

# Is Historic Judaism in its Rabbinic and Messianic Forms Exclusive or Inclusive of Other Religions?

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## Introduction

A rabbi once confronted me with great anger: “How dare you say that Jesus is the only way! We Jews do not believe that our religion is exclusive. Jesus is OK for Gentiles but not for Jews. You are intolerant if say that your religion is the only true religion. To say that means you are anti-Semitic and a hatemonger.”

While the rabbi was in line with the popular relativism of the day, he was out of line with the historic Judaism found in the Hebrew Scriptures and in the writings of Rabbinic Judaism. In effect, he had denied what his religion has always stood for and was no longer a “Jew” theologically.

When Christians say that there is only one way to heaven, they are simply repeating what the Law and Prophets and the rabbis taught. We must remember that the word “Christians” was invented by Gentiles who did not understand who we were. All Christians regardless of ethnic background or color are actually Messianic Jews who have accepted the long-awaited Messiah in the person of Jesus.

## Proposition 1: The Torah (Law), the Prophets, the Rabbis, Rabbi Yeshua and the Apostles were all exclusive of other religions.

- a. The Torah: No other gods!  
“You shall have no other gods before Me” ([Exo. 20:3](#)).
- b. The Prophets: NO other Savior!  
“I, even I, am the LORD; And there is no savior besides Me” ([Isa. 43:11](#)).
- c. The Rabbis were united on this point:  
“In virtue of the commandment, ‘Thou shalt have no other gods’ Israel will have a claim to be remembered favorably as exterminators of idolatry” ([Midrash Rabbah \[IX. 45\] Numbers I, Vol. V., p. 320](#)).  
“Know this day, and lay it to thy heart, that the LORD, he is God in heaven above and upon the earth below beneath; there is none else ([ib. iv, 39](#)). Not only that, but we have sworn to our God that we will not exchange Him for any other god” ([Midrash Rabbah \[I.16\] Deut., Vol. VII, p. 131](#)).
- d. Rabbi Yeshua (Jesus): No other Way!  
Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me ([John 14:6](#)).
- e. The Apostle Peter: No other Name!  
“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved” ([Acts 4:12](#)).
- f. The Apostle Rabbi Saul: No other Mediator!  
“For there is only one God, and only one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus ([1 Tim. 2:5](#)).

**Proposition 2: All the gods of other religions are either nothing or demons.**

a. The Torah:

“They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread” ([Deut. 32:17](#)).

“And they shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons with which they play the harlot. This shall be a permanent statute to them throughout their generations” ([Lev. 17:7](#)).

b. The Prophets:

“For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens” ([1 Chron. 16:26](#)).

“They have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them” ([2 Kings 19:18](#)).

“Have you not driven out the priests of the LORD, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and made for yourselves priests like the peoples of other lands? Whoever comes to consecrate himself with a young bull and seven rams, even he may become a priest of what are no gods” ([2 Chron. 13:9](#)).

“Has a nation changed gods, When they were not gods?” ([Jer. 2:11](#)).

“Why should I pardon you? Your sons have forsaken Me And sworn by those who are not gods” ([Jer. 5:7](#)).

“But they are altogether stupid and foolish In their discipline of delusion—their idol is wood! Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, And gold from Uphaz, The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith; Violet and purple are their clothing; They are all the work of skilled men. But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King” ([Jer. 10:8-9](#)).

“Can man make gods for himself? Yet they are not gods!” ([Jer. 16:20](#)).

c. The Rabbis were united on this point:

“I am not called ‘the god of idolaters,’ but ‘the God of Israel’ “ ([Rabbah Midrash, Exo. 29:4-5](#)).

“But is not burning incense to a demon idolatry?” ([b. Talmud, San. 65a](#)).

“And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto demons” ([b. Talmud, San. 61a](#)).

d. Rabbi Yeshua (Jesus):

“that they may know Thee, the only true God” ([John 17:3](#)).

e. The Apostles:

“No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become shares in demons” (1 Cor. 10:20).

“However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods (Gal. 4:8).

**Proposition 3: To worship any God other than YHWH was a capital crime in Israel to be punished by death.**

a. The Torah:

“He who sacrifices to any god, other than to the LORD alone, shall be utterly destroyed” (Exo. 22:20).

“You shall also say to the sons of Israel, ‘Any man from the sons of Israel or from the aliens sojourning in Israel, who gives any of his offspring to Molech, shall surely be put to death; the people of the land shall stone him with stones” (Lev. 20:2).

“As for the person who turns to mediums and to spiritists, to play the harlot after them, I will also set My face against that person and will cut him off from among his people” (Lev. 20:6).

“You shall not allow a sorceress to live” (Exo. 22:18).

“Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death” (Lev. 24:16).

“If your brother, your mother’s son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, ‘Let us go and serve other gods’...you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people” (Deut. 13:6-9).

“You shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed, to your gates, that is, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death” (Deut. 17:5).

“Seize the prophets of Baal; do not let one of them escape.” So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there” (1 Kgs. 18:40).

“But rather, you are to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim” (Exo. 34:13).

- b. "The Rabbis were united on this point:  
"Our Rabbis taught: Seven precepts were the sons of Noah commanded: social laws; to refrain from blasphemy; idolatry; adultery; bloodshed; robberty; and eating flesh cut from a living animal" (b. Talmud, San. 56).

Footnote (1), p. 382: "These commandments may be regarded as the foundation of all human and moral progress. Judaism has both a national and a universal outlook in life...it recognizes that moral progress and its concomitant Divine love and approval are the privilege and obligation of all mankind. And hence the Talmud lays down the seven Noachian precepts, by observance of which all mankind may attain spiritual perfection, and without which moral death must inevitably ensue. That perhaps is the idea underlying the assertion that a heathen is liable for death for the neglect of any of these."

"R. Huna, Rab Judah, and all the disciples of Rab maintained: A heathen is executed for the violations of the seven Noachian laws" (b. Talmud, San. 57a).

"He who sacrifices to any god, other than to the LORD alone, shall be utterly destroyed" (B. Talmud, Gitten 57b).

"The Torah decreed that such a charmer is to be stoned" (b. Talmud, San. 65a).

"There is no severer penalty than incurred for idolatry, for God himself is jealous of it, as it is said, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me, etc.' (Exo. Xx, 3); as it is written, 'For the LORD thy God is a devouring fire, a jealous God' (Deut. Iv, 24)...the penalty for idol worship is so severe..." (Midrash [II.18] Deut., Vol. VII, p. 45).

"He who engages in idol worship is executed. It is all one whether he serve it, sacrifice, offer incense, make libations, prostrate himself, accept it as a God, or say to it, 'Thou art my God' " (Mishnah 60b).

"The necromancer and the charmer are subject to the death penalty of stoning, so is a sorceress also subject to the penalty of stoning" (b. Talmud, Yebamoth 4a).

"Our Rabbis taught: Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live: this applies to both man and woman....How are they executed?...stoning...The sorcerer who insists on exact paraphernalia works through demons" (b. Talmud, San. 67a).

"Our Rabbis taught....The inclusion of heathens, to whom blasphemy is prohibited just as to Israelites, and they are executed by decapitation; for every death penalty decreed for the sons of Noah is only by decapitation" (b. Talmud San. 56a).

### Conclusion

Rabbi Yeshua and the Apostles taught that no physical violence was to be used in evangelism or church discipline. The Church set up by Jesus can only exclude from her

membership rolls: idolaters, pagans, cultists, occultists, homosexuals, lesbians, heretics, apostates, and those commit bestiality.

When the Roman Catholic Church used violence to force pagans, Jews and Protestants to convert and then tortured and killed those who refused, this was not New Testament Christianity. There is no historical evidence of Evangelical Christians using violence in this way. We use the moral persuasion found in the Gospel instead of brute force. We believe in missions, no missiles; Bibles not bullets. Messianic Jews believe in religious freedom for all.

### Recommended Book and CD:



### The Trinity: Evidence & Issues

This book is the most detailed exegetical work on the Trinity ever written by an evangelical scholar. It begins with a discussion on epistemology and hermeneutics and then proceeds to deal with all the Trinitarian passages found in the Old and New Testaments, the Intertestamental Jewish literature, and early Church writings. Includes refutations of anti-Trinitarian arguments. Recommended by Dr. Gleason Archer and Dr. John Ankerberg. 587 pages

### Judaism Explained--CD

Modern Judaism is much different than it was in Old Testament times. This lecture will help you explore the kinds of Judaism that exist today!



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