

Reply to Natalia (part 1)

Dear Natalia;

Salam from Allah and blessings;

Sorry for the delay,

I have read your letter meticulously. This is the first part of the reply to the issues you raised in it.

But, since you are as yet, a *neophyte in Arabic*, and your mastery of that language, which is part of the issue here, would not help much for a direct approach, I will try a didactic approach instead, making use of a historical precedent, trusting that your enquiring mind, your resolve and determination, are good enough to help you jump easily over this circumstantial hurdle, and recover from this perplexing faltering.

Since as you probably know by now, in matters of Faith, it is always certitudes that count.

This point made, let me now go through your arguments, developing them as the subject matter would require or calls for.

tight spot 1

You said:

At first I was convinced that Islam is the result of Qur'an and Sunna but now I'm thinking about letting the Sunna behind.

And you advanced 8 raisons, supported with quotations from the Qur'an, to justify your new stance, or in your own words;

The reasons why are these ones:

- 1) **The Qur'an is a complete book** { See Qur'an 6:19,38,114, 115, 12:111 and 50:45}

Remember that when God says that His book is complete, it means 100% complete.

God does not do half jobs. { See Qur'an 6:114, 7:52, 11:1, 41:3, 10:37 and 12:111},

(2) The Qur'an is perfect;

HE called on His true believers to accept no other hadiths as a source of this perfect religion { See Qur'an 7:185, 31:6, 39:23, 45:6, and 77:50},

no mistakes, no falsehood, no nonsense. { See Qur'an 41:42,12:40, 30:30, 30:43 and 98:5},

(3) The Qur'an is detailed, and when God says He detailed His book it means FULLY detailed.

(4) God does not need any addition to His book. God teaches us in the Qur'an that He does not run out of words and that if He so willed He could have given us hundreds, thousands or millions of books besides the Qur'an { see Qur'an 18:109},

Since the Qur'an is complete, perfect and fully detailed, God did not give us any more books,

(5) God calls His book, the Qur'an, the BEST HADITH.

(6) God calls on His true believers to make sure not to fall in the trap of idol-worship:

by following the words of the scholars instead of the words of God. { See Qur'an 9:31},

(7) God calls those who prohibit what He did not prohibit, aggressors, liars and idol-worshippers.

Muhammad cannot prohibit things, or make lawful things on his own. When he tried to do that God admonished him publicly, {see Qur'an 66:1}

Idol-worship is the only unforgivable sin, if maintained till death. {See Qur'an 5:87, 9:37, 7:32, 6:119, 6:140 and 10:59},

(8) Muhammad is represented only by the Qur'an. The Prophet Muhammad was the last Prophet and a messenger of God (See Qur'an 33:40). He was not the messenger of God because of who he (Muhammad) was, but because he was given the Qur'an (the message) to deliver to the world. The religion of Islam is a religion of God, not about Muhammad, who was blessed by God with the delivery of the message of the Qur'an. He did not have an agenda of his own. His job was to deliver to the world what God was giving him, the Qur'an. {See Qur'an 42:48, 13:40, 5:99-100}

And you concluded;

That's why now I have problems to believe in Sunna since there are lots of the scholars who claim different things and contradicts each other.

But I trust you. I have seen your Biography references so maybe you can give me reasons to still follow Sunna.

First remark

Needless to say that you have gathered all these 8th pervasive arguments from one of those sites with catch eyes banners like; “*Quranion*”, “*free - minds*,etc., which I will dub henceforward pejoratively, on doctrinal as well as on historical grounds; “Muslim Qaraites”, or “*MQ’ s*” for short

These contemporary “*MQ’ s*” emulate in **Islam**, for lack of sound knowledge of Islam, and loose scientific scholarship, which I will prove to you later with abundant examples, a replay of the Jewish medieval “**Karaite Drama**” that took place in the midst of the **Sephardic Jewish communities**, living in the **land of Islam and Byzantium between the eighth and eleventh century (C.E)**.

“*Karaite*” comes from the Hebrew word [קְרָאִים] or “**Qəra’ im**” in **Standard Hebrew**, meaning "Readers of Scripture", but they prefer to be called; ***B'nai Mikra*** (Children of Scripture) in hebrew, or (“**القرايين**” in Arabic), where the Hebrew word; [מִי קְרָא] “*Mikra*”, stands for the “**Bible**“.

This name was chosen by the adherents of ***Karaite Judaism*** to distinguish themselves from the adherents of **Rabbinic Judaism**.

The adherents of Karaite Judaism rely on the ***Tanakh*** as the sole scripture, and strive, when interpreting the scripture to adhere to the “***plain meaning*” [“*p'shat*” ; in Hebrew]of the text.**

This is to be contrasted with ***Rabbinical Judiasm***, which employs the methods of [p'shat], and other ***allegorical approaches***.

The following is how the “***Rules Of Interpretation*”** in ***Rabbinical Judiasm*** stand in their technically shortened expression in the treatise called "***The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan***"

Seven rules of interpretation Hillel the Elder expounded before the Bene Bathyra, to wit: (1) a fortiori; (2) analogy; (3) deduction from one verse; (4) deduction from two verses; (r) (inference) from the general and the particular and from the particular and the general; (6) similarity elsewhere; (7) deduction from context.

These are the seven rules which **Hillel** expounded (in his dispute) before the Bene Bathyra.¹

Now let us focus on the textual evidence the rabbanite present to sustain their "Oral Torah" claim !

The First pseudo - evidence;

We read in the Babylonian Talmud;

Our Rabbis taught: It happened once that a certain non-Jew came to **Shammai** and said:

- How many Torahs do YOU have?

- He said; "Two"; the **written Torah** and the Torah transmitted by mouth.

- I believe you with respect to the Written, but not with respect to the Oral Torah; make me a proselyte on condition that you instruct me on the Written Torah (only).

But **Shammai** scolded him and repulsed him in anger.

When the same man went to **Hillel**, the latter accepted him as a proselyte. On the first day he taught him his Aleph, Beth, Gimmel, Daleth; the following day he reversed their order.

- "But yesterday you didn't teach me thus," the man protested.

- "Must you then. not trust me? Then trust me with respect, to the **Oral Torah** too ?

The Second pseudo - evidence;

God said to **Moses**: "**Write these things, for it is by means of these things that I have made a covenant with Israel**" (Exodus. 34:27).
When God was about to give the Torah, He recited it to **Moses** in proper

¹ *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* 37) [ABOTH RABBI NATHAN 1953; p. 154], translated by Judah Goldin, New Haven, Yale University Press.

order, namely; the **Scriptures, Mishna, Haggada** and **Talmud**, for God pronounced all these words:

God revealed to Moses even the answers to questions which distinguished scholars are destined to ask their teachers in the future, for He said all these things.

Then, when God had finished, He said to Moses. "Go and teach it to My sons." . . . Moses said;

- "Lord"; You write it for them.

" God said,

- I did indeed **wish !!!** ² to give it all to them in writing, But it was revealed that the Gentiles would in the future have dominion over them. and will claim the Torah as theirs; then would my children be like the Gentiles. Therefore, give them the **Scriptures in writing**., and the Mishna, Haggada and Talmud **orally**. for it is **they which separate Israel and the Gentiles**

And it is quite evident that both traditions must have been forged, after the advent of Christianity, and by no others than the Rabbanites themselves in order to boost their cause!.

Now, taking note of this shaky evidence as a background, I will list below the 5 **justified and logical** *Main Reasons* given by *Karaites*}, for not Accepting the *Oral Law* forged by the Rabbanites:

1. *The Oral Law is not mentioned even once in the entire Tanakh*³
(Hebrew Bible)

2. *When God told Moses to come up to Mount Sinai to receive the tablets He said: "Come up to me into the mountain, and be there:*

² Notice this ignorant conception of the deity

³ *Tanakh*; an acronym for the three sections of the Hebrew Bible:[(Ta) = Torah (Law), (Na) = Nevi'im (Prophets) and (K) = Ketuvim Kedoshim (Holy Writings).

and I will give thee tablets of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written;" (Ex 24,12).

No mention is made of an Oral Law.

3. *The Tanakh reports; that the written Torah was both lost and completely forgotten for over 50 years and only rediscovered by the Temple priests (2Ki 22,8; 2Chr 34,15)*

It is inconceivable that an Oral Law could have been remembered when even the written Law was forgotten.

4. *The words of the Mishnah and Talmud are clearly the words of men living in the 2nd-5th centuries CE and;*

absent are the familiar Biblical formulae "And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying," and "Thus saith the Lord".

5. *The Rabbis claim that the "Oral Law" is the official interpretation of the Torah given on Mount Sinai.*

Yet if one actually looks at the Mishnah and Talmud they are full of the opinions of Rabbis who disagree with each other on almost every issue. The Rabbis explain that whenever there are such disagreements, "both opinions are the words of the living God". Karaites maintain that it is unreasonable to believe that God would contradict Himself.

In parallel with these 5 devastating arguments, the Karaites made much use of rhetorics to deconstruct the Rabbanites forged claims.

I cite below, to give you a foretaste of the issues, excerpts from "The Book of the Wars of the Lord" written in rhymed quatrains by the Karaite; Salmon Ben Jeroham as a critical diatribe and rejoinder to "The Book of Doctrines and beliefs" written in Arabic by the well known Egyptian Rabbanite; Rabbi Saadia Gaon (882 - 941 C.E⁴);

⁴ See; Salmon Ben Jeroham {canto I; 8-10} in NEMOY 1952; "Karaite Anthology; Excerpt from the early literature", pp; 72-73}, translated by Leon Nemoy, New Haven, Yale University Press.

He stated (Saadia) in his misleading discourse,
And he did utter the assertion,
that *the Almighty* chose to reveal himself to *Moses*
At *Mount Sinai*, to give him *two Laws* for His chosen people
The commandments of the *one Law were set down in writing*,
While the commandments *of the other were kept upon the tongue*.
Moreover, they were both to be, into everlasting eternity,
An heirloom for the congregation of the seed of the perfect ones.
My spirit advised, me to reply to him in this matter,

And to place my answer among my congregation in a written epistle,
In order to remove the stumbling block, and to clear the path of
stones,

And also⁵;

You say that the *Rock* has given Israel *two Laws*,
One which *is written*, and one which was *preserved in your mouths*.
if this is as you say,
Then indeed your deeds are *but falsehood and rebellion against God*.
The Holy One has given you an *Oral Law*
So you can recite it orally,
For, say you, He had deemed it, in His wisdom, a laudable command.
why, then, did you write it down in ornate script?
Had *the Merciful One* wished to write it down,
He would have had it written down by *Moses*.
Now did He not give it to you *to be studied orally*⁶,
And had He not ordained it *not to be inscribed in a book*?
Yet they altered God's alleged words and wrote it down,
And instead of studying it orally they transferred it into writing.
How, then, can their words be believed, seeing that they have
offended grievously?

They cannot withdraw from this contradictory path.

They wrote down both Laws, thus contemning the commandment of the Almighty.
where, then, is the *Oral Law* in which they place their trust?
Their words have become void and meaningless,
And out of their own mouths have they testified that they have
drawn God's wrath upon themselves.

and again⁷;

⁵ “idem” (canto I, 18—22) [NEMOYY (32:7—73)

⁶ The Rabbis declared the “Oral Law” should not be committed to writing, but only memorized.

⁷ “idem” (canto 3,2), p; 79

I have also seen in the *Talmud*—
Which you *Rabbanites* regard as if it were your main supporting column,
And which is made by you a partner of *the Law of Moses*,
And is held beloved and desirable in your hearts—
The bellowing of the *School of Shammai* against *the School of Hillel*,
to controvert their words,
As well as that of the School of Hillel against the School of Shammai,
to refute their interpretations of law.
This one invokes blessings, and that one heaps curses upon their heads,
yet both are an abomination in the sight of the Lord.
The words of which one of the two shall we accept,

The *School of Shammai* and *the School of Hillel*, mentioned in the text are two scholastic tendencies in first-century *Pharisaism* in Palestine, where one can discern, based on the c. 300 pertinent extent *pericopes*, that about two thirds of the controversies between the two schools deal either directly or indirectly with the *food laws*.

One can also discern in the school of Shammai a *conservative tendency*, with a more literal reading of *Scripture*, to the extent that an event in the *Shammai's School* is assessed strictly in terms of the action that ensues..

The *Hillelistes*, on the other hand, are more lenient and take into account the *intention behind*⁸.

Strangely enough, the Oral Law today is a written law, codified in the Mishna and Talmud. Orthodox Judaism has even forged another tradition, under the Influence of the Islamic concept of a chain of transmitters; “Isnad”, that says that Moses subsequently transmitted that Oral Law to his successor, Joshua, who transmitted it in turn to his successor, in a chain that is still being carried on (see; Pirque Abot (1; 1) “*Sayings of the Fathers*”

This late forgery is the more obvious, since given this claim for the existence of this chain of authority, one wonders why the *Mishna* and *Talmud* are filled with debates between rabbis; if all have received the same, unambiguous tradition!

⁸ See for more historical details; A. Guttmann, 'Hillelites ; - Shammaites - A Clarification', *HUCA* 28 (1957) 115-26; I. Konovitz, *Beth Shammai - Beth Hillel: Collected Sayings* (Hebr.), Jerusalem 1965.

Zooming out to see the hidden parts in this tight spot 1

Surely, you would have noticed by now, that The *Karaites* polemics echoes directly or in innuendo most of the 8 arguments you cited in your letter.

The only snag is that;

- *while* all the *Karaites* arguments concerning the *Bible* and the pseudo *oral Torah* of the *Pharisees* in their five points are *historically sound* and *correct*,
- *Those* of their *clones* in *Islam*; the “*MQ*’s, and specially those points dealing with *Islamic tradition*, that is; *Hadith*, starting from point (4) onward, *are false, ignoramus*, and with no textual foundation to support them, as I will prove later!

Closing in

So, let me now; for the sake of clarifying the innuendos and shades between your *arguments* and those of *the Karaites*, draw a comparison between the *two*”, as a résumé for this “*Tight Spot 1*”, and also in order to entice you to meditate upon this type of *religious borrowing*, which has nothing of an accident !

<i>Your arguments</i>	<i>Karaites arguments</i>
1) The Qur’an is a complete book	<i>Not addressed directly by the Karaites but understood by them to hold true for the Bible too, (even if the Qu’ran affirms that the Bible suffered from; corruption, Loss, fudging, ..etc., all of which were proven right by recent biblical criticism, and accepted officially as a fact of life, by the Roman Catholic Church in Vatican II in 1965)</i>

2) The Qur'an is perfect;	<i>Same remark as above</i>
3) The Qur'an is detailed, and when God says He detailed His book it means FULLY detailed	<i>Same remark as above</i>
<p>4) God does not need any addition to His book. God teaches us in the Qur'an that He does not run out of words and that if He so willed He could have given us hundreds, thousands or millions of books besides the Qur'an.</p> <p>Since the Qur'an is complete, perfect and fully detailed, God did not give us any more books,</p>	<p>1) <i>The Oral Law is not mentioned even once in the entire Tanakh⁹ (Hebrew Bible)</i></p> <p>2) <i>When God told Moses to come up to Mount Sinai to receive the tablets He said: "Come up to me into the mountain, and be there: and I will give thee tablets of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written;" (Ex 24,12).</i></p> <p>3) <i>The Tanakh reports; that the written Torah was both lost and completely forgotten for over 50 years and only rediscovered by the Temple priests</i> <i>It is inconceivable that an Oral Law could have been remembered when even the written Law was forgotten.</i></p>
<p>5) God calls His book, the Qur'an, the BEST HADITH.</p> <p>HE called on His true believers to accept no other hadiths as a source of this perfect religion</p>	<i>Your item (5) Echoes (1) and (2) Karaites</i>
<p>6) God calls on His true believers to make sure not to fall in the trap of idol-worship:</p> <p>by following the words of the scholars instead of the words of God.</p>	<p>4) <i>The words of the Mishnah and Talmud are clearly the words of men living in the 2nd-5th centuries CE and;</i></p> <p>5) <i>The Rabbis claim that the "Oral Law" is the official interpretation of the Torah given on Mount Sinai.</i></p> <p><i>Yet if one actually looks at the Mishnah and Talmud they are full of the opinions of Rabbis who disagree with each other on almost every issue. The Rabbis explain that whenever there are such disagreements, "both opinions are the words of the living God". Karaites maintain that it is unreasonable to believe that God would contradict Himself.</i></p>

⁹ *Tanakh*; an acronym for the three sections of the Hebrew Bible: [(Ta) = Torah (Law), (Na) = Nevi'im (Prophets) and (K) = Ketuvim Kedoshim (Holy Writings).

<p>7) God calls those who prohibit what He did not prohibit, aggressors, liars and idol-worshippers.</p> <p>Idol-worship is the only unforgivable sin, if maintained till death</p>	<p><i>Your item (6) Echoes (4) and (5) Karaites</i></p>
<p>8) Muhammad is represented only by the Qur'an. The Prophet Muhammad was the last Prophet and a messenger of God (See Qur'an 33:40). He was not the messenger of God because of who he (Muhammad) was, but because he was given the Qur'an (the message) to deliver to the world. The religion of Islam is a religion of God, not about Muhammad, who was blessed by God with the delivery of the message of the Qur'an. He did not have an agenda of his own. His job was to deliver to the world what God was giving him, the Qur'an.</p> <p><i>Muhammad cannot prohibit things, or make lawful things on his own. When he tried to do that God admonished him publicly.</i></p>	<p>A sneaky devious way of getting rid of the “clarifications”: “tibiane” (تبيان) of the prophet, as we will prove later in this reply.</p>

(to be continued)