

Just for clarification: In my presentations I am using YHVH (Yahuwah) instead of LORD, which is a title and not a name and I am using Yahusha instead of Jesus, which is not a translation but a transliteration and really has no meaning, neither in Hebrew nor in English! YHVH (Yahuwah) and Yahusha are the actual original names and the true nature and character of them.

Today we want to consider **Ephesians 2:14-16**, because this is a text which is often being used by those who hold that Yahusha abolished the Torah by His death at the cross!

Let's read Ephesians 2:14-16 (KJV): "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16. And that he might reconcile both unto Elohim in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

At face value, I think this verse is confusing. What does Paul say?



Millions of people have been and are still being deceived! Ministers and laymen alike have focused on this Scripture and **fell into a trap**, which Peter warned about. They have twisted it to say what it does NOT say and are bringing destruction upon themselves unknowingly!

Is that a serious statement "to bring yourself unknowingly to destruction?" Much of the information in this presentation is taken from a website called "torahresource.com"

Peter spoke of our beloved brother, Paul and says: "As in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable twist, as they do also the other scriptures, **unto their own destruction.**" 2. Peter 3, 16 (KJV)

As mentioned “Ephesians 2:14-15” is an often used text by those who hold that Yahusha abolished the Torah by His death.

Let’s make one point very clear that the verses in Ephesians 2:14-15 as well as Colossians 2:14 cannot be referring to the sacrificial laws or any other divine laws for none of these laws were ever “against us” nor did they create “enmity” but were for the good of the people. The only one that would be talking negative about any of YHVH’s laws has to be Satan.



When Yahusha spoke of “law” He meant all of Elohim’s Word. He said **“Thy Word is Truth”** (John 17:17 - KJV). All of YHVH’s Word is the truth just as His **“law – Torah”** according to Psalm 119:142. **He understood it, yet why don’t people who profess to know Him, understand it?**

We know the familiar verses in Matthew 5:17-18 where Yahusha said **“Think not that I am come to destroy the law (the Torah), or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say to you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Torah, till all be fulfilled.”**



When one reads the 2nd Chapter of Ephesians, it can be seen that **the central theme of Paul is the oneness of Jew and Gentile as united in Messiah.** That the Gentiles should be blessed within the scope of the Abrahamic promise was never questioned. What had been left a mystery was the manner in which the blessing would come upon the nations!

Ephesians 2:18-20: “For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, But fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of Elohim. 20. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Yahusha Ha Mashiach himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Yahuwah. In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of Elohim through the Spirit.”

The method of blessing the Gentiles is emphasized by the words like fellow-citizen, fellow-heirs, fellow-members, fellow-partakers. The Gentiles would be blessed not in a separate community, a separate entity but by being grafted into the ancient community of YHVH. Both Jews and Gentiles would be wedded into one and thus mutually share the blessings of Elohim.

Gentile believers were to be accepted as full citizens within the believing community without undergoing the ritual of a proselyte.



This issue brought **division** within the early emerging Believers. Some felt that a non-Jew had fewer privileges within the community than a Jew, some considered full fledged salvation impossible apart from becoming a proselyte, and still others refused to fellowship in fullness with the non-Jews of The Way.

Each of these perspectives was for Paul “different gospel,” since union with Messiah was the sole basis of entrance and privilege within the family of Elohim, and this union was a matter of grace, not of the works of the Torah. All members had the same position before the Father, because all members were in Messiah.

Any activity that taught something different than this was to be cursed. We could assume that each party was sincere in their stand but grossly influenced by their past upbringing and teachings.

The text in Ephesians centers upon this unification of Jew and Gentile in Messiah, but does so from the perspective of the cross. It is the sacrificial death of Messiah that has established the means of unity, for it was by His death that the enmity between Jew and Gentile was destroyed.

For Paul it is clear that the cross not only made atonement for sin, but it also established the basis for blessing the Gentiles by removing all the obstacles to unity with the chosen people. But it did this, not by raising the Gentiles to the level of the Jews, for both Jew and Gentile, apart from union with Messiah, are excluded from the blessing of Elohim.

*Let's look at some other Bible translations of Ephesians 2:14-15: "For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace." **NASB***

*"For He himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace." **(NIV)** Ephesians 2:14-15*

*"For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace." **[NRSV]** Ephesians 2:14-15*

*"For he is himself our peace. Gentiles and Jews, he has made the two one, and in his own body of flesh and blood has broken down the barrier of enmity which separated them; for he annulled the law with its rules and regulations, so as to create out of the two a single new humanity in himself, thereby making peace." **[REB]** Ephesians 2:14-15*

*"For he himself is our shalom — he has made us both one and has broken down the m'chitzah which divided us by destroying in his own body the enmity occasioned by the Torah, with its commands set forth in the form of ordinances. He did this in order to create in union with himself from the two groups a single new humanity and thus make shalom." **[Jewish New Testament]** Ephesians 2:14-15*

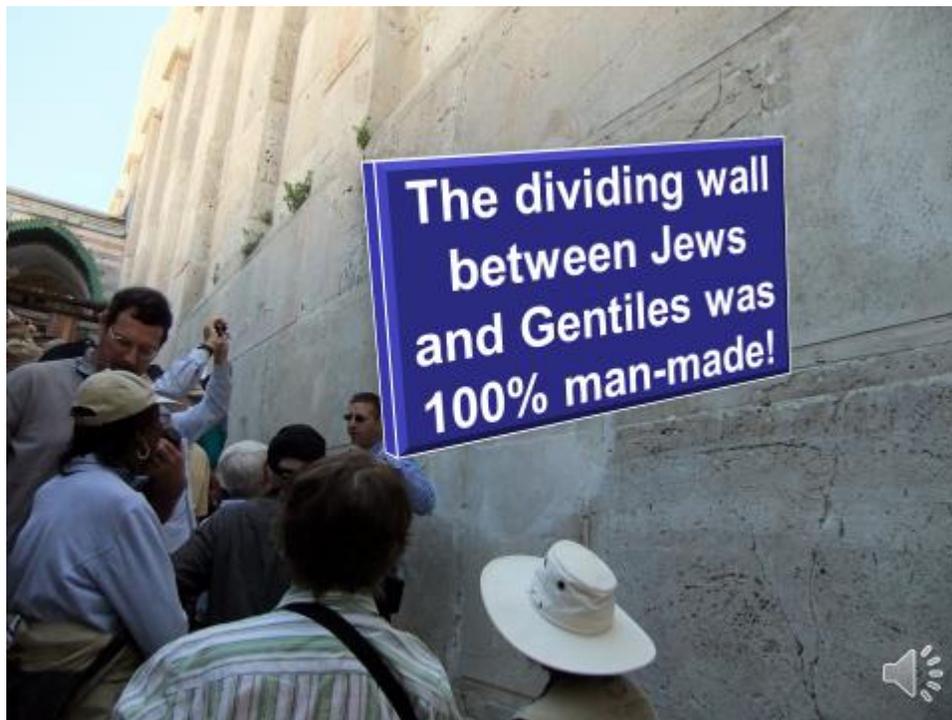
Taken at face value these translations present the text as a pointed assertion by the apostle Paul that Messiah abolished the Mosaic Torah by His sacrificial death, and that the Torah was the instrument of hostility that erected a dividing wall between Jew and Gentile. **IS THAT TRUE?**

Just reading these verses in Ephesians 2:14-15, you can come to the conclusion as most Christian Churches come to that the Messiah

abolished, did away with the Law, the Torah at His crucifixion. However, the difficulty with such an interpretation is twofold:

First, it contradicts the clear teaching of Yahusha Himself that He did not abolish the written Torah (See Matthew 5:17-18) and

Secondly, the written Torah never demanded a wall between Jew and Gentile!



Ephesians 2:14 is making the plain statement that Yahusha didn't create the wall but he "broke down" the dividing wall. The Greek term translated "broke down" which can mean "to loose," "untie," "set free," "break up," "destroy," "bring to an end," "abolish," or "do away with."

Contextually, the abolishing action is viewed as final = as a death. Thus, the barrier, whatever that barrier was, is done away with forever.

Then we have the word "*Katargew*" (*katargeo*), translated as "abolished" describing what Yahusha did to the "enmity" between Jew and Gentile, usually means "to render void," "make ineffective", "powerless," "abolish," "wipe out," or "set aside," and is used in the context of rendering laws or edicts of no more effect.

That is in verse 15 (*Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances*) for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.

But what is that dividing wall? **The object of the verb “to destroy” is “the dividing wall of the barrier” or the “middle wall of partition!”**.

The Jews had actually a physical wall constructed even in the court of the temple, and it physically separated the Gentiles. Yet, spiritually, both were cut off from YHVH because both were sinners. “All have sinned...” we read in Romans 3:23

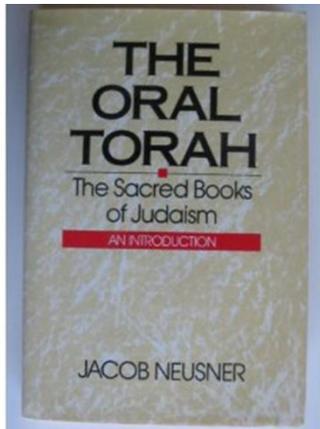
The Soreg is the small wall right before the stairs to go up to the Temple. It was meant to keep Gentiles (non-Jews) away from this most holy place.

The Soreg was a five foot wall on the Temple Mount that kept the Gentiles away from approaching the Temple itself. The Temple area was considered holy and clean. Gentiles, on the other hand, were considered unrighteous and defiled. Thus, Jews could approach the Temple, Gentiles could not. In A.D. 1871, archeologists discovered the “Soreg Inscription”. The inscription was written in Greek with this chilling warning: No Gentile may enter within the railing around the Sanctuary and within the enclosure. Whosoever should be caught will render himself liable to the death penalty which will inevitably flow.



Here is a stone block from the original Soreg (the Middle Wall) - The Temple warning to Gentiles!

However, the wall spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 2:14 **could not be the physical dividing wall made out of stone in the 2nd Temple** as some commentators have assumed, because (a) it was still standing at the time Paul wrote Ephesians, and (b) the terminology Paul uses to describe the wall is different than the terms regularly used for that dividing wall in the Temple. (torahresource.com)



Secondly, the Greek term “fragmo” (fragmos) was used in the 1st Century to identify the Oral Torah as a “wall” or “fence” around the written Torah, and the Pharisees as “builders of the wall.”

So who was the builder of the dividing wall? It was the Pharisees!

Thirdly, aspects of the Oral Torah, not the Written Torah, laid the foundation for a strict separation between Jew and non-Jew.

What we are simply saying is that the dividing wall that was abolished by Messiah was none other than those Rabbinic laws which had enforced a separation between Jew and Gentile in opposition to the Written Torah. In fact, the Tanakh gives very clear instructions against erecting barriers to separate Israel from the other nations.

The foreigner who desired to worship the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was to be welcomed into the community and treated with the same respect as was given the native born.

Here we have a few texts that prove that, first in Exodus 22:21

“Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” KJV

“Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt!” Exodus 23:9 - KJV

“The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am Yahuwah your Elohim.” Leviticus 19:34 - KJV

“And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.” Leviticus 25:35 – KJV

Deuteronomy 26:12 **“When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled.”** - KJV

The strangers were to be given full participation in matters of Torah and Torah-life. Like Sabbath keeping in Exodus 33:12:

“Six days shalt thou do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.” KJV

Then we have Leviticus 19:10 when gleaning the land “And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor **and stranger**: I am the YHVH your Elohim.” KJV

The same applied to justice in Exodus 12:49: **“One law shall be to him that is home born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.”** KJV

The same principle applied for the festival and the worship and prayer in the temple.

“Thus saith YHVH: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and **do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger**, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.” Jeremiah 22:3 - KJV

The prophets pronounced judgment upon any who would neglect their Elohim-given responsibilities to the “stranger,” on the same grounds as neglect of orphans and widows

This is what the Written Torah, what the Law of Moses had to say!

The promise that Gentiles could have access to know, love and treasure YHVH was spoken of in the Old Testament. YHVH speaking through the prophet Hosea said, “I will call those who were not my people, ‘my people,’ and her who was not beloved, ‘beloved’. And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, ‘you are not my people,’ there they shall be called sons of the living Elohim.” KJV

The claim that Gentiles could have access to know, love and treasure YHVH was fulfilled through Yahusha!

John 10:16 KJV “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd... I am the good shepherd.”

The reminder that Gentiles could have access to know, love and treasure YHVH was re-emphasized through the Apostles.

“He made known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He called, not from Jews only, but also from among Gentiles” (Romans 9:23-24 - KJV).



Or, to put it as succinctly as Paul did:
“**There is neither Jew nor Greek...; for you are all one in Messiah**”
(Galatians 3:28 - KJV).

The practical outworking of the rabbinic laws of purity, raised a strong wall of separation between the observant Jew and the non-Jew even if this was not the original intent. With the emphasis put upon purity by the Rabbis, separation from those things that rendered a person unclean was inevitable.



When Gentiles were added to the “list” of those things that communicate uncleanness, the wall was built between Jew and Gentile. According to **Oral Torah**, mere contact with non-Jews could render a person unclean, as well as contact with the residence of a non-Jew or even with land outside the Land of Israel.

These were man-made laws.

Contact with any object used for idolatrous worship was added to the list of what might render a person unclean.

Clearly, the oral Torah of the 1st Century functioned to separate Jew and Gentile in a dramatic way.

“The law of commandments *contained* in ordinances.” Ephesians 2:15
The Ephesians text helps to define the dividing wall with the appositional phrase “the law of commandments contained in ordinances.” The question is, did Paul use this phrase to denote those Rabbinic laws which had, in fact, separated Jew and non-Jew?

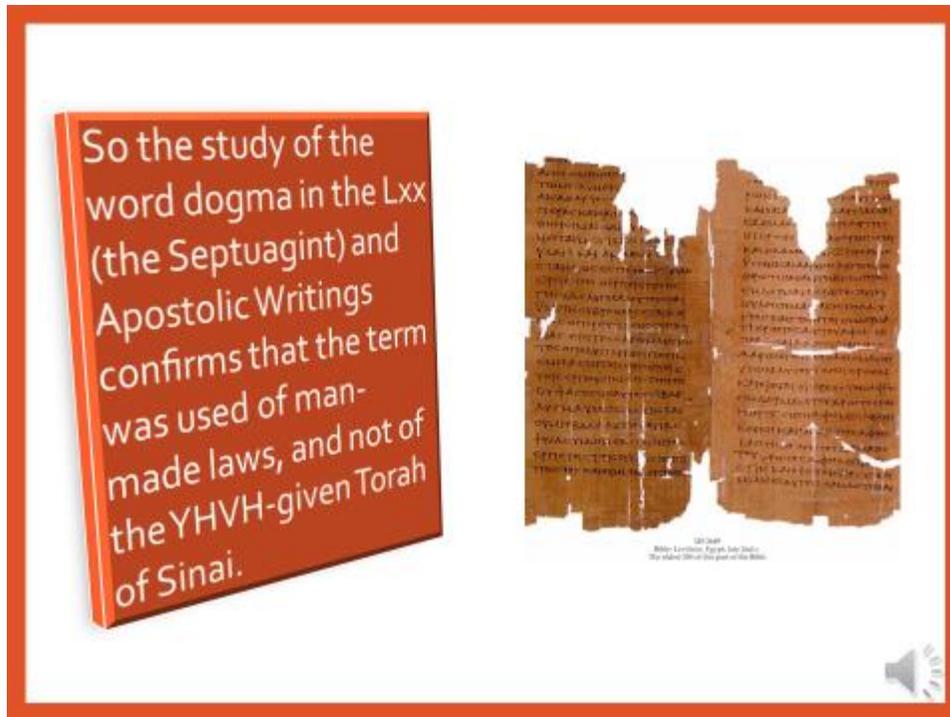
The first thing to note is that the term “dogma” is never used in the Septuagint of any of the commandments, judgments, statutes, or laws of which, according to Genesis 26:5, the total Written Torah consists. In the Septuagint (Lxx) dogma normally designates the edicts of a king or court.

LXX = Septuagint – The oldest Greek Version of the Jewish Bible

The word “ordinance” in Ephesians 2:14-15 as well as in Colossians 2:14 is translated from the Greek word “dogma” #G1378 from the base of #G1380 a law (civil, ceremonial or ecclesiastical) - decree, ordinance (Strong’s Concordance) The noun dogma is found five times in the Apostolic Writings. In Luke 2:1 and Acts 17:7 it is used of Caesar's decrees, while in Acts 16:4 it refers to the Apostolic decree formulated at the Jerusalem council.

Therefore this phrase according to the Greek (*tw̄n patriw̄n dogmatw̄n - ton patrion dogmaton*) “the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances” is best understood not to refer to the Mosaic Torah but to the “traditions of the fathers,” the Halakah of the community.

These man-made ordinances (#1378) dogma prevented the salvation from extending past the Jews and created enmity. This is what was truly “**contrary**” and “**against**” the Gentiles, preventing them from being brothers in Messiah.



We may therefore conclude that Paul adds it to his description in order to identify the abolished law as the legal fence of the Rabbis, particularly the parts of the Oral Torah that separated Jew and Gentile and thus were at odds with the Written Torah that prophesied the unity of Jew and Gentile all within the promise of blessing given to Abraham.

This does not mean that Yahusha abolished the entire Oral Torah in His death on the cross. In fact, there are many instances recorded in the life of Yahusha where He gives clear allegiance to Oral Torah.

We have some examples of this: Matt. 9:14, 15 The argument of Yahusha, in which He defends the manner in which His disciples fast, is based upon a recognized Halakah that it is improper to fast in the presence of a bridegroom. This is not found in the Written Torah.

Matt. 12:5 The teaching which states that the priests break the Sabbath but are innocent is not found in the Written Torah, but in the Oral Torah.

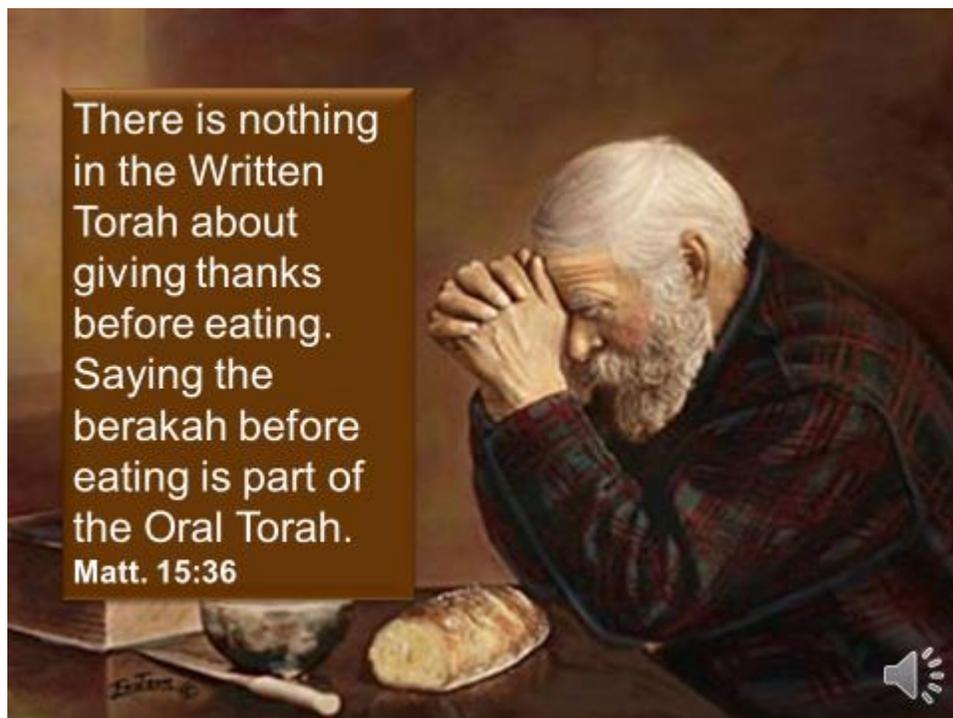
Halakah means Jewish Law. 2. Halakah originates from the Aramaic word, "hilkheta" (direction of the action) and the Hebrew word "holech" (from the verb "to walk.") 3. We combine the meanings. Hilkheta and Holech give us "Halakah" which means **"This is the way to go."**



In Matt. 15:1 the Pharisees are inquiring about the disciples of Yahusha: **why do they transgress the traditions of the elders by not washing their hands according to Halakah before eating?**

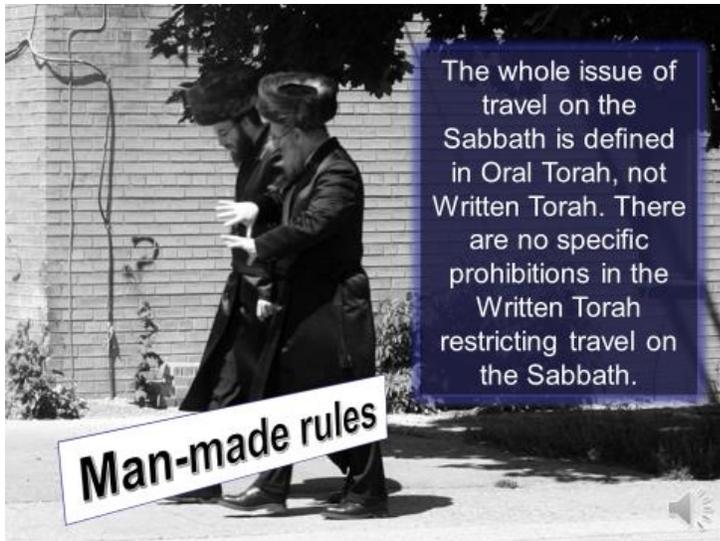
Yahusha rebukes them, citing also their use of korban

..... to “hide” their wealth from aging parents who needed their support. In both cases, it is clear that the Pharisees consider the Halakah, based on Oral Torah, as binding.



Another example is in Matt. 22:40 Yahusha quotes the Shema and Lev. 19:18, stating that upon these two precepts hang the Law and Prophets. The terminology of the Law and Prophets hanging from something is derived from Oral Torah. Yahusha knew both the Written and the Oral Torah.

The matter of tithing very small amounts of produce from volunteer seedlings is not taken up in the Written Torah, but is part of the Oral Torah. Matthew 23:23



The Written Torah does not define the dimensions of one's "place." It was the Oral Torah that developed, for instance, a "Sabbath-day's journey." Matthew 24:20

The Written Torah declares that a person is unclean from a corpse if he touches it or is in the same room with it (See Numbers 19:11-15).

The Pharisees extended the communication of impurity to any object overshadowed by a corpse (or part of a corpse) or any object whose shadow contacts a corpse or tomb. The Oral Torah further elaborates the means by which impurity is transmitted from a corpse to an object. It appears that Yahusha accepted at least some of this Oral Torah as grounds for His illustration of the Pharisees as concealed tombs in Luke 11:44 that rendered those who overshadowed them unclean.



The issues of healing on the Sabbath are part of the Oral Torah, to which Yahusha no doubt refers as he asked the question in Luke 6:9 "I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil" - KJV to save life or to destroy it?

We probably could recite many more like Matt. 26:20 reclining when eating at the Passover meal, which is not prescribed in the Written Torah.

What law was violated In Acts 23:3 when Paul was struck? The idea that a person was innocent until proven guilty is a function of Oral Torah, not Written Torah.

The threefold designation in Acts 25:8, “law of the Jews, or against the Temple or against Caesar” (KJV) seems to define the three most powerful arms of law!

Pharisees = Laws of the Jews
Sadducees = Against the Temple
And Rome = Against Caesar

The only logical conclusion in regard to the Oral Torah, is that Yahusha **abolished those Rabbinic laws which, when practiced, set aside the Written Torah of Elohim** by separating the Jew and Gentile, which YHVH intended **to make one in Messiah.**

This was the “dividing wall, the (Rabbinic) law contained in the ordinances (of the Oral Torah).” Those parts of the Oral Torah that affirm the Written Torah or are in harmony with it, remain viable for the Messianic believer as the traditions of the father.



“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Yahusha Ha Mashiach.” Galatians 3:28 - KJV

Summary!

The middle wall of partition (the dividing wall)! **What is it? Who made it? How was it broken down?**

The middle wall of division were added **manmade** ordinances part of the Oral Torah that prevented the salvation from extending past the Jews and created enmity. This is what was “contrary” and “against” the Gentiles, preventing them from being brothers in Messiah.

These man-made laws Paul called “the law of commandments contained in ordinances!” So those verses in Ephesians 2:14-15 can not be referring to the sacrificial laws or any other divine laws for none of these laws were ever “against us” nor did they create “enmity” but were for the good of the people. These were added man-made laws inspired by Satan.

The Messiah broke that middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile down by spilling His blood on Calvary. He broke down the wall separating both from YHVH.



Jew and Gentile are both now one new creation because of what Messiah did.

Let's remember Galatians chapter 3:26-29 **“For you are all the children of Elohim by faith in Yahusha the Mashiyach. For those who have been immersed in Mashiyach have been clothed with Mashiyach. For there is neither Jew nor Aramean, nor slave nor free, nor male nor female, but you are all one in Yahusha the Mashiyach. And if you are of the Mashiyach then you are seeds of Awraham und inheritors by the promises.”** *Aramaic English New Testament*

The central theme of Paul In Ephesians 2:14-16 is the oneness of Jew and Gentile as united in Messiah by tearing down the man-made wall of partition . Paul is not saying that the Messiah was doing away with any law, ceremonial or moral, he is talking about man-made laws! That makes sense!

THE END

