

A. A Matter of Terminology- Historical, Cultural, Religious

1. Biblical Definitions & Terms for the “Jewish” People-

a. **Hebrews**-The Hebrews are peoples descended from Abraham. The origin of the word *Hebrew* comes from the proper name “Eber,” from Genesis 10:24, the great-grandson of Shem and an ancestor of Abraham. The original root word comes from the phrase “to cross over or pass over”. Abraham referred to as a “Hebrew”. Genesis 14:13

b. **Israel/Israelites**-The Israelites are the physical descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. God changed Jacob’s name to Israel in Genesis 32:28. From then on, his sons and other descendants were called “children of Israel” or “Israelites.” Known as the “Covenant Nation”.

c. **Jews**- Derived from the Tribe of Juda during the first Jewish diaspora (Babylonia Captivity). No longer tribal; but a reference to those that endured during the Babylonian exile.

2. Ethnic Divisions- While not denominations, these reflect cultural and geographic origins:

a. **Ashkenazi**: Descendants of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe- (Yiddish)

b. **Sephardic**: Descendants of Jews from Spain and Portugal- Ladino (Hebrew/Spanish)

c. **Mizrahi**: Jews from Middle Eastern and North African countries. (Judeo/Arabic)

3. The Three Major Forms of Judaism-

a. **Orthodox Judaism**: Adheres to the traditional belief that the Torah was given directly by God to Moses and remains unchanging. It emphasizes strict observance of *Halakha* (Jewish law), including Shabbat and kosher laws.

b. **Conservative Judaism**: Occupies a middle ground, viewing the Torah as divine but acknowledging that its laws can be adapted to fit modern times.

c. **Reform Judaism**: The most liberal of the major branches, viewing Jewish law as a set of non-binding guidelines rather than requirements. It emphasizes personal choice and social justice.

B. A Matter of Authority- The Torah, Tanakh, Talmud

1. **The Torah**- *Torah* is a Hebrew word meaning “to instruct.” (AKA The law). The Torah refers to the five books of Moses in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). The Torah was written approximately 1400 BC.

2. **The Tanakh**- The Hebrew Old Testament- Interesting Structure-

3. **The Talmud (AKA Rabbinic Judaism)**- The word “Talmud” is a Hebrew word meaning “learning”. The Talmud is a central text of Judaism and consists primarily of discussions and commentary on Jewish history, due to the loss of temple worship. The Talmud consists of what are known as the Gemara and the Mishnah. Consists of roughly 80 rabbis over 500 years.

In addition to the inspired written Hebrew scriptures (Tanakh), which Christians call the Old Testament, Judaism has an "Oral Torah" which is a tradition explaining what these scriptures mean and how to interpret them and apply the laws. Orthodox Jews believe God taught this Oral Torah to Moses, and to others, down to the present day. This tradition was maintained only in oral form until about the 5th century A.D.

C. A Matter of Perspective- Jesus, Christianity

1. **Issue-** Reasons why Jesus and Christianity are s Rejected- He is nowhere to be found in the Tenakh-

- a. Not mentioned anywhere in the Torah-
 - The seed of the Woman- Genesis 3:15
 - The Crucifixion- Genesis 22
 - The Passover- Exodus 12
 - The Two Goats- Leviticus 16
 - The Brass Serpent- Numbers 22
 - The Suffering Servant- Isaiah 53- His suffering before His Glory
 - The Stone rejected- Psalm 118
- b. Antisemitism by so-called Christian nations-
- c. Cultural implications/Tradition
- d. The Godhead vs. a monotheistic perspective
 - Deuteronomy 6:4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God [is] one LORD: