



For most claiming allegiance to the Messiah of the New Testament, acceptance of all the compositions included in the Catholic New Testament canon is taken for granted. To question this is overwhelming held anathema. In the largely unbridled, fractured myriads calling themselves “Christian,” the writings ascribed to Paul have been revered as holy scripture for the better part of the last two millennia.¹ He is even seen as having a special authority to countermand various parts of the Hebrew Bible. Yet, on closer examination, it is easily seen that this reverence is feigned.

Consider, for example, Paul’s instructions in 1 Corinthians for the congregation to maintain a *beit din* (standing congregational council with judiciary authority), to observe the *Pesach* (Passover) with its *Chag haMatzot* (Feast of Matsot), or to exclude the unchaste from the congregation. Or what of the pastoral qualifications directed to Timothy and Titus? Who is implementing these?

The reality is that the writings ascribed to Paul present a handy foil to dismiss key portions of the *Tanakh*. Having then served their function, they are themselves casually discarded as instructions limited to a particular time and place.

The reverence we accord holy scripture far exceeds such treatment. However, we are more discriminating than Catholicism and her daughters as to what is holy and what is not.

With little, if any, explanation, Christian textual critics use Galatians in particular as the barometer by which to evaluate the authenticity of all other seemingly Pauline or pseudo-Pauline writings. It is also the scriptural bedrock of mainstream Christian doctrine by which all other scripture is generally interpreted. Essentially, for Christians, all other scriptures must be evaluated in light of Galatians. This includes Yehoshua’s teachings. Martin Luther’s famous comments both reflect and reinforce

¹ This special deference to Paul was really the position of the clergy rather than the laity because, for most of the last two millennia, the vast majority of Christians were, not only illiterate, but uncomprehending of the Latin language in which the scriptures were generally available and in which religious services were conducted.

this perspective. Of Galatians, he was fond of saying in his lectures, “This is ‘my’ epistle. I am wed to it.” In contrast, of the letter of Ya’akov, he wrote, “Therefore Saint James’ Epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to them; for it has nothing of the nature of the Gospel about it.” (1522 Preface to the New Testament)

It is true that many, if not most, Christians would find Luther’s comments brazen. Yet, with outstanding candor, those comments accurately represent the relative stature assigned to Galatians by Christians in general.

Thus, there is no reason for the mainstream Christian to question any statement in Galatians—and every disincentive to do so.

General Principle: The systematic process for distinguishing between holy and common scripture

For the Torah-observant disciple, the matter is entirely different. While every disincentive remains, an imperative completely alien to Christianity is also present: That is, the Torah is paramount; every other scripture must be evaluated in its light. Beyond the Torah itself and the consistent affirmations of it throughout the Neviim and Ketuvim (Prophets and Writings), this fact emanates from Yehoshua’s statement in Matityahu (Matthew) 5:17-19:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish, but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter or one dot will pass from the Torah until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever violates one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Significantly, the primacy of the Torah was used by normative Judaism in antiquity to identify what gradually became the canon of the Tanakh (what Christians refer to as the “Old Testament”). We actually have records of some of the debating points over some of the books which were ultimately included, some not without initial reservations. Though some compositions seemed inconsistent with the Torah, it was generally agreed that, on deeper consideration, they were not actually at odds with, but complimented it. Additionally, there are ancient Jewish writings still extant (known as the “Apocrypha”) that were rejected by Judaism in general as holy scripture, though the Catholics and Eastern Orthodox opted to incorporate them into their canon. The Protestants did not follow suit.

It should be stated that “Torah” in this context means the five books of Moshe. Replace that yardstick with any other measure and the trajectory of biblical interpretation is radically different.

Increasingly of late, teachers and authors endeavoring to be Torah-observant disciples have attempted, as have I, to reconcile Galatians with the Torah and the remainder of the Tanakh. Their efforts have proven notably strenuous and unsuccessful. For example, Avi ben Mordechai devotes 500 pages to the task in his *Galatians: A Torah-Based Commentary in First-Century Hebraic Context*. Granted, penetrating the language and culture is no casual exercise for any ancient writing, but should such a brief composition as Galatians demand such a herculean effort to salvage?

This is not to suggest that reconciling any New Testament statement or composition with the Torah is always easy, any more than was the process of evaluation to which the books of the Tanakh were subjected,

The following hurdles are typical of New Testament interpretation in general:

1. Biased mistranslation from Greek into English (or any other modern language) by those whose loyalties to the Nicene Creed are significantly greater than to the New Testament content itself.
2. Lack of familiarity with the inherent Jewish culture and religion upon which the New Testament writings are generally based (as well as with Hebrew idioms).
3. Inconsistencies in Greek-to-Greek text transmission from antiquity as reflected in manuscript variants—sometimes due to unwitting mistakes, sometimes due to doctrinal bias or cultural/religious detachment.

Most often, evaluation of the above three factors suffices to bring the Torah-compliant messages to light. Occasionally, none of the Greek texts extant supply the faithful rendering. For example, Yehoshua was notoriously critical of much of the great body of oral traditions the Pharisees overlaid upon the written Torah. Quoting Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 29:13, he said, “Their reverence toward me, as is taught, is the commandments of men.” (Mark 7:7) What, then, is one to make of Matityahu (Matthew) 23:3, where it reads, “The scribes and the Pharisees have sat down on Moshe’s seat. Therefore, all things, whatever they tell you to perform, keep and do”?

Though some stubbornly contest it, George Howard has demonstrated that, despite containing an abundance of obvious and often clumsy corruptions, Shem Tov Matityahu contains much of the original Hebrew base of Matityahu. It thus supplies facts and nuances lacking in *any* Greek text, the Greek being a translation of a Hebrew record of Hebrew conversations and teachings, not vice versa. Examining the Hebrew variants of Shem Tov Matityahu, Nehemia Gordon has conclusively demonstrated that Yehoshua’s statement was actually, “Upon the seat of Moshe the Pharisees and sages sit. Now all which *he* says to you keep and do, but their ordinances and deeds do not do because they say and do not.” The statement, which is hopelessly senseless in Greek, defying reliable interpretation, becomes very clear in Hebrew, needing no interpretation.

In this particular example, we can see that one cannot draw Yehoshua’s true teaching from the Greek texts alone. Further, though a pivotal teaching, the true meaning of the Moshe’s seat statement could not be widely demonstrated conclusively until the last couple decades, when Howard and others began to make Shem Tov Matityahu broadly available and still others with the necessary linguistic fluency began to study it.

This highlights a crucial point: Some enigmatic verses will not be properly and definitively interpreted until evidence presently lacking eventually comes to light. Such verses may have to be “held in escrow,” conclusions suspended and dogma based on them avoided until such an eventuality. Even as some evidence remains obscured, perhaps some being wittingly or unwittingly destroyed, new evidence has periodically emerged, even within the last century—the Qumran scrolls being the

most spectacular example—which enables us to refine our understanding of the scriptures in ways impossible before.

So this evaluation process demands considerable discipline and a background and skill beyond which most have the opportunity to cultivate, yet it is attainable and it should be encouraged and demanded of those who wish to teach more than superficially from scripture. Many of us who cannot do original research in this regard can still benefit greatly from those who do, but we must be considerably more discriminating than most and use the information judiciously. When this is done, the vast majority of superficially questionable passages appearing to contest the Torah will be found either to actually affirm it when considered in depth or they will be found to be spurious.

Given the issue of suspect credibility in the dominant religious milieu—ironically, coupled with the academic incredulity also emerging therefrom—it is advantageous to approach this analysis with a predilection of acceptance rather than feed doubt for doubt's sake. The rejection of any scripture handed down to us is very serious business. A healthy, measured approach is to consider the statement in the Greek and, where applicable, how it would have likely been expressed in Hebrew. When interpretation fails to resolve an apparent conflict, the next step is to compare its rendition in different manuscripts. Most often, this latter exercise simply involves a comparison between a critical text with the Textus Receptus (Received Text)—though it can entail review of individual manuscripts, Shem Tov Matityahu and, perhaps, citations from other near-contemporary writings.

When a passage is found to be spurious, it is typically (and thankfully) no more than a sentence. However, Mark 16:9-20 is a notorious example of more a lengthy passage that is absent from most early manuscripts. Like so many of the shorter passages, that its content contrasts with other Biblical instructions should hardly be considered accidental.

This returns us to the core basis of this whole evaluative process. The validity of a New Testament statement or composition is not based on acceptance by the Roman Catholic church or by Protestants, nor is it based on alleged authorship or consistency in text transmission. Rather, it is based on compatibility with and affirmation of the Torah. The Torah-observant disciple must both accept this fact and recognize the profoundly spectacular irrelevance of this criterion in mainstream Christianity, together with the necessary implications.

Thus, if anyone can demonstrate Galatians' abiding support of and compliance with the Torah—and do so succinctly, the treatise then stands as authoritative. If, on the other hand, the conclusions of its teachings remain as they have been generally interpreted, it cannot survive the essential litmus test of Torah compliance and must be clearly identified for what it is.

Question as to Audience & Dissemination

As a background observation, it is noteworthy that among the unique features of Galatians, it is not addressed to a congregation, but to a region of congregations. It has the broadest target audience of any composition in the so-called Pauline corpus.

Though unique within that corpus in addressing a broadly-dispersed audience, Ya'akov (James) does similarly as directed toward "to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion." The

mechanics of correspondence dissemination in antiquity is worth consideration. In this light, Galatians happens to add a very curious element with one of its closing comments in 6:11:

“See in what large letters I write to you with my hand.”

If this “letter” was intended for several congregations and to carry authority with them, it would have to be copied. Romans, if we are to accept the “second ending” Chapter 16 as original, was scribed by an amanuensis of Paul, a practice alluded to in some of the other letters. Did Galatians’ author write several copies of the entire letter in large letters? Did the amanuensis write several copies? Did the first congregation in receipt retain their own copy, mimic the handwriting and forward the original?

Whatever the case, when a letter was penned by an amanuensis, signed by the author and sent to a single recipient, the signature as a verification made sense. The autograph (original) or autographs would bear such a feature. The moment an autograph was later copied, such verification was nullified.

Other letters (though not all) attributed to Paul also have closing signature references, some more natural than others. For example, though highly relevant for broader instruction, 1 Corinthians was obviously written to a particular congregation addressing specific situations. The statement, “The greeting with my hand, Paul,” is unadorned and makes perfect sense in its context. Neither is there any indication the letter was written with broader dissemination in mind that would necessitate copying.

In contrast, Galatians’ signature reference is conspicuously self-conscious and stands as a lone interloper between two sections of completely disparate chains of thought.

Though this signature issue raises suspicions, it does not render the entire composition wholly defective. The New Testament writings were subject to glosses (editorial additions), omissions and other post-authorship amendments and errors. These do not disqualify the entire work in which they occur. The features we are about to examine do.

Lashon Hara (Evil Speaking) & Unresolved Conflict

There are a variety of statements in Galatians that seem discordant with the Torah. Most of them lend themselves to a Torah-compliant interpretation. However, there are at least four distinct ideas that stand firmly against the Torah. If anyone has been able to successfully reconcile them with the Torah, we have yet to see it. They are as follows:

Then, after fourteen years again I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, having taken with me also Titus; and I went up by revelation, and did submit to them the good news that I preach among the nations, and privately to those esteemed, lest in vain I might run or did run. (2:1-2)

The author does not reveal here who “those esteemed” in Jerusalem were, but the inference seems clear.

And from those who were esteemed to be something--whatever they were then, it makes no difference to me--the face of man God accepts not, for--to me those esteemed did add nothing. (2:6)

A few verses later, “the esteemed” are named:

And having known the grace that was given to me, Ya’akov, Kefa and Yochanan, who were esteemed to be pillars, a right hand of fellowship they did give to me, and to Barnaba, that we (go) to the nations, and they to the circumcision. (2:9)

Here, the author does not refer to Ya’akov, Kefa and Yochanan as “στυλοι,” (pillars) outright, but as those *esteemed to be* pillars—again casting doubt as to their actual status versus their perceived status.

He goes on to criticize Kefa for, upon the arrival of those “from Ya’akov,” drawing back from the gentiles. Such a criticism could have had a well-founded basis, but this criticism has the following disturbing features:

First, Yochanan is named among the three leaders whose status he challenges, but no wrongdoing is attributed to Yochanan.

Second, Barnaba is implicated in this misbehavior, as are “the rest of the Jews,” but no mention is made of a single person *not* implicated. Given the power of peer pressure, this could well be the case, but that leads to another striking fact:

There is no indication in this account or anywhere in Galatians that the author’s rebuke led a single soul to reform their behavior. There is no redemption noted for Kefa, Barnaba, Ya’akov or any other guilty party or the congregation as a whole. Thus, the recipients of this letter—the original recipients and all future readers—are left abruptly with an *unresolved* encounter—at least unresolved in the author’s estimation.

Could the lack of a resolution be a simple omission? Not for an observant Jew. This is why:

Avoiding לשון הרע (“lashon hara - the evil tongue) is a critical value in Judaism—and not merely on the basis of oral tradition. It is rooted in the statement, “Do not go about as a talebearer among your people” from Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:16. This is reflected in Titus 3:2, where Paul writes, “. . . speak evil of no man . . .”

An excellent example of how the avoidance of lashon hara works will be found in Michael Weisser’s account of his encounter with the Grand Dragon of the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan in Nebraska on NPR’s *Snap Judgment*. Within the first minutes of his account, Weisser shares, not only a litany of the Grand Dragon’s hateful conduct, but his full name. On a first hearing, this seems like a jarring breach of the lashon hara prohibition. Yet, as the story unfolds, it becomes a tale of redemption in which Weisser’s former adversary, Larry Trapp, renounces his hatred and becomes an agent of healing.

The chasm between Michael Weisser’s story and Galatians 2 is that one honors the memory of a troubled man who was redeemed; the other lacks any reference to reconciliation, therefore leaving the opposing side as unredeemed villains. It is essentially the libelous equivalent of hit-and-run. Such treatment might seem natural to a gentile, but it is abhorrent to Judaism and, more importantly, stands in opposition to the Torah.

Another reason that leaving the record of the conflict unresolved is troubling relates to Judaism’s emphasis on reconciliation. Every year, during the so-called “Ten Days of

Awe from Yom Teru'ah to Yom haKipurim, the entire community focuses on proactively mending strained relationships, one of the aspects of כַּפָּר (kafar). Such reconciliation is not necessarily easy, and the regularity with which the community is called to engage in it places considerable pressure on the Jew to avoid alienation in the first place, and to resolve it when it does occur. Lacking such a tradition, it is significantly easier for the Christian and gentiles in general to take alienation for granted. Like the prohibition of lashon hara, the imperative to reconcile is not merely a Jewish tradition; it is a mandate of the Torah.

The author of Galatians does precisely the opposite. He relates a conflict to third parties, leaves it unresolved, then propagates the breach so that, instead of containing and healing the conflict, others join him in his alienation. He is writing, not just to a congregation, but to an entire ethno-region, and he is well aware that, in the spirit of Mishlei (Proverbs) 18:17, he is transforming an event of personal offense into a broad and perpetual schism. The historical implications of this will be addressed near the close of this article.

“Seed” vs. “Seeds”

What seems to be the next flagrant error in Galatians is found in 3:16, which reads:

But the promises were spoken to Avraham and to his seed. It does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “And to your seed,” which is Christ.

In Acts 15, gentile believers are advised in the council (at which Paul was present) to listen to the weekly Torah reading performed in the synagogues every Shabbat. Those of us long experienced in this are very well aware that references to Avraham's seed in the Torah abound. If we count them, we find “זרעך” (your seed) forty-six times and “זרעו” (his seed) thirteen times. In normative Judaism and amongst Yehoshua's disciples, it is understood that Avraham's seed can refer to his collective progeny, or it can refer to his most illustrious son, the Moshiach, or both. In all cases, the word for Avraham's seed is “זרע,” (zer'a) in its singular form. The plural form, “זרעיד” (your seeds) is absent from the Tanakh, for, just like the English “seed,” זרע in its singular form can denote a single seed or innumerable seeds. It is what linguists refer to as both a count noun and a mass noun. (Shem Tov Matityahu (Matthew) does use the plural form (זרעונים) in a parable (13:32), but that form is not to be found in the Torah.) The following examples are illustrative:

His sons and the sons of his sons were with him, his daughters and his sons' daughters, and all his seed he brought with him into Egypt.
(Genesis 46:7)

“And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can count the dust of the earth, then your seed also will be counted.”
(Genesis 13:16)

“Look now at the heavens and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And he said to him, “So shall your seed be.” (Genesis 15:5)

And he said to Avram, “Knowing you must know that your seed shall be an alien in a land not theirs, and they shall serve them. And they shall afflict them four hundred years.” (Genesis 15:13)

When we come to the statement in Genesis 22:18: “And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice,” we find the same form—“זרעך.”

As usual, the word “seed,” whether we are reading this in Hebrew or English, is singular in form, yet denotes a multitude.

Were the references to Avraham’s seed few and obscure, such a gaff might be understandable—at least for a composition lacking God’s inspiration. However, the references are so frequent that, for those engaged in the weekly Torah reading, recollection of the Torah passages and their true contexts when reading Galatians 3:16 is immediate and instinctual for many. The error becomes obvious, as does the author’s ignorance of the Hebrew language and its message. Moreover, it is clear that he is also dependent on the ignorance of his readership to make his point. And still worse, by the time he gets to verse 29 of the same chapter, he seems to have forgotten his former argument, saying, “. . . you are Avraham’s seed . . .”

To the observant Jew, it is elementary that no Pharisee could possibly have made this mistake. Since Paul was a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5), this exposes the authorship of Galatians as obviously pseudopigraphic and targeted to a Torah-illiterate audience. Any gentiles following the Jerusalem council’s instructions, aside from neophytes, would have perceived Galatians 3:16 as fraudulent. This exposé also reveals the ignorance of those who copied, disseminated and taught from Galatians, the ignorance of those who included it in the New Testament canon, and how great a chasm lay between all of the above and the real disciples. The passage is simply not one that would have been penned by a “Hebrew of the Hebrews,” a Pharisee who studied at the feet of Gamaliel.

This conundrum has certainly not gone unnoticed by Christian commentators. Many have sought to find justification for the statement in the Greek, for Galatians was obviously written in Greek. And, to whatever extent its audience had access to the holy scriptures, that would have been via the Greek Septuagint (LXX)². Yet, while that might shed some light on the author of Galatians, nothing in the Greek will exonerate him, for such an examination has about as much bearing as if an eminent American theologian were to attempt expounding the meaning of the text purely from an English translation. The fact is, the original language of the Torah is neither English or Greek, but Hebrew.

The irony of all this is that we and normative Judaism concur that “Avraham’s seed” does often refer to the Moshiach—we just don’t need a specious argument to demonstrate this fact.

One of the reasons for this is Hebrew’s persistent tendency in language and thought toward inclusivity rather than exclusivity. For example, in Sh’mot (Exodus) 12:15, we read, “You shall eat matzot seven days,” while in D’varim (Deuteronomy) 16:8, we are

² The Septuagint in its initial form was a translation of the Hebrew Torah (Five Books of Moses) into Greek, the product of Egyptian Jews of the 3rd Century BCE. It represents a text base, at times, slightly divergent from the Masoretic text underlying the longstanding Hebrew Bible. In addition to being a cross-check of the fidelity of the Hebrew, it also provides a window into how Jews prior to the New Testament era interpreted their text. Subsequent portions of the Tanakh were translated into Greek later.

instructed to do so six days. Whereas the gentiles might debate whether the instruction applies to only six rather than seven and which supersedes the other, the Hebrew mind, while it will inquire into the differences between these passages, is perfectly comfortable accepting that the six are a portion of the seven. Likewise it is with zer'a—it can mean the singular or the plural or both at once. Thus, when the author of Galatians asserts that, because “and to your seed” is singular, that it cannot simultaneously or alternately also represent the plural, this is not only a grammatical falsehood, but a logical one—seeming to betray the author as a Hellenized outsider. However, this misinterpretation appears more grave than being born of mere ignorance; it evidences deceit.

In the discussion above, we gave examples of “your seed.” The principles observed all very much operate here, but Galatians’ author is actually more specific, for he is not merely quoting “your seed,” but “και τω σπερματι σου”—“and to your seed.” He could have just as effectively made his point by quoting just “your seed” or “to your seed.” Why more ink for “and to your seed?”

We noted “your seed” occurring forty-six times in the Torah. With the more specific, “and to your seed,” we narrow the occurrences to eight—and this phrase, which is four words in both Greek and English, is just one in Hebrew: “ולזרעך.” In quoting the entire “και τω σπερματι σου”—“and to your seed,” Galatians’ author avoids, in his mind, drawing from a dismembered source, yet misrepresents it nonetheless. It seems he may well have been Jewish or a gentile who knew Hebrew. In either case, he has led many astray.

Given what the seed gaff reveals about both the author’s misrepresentation of the Torah and his audience’s illiteracy of it, this is an apropos juncture at which to introduce an example of the folly of relying on those esteemed by the Roman church to inform us as to what constitutes reliable or holy scripture.

The Roman church collected and preserved numerous compositions attributed to early leaders who were said to have had direct contact with some of the original shluchim (apostles), those who eventually came to be known as the “apostolic fathers.” They and those following them up to the 325 CE Council of Nicaea are also referred to as the “ante-Nicene fathers.”

Among the earliest of these was Polycarp of Smyrna (Izmir - c. 69 – c. 156 CE).

As a quartodeciman (one who observed the Master’s supper on the fourteenth of Aviv—and, hence, dependent on the Jewish calendar), Polycarp would superficially appear as an early, authoritative representative as to what was considered holy scripture by the so-called “early” or “primitive church.” His advocacy of Pesach observance is an important witness to its persistence amongst 2nd century disciples of Yehoshua’s teachings, but not much beyond that.

Particularly noteworthy to the present topic is his reference to Pauline writings as “holy scripture.” In his letter to the Corinthians (ch. 7) he writes the following:

For I trust that ye are well versed in the sacred scriptures, and that nothing is hidden from you; but to me this privilege is not yet granted. It is declared then in these scriptures, “Be you angry, and sin not,” (Psalms 4:5) and, “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.” (Ephesians 4:26) Happy is he who remembers this, which I believe to be the case with

you. But may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ himself, who is the son of God, and our everlasting high priest, build you up in faith and truth, and in all meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, forbearance, and purity; and may he bestow on you a lot and portion among his saints, and on us with you, and on all that are under heaven, who shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Father, who “raised Him from the dead.”

The last statement is an allusion to if not a direct quote of Galatians 1:1. He also has equally brief quotes from 4:26 and 6:7.

In the mind of one tracing their religious pedigree through this milieu, this is perhaps the most primitive, explicit and authoritative endorsement of Galatians. Yet, for those of us intimately and abidingly familiar with the weekly Torah reading, this endorsement simply betrays Polycarp as an ignorant peddler of foreign doctrine. He instead becomes yet another witness for the rise of a competing religion.

(In similar fashion, Polycarp quotes Tobit 4:10 and 12:9 with, “alms delivers from death,” a composition of obvious fiction.)

Thus, what Rome has long touted as early coalescence of the New Testament canon, purportedly validated by the earliest patristic writers, is actually evidence of the early rise of apostasy, reaching not merely back to Polycarp and his contemporaries, but to Galatians itself. In fact, the New Testament contains several frank references to individual dissenters—Shimon the sorcerer, Hymenaeus, Alexander the coppersmith (1 Timothy 1:20 & 2 Timothy 2:17) and Diotrophes (3 Yochanan 9) the reader is encouraged to review—and to competing movements and outlooks.

Reviling Sinai

Next in terms of particularly serious issues is the Sarah/Hagar analogy, suggesting that Hagar is emblematic of the Sinitic covenant, Yerushalayim and bondage, while Sarah represents freedom, “the new Yerushalayim” and a different covenant. The author then goes on to discuss the Torah in less than reverential terms, emphasizing the contention between Hagar and Sarah.

Now, as the author of Hebrews states, the Sinitic covenant entailed promises inferior to the New Covenant—and this is true, for all the Sinitic promises were temporal. However, depending on which manuscript one reads, Hebrews makes clear that the fault lay with the people, not with the terms of the covenant.

Moreover, of the New Covenant, Yirmayahu (Jeremiah), who introduces it, states that it involves *writing the Torah on our hearts—and he says it is made with Yisrael and Yehudah.*

The Tanakh always describes the terms of the Sinitic covenant with reverence. So while the Sinitic covenant was hardly the ultimate goal or arrangement, neither was it slavery or in competition with the New Covenant.

How much authority can any “apostle” claim?

Next is the following statement:

Behold, I, Paul, say to you, that, if you receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yes, I testify again to every man that receives circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the entire Torah. (5:2-3)

If the author is not advocating the complete abolition of brit milah (circumcision), what is he advocating?

The paramount question we must ask about this statement is, how does it stand before Sh'mot 12:48, where God himself makes a provision for gentile brit milah)?

Next, we must ask, to whom is this author writing? Does this statement include Jews? Does it include members of Yisrael's other tribes—all of whom remain obligated to brit milah in perpetuity? What about Ishmael's and Keturah's descendants?

Timothy received brit milah as an adult. Did that make Moshiach of no effect in his life? Larry Tripp received brit milah. Was he not redeemed?

We also have Galatians' statement (2:3), "Yet not even Titus, the one with me, a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." However, the reality is that no independent, adult gentile was compelled to be circumcised. One could not partake of the korban Pesach (Passover sacrifice) without brit milah or intermarry or fully integrate into a Jewish community—disciples or otherwise—absent it, but such integration was voluntary, not compulsory.

We are not suggesting that conversion to rabbinic Judaism is advisable or appropriate for every gentile. However, was Paul ever conferred the authority to make the statement we find in Galatians in this regard?

When we give the council of Acts 15 more than superficial consideration, we have to realize that the recorded policy issued was not about expectations of gentile disciples over the long haul, but about "those from the goyim (nations) turning to God"—in other words, in their *initial approach* as observed from the disciple community.

What naturally and inevitably occurs when Jews and gentiles mix in fellowship? Young people from both backgrounds become romantically interested and the specter of intermarriage is introduced. What does the Tanakh say about this? It emphatically forbids it—often enough we have no need to cite examples. It hardly accommodates shared belief in a common Moshiach as an allowance.

Ruth the Moabitess did wed Boaz the Jew, yet not before she left her own people and declared, "your (will be) God my God." This contrasts with the mixed marriages condemned by Nechemya (Nehemiah) which yielded children who, not understanding Hebrew, clearly were aliens to Judaism's culture and its God. (13:24)

Given the Jewish disciples had no leave to abandon these standards, the inescapable reality is that, where young men and women of Jewish and gentile backgrounds became even remotely interested in one another, the gentile was compelled to convert to Judaism, albeit within the context of discipleship. So, when the writer of Galatians asserts that becoming circumcised renders Moshiach's involvement ineffective, he reveals himself as an adversary.

In Acts 15:1, we are apprised, "And going down from Judea, some taught the brothers, saying, 'If you are not circumcised according to the custom of Moshe, you

cannot be saved.’” In Galatians, we have the polar opposite claim—both claims linking salvation as dependent either on circumcision or refusal to undergo it.

This discussion of brit milah demands a brief review of the topic as addressed in 1 Corinthians 7:7-21, which reads as follows:

Only as God has divided to each, each as the Lord has called, so let him walk. So I command in the assemblies. Was anyone called having been circumcised? Do not be uncircumcised. Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not be circumcised.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of God's commands. Each one in the calling in which he was called, in this remain.

Were you called as a slave? It does not matter to you. But if you are able to be free, rather use it.

The careless may find an affinity between this passage and the treatment in Galatians, but we actually observe otherwise.

The core statement above is, “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of God's commands,” which fully aligns with normative Judaism. The circumcised peoples and the uncircumcised peoples stand equal before God as to status and as to obeying his instructions to them.

One may ask, since this Paul says, “Was anyone called in uncircumcision? Do not be circumcised,” does this not preclude a young gentile man being circumcised in order to wed a young Jewish woman in the same congregation of mixed disciples? No, it does not.

The reason is the statement, “God has divided (μερίζω) to each.” God has, at various times—from Bavel to Avraham and Lot to Yitzchak and Ishma’el to Ya’akov and Esav, etc.—divided the peoples. In general, each individual is answerable before God regardless as to one’s locale or society, and God is not limiting his redemptive work to one group or another. However, this hardly precludes those such as Rachav or Ruth from abandoning a grossly reprobate society to join those following the one true God.

There is also the fact, as already observed, that the congregations of disciples in Paul’s time were mixed, so conversions joining family to family were inevitable. Also inevitable was the fact that, more due to external than internal pressures, mixed congregations of disciples did not appear to survive more than two or three centuries. It is no accident that the Corinthian verses quoted above are closely followed by the provisional statements, “Have you been bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Have you been released from a wife? Do not seek a wife.” These were obviously not sustainable provisions either. (1 Corinthians 7 has a mix of provisional and timeless instructions. Those who fail to differentiate and view as provisional what is timeless do so to the destruction of many.)

We have given consideration to four extremely problematic features of Galatians that have stymied strenuous efforts to reconcile the treatise with the Torah. In summary, they are as follows:

1. The author recounts an unresolved conflict with the top leadership of Yehoshua's disciples—all of whom knew Yehoshua personally, thereby undermining their status in the eyes of his readership in perpetuity and engaging in lashon hara.
2. The author betrays fundamental ignorance of Hebrew (and, frankly, the Torah, even in Greek translation) with his clearly errant assertion about Avraham's seed. His composition only has credibility for an audience likewise ignorant.
3. The author's unflattering association of the Sinitic covenant with Hagar appears unredeemable and stands in sharp contrast with the rest of scripture.
4. The author suggests that anyone remaining in or converting to Judaism will be lost to Moshiach.

Several other difficulties are present in Galatians. None of them seem, of themselves, as impervious to reconciliation with the Torah as the above four. In other words, they still lend themselves to Torah-compliant interpretations. However, the above four, individually and in the aggregate, do not. Once this becomes apparent, the incentive to salvage the other questionable material in Galatians fades considerably.

For example, at the outset, the author vigorously insists that his training came, not from holy scripture and not from the leadership established by Yehoshua himself, but by private revelation. He also asserts that, should anyone instruct his audience differently, (which would necessarily include the angel of YHVH or Gavriel), that one should be accursed. At first blush, one might be sympathetic to this assertion. For example, if a spirit spoke against the Torah, we would know that spirit to be adversarial. However, in this case, it is the Torah itself that comes under fire in several ways. Does this author, then, truly have the authority to mute the angels?

Were the remainder of the treatise honorable, we would be inclined to defend this introduction, but as we consider what follows, such an approach becomes imprudent.

By the time the author progresses to chapter 5, we encounter truly noble material, such as the fruit of the spirit. The problem is, the author has already engaged in what he himself terms "works of the flesh"—specifically enmity, strife, promoting a faction and division. Where then is his peacemaking credibility in the mind of a Torah-literate/observant disciple? Not where Catholicism or Luther would have it.

When the defense of a composition demands more space—far more space—than the composition itself, that is a bright red flag. If well-informed efforts to salvage it prove tortuous, one must eventually ask, is a sheep clad in wolf's garments whose message so readily and overwhelmingly lends itself to Torah marginalization truly an effective medium for Torah observance and discipleship? One must ask, what has been the fruit of Galatians for these last two millennia?

It may then be asked, what value does Galatians have? Is it partly chaff and partly wheat? Likely.

Galatians affirms (as do other New Testament compositions) that, even in the lifetimes of Yehoshua's original disciples, there were, regrettably, fiercely competing "gospels." 2 Corinthians 11:4 raises the specters of "another Jesus," "another spirit" and "another gospel." Openly and bitterly adversarial, Galatians' gospel, as it turns out, appears to be contending with that of Ya'akov, Kefa and Yochanan. The author

even goes so far as to label those with whom he disagrees as “pseudo-brothers.” (2:4) No wonder the letter bearing Ya’akov’s name stands in such sharp—and for us, reassuring—contrast!

Perhaps its most valuable message lies with the implications of the unresolved conflict. Had Kefa and the others present at Antioch been moved to reform as a result of the author’s rebuke, surely everyone would be exonerated and the account would end happily. Moreover, from a terribly cynical vantage, the author would then have his penitent example to reinforce his cause and to serve as additional peer pressure for his readers. In other words, the author had considerable incentive to bear glad tidings of a positive outcome of this encounter. He offers nothing of the kind. From the text we have, we must conclude the author lost this argument and that the Jewish believers’ demarcations between Jew and gentile remained. Nonetheless, his successors prevailed spectacularly.

(This demarcation is essentially confirmed in the writings attributed to Ignatius, the alleged bishop of Antioch, who lived roughly between 35 and 107 CE. In chapter 4 of his *Letter to the Magnesians*, he writes, “Be not deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables, which are unprofitable. For if we still live according to the Jewish law, we acknowledge that we have not received grace.” He leads chapter 9 with, “If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord’s day. . .” This is not merely advocacy of Sunday worship over Shabbat, but is encouragement of Jews, and in particular, Jewish disciples, to abandon Shabbat.

We might not necessarily condone how Ya’akov, Kefa and Yochanan and the others interfaced with gentiles as represented in Galatian’s critical perspective, but there is more to this issue of great import. We do know from the book of Acts and elsewhere that relations between the Jewish and gentile disciples proved very challenging.

Consider that God’s instruction that Israel remain a holy (set apart) people did not end with the crucifixion. Meanwhile, the comparative chaos and ignorance of gentile culture remained stubborn. It is also true that Yehoshua told the disciples to “go to the lost sheep of the house of Yisrael,” and that he had sheep outside their fold. So it seems inescapable that there would develop distinct communities of disciples and that these distinctions might long endure. And it may also be that some enduring rancor was unavoidable. After all, the Torah states that Yisrael would eventually be made jealous by a foolish “non-people.” Conversely, many gentiles have felt resentment over the intractable (though necessary) exclusivity of Judaism—a “club” they cannot enter while remaining as they are.

Regrettably, Galatians goes beyond, helping ensure alienation between Jews and gentiles. For the last two millennia, it, beyond any other composition in history, has alienated gentiles from the Torah. It violates, denigrates misrepresents it.

Some will likely continue to debate whether it was the intent of Galatians’ author to dissuade gentiles from Torah observance, but its actual, historical track record is spectacularly and unwaveringly clear. Were someone to come forward today unlocking a truly intrinsic, pro-Torah message actually permeating Galatians—a feat heretofore not remotely accomplished—it would hardly undo the catastrophic damage already perpetrated.

One can immediately see that our approach could easily be misused or abused, bringing every scripture into doubt. That is hardly the goal.

For example, when a defect is alleged in a Pauline writing, the entire Pauline corpus is often subjected to repudiation. However, as was stated at the outset, it is paramount that the evaluation of a composition's comportment with the Torah be carefully and competently conducted solely on the basis of content—its own content. Further, we are in favor of maintaining an initial bias decidedly in favor of acceptance as holy scripture. Too many will jettison passages or books due to insufficient or incompetent analysis or simply because the content seems too alien or difficult to implement. Yet, with the appropriate caution and reverence, we do well to consider when the New Testament canon we have today was established and by whom. If the New Testament indeed is Constantine's Bible as professor David Dungan asserted, we must shine the light of the Torah more brightly on its content.

Some textual critics have the opinion that some New Testament letters bearing Paul's name are pseudepigraphic, though this estimation is rarely made of Galatians. This matters not to us either. Given the text variations in the extant New Testament manuscripts, it is not unlikely that a rogue scribe could have supplied his name to the work of another to give it more credibility. If this occurred early enough, such a phenomenon could be represented on all surviving manuscripts. If it did occur, yet the composition is otherwise true and Torah-affirmative, that composition is, to us, acceptable overall, despite blemishes of textual transmission. For example, we don't abandon the first letter of Yochanan simply because most of verse 7 in chapter 5 is clearly spurious.

Returning briefly to an earlier point, one might reasonably ask, might not new evidence come to light by which Galatians can eventually be interpreted differently? For example, what if a manuscript or even the autograph (were that possible) emerged which lacked the seed gaff? Perhaps that is conceivable to some, but it strains reasonable credulity. Why? Because, in Galatians, we are not dealing with mere slips of words or a sentence here and there. We are dealing with an unmistakably adversarial tone directed against those among Yehoshua's original and most intimate disciples and against the Torah that permeates extended sections. It is an aggregate accumulating critical mass.

Anyone who undermines respect for the Torah reveals themselves a charlatan. As Yeshayahu (Isaiah) said, "To the Torah and to the Testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no dawn to them!" (8:20) The idea that Paul or anyone else was given the authority to overturn the Torah or Yehoshua's clear affirmation of it is complete nonsense.

We have already stated that content, not authorship (alleged or otherwise) drives acceptance or rejection of writings. Yet, out of due consideration, what if Galatians were truly written by Paul? Determining authorship is a futile, deep and dark rabbit hole with no assurance of certainty, but, if it were somehow demonstrated, we could only conclude that, having once migrated from rabid animus for Yehoshua's disciples, Paul would have further migrated to . . . a different form of animus for Yehoshua's disciples.

With Galatians dispatched, the onus to arduously wrest it into Torah compliance evaporates. This then fosters the positive, unfettered teaching of Torah-observance,

freed from the tortuous entanglement of explaining the unexplainable. Of course, the flip side is that anyone taking this approach is a perceived threat among those who do accept the Roman Catholic New Testament canon as authoritative and infallible. For this reason, a demarcation as sure and as definite as the one between Christianity and Judaism is assured.

When comparing scriptures against the Torah, it is not being suggested that no new insights can be added to it, for then substantive contribution of later works would be impossible. However, such writings must not pit themselves against it. When we consider the remainder of the Tanakh, the testimonies (gospels) and other works, we can readily observe what constitutes valid and valuable augmentation in a variety of genres by many authors across millennia. That is exactly what we should expect of the New Testament.

One final question to be raised with Galatians is, given its obvious spuriousness, should true disciples even be commonly in possession of it? Is its infectious rancor and deception blended with disarming promotion of “fruit of the spirit” too toxic for association?

Given our minority status in the larger Christian milieu, familiarity with Galatians seems necessary understand our neighbors, particularly given the special deference accorded it. However, it calls into question the Protestant maxim, “sola scriptura,” (to which the Protestants also attach the concept of scriptural infallibility). Though the word of God as he originally delivers it is infallible, what we have in manuscripts and in print bear obvious signs of human fallibility. And, whether we are dealing with human errors or simply God’s sometimes enigmatic way of expressing himself, we need each other to elevate our understanding of the scriptures.

If one accepts this position, radical as it is in our overwhelmingly Catholic/Protestant environment, one must accept and recognize that the times, people and places appropriate for sharing are very limited. The narrowness of our path becomes more apparent.

We have never accepted Roman Catholicism’s canonization of the Jewish Apocrypha. The taken-for-granted Protestant acceptance of Roman Catholicism’s canon of the New Testament appears a safe haven for most, but the track record demonstrates otherwise.

It seems the Reformation can only bring Christianity so far. As Miguel Servet observed, what is needed is a *restoration*—though likely beyond what he could have imagined.

Epilogue

The Septuagint (LXX)

Galatians 3:16: Does an examination of the Greek yield any additional insight?

We have already noted that, since the Torah was delivered first in Hebrew, any credible effort to explain it in another language had better include consideration of what it says in its original, native language. Thus, at this point, consideration of the Greek is not going to validate Galatians as the work of one of Yehoshua's faithful disciples—except to those who believe the LXX, despite being a translation, is, consistently, a more reliable representation of the original words than the Hebrew.

However, the following tour of the Greek reveals the same grammatical catastrophe.

The Greek reads as follows, the key words appearing in bold:

Τῷ δε αβρααμ ερρηθησαν αι επαγγελια **και τῷ σπερματι** αυτου ου λ
εγει **και τοις σπερμασιν** ως επι πολλων αλλ ως εφ ενος **και τῷ σπερμ
ατι σου** ος εστιν χριστος.

(But the promises were spoken to Avraham **and to his seed**. It does not say, "**And to seeds**," as of many, but as of one, "**And to your seed**," which is Christ.

If the Greek of the LXX employed the plural forms σπερματα, σπερματων, and/or σπερμασιν to denote plurality in fact—and it reserved the singular σπερμα, σπερματί and/or σπερματος for individuals, then the author could possibly be excused for his reliance on the LXX alone—though not for masquerading as the Pharisee, Paul. However, the Greek operates similarly to Hebrew and English in this regard. It only utilizes plural forms in Leviticus 26:16, Numbers 16:22 and Numbers 27:16. Abundant are the singular forms representing the many.

The frequency of this use numbers in the dozens, but we can reserve our citations (from the LXX) here to the seven occurrences of the full phrase, *και τῷ σπερματι* (and to your seed).

Genesis 13:15-16

For all the land which you see I will give to you, and to your seed always. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can count the dust of the earth, then your seed also will be counted.

ὅτι πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν, ἣν σὺ ὄρας, σοὶ δώσω αὐτὴν **καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου** ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος. καὶ ποιήσω τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς τὴν ἄμμον τῆς γῆς· εἰ δύνатаί τις ἐξαριθμησαι τὴν ἄμμον τῆς γῆς, **καὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου** ἐξαριθμηθήσεται.

Genesis 17:7-10

And I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your seed after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. And I will give to you and to your seed after you the land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession and I will be their God. And God said to Abraham, You shall keep my covenant, you and your seed after you in their generations. This is my covenant which you shall keep, between me and you and your seed after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised.

Καὶ στήσω τὴν διαθήκην μου ἀνὰ μέσον ἐμοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον σοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σπέρματός σου μετὰ σέ εἰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν εἰς διαθήκην αἰώνιον εἶναί σου θεός καὶ τοῦ σπέρματός σου μετὰ σέ. Καὶ δώσω σοι καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου μετὰ σέ τὴν γῆν, ἣν παροικεῖς, πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν Χανααν, εἰς κατάσχεσιν αἰώνιον καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς θεός. Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸς Ἀβραάμ Σὺ δὲ τὴν διαθήκην μου διατηρήσεις, σὺ καὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου μετὰ σέ εἰς τὰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν. Καὶ αὕτη ἡ διαθήκη, ἣν διατηρήσεις, ἀνὰ μέσον ἐμοῦ καὶ ὑμῶν καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σπέρματός σου μετὰ σέ εἰς τὰς γενεὰς αὐτῶν· περιτμηθήσεται ὑμῶν πᾶν ἀρσενικόν,

Gen 22:17-18

. . . that blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the shore of the sea. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.

ἢ μὴν εὐλογῶν εὐλογήσω σε καὶ πληθύνων πληθυνῶ τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς τοὺς ἀστέρας τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ὡς τὴν ἄμμον τὴν παρὰ τὸ χεῖλος τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ κληρονομήσει τὸ σπέρμα σου τὰς πόλεις τῶν ὑπεναντίων· Καὶ ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς, ἀνθ' ὧν ὑπήκουσας τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς.

Genesis 26:3-4

Reside in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your seed I will give all these lands. And I will cause to rise my oath which I swore to your father Abraham. And I will increase your seed like the stars of the heavens, and I will give to your seed all these lands. And all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves in your Seed.

Genesis 28:4

And may He give to you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your seed with you, for you to possess the land of your travels, which God gave to Abraham.

Καὶ δόξῃ σοὶ τὴν εὐλογίαν Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ πατρὸς μου, σοὶ καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου μετὰ σέ, κληρονομήσαι τὴν γῆν τῆς παροικήσεώς σου, ἣν ἔδωκεν ὁ θεὸς τῷ Ἀβραὰμ.

Genesis 28:13-14

And, behold, YHWH stood above it and said, I am YHWH the God of your father Abraham, and the God of Isaac; the land on which you are lying, I will give it to you and to your seed. And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall spread to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your seed.

ὁ δὲ κύριος ἐπεστήρικτο ἐπ' αὐτῆς καὶ εἶπεν Ἐγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραὰμ τοῦ πατρὸς σου καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσαακ· μὴ φοβοῦ· ἡ γῆ, ἐφ' ἣς σὺ καθεύδεις ἐπ' αὐτῆς, σοὶ δώσω αὐτήν καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου. Καὶ ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς γῆς καὶ πλατυνθήσεται ἐπὶ θάλασσαν καὶ ἐπὶ λίβα καὶ ἐπὶ βορρᾶν καὶ ἐπ' ἀνατολάς, καὶ ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου.

Genesis 35:12

And the land which I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I will give it to you; and after you I will give the land to your seed.

καὶ τὴν γῆν, ἣν δέδωκα Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαακ, σοὶ δέδωκα αὐτήν· σοὶ ἔσται, καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου μετὰ σέ δώσω τὴν γῆν ταύτην.

The above scriptures speak adequately to the issue, but, given how well Catholicism and her daughters have done their job, let us belabor the point a bit.

Returning to Genesis 13:15-16, we read:

For all the land which you see I will give to you, and to your seed always. And I will make your seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can count the dust of the earth, then your seed also will be counted.

Grammatically, in the Hebrew and the Greek, seed is always singular here, yet it clearly denotes a multitude.

The plurality is even more explicit in Genesis 17:7-9, even as the forms of σπέρμα remain singular:

And I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your seed after you in **their** (αὐτῶν) generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to you and to your seed after you. And I will give to you and to your seed after you the land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession and I will be **their** (αὐτῶν) God. And God

said to Abraham, You shall keep my covenant, you and your seed after you in **their** (αὐτῶν) generations.

So we observe that, whether we are reading the Hebrew original, the Greek, or English, the occurrences of the singular form “seed” representing the masses are abundant and clear. Thus, we have to be dealing with an author who is counting, not merely on a language barrier, but on an existing chasm between his readers and the Torah. It seems inescapable that his readers are aliens to the Torah, even as rendered by the LXX—not unlike today’s scenario in Christianity at large.

The Qumran Torah & the Samaritan Pentateuch

Serious students of the Tanakh and the New Testament are aware that the Qumran scriptures and the Samaritan Pentateuch each represent separate text traditions that can be used to check Masoretic fidelity, or at least, compatibility. Thus, some brief observations as to what light, if any, they might shed on this topic are appropriate.

Unfortunately, the Qumran Torah is only fragmentary, so much so that no examples of ולזרעך, let alone זרעך, appear to survive.

Where זרעך appears in the MT (Masoretic Text), all of the Samaritan Pentateuch corollaries render the word identically.