

# K-462 Jewish Resistance to the Gospel (2 of 2)

by Art Katz

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*The sermon highlights the opposition to the Gospel from within the Jewish community, particularly from the Lubavitcher Hasidic movement, and emphasizes the need for the Holy Spirit to guide and empower us in our walk with God.*

**Duration:** 1:10:49

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:37-38, Hebrews 5:8

**Topics:** "Jewish"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes his experience at a Yeshiva, a Jewish educational institution, where intense study of Rabbi Schneerson's teachings takes place. He emphasizes the importance of studying and understanding the Scriptures, comparing the validity of Rabbi Schneerson's statements to that of Scripture itself. The speaker highlights the need for humility and dependence on God, recognizing that without Him, we are unable to acquire true knowledge or conduct ourselves according to proper principles. He also discusses the significance of the gift of the Holy Spirit in interpreting Scripture and challenges the idea of relying solely on extraneous sources, such as the interpretations of the rabbis.

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## Transcript

We have an opposition that is given of God for our sake. Paul sought all the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. Who has been his counselor? Only he could have conceived of this.

Nothing less would prepare the bride than this devastating rebuke and criticism coming from people who are ostensibly more righteous and more ethical than we. And we're going to tell them, whose life is shot through with defect, and whose sons are on route to divorce, whose marriages are nothing to write home about, and all of that, you see what I mean? Their homes are impeccable and in order, because they're not fighting flesh against spirit. They're all flesh, but it's well-ordered flesh and religiously respectable flesh.

It's only when the battle is only joined when the spirit is born. Then there's a contest between flesh and spirit of the kind through which we move. And while we're moving through it, we're showing our warts, our pimples, our defects, our shortcomings, or an embarrassment.

But the end thereof is eternal glory and angelic righteousness, a bride prepared for the bridegroom. But in the process, it's not looking good, especially to those who perceive us through natural eyes. So everything, everything is stacked against us.

The just shall live by their faith and triumph by their faith. And what a triumph it will be to the eternal praise of his glory. Okay, so even if they forsook me, all would have turned out well, provided they keep studying my Torah.

God has created the law as an antidote against the evil inclination, the Yetzer Hara. In Hasidism, the fusion of holiness and righteousness is complete, sweeping over Europe in the 18th century as the most powerful Jewish revival movement of the millennium. That's the Lubavitcher Hasidim that we have today, and there are other forms.

Hasidism added a charismatic dimension to the meaning of righteousness. The spiritual leader of the Hasidic community, called Tzaddik, from the root word for righteous, is seen as mediated between God and man. Here's something being ascribed to a rabbi and a sage that we reserve only for Jesus.

Purified by his righteousness, listen to this. That Tzaddik is, so to speak, a conductor of divine grace and power, which can be channeled by him toward those in need of healing or help. This is the way that Rabbi Schneerson was so exalted and raised up before his people as the seventh in the line of a family of great sages.

And indeed, I've heard him speak for three hours in Yiddish with a whole auditorium at 770 Eastern Parkway in their big synagogue, standing. And there was not once the shuffle of the feet or the dropping of a pin. There was an enwrapped silence as this man gave forth great wisdom and Talmudic exegesis and bringing in of many sources, who was on top of everything else an engineer and a man of science.

And he's the one who led the Hasidim out from their dusty study halls out into the world and to employ technology and radio and make tapes and use modern technology to promote their cause and to send their emissaries into the world so that a Pesach Seder can be conducted in Tibet. They gathered 5,000 Jews in Tibet, Kataramandu, however that place is called, because a Hasidic Rabbi came all the way to conduct it. And what are Jews doing in places like that? They're looking for a guru.

They're looking for some kind of wisdom and understanding as a key for life that they've not found in the secular world and they've not found in the religious world. But these men are sending emissaries of the precious kind that we found in Bulgaria, Sofia. When we visited there last, we went to the synagogue.

We always go to the synagogue, don't you? I always go to the cemeteries, don't you? I'm always looking for any and every vestige of Jewish life and finding it. We went to the synagogue. What an architectural marvel of an Eastern European model of synagogue, but occupied only in a small room with a congregation that just barely had a minyan, 10.

And sitting there for a half hour and observing at the back of the room and seeing one man in particular who somehow was striking, young, and he was kind of eyeballing us, wondering who we were in the back of the room. And when we left to go out onto the street, he followed us out. Who are you, he wanted to know with typical chutzpah.

Well, we told him. And what are you doing here? And we told him. And you're Jewish? Yes.

Well, I'd like to invite you to visit my synagogue, my yeshiva. I'm the Chabad rabbi. I've been sent from Israel to be the representative of the Lubavitcher Hasidim in Bulgaria.

25 years old. And we went the next day. And some Jew in New York had provided over a million dollars for the purchase of this building.

And they had completely refitted it. It had a nursery, it had a sanctuary, it had a kitchen, it had this, it had that, it had everything. And this young man is in charge of the entire enterprise.

And he had refreshments set out. And after he gave us the tour, he was so cordial, such a sweetheart. And we sat down, we enjoyed his refreshments, we schmoozed, we chatted.

And he said, you know, I didn't know what anti-Semitism was until I came to Bulgaria. No one ever opposed me as a Jew living in a Jewish land. But I was walking down the street, he said, a few days ago, and I passed the schoolyard.

And when the kids saw me with my black hat and beard and my coat, they came running over and started calling me names and throwing stones at me. I had to retreat for my life. It's the first time I've ever experienced this.

I thought to myself, it would not be the last time. And so I said, before we left, may I pray for you? Yes, he said. So I prayed a holy ghost prayer.

I don't know if I said it in the name of the Father. I don't know how I said it. The God of Israel, his safety, his continuance, his blessing.

And it was like two brothers meeting. He was very precious and he's being brought to mind now as the expression of this movement. Celebrating a man as Messiah and as God.

They're waiting for him to rise. And so a Brooklyn historian and rabbi has written a book that the most dangerous thing in the history of Judaism and orthodoxy is this Lubavitcher Hasidic movement who look upon a man as being Messiah and as Savior and even Deity and are awaiting his resurrection. In a word, they are subscribing to a total Christian theology.

And all that has to happen to move them into the Christian camp is to exchange their sin for Jesus and we've lost them to Judaism. This is the greatest threat ever. So very interesting tension and things that are taking place.

But that man can be celebrated, isn't that ironic? Because he's a sage and expresses an anointing, a conductor of divine grace and power which can be channeled by him toward those in need of healing or help. Even the word channel is suspicious and has occultic overtones. And in fact, when you invest yourself in these convictions and open yourself to this kind of belief and expectation it's not long before a disposition to an occultism becomes a demonic stronghold.

And so deliverance of an ultimate kind is going to be required by people who have been mesmerized to follow this kind of a man and to subscribe to these views. Never a mention of the Jew or the significance or the future or the relationship to the church. That if he brought back something of this perspective to that environment they would think him off the wall as if he's been Judaized which is often a suspicion that's leveled against those who take up these concerns.

But I said that I believe that the whole lamentable condition of the church by and large can be found in its avoidance of this subject. The absence of this subject condemns the church to a shallow equivalent of God's intention because the issue of the Jew is the issue of the faith, the issue of the word, the issue of the Holy Spirit the issue of obedience, the issue of fellowship, the issue of worship, the issue of prayer everything is affected and touched and brought into its intended significance when this key is again inserted. So you can believe that everything that the devil can do to oppose the restoration of this key he will.

And another danger from the other side is as a brother brought up what about the messianic congregations that are inspired by the synagogue example and think to emulate it as being a witness to Jews and that's another very interesting and significant question. Interesting that Jews themselves are not impressed with that kind of performance because they see it for what it is rightly an affectation, an external kind of a cultural thing that is winsome and attractive but not authentic. So these are all remarkable questions.

Someone has asked the difference between our perspective of the word faith and the way the word faith is understood rabbinically and Jewishly which is a real question in itself. You can believe that they have a very different perspective. More of a system of articles of belief rather than a mode of being.

So that one can attain by study rather than receive as gift by God's grace lest any man boast. That's what Paul tells us in Ephesians. Faith is a gift.

It's the grace of God lest any man boast. It's not our attainment. It's the faith of the son of God which is more than just a hope against hope of believing.

It's an apprehension of the character of God that cannot be violated. It's the knowledge of God and confidence and trust predicated on a spirit given understanding of God's infallible character. See that's more than principles.

God forbid that it should ever become principles for us who would be on Judaic ground. Well, as I shared with my dear sister, she raised some questions for me. This study is so complex that there are now in universities in many places whole departments of Judaic studies.

This is worth whole attention. You can get a PhD in Judaic studies and not begin to exhaust. The varieties of things that are so inclusive in this.

So we're just touching some elementary considerations. And even though there are many varieties of Judaism, especially liberal conservative reform, orthodox conservative reform, there are varieties even within orthodoxy. So we want to get at the heart of what is the distinctive, the essential of the rabbinical content of Judaism that we need to recognize and face.

So continuing on the Talmudic statements that common sense or human needs would dictate fundamental laws of righteousness. If they had not already been revealed in the Torah, encouraged Jewish philosophers through the centuries to corroborate, reveal laws of righteousness by independent rational inquiry. There's a tremendous emphasis on study as we've already seen, which is the issue of mind.

And so when you read of the sketches of orthodox life in Eastern Europe, they're always looking for the bright students who give encouragement that they might themselves become masters and sages. Men like Maimonides were the founder of Kabbalism. Luria, men who have remarkable minds.

And I can't help but suspect aided and abetted by the powers of darkness. Because if you move in that direction, there are supernatural powers only too happy to encourage you further. And give you insights and brilliance and understandings of a kind that fasten you more deeply in the realm of intellect, which is to say the realm of flesh, which is antithetical to spirit.

So here they're even acknowledging that's the beauty of this. As we're hearing out of the horse's mouth. These are Jews writing for Jews, stating what is what they understand to be the truth of their Judaism.

That common sense would dictate fundamental laws of righteousness. What did we understand yesterday? Righteousness is not only of God, it is God. His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts are our thoughts.

Righteousness cannot be prescribed. You can't have a fixed dictum of how you will act in given situations. Because there are things that will arise for which past experience cannot help you.

And that you need the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So when we talk, when we read about Paul in Galatians, He's saying that the leading of God by the Spirit is God's answer to a system of precepts and dictums predicated on ethics or understanding of men. But it requires a relationship with the God who is the Spirit.

So there are two directions. If you seek to develop your mind through study and rational deduction, it's hostile and antithetical to the Spirit. The Spirit requires poverty.

Blessed are the poor or the meek. And Spirit, these are the ones that will become rich in God. What does it say? God gives to the poor, makes the poor rich in faith.

But the poor, not just in terms of finance, poor in terms of any thought that you have in yourself that you can acquire a knowledge or predicate a system of conduct on principles that you elucidate or that others have that you adopt. There's a poverty. You need to be poor and recognize that without God, I can do nothing.

I walk into walls. I cannot know what to do in any given situation. What might have been right yesterday is wrong today.

There are intricacies and depths of things that only God knows and needs to communicate. And that answers the question even of how to witness the Jews. Are we going to do it by a system? Are we going to take the four spiritual laws and now add a fifth spiritual law and that will do it for them? How do you speak to people like this? How was I spoken to? That saved me out of most vehement atheism, anti-Christianity, anti-Christ mentality was not by a guy quoting a scripture.

It was by Holy Ghost-directed words that pierced my heart asunder. So the issue of the Holy Spirit versus the issue of the human mind is the issue in sum between our faith and that which is at the heart of Judaism. Ironically, that's why we were chosen people to begin with.

Not because we were the greatest, but because we were the least. We were a people four centuries in slavery. We were a bunch of dum-dums who wanted leeks and garlics more than the righteousness of God.

And we continually failed Him and were a source of unbelievable aggravation, made our golden calves and railed against God and against His Moses. And yet, God persists in His love and covenant faithfulness and yet to bring such a people to a place where they will be exalted above all nations. We were chosen in foolishness and weakness.

So for us to take this direction and to celebrate it, make it a way of substitute righteousness, is a remarkable paradox. So, he's talking about rationalism and the encouragement to Jewish philosophers to corroborate law of righteousness by independent rational inquiry. Thus, many evil thinkers, and he gives the name of one, Moses Maimonides, who is the Rambam, R-A-M-B-A-M, if you come across a reference like that.

That's a, they take the first letter of a long name and they make a, somebody help me, an acronym from the first letter and it becomes Rambam, but it's Maimonides. So these names are so central to Judaism that they don't use the longer names, they use the acronyms, but you know who they're referring to. He gave the Mishnah Torah and brought about by his own brilliance the taking of the whole corpus of Biblical and Talmudic and Rabbinical law and established it as a system.

What to do with eating, with diet, what to do with the observation of feast days, what to do with the issues of marriage, with child rearing, with justice, with law. It was systematized in the brilliance of one man's mind, formative giant in Judaism because these men were exceptionally brilliant. And you see that Jewish brilliance today, and I believe as I'm suggesting that the enemy even supplies a quotient of the wiles of his own brilliance to those who choose to go in this direction, who love to be applauded and distinguished by their brilliance.

I just brought a copy of the forward newspaper, it's out on the table somewhere and one of the articles was brilliant and then he gave a little italics that the author is a medical doctor but he has also a PhD in linguistics and on top of that he made studies in this independent field and he's only 35. You know, this is beyond human ability. Well, it may well be that the same kind of demonic assistance is given to those in the faith who become superstars charismatically and have a wonderful ability to perform or even to express miracles and so on because they've made an unconscious covenant with the evil one for fame and for celebrity and for the applause of the many.

There's a, what's that famous book by that German poet who said like more like Faust. Faust made a contract with the devil, he loved a young girl and he was beyond an age when she should have been a legitimate object of his desire. His covenant with the devil was if you give me youth and attractiveness and ability so as to win this girl, I'll give you my soul.

More than we can suspect, you can unconsciously make covenants like this with powers of darkness through your lust for ambition and for celebrity and for recognition and for fame. You cannot believe how beguiling and seductive fame is. Particularly if you come out of a Jewish community that has men of such distinction how will you be known? How will you be recognized? And when you read the biography of Norman Polthoritz as I have you see that this is his conscious quest from his earliest youth on is what direction can I take? What form of study can I enter that I can obtain a distinction of recognition above my brethren for my brilliance? That's why the faith is predicated on humiliation.

On humility, on being poverty stricken, being poor, abject, having no confidence in oneself which of course to the Jew is an abhorrent mentality. That's sick. And when the young brother received the Lord and I drove him from Brooklyn to Venezuela years ago who was getting married this month at the age of 50,

something like that his parents brought him to a psychiatrist.

Our son has so changed he's no longer ambitious. Something is grievously wrong with him. He's lost his mind.

Because he's lost his ambition to become distinguished. At the cross another wisdom was being demonstrated for those who were the proponents of the worldly wisdom who railed against him and said come down off the cross we'll believe you. You know if you want to be believed demonstrate something to which we could subscribe but don't hang there as some limp and pathetic victim that is being wrangled unto death before our eyes.

So there you see the contradictions of two wisdoms. And of course because he did not come down and could not and would not his wisdom has triumphed and broke the power of their wisdom but to which they still subscribe even in its beggarly elements that's why Paul uses exactly that phrase. How is it that having believed that you're going back to the beggarly elements of Sabbaths and of seasons and of times and of observations as if that constitutes your righteousness.

Don't go back to the beggarly worldly elements that were introduced at the cross. The greater wisdom was demonstrated by the Lord himself in a humiliation of suffering unto death. That's why a Rabbi Schneerson is much more to be celebrated than a Jesus because he had all the marbles.

He could hold an audience spellbound for three hours in Yiddish by such an ability to draw from Maimonides and from the masters and from Talmudic sources from the Bible and even from secular sources and weave together statements of such kind that left the people hanging on the ropes. This was a master, a seventh generation master. What else should a man be but one whose brilliance commends him? His mind and his study, how did he come to that? So when we went to the same synagogue and what were they doing? They were studying Rabbi Schneerson's commentary on that portion of the Torah that was appropriate to that Shabbat and I mean study of a kind where they hardly looked up if I had wings or a halo or a tusk that they would hardly have to describe.

There were four or five guys and they had these sheets in their hand and what do you think it was? I've never seen that intensity in any Christian Bible study. Pouring over not only Rabbi Schneerson's last statement on that portion of Torah but all of his previous statements throughout his whole rabbinical tenure have been recorded, transcribed and are now available for study having the same validity of scripture itself. See what I mean? No wonder that study is a lifelong practice and as I told my dear brother At at the coffee urn that this Rabbi Blumenthal took me to his yeshiva, the greatest in North America and it was awesome, three thousand students.

We walked through that place, vast study halls. A lecture is only a periodic thing. Classrooms as we know.

I said well how long is the program? He said like four years, like universities. He looked at me like oh you're so naive Katz, when are you going to grow up? There's no time limit, there's no such thing as graduation. Don't you know he said that study is a lifetime's practice? I didn't know.

I only thought that you go for four years and you get a certificate or a diploma and that you can make a better living. He says these men are not here to make a better living or to receive a certificate. They're here for study of Torah and the Talmud and it's lifelong, they have given up vocations to be here.

They're not here to obtain a vocation. You guys go to your secular institutions so you can graduate and make a better living. These guys are forsaking a better living to be students and they're being subsisted and helped by wealthy Jewish businessmen because it's a mitzvah and a blessing to help a Torah bocha, a student who's studying Torah.

And so how do they do it? They're at tables one-on-one intensely going over a text and drawing it out to its last syllable. It's a whole other mode of being and I'm jealous in the intensity that they exhibit and the sacrifice. We need to know these things.

Okay, so here's an emphasis on rationalism, rational inquiry. Medieval thinkers have borrowed concepts from Platonic and Aristotelian thought respectively. So they were encouraged and drew from Greek sources and incorporated that in their Judaistic understanding and found ways to incorporate these great pagan thinkers in a way that was compatible with their rabbinical understanding.

So one of the great German Jewish philosophers Herman Cohen who took this direction interprets his view to mean that the Lord becomes the Holy God through action which man has to accomplish. It's not because he's holy in himself but man's conduct determines God's status. Man sanctifies God by his study and by his rectitude, his righteous behavior.

Thus the ultimate object of all man's righteous acts is to sanctify God. Not to honor God as we would say but to establish God's sanctity by man's righteous acts. Man determines God by his conduct.

So for example when I discussed with my Rabbi Blumenthal I thought I got him now. I'll show him in Psalm 22 where someone is pierced and wounded in his hands and in his feet and that his clothing is gambled for in his death seven centuries before the event that speaks so unmistakably of the crucifixion of Jesus and is corroborated in Zechariah the prophet the Hebrew prophet that when he comes we shall see him whom we have pierced and I got him now only to find out that when I opened those texts he says no Art you dumb dumb that's not what it says in Hebrew.

I said what do you mean?

In Hebrew it's not pierced it means that the lion is something or this or that and what I'll read to you from the second portion of the Torah I didn't know it but there's such a thing as Mishmaic Hebrew which is a use of the language that is not the literal Hebrew that is presently employed but a certain use of the language for rabbinical purposes that reads these words differently and you know that Hebrew for the longest time did not have vowel markings it just has the consonants and you understand whether it means ah or oh or eh or er depending on the context it's only more recently with the Masoretic text that the vowel markings were given so that the words were clearly identified but you know you can take the same consonants and the word that means pierced can mean lion and if you

want to avoid the word pierced because it is too evidently Christological you will endorse the interpretation of lion as being the rabbinical consensus and that will stand as unchallengeable as law itself which is exactly what they have done and that's how they avoid what to us are the apparent scriptures that testify of Jesus when Luther debated with rabbis he was himself a professor of Old Testament that was fluent in Hebrew he was astonished that in the avoidance of what was to him the clear messianic implications of the Hebrew text that it was so deviously misconstrued and seen and stated in so other way that it was nothing less than blasphemy and he thought that this now this blasphemous rejection of the evident meaning of the word of Christ if it comes into the church will not only

discredit the Reformation but possibly invalidate it so he saw Judaism as much a threat to the faith as the Turks or Catholicism itself and therefore that gave rise to his heated castigation of the Jews to destroy their Talmud and their synagogues because they were the bastions of anti-Christ conviction and that many Christians were now seeking out rabbis to learn Hebrew but through that they are not only learning Hebrew they are receiving Jewish prejudice against the Lord and that might controvert even their Christian faith so all of this is part of the unhappy history that Hitler seized upon and utilized for the very thing that Luther spoke that the synagogue would be destroyed the Talmud is burned and men themselves burned so just dwell on this one of the great modern day Jewish

philosophers Herman Cohen deriving his view from Plato and Aristotle and reconciling Greek thought with rabbinical understanding came to the place where the holiness of God is not the issue of God but the issue of man through action which man accomplishes thus the ultimate object of all man's righteous acts is to sanctify God it's not it's the exact reverse of our own faith we are sanctified by God here God is sanctified by man so at every point in particular their perspective is completely at odds with our own you could not find two systems more altogether opposed than Judaism and Evangelical faith even talking about the Holocaust and judgment I won't even go into this it's too time consuming one can still make a strong case for a law of moral causality in history and that the cause of

righteousness is upheld by a system of retribution that is rooted in the moral sensitivities of man so yes there is God's justice but the issue of that is not God but man man's moral sensitivity decides even the way in which history is vindicated so as if there is something intrinsic in man a moral sensitivity which though it's guarded this is especially pronounced in Jews as contrasted with the Goyim there's especially a unique faculty in the Yiddish soul in the Nefesh so that when I gave to one of these years ago Hasidic men we came oh it's a whole story of how we came to their place in New Jersey where I was then living in a blizzard where I was waiting for two brothers to come from Kansas City their plane was delayed till midnight because of severe blizzard and a little boy with side

curls came up to me and said Mister can you tell me how I can get to Livingston I forgot what city it was in New Jersey I said there's the there's the limousine service I think that they drive there I came back five minutes he says they're closed down no vehicles running would you take me?

I said are you willing that a Meshuvah should take you? a Meshuvah is a traitor he said a nice man like you? we took him my friends arrived we took him I had an old Volvo and the windshield wipers had not been working I turned them on and they worked and we came in this blinding snowstorm to this place in New Jersey it was the one night of the month they were up all night celebrating Torah and they had schnapps on the table because you drink you're high spirited it's the very opposite of poor well be not drunk with wine where in is excess but be drunk in the Holy Spirit well not having the Holy Spirit they were drinking the hard stuff and really celebrating and we came in like gangbusters boom in two minutes we were into it rock stock and barrel and this young convert to orthodoxy out of

the Jesus movement who had a red he was red haired with a afro which was the fashion at that time woke the rabbi up and said there's a Meshuvah here speaking about Jesus and the rabbi said get rid of him so he got rid of me but before I left I gave him a copy of Yom Kippur and so days went by I didn't hear anything also I get a phone call from this dear man Aaron calls me by my Hebrew name yes this is Ephraim Ephraim is that you I said you sound so sweet the last time that we had anything to say you were just choked up and spitting out and getting rid of me I read your book Aaron and you have a Yiddish and Meshuvah Jewish soul is a special quality and ingredient a moral sensitivity that the goyim lack ironically

there is an implicit unspoken kind of racial superiority that if you press a

Jew deeply enough he will acknowledge as being true so that means a contempt for the lesser orders of mankind where we can be benevolent to them and help them but we don't expect them to celebrate Shabbat or to understand God or have a righteousness predicated on moral precepts for them the Noachite lords are enough avoid strangled meat don't drink blood don't fornicate keep your nose clean but we don't expect more from you after all you're only a Gentile you see why they have to be converted and why we Jewish believers as I mentioned either in another class or earlier here had to be dealt with by the Lord and shown that we were still carrying the germ of an anti-Christian anti-Gentile prejudice even as we were now ministers and even in our ministries in subtle ways we were not only

inserting the word of the Lord as the sword of the Lord but twisting it at the hilt just to zap them unconsciously we had to be divested of something that was historic and an enmity ages old against the Goyim you should have heard my mother talk about the Goyim them them the enemy the dum-dums those who spend their money recklessly and this is what your mother will say to you as a Jewish kid and you misspend your 15 cent allowance and you blow it at one time with a Nathan's hot dog and a drink because Moses saves and Jesus saves but Moses invests as the wise crack and my mother would say you and your Goyish Akof you are just like them instead of being prudent and economical and saving you blow it all at one time you are like them that's what they do they drink they fornicate they don't

save they are them so that compounds everything that issues out of a history of a church that has given a false statement of the Lord and too often conducts itself unrighteously and is not sanctified and is Christian in name only if at that but to the Jew that's the statement of an error for following a magician and a sorcerer all the cards are stacked against us so he ends his essay given the Torah with its numerous commandments and prohibitions Israel is afforded adequate resources with which to resist the corruption of evil and how all the nations of the world are to be united in the Torah way of life whether by Israel's teaching mission or by another divine intervention remains part of the messianic mystery so the hope of the world is the Jew and the teaching that he will communicate

to the dum-dum Gentile world that is walking into walls and misspending their substance fornicating like jack rabbits drinking and acting unrighteously and justifying it in the name of Christ so he ends on that note that if there is to be hope for the world it will come through Torah teaching by Jews who can bring what is uniquely their own heritage because though they are religious they are eminently rationalists and the rational mind and thought prevails over every such consideration they are offended by the supernatural if it cannot be rationally understood so is the rational mind celebrated as ultimate idolatry which they don't understand and see and if you'll excuse this if you heard this before my first revelation that came to me as shock while I was being trained as a missionary to

the Jews it was the beginning of the Jews for Jesus phenomenon and one of their schools called our mission and asked for some representative to come and to explain how Jews could believe in Jesus and I was the one who was sent and I came into this yeshiva high school for orthodox Jews and shared and answered the questions of the students it was a precious time and of course I became engaged in debate with their teacher who had a van dyke beard a yarmulke he was the epitome of the righteous ethical moral orthodox Jew and we were going at it and the bell rang we had spilled out into the hallway the kids left and we still were and all of a sudden I blinked and I said excuse me I said do you believe that God parted the Red Sea that Israel should go over as on dry ground and all of a sudden

the guy just choked and spluttered and went silent as if I had splashed him with a bucket of cold water and finally when he found his voice he said I believe it was a confluence of the tides I said what about Isaac and the miraculous birth when Abraham was whose body was old and had a barren wife that was he gave a rational explanation for every supernatural thing given in Old Testament Scripture because miracle itself and a God who intervenes supernaturally is an offense against the liberal and rational mind that even the Messiah has been converted into messianic age that will come not by the advent of someone sent from heaven but something raised up from earth that is moral and ethical and righteous according to the use of mind and study and law and that will bring in justice and equity

in the earth and liberal Judaism which is the rejection of the supernatural had its origins of all places in Germany because it took its cue and its inspiration from German rationalism who were offended by the Christian New Testament and voided the supernatural references in it so Jesus is only a moral teacher the miracles ascribed to him are only legend and we're looking for the historical Jesus and not the legendary one because the scriptures were the New Testament descriptions are not valid they are not faithful historic transcripts they are well meaning intentions by polemicists seeking to make an argument for Jesus against a hostile Jewish environment that cannot be corroborated as true this is German rationalism this is the birth of the higher criticism and that the scriptures must

be subject to the same kind of critical literary analysis that you bring to any text there's no such thing as sacrosanct word of God it's man and we need to see what of it is valid and what of it is imagined and what is legendary Jews living in that Germany took their cue and brought that same mentality into the Judaism which gave rise to present reform Judaism that subsequently came to America and to all the world so there's a movement away from supernaturalism and the God of the Bible though the word God is used and the Bible is even referred to but it's a ceremonial use it's a literary use and even the same guy in my Jewish theological seminary who said God was on a learning curve the class ended with a discussion on the Holocaust and it was not a satisfactory discussion from my

perspective and the rabbi professor whom I suggested my last word with him privately that he has a problem with pornography had the class to rise and for them to pray the traditional Jewish blessing at the time of discussion of tragedy and loss of life and the same young man led it who gave the remark that God is on a learning curve and it was almost holy the atmosphere changed the same wise alecky and impertinent squirt whom I judged all of a sudden took on a new demeanor with his yarmulke on and praying with a deep sincerity and the whole room moved with that and vibrated with that orthodoxy isn't that a remarkable contradiction there is something in what can you say in their prayers in their tradition that is greater than their own minds that somehow brings some semblance of the sense

of God which ironically reinforces the sense that what they are about is correct and makes them all the more difficult to appeal to so Torah plays a prominent place in the issue of righteousness it's prescriptions how it's understood the very study of Torah is the basis by which righteousness is to be obtained so I rightly turned in the same book to the exposition of the word Torah and there the Lord opened the veil this is by James Kugel maybe I'll read you through his qualifications it will move you to Envy star professor of Hebrew literature at Harvard University since 1982 is co-founder and editor of Poof Texts a magazine as well as a member of the advisory board of Crossroad Biblical Studies he's the author of a book called The Techniques of Strangeness in 1971 The Idea of Biblical

Poetry 1981 and a forthcoming examination of biblical exegesis called The Dismembered Bible in the Mind of Midrash so this is a man of qualification if I were to seek a single term he says that might summon

up the very essence of Judaism it would certainly be Torah a concept whose centrality has endured from the biblical period to the present day as such it is an idea that defies easy summary indeed the very word Torah underwent a complicated evolution from its earliest usages in the Bible until its definitive formulation in classical rabbinical texts so you even hear the word evolution so in other words nothing is given once and for all that is timeless and eternal with God there is a corpus called the Bible but the understanding of it and the way in which it is to be perceived and

interpreted is subject to other factors that are evolutionary and not static so that puts the premium then on teachers of the kind that this guy himself is and the learning of rabbis and their interpretation so this evolution in itself provides an interesting he gives a Latin phrase I don't know what it means for the emergence and development of rabbinic Judaism this very concept of evolutionary change that there's nothing static it's not fixed or given that it has an origin and is subject to interpretation and use through passage of time and study is itself distinctive of Judaism and the ones who have the right to prevail over this body of information are the sages who are tested and approved by their own credentials and the recognition of their piety by those whom they serve in later

biblical evidence it argues for a broader more varied use of the term Torah that there's a post-biblical way even to understand the word Torah particularly in classical rabbinic texts rabbinic texts use Torah in various senses as a designation specifically of the Pentateuch the five books of Moses but also as a synonym for scripture as a whole and that defined the prophets and the writings as proofs and as a term for the study of sacred texts and their interpretation so the Bible is included, the prophets are included the writings are included but also as we'll see the sacred texts include rabbinical texts and in fact he says as a term encompassing all the unwritten statutes and interpretations that eventually came to comprise the oral Torah and here's what you need to understand that the

that Moses was not only given the tablets of the law written with the finger of God but in order to understand that extract he was given also the oral law by mouth, oral spoken but not written in order to interpret the written and Moses passed it on to Joshua and Joshua to the elders of Israel the elders to the sages, the sages to the rabbis, so there's a transmission from Sinai to this present day that is the equivalent of the written Torah and in fact is the key to the written Torah which is the oral Torah so that when they use the word Torah, it's not the five books of Moses that we thought they meant, so that we are all agreed that the Torah is the foundation but it includes what is presumed to be equally given but for which there's no proof only legend and tradition of these men

themselves that argue for it because there's a segment in Jewish life called Karaites K-A-R-A-I-T-E-S segments of which still remain in Israel that have never subscribed to this rabbinical dictum and see that the only thing that is holy is that which is given of God in scripture as the five books of Moses well then how is it to be interpreted if there's no appendage called the oral law which is the means of interpretation to be predicated on rabbinical use the Holy Spirit the Spirit that inspired the scriptures is the Spirit that will interpret them that's our understanding but if you have not access to the Holy Spirit if you're not under the blood because God says what has your righteousness but so many filthy rags in my sight but my arm is not short that it cannot save though is my ear

deaf that it cannot hear but your iniquity has separated you from me sayeth the Lord so if we will not heed that word as God's word and see ourselves in the place of iniquity for which our righteousness is as filthy rags and that God can hear his name is not deaf and his arm can save if we will acknowledge our condition by which our sins can be forgiven on the basis of the atonement God has predicated in his own

wisdom then we can receive the Holy Spirit and this is what Peter says to the hearers on the day of Pentecost who cry out men and brethren what must we do to be saved repent of your sin and receive the gift promise the fathers be baptized and receive the gift promise to the fathers and on that day three thousand were baptized and received the gift of the Holy Spirit the key of

interpretation to scripture in the absence of that gift and its use what will men do with the five books of Moses and the prophets and the writings but have to find an extraneous secondary source which they view not only as secondary but as primary as the given books of Moses themselves and in fact even superior to it maintained through the rabbis and interpreted by the rabbis and here you have the heart of the whole system of rabbinic Judaism there is no evidence of such a law of oral law but their testimony and remarkably that testimony validates them and gives them a place of authority in that whole system to which Jews are required to subscribe so there is a remarkable parallel between orthodox Judaism predicated on a class of sages, rabbis and yeshivot plural for yeshivot and the

papal bureaucracy the papal bulls the statements that come forth from that throne validated by a whole hierarchy of bishops and so on who applaud and serve their same function we really are a round peg in a square hole or vice versa, we're in another place altogether and we are under criticism oh yeah you have the Holy Spirit and so how much of your Holy Spirit is hype and human performance and calibrated worship through musicality and through electronic devices and amplifiers that you call the Holy Spirit it's suspicious and we have given sufficient grounds for that suspicion because we have not been careful and jealous for the sanctity of God and the issue of that spirit and have been too quick to say God told me God showed me when in fact it was our own carnal hearts and our own desire

that chose such a course that's part of the the tension of the difficulty that needs to be overcome these Lubavitcher Hasidim sold their homes in Long Island and Queens and the more notable places and moved to a black ghetto in Crown Heights Brooklyn why? because there you can buy the old brownstone slum buildings and fix them up and live in proximity to one another as the community of God and walk to the synagogue on Shabbat because to drive would be a violation of the Sabbath so we're willing to forsake our Long Island estates and our Queens condominiums and move to the black ghetto and live in detention with these black people that will erupt from time to time in near racial riots which has taken place and still simmers beneath the surface now in order on the Shabbat at the hour that the

Rabbis say the Shabbat begins at 5.42 in the month of August as against 6.30 in the month of September the Rabbis determined the very hour and moment when Shabbat has begun and all of the stores close hours before that and you can see them coming out of their buildings at the prescribed hour with their children and going on the way to the mikvah for the ceremonial bath and on the way to the synagogue and from there to the home because the home is now the sanctuary and the table is now the altar therefore the father will pronounce the kirush over the wine and the mother will welcome the Shabbat and the lighting of the candles we have nothing corresponding to this in our Christianity and the sanctity of the Shabbat and the willingness to sacrifice to be in proximity with other believers

that we might have access to the place of common worship without having to drive we're unwilling for the sacrifice and when I talk about the early days the privilege that was ours in community to meet every morning for prayer and how God directed us out of that prayer because we didn't know how to conduct community the guidance came through the fellowship and prayer day by day as God would give it, some would come to me afterwards and say I'm so jealous of you for what you've described but unfortunately I live so far from those with whom I'm joined on a Sunday, I could never come on a daily basis, what do you

recommend?

I said move I recommend you move give up your palatial house or your comfortable, it doesn't have to be a palace, it's just what is dear to you and come and move into the neighborhood where the other believers are that you can go from house to house daily baking bread but how many believers are there willing for the degree of sacrifice that these Jews take as a matter of course and rejoice for and you're telling me that God speaks to you and that the Holy Spirit said when you have not even a relationship that even begins faintly to correspond to what we enjoy in the daily prayer three times a day like Daniel and our fasts and our keeping of the feast days and the way in which we bring up our children and the hours that we will spend in the synagogue which is the foremost center of our

life and our prayer and our worship is the sum and substance of what we are about as Jews and you with your Sunday service and going from there to the ball game that it's late enough that you can sleep in but not too late that you can't still go to the golf course or watch the ball game, you're telling me the Holy Spirit speaks to you and God told you, you're a fraud and you're trying to convert me to your Jesus in whose name we have been systematically persecuted for 2000 years, they are the enemies of the gospel for our sake, when they'll see a dedication and a consecration that begins to approach theirs, a believer is willing to live that sacrifice for the privilege of going from house to house daily breaking bread, who see the issue of prayer as so significant for their life that

they're willing to forfeit comfortable places and homes and vocations and occupations to put first things first, we might have more credibility with them so go ahead and have your congregations and put on your yarmulke and your talis and davin and shake yourself appropriately and incorporate some synagogue melodies and think that that's going to impress them it's counterfeit, they see right through it, all the more when there are gentiles performing that and learning how to do it who know that there is something wanting in their Christian experience and think that this might be the answer, this will answer the vacuum of a grey and predictable Christianity these Jews are on to something and there's something so commendable and impressive in their practices it's Hebrew after all that why

don't we adopt that and that this is what's lacking in Christianity the difference between being Jewish or being Hebraic and I gave a message upon arrival came back from Leipzig, went back to the conference quarter and I said to Chinese believers, Jewish is cultural, you can adopt its practices as external put-ons, you can wear their artifacts you can put on a prayer shawl and a yarmulke you can learn to davin, you can employ their Hebrew liturgies but they'll not be impressed it may be a blessing and measure for you but the ultimate witness I believe is not Jewish but Hebraic it's not a cultural thing but a spiritual thing it's Davidic it's Danielic it's the genius of the prophets it's the quintessence of scripture, it's the nature of very God and how do you acquire that's not a cultural

thing that can be accrued it's something that needs to be obtained something that is wrought in you by proximity to God in devotion in relationship and in obedience of faith over a protracted period of time at sacrifice and at cost I once even off the top of my head said that what we call anointing is the residue of God that comes to those who serve Him at the price of being misconstrued and suffering the reproach of that obedience that when obedience costs us something as reproach something lingers from God, it's the fellowship of His sufferings that becomes a residue that becomes the anointing this is off the top of my head I can't say thus say it for just a suggestion, but something like that is the answer to what you're asking we're called to move them to jealousy and I think that to

think that we're going to do that by emulating synagogue practice will more likely move them to resentment or to humor than it will to envy because synagogue practice itself is a exilic phenomenon and a statement of judgment the synagogue is the alternative to the temple temple worship priesthood, the holiest place of all within the temple to which only the holy the high priest could come this is the foundation of faith and relationship and that the curtain has been rent that we might enter the holy place does not discredit or invalidate that formation, it gives it unending meaning if we can come into that holy place that's the Hebraic the root, the sense of God as God the prophetic spirit the sweet singer of Israel the poetry of the psalms the conviction of the psalms the cry of the

psalmist who cries out to God out of oppression and persecution that he is bearing because of the quality of his relationship with God that he need not suffer if he would be satisfied with something less so he got feeling for something, these are the constituent elements of Hebraicness or godliness and the ironic thing is this, if you choose the course of synagogue emulation you cannot pursue the other because one is the flesh it's the soul realm and the other is the realm of spirit and the two cannot be reconciled, you have to choose the one or the other and so I believe that this messianic direction is a wrong emphasis and prohibits the route of holiness and the acquiring of that union with God who is the son of Shem the essence of Hebraicness that can only come by the spirit the one is

infinitely more painful and difficult than the other one is the route of convenience, culture soul, flesh, the other is the course of sacrifice and separation and reproach and misunderstanding we haven't even begun to take this latter course and didn't even realize that there's an alternative, it's only a lonely voice like mine who's even beginning to suggest to the church that there's an alternative to messianic Judaism that anything with ism is already suspect and that Judaism itself is discredited and has its origin in man and celebrates beyond Torah what includes that is rabbinical and study and mentality and rationality but that there is an alternative and God is waiting for it as his unsuspecting jury to move them to jealousy, namely to see a heavenly reality in the earth all the

more awesome because it is expressed not through Jews but through Gentiles that you will exhibit to them what it really means to be distinctively Hebraic when you're not even genetically out from that people but you've been brought in by the blood of Messiah to be grafted into their tree and that the sap of the life of God therefore flows through you to the degree that you're grateful for that insertion that the fruit alone that can be formed by that life is being expressed that they themselves cannot produce because they now are in fact the broken or wild branch and you are showing the fruit that ought to be more rightly their own but will not obtain it without sacrifice will not obtain it without real sanctification, without the real dealings of God, without the real work of the cross

with the real unity of the body that requires the kind of sacrifice we see depicted by Jews who will leave their Long Island homes to live in the black ghetto, that they might be together at the house of God so whatever it takes, God is waiting and it's the great purpose for all beings because what is their return, Paul says if they're falling away, has been blessing to the Gentiles, what shall return me but life from the dead for the very tent of the tabernacle of David will be raised up their kingdom will come to that Zion and prevail over the earth and righteousness will abide in God's creation so Lord this is the faith and for the want of the recognition of it because we have omitted the consideration of our Jewish brethren we have allowed them to be just a kind of curio a little

culture religious entity outside of our consideration and as if the faith started with us, as if we have no antecedent, no history of which they are part nor any relation, nor obligation to them to fulfill or

demonstrate something that is ultimate and so we're asking your forgiveness Lord for being slipshod, sloppy, indifferent casual

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