

D. Evaluation of the Oral Law

1. Examination of relevant terms in Scripture

a. "Custom"

In II Chronicles 30:16 we read, "And they (priests and Levites) stood at their stations after their custom ($\mu\theta\omega\varsigma$) according to the law of Moses . . ."

In Luke 1:8-9 we read, "Now it came about, while he (Zacharias) was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, according to the custom ($\epsilon\theta\omicron\varsigma$) of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense."

(Notes: In I Chronicles 24 we discover that David, not Moses, divided the descendants of Aaron into 24 orders or divisions for ministry. In verse 3 David, with Zadok, is specifically mentioned as dividing the descendants of Aaron; and in verses 7-18 the 24 divisions are named. Also in I Chronicles 25 we discover that David divided the Levites who supplied music for the temple services into 24 orders. In verse 1 David, with the commanders of the army, is said to have set apart these Levites; and in verse 8 they cast lots for their duties; and in verse 9-31 the 24 orders of musicians are named. We also note that in II Chronicles 23:18 David's ordering of the Levitical priests and of the Levitical musicians is mentioned as complementary to the stipulations of the Law of Moses)

b. "Tradition"

The word $\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\delta\omicron\sigma\iota\varsigma$ is used 13 times in the New Testament. BAG defines this word to mean "tradition." The root idea is "handing over" or "turning over," since it also means "betrayal" or "arrest." All 13 uses follow.

Matthew 15:1-6 -- "Then some Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem, saying, 'Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.' And He answered and said to them, 'And why do you yourselves transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, 'Honor your father and mother,' and 'He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever shall say to his father or mother, 'Anything of mine you might have been helped by has been given to God,' he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And thus you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.'"

Mark 7:1-13 -- "And the Pharisees and some of the scribes gathered together around Him when they had come from Jerusalem, and had seen that some of His disciples were eating their bread with impure hands, that is, unwashed. (For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots) And the Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, 'Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?' And He said to them, 'Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.