodology as the first. This time we were asked to select entries from the Encyclopedia of Great Men in Israel containing 1.5-3 columns of text. In addition, a control experiment was conducted using a cycling shift of data. That is, we used [name of ith person, date of i+1st person] as the set of word pairs. The results of these experiments have been rigorously tested, verified and validated by leading statisticians worldwide. In August 1994, the "Great Rabbis Experiment" was published in its entirety in the prestigious scientific journal, Statistical Science.

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JOURNAL EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Equidistant Letter Sequences in the Book of Genesis

Doron Witzum, Eliyahu Rips, and Yoav Rosenberg searched the Book of Genesis looking for pairs of words spelled by picking every dth letter, where d is some integer. The pairs of words were names of personalities and dates of their birth or death taken from the Encyclopedia of Great Men in Israel. When the authors used a randomization test to see how rarely the patterns they found might arise by chance alone, they obtained a very highly significant result, with $p=0.000016$. Our referees were baffled: Their prior beliefs made them think the Book of Genesis could not possibly contain meaningful references to modern-day individuals, yet when the authors carried out additional analyses and checks, the effect persisted. The paper is thus offered to Statistical Science readers as a challenging puzzle.

EQUIDISTANT LETTER SEQUENCES IN THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Doron Witzum, Eliyahu Rips, and Yoav Rosenberg Abstract. It has been noted that when the Book of Genesis is written as two-dimensional arrays, equidistant letter sequences spelling words with related meanings often appear in close proximity. Quantitative tools for measuring this phenomenon are developed. Randomization analysis shows that the effect is significant at the level of 0.00002.

Key words and phrases: Genesis, equidistant letter sequences, cylindrical representations, statistical analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon discussed in this paper was first discovered several decades ago by Rabbi Weissmandel. He found some interesting patterns in the Hebrew Pentateuch (the Five Books of Moses), consisting of words or phrases expressed in the form of equidistant letter sequences (ELS's) that is, by selecting sequences of equally spaced letters in the text. As impressive as these seemed, there was no rigorous way of determining if these occurrences were not merely due to the enormous quantity of combinations of words and expressions that can be constructed by searching out arithmetic progressions in the text. The purpose of the research reported here is to study the phenomenon systematically. The goal is to clarify whether the phenomenon in question is a real one, that is, whether it can or cannot be explained purely on the basis of fortuitous combinations. The approach we have taken in this research can be illustrated by the following example. Suppose we have a text written in a foreign language that we do not understand. We are asked whether the text is meaningful (in that foreign language) or meaningless. Of course, it is very difficult to decide between these possibilities, since we do not understand the language. Suppose now that we are equipped with a very partial dictionary, which enable us to recognize a small portion of the words in the text: "hammer" here and "chair" there, and maybe even "umbrella" elsewhere. Can we now decide between the two possibilities? Not yet. But suppose now that, aided with the partial dictionary, we can recognize in the text a pair of conceptually related words, like "hammer" and "anvil." We check if there is a tendency of their appearances in the text to be in "close proximity." If the text is meaningless, we do not expect to see such a tendency, since there is no reason for it to occur. Next, we widen our check; we may identify some other pairs of conceptually related words like "chair" and "table," or "rain" and "umbrella." Thus we have a sample of such pairs, and we check the tendency of each pair to appear in close proximity to the next. If the text is meaningless, there is no reason to expect such a tendency. However, a strong tendency of such pairs to appear in close proximity indicates that the text might be meaningful. Note that even in an absolutely meaningful text we do not expect that, deterministically every such pair will show such tendency. Note also, that **we did not decode the foreign language of the text yet: we do not recognize its syntax and we cannot read the text. This is our approach in the research described in the paper. To test whether the ELS's in a given text may contain "hidden information," we write the text in the form of two-dimensional arrays, and define the distance between the ELS's according to the ordinary two-dimensional Euclidean metric. Then we check whether ELS's representing conceptually related words tend to appear in "close proximity." Suppose we are given a text, such as Genesis. Define an equidistant letter sequence (ELS) as a sequence of letters in the text whose positions, not counting spaces, form an arithmetic progression; that is, the letters are found at the positions $n, n + d, n + 2d, \dots, n + (k - 1)d$.**

[The tests showed the names of great Rabbis plus their birth dates and other information encoded in the Book of Genesis].

PROMISES OF ETERNAL ISRAEL FALL ON THE KEEPERS OF THE ORAL LAW

Finally, Israel is described as the eternal nation. **[GENESIS 17:7, LEVITICUS 26:44-45] speaks of 'ETERNAL BONDS OF DESCENDANTS AFTER YOU.' [ISAIAH 54:10, 54:17] 'MY LOVE FOR YOU SHALL NEVER MOVE.'**

[JEREMIAH 31:34-35, 46:27-28] 'I WILL CORRECT YOU IN JUST MEASURE, BUT I WILL NOT UTTERLY DESTROY YOU.' [MALACH 3:6] 'FOR I AM G-D, I DO NOT CHANGE. YOU ARE THE CHILDREN OF JACOB, YOU WILL NOT CEASE TO BE.' [DEUTERONOMY 7:6-9, 12] 'HE IS G-D, THE FAITHFUL G-D WHICH KEEPS HIS COVENANT AND MERCY WITH THEM THAT LOVE HIM AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS.... IF YOU HEARKEN (the oral listening, ongoing teaching ingredient) TO THESE JUDGMENTS AND KEEP THEM AND DO THEM, THAT THE L-RD YOUR G-

D SHALL KEEP UNTO YOU THE COVENANT AND THE MERCY HE SWORE TO YOUR FATHER.' [ISAIAH 59:21] **'AS FOR ME, THIS IS MY COVENANT ...MY WORDS WHICH I HAVE PUT IN YOUR MOUTH, (ORAL TRANSMISSION) SHALL NOT DEPART FROM YOUR MOUTH NOR FROM THE MOUTHS OF YOUR CHILDREN, NOR FROM THE MOUTH OF YOUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN,'** says G-d, **'FROM NOW ON TO ALL ETERNITY.'**

So, who will survive so who has survived as identifiable Jews of today? Only those who have had absolute orthodox, Torah true, observant, great-grandparents. Demographically after 3-4 generations of Jews who have cast aside the Oral Torah, they simply stop being sociologically Jewish. A fifth generation doesn't exist if there were not Torah keeping, oral tradition living relatives. Similar to a flower is cut from it's roots, the fragrant smell is retained for a while. Thus we see the Jews who sever themselves from the living Oral Torah after a while stop being Jewish. As individuals, or as part of breakaway sects, they disappear from the community of the Jewish people. Many verses describe the eternal bond

between G-d and His people. These verses describe the bond specifically with those who have kept and will keep the Oral Torah. In short, only the keepers of the Oral Law are alive and part of the body of Israel to tell G-d's story to the world.

You would have expected more problems with the Jewish Oral and Written Torah. [LEVITICUS 6:46] "THESE ARE THE DECREES, THE ORDINANCES AND THE TORAHS THAT G-D GAVE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL AT MOUNT SINAI THROUGH MOSES." But yet the gospels with a 1500 year less history had a central Church authority who would not hesitate to kill. The New Testament is much smaller, lacking an enormous, beautiful Oral Torah, explaining the Bible, and has over 200,000 textual arguments. Some of the codexes have serious theological implications. For example, several important Christian New Testament versions only go up to Mark 8. Thus rejecting chapters that come after Mark 8 as unreliable and unsubstantiated. Yet look at those branches of Christianity who make a religion out of the chapters supposedly to be found later in Mark. Again, for about 1300 years of New Testament existence, the central authority of the Church made it lethal to tamper with text and it was willing to bloodily enforce its decisions. On the other hand, the Jews for 200 years had no such armed and central authority that could effectively do anything if a scribe decided to change a text. What would stop a scribe in London, Paris, L.A., or Manchuria from altering texts? Nothing, no one; yet the Rabbinic scribes, on their own, remained loyal to the teachings of their fathers and mothers. So, respect for the integrity and honesty of the torchbearers is certainly in order. Many ancient, non-Jewish sources recognize the honesty, integrity, sincerity, and righteousness of the sages of Israel.

We can go on and on with examples of complex commandments whose understanding was assigned to the Oral Law. **[NUMBERS 15:37-40] "...HAVE MEN MAKE TASSELS ON THE CORNERS OF THEIR GARMENTS FOR ALL GENERATIONS..."** What these are and how they are worn and what symbolism the details expound, etc., etc., are clearly spelled out in the Oral Bible. Jews for 3300 years have been wearing these fringes and know what they are and have an unbroken Sinaitic tradition explaining the Torah's shorthand. The Oral Bible brings color and life to the Biblical painting, making the Biblical commands possible to fulfill practically, as they were intended to be.

[DEUTERONOMY 6:5-9] "AND WRITE THEM ON THE DOORPOSTS OF YOUR HOUSE AND UPON YOUR GATES..." What are you to write? The Magna Carta? The Star Spangled Banner? Who is authorized to write? How, what, when should it be written on your gates? What if they are not your doorposts and gates you are merely a renter? What if, how to ad infinitum. Here, again, fulfillment of G-d's command predicates reliance on the Oral Bible. The Oral Bible is a necessity. Here, again, for millenniums, the Jews never had a doubt as to the divine directive.

The mezuzas is a well known feature n Jewish properties without debate, confusion, or subjectivity. The Oral Torah filled in the spaces.

[DEUTERONOMY 12:25] "... YOU MAY SLAUGHTER FROM YOUR CATTLE AND YOUR FLOCKS THAT THE L-ORD HAS GIVEN YOU AND I HAVE COMMANDED YOU, AND YOU MAY EAT IN YOUR CITIES ACCORDING TO YOUR HEARTS ENTIRE DESIRE." Let us paraphrase the Encyclopedia Britannica. Scientific opinion indicates that severance of the carotid arteries and the jugular vein (with the razor sharp ritual knife) in one swift movement results in immediate loss of consciousness. The after struggle is reflex muscular action alone. It is a very painless way to raise the animal up spiritually together with everything that ever went into the raising of that animal. This takes the animal to a higher plane. Thus, through its health imbuing properties, the human being can live and better serve G-od and humankind. The ancient law stands on humanitarian high ground when compared to the head crushing and strangling inflicted on animals through non-kosher methods of slaughter. Many Rabbinic Torah authorities feel that unless people serve G-d, thus using their food consumption for that purpose they do not really have an ethical moral right to eat them. Judaism has led the world in legislation against animal cruelty and some of the modern societies for animal protection and been founded and supported through tradition conscious Jews.

The question is where in the twenty-four books of Hebrew Scriptures did G-d explain how to perform this ritual slaughter? **[DEUTERONOMY 12:21]** says clearly, **"YOU SHALL SLAUGHTER IT AS I HAVE COMMANDED YOU."** Again and again, from any honest reading of the scriptures, the question that emerges is where are those commands to be found? The answer, my friend, is flowing in the Oral Torah. The answer is in the Oral Torah. **[LEVITICUS 11:1-8]** **"BUT THIS IS WHAT YOU SHALL NOT EAT FROM AMONG THESE THAT BRING UP THEIR CUD OR THAT HAVE SPLIT HOOVES. THE CAMEL, FOR IT BRINGS UP ITS CUD, BUT ITS HOOF IS NOT SPLIT. THE SHOFAN, FOR IT BRINGS UP ITS CUD, BUT ITS HOOF IS NOT SPLIT. THE ARNEVET, FOR IT BRINGS UP ITS CUD, BUT ITS HOOF IS NOT SPLIT. THE PIG, FOR HOOF IS SPLIT, BUT IT DOES NOT CHEW ITS CUD..."**

The ID signs of permitted animals are those that have the true cloven hoof and the chewing of the cud (rumination). Also says the Oral Law, all ruminators have no incisor teeth in the upper jaw. Furthermore, all ruminators have a cloven hoof except for the camel and its family. All cloven hoofed animals ruminate, except for the pig. Therefore, says the Oral Tradition, if you find an animal whose species cannot be ID'd, check out its hoofs. If the hoofs are mutilated or missing, then check out the mouth. If no incisor teeth in its upper jaw are present, you can be sure **it is a clean animal species as long as s you can recognize a camel. If you find an animal whose mouth has been mutilated, check the hoofs. If they are cloven, the animal is clean as long as you can recognize a pig. Zoologists have discovered over 5,000 different kinds of mammals. Why would the Bible and Oral tradition stick its neck out 3,300 years ago and make such absolute statements regarding the animal kingdom? Did the scribes and the Rabbis have the means of the Discovery Channel and National Geographic to check out every hemisphere, to investigate every nook and cranny of forest, hill, jungle or prairie? In other words, asks the Talmud (Chulin 60/b), Was Moses a hunter or an archer (a zoologist)? This refutes those who maintain that the Torah was not divinely revealed.**

It was taught in the Academy of Rebbe Yishmael the Torah states, **"THE CAMEL SHALL BE UNCLEAN TO YOU, ALTHOUGH IT CHEWS ITS CUD."** The Ruler of the Universe knows that the camel chews its cud and yet, it's impure. Therefore, the verse specifies it. In other words, the redactor of the Bible G-d himself knew all the species the zoologists would eventually reveal throughout history. The same G-d of pure oneness, who can see the unity of history

and nature, could have the oral and written tradition go out on a limb describing the wild kingdom without any fear of future contradictions.

What about fish? You know what kind of cigarettes a Rabbi smokes? A gefilter cigarette. Fish need fins and scales (microscopic ones are not included). Leviticus 11:9-10, Deuteronomy 14:9b, Mishna in Talmud Nida 6:9, all clearly say, "Every creature that has scales will have fins, but there are those which have fins but no scales." The Talmud Nida 51/b goes on to say if so, then why did G-d not write scales and there would be no need to mention fins? Rebbe Abbahu answered and it was taught in school of Rebbe Yishmael. In order to magnify the Torah and make it glorious [Isaiah 42:21] around 25,000 new species of fish have been revealed in the last 100 years. How could the Talmud have been so sure of itself? Because the information given in the Talmud comes directly from the very author of life, who knew oceanography and marine biology the best.

Remember [ISAIAH 45:19], also [EXODUS 16:29-30] says, "**LET EVERY MAN REMAIN IN HIS PLACE ON THE SABBATH.**" What does that mean? Do we envision West Side Story Jets vs. Sharks. 'Yo bro don't leave your turf. Your hood (neighborhood) is your place and don't you dare cross lines into another turf on the Sabbath or else you is chopped meat.' The answer is no. The oral tradition spells out what it means not leaving your place. The Sabbath laws carry with them severest of penalties. So G-d was exact in what He wanted, but the exactness was to be found in, yes, you guessed it; the living, breathing, dynamic oral tradition.

[ISAIAH 58:13-14] "**IF YOU RESTRAIN YOUR FOOT BECAUSE OF THE SABBATH FROM PERFORMING YOUR AFFAIRS...**" What does this mean? "**...AND IF YOU DO RESTRAIN YOUR FOOT...THEN YOU SHALL FIND DELIGHT WITH THE L-RD...**" Perhaps some new dance step. Do the "Restrain your foot hop." No such confusion was left. The earth was null and void only in Genesis; afterwards the world was to be orderly and logical. G-d's natural laws make sense and have logus, likewise His spiritual laws have order, logic, and logus about them. He did not say unintelligible things and order us to do them and be consequently rewarded or punished. He gave laws to do and explained what that meant to us in His Oral Torah. Perhaps we do not understand His ultimate reason or purpose to a specific law, but the practical application has always been intended. Any technical differences are worked out in terms of application within a system that comes to proper Biblically anchored conclusions.

Michael Drazin in 'THEIR HOLLOW INHERITANCE', states that clearly, the Oral Tradition must be afforded the utmost seriousness, for its explanations of Biblical verses were given to Moses by G-d and have been studied and cherished for generations. In contrast, during the glorious prophetic era (which lasted one thousand years), while the Jewish people pondered the profound Divine messages conveyed by its prophets, Christians were non-existent and most Gentiles were illiterate pagans. The Hebrew Bible, with its revolutionary moral standards, only became known to the world at a much later date (around 246 B.C.E.). Nevertheless, the founding fathers of Christianity had to insist that their interpretations of the Hebrew Bible were as valid as the Jews'. But the basis of these claims is itself founded on misinterpretations: [II CHRONICLES 34:14] "**AND WHEN THEY BROUGHT OUT THE MONEY THAT WAS BROUGHT INTO THE HOUSE OF THE L-RD, HILKIAH THE PRIEST FOUND THE BOOK OF THE LAW OF THE L-RD BY THE HAND OF MOSES.**"

The sensational discovery unearthed the Torah scroll Moses himself had written ("the Book of the Law") not that there were not an abundance of scrolls Torah was being learned and practiced day and night. Merely that this was particular because of its antiquity and very special scribe that worked on it, namely Moses. [DEUTERONOMY 31:24-26] **AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN MOSES HAD FINISHED WRITING THE WORDS OF THE LAW IN THIS**

BOOK...THAT MOSES COMMANDED THE LEVITES...SAYING, "TAKE THIS BOOK OF THE LAW AND PUT IT BY THE SIDE OF THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE L-RD, YOUR G-D, THAT IT MAY BE THERE FOR YOU AS A WITNESS."

This scroll had been hidden from King Ahaz, who had destroyed the holy artifacts one hundred years earlier:

[II CHRONICLES 28:24] "AND AHAZ GATHERED TOGETHER THE VESSELS OF THE HOUSE OF G-D, AND CUT IN PIECES THE VESSELS OF THE HOUSE OF G-D..."

However, when this scroll was unrolled before King Josiah, he rent his clothes (II Chronicles 34:19) for it fell open to the section containing all the curses destined to befall those Jews who disregard the Torah (Deuteronomy 27-28).

Huldah the prophetess confirmed Josiah's conviction that this was no mere coincidence but an omen from G-d:

[II CHRONICLES 34:24-25] THUS SAYS THE L-RD: "BEHOLD, I WILL BRING EVIL UPON THIS PLACE AND UPON ITS INHABITANTS, EVEN ALL THE CURSES THAT ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK THEY HAVE READ BEFORE THE KING OF JUDAH. BECAUSE THEY HAVE FORSAKEN ME AND OFFERED TO OTHER GODS..."

Hoping to move the populace to repent, Josiah read them this section of the Torah: **[II CHRONICLES 34:30] "AND HE READ IN THEIR EARS ALL THE WORDS OF THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT THAT WAS FOUND IN THE HOUSE OF THE L-RD."**

Although there are many covenants in the Torah, this section is called "the Covenant" because they accepted each curse upon themselves as a punishment for violating the Torah. The conclusion of these two chapters affirms their uniqueness:

[DEUTERONOMY 28:69] "THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE COVENANT THE L-RD COMMANDED MOSES TO MAKE WITH THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL IN THE LAND OF MOAB, BESIDES THE COVENANT HE MADE WITH THEM IN HOREB [SINAI]"

It should be noted that of all of the Torah's commands, some of Josiah's subjects were accused of violating; with idolatry: **[II CHRONICLES 34:21] ...FOR GREAT IS THE WRATH OF THE L-RD THAT IS Poured OUT UPON US, BECAUSE OUR FATHERS HAVE NOT KEPT THE WORD OF THE L-RD, TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT IS WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK.**

It has been claimed that the written Torah (and consequently, the Oral Tradition) was lost and forgotten until it was found by Hilkiah, which any objective reading would show otherwise. The Torah was being lived and studied continuously, without interruption, from time immemorial. Obviously, during the seven hundred years between Moses and Josiah, the Jews had innumerable copies of the Torah. As shown, it was their most treasured possession. The Torah is also referred to throughout the Hebrew Bible. For instance, in the same book chronicling the discovery of this scroll, Deuteronomy 24:16 is quoted verbatim with regard to Amaziah, who reigned just three years prior to Josiah:

[II CHRONICLES 25:3-4] NOW IT CAME TO PASS WHEN THE KINGDOM WAS ESTABLISHED UNTO [AMAZIAH] THAT HE KILLED THE SERVANTS WHO HAD SLAIN THE KING, HIS FATHER. BUT HE DID NOT PUT THEIR CHILDREN TO DEATH; RATHER HE DID ACCORDING TO THAT WHICH IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW OF THE BOOK OF MOSES, AS THE L-RD COMMANDED, SAYING, FATHERS SHALL NOT DIE FOR CHILDREN, NOR SHALL CHILDREN DIE FOR FATHERS; BUT A MAN SHALL DIE FOR HIS SIN."

Two men, one Jewish and one a Gentile, arrived late at night in the emergency room at a hospital. In the morning the Jewish man donned tefilin and prayed. The Gentile man was amazed and said to the visiting doctor, "These Jews are really something. He's here one night and already he's taking his own blood pressure." These little boxes and straps were uncovered by archaeologists thousands of years ago. Hundreds of years before, a portion of the Oral Tradition had to be put into writing.

The Torah says [EXODUS 13:9] "AND IT SHALL BE AS A SIGN ON YOUR ARM AND A REMINDER BETWEEN YOUR EYES SO THAT THE L-RDS TORAH WILL BE IN YOUR MOUTH FOR WITH A STRONG HAND THE L-RD REMOVED YOU FROM EGYPT." Look at [EXODUS 13:16] "IT SHALL BE A SIGN UPON YOUR ARM AND AN ORNAMENT (FRONTLETS) BETWEEN YOUR EYES FOR WITH A STRONG HAND G-D TOOK YOU OUT OF EGYPT." Deut. 6/8 makes it clear that this is a real time command. "BIND THEM AS A SIGN UPON YOUR ARM AND LET THEM BE FRONTLETS BETWEEN YOU EYES."

[DEUT. 11:18] "Place these words of mine" (which words?). The command says "these words" quite specific so, friend, which words?

The hundreds of times is to what are these things (tefilin) who must wear them, how to make them, exactly how to wear them, etc. was faithfully transmitted and the entire Jewish people accept these traditions until this day, 3,300 years after the command was articulated, still practiced in its original fashion. Because of the terrible persecution and dispersion, a danger arose of forgetting the Oral Law. Thus part of it was written down, the Mishna, and later, for the same reason, the Gemora was committed to writing. The two together is the Talmud. This archaeological revelation showed that the tefilin of yesteryear are the same as the ones used today. The fact that the tefilin conform exactly with those of thousands of years ago is truly profound.

We clearly see the continuity of the Biblical Oral tradition. How carefully it was preserved and transmitted. Likewise the uncovering of numerous mikvot ritual baths even from the First Temple times. Once again, they conform to the rigorous standards of any ultra orthodox Jew of today. The Bible cryptically says, "waters bring purity" and that reveres numerous religious precepts for layman, priests, men, and women that necessitates a ritual bath for purification. Yet complete reliance is again placed on the Oral Bible for the practical real time application of these crucially important biblical injunctions. Almost no problems have crept into the Hebrew Bible. We see here even into the Hebrew Biblical

Oral Torah an absence of problems that would halt or obstruct actual observance of the Bible. These discoveries of ritual baths, tfillin, etc. are of such amazing ramifications to be mind boggling. Proof of the ancient Oral biblical teachings being faithfully kept. Hershel the water carrier had a son who would soon be Bar Mitzvah, so he went to his friend that he considered wise, as opposed to going to the town's local spiritual leadership. "Tell me, Buddy, how shall I introduce my son to mysteries of reproduction? He will soon reach an age of spiritual manhood and it is time he learned about the 'birds and the bees.'" "First of all," replied his friend, "you must forget about the

'birds and the bees.' It is a myth that has no reality, in fact." "How can you say that?" asked Hershel. "Because I proved it to my own satisfaction. I put a bird and a bee together in a cage and although I watched for a week, I assure you, dear Hershel, nothing happened." People start off with the wrong premises, with conceptual mistakes, and

being overly literal in context. The results of these logical faults are to reject the tried and true wisdom of the Oral Bible. Simple, honest reevaluation would correct their mistaken conclusions. Clarifying the Identity of the Lost Ten Tribes and working to bring them back is part of the Messianic Process. We should all do all we can to hasten the coming of the Messiah. The whole concept of a Messiah is the concept of a world whose mistaken conclusions can be rectified, whose conceptual mistakes and out of context literalness can be fixed.

The Oral law was given together with the Written Law from the hand of the Almighty God of Israel.

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