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This thesis is a study of the relationship between a master and his disciple as reflected in the tannaitic sources--the Mishnah, Tosefta, tannaitic Midrashim (Mekhilta, Sifra, Sifre) and baraitot found in the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds. It seeks to examine the dynamics of this fundamental institution of rabbinic Judaism, presenting the various components of the relationship in a systematic way. All of the material examined is assumed to be of tannaitic origin, except when there is clear evidence to the contrary. When a particular incident or passage of non-tannaitic origin is utilized, it is designated as such. The thesis is not a critical study of tannaitic material per se, but is rather an attempt to systematically arrange the material on the master-disciple relationship and thereby present a clear and well-rounded understanding of what the relationship entailed.

The thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter One is an introduction, stating purpose, methodology, and acknowledgements. Chapter Two gives a broad historical overview of the proto-tannaitic and tannaitic periods. The educational institutions of early rabbinic Judaism and their development are set forth in Chapter Three. With Chapter Four we begin to examine the master-disciple relationship as it worked in the

classroom. Chapter Five deals with those aspects of the relationship that were operative outside of a formal classroom setting. Two of these, service to the Master and rabbinic role-modeling, are focused upon in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven looks at the relationship in light of the father-son relationship, presenting comparisons and contrasts between the two. Chapter Eight, the concluding chapter, attempts to put the master-disciple relationship in a broader perspective, and demonstrates how it served as an "auxiliary" concept within the framework of value concepts set forth by Max Kadushin.

For Ellen,

For my parents

and

For my Teacher

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTIONS

In a sense to write on the relationship of the master and his disciple, even within the time boundaries that enclose the years known as the Tannaitic period, is an impossible feat. Because the entire literature extant from that time (or assumed to be from that period) constituted the actual texts, oral and written, which the venerable Sages imparted to their students, such an undertaking should involve, at least in theory, the examination and consideration of literally every statement, every law, every parable, every vignette, every aphorism related by or about the personalities of that period. However, the scope of this thesis is infinitely more limited, and deals primarily with specific elements that constituted this unique sort of association.

The reason I undertook a study of the master-disciple relationship was not only to fulfill a requirement for rabbinic ordination, but was also to explore, to learn, to compare and contrast the insights, techniques, and dynamics of Tannaitic/rabbinic pedagogy (specifically in the academy), with the framework of twentieth century educational methodology, as I have employed it as a teacher and as I have experienced it as a student.

It has been suggested that the rabbinic ideal of an intimate personal relationship between teacher and

student is impossible to achieve in contemporary society.[1] To a certain extent this must be true, if only because students and teachers on any level of education today do not and cannot spend the amount of time together as their forebearers did in ancient days. Study is not characterized as the sole vehicle for acquiring "the good life," as it once was in Jewish and non-Jewish societies alike. Because of the demands of a modern, complex culture, even a conscientious student's time is compartmentalized for a variety of activities, only one of which is learning; it is rare to find the persistent scholarly diligence attributed to the teachers and students who lived in a less kinetic, if not less threatening, era. And although scholars who maintain their livelihoods through the instruction of students would probably desire that more time be devoted to study, their time out of the classroom is taken up by other requirements of academia, namely those of research and publishing, so that they, too, cannot set a priority for carving out an adequate block of time in order to establish and nourish the relationship. Indeed some seek to avoid it altogether by hinding behind their research, emerging only when the call of the classroom beckons them.

Although lecturing is probably still the most important pedagogical technique utilized, especially on the levels of higher education, other methods of communicating knowledge--books in abundance, popular magazines, scholarly

journals, films, radio and television--have, by and large, replaced the total reliance on lecture and the emphasis on sitting at the master's feet and drinking in his words. Although these latter forms of media have the advantage of being able to be reproduced quickly and in abundance, they certainly cannot replace the intimacy and mutual devotion which was bound up with the sort of relationship between master and disciple in Tannaitic times. Such intimacy and devotion, as we shall see, was expressed both inside and outside of the classroom. This is not to say that some contemporary teachers and students are not close to one another, or that they do not associate with one another outside the formal classroom setting; indeed, the ability to relate to students is still the sine qua non of a good pedagogue. But because of the aforementioned reasons (undoubtedly there are numerous others) and because of the way time has changed societies and their priorities, the teacher/student relationship of today is not the unique connection it once was. In those days, much more than in these, the human factor, with all of its assets and liabilities, was the irreplaceable element in the chemistry between master and disciple.

This thesis is arranged topically and is divided into eight chapters. Chapter One, Introductions, states the purpose of the thesis ~~of the thesis~~, methodology employed and acknowledgements. Chapter Two presents a broad overview of the historical period, its developments and setbacks, which give this study some degree of perspective regarding time and place. The period covered spans 700 years, from the

return of the Babylonian exiles to Judea under Cyrus I of Persia (ca. 500 BCE), until the end of the Patriarchate of Judah I (ca. 220 CE). To be sure, the Tannaitic period officially begins with Hillel the Elder who flourished around the beginning of the Common Era, and continues through two wars with Rome and concludes shortly after the death of Judah I. The history of the first 200 years of the 500 years before the Common Era is not that clear at all. Scholars agree that during that time, Judea was ruled by a priestly theocracy and that when Alexander the Great brought Hellenism to the Orient (ca. 330 BCE) Judean society slowly adapted Greek ways with priestly encouragment. As a reaction to this, the Maccabean revolt broke out, and besides a short period of political independence, one of its consequences was the evolution of a lay-scholar class, the Pharisees, which eventually wrested ecclesiastical authority from the priestly Sadducees. The Pharisees were the prototypes and immediate predecessors of the Tannaim.

The **third** chapter consists of a digest of the educational institutions that flourished during the Tannaitic period and focuses on the development of the various levels of education. It deals with the evolution of the academy and the conditions which led to the establishment of the secondary school, and later the elementary school. School administration and teacher remuneration are also touched upon.

In the **fourth** chapter we begin moving into the

specifics of our study. We see the subjective and objective criteria which were applied in judging a master competent and a student worthy. We also learn of the various pedagogic techniques which teachers utilized, the most important of which was probably aids in developing the memory. Moreover the dynamics of the college classroom is explained. We see that the students were expected to conform to a set etiquette while in the classroom and learning was accomplished in a formal manner. Dealings with colleagues also assumed a certain pattern of behavior.

Chapter Five concerns itself with these elements of the master-disciple relationship expressed outside of the formal classroom setting. In particular, it deals with the teacher and student dining together, traveling together, and spending leisure time, especially holidays, together. As will be demonstrated, an etiquette, although of a somewhat different form was to be followed by the student even in the most relaxed atmosphere. Spending time with one's master in a social setting was, as will be shown, an excellent opportunity for a disciple to learn informally from the master, and to get to know him as a person.

Although associating with the master in the classroom and at the table did increase the student's familiarity with him, it was only observing his every gesture and emulating him that the student could truly benefit from such an association. And in order to emulate

the master's example, which was conscientiously set, the disciple was required to attend upon the master, in the capacity of a valet or butler. Chapter Six explores the phenomenology of these facets. From the evidence of the passages examined and analyzed they seem to have been the crucial ones. Therefore, Chapter Six is perhaps the most significant in understanding the dynamics of the master-disciple relationship.

The seventh chapter looks at the relationship in the light of the father-son relationship, demonstrating how the Sages not only saw themselves as surrogate fathers to their pupils, but indeed relegated the biological parents to a somewhat less significant role in raising a youth. Likewise disciples understood the legal and homiletical teachings of their teachers as an ethical and spiritual patrimony left to them to be transmitted to succeeding generations. A teacher's immortality, as it were, was bound up with his disciples' reporting of a tradition in his name. Because of the great stress on oral transmission of the Tradition and the accuracy thereof, great emphasis was placed on memory. Furthermore we will see how and why a disciple was allowed to decide legal questions on his own only with the prior authorization of his master.

The last section of Chapter Seven deals with students confronting the death of their masters, focusing on why such a time was of paramount importance, what was said during the last moments, and how a master was mourned.

Finally the chapter on "Conclusions" attempts to fit the master-disciple relationship into the framework of Max Kadushin's theory of rabbinic value-concepts, demonstrating how it served as an "auxiliary" concept to the basic value of the study of Torah.

Perhaps a few words should be offered as to the methodology employed while researching and writing this thesis. The research consisted of gathering material from various primary sources: Mishnah, Tosefta, Tannaitic midrashim, as well as the extraneous baraitot scattered throughout the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds. Parallels were meticulously checked. When critical editions of texts were used they were noted as were translations when they added to the understanding of a particular passage. In some cases original translations were employed for want of published ones. While gleaning passages from the two Talmuds not only did I extract Tannaitic material but Amoraic material as well. At times distinguishing between various strata was difficult. In such cases the vernacular was checked (Hebrew or Aramaic) as were the names of the Sages who were characters in a passage, or in whose names passages were transmitted. When an earlier Tanna and a later Amora shared a namesake the Soncino index on rabbinic personalities was arbitrarily consulted.

Although material from both Tannaitic and Amoraic strata was drawn upon, this work primarily is concerned with the former. To be sure many passages found in later

Amoraic strata were found to succinctly express or illustrate an important point. Because it could not be assumed with certainty that concepts or conceptual interpretations inherent in those passages would necessarily hold true for the earlier Tannaitic material, a conscious effort was made to exclude such passages from the final material to be organized. When they were utilized it was only with clarification of the Tannaitic passages by historical extension in mind. It should be noted that this work does not pretend to be definitive or exhaustive. It does claim, however, a substantial thoroughness.

It is possible that those who subscribe to the "form criticism" approach to rabbinic literature, espoused by scholars such as Jacob Neusner will fault this paper on two accounts. They might suggest that 1) the Tannaitic period covers too broad a time span and records too many socio-religio-political changes and responses to those changes as to preclude any valid attempt to propose that any one attitude expressed in a particular time by a particular Sage might be representative of the general prevailing attitude throughout the entire Tannaitic period, and that, more fundamentally, 2) we cannot even be sure as to the validity of the claims that material attributed to Tannaitic sources are, indeed, genuinely Tannaitic. Therefore, on the basis of such material we cannot really determine the relationship of master and disciple or deal with any other subject for that matter.

In responding to these it should be noted that they were considered throughout the time spent on this project. My intention, however, is not so much to trace the historical development of the subject as it is to study and examine the different components of the relationship as presented and interpreted from the material that has come down to us. Although it is likely that not all of what claims to be of Tannaitic origins is so, certain assumptions as to the validity of such claims by most of the material had to be made. When there was a doubt, however, it was noted that the source used was attributed to the Tannaitic period. As to use of secondary sources, only those which had a direct bearing on the first two chapters and the last chapter were consulted. Although Josephus was consulted, for the most part, modern historians were relied upon for the chapter on the historical overview. Since only the Jewish educational system of the time was concentrated on, any references made to general, or non-Jewish (e.g. Greek) education comes mostly from references made in the works consulted dealing with early Jewish education. Talmudic and other references in the footnotes are given in full at first reference, and thereafter are abbreviated.

I would like to thank several individuals who have assisted me in producing this work, probably more than they realize. Foremost among them is my master and teacher and my friend, Dr. Alexander Guttmann who not only advised

and guided me while allowing me total freedom in organization and conclusions, but also has made it possible for me to experience the type of relationship to a teacher idealized by the Rabbis. My thanks also to Mrs. Linda Skopitz who graciously undertook the mammoth task of typing the final draft; to Ken Kanter, who not only offered me his electric typewriter, but his friendship as well; to Rabbi James Kessler, who helped me clarify my vague ideas and who was especially helpful with regard to the mechanics of organizing and writing this thesis. Lastly but certainly not least my thanks and love to my wife Ellen, who selflessly shared the time I should have spent with her, who saw me through some rough periods when my creativity seemed drained. Her patience, and her belief in me has truly inspired me throughout my work on this thesis.

NOTES

CHAPTER I

1. Chaim Potok, The Ethics of the Student-Teacher Relationship (New York: Leadership Training Fellowship, 1966), p. 7.

CHAPTER II

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The period of Restoration after the Babylonian exile marked the beginning of an era of creativity for the Jewish prople which, in the opinion of some, has yet to be equalled. Yet the Restoration and the period following immediately after, is one of the least known. When Cyrus ascended the Persian throne, he embarked on a policy of good-will toward the subjects of his vast empire, including the Judean exiles in Babylonia. For them, the monarch's favor came in the form of allowing them to return to their homeland. Upon returning the replanted Judeans not only faced hardships of drought, famine, and taxes, but they also encountered enmity from their Samaritan neighbors. The building of a second temple, in 520 BCE, supposedly instigated by the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, was slow in starting, and took many years to complete. Moral laxity, disregard for the Sabbath, inequality in justice, and intermarriage with their neighbors contributed to a general socio-religious breakdown of the fledgling community.

By 458 BCE[1] the situation required the expertise of Ezra and later, Nehemiah, both Persian Jews. They succeeded in salvaging and restructuring the Palestinian community. Under the Persians the Jews were almost autonomous, allowed to live under their own laws and ordinances in matters solely involving Jews.[2] These laws consisted of those

written in the Pentateuch, which functioned as the community's "constitution,"[3] as well as certain unwritten laws, or takkanot, which, according to Solomon Zeitlin,[4] were ordained by Ezra and the Men of the Great Assembly and recognized by the Persian authorities.

Such takkanot dealing with secular as well as with religious areas of life, were the prototype of the Oral Law which the Pharisees and tannaim would develop and amplify in later years.

The century and a half between the popular ratification of the Torah as the constitution and the coming of Alexander the Great is, for the most part, shrouded in mystery. When Alexander crossed the Hellespont in 333 BCE he defeated Darios III and Macedonian rule replaced Persian rule in Darios' empire. After conquering Phoenicia Alexander marched into Egypt and was hailed as liberator by the pagan population as well as by the Jews there. Hence the Jewish citizens were granted certain privileges that had heretofore been reserved for Greeks. When Alexander died in 323 BCE, his empire was divided by his two generals, Seleucus who claimed Syria, and Ptolemy, who claimed Egypt. Palestine, situated in the middle, was invaded by both armies, and, although Ptolemy's troops had invaded first, the country was solidly in Seleucid hands by the year 198 BCE, but only after years of assassinations and political intrigue between the two dynasties.

Alexander and his successors not only brought

invading armies, but they also brought Hellenism--Greek culture and Greek philosophy--which had a profoundly significant effect on the cultures of the Orient and, in particular, Judaism. It later would be adopted by Rome and Hellenistic elements would heavily influence the offshoot of Judaism, Christianity, which would ultimately supplant both Judaism and Hellenism, as the dominant religion of the Roman Empire. Because of Hellenism, Greek became the lingua franca of the civilized world. The Jews of Alexandria, Egypt, many of whom had ancestors who had been taken captive in Palestine by Ptolemy I, eventually lost fluency in Hebrew and Aramaic, being comfortable only with Greek, although what they spoke was not pure Greek. To keep links with their religious tradition the Egyptian-Jewish community produced a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Septuagint, and allowed Greek to be used in worship and study.[5] Palestinian Jewry benefited from its initial encounter with Hellenism. Its priestly class and aristocracy[6] became enamoured with the Greeks' concept of wisdom.[7] The books of Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and Ben Sira were probably authored at this time, teaching that wisdom was the means to a full life, a complete life. It was the highest ideal, but it was also a religious ethic--"the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord."

Besides the Egyptian community, there were Jewish communities all over the Diaspora. From Cyrenaica, the Balkans, the isles of the eastern Mediterranean, to the

Crimea, Persia, Arabia, and Abyssinia, Jews lived and worshipped. Business ventures and the search for new markets brought Jewish merchants into contact with the various gentile communities, as did expatriation and migratory movements.[8] Later on when Rome developed her excellent system of roads as well as maritime traffic, such contact between Jew and gentile accelerated. As a result of such contact, cosmopolitanism developed and cultures borrowed from each other.

The hellenization of the Jews seemed at first, conducive to the Seleucid Empire's imperialistic plans, but later on strengthened Jewish ties among the Jewish citizens in the Greek poleis. This interfered with the spread of pure Hellenism and led to severe anti-Jewish reactions.[9] Under Rome Jews would experience violent riots, incited by their pagan neighbors--the result of jealousy and xenophobia.

In approximately the year 175 BCE hellenization was widening the gap, in Palestine, between the cosmopolitan aristocracy, sympathetic to Greek ways, and the more traditionalist plebian community, who took flirtation with the pagan's practices for apostasy. Matters began to come to a head when, after the assassination of Seleucus IV, Antiochus IV, surnamed Epiphanes, assumed the throne. Antiochus IV fancied himself a great champion of Greek culture. He built magnificent temples and gymnasia, abounding with Greek statuary. His wish was to see the

Seleucid Empire united by Greek thought, Greek religion, and Greek culture.

The wealthy citizens of Jerusalem were only too eager to oblige. Children were given Greek names; naked Jewish youths participated in athletic games. To hide the embarassment of circumcision, an abhorrence to the Greeks and their sense of anatomical perfection, young men underwent painful operations. The Temple priesthood, which should have provided leadership to the pious faithful in the time of crisis, also forsook responsibility and embraced the new culture. Nor were some of its members above improbity to gain Antiochus' favor. Jason, the brother of Onias III, the High Priest, persuaded the monarch to appoint him High Priest, with the promise of remaking Jerusalem into a Greek city.

However, local factions in Jerusalem sympathetic to Ptolemy Philometor of Egypt, caused Antiochus to re-evaluate Jason's ability, and he subsequently appointed to the High Priest's office a Hellenist by the name of Menelaus, who had made still more grandiose promises to the king. The wealthy of Jerusalem resisted Menelaus' attempts to gather tribute for the king. Therefore, the High Priest embezzled Temple funds. He was acquitted of the charge after bribing the court. Upon Antiochus' arrival at Jerusalem on a return to Antioch from an expedition, Menelaus allowed him to pilfer the Temple treasury.

The situation worsened when, in an effort to stamp

out cultural competition with Hellenism in Palestine, Antiochus prohibited the practice of Judaism on pain of death. Sabbath observance, study of Scripture, and circumcision were outlawed. The Temple service was changed to the service of Zeus with swine sacrificed on the altar. These events led to the growth and popularity of the Hasidim, or "pios ones." The Hasidim increased as Jews tried desperately to keep the traditions of their fathers under such adverse conditions. During this time martyrdom became a viable alternative to living as a pagan and there were those who anxiously awaited divine salvation in a final apocalyptical battle between good and evil. Such were the attitudes that inspired the author of the Book of Daniel and several apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works.

Another alternative was armed resistance. Such was the avenue taken by Matthias, a priest of Modein, and his five sons. The Maccabees, as they were named, were dedicated, valiant fighters, adept at guerilla warfare. The struggle lasted three years (168 BCE-165 BCE) before the Jewish army was able to wrest control of the Temple from the enemy. Immediately they set to work on restoring and reconsecrating the Temple with new vessels, a new altar, and an eight-day festival commemorating the victory, to be celebrated each year.

Complete independence had yet to be won. While his father was away, the prince Antiochus V was persuaded to cease the war against the Jews. Rome had indicated it

preferred that hostilities stop, and the prince recognized its rising power. Reconciliation, however, was difficult, because the war had triggered long-standing animosities between the Jews and the Greeks.[10] But freedom of religion and other rights were conceded by Antiochus V (163 BCE) and later re-confirmed both by Demetrius I and Demetrius II. The end of the war left the political and religious leadership in the hands of the Maccabean, or Hasmonean family. Simon, the last of the five brothers, ruled from 142 BCE to 135 BCE. During his rulership, he strengthened the commonwealth. A conclave of priests and laity named him and his descendants "leader and High Priest."[11] Daily life improved for the average man, materially and spiritually. The economy drew strength from agriculture and artisans' crafts and the Law was strictly obeyed.

Although Simon was the political ruler and also High Priest, a high council of elders called the Sanhedrin (from the Greek synhedrion) dealt with organic, internal socio-religious issues.[12] The Sanhedrin was not like the pro-Hellenistic gerousia that preceded it. It was not limited to administrative tasks. Its fundamental importance was that "it interpreted Judaism authoritatively, modified it as the need arose, and saw to it that its instructions and decisions were put into practice."[13] The leaders of this council were the Zugot or "pairs." A nasi (president) and an av bet-din (vice-president) made up each pair. The zugot began in the reign of John Hyrcanus (135 BCE-105 BCE)

and ended between 10 and 20 CE, with Hillel and Shammai. Although the people looked to the Sanhedrin for religious leadership and legislation it was never recognized officially by the Ptolemaic, Seleucid and Roman governors, nor by the Hasmonean and Herodian leaders.[14]

In 135 BCE John Hyrcanus succeeded his father, Simon, taking further advantage of the political turmoil in Syria and further strengthening Judea's borders. With mercenaries he expanded his territory, subjugating Idumea, and forcing the natives to convert to Judaism. He also burned the Samaritan sanctuary on Mount Gerizim. Many of the religious leaders resented Hyrcanus' dual role as ruler and High Priest, preferring that he give up his claim to the High Priesthood. According to some scholars,[15] the group that broke with the religious establishment over this issue became perushim or the Pharisees. We will deal with the Pharisees as a movement later in this chapter.

After John Hyrcanus' death, his son Aristobulus lasted only a year on the throne, but succeeded in judaizing all of Galilee in that time. His widow Salome Alexandra married his elder brother Alexander Jannaeus, who assumed both titles of ruler and High Priest, reigning from 93 to 76 BCE. Like John Hyrcanus Jannaeus was constantly engaged in warfare, and because his expeditions detracted from his other duties, the gap between the Pharisees and himself widened. The enmity resulted in civil war. Upon his deathbed, however, Jannaeus urged Salome to reconcile with

the Pharisees. During her reign the Sanhedrin became predominantly Pharisaic.[16]

When she died, the intrigue between her sons again plunged the country into civil war. All sides sought out the assistance of the Roman general Pompey, who marched on Jerusalem, slaying 12,000 Jews, including officiating priests. Judea was then made a tributary of Rome.

In the year 37 BCE, Herod, the son of Antipater, and a close friend of Marc Antony, deposed the last Hasmonean and was named king of the Jews by the Roman senate. Because of his Idumean origins, his Jewish subjects resented him, despite his marriage to Mariamne, a Hasmonean princess, and his lavish remodeling of the Temple. Other factors contributed to his unpopularity. Firstly, although he remodeled the Temple, he also engaged in building for the pagans, a program which sucked the country's resources. He built a complete city in honor of Caesar, naming it Caesarea. Secondly, Herod's reign was one of unequalled bloodshed. Suspicion to the point of paranoia drove him to murder not only political opponents, but also his wife and sons. He also murdered members of the Sanhedrin when they dared oppose him.

Herod's machinations were not the only cause for the social turmoil at this time. There was deep schism between the landed gentry and the small farmers and between the urban and rural populations. Herod exacerbated the situation with his lavish building programs.[17] There was

religious tension between Judeans with their established religious traditions, and the Galileans, whose ancestors had been converted by John Hyrcanus and who were in a state of "relative neophytism"[18] as far as Judaism was concerned. The animosity between the Jewish and Greek communities was worsened by Herod's overt admiration for pagan culture. Nevertheless, his remodeling of the Temple kept Jerusalem as the center of the Jewish world, for it attracted pilgrims from all over the Diaspora and Palestine.[19] Those who could not come sent gifts and tribute for the Temple's upkeep and the priests. The Temple cult at this time was "central to the historical and theological consciousness of the people."[20] However, as Baron has pointed out, by the time of direct Roman government in Palestine, the small aristocratic priestly class had become a "liability," for its members were no longer in respected positions of judges, and teachers.[21] These positions and duties were assumed by lay scholars who, though functioning by their knowledge of the Law, did not want to detract totally from the prestige of the priesthood and the Temple because of its national and religious symbolic nature.[22] To understand how these scholars changed the religious life of the people, a few words of introduction are necessary.

As was stated above, Judaism was not confined to the borders of Palestine, but spread to all parts of the civilized world. As Jews moved to new places, they brought their religious traditions with them, introducing them to

pagan communities. Jewish preachers reinforced these tenets in worship and study sessions.[23] As reaction to the hellenization process, the peoples of the Orient re-oriented themselves and the re-awakening of the ancient oriental cultures was first expressed in creedal and ritual elements, and "the greatest syncretistic age in history" was under way.[24] Because Judaism offered a rational understanding of morality, of matters divine, as well as democratic ideals, pagans found it attractive. Judaism, in kind, engaged in active proselytizing. The Alexandrian Jew, Philo, wrote that the Septuagint, although needed by the non-Hebrew speaking Jewish population of Alexandria, was created originally to enlighten the gentile world.[25]

Judaism, however, not only gave a great deal to the pagan world, but also integrated a great deal from it. Because of social intercourse with pagans over the centuries, it assimilated trends in art, architecture, and music from paganism, as well as certain theological ideas, such as angelology, demonology, and aspects of mysticism. Philo himself integrated Greek philosophy with Jewish sources.[26] Carried to extremes, such syncretism developed into Jewish gnosticism. This syncretism, a consequence of Jews mingling with gentiles and pagan ideas, as well as new proselytes to Judaism bringing their own ways of understanding religion to their adapted faith, played a large role in the proliferation of numerous Jewish sects and later helped the spread of Christianity.[27]

In such a period there was no "normative Judaism." The Bible, although taking shape, was not yet in its final form. Religion was in a state of flux. Although the woes of everyday life and political oppression caused the masses to seek Divine salvation and deliverance, there was no comprehensive view of how to attain them.[28] Eschatology pervaded religion and many daily awaited a Messiah, a descendant of David, to deliver them from their Roman and Herodian oppressors.[29] Many charismatic leaders, such as Menahem, Theudas, and Jesus, came from the ranks of the masses, claiming to be the Anointed One. Whether they preached passive waiting for God or armed resistance, they were usually eliminated by Roman might or their own treachery. Apocryphal and pseudepigraphic works predicted imminent apocalypse.[30]

Naturally the different religious sects placed different emphases on different religious ideas. There were, however, three main sects during this dynamic period: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Josephus mentions a fourth group known as "the fourth philosophy." Members of this group have been identified with militant Zealots, who seemed to have differed with the Pharisaic scholars only in their militancy against Rome.

At least one scholar holds the opinion that the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the Essenes (or their prototypes) all existed in the time of Jonathan the Maccabee.[31] Although it is widely believed that the name

"Sadducee" is derived from Zadok, the High Priest under Solomon, there is also a strong opinion that holds that the name actually is taken from a Zadok who was a disciple of Antigonus of Socho.[32] The Sadducees tended to come from the aristocracy; we will deal with their religious beliefs later in contrasting them with those of the Pharisees.

The Essenes constituted a group dedicated to living apart from established communities. They chose to live in the desert in communes, living a monk-like, celibate existence, and meticulously carrying out their understanding of the laws of ritual purity. They also awaited an imminent end to history, which would be characterized by a final war between good and evil, in which they would participate.[33]

There are numerous opinions, some conflicting, some overlapping, as to who exactly were the Pharisees. One scholar labels them as a movement within the Jewish people, as opposed to a party, a school, or a sect.[34] Another holds that they were a chavurah, a "holy fellowship," a minority at first, which based itself on meticulous tithing and ritual purity, and separated from those who did not do so. However, the segregation was not as complete as that of the Essenes, nor was there as firm a community structure in Pharisaic circles.[35] Other scholars, however, do not accept the association of the Pharisees, or perushim, with the chaverim,[36] but suggest that from our sources we can deduce that the Pharisees were

> . . . a scholar class dedicated to the supremacy of the two-fold Law. . . . They actively opposed the Sadducees who recognized only the Written Law as authoritative. . . . Their unwritten laws, the halakha were operative in all realms: cultus, property, judicial procedures, festivals, etc. The Pharisees were active leaders who carried out their laws with vigor and determination . . .[37]

The originator of this definition holds that the label perushim comes only in contradistinction with the Sadducees. It has also been suggested that they separated not from the Sadducees per se, but from the influence of John Hyrcanus. The schism between the laity and the priests had already been in existence. With the split with Hyrcanus, the Sadducees assumed duties heretofore assigned to members of the Pharisaic party.[38]

Besides differences in understanding and legislating ritual and civil matters, examples of which abound throughout the tannaitic sources, there were also basic differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, regarding fundamental theological tenets. From Josephus, our main non-rabbinic source for this period, we know that

> The Pharisees had passed on to the people certain regulations received from their forefathers, but not recorded in the law of Moses, for which reason they are rejected by the Sadducean group, who hold only those laws should be considered valid, which were written down and those which had been handed down by the forefathers need not be observed.[39]

Thus, we know that the Pharisees had traditions handed down from ancestors, which they are assumed to have held as the oral component of a two-fold law revealed at Sinai.[40] This revolutionary concept[41] of a two-fold law seemed to be "not

so much a body of laws, as a principle that could solve problems in God's name."[42] It broadened the definition of Torah,[43] and while its advocates might have deviated from the literality of the Pentateuch at times, "they always enacted laws in its spirit; they never abrogated biblical law, but interpreted it."[44]

It should be noted that, although the Sadducees by and large rejected this notion of a two-fold law, they also engaged in enacting new ordinances, albeit ad hoc legislation, but they never claimed that theirs was in any way on a level with the Pentateuch itself.[45]

Sadducean theology was conservative for its time and place setting. As has been said, the Sadducees only considered the Pentateuch as the authoritative law. They did not believe in an afterlife or pre-determination by Providence, nor did they believe in angels, spirits, or demons, in the same way that the Pharisees did.[46] They also rejected a messiah from Davidic descent.[47] Furthermore, the Sadducees' method of worship centered almost exclusively around the Temple cult and its priestly advocates depended on the populace's tithing for their livelihood.

In contradistinction with Sadducean theology, Pharisaic tenets were radical, yet eventually appealed to the masses. To strengthen their concept of an oral law based on a chain of tradition, they developed an innovative methodology of hermeneutics to interpret and derive new laws. Afterlife and bodily resurrection came to be cardinal

doctrine, as did angelology. They strongly believed that God's kingdom would be ushered in on earth with Messiah's advent, and the political upheavals suggested that such a time was imminent. Their idea of God as a Father, loving yet chastising, brought consolation to the unfortunate and a promise of reward in the World to Come. Perhaps their most important achievement was their democratization of education and worship in founding schools and prayer-meetings for the masses. So popular were their beliefs that they quickly spread to parts of the Diaspora,[48] attracting many admirers.

Why was Pharisaic theology so successful with the people? Probably because the Pharisees taught that the Torah was not just a legacy for the priests, but was for the entire House of Israel. Furthermore, the movement aimed at living a holy life by recognizing Israel's separateness from the rest of the nations.[49] Although this uniqueness was part of Israel's heritage, once religious freedom had been secured after the Maccabean struggle against Hellenism, religious leaders began to stress the purity and cohesion of the Jewish community.[50] Paradoxically, they did not withdraw from society, but even engaged in proselytizing. As Baeck put it, "the universalism of the prophets was not impaired by the Pharisees' separatist stance."[51] To the Jewish masses they were able to demonstrate that religion was a comprehensive pursuit including secular and national interests.[52]

Pharisaic theology seemed to enhance the value of the individual;[53] through the ability to gain knowledge in Torah a person was able to perform mitzvot and have some control over his responsibility to God, rather than being a vicarious worshipper in the Temple service. The survival of this type of Judaism after the wars in 70 CE and 132 CE indicates its flexibility, as opposed to the other types which did not survive. After these two wars, the tannaim, or sages who were the spiritual heirs of the Pharisees ironically labeled, derogatorily to be sure, the sects and fringe groups outside the normative stream of rabbinic Judaism with the same label their forbearers had been called by--perushim.[54]

With the sage Hillel, rabbinic Judaism begins.[55] From his time until the year 200 CE the sages were known as the tannaim (mentioned above) from the Aramaic tana, to study or repeat. As we will see later on in this work, the way lore was kept and handed down from generation to generation was to repeat it until it was memorized. Hillel's chief opponent was the av bet-din of the Sanhedrin while Hillel was its nasi. Each is identified with a particular school of thought, the school of Hillel being the more liberal, and the school of Shammai being the more conservative. It is believed, however, that the factions that made up these schools of thought were actually older than their namesakes, and they continued after the death of the two men until around the year 70 CE.[56]

As has been said, in making the authority of Torah supreme hermeneutic rules were used to interpret and derive new laws as the need arose. Such was the process of halakha. It has been suggested that this methodology of hermeneutics was borrowed from, or at least paralleled the Graeco-Roman method of legislation.[57] In any case, there were different types of legislation enacted.[58] There were halakhot, laws enacted to be part of the Tradition, yet without biblical support 2) gezerot, authoritative decrees meeting specific situations 3) takkanot, amendments to earlier legislation, and 4) siyyagim or "fences," ordinances designed to protect more important laws from being transgressed. Throughout the tannaitic period and into that of the Amoraim, halakha was made to be in consonance with life. Its success depended at first on the co-operation of the legislating leaders and the masses, who voluntarily submitted to their legislation. Once rabbinic Judaism became the normative Judaism, those refusing to submit to tannaitic jurisdiction became outsiders.

Such was the phenomenon of the Pharisees. During Herod's reign, the religious life of the Pharisees or that of the other sects was not interfered with, unless they became politically dangerous to the king, in which case he wrought cruel vengeance, as he did even to members of his immediate family. After drenching the country in blood, Herod finally died and for a short time his son Archelaus reigned. Rome however decided to annex Judea

to the province of Syria, with a Roman procurator in Caesarea governing in the Herodians' stead. The procurators brought Roman cruelty. They began the hated census-taking for the purpose of taxing the population and were equated with robbers and traitors. An insurrection in Galilee was put down with Roman efficiency while 2000 of its participants were crucified. The procurators themselves were self-aggrandizing individuals who did not attempt to understand the ways of the people they governed.

Such a situation caused a great deal of civil unrest, with calls for armed revolt. This was when the Zealots began to attract followers. It was a time for renewed expectation of God's redeemer to oust the Romans, and there were many claiming the role who were also crucified. Herodian rule was restored temporarily in the middle of the first century CE in the person of Agrippa I, but after his reign the government returned to the procurators and the hatred of the Romans increased. Ironically Rome tolerated and even favored Judaism in most of the Empire. It was tolerant of the Jewish abhorrence to images and human worship. Thus, Jews were allowed to sacrifice to their God on behalf of the emperor, rather than offer sacrifices <u>to</u> the emperor. With the exception of Caligula who desired to put a statue of himself in the Temple in Jerusalem, the Roman government accepted this arrangement and Jewish sensitivities were respected.

As the situation worsened the political fanatics'

influence increased. Brigands roamed the countryside and political assassinations by sicarii ("dagger-men") took place against any suspected of collaborating with Rome. The Roman authorities responded in kind. Florus, the last procurator in Judea plundered and pillaged villages. The virtual declaration of war on behalf of the Jews was the cessation of sacrifices on behalf of the emperor. A peace faction led by prominent sages such as Johanan b. Zakkai, was unsuccessful in cooling the war spirit. War finally broke out in 66 CE when the revolutionaries captured the Roman fortress of Antonia in Jerusalem. As the war progressed, guerilla fighters defeated the trained Roman troops. The Jewish army was defeated when Vespasian, Rome's most able general, was summoned from Germany to put down the revolt. With his son Titus' army and the auxiliary troops of Agrippa II, he put 60,000 troops into the field. The climax of the war, which lasted until 73 CE, came with the long and tragic siege of Jerusalem and subsequent razing of the Temple. It is believed, however, that the defeat of the Jews was caused as much by the dissension within the Jewish ranks, as by the superiority of Roman numbers and military skill. Furthermore, the assistance expected from Diaspora Jewry never materialized.[59]

With the destruction of the Temple and the cessation of the cult, the sages' emphasis on Torah study became central to Jewish ethnic and religious survival. As Baron has put it:

> Concentration on the Torah was, indeed, considered the main remedy for all private and public ills, as the ultimate antidote to foreign domination.[60]

The religious Sanhedrin in Jerusalem was replaced by a Bet Din ha-Gadol located at Yavneh and founded by R. Johanan b. Zakkai. Changes were made. Although the sacrifices were missed, there was more concentration on prayer and good deeds as expiation for sins. Students were ordained with the title rabbi, and obliged to pass on to their own students the teachings handed to them by their teachers. The following chapters of this work will deal with the dynamics of that special relationship.

Realizing the mammoth task before them, Johanan b. Zakkai and his successors succeeded in transforming Jewish life. Like their forbearers, they

> . . . possessed a deep understanding of the need for a warm practical religious expression . . . Emerging from the ranks of the people, the rabbis spoke in terms intelligible to the populace and were therefore able to lead the people in accordance with their teachings . . .[61]

Furthermore, the rabbis stayed away from extremes. They were concerned with the spirit of the Law, modifying old laws and sometimes suspending obsolete ones, "shifting a number of laws and practices from the periphery to the center and vice-versa."[62]

Johanan b. Zakkai's successor was Gamliel II. His colleagues were the renown R. Joshua, R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, and later, R. Akiba. It has been suggested by at least one scholar that Gamliel II and R. Eliezer b.

Hyrcanus, although officially of the liberal Hillelite school of thought, were in reality closer to the more conservative Shammaiite school,[63] but this hypothesis also has its dissenters.[64]

Although his undue strictness led to his deposal as nasi and eventual reinstatement his years as nasi were characterized as some of the most active and fruitful from a halakhic standpoint: the texts of the prayers, as well as the canon of Scripture were put down in final form and calendar emendations were made. Christianity made its final split with Judaism. This was the period of the development of the exegetical midrashim, Mekhilta, Sifra, and Sifre on the biblical books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Due to R. Akiba's ingenuity the oral traditions up to his time were ordered into a system of six orders and sixty-three tractates, which became the Mishnah. Reflecting on the magnitude of Akiba's accomplishment, one scholar has said:

> The development of halakha in the period following Hillel . . . necessitated the arrangement of the halakha on a systematic basis . . . Akiba was probably the originator of the present division of the Mishnah . . . The many shortcomings in the arrangement of the Mishnah must not be ascribed wholly to the author. One must bear in mind both the connection of the Mishnah with the Scripture and the fact that it was intended as a code for the practical teacher of the law, as well as a textbook for the student.[65]

Furthermore

> The Mishnah, it must be stated . . . successfully terminated the revolution of Jewish intellectual life, which, lasting for about two centuries, threatened to destroy the vital principle of rabbinical Judaism.[66]

Also during this period, new translations of Scripture, into the Aramaic vernacular and into Greek were produced.[67]

After the war in 70 CE there was, as we have pointed out, a period of spiritual and religious reconstruction, as well as attempts at economic reconstruction in Palestine. Under the emperor Trajan, however, Diaspora Jewry in Egypt, Cyrenaica, and Cyprus revolted in the second decade of the second century, with the hope that the rebellion would draw Parthian support from the East. The Parthians never came and the rebellion was crushed.

With Trajan's successor, Hadrian, Judaism again found itself threatened. Hadrian desired to do what Antiochus Epiphanes had desired to do--unite his empire through Graeco-Roman culture and make Jerusalem a pagan city. He outlawed the practice of Judaism on pain of death, and soon a spirit of resistance and revolt enveloped Palestinian Jewry. It touched even the most respected of Jewish leaders, R. Akiba, who proclaimed the leader of the Jewish army, Simon ben Cosiba, as the Messiah, renaming him Bar Kokhba, "son of a star." The second war with Rome began in 132 CE and lasted three years. Again Rome's best general, Severus had to be called from Britain to defeat the Jewish guerillas. He was successful and at Bethar, the last of the Jewish resistance fell. Hundreds of thousands had been killed or sold as slaves. Many suffered martyrdom, including Rabbi Akiba and a number of his colleagues. Jerusalem became Aelia Capitolina in

honor of Jupiter.

Antoninius Pius (138 CE-161 CE) resinded the Hadrianic decrees. The disciples who had fled now returned. Simon III succeeded his father, Gamliel II as nasi and the academy was moved to Usha in the Galilee. The rabbis again had the task of enacting legislation to reconstruct life in Palestine. To regain its authority over the world Jewish community they concerned themselves with regulating the calendar. Members of fringe sects were declared outsiders and proselytizing was radically curbed.[68] To curb increasing emigration to Babylonia rabbinic legislation was drawn up to counteract it. The academies revived under the leadership of Akiba's disciples.[69] Rabbi Meir, his outstanding student, continued his work in revising the Mishnah.

In approximately 170 CE Judah I assumed the position of nasi. By this time the office was officially recognized by the Roman authorities. Judah had been trained in the school of Akiba and became the most renown scholar of his time, attaining the title Rabbi par excellence. His distinguishing achievement was his editing and redacting of the various Mishnah collections into one authoritative text. This occurred around 200 CE and it became the textbook for both the Palestinian and Babylonian academies. Following the same system as the Mishnah was the Tosefta, made up of statements not included in the Mishnah and whose redaction is attributed to R.

Hiyya.

With Judah's death the tannaitic period comes to a close. There was a subsequent shift of influence from Palestine to Babylonia. It is quite evident that between the period of return from Babylonia around 500 BCE and the final redaction of the Mishnah around 200 CE, Judaism and the Jewish people suffered and survived internal and external adversaries. It was the ability of the religion and the ability of the people to respond creatively, adapting new alternatives, albeit within a time-honored Tradition. Salo Baron, in alluding to the Herodian period, expressed an observation which seems apt for the entire 700-year period:

> In this state of extraordinary tension, the people's creative forces searched for even new intellectual and spiritual solutions . . . As in the First Commonwealth the stresses and strains of these deep conflicts . . . produced deeply creative quests for new socio-religious answers . . .[70]

As we shall see, one of the chief sources of energy for these quests came in the persons of the master and the disciple, and their relationship to one another, in the context of the schools and academies of the period.

NOTES

CHAPTER II

1. G.F. Moore, Judaism in the First Christian Centuries, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1930; Schocken, 1971), 1:5.

2. Ibid.

3. A. Guttmann, Rabbinic Judaism in the Making (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), p. 4.

4. Ibid. Also see S. Zeitlin, "The Halakhah: Introduction to Tannaitic Jurisprudence," Jewish Quarterly Review, n.s. 39 (1948-49). pp. 1-3.

5. Salo Baron, A Social and Religious History of the Jews, vol. 1: To the Beginning of the Christian Era; vol. 2: Christian Era: The First Five Centuries (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937; second ed., Jewish Publication Society, 1952), 1:176.

6. On the aristocratic council known as gerousia, see Guttmann, Making, p. 12.

7. Moore, Judaism, 1:38.

8. Baron, History, 1:173.

9. Ibid.

10. M. Margolies and A. Marx, A History of the Jewish People (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1927; Atheneum, 1972), p. 142.

11. Baron, History, 1:222.

12. Guttmann, Making, p. 17.

13. Ibid., pp. 21f.

14. Baron, History, 1:222.

15. Margolies and Marx, History, p. 153; Guttmann, Making, p. 131.

16. Guttmann, Making, p. 25.

17. Baron, History, 1:224.

18. Ibid., pp. 275-278. The Galilee, brought into Judaism rather late, had a relatively uneducated population. Baron believes that many of those labeled as 'am ha'arets by the Rabbis might have been Galileans. Also see J. Neusner, A Life of Yoḥanan b. Zakkai (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970), p. 19.

19. Ibid., p. 213.

20. Neusner, Life, p. 7.

21. Baron, History, 1:271.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 173.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid., quoting Philo, De vita Mosis II, 6:36.

26. Ibid., 200.

27. Baron, History, 2:15.

28. Neusner, Life, pp. 25-26.

29. Baron, History, 1:209.

30. For an excellent account of the messianic movements in Jewish history, see A.Z. Zescoly, Ha-t'nuot Ha-m'shiḥiyot B'Yisrael (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1956).

31. Guttmann, Making, p. 12.

32. Ibid., p. 132.

33. Although the Dead Sea Scrolls have been attributed to the Essenes, Baron believes they were composed by a similar, yet not identical group, the Damascus Covenanters. For a For a thorough account of the awaited apocalyptic battle, see Y. Yadin, The War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).

34. L. Baeck, The Pharisees and Other Essays (New York: Schocken, 1947; first paperback ed., 1966), p. 11.

35. Neusner, Life, p. 23.

36. Ellis Rivkin, "Defining the Pharisees: the Tannaitic Sources," Hebrew Union College Annual 40 (1969): pp. 205-249.

37. Ibid., p. 247. Cf. Josephus, Antiquities XIII, 297-298.

38. Guttmann, Making, p. 131.

39. Zeitlin, "Halakhah," p. 9.

40. For a dissenting view on this opinion see J. Neusner, Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), pp. 143-179.

41. Rivkin, E., The Shaping of Jewish History, (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1971), p. 51.

42. Ibid.

43. Lauterbach, "Sadducees and Pharisees" Rabbinic Essays (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College; reprinted ed., Ktav, 1973), pp. 34f.

44. Zeitlin, "Halakhah," p. 39.

45. Lauterbach, "Sadducees and Pharisees," p. 34.

46. Baron, History, 2:38ff.

47. Zeitlin, "Halakhah," p. 9ff.

48. Baron, History, 2:38ff.

49. Ibid., p. 5.

50. Ibid., p. 11.

51. Ibid., p. 26.

52. Guttmann, Making, p. 135.

53. Baeck, Pharisees. p. 34.

54. Guttmann, Making, p. 163.

55. Ibid., p. 74.

56. Zeitlin, "Halakhah," p. 32.

57. Ibid., p. 38.

58. Ibid., p. 21ff.

59. Baron, History, 2: 90.

60. Ibid., p. 121.

61. Guttmann, Making, p. xii.

62. Ibid., p. xiii.

63. Cf. L. Finkelstein, Akiba: Scholar, Saint, Martyr, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1936; Atheneum, 1970), pp. 73-91.

64. Guttmann, Making, p. 117.

65. Ginzberg, Of Jewish Law and Lore, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1955; Atheneum, 1970), pp. 161f.

66. Ibid., p. 160.

67. Moore, Judaism, 1:88 and 102.

68. Baron, History, 2:123.

69. Moore, Judaism, 1:94, quoting Shir ha-Shirim Rabbah 2:5.

70. Baron, History, 1:284ff.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE TANNAITIC PERIOD

A modern scholar of education has remarked that the task of education is "the fullest possible development of human beings."[1] Essentially Jewish education in the classical period was uniquely concerned with just that--developing and training the total character of a person. A Jewish philosophy of education was not only concerned with the impartial pursuit of "pure knowledge," but rather emphasized personal conduct that derived from that knowledge. The proverb "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord" (proverbs 9:10) was a cornerstone in classical Jewish education because knowledge was not extraneous to life, but instead was synonymous with it, giving it depth and direction;[2] "The dedication to a continuous striving for ethical perfection (was) a keynote of all Jewish education."[3]

Unlike the Greek system of education, whose objective was to train sound bodies and minds and to produce useful citizens for the state through philosophical discourse and physical exercise, the Jewish objective was to develop and improve "a kingdom of priests and a holy people" through the knowledge of Torah. But such knowledge had to lead to the performance of right deeds; the ideal was a blending and a balance of both, yet there was always a creative tension between wisdom and deeds. A pious man

was not ignorant nor was an ignoramous pious.[4] Knowledge of Torah was thought to be the pivotal point of one's portion in eternity,[5] of which one could not have sufficient amount.[6] Both the national and religious motives of Jewish education during this period, and the dual necessity of the purely cognitive and the purely active, were aptly summed up by the historian Josephus in his work, Against Apion:

> Indeed the greatest part of mankind are so far from living according to their own laws that they hardly know them; but when they have sinned, they learn from others that they have transgressed the law. Our principal care of all is this: to educate our children well; and we think it to be the most necessary business of our whole life to observe the laws that have been given to us, and to keep the rules of piety that have been delivered down to us. Our legislator (Moses) carefully hoined the two methods of instruction together; for he neither left the practical exercises to go on without verbal instruction, nor did he permit the hearing of the Law to proceed without the exercise of practice.[7]

Because Greek culture was so dominant during this period, many Jews, as has been mentioned became attracted to it, and the Jewish system of education was influenced by it, though not to the extent that some scholars have suggested.[8] Unlike the Greeks, however, whose idealistic pursuit of "beauty" and "grace" led them to view work and manual labor as degrading and not fit for an educated person, the Jews stressed both learning and labor as necessary for building one's moral character. Not only was it incumbent upon a father to teach his son a trade as well as send him to school,[9] but true learning was

viewed by some as incomplete without a livelihood.[10] It was the interaction of the people's daily lives and livelihoods that tested and taught the tenets of Torah. As one historian of Jewish education has put it:

> The conception of "pure" or contemplative knowledge as an ideal, or as a means of achieving perfect happiness, or perfect virtue, was utterly strange to the Jews . . . the antithesis between a worthy life--that is, a life of reason and contemplation--and the "mere living" of those who have to spend their energies in labor of all kinds, could have no meaning in the social and economic conditions of ancient Judea. It could arise only in a society in which the socio-economic structure was based on a division of the people into those who had to labor for a living and those who were relieved of the necessity.[11]

To be sure the priests who were economically supported by tithing, did have the means to engage in day-long study, and during the political turmoil which threatened to uproot Jewish life, some sages, especially the more affluent ones urged their students to spend most of their time studying, for they saw study as the only way of saving it. Indeed, some sages preferred only students from wealthy families who could devote all of their time to their studies, as opposed to those students who had to work.[12] Although education was not an avocation for leisure, one needed leisure for study.[13]

The incumbency upon every male Jew to learn Torah and perform the mitzvot derived from it, had its roots in the belief that Torah as taught by the priests and later by the Pharisaic lay teachers, had a divine, and, therefore, unchangeable character. Such a belief resulted in three

important facets of Jewish education: 1) unchangeability of curriculum 2) early indoctrination of the young, and 3) popularity of learning. The belief that Torah, both the written and the oral, had been given by an Infinite God, naturally meant that finite man did not have the reason nor the right to amend it. Any adjustments that were needed for the proper understanding of Torah had already been provided for at Sinai--at least according to Pharisaic/rabbinic teaching. There was also a certain humility stressed among the Jews, in knowing that they lived in a universe larger than themselves, created by their Infinite God, and yet that God cared about their personal daily conduct; to understand His will meant learning His Law.[14] Because the Law had been given to all of Israel, each male Jew had the responsibility of continuing his learning, regardless of his social or economic position. As we have said, this was especially emphasized by the Pharisees.

Of all education, that of the children and of the youth was held to be **the most important**, for it was at this period in an individual's life that his future character was molded and directed. As early as biblical times, when there were no formal schools as there were in post-exilic times, educating children, especially in the home played a central role in a father's religious duties.[15] Then the father served as instructor; if the father was ignorant, the son would probably follow in his footsteps. Or, in a

large family, where the first-born (whose rights were commeasurate with his responsibilities) was a dolt, it might happen that his siblings' education would be neglected,[16] since the first-born would have no use for education. To be sure, priests taught the Law to novice priests and there were apprentices to craftsmen as well as students in the prophetic guilds. But, by and large, most of the learning was done in the home, and came in the form of stories, songs, poems, and proverbs. This was how a child learned his history and culture.[17] However, the child's best learning of his people's heritage came about watching his parents, asking questions, and imitating what he saw and heard.[18] The festivals were especially favorable to this type of learning, and parents were encouraged to answer their children's inquiries and to explain the meaning of the various symbols.[19] As soon as a child began talking he was taught verses from the Pentateuch, such as the Shema, gradually being initiated in stages into the practice of religious rituals obligatory to adults, long before reaching that mature stage. He learned to shake the lulav and to wear fringes on his clothing, as well as the importance of synagogue attendance and participation in the national/religious festivals.[20] Of course the child learned to perform deeds of lovingkindness, have respect for his elders, and show hospitality to strangers and the poor.

Once a youth reached adulthood, his education was

far from finished. Opportunities for study and learning were numerous, especially in informal contexts outside the school. The Pentateuch was read on the market days, Monday and Thursday, as well as on the Sabbath and Festivals, when a portion from the Prophets was read as well. The scholars of the day instituted study sessions on Sabbath afternoon, when lectures and sermons designed especially for the masses were delivered, and they were careful to suit the style and content of these sessions to the level of their audiences, spicing their talks with parables and folk-tales for popular appeal.[21] Besides facilitating study sessions and leading them, the rabbis seemed to have urged that men reserve part of every day for study, and learn in groups of two's and three's.[22] Although girls learned sections of Scripture and customs at home, they were not expected to pursue serious study, much less become scholarly. Parents were concerned with instilling in their daughters a sense of morality and good manners. By the time her male contemporaries were in the academies, a girl was usually married. Therefore it was essential that she learn basic household management. Her affinity to love of Torah usually proved itself in her ability to start her own children in their proper religious training.[23]

It must be remembered that, although opportunities for learning were present when the child was a pre-schooler as well as when he reached adulthood, perhaps with a secondary education, these opportunities were informal and

in a loose framework; they were only to supplement the formal schooling of an individual, which began at age five or six (maybe seven) and could continue indefinitely depending on that individual's talents and devotion to his studies. Indeed, the creation and development of formal classes and schools on the three levels of college, secondary, and elementary, during the post-exilic and second commonwealth periods, were a marked difference from the type of education available in pre-exilic times, both in quality and quantity of the knowledge disseminated. As has been mentioned, the development of a class of "lay scholars" was instrumental in setting up such institutions and making Torah available to the rank-and-file. In studying this period, a noted scholar has remarked:

> In these centuries . . . Judaism brought to complete development its characteristic institutions, the school and the synagogue, in which it possessed not only a unique instrument of education and edification of all the classes of the people in religion and morality, but the center of its religious life and to no small extent also of its intellectual and social life.[24]

At this point we shall examine at least one theory of how these three levels of the educational system in Tannaitic times evolved from real needs, a theory which seems logical, and yet we will see it is totally not accepted by other scholars dealing with this period.

Morris Drazin, in his book Jewish Education in Tannaitic Times, states that the educational history of this period can be divided into three parts: 1) the period

of the Soferim, or Scribes (515-200 BCE), 2) the period of the Zugot, or "Pairs," which were the heads of the Sanhedrin (200 BCE-10CE), and 3) the period of the Tannaim (10CE-200CE).[25] On the basis of these divisions, he believes that the development of the Jewish school system occurred in three stages: 1) the acadamies 2) the secondary schools 3) the elementary schools.[26]

In forming this hypothesis Drazin takes as his source the passage in Baba Batra 21a which praises Joshua b. Gamala for his founding of elementary schools for children. Regarding the reliability of this passage[27] and whether or not his actions were successful is not totally clear and we shall see later on what scholars believe about them. We must note however that Drazin sees in this passage evidence for the evolution of the Jewish school system. He says:

> In exploring the ancient Jewish literature with reference to the history of the Second Commonwealth prior to Joshua b. Gamala, we find mention of two significant educational decrees which are attributed respectively to the men of the Great Assembly and to Simon b. Shetah. In the absence of any opposing evidence it is reasonable to assume, therefore, that the first educational measure . . . refers to the contribution of the Great Assembly in the period of the Soferim while the second ordinance is that of Simon b. Shetah, who flourished in the second half of the second century of the period of the Zugot.[28]

It should be noted that the term soferim refers not only to the men who copied Scripture, but also who taught and interpreted it.[29] Although they are believed to have been the learned class in the period after the return from

Babylonia to 200 CE, they were not bound to the priestly or Levitical classes. For Drazin this first ordinance, assumed to have been decreed by the Men of the Great Assembly, was instrumental in founding the schools for higher learning in Jerusalem, the acadamies.[30] From the passage in Baba Batra we also learn that "Jerusalem" indicates that the schools were centers for higher learning, because the officiating priests and ruling elders were located there. Thus, the acadamies would have grown out of their charisma and knowledge. Drazin observes that the proof-text from Isaiah indicates that it was understood that what was taught in Jerusalem was substantially much more than elementary subjects.[31] However, it has also been suggested that as part of their duties, these early scribal teachers would also travel to outlying districts so that all the people could at least hear the Law taught.[32] From the first mishnah in Avot Drazin sees evidence that the acadamies were at least as old as the time of the Men of the Great Assembly. Of the three adages "be deliberate in judgment," "raise up many disciples," and "make a fence around the Torah," he believes the first and third were almost definitely addressed to leaders in the courts, while the second was also addressed to them, but reminded them that if Torah was to be taught, it was they, the leaders, who would have to teach it and perpetuate it. Therefore, each elder was urged to create around him a circle of disciples.

We must remember that, at this time, the rudiments of learning were taught almost exclusively at home. If a father had no time for education because of the necessity for making a living, he and his son who was also deprived, suffered. Before the acadamies were created a sage might select an unusually gifted pupil and teach him; thus, the "chain of tradition" was a selective process and only the ones with the most ability were the ones who were exposed to study. With the formation of the acadamies, however, learning was a bit more democratized and certainly more available to the masses than had been the case,[33] yet primary and secondary education was still not provided for, within a widespread, organized framework.

Exactly when these schools were established within this 300 year is a matter of conjecture. It is believed that at first, there were several academies in Jerusalem, but at the close of the period of the Soferim these merged into one big academy. The academy also engaged in legislation and had a nasi and an av bet din. Drazin believes this single academy lasted until the split between the schools of Hillel and Shammai.[34] It is also believed that despite the lack of formal training, hundreds of students did attend these lectures at the colleges, especially the priests and Levites who relied on them for their cultic responsibilities. Yet while hundreds might have attended the fact that the colleges were located only in Jerusalem, had tuition fees that were too steep for some families, and

also had high entrance requirements, disenfranchised a goodly number who might have taken advantage of such learning opportunities. Graduation from the academies entitled one to sit on a court and adjudicate legal matters; in the tannaitic period it meant that one was also ordained and held the title Rabbi (my master).

The entrance requirements were especially difficult for some students because many of them received inadequate preparation during what should have been their elementary and secondary years of education. We have already mentioned the reasons for this. In addition, orphans received no training at all, and poor students had the added burden of meeting living expenses in Jerusalem, and paying tuition, a subject we will examine later on. Thus, it seems that, according to Baba Batra 21a, the father who educated his son was one who could not only teach him the rudiments to prepare him for the academies, but could also afford his tuition and living expenses away from home.

With the pietists' reaction to Hellenism, which crystallized around the Hasmonean revolt, the interest in Jewish education, which had declined considerably during the Jewish courtship with Hellenism, was revitalized. At least two scholars view our passage from Baba Batra (and also Yer. Ketubot 8, end) as authoritative in naming Simon b. Shetah as responsible for setting up the "prep" schools in Palestine, with the purpose of educating sixteen-and seventeen-year-olds in Judaism--Pharisaic Judaism in

particular.[35] These "prep" schools might have been viewed as an antidote to the Greek gymnasium which they often juxtaposed. By 75 BCE there was a two-level system: the Jerusalem academy and the preparatory schools in different areas of the country. While it is questionable as to whether or not these were compulsory, certainly there was peer pressure on parents to send their children to school, lest they become one of the 'amei ha-arets. Graduation from these preparatory schools entitled one to try for the academy in Jerusalem.

As to the creation of the elementary schools and their dating there are several theories, all of which deserve mention. Drazin's belief is that the development of the "prep" school, with its formal, disciplined method of instruction, was a radical change from the informal, parental preparation that had preceded it. Many fathers became more and more negligent of their sons' elementary education, so that it was increasingly difficult for their children to even enter the preparatory school and standards lowered.[36] Only the rich could afford tutors. Such was the situation which Joshua b. Gamala sought to change with his innovation of free elementary education (64 CE) wherever there was a sizable Jewish community.

To strengthen his program, according to Drazin, he carried on a campaign to convince parents of their obligation of educating their children with qualified teachers. Those who were not convinced and did not send

their children were regarded as ignoramuses--'amei ha-arets. Paraphrasing the Talmud, another scholar praises Joshua b. Gamala:

> . . . had he not taken steps to found schools in every town were it ever so small; had he not by these efforts sowed the seed of a national intellectual development . . . the spiritual stronghold of Israel would have been sapped, knowledge would have slipped away, and the people would have been slain by the first blows with which their enemies struck them in time of exile.[37]

Nathan Morris, on the other hand, disagrees strongly with Drazin, stating that the account concerning Joshua b. Gamala is probably not historical for three reasons: 1) the troubled times in which he lived would not have nourished such a widespread reform 2) the account is recorded 200 years after it supposedly took place 3) there are no outside non-rabbinic sources (i.e. Philo or Josephus) to verify the account with. Morris suggests that such a widespread elementary school system was not really effective until the Amoraic period (4th century).[38] Before this period, according to Morris, elementary education was, for the most part, a private arrangement between father and tutor, if the family could afford it.

There is still a third theory as to how elementary schools developed, that of E. Ebner, who suggests that elementary schools were actually founded by Simon b. Shetah. He uses as his source Jer. Ketubot 8, 12-32a. Due to slow urban growth, the agrarian economy and the numerous political and military upheavals, such schools did not

proliferate quickly. He also mentions that there is a problem with the historicity of the Baba Batra passage and questions whether or not Simon b. Shetah was intended here, instead of Joshua b. Gamala. By 132 CE, however, there was a general adaptation of the takkanah of Joshua b. Gamala, who tried to expand the school system, and that by the end of the tannaitic period organized elementary education was already an established institution.[39]

With the rise of the formal elementary school, there was a break with parental instruction, and although the father was still responsible for providing his son with an education, he no longer had to do the actual teaching. Indeed, one of the benefits of the elementary school was that orphans could learn without depending on parental incentive.

In the area of curriculum, the attitude was to begin with building a solid foundation in Scripture and slowly but surely progressing into other areas. The mental capacities of the different age groups were taken into account. From Avot 5:21 it is believed that children did begin with Scripture study at age five or six, progressing into Mishnah, or oral traditions at ten years, and then moving into the area of advanced dialectics and reasoning when a teen-ager. It is possible that the Avot passage was more of a recommendation than an ordinance.[40] Since the study of Scripture lasted four or five years, many families could not afford more time than this for

education, and some boys had to quit in order to go to work and therefore, never got passed the rudiments. Gifted students, however, were urged to continue and even received financial help if they required it.[41]

Naturally the objective of every pupil studying Scripture and the Law in particular, was to prepare for assuming responsibility that adulthood would place upon him. However, even before learning to read, the youngsters learned the alphabet and learned it in a way conducive with the objectives of Jewish education. In teaching the letters, creative teachers often made up little parables about the letters in which were embedded moral lessons.[42] After learning the alphabet (which did not include learning phonics because the vowel signs were non-existent then), the children were introduced to verses from Scripture. Although it is held by some scholars that children did, indeed, begin their formal training by rehearsing the priestly code in Leviticus, as the sources claim, it is also believed that before the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, children began their studies with the non-legal portions of Genesis. Those who hold this opinion reason that the Temple's destruction and the cessation of the cult led community leaders to make a change in the children's studies in order to inculcate a hope of rebuilding the Temple, and thereby keep the hope of national independence alive.[43]

Scripture was taught in its original Hebrew, but

was translated into the vernacular (Aramaic in Palestine; Greek in Egypt) with paraphrased explanations to clarify the passages. Children were expected to virtually memorize the verses and it was a common practice to stop children and ask them to recite the verses they had learned that day.[44] When studying the Pentateuch, scrolls of the entire Five Books were usually not used by the children. Scrolls were not only sacred, they were also scarce. But moreover they would be cumbersome for children, and a child might inadvertently defile such a scroll while trying to manage it.[45] This difficulty seems to have been solved when after prohibiting the use of scrolls with only parts of the Pentateuch written in them, the Sages allowed the writing of whole scrolls for each individual book. These were more procurable and not as bulky, but were only allowed for classroom use, not for synagogue use.[46] The children would study a particular section during the week and on the Sabbath, would review the portion to be read in the synagogue, sometimes with the assistance of an instructor.[47] Thus, every child would be able to read from the Pentateuch in the synagogue.

It must be remembered that the Pentateuch was not studied as literature but as law. This was supplemented with the learning of the Prophets and the Hagiographa, and perhaps even works such as Ben Sira, all emphasizing the moral and ethical responsibilities of life. History was taught by rehearsing sections of Scripture. There is

a dispute as to how reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught: were they taught as subjects per se, or were they learned only as a result of an almost exclusive emphasis on Scripture.[48] As a matter of course, children were instructed in the liturgy of their people and were expected to have a proficiency in the prayers. As one scholar suggests: "the teacher would recite a sentence and then make the whole class repeat it. As soon as the pupils were able to read or recite the sentence, the teacher called on individuals to lead in a similar fashion."[49] Eventually pupils were able to lead services. This same scholar suggests that both physical activity and literary creativity, although not entirely suppressed, were not encouraged to a great degree. The distaste for physical education probably stemmed from enmity toward the Greek gymnasia and the activities that took place there. The reluctance to encourage literary creativity might have been from an attitude that 1) there were already too many apocryphal, "heretical" works in circulation and 2) no literary creation could ever deserve the attention that the Pentateuch merited. Certainly some lads learned the skill of writing in order to be scribes and write mezuzot, tefillin, and documents.[50]

Children usually attended class all day, usually returning home in the evening.[51] Besides the Sabbath and the latter part of Friday afternoon needed to assist in preparing for the Sabbath at home, children were also free

from classes on the Festivals and were also dismissed early on the eve of the Festivals in order to prepare for them.[52]

A class on the secondary level was probably quite similar to that on the elementary level, with the exception of the curriculum and maturity of the students. Once Scripture was mastered after five or six years, the child progressed into the more advanced study of oral literature. Since the school consisted of two rooms, there were two classes--one for the elementary levels and one for the advanced levels.[53] Because not all boys were fortunate enough to progress to these advanced secondary levels, it seems to have been the mark of good upbringing when a youth was sent to these advanced classes, for it meant that his father had the right priorities and cared for the education of his son. Although it was assumed or at least hoped that every male could read Scripture, knowledge in oral literature separated the learned from the ignoramuses.[54]

What "mishnah" (Avot 5:21) consisted of in the tannaitic period we can only conjecture, because of the intense dynamics and fluidity of the oral literature during this time.[55] It has been suggested, however, that when segments of the Oral Law were taught on the secondary level, these segments were embellishments of texts taken directly from the Pentateuch. A certain passage would be read and the instructor would then orally summarize

details of the laws connected with that particular passage. The students would then repeat these several times until they had memorized them. We shall discuss the use of memory as a pedagogic device later on. Because of the technical nature of the oral traditions, agronomy, botony, zoology, astronomy, and mathematics also had to be learned.[56] The study of Greek literature was generally banned after 70 CE, although community leaders found it necessary to familiarize themselves with it for diplomatic reasons.[57] Secular subjects were not studied for their own sake, but rather:

> . . . whatever the appreciation and interest secular knowledge elicited, was bound up with practical value, either in pursuance of a trade and profession, or in its helpfulness to better understand and apply the laws of the Torah. The claim of knowledge for its own sake, Jewish education accepted only for the study of Torah.[58]

Before discussing the curriculum on the college, or academy level, several facts concerning the creation and role of the academy should be reviewed. The original academies in Jerusalem were, as we have said, established with the purpose that each scholar would draw a select group of disciples to himself and thereby create a college of his own. We stated that these small academies consolidated into one college which flourished until the schism between the Hillelites and the Shammaiites. After 70 CE this operative framework changed when Yohanan b. Zakkai established an academy at Yavneh, virtually re-uniting the two factions.[59] Although his disciples

scattered throughout the country, establishing their own academies when he died, the academy at Yavneh and later at Usha and Sepphoris were considered the main centers, for these served as the High Court where new legislation was discussed and created. There the nasi, the head of the court, was the chief lecturer, supervisor and administrator.[60] Because of Roman persecution, the proliferation of these smaller academies throughout the land (as well as through Babylonia and Rome) helped insure the continuance of Torah study during the difficult period. They were not, however, on the same level of sanctity and prestige as the Jerusalem academy had been.

Different colleges had different curricula and each scholar had his own particular teaching style. Thus, it was not uncommon for an advanced student to visit more than one school. Indeed, it was urged that to learn oral traditions, one master would suffice; for learning dialectics and logic, many masters were sought out, so that learning was virtually a "life-long" discussion.[61] M. Aberbach[62] has written that there was a difference between the school teaching dialectics called a bet alifna, and the bet talmud. The latter was the secondary school which prepared students for the more rigorous studies of the former, although both based their curricula on the oral literature and not Scripture.[63] The usual method of instruction was a thorough examination of the Scriptural text and a thorough reviewing of the oral laws pertaining to it. To develop

new laws and new homiletical understandings, the student would participate with the master in analyzing and expounding the material through hermeneutic rules.[64] Such exercises, especially when creating new legislation, often led to fine casuistry; attempts were made to reconcile apparent contradictions. Students were also introduced to philosophical topics as well as esoteric knowledge and mysticism.[65]

This type of discursive inquiry which characterized the rabbinic academies was held in the highest esteem. In contrasting classical rabbinic scholarship with that of modern times, one modern scholar has remarked:

> . . . what I find strange and awesome is that the rabbis, unlike us, were able to conceive of practical and critical thinking as holy. They were able to claim sainthood in behalf of learned men, to see as religiously significant, indeed as sanctified, what the modern intellectual perceives as the very instrument of secularity: the capacity to think critically and to reason. Here is the mystery of Talmudic Judaism: the alien and remote conviction that the intellect is an instrument not of unbelief and desacralization but of sanctification.[66]

The maxim "He who does not increase his knowledge diminishes it; he who does not study deserves to die"[67] was a crucial concept for the rabbis; study was the key to eternal life and could unlock the secrets of the cosmos and give a deeper understanding of reality.

To enter the academies a student had to pass oral entrance examinations. Once admitted, he was prohibited from participating in discussions and usually sat in the back, listening intently. Upon graduation, he was

ordained by his master as "a rabbi in Israel."[68] This did not mean that his studies were completed but only that he had reached a certain level of competency in adjudicating civil and ritual matters. Students were usually ordained about the age of 22, at which point they qualified for election to the Bet Din ha-Gadol, the High Court.[69] Daily sessions were held in the morning and in the evening, in order to let working students attend. On the festivals, lectures were probably abbreviated, and as with the lower levels, classes were dismissed early before a festival to give ample time for preparation.[70]

Parallel to the development of this tri-level system of education there developed a mechanism of tuition and remuneration for teachers. However, the exact data of this aspect of the system is sparse. It is believed that a daily fee was charged for admission to the academies and that this fee became a bone of contention between Hillel and Shammai,[71] the former favoring free education, the latter continuing to charge the fee. Such fees were usually used for building upkeep and other administrative purposes. The exacting of admission fees, however, also meant that there could only be a certain, select group who would be financially able (because of the families these students came from) to pursue study with any regularity. In such a situation, learning would remain in the hands of a small, scholarly elite, which is what the Shammaiites preferred,[72] while the Hillelites stopped charging the fee. Although

tuition was charged, theoretically instructors in the oral traditions were not supposed to accept payment,[73] on the premise that Torah had been given by God without charge. Therefore it was not proper for teachers to charge.[74] Ideally the teachers' remuneration was supposed to be the satisfaction of facilitating a love for learning among their students. From a practical aspect, however, it was probably thought, at first, that since instruction in the oral teachings was not as time-consuming as it later came to be, it was not proper to charge money. As the literature grew and more time had to be spent in teaching and learning it, the instructors of the oral traditions found themselves with full-time occupations! Thus, it became necessary to charge fees, but this was done under the legal fiction that payment was given for work the instructors had foregone.[75]

As the elementary schools became a fixed institution, such was not the situation as far as the elementary teachers were concerned. Because theirs was a full-time occupation they were able to receive modest payment. An agreement was usually worked out between the individual instructor and the pupil's father.[76] Eventually the financial responsibilities were shouldered by the individual communities, through taxation and contributions which supplemented tuitions.[77] In addition elementary teachers were provided with living quarters, which sometimes served as the classroom.[78] A community elementary school was

considered so vital that scholars were urged to live only in communities in which one could be found.[79]

The elementary and secondary schools were under the supervision of the local courts, which were responsible for hiring and dismissing teachers, setting up new classes and collecting school taxes.[80] Although classes were sometimes held in private quarters, most scholars believe that the synagogues were utilized for classes, and that the building itself was labeled according to the function it served at any one time. Thus, for worship services and convocations it was referred to as the bet knesset house of assembly; for purely educational purposes it might be the bet midrash (house of study), bet sefer (elementary school), or bet talmud (secondary school).[81] According to these scholars the synagogue was the logical place for the schools because of its centralization, its size (over private dwellings), and its alleviation of the need to build a separate school building, especially in hard economic times.[82] The synagogues had no formal classrooms but classes made use of their auditoriums and galleries. The elementary classes met in one, while the upper classes met in the other.[83] Other scholars, however, hold that in pre-Amoraic times at least, the schools were separate from the synagogues and that only later were classes actually held in the same building. They believe that this was a function of 1) more community control of the schools and 2) the ever-growing influence of the

synagogue after the wars with Rome.[84]

Classroom size was a considerable factor in school administration. When a community had twenty-five children of school age, an elementary teacher was engaged. When the class reached fifty pupils, a second class of twenty-five was formed. If there were forty pupils usually one of the older students served as an aide to the instructor, helping the younger pupils with their lessons.[85] Classes in oral literature were usually larger.[86] It has been suggested that this consideration of class size was due to concern for student health. One scholar holds:

> The Rabbis of the Talmud have . . . laid down strict regulations respecting the sanitary arrangement of the schools viz. that there should not be an overcrowded classroom, lest the atmosphere become polluted, and consequently the health of the children be impaired, and the proper work of the teacher be thereby impaired.[87]

Although the classes and courts that made up these academies probably met in fixed locations (i.e. the Chamber of Hewn Stone, on the Temple mount)[88] and indoors, it was a common practice among the Tannim to hold class outside when weather permitted. The custom might have been an imitation of Greek practice, but in any case, was practical for the climate when it was too hot to be indoors. On such days masters and disciples would sit under large shade trees while learning, or in the shade of large buildings.[89] It is not unlikely that during times of persecution learning out-of-doors provided more security than learning indoors. This was due to the fact that soldiers could be seen and

heard more easily when out-of-doors, giving the class a better opportunity to disperse, or at least to cease learning Torah and turn to a topic of secular concern.[90] Judah ha-Nasi preferred not to follow this custom of learning outside[91] except when classes were overcrowded.[92]

Was there furniture used in the classroom? This, too, is disputed by scholars. It is known that in the schools of Athens the master sat on a high chair while the pupils either stood or sat on the ground. When it was a particular student's turn to recite he was required to stand and do so in his place. This practice found a parallel in the Jewish elementary school.[93] It is quite unlikely, however, that Jewish elementary schools had much furniture whatsoever save for a bench for the teacher.[94] While learning, a child usually sat cross-legged with a scroll held in his lap between his knees, the scrolls being too awkward to handle while standing.[95] Each student sat in a semi-circle with the teacher in the middle so that every student could see every other student and they could all see the instructor and vice-versa. This was taken from the seating arrangement of the Sanhedrin and that of Yavneh later on. That each student had to look up to the instructor sitting on a bench at the head of the class reinforced the teacher's authority and the students' respect for their teacher.[96]

In Megillah 21a we find the statement "From the days of Moses until those of Rabban Gamliel, Torah was

learnt only standing. When Rabban Gamliel died feebleness descended on the world, and they learnt Torah sitting; and so we have learnt that 'From the time that Rabban Gamliel died (full) honour ceased to be paid to the Torah.'"[97] That is, before Rabban Gamliel's death both masters and disciples stood while learning Torah. At this point we are obliged to mention an intriguing, yet somehow fallible hypothesis set forth by Aberbach in his article "The Change From A Standing to A Sitting Position by Students After the Death of Rabban Gamliel."[98] Aberbach theorizes that the practice of standing while learning ended about the time of Gamliel I, not Gamliel II. He gives several reasons for this conjecture. Although Megillah 21a leaves out the appositive "the Elder" for Rabban Gamliel, it is used in Mishnah Sotah 9:15,[99] which is a parallel to this passage, as well as in the Babylonian and Palestinian versions of Mishnah Sotah 9:15. The Mishnah passage mentions deceased sages in reverse chronological order. Since Gamliel is placed between Yohanan b. Zakkai and R. Ishmael b. Phabi (High Priest during the reign of Agrippa II), Gamliel I, who lived before the destruction of the Temple, must be the one referred to in Megillah 21a. From Berakhot 28a we know that more benches were added when Gamliel II was deposed as nasi. Therefore some benches must have already been in use and thus, the practice of standing while learning must antedate the time of Gamliel II. Therefore if the change was made after the

death of Rabban Gamliel, it was made after the death of Rabban Gamliel I.[100]

Aberbach points out that, at least in the academies, the "peripatetic" method was used, where the teacher would walk in an area and his students would accompany him, all the while engaging in learning and discussion,[101] and that, after several hours, the walking and standing would become strenuous. He points out (correctly, I believe) that if there were many students accompanying a master, the teaching would not have been effective because not everyone would have been able to see or hear the master, in addition to which the older scholars probably could not have endured hours of standing and walking, while concentrating on the complicated intricacies of the Law. And what "weakness" could cause a change from standing to sitting?[102]

Aberbach understands the study of the Law to have been a "part-time" endeavor in the early classical period. That is, learning usually occurred in the spare time of students and scholars. Therefore, these "study-walks" were brief legal discussions. However, as the oral literature amassed more and more material, these sessions transformed themselves from a mean of extrapolating the Pentateuch, to an end of learning unto itself, requiring much more time and concentration, and consequently, attracting an increasing number of "full-time" students. When the time periods were manageable these study sessions however, began with consulting the Scrolls of the Law,

which would imply that, at least at the beginning of these sessions, sitting was required, if there were no reading desks to place the scrolls on, which Aberbach assumes to be the case. Thus, the scrolls were read in a sitting position. The extrapolation began when the master and the disciples would then rise and walk while deep in discussion.[103]

I find, however, two possible difficulties with this conjecture. Firstly, if "studying Torah" meant reading from the Written Law and then discussing it and applying it in terms of the Oral Law, yet the respect and esteem held for the Written Law was still greater than that held for the Oral Law, why would they sit for the Written, yet rise for the Oral? Secondly, it would seem that a significant amount of time would be spent in rising from a sitting position to a standing position, even with a few students comprising a class; if time for study in this early stage was so very precious, every second counted and could not be spent in the mundane changing of positions. Therefore it would seem more feasible that these study-sessions began in the vicinity of what now might be termed a "portable Ark" with Torah scrolls, and where a reading desk was available, i.e. in or near a synagogue. The scroll would then be placed on the desk, unrolled, read from, rolled up, put back in the Ark, all while standing. The session would have then continued with the walking and sharing of ideas among the master and the disciples.

Although this is admittedly a speculation, it is a possibility, and one I believe cannot be discounted. On the other hand, the idea of the seated position gradually becoming the norm as the amount of oral material and time invested increased, does have its appealing features. We can deduce from this that, by the time of Rabban Gamliel I's death a substantial body of oral literature was already being learned and more was being created. The later weakness was according to Buchler, due to the destruction of the Temple.[104]

In another place[105] Aberbach states that after the Second Commonwealth disintegrated, standing was the norm only when the teacher was giving individual instruction in an informal setting, or a master and disciple were engaged in casual discussion,[106] or when an individual student was giving a discourse before his master and colleagues.[107]

The seating arrangement in the academies after 70 CE seems to have been a replica of that of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin which, by that time, no longer existed. Although Aberbach holds that it was not always economically feasible that benches should be used[108] and that even the high court at Yavneh sat on the ground, others hold (correctly I believe) that benches were used in the academy. They were arranged in a semi-circle with the lecturer in the center, so that he could see the audience, and his audience could see him.[109] The academy court was made up of twenty-

three members who made up the first rows and these were the brightest and most knowledgeable students. The less advanced students sat toward the back, while freshmen sat on the ground.[110] It would seem probable that occasional on-lookers stopped to listen to lectures, especially when held out-of-doors, and it is possible that these "auditors" were required to stand in the back "behind the fence."[111] "Knowing one's place" in the academy[112] was an important virtue for the promising student to possess, yet although one merited promotion from ground to back bench, and from back bench to one nearer the front, only after distinguished performance in class and/or years of study, did one change his seat. This also occurred if a student ahead was promoted, or if a scholar died or emigrated. In the latter case a senior student from the first of the three rows of senior disciples was promoted to the rank of judge and everyone behind him moved up.[113] It is interesting to note that, in the absence of a developed grading system, this arrangement of promoting or demoting students from front to back benches, or from back benches to sitting on the ground, seems to have been an adequate method of measuring students' progress. While the criteria were somewhat subjective at times,[114] usually the diligent ones advanced while the less serious students did not. Those sitting on the ground often brought mats to spread out or would spread out their cloaks. This was done especially when the ground was cold.[115] It was considered crude

conduct for late-comers to "step over the heads of the holy people" in order to get to their own places closer to the front.[116] If we remember that those sitting near the back were less diligent students while those who sat toward the front were the more diligent, we can detect how serious such an offense might have been. In rebuking offending students, teachers were mindful of the fact that 1) those students who were not as bright, were still to be treated with respect and that 2) diligent students should not be late to class.

We have attempted to give an overview of the educational institutions that were operative in tannaitic times, as well as their history, functions, and salient aspects. Next we turn to examining the relationship between master and disciple as it manifested itself within the classroom context. Surely such a relationship was present in the lower grades. Yet because of the immaturity of the pupils and the differences between the adult mind and the child's mind, the relationship between teacher and pupil in the lower grades was probably one of didacticism, laced with professionalism. That is, there probably never developed a deeper relationship than that of the instructor teaching and the young pupil regurgitating. In the academy where both the levels of maturity and dedication were substantially higher, the relationship was deeper and was based on a dialogue between master and disciple, a dialogue which affected the lives of both profoundly.

NOTES

CHAPTER III

1. H. London and A. Spinner, Education in the 21st Century, (Danville: Interstate, 1969), p. 21.

2. Morris Drazin, A History of Jewish Education from 515 BCE to 200 CE, (Baltimore, 1940), p. 12.

3. E. Ebner, Elementary Education in Ancient Israel During the Tannaitic Period,(New York, 1956), p. 19.

4. Avot, 2:5 (2:6).

5. Avot, 2:8; Cf. Ta'anit 7a.

6. Peah 1:1: ". . . but the study of Torah is equal to them all."

7. Drazin, Education, p. 11, quoting Josephus, Against Apion, I, 12; II, 19.

8. See N. Morris, The Jewish School (London, 1937), p. 40, where he attacks Dr. William Boyd, who stated in his History of Western Education (London, 1932) that "the Jews adopted the Hellenistic institution of the school (pp. 64-65). Cf. Morris, pp. 38-46.

9. Kiddushin 29a.

10. Avot 2:2; 3:21.

11. Morris, School, p. 184.

12. Avot De-Rabbi Nathan. Edited by S. Schechter, (Vienna, 1887). Translated by Judah Goldin, The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955; Schocken, 1974), thereafter to be referred to as ARN ch. 40, (ed. Goldin), (p. 166).

13. Avot 2:5.

14. Ebner, Elementary, pp. 19ff.

15. Cf. Deut. 6:9; Prov. 22:6; Ps. 144:12.

16. N.H. Imber, Education in the Talmud in Report of U.S. Commission of Education for 1894-5 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896), p. 1798.

17. M. Rosenberg, Historical Development of Hebrew Education (Long Beach, 1927), p. 66.

18. A. Simon, Jewish Education in the Past (Washington, D.C., 1909), p. 14.

19. See Exodus 12:26, 13:8; and Deuteronomy 2:20.

20. Drazin, Education, p. 87. Also see M. Ḥagigah 1:1; M. Pesaḥim 10:4; M. Sukkah 2:15.

21. Ebner, Elementary, p. 17. Cf. Shabbat 115a; Betsah 15b; Gittin 38b. On how parables (aggadah) functioned to illustrate the value of Torah, see Max Kadushin, The Rabbinic Mind (New York: Bloch Publishing C., 1952; 3rd ed., 1962), pp. 86-87.

22. Drazin, Education, p. 76. Cf. Avot 3:2-6.

23. Ibid., p. 129. Also see B. Spiers, The School System of the Talmud (London: Eliot Strack, 1898), p. 8.

24. Moore, Judaism, 1:3.

25. Drazin, Education, p. 35.

26. Ibid., p. 37. Nathan Morris believes each stage in the system's development was a reaction to a political development in the national life of the Jews. Cf. School, p. 13.

27. This particular passage is Amoraic, which means that Joshua b. Gamala lived about four centuries before. The problem of a reliable oral tradition here is obvious.

28. Drazin, Education, p. 38.

29. Ibid., p. 35. Drazin also mentions that the term sofer was understood by the Rabbis to be "one who enumerated." Thus the soferim counted words and letters of Scripture, classified contents and enumerated laws.

30. Ibid., p. 38. Even though the word tinok is used, Drazin points out that the term can mean a lad or a youth, as well as an infant. Cf. Git. 58a and Yoma 33a. Thus melamdei tinokot can mean "teachers of youths."

31. Ibid., p. 39.

32. Morris, School, p. 11. Cf. Neh. 8:8 and II Chron. 17:7.

33. Drazin, Education, p. 40. Here he notes that in Avot 1:1 the term masar is used when referring to the generations between Moses and the Great Assembly. From the Men of the

Great Assembly to the last of the zugot the term qibbel is used. This indicates for Drazin that more people had exposure to Torah during this later period.

34. Ibid., p. 42.

35. Ibid., p. 44. Cf. Morris, School, pp. 19ff.

36. Ibid., p. 45.

37. Spiers, School System, p. 9.

38. Morris, School, pp. 12-17.

39. For a detailed discussion, see Ebner, Elementary, pp. 39-49, particularly pp. 43-35.

40. Ibid., p. 69.

41. Ibid., p. 71.

42. See N.H. Imber, The Letters of Rabbi Akiba (Washington: U.S. Bureau of Education, 1897).

43. Drazin, Education, pp. 81ff; cf. Morris, School, pp. 86ff.

44. Morris, School, p. 93. Also see Max Arzt, "The Teacher in Talmud and Midrash," Mordecai Kaplan Jubilee Volume (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1953), pp. 35-47. Cf. Hag. 15a; Git. 58a.

45. Yadaim 3: 2-5; Soferim 3:11.

46. Drazin, Education, p. 45; Morris, School, p. 58; and Ebner, Elementary, p. 67, quoting Soferim 5:9 and Git. 60a. Cf. Yoma 37a; Yer. Megillah 4:1-74a; Menahot 30a.

47. Morris, School, p. 87. Cf. Nedarim 37a.

48. Drazin, Education, p. 86. Cf. Morris, School, pp. 78ff and Arzt "Teacher," p. 44.

49. Ebner, Elementary, p. 41.

50. Ibid., pp. 26, 82. Ebner points out that swimming was the one physical activity sanctioned and taught. Cf. Tos. Kid. 1:8.

51. Ta'an. 23b.

52. Ebner, Elementary, p. 71; Drazin, Education. p. 62. Cf. Morris, School, p. 63, quoting the Jewish Encyclopedia ("Pedagogics"), which explains that children had many other holidays free. Morris, however believes this practice was of much later origin.

53. Drazin, Education, p. 49.

54. Morris, School, p. 95.

55. Drazin, Education, p. 87.

56. Ebner, Elementary, p. 84; Drazin, Education, p. 14.

57. Ebner, Ibid. Cf. Morris, School, pp. 96f and Rosenberg, Development, p. 117.

58. Ibid., p. 87.

59. Cf. Git. 56a-b.

60. Drazin, Education, p. 66.

61. A. Landsberg, "The Master/Disciple Relationship as Portrayed in the Talmudic Sources," Rabbinic thesis, New York, HUC-JIR, 1962, p. 5. Cf. Avodah Zarah 19a.

62. M. Aberbach, "Educational Institutions and Problems During the Talmudic Age," Hebrew Union College Annual 37 (1966), pp. 106-121.

63. Ibid., p. 107.

64. Hillel began with seven, which were developed by R. Ishmael into thirteen and by R. Eliezer into thirty-two. R. Akiba is also supposed to have learned hermeneutics from Naḥum of Gimzo. Cf. M. Mielziner, Introduction to the Talmud with a new bibliography, 1925-1967, by Alexander Guttmann (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 130-176.

65. Drazin, Education, p. 102. Cf. M. Ḥag. 2:1; Ḥag. 14b.

66. J. Neusner, Invitation to the Talmud: A Teaching Book (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 62.

67. Avot 1:13.

68. Near the end of the Tannaitic period, Judah Ha-Nasi reserved this right for the office of the Patriarchate. See Guttmann, Making, p. 246. Cf. M. San. 1:2; San. 19a.

69. It was unusual that Eleazar b. Azariah was elected nasi at the age of eighteen. That he was already a member of the Court indicates how brilliant he was. See Berakhot 28a; Kid. 30a.

70. Drazin, Education, p. 63. Cf. Suk. 53a; Bets. 21a; Yoma 35b; Pes. 72b; Pes. 109a.

71. Ibid., p. 50 and notes.

72. Cf. Ber. 28a and ARN ch. 3 (ed. Golding, p. 26). Rabban Gamliel II, although theoretically a Hillelite, was very selective of who attended his lectures. When he was deposed as nasi, the porter he had stationed at the door to screen those entering the college was removed and more students were able to enter, Cf. H. Graetz, A History of the Jews 6 vol. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1893; reprinted ed., 1967), 2:378.

73. Cf. Ned. 36b-37a.

74. See Avot 4:5 and Yer. Ned. 4:3; Berkhorot 29a.

75. Arzt, "Teacher," p. 39.

76. Ibid. Cf. Morris, School, p. 44; Bets. 16a.

77. It was not known whether or not teachers were paid directly by parents or from a community fund to which parents contributed. See Ebner, Elementary, p. 57 and Morris, School, p. 44. On the community's responsibility, see Yer. Hag. 1:1-76c.

78. See Arzt, "Teacher," p. 40 and his notes.

79. San. 79b.

80. Drazin, Education, p. 67.

81. See Ebner, Elementary, pp. 63ff, where he cites Yer. Meg. 3:1-73d, and Ketubot 105a. Cf. Drazin, Education, p. 60, and Arzt, "Teacher," pp. 37 and 44.

82. Ebner, Elementary, p. 64.

83. Ibid.

84. Morris, School, pp. 48-49, 51ff. Cf. M. Schwabe, "Al Batei ha-Sefer Ha-Yehudim V'haYavanim-Romaim B'tekufat Ha-mishnah," Tarbits 21 (1950) Jerusalem: Magnes Press.

85. Baba Batra 21a; Cf. Drazin, Education, p. 63.

86. Drazin, Ibid.

87. Spiers, School System, p. 48.

88. Drazin, Education, p. 57, citing Tos. San. 7:1.

89. In his article "Learning and Teaching in the Open Air in Palestine," Jewish Quarterly Review n.s. (Philadelphia: Dropsie College) 5: 485-491, A. Buchler points out a number of instances found in the sources of masters

holding classes outside. Yoḥanan b. Zakkai taught in the shade of the Temple walls and one legend relates that when Jonathan b. Uzziel studied, the birds overhead were consumed by fire (Suk. 28a). Buchler suggests that the dispute between R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus and the Sages (B.M. 59b) took place outside of the school because the trees were commanded to support R. Eliezer. See p. 489, note 21. Furthermore, the expression kerem b'Yavneh is not just a metaphor describing the students, but suggests that the school did indeed meet during the warm season in a vineyard next to a building which the academy used during the winter. Cf. Pes. 26a; Yer. A.Z. 3:43b; Tos. Ber. 4:18; Hag. 9b.

90. Ibid., p. 486.

91. Moed Katan 16a-b.

92. Shabbat 127a.

93. Morris, School, pp. 54f. However, cf. Aberbach, "Institutions and Problems," p. 111.

94. Ebner, Elementary, p. 66.

95. Morris, School, pp. 53 and 57. Cf. ARN ch. 8 (ed. Golding, p. 51). The scroll was probably not the complete Pentateuch, but one containing a complete book of the Pentateuch. Cf. Sof. 3:3. Perhaps Avot 1:4 also referred to young students.

96. Ebner, Elementary, p. 66. Also cf. Spiers, School System, p. 12. See also M. Maimonides, Yad Hahazakah: Hilkhot Talmud Torah, ch. 4.

97. Loc. cit.; Soncino ed., p. 129.

98. Jewish Quarterly Review n.s. 52 (1961-62), pp. 168-174.

99. Loc. cit.

100. Aberbach, "Open Air," p. 168 and note 10.

101. Ibid., p. 109, quoting Ebner, Elementary, p. 110. Aberbach agrees with Buchler that the "vineyard of Yavneh" was where scholars walked and learned. See note 89.

102. Ibid.

103. Ibid., p. 171.

104. Ibid., p. 174, note 30. Buchler suggests that Avot 1:4

might have been Jose b. Joezer's alternative to Antiochus' closing of the academies, at which point sessions would have probably been held in private houses, and the benches or couches would have reserved for the teachers' use. See p. 172, note 25.

105. Aberbach, "Institutions and Problems," pp. 112 ff.

106. Cf. Yer. Ḥag. 3:1 and Yer. Shab. 10:5, where formal learning in a sitting position, and casual learning in a standing position are compared.

107. Aberbach, "Institutions and Problems," p. 113. Cf. Morris, School, p. 64.

108. Ibid. pp. 112, 114.

109. Ibid., note 96. The metaphor of the "vineyard of Yavneh" has also been applied to the seating arrangement of the academy. See also M. Ket. 4:6; Men. 82b; see also Drazin, Education, p. 59.

110. Drazin, Ibid. In Eruvin 13b Judah ha-Nasi explains that he would have learned more if he would have seen R. Meir's mouth, which indicates that he was not yet sitting in the front near R. Meir.

111. Aberbach, "Institutions and Problems," p. 113, where he notes M. Kassovsky's opinion that new students were required to stand before being promoted to the rear benches. Citing Yer. Ḥag 3:1, Yer. Shab. 10:5, he suggests that the phrase shamashti b'amidah indicates that new students probably had to stand (in the back). Citing Yer. Ber. 4:1 and Yer. Ta'an. 4:1 he hypothesizes about the "auditors" behind the fence. On this point, Aberbach disagrees with him, saying that it was improbable that people stood for such long periods of time when sessions lasted all day. According to Ber. 28a, when Gamliel II was deposed and those outside were allowed in, more benches were added. This would indicate that, according to what we have put forth, the newer students would have had to sit on the floor, while those on the floor would have been promoted to the added benches.

112. See M. San. 4:4 and Avot 6:6: "Knowing one's place (in the academy), rejoicing in one's position (of knowledge)" were part and parcel of the ideal student of Torah. Cf. Aberbach, "Institutions and Problems," p. 119.

113. M. San. 4:4. The text, however, makes it clear that the moving student did not occupy the former's place, but instead occupied a place suitable for him.

114. See B.M. 84b where it is related that Rabbi and R. Eleazar b. Simon were both promoted to benches which were later taken away from them because of the "evil eye." Aberbach explains this to mean that fellow students were probably jealous. See "Institutions and Problems," pp. 119f.

115. Aberbach, ibid., p. 116, noting Numbers Rabbah 21:14 which relates that Joshua spread out mats for the class which Moses taught and this act merited the successorship to his teacher. See also San. 20a, particularly the passage on the six poor students who covered themselves with one cloak.

116. Yebamot 105b.

CHAPTER IV

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM

As we have seen, learning for the Rabbis was the primary duty of an individual's life experience. However, when one learned, it was incumbent upon him to share his knowledge with others. He was duty bound to spread his learning, and to help others discover Truth. One who withheld learning from another was likened to a lone myrtle tree in the desert, a robber, and a despiser of the Divine Word. Teaching was a form of imitatio Dei.[1] One who engaged in it would have endless rewards and would successfully reach his goals in life.[2]

We must state here that, although elementary and secondary teachers played vital roles in preparing students for the academies and thus were instrumental in their acquisition of Torah, this chapter and subsequent chapters will nevertheless concentrate on the relationship between the Sage and his more mature student. In this chapter, specifically, we will deal with the personality of and the pedagogical techniques used by the Sage, as well as the dynamics of the college classroom situation as it related to the overall relationship. The reason for this concentration is that the relationship between the Sage and his students in his academy had a far greater degree of reciprocity, then was found on the elementary and secondary levels. To be sure several pedagogical

techniques to be mentioned were used on all three levels.

What were the required criteria for a qualified teacher? One scholar in responding to such a question has stated:

> The Talmud emphatically asserts the education of children to be work of especial merit, and the importance of school and instruction cannot be too highly estimated. The whole stability of the world inasmuch as it is intended to support sensible, thinking beings, is linked with the stability of the school . . .[3]

The school and its personification, the instructor, was thus central to Jewish survival, especially in Tannaitic times, and teaching, especially in an academy was a most noble endeavor. Because the continued transmission of learning in the Academy and the knowledge of the correct form of behavior associated with learning was so very essential to the continuance of the Jewish people, we now turn our attention to the position and personality of the academician of the times, the Sage. It was the Sage who, by transmitting his knowledge and his life-style to his disciples, was the guarantor and the embodiment of Jewish learning. Because of their learning and their assumption of the leadership roles during those unstable periods, the Sages were greatly respected and admired by the people. Such respect and admiration was the basis on which their teachings were adhered to by the lay people.[4] The status they enjoyed, although replacing that of the wealthy nobility of the priesthood, was not based on wealth or lineage. Anyone, even a member of the lower classes,

who had the inclination to learn, could by diligent study and association with the Sages, become a member of this scholar class. To be sure, there were some Sages who were quite vocal in their preference for students from well-to-do homes and noble families.[5]

To be an effective teacher, one had to possess a unique personality. Besides the tremendous amount of knowledge one needed, and the incisive, analytical mind required to handle that knowledge (which often brought praise),[6] the ideal teacher had to be truthful and conscientious. He had to be an individual that commanded respect and trust.[7] The fear of one's teacher was likened to the fear of Heaven.[8] Consequently, it was suggested by some that an older man with the experience that age brings would be more qualified to teach than a younger man; such a person was likened to ripe grapes that produce mature wine, in contradistinction to the younger teacher who would lack age to supplement his cognitive knowledge of Torah, and who would be like sour grapes that produce new wine not yet fit for drinking.[9] The ideal teacher was humble ("Be meek as Hillel, not irritable like Shammai"[10]) and a person of fit moral character. He was tidy in appearance, moderate in his consumption of food and drink, and modest.[11]

Although disciplining his students was sometimes necessary, the gifted teacher could usually hold the attention of his class. Thus, perhaps the most significant

and valuable qualities a teacher could possess were cheerfulness and patience. The adage "a strict person cannot teach"[12] was one that probably had been tested in innumerable classroom situations, both pleasant and unpleasant. A teacher's patience also came into play when the lesson was not fully grasped by the student. At least one Sage urged that the lesson be repeated at least four times to a better-than-average student,[13] implying that for the average student, additional repetitions were necessary. Rabbi Akiba is credited with the suggestion that a teacher should continue to go over the material until it is fully comprehended and integrated in the student's mind, regardless of the number of rehearsals.[14] The reason for this emphasis on repetition was due to the emphasis placed upon memorization of the material covered in the classes. Memorization as a pedagogical device will be examined later in this chapter.

Studying not by one's self but with a good teacher and with other students in a "co-operative" learning situation was the proper way to learn.[15] Indeed the pursuit of right living par excellence involved, for the Tannaim, studying at the academies of various Sages located throughout Palestine, Babylonia, and even Rome.[16] The masters also realized the value of the "co-operative" study setting embodied in the classroom atmosphere. The mutual "give-and-take" between student and teacher sharpened the mind of the former, while giving the latter

an opportunity to review his own knowledge. Collective learning, rather than that produced autogenously, was preferable because it allowed the Sages to better impart their knowledge both from a quantitative and a qualitative aspect.

The hallmark of successful teaching was the increasing of disciples.[17] As R. Travers Herford has put it:

> To make disciples, in the sense of imparting knowledge of Torah has always been both the aim and practice of Rabbinism, as the Talmud bears ample witness. In the larger relation, the minor one of discipleship to a particular master held but a small place (!). The Rabbi was enjoined not to make followers of himself but to impart to all whom he could influence such knowledge as he possessed of divine truth.[18]

Raising up disciples was a constant duty throughout the entire career of a Sage. Old age and large numbers of students was insufficient reason to cease influencing other younger men; one could never be sure which disciples would succeed in perpetuating what was to be passed on, and having as many disciples as possible improved the chances of such transmission.[19] For the master disciples were as gold to the merchant--the concrete sign of a successful life.

While the aware and sensitive masters actively tried to influence young men into discipleship (as will be demonstrated in chapter five), they nevertheless sought only the type of individual that had the characteristics and potential of a young and promising scholar--a

talmid hakham who would perpetuate through his learning and actions in daily life, the values and tenets of Torah. Thus the Sages were discriminating in whom they sought as disciples. The ideal student epitomized good conduct, modesty, industriousness, and even self-denial.[20] The following passages, with their specific criteria and description of "the one who occupies himself with Torah," clearly illustrate what the masters looked for in a student and how a disciple was to conduct himself once he was a member of the learning "co-operative":

> Greater is Torah than priesthood or kingship. For kingship is acquired through thirty virtues and priesthood through twenty four, but Torah is acquired through forty eight. And these are they: By study, by the listening of the ear, by the ordering of the lips, by the discernment of the heart, fear, dread, humility, cheerfulness, purity, attendance on the Wise, cleaving to associates, discussion with disciples, sedateness, Scripture, Mishnah; by little business, little intercourse with the world, little pleasure, little sleep, little conversation, little laughter. By long suffering, a good heart, faith in the Wise, acceptance of chastisements, by knowing one's place, and rejoices in his portion, that makes a fence around his words, and claims not merit for himself, that is beloved, that loves God and loves mankind, that loves justice, that loves right courses, that loves reproof, and keeps aloof from honour, and puffs not his heart with learning, and delights not in giving decisions, that takes up the yoke with his associate and judges him with a leaning toward merit; that establishes him upon truth, and upon peace and does not exalt his heart over his study, that asks and answers, that hears and adds thereto, that makes his teacher wise, that learns with a view toward acting, and that defines accurately what he hears; that repeats a thing in the name of he who said it . . .[21]

> Fifteen traits characterize a scholar and they are these: (he is) decorous in his entrance, modest in his sitting, shrewd in his knowledge, discerning in his fear (of God), alert in his ways; his mind is absorptative and retentive; (he) pays attention to (the place of his) sitting, asks and answers, listens

> and adds thereto, discusses each section covered, walks with the wise, learns in order to teach, and in order to do.[22]

It is not unfair to assume that students did not enter the colleges already possessing these traits, but rather they were expected to acquire most of them during their course of study.

However, the Sages did understand that occasionally a student might pursue the study of Torah with ulterior motives, i.e. he might desire to be recognized as a distinguished member of the scholarly class, and they tried to discourage such individuals:

> It is taught: That you may love the Lord your God, to listen to His voice and to cleave to Him.[23] (This means) . . . that one should not say, "I will read Scripture that I may be called a Sage; I will study, that I may be called Rabbi; I will study (to teach) to be an Elder and sit in the assembly," but learn out of love, and honor will come in the end. . .[24]

Knowledge for its own sake (but with the ultimate purpose of translating it into action) was the only worthwhile knowledge. Perhaps with a similar thought in mind, the editor of the tractate Avot attributed the following to Meir:

> Everyone who is occupied with Torah for its own sake is worthy of many things; and not only so, but the whole world is his equivalent. He is called friend, beloved, one that loves God and that loves mankind, that makes both God and mankind glad. And it clothes him with humility and fear and fits him to be righteous, pious, upright and faithful. . .[25]

In responding to such a statement, one wonders whether it is merely rabbinic hyperbole, or whether such a student, in being equivalent to the whole world in his study for

study's sake, was indeed so rare.

A student aspiring to rabbinic status was also admonished to be heedful of his personal conduct in social intercourse. It was incumbent upon him to realize the high position his masters and colleagues held in the community and his behavior had to be such as not to embarass them or himself:

> Six things are noxious to a scholar:
> He should not go out in the streets perfumed.
> He should not go out alone at night.
> He should not go out in patched sandals.
> He should not converse with women in the street.
> He should not dine together with boors (amei ha-arets).
> He should not be last in entering the House of study.[26]

Although they knew specifically what they were looking for in prospective disciples, as is evident from the preceding passages, the tannaitic Sages were well aware, as we have commented, that the human factor involved hardly allowed for the ideal student to be found or even cultivated. Indeed, understanding the human factor with both its overt and subtle expressions in a student's ability and personality, led the Sages to recognize the various differences among their students.[27] Intellectual capacity was evaluated thusly:

> There are four types of students:
> 1) quick to learn and quick to lose-his gain is cancelled by his loss.
> 2) slow to learn and slow to lose-his loss is cancelled by his gain.
> 3) quick to learn and slow to lose-this is a good portion.
> 4) slow to learn and quick to lose-this is an evil portion.[28]

A student's ability to analyze and retain material was

also evaluated:

> Four types sit before the Wise-a sponge, a funnel, a strainer, and a sieve. A sponge, because it sucks up everything; a funnel because it receives at one end and lets out at the other; a strainer because it lets out the wine and keeps back the dregs; a sieve, because it lets out the coarse meal and retains the fine flour.[29]

Such reflections not only offer an analysis of the various learning capabilities, but they also seem to hint at how the creative instructor would apply different teaching methods for each category of student.[30] In observing where students stationed themselves in relation to their masters during a study session (and for what reasons they did so) caused one Sage to comment:

> There are four types among those that frequent the house of study:
> One takes his place close (to the Sage) and is rewarded;
> One takes his place close (to the Sage) and is not rewarded;
> One takes his place at a distance (from the Sage) and is rewarded;
> One takes his place at a distance and is not rewarded. . .
> If one takes his place close (to the Sage) in order to listen and learn, he is rewarded.
> If one takes his place close (to the Sage) so that men might say, "There is so-and-so drawing close and sitting down before a Sage," he is not rewarded.
>
> If one takes his place at a distance so that he might honor someone greater than himself, he is rewarded.
>
> If one takes his place at a distance so that men might say, "So-and-so has no need of a Sage," he is not rewarded. . .[31]

Similarly with class discussion:

> . . . One engages in discussion and is rewarded.
>
> One engages in discussion and is not rewarded.
> One sits and keeps quiet and is rewarded.
> One sits and keeps quiet and is not rewarded. . .

> If one engages in discussion in order to learn and understand, he is rewarded.
> If one engages in discussion so that men might say, "So-and-so engages in discussion in the presence of sages," he is not rewarded.
> If one sits and keeps quiet in order to listen and learn, he is rewarded.
> If one sits and keeps quiet so that men might say, "There's so-and-so sitting quietly in the presence of sages," he is not rewarded.[32]

Thus we see further evidence that the tannaitic masters were acutely aware of the ulterior motives of ego fulfillment and self-aggrandizement that might attract a young man to the Sages. We find it in this passage as well:

> There are four types of disciples:
>
> One who wishes he might study and that others might study too-the liberal.
> (One who wishes) that he might study, but not others--the grudging.
> (One who wishes) that others should study but not he--the commonplace type. Some say: the Sodom type.
> (One who wishes) that neither he nor others should study--the thoroughly wicked.[33]

In examining the thoughts of the tannaitic masters regarding the heterogeneous make-up of a class, we can easily deduce that there were students who did not wish to take their studies seriously, and therefore did not fully participate nor did they retain the salient points of a class discussion. In a word, they did not utilize their full potential. Such a student was scorned and considered unworthy,[34] and to engage in teaching an unworthy or wicked student, for at least one Sage, (R. Simon ben Eleazar) was comparable to practicing idolatry.[35] Teachers were warned of the consequences that could result from

teaching such individuals.[36] There was the singular worry that a bad student would negatively influence a diligent one. Perhaps this was one of the reasons Rabban Gamliel II is reported to have decreed that only those students whose internal worth was equal to their external worth could be admitted to his academy.[37] Yet as careful as they were in screening students, the Tannaim were quick to recount the praises of those men who were, or had been exceptional students. This probably was a way of inspiring and inducing their own disciples to similar levels of excellency in scholarship.[38]

It is interesting to note that a master's feelings toward a disciple could change. In a baraita found in Hagigah 14b we find a unique example of this:

> Our Rabbis taught: Once R. Yochanan b. Zakkai was riding on his donkey when going on a journey, and R. Eleazar b. Arak was driving the donkey from behind. (R. Eleazar) said to him, "Master, teach me a portion of the 'Work of the Chariot'." (R. Yochanan) answered, "Have I not taught you thus: '. . . nor the "Work of the Chariot" in the presence of one, unless he is a Sage, and understands of his own knowledge'?" (R. Eleazar) then said to him, "Master, permit me to say something before you which you have (previously) taught me." He answered, "Say it."

The Soncino edition (p. 88) points out that it is hard to reconcile the fact that Yochanan would have at one time taught Eleazar, his prize student, in chariot mysticism, but would later refuse to teach him upon his own, Eleazar's request. That he did teach him portions of this esoteric material is evident both from his request and from what the text relates further on. In order to reconcile the two, the

of the Soncino edition, with the Yerushalmi, omits the words "that you have taught me." However Maharshal explains that at first, Eleazar was an able student of R. Yochanan's. The latter had no compunction for sharing the secrets of the chariot with him. However, because of self-indulgence, Eleazar forgot what he had learned, whereby Yochanan thought him unworthy to continue learning. When Eleazar implored his teacher to teach him more, reminding him of what he had once taught him, Yochanan realized that his student still possessed his former capability and acceded to the request.[39]

In the classroom student demeanor and participation as well as the pedagogical methodology of the instructor was guided by certain principles and standards that were mutually understood by both master and disciple. A worthy disciple's conduct constantly reflected the honor and respect due to the learning of Torah and to those facilitating its study. Frivolity was frowned upon; the master generated a feeling of awe and reverence among his students.[40] Just as those present at the sessions of the Sanhedrin would rise when the officers of the court entered,[41] so students were expected to rise upon their masters entering the classroom. Indeed one Sage commented that a disciple who did not rise before his teacher was "wicked" and would not live a long life, nor remember what he had learned.[42] This gesture of respect was of such significance that it generated a dispute as whether or not

students (and common folk for that matter) were required to rise whenever a Sage passed before them. Since such a practice was understood to be annoying, especially in a classroom setting, it was later decided that to rise for a Sage in the morning and in the evening was sufficient. The rationale for this was that any extra show of respect would exceed that shown to God (during the times of prayer). One Sage stated that a student studying Torah was not obliged to rise, and some rabbis preferred to dispense with the practice altogether. Yet whether or not a Sage could forego accepting the gesture was also disputed and ultimately left up to the individual Sage.[43]

Regular attendance was expected and each student was expected to "know his place" in the class, and sit there.[44] Tardy individuals were strongly reminded not to step over the heads of other students when trying to get to their own seats.[45] Moreover permission to leave a lecture before its conclusion was required,[46] and it is recorded that two loyal disciples sat through an entire day-long lecture of their master during a festival, while the rest of the audience had periodically left during the course of the day.[47]

When a point was unclear to a student, questioning was encouraged, although the questions were directed to the turgeman, who then asked the master directly. The turgeman's main function was to utilize his powerful voice and amplify the instructor's words which were delivered in a less

audible voice.[48] That a student might be deficient in knowledge of certain aspects of the Law was understood by the tannaitic masters. But they saw the learning of Torah best served when such a student did not pretend expertise, but admitted his ignorance:

> If you desire to learn Torah, do not say concerning what you have not learned, "I have learned that." If something was taught to you and you did not learn it, do not be ashamed to say, "I have not learned it." If someone asks you something that you are not well-versed in, do not be ashamed to say, "I do not know."[49]

Thus, we see that the Tannaim realized that learning was not accomplished when one pretended to be what one was not, out of false pride; it was attained when one was honest enough to admit ignorance, in which case he would then seek out the answers by asking questions.

Questioning and inquiry made up an integral part of the classroom scenario and special rules pertaining to inquiry were established. One was not to be on a higher level than the person to whom the question was directed, although a student was obliged to stand and face the elders of the College when asking a question of them.[50] The question asked was to be related to the subject under discussion at the time, while the answer was to be a scholarly one and to the point.[51] A student was not supposed to ask more than three <u>halakhot</u> related to a particular subject.[52] No question was considered too simplistic to be overlooked.[53] When a student wished to ask about a situation that had actually occurred, as opposed

to one that was theoretical, he was required to say so, and such an inquiry took precedence over a theoretical question.[54] Moreover, questions of halakhah preceded questions pertaining to expository midrash, which in turn preceded questions on aggadah. Questions on midrash preceded those pertaining to a kal v'homer, while questions on a kal v'homer preceded those pertaining to a gezerah shavah. When a Sage and a disciple both wished to have a point clarified, the Sage took precedence, as did a senior disciple over a junior disciple.[55] In the event that two questions arose simultaneously with equal status (i.e. both were on halakhot, both were asked by Sages), the turgeman's discretion determined which was answered first.

It was not considered proper for a student to bombard the master with questions as soon as the latter entered the class; he was to wait until the master had settled himself and was prepared to entertain questions. Similarly the master was not to immediately jump into a discussion among students, but was to wait a few moments before speaking, in order to gauge and understand exactly what was being discussed and what the apparent difficulties were. Such an interruption reflected an insensitivity characteristic of a boor.[56]

Likewise, a student was urged to be sensitive to the possibility that his teacher might not be able to answer every question, in which case it was best not to ask, thus saving both the teacher and the student from public

embarassment, although the student could leave the master, and search for one who could teach him what he wished to know:

> For R. Hiyya taught: When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider well him that is before thee. And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.[57] If the pupil knows the master is capable of answering the question, then he may ask it, otherwise-consider well him that is before thee and put a knife to thy throat if thou be a man given to appetite--and leave him.[58]

When attempting to answer a question posed by a teacher, a student was urged to utilize prudence: "Not he who answers quickly is worthy of praise," Akiba reminded his students, "but he who can support his views."[59] As to how to effectively respond to a question raised in the course of discussion, the Sages stated:

> A wise man does not speak before one greater than he in wisdom, and does not interrupt the words of his associates, and does not hasten to reply. He questions according to the subject and answers according to the rule. He speaks of first things first and of the last things last, and concerning what he has not learned, he says, "I have not learned."[60]

To integrate within one's self a sense of unity of purpose and a feeling of co-operation conducive to the goals of group study, students had to pay close attention in class.[61] One did not have the privilege of pursuing one's own intermittent interests during class time. That is, one was obliged to participate in whatever the class was doing. If the class was sitting, one was not to stand; if the class was standing, one was not to sit; if they were learning Mishnah, one was not to read Scripture; if

they were learning Scripture, one was not to review his Mishnah.[62]

Occasionally, disciplinary measures had to be meted out and the strap was not withheld even from students of college age. In fact, if a student accidentally died from physical chastening, the teacher was not held culpable.[63] The sensitive teacher, however, took into account the honor and self-respect of his youthful disciples[64] in which case such chastening was dealt not in retribution, but as a preventative measure. While the master had to "throw gall upon his students" and make them respect him,[65] he could not go to extremes and become an impetuous disciplinarian,[66] else the chastised student(s) quit the class. What the Rabbis projected from such a situation, and what caused them a great deal of consternation was the possibility of the rebelling student not only forsaking the teacher, but also forsaking what the teacher stood for. They were afraid a master going to extremes might lead to a student apostasizing.[67] Thus, a sound discipline was one that "pushed away with the left hand, while drawing near with the right," and did not push away with both hands.[68]

The essential probelm for the rabbinic pedagogue, both in the academy and in the lower classes, (as for any teacher regardless of what era he/she lives in) was "the way in which the teacher uses the given situation to create a comfortable atmosphere which is likely to encourage the

active participation of the pupil without threat or compulsion."[69] Furthermore

> In order to learn significantly the learner must want to learn. He will learn better and learn that which matters to him if he does not need to feel defensive and if he is not threatened.[70]

The Tannaitic masters were already aware of the necessity of interest on the part of the student for the material offered to him by his master:

> Rabbi said: a man should only learn a part of Torah that his heart desires . . .[71]

Yet the skillful instructor, as a function of his personality, innately knew how to "interest" students, how to "turn them on." This was probably due at least partially to his ability to empathize with his students and to adapt their youthfulness, taking it as the basis for his relationship with them, yet maintaining the distance between he and his students which reinforced the serious respect which the position called for.[72] Only the teacher who understood effective pedagogy possessed this ability to allow a warm personality to revitalize even the coldest, dullest lesson. In describing the ideal contemporary teacher one educator has remarked:

> The skilled teacher may be compared to the sensitive symphony conductor. He knows the musical score, he controls the dynamics . . . He is highly aware of what is happening and what is to follow . . . He makes music. He sings with and communicates to the members of the orchestra even as he knowingly directs them.[73]

As we examine the Sage's personality both in and out of the classroom, and how he utilized the moments spent with

his students, we shall see that the above metaphor aptly describes them as well as their contemporary counterparts.

One might say that the skilled teacher of the academy in Tannaitic times was able to "control the dynamics" and "make music" <u>because</u> he knew how to implement the pedagogical techniques used in his time. Such techniques were simple, yet genuine learning was contingent on their effective utilization. We have mentioned motivation and generating inquiry among the students. But there were others. Every student had to be able to see the master. We have discussed seating arrangement at some length in the previous chapter and offer no more here than to say that as the master lectured it was desirable to not only listen to what he was saying, but also to observe him, his mouth and even his body gestures.[74] When lecturing the master was to speak concisely,[75] and pause periodically after each section was taught.[76] This was to insure maximum retention in the memories of the disciples.

The cultivation of memory and recollection was a primary objective in ancient Jewish education. This was due to the predominantly oral character of the transmission of the masters' teachings and statements. With the exception of Scripture which was preserved in written form, the developed and handed down traditions (both legal and homiletical) depended on the memories of their transmitters for their perpetuation.[77] Hence if Pharisaic/rabbinic Judaism was to continue its faithful adherence to, and

promulgation of the Oral Tradition, especially in the restless decades of the first and second centuries, it was essential that the transmitters memories be acute and keen.

The nourishing and refining of a student's retentive abilities began while the student was still a youngster learning to read Scripture. Part of the elementary curriculum entailed the constant repetition of verses read from the written text until they were learned by heart. Although in the academy the prime quality of a good student was a high grade of innate intelligence and creativity in order to keep up with the dialectical nature of the discussions,[78] retentive skills were still invaluable because various traditions had to be memorized. This is why students were urged to keep repeating and reviewing their lessons, even with clear enunciation and in a chanting fashion.[79] Without enunciation it was believed that what was learned would soon be forgotten and forgetting even a part of one's knowledge out of neglegence was a serious affront to the study of Torah. One Sage viewed a person who had forgotten something as if he were guilty against his own soul.[80] Similarly another remarked that one who repeated his lesson to himself and paused to admire a tree or a field and said how beautiful either was--such a person was also guilty against his soul.[81] A modern scholar has put this passage in an original perspective by suggesting that by pausing

to admire nature's beauty aloud, a student might unintentionally incorporate his words of admiration into the tradition he had heretofore been reciting. Thus that particular component of tradition which he had been reciting supposedly in the exact words that it had been transmitted to him, would be corrupted and its authenticity destroyed.[82] From such evidence we can see that a sponge-like memory was the most valuable tool a student could bring with him to the classroom, aside from his innate intelligence.

Because memorizing was so essential certain methods of teaching and reviewing were utilized in the classroom by master and disciple respectively. We have already mentioned the concise way of teaching, and teachers were not at liberty to introduce complex exposition when initially presenting material to their classes.[83] Students memorized verbatim these short, concise statements, often using them as clues to recall discussions that justified the conclusions given in these statements. Constant reviewing aided the memory; one could not review enough, for "one who repeats his lesson 100 times is not like he who repeats his lesson 101 times!"[84] Mnemonics and acronyms, used as a sort of "mental shorthand" greatly aided in improving recall and in assembling into some orderly fashion the vast array of oral material dealing with every aspect of the individual and communal life of the Jewish community. Such methods were so important that one Sage remarked, "No man can acquire a proper knowledge of Torah unless he

endeavors to fix the same (knowledge) in his memory by certain marks and signs."[85] The legal material was subdivided into portions that could be mentally digested easily and thoroughly and these were learned, part by part, until the whole was acquired.[86] Because the human memory is a fallible instrument it was not uncommon for a student to rehearse a particular section before his master, or least before a fellow student. When approaching the former, it was customary to begin with the words, "My master, allow me to rehearse before you . . ."[87] As we have stated, such a request, a form of self-testing initiated by the student also gave the master an opportunity to compare his own knowledge with that of his student's, thus sharpening his own ability for recall, as well as allowing for the mutual discussion between master and disciple. Naturally for maximum alertness, good health (i.e. a proper diet and the proper amount of rest) was essential.[88]

Of course the Tannaim desired that their students be more than memory banks. They desired that class discussion develop keen analytical minds as well as an ever-deepening devotion to performing mitzvot and good deeds. A significant technique used by rabbinic pedagogues in the academy was to challenge the students' ability to analyze the material given to them. They would make erroneous statements, waiting to be corrected by members of the class. This form of "quizzing" was an innovative,

effective, yet empathic way of testing. It was effective in that it measured ability other than rote memorization--that is, ability to compare and contrast traditions and reason them out. It was empathetic in that it challenged a student without threatening his self-respect. The Sages realized that

> Skilled teaching will be characterized by the creation of an accepting atmosphere . . . an understanding of when, how, and where to challenge the pupils . . . an acceptance of the premise that learning is essentially personal . . . and that it depends on self-motivation and self-discipline.[89]

In addition to the many praises of Torah and study thereof which the Rabbis offered, as well as their careful portrayal of the role model of the ideal life governed by Torah that served as constant motivation for the disciples, the rabbis seem to have thoroughly understood that self-motivation and self-reliance were also necessary. These two qualities were brought out by periodically keeping the students "on their toes," challenging them to use their minds and thus contributing to the solidification of their learning.[90] Moreover the master would engage in other ways of stimulating thought and sharpening understanding: asking an interpretation of a verse, presenting a philosophical problem, or contrasting two traditions with each other.[91] When a student wished to contradict his teacher, i.e. when to correct an erroneous statement, he would politely interrupt the master with the words, "But you have taught us . . .," or rhetorically, "Have you, our Master, not already taught

us . . .?"[92] These seem to have been the standard phrases of respect employed by students when they also wanted to check a particular tradition.[93]

Although contending with the teachings of one's teacher was considered grievous insubordination by one sage,[94] dissent seems to have been perfectly acceptable as long as it was politely and reverently expressed. Indeed the student had a moral responsibility to contest his master's decision, especially in a capital case, when it was clear to the student that his master had erred in judgement. In such circumstances the disciple was not to remain silent, thinking that his silence was out of respect for the master. However, a student had to be sure of his own position before doubting his master's decisions. He probably had to be a veteran of classroom discussion, capable of drawing his own conclusions. That Akiba was such a student, Louis Finkelstein has more than adequately pointed out.[96] His store of knowledge, his incisive mind, and self-assurance did not ingratiate him with his own masters, Gamliel II, Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, and Tarfon. Yet he always raised objections with respect and courtesy.[97]

Among the students themselves, relationships were usually cordial but sometimes strained. In examining Ben Zoma's statement "Who is wise? He who learns from all men . . ."[98] and the remark that "he who learns from his colleague a single portion, a single ruling, a single verse, a single expression, or a single letter should

render him honor . . ."[99] we should ask why these ideas were considered important to be passed on? What, in the Tannaim's experience prompted these sayings? We can only speculate that such statements might have been directed at those students who, for whatever reasons, did not feel the strong need for co-operation among their colleagues; perhaps they resented being corrected by a colleague or a junior disciple. Perhaps they felt the competition was such that they had no use for the least amount of assistance offered by a schoolmate. The sources reveal several instances of tension and ill-will among the disciples. It is recorded that many of Akiba's disciples perished because of their hatred of one another.[100] The disciples of R. Eliezer complained to their master about a colleague who unnecessarily prolonged services.[101] Their master rebuked them, defending the disciple against what subtly seems to have been a bit of a conspiracy on the part of the other students, although the text does not reveal the source of any underlying enmity. A tension that plagued Rabbi Akiba was that between his two prize disciples, R. Meir and R. Simeon b. Yohai.[102] The latter's son, Eleazar, and Judah ha-Nasi also do not seem to have "gotten along" too well.[103] In both these relationships, one student felt that the other was receiving undue preferential treatment from the master. In yet another example of ill-feeling between students, the tension and ill-feeling was channeled into an unfortunate verbal battle:

> R. Hiyya and R. Simeon b. Rabbi once sat together . . . In the meanwhile they were joined by R. Ishamel b. R. Yose. "On what subject are you engaged?" he asked them. "On the subject of prayer," they replied . . . While this was going on, Rabbi entered the academy. They, being nimble, got into their places quickly. R. Ishmael b. R. Yose, however, owing to his corpulence could only move to his place in slow steps. "Who is this man," cried Abdan out to him, "who strides over the heads of the holy people?" The other replied, "I am Ishmael b. R. Yose who has come to learn Torah from Rabbi." "Are you indeed fit," the first asked him, "to learn Torah from Rabbi?" "Was Moses fit," the other retorted, "to learn Torah from the lips of the Omnipresent?" "Are you Moses indeed?" the first explained. "Is then your Master a god?" the other retorted . . . While this was proceeding a yevamah came before Rabbi (wanting a halitsah arranged). "Go out, said Rabbi to Abdan, "and have her examined."

After R. Ishamel told Rabbi what his father had taught, concerning the age of a woman desiring the halitsah, Rabbi recalled Abdan:

> Abdan now came back watching his steps, when R. Ishmael b. R. Yose exclaimed, "He of whom the holy people are in need may well stride over the heads of the holy people; but how dare he of whom the holy people has no need stride over the heads of the holy people?" "Remain in your place," said Rabbi to Abdan.[104]

R. Joseph, an Amora, remarks that Rabbi deserved R. Ishmael's subtle chastisement in referring to Rabbi as "your master" and not "our master," although he had explicityly stated that he had come to learn Torah from Rabbi. Perhaps the fact that Rabbi told Abdan to remain where he was after returning to the class indicated R. Ishmael's vindication and that he, as the teacher, had not fulfilled his responsibility by allowing Abdan to publicly humiliate R. Ishmael.[105]

Despite the tension that prevailed among students from time to time there is also evidence to indicate that some students, sensitive ones to be sure, would band together to support a colleague who had incurred the displeasure of the master; they did so to the extent of taking blame upon themselves:

> It once happened that Rabban Gamliel (II) said, "Send up for me seven (scholars) early in the morning to the chamber (for the purpose of intercalating the year). When he came in the morning and found eight, he asked, "Who is he who has come up without permission? Let him leave." Thereon Samuel the Younger said, "It was I who came up without permission; my object was not to join in the intercalation, but because I felt the necessity of learning the practical application of the law." Rabban Gamliel answered, "Sit down, my son, sit down; you are worthy of intercalating all years (in need of such), but it is a decision of the Rabbis that it should be done by those who have been specifically appointed for the purpose."
> But in reality it was not Samuel the Younger (who was the uninvited member, but another; he only wished to save the intruder from humiliation.[106]

Thus the later Amoraim seem to have understood the situation in the light of student solidarity. Similarly:

> It once happened that while Rabbi was delivering a lecture, he noticed a smell of garlic. Thereupon he said, "Let him who has eaten garlic, leave." R. Hiyya rose and left; then all the disciples rose and went out. In the morning R. Simeon, Rabbi's son, met and asked him, "Was it you who annoyed my father yesterday?"
> He answered, "Heaven forbid that such a thing should happen in Israel.[107]

Supposedly R. Hiyya learned this behavior from R. Meir:

> It is taught: a story is related of a woman who appeared at the House of Study of R. Meir and said, "Rabbi, one of you has taken me to wife through cohabitation," Thereupon he rose and gave her a bill of divorce, after which every one of his disciples stood and did likewise.[108]

Thus we see that not only was there solidarity within the student body one or all faced a compromising situation, but also that the master might put himself in the same situation in order to shield his students' honor, and to protect the integrity and reputation of Torah and those who labored in it.

NOTES

CHAPTER IV

1. Rosh Hashanah 23a; San. 91b; San. 99a; Temurah 16a. Also cf. Maimonides, Yad Hahazakah Hikhot Talmud Torah, ch. 1.

2. B.B. 8b; Avot 4:6. See R.H. 31b, particularly the passage on Yoḥanan b. Zakkai's teaching career.

3. Spiers, School System, p. 1.

4. See E. Urbach, "Class Status and Leadership in the World of the Palestinian Sages," Israel Academy of Science and Humanities Proceedings 2:4 (Jerusalem, 1966), pp. 16ff. Also cf. Max Kadushin, Organic Thinking (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1938), p. 85. On the contrast between the Sages' social position with that of the elementary school teacher, see Pes. 49b; Shab. 119b; San. 17b. The elementary teacher's lower status is believed to have been due to his lack of knowledge of the Oral Law.

5. ARN ch. 3 (ed. Goldin, p. 26), and ch. 40, (p. 166).

6. Kid. 30b. One had to be ready with an answer to a question and had to know the material thoroughly. This applied to both masters and disciples. Cf. ARN ch. 18 (ed. Goldin, p. 90).

7. Cf. Maimonides, Hilkhot Talmud Torah, 2:3: "One who leaves pupils to themselves, of him it is said, 'Cursed be he who does the work of the Lord deceitfully.'"

8. Avot 4:12.

9. Avot. 4:20. Other Sages, however, claimed that age had nothing to do with teaching competence. See Avot 4:27.

10. Shab. 30b.

11. Eruv. 64b; Cf. San. 104b; Ta'an. 24a; M.K. 17a; Yoma 72b; Ned. 37a; A.Z. 3b.

12. Avot 2:6.

13. Eruv. 54b.

14. Ibid.

15. Avot 1:13.

16. San. 32b. See Guttmann, Making, p. 200 for a critical note on this passage.

17. Avot 1:1.

18. The Ethics of the Talmud: the Sayings of the Fathers (New York: Jewish Institute of Religion, 1945; Schocken, 1962), p. 21.

19. Rashi on Avot 1:1; cf. Bereshit Rabbah 5:11.

20. Hullin 44b; Avot 3:11; Ta'an. 7a; Avot 2: 6, 17; Meg. 6b; Avot 6:4.

21. Avot 6:6 (Herford's translation).

22. Pirke Derekh Erets Zuta 2:8; 7:1 found in The Minor Tractates. Edited by Michael Higger, some with translation. (New York: Debe Rabanan, 1935). We will refer to this work thereafter as Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

23. Deut. 30:20.

24. Ned. 62a.

25. Avot 6:1.

26. Ber. 43b; cf. Derekh Erets Zuta 5:1, 7:2 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

27. See Suk. 28a on Hillel's disciples and Avot 2:8 on those of Yohanan b. Zakkai.

28. Avot 5:15.

29. Ibid., 5:18. Cf. ARN ch. 40 (ed. Goldin, pp. 165ff).

30. Spiers, School System, pp. 22ff.

31. ARN ch. 40 (ed. Goldin, p. 165).

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., ch. 40 (ed. Goldin, p. 164).

34. This does not refer to a student who did not have the

innate capabilities; it was assumed that such an individual would not have been able to reach the advanced level of the academy.

35. Tos. A.Z. 6:18.

36. Makkot 10a; cf. Hul. 133a.

37. Ber. 28a. There were probably other reasons, for Rabban Gamliel was somewhat of an elitist.

38. Suk. 28a; B.B. 134a; San. 11a; Avot 2:8.

39. Loc. cit. Maharshal suggests that Eleazar's self-indulgence was due to a special sort of wine.

40. Shab. 30b; Eruv. 53a, where the students of R. Eleazar b. Shammua fell over each other to be as close as possible to their master.

41. Horayot 13b; Tos. San. 7:8.

42. Kid. 33b.

43. Ibid., 32b-33b. Cf. M. Aberbach, "The Relationship Between Master and Disciple in the Talmudic Age," Essays Presented to Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie (London: Jews' College, 1967), p. 13.

44. Avot 6:6; M. San. 4:4. On the seating arrangement of the academies, ses supra, Ch. 2.

45. Hor. 13b; Tos. San. 7:8; Yebamot 105b; Meg. 27b; San. 7b.

46. Ber. 24b; Shab. 41a; Ket. 110.

47. Bets. 15b.

48. Ber. 27b; Eruv. 104a; Yoma 20b; M.K. 21a.

49. Derekh Erets Rabbah 1:22 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

50. Tos. San. 7:7.

51. Ibid. R. Meir states that one wishing to ask on a subject not being discussed had to say so, but other sages said that this was not necessary for "all of the Torah" is one. In some versions b'mada is rendered b'm'ora.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Ibid., 7:10.

57. Prov. 23:1-2.

58. Hul. 6a; also see Shab. 3b and M.K. 5a-b.

59. Tos. Zavim 1:5.

60. Avot 5:10. Cf. Derekh Erets Rabbah 1:21, 22; 6:1 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

61. ARN ch. 13 (ed. Goldin, p. 72).

62. Derekh Erets Rabbah 4:4 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

63. M. Mak. 2:2.

64. M.K. 17a and Rashi, loc. cit. Also, see Spiers. School System, pp. 52f.

65. Ket. 103b.

66. Avot 2:5.

67. See the account of Joshua b. Perahiah and his disciple in Sotah 47b and San. 107b. Despite the historical problems inherent in the text, the Rabbis understood the disciple apostasizing to be Jesus, who because of his master's rejection of him apostasized and led others astray. Cf. J.Z. Lauterbach, "Jesus in the Talmud," Rabbinic Essays, pp. 473-570.

68. Ibid.

69. N. Cantor, The Teaching-Learning Process (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), p. 29. Italics his.

70. Ibid., pp. 78f.

71. A.Z. 19a. Rashi comments that if a man lets his teacher teach him a tractate that he has no interest in, the learning will not endure with him.

72. Spiers, School System, p. 37.

73. Cantor, Process, p. 78.

74. Eruv. 13b. "Rabbi said, 'The reason I was sharper than my colleagues was that I sat behind R. Meir, and if I

. sat in front of him, I would have been keener . . . '"

75. Pes. 3b; cf. Hul. 63b.

76. Sifra 1:1 (ed. Weiss).

77. In his article "The Problem of the Anonymous Mishnah" Hebrew Union College Annual 16 (1941), Dr. Alexander Guttmann points out that two basic problems arise out of this oral transmission of teachings. One is the origin of the teaching, and the other is the quality of the transmission, and that because the oldest components of these traditions are hidden in the darkness of the past, we can only rely upon the transmitters for their authority and trustworthiness. For a radially different view of this problem, see J. Neusner, Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70, pp. 143-179.

78. Drazin, Education, p. 106.

79. Eruv. 54a-b; San. 99a-b.

80. Avot. 3:10.

81. Ibid. 3:7.

82. J.J. Petuchowski, "The Rabbi and the Tree," Central Conference of American Rabbis Journal 20 (January, 1970), pp. 52-56.

83. Pes. 3b.

84. Hag. 9b. Also cf. Ta'anit 8a; Ber. 28a; Meg. 7b.

85. Eruv. 54b. See Spiers, School System, p. 125, where he suggests that the use of the phrase "al tigra" was a mnemonic catch-phrase for better retention of a particular point.

86. Morris, School, pp. 134ff.

87. Ibid., p. 120. See Hag. 14b.

88. Ibid., p. 123.

89. Cantor, Process, p. 79.

90. Ibid., p. 80.

91. B.B. 10b; Avot 2:13, 14; Eruv. 13a.

92. We see examples of this phenomenon when the students of Yohanan b. Zakkai wished to correct his erroneous statements. See Tos. Ohelot 6:8; Tos. Parah 4:7; Sifre

to Numbers (ed. Horowitz), p. 151; Tos. Ber. 4:16.

93. Landsberg, "Relationship," p. 91.

94. Ber. 27b; San. 110a.

95. San. 6b and Rashi, loc. cit.; B.M. 31a.

96. L. Finkelstein, Akiba; Scholar, Saint, and Martyr (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1936; Atheneum, 1970).

97. Ber. 37a; M. Keritot 3:10; Pes. 63a; Tos. Yom Tov 2:12; Sifre to Numbers, Beha'alotecha, p. 70 (ed. Horowitz); Tos. Ber. 4:15; Tos. Bets. 2:2. Akiba was a rival to R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus, yet was sensitive as not to intentionally offend him under any circumstances. In one source Akiba's prayer is accepted over R. Eliezer's and he goes to great lengths to pacify his master, even resorting to self-deprecation. See Finkelstein, pp. 105ff; cf. Ta'an. 25b.

98. Avot 4:1.

99. Ibid. 6:3.

100. Yev. 62b.

101. Ber. 34a. A similar incident is recorded about a disciple who shortened a service.

102. Yer. San. 1:2.

103. B.M. 84b.

104. Yev. 105b.

105. Ibid. Cf. Rashi's comments.

106. San. 11a.

107. Ibid., Cf. Rashi's comments.

108. Ibid.

CHAPTER V

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

We have seen that the relationship between master and disciple in the Tannaitic period channeled itself, operating through a certain decorum and etiquette unique to the dynamics of the classroom of that particular time. We have observed how these manifested themselves not only through the conceptions of the ideal master and the ideal student but also through certain pedagogical techniques and conduct on the part of the student. There was also, however a certain fixed etiquette which governed social intercourse between master and disciple, which although formal and seemingly aloof at times, indeed served to strengthen and nourish the relationship. The study of Torah created a community which was not bound by classroom walls or curricula. It brought teacher and student together in such a way that while walking, reviewing, chatting, and eating, master and disciple could mutually share their knowledge and their love for one another. That the relationship was an enticing, yet binding commitment, pregnant with responsibility, will be demonstrated not only in this chapter but in the following chapters as well.

On one level the social relationship between master and disciple might be viewed as a foregone conclusion. We might assume this on the basis of another assumption--

that the student lived in close proximity to the master in order that he be readily accessible to the student and that the student have the maximum amount of time to spend with his master. But let us examine the following passage:

> R. Hiyya b. Ammi said in the name of Ulla: A man should always live in the same place (town) as his teacher, for as long as Shamei b. Sera lived, Solomon did marry Pharoah's daughter. But has it not been taught that he should not live (in the same place)? There is no (contradiction): one speaks of one (disciple) who is submissive to him (the teacher); the other (refers to a disciple) who is not submissive.[1]

Rashi explains that the one who will listen to his master's chidings and admonitions should live in the same place. But if he will not listen, it is better to keep far from the teacher so that if he (the disciple) errs, he will do so unknowingly and not intentionally. Implicit in the passage, which is from the Amoraic period, is the question of whether or not this is a question raised in Tannaitic times. Whether or not Rashi's explanation was indeed operative in the Tannaitic period we cannot know. We can only assume that the prevailing attitude was that the teacher served to show the disciple how to pursue a life of holiness, and that to live near one's master was advantageous. However, to live near one's teacher yet disregard his teachings and his admonitions would have been self-defeating for both master and disciple. It is also interesting to note that the Rabbis saw Solomon delaying his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter out of respect to his teacher, and presuming that his teacher definitely would have disapproved

of the union.

Because the teacher served as a role-model (a phenomenon which we will examine more closely in the next chapter) outside of the classroom setting as well as inside it, the student conducted himself in the presence of his master in the same fashion no matter where they were together. Such conduct revealed the utmost respect and was shown specifically by the actions of the disciple. Presumably more instruction for "acting out" this respect and honor was set forth for disciples, with virtually none dealing with a master's honor for his disciples, although, as we know, the sages recognized such honor as a necessity.[2]

Such actions were called forth in a number of contexts. One was the proper way of greeting one's master. Although we have mentioned this as an aspect of proper classroom etiquette, we wish to show here how it operated on a one-to-one basis, out of class, and not within the context of a group. As to the proper way of greeting one's teacher, one passage relates: "If one wishes to greet his master or one greater than himself in Torah, he has the option to do so.[3] In contradistinction to it we also have the following:

> It has been taught: R. Eliezer said, "One who prays behind his master, and one who gives a greeting to his master, and one who returns a greeting to his master, and one who argues with the teachings of his master, and one who says something which he has not heard from his master, causes the Divine Presence to depart from Israel.[4]

Both statements are Tannaitic. Although the word "ordinary" is offered in the Soncino translation as describing the greeting a disciple should not give his master[5] this is only understood from Rashi's and the Tosafists' attempts at clarifying the passage. Otherwise the two passages seem to contradict each other. However, the comments on this passage make sense. Their explanation is that one should not say merely "Peace unto you" as to a colleague or a contemporary. Rather, it was incumbent upon a disciple to acknowledge his master <u>as</u> his master with a bow and the words "Peace unto you, my master and my teacher."[6] Moreover this small but important distinction eventually became the basis of a significant legal point introduced in connection with the attempt to determine what constituted a single alterable testimony or two separate unalterable testimonies given by witnesses:[7]

> The Rabbis maintained that statements following one another within the minimum of time (sufficient for the utterance of a greeting) are not equivalent in law to a single undivided statement, whereas R. Jose maintained that statements following one another within the minimum of time (sufficient for a greeting) are equivalent in law to a single undivided statement.[8]

This is followed by a discussion as to whether or not R. Jose indeed held this view--that statements following one another within a minimum of time sufficient for the utterance of a greeting are equivalent in law to a single statement. The text brings an example which seems to prove that R. Jose did not hold this opinion. The resolution

itself is based on the greeting itself. The operative phrase here is the words tokh k'dei dibbur:

> It may be said that there are two different minimums of time (within which two different kinds of greeting could be uttered)--one sufficient for the greeting given by the disciple to his master, and the other sufficient for the greeting of the master to his disciple. Where R. Jose does not hold (the two statements to be one) is where the interval is sufficient for the greeting of a disciple to his master, viz, "Peace unto thee, my master and teacher," as this is too long, but where it is only sufficient for the greeting of the master to the disciple, "Peace unto thee," he holds that they do (form one testimony).[9]

The difference between the two greetings also served as a time gauge in certain legal cases that occurred during the Amoraic period where split-second timing was a determining factor.[10] Of the countless other ways of measuring small amounts of time that must have been available to the Sages, it is indeed interesting but somehow not surprising that they chose this particular custom to serve as a standard of measure; perhaps this is a subtle indication of the influence that the master-disciple relationship had within the Tannaitic frame of reference, especially with regard to legislating civil and criminal law--law which affected not only the Sages, but the lay people who were outside the scholarly circles. Moreover, from the standpoint of proper etiquette the addition of the words "my master and teacher" in a greeting revealed whether one held the status of a mere student, or that of a colleague, a talmid haver; apparently, a talmid haver had the privilege of being on more familiar terms with his

erstwhile masters.[11] The importance of greeting one's master as well as the awe and respect in which a disciple held his master is poignantly illustrated in this baraita:

> It has been taught: If one was reciting the Sh'ma and his teacher or his superior meets him in the breaks[12] he may greet him out of respect, and needless to say, he may return the greeting; and in the middle[13] he may give greeting out of fear, and, needless to say, he may return it.[14]

This is a very telling passage. If we compare it to R. Eliezer's remarks[15] we see that not only does it illustrate and give some practical substance to the concept that the honor of one's master should be as the fear of heaven,[16] but that in certain respects reverence for the master might surpass that held for Deity. R. Eliezer compares the student's common greeting to the master, with the removing of the Divine Presence, indicating that somehow the teacher and the Divine Presence are equivalent. Yet the baraita quoted above reveals that despite the rabbinic aversion to the interruption of prayer, the rules expressing this aversion were suspended in order to greet one's master, indicating that, in this instance at least, the two are not equivalent: reverence for Deity must defer to reverence for the master.[17] However we find the statement that one should rise for a teacher whenever he is seen approaching. We also find the statement that one did not rise for a master when engaged in the study of Torah, and that to rise in the morning and in the evening for a teacher was sufficient, lest he be given more honor than that due

the Deity when saying the Sh'ma in the morning and in the evening (!).[18] Thus, from these statements we find reverence for the master deferring to reverence for Deity.

These examples seem to indicate that although the Sages wanted to impress the weight of proper respect toward one's teacher (by comparing it with reverence for God) they were somewhat ambivalent and perhaps even uncomfortable with a position that even hinted at usurping any honor due the Almighty. Indeed one Tanna understood the fear of God as potentially counteractive to the respect and honor due the Sages:

> It is taught: Simon b. Eleazar said: How do we know an elder should not annoy (the community by making them rise)? Scripture says, Elder . . . and you shall fear your God; I am the Lord.[19]

Not only was there an accepted etiquette for rising before one's master, but also for sitting with one's master, especially when engaged in study, as is indicated from the following passage:

> Our Rabbis taught: What was the procedure of learning the oral law? Moses learned it from the mouth of the Omnipotent. Then Aaron entered and Moses taught him his portion. Aaron then moved aside and sat down on Moses' left. Thereupon Aaron's sons entered and Moses taught them their portion. His sons moved aside, Eleazar taking his seat on Moses' right and Itamar on Aaron's left.[20] R. Judah stated: Aaron was always on Moses' right.

From this projection into the past it is obvious that the Tannaim understood the custom of sitting next to one's master (in the proper place) as an old and established one, which carried with it the sacredness of years. The passage

itself reveals several illustrative points regarding this point of etiquette. Firstly, Rashi remarks that when Aaron first entered to learn, he did not immediately sit next to Moses on either side of him, but sat directly in front of him, thus adhering to the passage from Isaiah, which held great pedagogical value for the Rabbis: "Your eyes shall see your teacher."[21] Secondly, we notice that although this passage relates that Aaron, when finished, moved to Moses' left side, Rashi again explains that by doing this, Aaron followed the custom of not stationing himself at his teacher's right side; this, according to the Rabbis, would have been in bad taste.[22] But we notice that Aaron's position was disputed by another tradition, that offered by R. Judah, which maintained that Aaron always sat to Moses' right side, not his left side. Furthermore, an Amora brings in another passage which holds that when three are walking, the master walks in the middle, the greater of the two (students) walks on his right, while the lesser walks on his left.[23] Confronted with the contradiction between the tradition of R. Judah and our original baraita, the Amora resolves it by stating that Aaron's trouble had to be taken into consideration; that is, when Aaron and Moses were alone, Aaron indeed sat to Moses' left. But in the presence of others, he was saved the trouble of having to get up and then sit down again, although he should have moved to Moses' right side.[24] Thus, since Moses right side was vacant, one of Aaron's sons

sat there.[25] We can see clearly that the Rabbis were indeed concerned with proper seating arrangement according to status, but that opinions did not always concur. It is also interesting to note that the later Amoraim attempted to resolve the contradiction, but by doing so, they also projected their own frame of reference back to both the time of their immediate predecessors, the Tannaim, and their remote ones, Moses and Aaron.

We mentioned the convention of a disciple stationing himself at the master's left side as the proper procedure.[26] This seems to have been no earlier than the Amoraic period, and therefore we cannot determine whether or not such a custom existed in Palestine at the time of the Tannaim. We have also noted that certain customs did change over the years in their transference to Babylonia.[27] However we have the following passage which contradicts our Amoraic opinion:

> In which way should one honour his teacher? When the two of them walk together on the road, he should place himself on (the teacher's) right hand and not on his left. If there be three, the Sage should be in the middle, the greater (older?) on his right side, and the lesser (younger?) on his left. For so we find it with the three ministering angels--Gabriel was in the middle, Michael on his right, and Raphael on his left.[28]

Thus we infer that at one time there was a tradition of accompanying one's teacher on his right side, which stands in opposition to the Amoraic statements found in Yoma 37a and Hullin 91a (as well as a similar passage found in Derekh Erets Rabbah 4:2).[29] Whether the passage

from Kallah Rabbati is earlier or later than the other two, whether it comes from a different time and/or a different setting, is a matter for speculation.

We should also note that in Yoma 37a, in opposition to R. Judah's statement,[30] the teaching of the three angels is offered as an argument against the prohibition of walking on the master's right side. The resolution of the Amoraim is an interesting but tenuous: the student most not walk on his master's right side if the teacher is hidden by him; yet to insure that he does not walk in front of him or behind him (which would have shown boorishness and arrogance), the student is assumed to have walked with his master sideways.[31] It is hard to believe that this solution to the difficulty was a practical one; thus, it would seem that it was not answered definitively. It was also customary for the disciple to walk behind the master when the latter was riding. The disciple usually drove the ass from behind.[32]

Not only was the form important in accompanying one's master; the distance and length of time was also a concern of the Sages:

> Our Rabbis taught: A teacher (accompanies) his pupils until the outskirts of the city;[33] one colleague accompanies another to the Sabbath limit;[34] a pupil accompanies his master a distance without limit.[35]

That a pupil accompanied his master without limit showed how the Rabbis placed no maximum on this expression of respect and devotion. It was usually the privilege of a

senior student to accompany the master, who would lean on his student for support.[36] Later, the Amoraim raised the question of a minimum showing of respect. R. Sheshet answered: a parasang when the master was not a distinguished scholar and three parasangs when he was.[37] Accompanying one's master was of such great importance that a priest could defile himself in order to do so.[38] When a disciple desired to take leave of his teacher, different gestures were expected from him. Before taking leave he was required to ask permission, whether or not the teacher was older or younger than himself.[39] Once permission was granted, the disciple withdrew, taking a few steps backward. He was not, however, allowed to turn his back to his master, but was expected to turn sideways to depart.[40] From examining these several aspects of what constituted proper escort behavior on the part of the student, we better understand the need to "act out" the deep respect and awe for the teacher, by the student. We also see how representative and how illustrative of the relationship's dynamics such behavior was.

With emphasis our sources seem to place on this particular relationship, it would seem odd if they did not mention instances of the master and the disciple socializing with one another, for it is during informal visits and discussions that personalities are revealed and associations strengthened. Fortunately, our sources relate fraternizing between master and disciple out of the

formal setting, and although outside of the classroom, the teacher might have tended to be somewhat less formal, this informality did not preclude spontaneous scholarly discussions in a leisurely surrounding.[41] This was especially the case when master and student dined together, which was somewhat frequently.[42] The importance of discussing Torah while dining was such that those dining were as if they had eaten at the table of God. Failure to discuss Torah was equivalent to having dined on "sacrifices of the dead."[43] Mealtimes gave the student the opportunity to ask points of clarification of the master, as well as other types of questions not raised during formal class periods. Furthermore, the disciple had the opportunity to listen to his master elucidate on other topics of interest, such as theology and politics.

As one might expect, there was an etiquette pattern adhered to when sitting at the table:

> Our Rabbis taught: Two must wait for another before (partaking) of the dish, but three need not wait (if one stops eating). The one who has broken bread stretches out his hand first (to take from the dish first), but if he wishes to honor his teacher or anyone else greater than him, he is free to do so.[44]

Likewise, a disciple was free to let his master have the privilege of mixing the cup of wine for the Grace after Meals.[45] It goes without saying that if it was the privilege of the master at the beginning to break bread or to mix the cup for Grace, he could pass it on to his disciples.[46] When drinking from a cup the master was to

drink and then pour some of the liquid out before giving the cup to his disciple.[47] To emphasize the weight of this practice, the following incident was related:

> It once happened that a man drank some water and without pouring out any, gave (the cup) to his disciple. The disciple was squeamish and did not drink, and he died of thirst. There and then they laid down a rule that a man should not drink and give (the cup) to his disciple without pouring some out.[48]

Rav Ashi, a later Amora, added to this, saying that if one pours out in front of his teacher, this was not a disrespectful gesture.[49] Table manners were of the utmost importance and a master might take extreme measures to impress their importance upon his students:

> It is told of Rabbi Akiba that he prepared a feast for his students, and brought them two dishes, one half-cooked and the other completely cooked. He brought the half-cooked dish first. The refined student among them took hold of the stalk (of the vegetable?) in one hand and tried unsuccessfully to tear it, whereby he put it down and ate only his bread. The uncouth among them took hold of the stalk with both hands and tried to tear it with his hands and teeth. R. Akiba said to him, "Not that way, my son, but why don't you put your heel on the dish and tear it?" Afterwards, he brought out the cooked dish. They ate, drank, and were satisfied. After they had eaten and drunk he said to them, "My children, I only did this to see whether or not you possessed any manners."[50]

Despite the more relaxed atmosphere at meals, levity, insobriety, and unfamiliarity with table ritual--all characterizing conduct unbecoming a budding scholar--were frowned upon:

> Once two disciples were sitting before Bar Kappara, and cabbage, Damascene plums, and poultry were set before them. Bar Kappara gave one of them permission to say a blessing and he said the blessing over poultry. The other laughed and Bar Kappara was angry.

> He said, "I am not angry with the one who said the blessing, but with the one who laughed. If your companion acts like one who has never tasted meat in his life, is that any reason for you to laugh?" Then he corrected himself and said, "I am not angry with the one who laughed, but with the one who said the blessing. If there is no wisdom here, is there not old age (why did you not ask me?)."[51]

> Rab and R. Hiyya were once sitting before Rabbi at dinner. Rabbi said to Rab: "Get up and wash your hands." R. Hiyya saw him trembling (Rab thought his hands were dirty). Said R. Hiyya to him, "Son of princes! He is telling you to recite Grace after Meals!"[52]

> Judah and Hezekiah, the sons of R. Hiyya, once sat at the table with Rabbi and uttered not a word. Whereupon he said, "Give them strong wine so that they may say something." When the wine took effect, they began saying, "The son of David cannot appear before the two ruling houses of Israel shall have come to an end . . ."[53] Thereupon he (Rabbi) exclaimed, "My children, you throw thorns in my eyes." At this R. Hiyya remarked, "Master, be not angered, for the numerical value of the word yayin (wine) is seventy, and likewise, the letters of sod (secret) are seventy. When yayin goes in, sod comes out."[54]

Dining was a significant aspect of the relationship between the master and the disciple and this included celebrating festivals together. We know that it was incumbent upon a man to recount the Passover narrative and explain the pertinent laws, even if he was by himself, with his family, or with his student(s), which certainly implies that it was common for masters and disciples to rejoice together on the festivals.[55] Celebrating the feast-days of the Jewish calendar together allowed the master and the disciple to spend leisure time together. Likewise it was not uncommon for a master to visit a disciple and the latter took pains to prepare for the former's visit, e.g. by

setting up a proper eruv.[56] Since most Sages encouraged this personal contact, and since serious students craved spending leisure time with their masters, these festive days were eagerly taken advantage of. The established custom of paying respects to one's teacher was called hakbalat panim, and drew its biblical precedent from the account of the Shunammite woman visiting Elisha on a New Moon.[57] Although visiting one's teacher was an established custom practiced especially on the Sabbath and Festivals,[58] the Sages were sensitive to the possibility that an excess could pose an obstacle to the student in carrying out his responsibilities to his own family:

> Our Rabbis taught: It once happened that R. Ilai went to pay his respects to R. Eliezer his master in Lydda, on a Festival.[59] He (R. Eliezer) said to him, "Ilai, you are not of those who rest on the Festival (he did not spend it with his wife)," for R. Eliezer used to say, "I praise the indolent who do not emerge from their houses on the Festival since it is written, And thou shalt rejoice, thou and thy household.[60]

Thus we see that family responsibilities were as important as one's duties to one's teacher, and sometimes more so. The Gemara, however, continues with an objection to this, citing a statement by R. Isaac, obliging a man to pay his respects to his teacher on the Festival as well as on the Sabbath, and on the New Moon. The problem is resolved with the decision that R. Eliezer's statement refers to the time a man should set out for his master's residence. If it was impossible for the man to return to his own house on the same day, it was preferable for him to stay

home with his family. R. Isaac's statement, on the other hand, refers to a situation in which the student could go and return on the same day. Consequently he would be able to spend part of the day with his family and part of it with his master:[61]

Although Sabbaths, Festivals, and New Moons were ideal times for visiting one's master, the merit that one gained from such a gesture of respect, as well as the spiritual rejuvenation derived, fostered a desire on the part of the disciple to take advantage of every opportunity to visit the master. This applied no less when the teacher was younger than the student:

> R. Jacob of Kefar Hitya used to visit his teacher every day. When he became old, the latter said to him, "Let the master not trouble himself since he is unable." He replied, "Is it a small thing that is written concerning the Rabbis, '<u>And he shall still live always he shall not see the pit; when he seeth that wise men</u> die?'[62] Now if he who sees wise men at their death shall live, how much the more so (he who sees them in their life)?"[63]

It applied no less to the <u>nasi</u>:

> Rabbi and R. Ḥiyya were once going on a journey. When they came to a certain town, they said, "If there is a scholar here, we shall go and pay our respect." They were told: There is a scholar here and he is blind. Said R. Ḥiyya to Rabbi, "Stay (here); thou must not lower thy princely dignity; I shall go and visit him." But (Rabbi) took hold of him and went with him. When they were taking leave of him (the blind scholar), he said to them, "You have visited one who is seen but does not see; may you be granted to visit Him who sees but is not seen." Said (Rabbi to R. Ḥiyya), "If now (I had listened to you) you would have deprived me of this blessing."[64]

Thus neither age nor position mattered when such a deed had such meaningful satisfaction for scholars and students. It

was all the more so for young disciples who had neither. On festive days as well as on regular days calling on one's teacher ranked high as a gesture of respect and admiration. The experience gained in such acts was considered part of one's study and one's training in becoming a sage in one's own right.

Although the disciples usually sought the master out for knowledge or advice, occasionally the opposite held true, and the master would solicit the disciple's attention. This occurred when the master, because of personal circumstances, needed solace or advice from a budding colleague. It is important to note that despite the master's age, knowledge, and experience, and the student's lacking of these he was not prevented from seeking out the disciple for counseling and consolation. The master, for all he had to offer, was nevertheless, a human being with fragile feelings and emotions. It is significant that disciples were sought out by the masters in times of crises, for it reveals that the latter had a certain amount of respect and trust in the former; this is especially brought out in the accounts of disciples' consoling a master over a death in his family:

> When Rabban Yochanan b. Zakkai's son died, his disciples came to comfort him.[65]

After R. Eliezer, R. Joshua, R. Simeon, and R. Jose had all tried to console him,

> R. Eleazar b. Arak entered. As soon as Rabban Yochanan b. Zakkai saw him, he said to his servant, "Take my

> clothes and follow me to the bathhouse, for he is a great man and I shall be unable to resist him." R. Eleazar entered, sat down before him, and said to him, "I shall tell thee a parable: to what is this likened?[66] To a man with whom the king deposited some object. Every single day the man would weep and cry out, saying, 'Woe unto me! When shall I be rid of this trust in peace?' Thou, too, Master, had a son; he studied Torah, the Prophets, the Writings; he studied Mishnah, Halakha, Agada, and he departed this world without sin. And thou shouldst be comforted when thou hast returned thy trust unimpaired." Said R. Yochanan to him, "R. Eleazar, my son, thou hast comforted me the way men should give comfort."[67]

From this account we learn that R. Eleazar b. Arak had the necessary attributes that make a good counselor; he was compassionate, empathic, yet detached and objective to the degree that he was able to give real comfort to his master. Other disciples also showed themselves to be competent in this area. They were able to share their masters' burdens and helped them put the crises-at-hand into perspective, sometimes with youthful insight. Perhaps no other disciple exemplified this attribute better than R. Akiba, as the following excerpts indicate:

> It has been taught: R. Akiba went and found R. Joshua while he was in great distress.[68] He said to him, "Master, why are you in distress?" He replied, "Akiba, it were better for a man to be on a sickbed for twelve months than such an injunction should be laid on him." He said to him, "Master, will you allow me to tell you something which you yourself have taught me?" He said to him, "Speak." He then said to him, "The text says 'you', 'you', 'you' three times,[69] to indicate that 'you' (may fix the festivals) even if you ere inadvertently, 'you', even if you err deliberately, 'you' even if you are misled." He replied to him in these words, "Akiba, you have comforted me, you have comforted me!"[70]

> Our Rabbis taught: When R. Eliezer was arrested for heresy[71] they brought him up to be judged . . . When he came home (after being pardoned) his disciples

> called on him to console him, but he would not be consoled. R. Akiba said to him, "Master, will thou permit me to say one thing thou hast taught me?" He replied, "Say it." (He said,) "Perhaps some of the teachings of the heretics had been transmitted to thee and thou didst approve of it, and because of that, thou wast arrested." He replied, "Akiba, thou hast reminded me of it!"[72]

Likewise, when R. Eliezer was excommunicated by Rabban Gamliel II, it was Akiba who broke the news to him, "lest some other, less tactful person go and hurt him." Akiba approached him but stopped four cubits distance from R. Eliezer, which was the distance one had to stand from a person who had been excommunicated. His teacher asked him the meaning of his behavior, and Akiba replied, "Master, it seems to me your colleagues are keeping away from you."[73] His teacher perceived immediately the meaning of Akiba's words. Akiba's gesture communicates his ability to empathize with his master and to discern both the gravity of his message and the delicacy with which it had to be communicated. In comparison with his contemporaries, he was more successful in bringing comfort because he seems to have understood exactly what needed to be said in a given set of circumstances:

> R. Eliezer was sick and the four elders, R. Tarphon, R. Joshua, R. Eleazar b. Azariah, and R. Akiba went to visit him. R. Tarphon then began saying, "Master you are more precious to Israel than the globe of the sun, for globe of the sun give light only for this world and for the world to come."
> Then R. Joshua began saying, "Master, you are more precious to Israel than the days of rain, for rain gives life only for this world while you have given us life for this world and for the world to come."
> Then R. Eleazar b. Azariah began saying, "Master you are more precious to Israel than father and mother,

for father and mother bring a man into the life of this world, while you have brought us to the life of the world to come."[74] Then R. Akiba began saying, "Precious are chastisements." R. Eliezer then sat up and said to him, "Speak, Akiba." Akiba then said to him, "Behold it says: Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty-five years; and he did evil in the sight of the Lord.[75] And it also says: There also are the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.[76] And could the thought enter your mind that Hezekiah king of Judah taught the Torah to all Israel, and to his son Manasseh he did not teach the Torah? You must therefore say that all the trouble which he took with him did not affect Manasseh at all. And what effect did it have on him? You must say: chastisements. For it is said: And the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in distress he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. And he prayed to Him; and He was entreated of him, and heard his supplication and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom.[77] Thus you learn that chastisements are very precious.[78]

Although the text does not reveal what R. Eliezer's reaction was to Akiba's words, we may infer from his initial statement, that he expected to receive genuine solace from Akiba. We must note that, unlike his colleagues, Akiba did not deem it necessary to resort to adulation and praise in attempting to refresh R. Eliezer's spirits. Instead, he attempted to assist him in coping with his master's illness, and finding meaning in his affliction.

Thus we see that it was not uncommon for the master to seek out his disciples in times of personal crises, and that certain disciples displayed great skill in helping their masters through taxing emotional hardships. Whether advice was solicited or whether the disciple understood

his teacher's distress and offered it unsolicited, clearly from the evidence we have offered, these encounters were beneficial and held no stigma for the master who sought out a student. Perhaps this was due to the fact that the Sages genuinely understood that the teachers also benefited from the knowledge acquired by the disciples:

> Rabbi said: "I have learned much Torah from my teachers; I have learned more from my colleagues; and I have learned the most from my students."[79]

They seem to have realized that the teacher who continued to learn was the one who would allow his students to learn as well. Consoling one's master in a time of distress must have been a very satisfying experience for a disciple. Whether he felt the satisfaction of performing a good deed or saw it as an opportunity to repay, albeit in a small way, the constant knowledge he gained from his master, it is clear that such encounters only served to strengthen, through mutual trust, the bonds between master and disciple.

The knowledge that one was living by God's Torah, coupled with the fervor and passion for living that such knowledge instilled in a disciple, was acquired partly in the classroom. It was also acquired while dining with the master, spending Sabbaths and Festivals as well as other leisure time with him, and engaging in occasional walks and informal discussions with the master. The most significant way, however of gaining access to the master's rich treasury of wisdom, was to engage in serving him and ministering to his needs. In serving one's master, a student

would discover the role model *par excellence* to faithfully pattern his life after.

NOTES

CHAPTER V

1. Ber. 8a.
2. Avot 2:15; 4:12.
3. Yer. Ber. 2:1 (4b).
4. Ber. 27b.
5. See Soncino ed. p. 164.
6. See Rashi and Tosafists. Also cf. M. Aberbach, "Relation" p. 13, where he explains that in Babylonia R. Eliezer's words were taken literally and students did refrain from greeting their masters. He also notes Ginzberg, who suggests this practice was adhered to only in Babylonia, while Aberbach insists that it might have originated in Plestine and was later transferred to Babylonia.
7. For details on false witnesses, see Baba Kamma 72a.
8. B.K. 73a ff.
9. B.K. 73b.
10. Cf. Nazir 20b; Mak. 6a; Shevuot 32a.
11. Cf. B.B. 158a; Rashi notices that Ben Azzai did not use the title "Master and Teacher" when addressing Akiba and deduces that he must have been the latter's colleague at this time. Also cf. Tosafists to Ber. 27b and Aberbach, "Relation," p. 12.
12. Between the blessings that precede or follow the Sh'ma.
13. Of the blessings.
14. Ber. 14a; cf. Kid. 32a.
15. Ber. 27b.
16. Avot 4:12.
17. See Yer. Eruv. 5:1 where the opposite of R. Eliezer's view is found: One who greets his master, it is as if he had greeted the Divine Presence.

18. Kid. 33a.

19. Yer. Bikkurim 3:3 (65c); cf. Kid. 33a.

20. Eruv. 54b.

21. Isaiah 30:20.

22. Hul. 91a.

23. Yoma 37a; "greater" and "lesser" refers to status and/or age.

24. Eruv. 54b, loc. cit.

25. Yet it would seem that since Eleazar was not greater than his father Aaron, he would not have sat on Moses' right while his father sat on Moses' left. Perhaps this is what prompted R. Judah to make his statement.

26. Eruv. 54b.; Yoma 37a.

27. Supra, note 6.

28. Kallah Rabbati 7:1 (Minor Tractates, 2 vol. London: Soncino, 1965, 2:487). But cf. Perek Ben Azzai 2:2 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger), where the version there agrees with Yoma 37a (and not Kallah Rabbati) and Michael is in the middle, Gabriel is on the right, and Raphael is on the left.

29. Soncino ed., 2: 546.

30. Yoma 37a, loc. cit.

31. Ibid.

32. Hag. 14b; Tos. Pes. 1:27. Cf. an article by Kendrick Grobel, "He That Cometh After Me," Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 60, Part IV (December 1941), where he examines the succession of Jesus to John the Baptist in light of this particular custom.

33. I.e. 70 2/3 cubits beyond the outer range of the houses of the city. Cf. Sotah 46b, Soncino ed., p. 243, note 3.

34. 2000 cubits beyond the peripheral buildings of the city.

35. Sotah 46b.

36. B.B. 111a; Yev. 42b; cf. Aberbach, "Relation," p. 5.

37. Sotah 46b.

38. Yer. Ber. 3:1; Yer. Naz. 3:1.

39. See Perek Ben Azzai 2:3; 3:1 (Minor Tractates, ed. Higger). Also cf. Kallah Rabbati 7:1 (Minor Tractates, ed. Soncino, 2:408).

40. Kallah Rabbati, ibid.

41. Yev. 16a.

42. Tos. Yom Tov (ed. Zuckermandel) 2:14.

43. Avot 3:4.

44. Tos. Ber. 5:7; Ber. 47a; Git. 59b. According to S. Lieberman, the person saying the blessing could eat first, but could pass this privilege of tasting to his teacher. He could not, however pass on the privilege of reciting the blessing. See his commentary to Tos. Ber. 5:7.

45. Tos. Ber. 5:6.

46. Ber. 39a, 43a, 46b.

47. Tamid 27b. Rashi notes that this practice did not apply to wine.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Perek Ben Azzai 5:2 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

51. Ber. 39a.

52. Ber. 43a; cf. Eruv. 73a where R Hiyya states that he dined at Rabbi's table. Rashi notes that this probably meant that he lived with Rabbi and was supported financially by him. The custom of supporting students who were poor was undoubtedly a common one.

53. They were foretelling the end of the Patriarchate.

54. San. 38a.

55. Tos. Pes. 10:11.

56. M. Eruv. 3:5; Tos. Eruv. 4:1, 7:11.

57. II Kings 4:23. Cf. Drazin, Education, p. 73.

58. Hag. 3a; cf. R.H. 16b; Tos. Sotah 7:9.

59. He set out on the day before the festival to be with his master on the first day (Rashi).

60. Suk. 27b: Cf. Deut. 14:26.

61. Ibid. Also see R.H. 16b. In the Soncino edition (p. 62 note 12) the editor notes that R. Hananel's text reads, "But we have said (only) on festivals (whereas the verse speaks of New Moons and Sabbaths)?--If the teacher lives near him, he must go to pay his respects every Sabbath and New Moon; if he lives a long distance he must go to pay his respects (only) on Festivals."

62. Ps. 49:10.11.

63. Hag. 5b.

64. Ibid.

65. See ARN (ed. Goldin), p. 192, note 19.

66. I.e. the son's death.

67. ARN (ed. Goldin), p. 77.

68. His distress was caused by the censure and injunction of Rabban Gamliel II. See R.H. 25a.

69. Lev. 22:31; 23:2,4.

70. R.H. 25a.

71. He was suspected of being a Christian. Under the emperor Trajan Rome did not distinguish between Jews and Christians.

72. A.Z. 16b.

73. B.M. 59b.

74. Infra, ch. 6.

75. II Chron. 33:1-2.

76. Prov. 25:1.

77. II Chron. 33:10-13.

78. Mekilta de-Rabbi Ishmael. Edited and translated by J.Z. Lauterbach. 3 vol. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1933; reprinted ed., 1976), Tractate Bahodesh, 2: 290-281.

79. Mak. 10a.

CHAPTER VI

RABBINIC ROLE-MODELING AND ATTENDANCE UPON THE SAGES

Whether inside the classroom or outside of it--as long as the master and the disciple were in each other's presence, learning took place. The disciple observed every act the master engaged in and every move he made, for these were held in the utmost reverence as "Torah." To reap the most benefit from such observation, the disciple had to constantly be in the master's presence. This was accomplished by encouraging students to engage in acts of personal service to their masters. Such acts might be performed in several capacities, and were looked upon as an extremely important aspect of the disciple's role. Ministering to the master came to be recognized as part and parcel of one's course of study in becoming a Sage.

Before we examine the attendance of a disciple on his master let us take a look at the dynamics of the role of the master. In contrast to that of the disciple it seems that the role of the master was a somewhat more passive one. The disciple was expected to show respect and honor to the master through tangible acts--not vice versa. The disciple accompanied the master--not vice versa. The disciple was expected to call on his master on Sabbaths and Festivals--not vice versa. Thus, on the surface of it, the relationship seems to have been one in which the

dynamics took a singular direction; a genuine "give-and-take" relationship does not seem to have been the norm.

If we look below the surface, however, we learn that the master did indeed play an active role in the relationship, but did so in a more subtle way. His chief role was to set himself as role-model for his disciples. He set the example of a life lived according to the Law. In this respect he was an anticipator of character education, which is being stressed in contemporary Jewish education.[1]

The master's life was supposed to be such that his students would strive to simulate and imitate his lifestyle as their own, utilizing his character to mold and shape their own. This was the ultimate task of the Rabbis in a period in which "genuine" Tradition was in a state of flux and schismatic sects proliferated their own notions of true religion. During this time of religio-political turmoil, a proper and correct interpretation of Torah, as understood by the Tannaim, needed to be very clearly demonstrated through personal example. The Rabbis of the classical period understood that "learning occurs when the entire personality of the pupil is involved,"[2] and that the concept of the holiness of living, which they stressed, involved personal experiences on the part of the individual, experiences which had lasting overtones and commitments for pious personal conduct.[3] The objective of rabbinic role-modeling for disciples was to teach just

this. Imparting this concept to students, however involved a great deal more than talking about holiness and piety. Teaching the holy required the teacher to live the holy, relating it with a special sort of communication. As one modern educator has put it:

> Talking is not teaching, and listening is not learning. The teaching/learning experience is an organic whole characterized by communication. Communication involves language, but it is more than language . . . the instrument does not play itself; the violinist performs through the instrument. It is the teacher, the person who uses, and the student as a person who perceives, the language; together they determine the quality and depth of communication.[4]

Such communication characterized the unique relationship of the master and his disciple. Such communication was simultaneously a cause and a result of the relationship. The quality and depth of the communication from the master to the disciple depended on the master conscientiously fashioning himself into an exemplar and paradigm of "Torah," and to what degree he did so.

It must not be assumed that the modeling or imitation that we are speaking of was a simplistic "aping" or mimicking of the master. Rather, the students followed a pattern that was taken to be faithful reproduction of that which had originally been set down by Moses, who had in turn learned it from the Eternal Master and Teacher:

> Just as God taught Torah to Moses, so the rabbi modeling his life after Moses "our rabbi," teaches his own disciple. In "studying Torah" and even more so in affecting the lives of Israel, the rabbi thus imitates God . . . The schools are not holy places only or primarily in the sense that pious people make pilgrimages to them or that miracles are supposed to take place there.

> The schools are holy because there men achieve sainthood through study of Torah and imitation of the conduct of the masters. In doing so, they conform to the heavenly paradigm, the Torah, believed to have been created by God "in His image" revealed at Sinai, and handed down to their own teachers. Thus, obedience to the teachings of the rabbis leads not merely to ethical or moral goodness but to holiness or sainthood . . . the rabbis believe they themselves are projections of heavenly values on earth . . . man truly made in the divine image is the rabbi; he embodies revelation--both oral and written--and all his actions constitute paradigms that are not merely correct, but holy and heavenly.[5]

The function of the master as a facilitator of imitatio Dei was described by another scholar in this metaphor:

> It has been said by the Jewish Sage, that the pre-eminence of the teacher . . . is his endeavor to make the picture correspond to the design of the artist, and the creature approach the likeness of the creator.[6]

It was not sufficient, however, that the rabbis alone enjoy the insights and rewards of a life-long preoccupation with Torah. It was their perennial hope that every Jew would soon realize fully the value and significance of adhering to such a life, and of associating with those who embodied it:

> The rabbis . . . wanted to transform the entire Jewish community into an academy where the whole Torah (would be) studied and kept. This belief aids in understanding the rabbis' view that Israel will be redeemed through Torah . . . When all Jews become rabbis they will no longer lie within the power of history. The Messiah will come. So redemption depends upon the "rabbinization" of all Israel, that is, upon the attainment by all Jewry of a full and complete embodiment of revelation or Torah, thus achieving a perfect replica of heaven.[7]

A student wishing to create a "perfect replica of heaven" for himself (and others) had to reproduce his master's behavior in his own life:

> The "disciple of a Sage" (talmid ḥakham) is a student who has attached himself to a rabbi. He does so because he wants to learn Torah . . . But Torah is not learned through the law, but through seeing the law embodied in gestures and deeds of the living sages. They teach the law by what they do, not alone by what they say. The texts before us do not exhaust the laws they state--they merely hint at them. To apprehend the full weight and meaning of the law, we should enter into the household of a master and see just how he does things. We should have to imitate his gestures not merely reducing them to legal formulae . . . Imitating the master is imitating Moses' imitation of God.[8]

The Sages were keenly aware that their own acts and behavior was constantly held to be the paradigm par excellence of lifestyles based on Torah, and that the disciples wishing to learn, and trusting their masters to teach them correctly, would follow whatever example they set, an expectation which could have future legal ramifications:

> Our Rabbis taught: the School of Hillel says one may recite the Sh'ma sitting, one may recite it reclining, one may recite it walking on the road, one may recite it at one's work. Once R. Ishamel and R. Eleazar b. Azariah were dining at a place, and R. Ishamel was reclining, while R. Eleazar was standing upright. When the time came for reciting the Sh'ma, R. Eleazar reclined, and R. Ishmael stood upright.
>
> R. Eleazar b. Azariah said to R. Ishmael, "Ishmael, my brother, I will tell you a parable. To what is this (your standing) likened? It is likened to a man of whom people say, 'You have a fine beard' and he replies, 'Let it be destroyed' (I will cut it off just to spite you). So now, with you; as long as I was upright you were reclining, and now that I am reclining, you stand upright!" He replied to him, "I have acted according to the rule of the School of Hillel and you have acted according to the rule of Shammai, and what is more, (I had to act thusly) lest the disciples should see and fix the halakhah for future generations.[9]

Teachers feared the possibility that novice disciples who could not discriminate between teachings that were accurate and precise, and those that were not so, would follow the latter. Not only did this depend on what the disciples heard, but also on what the master taught--which traditions he disclosed and how precisely he himself had acquired them.[10] Consequently, the Sages stressed the essentiality of precision and accuracy in relating and acting upon the traditions, especially those handed down orally:

> R. Judah said: Be cautious in teaching for error may amount to intentional sin.[11]

On this maxim a modern scholar of rabbinics comments that

> Where the whole body of religious teaching rested on tradition it was clearly of vital importance that no error should be made in what was transmitted. There might be differences of interpretation; but that which was to be interpreted must not be varied in the slightest degree. If a teacher, through carelessness, did so vary what he was bound to teach exactly, that would be at the moment . . . a sin committed unwittingly; but in its consequences, by perpetuating error and leading to false deductions on the part of those who in all good faith accepted the erroneous teaching as being true (i.e. the disciples), it amounts to . . . intentional sin on the part of the original teacher.[12]

The consequences of teaching false traditions were extremely serious ones:

> Avtalion said: "Sages, be careful of your words, lest you incur guilt (that deserves) exile, and you be exiled to a place of evil waters, and the disciples that come after you drink and die and the name of Heaven be profaned.[13]

This warning to the teacher of his responsibility seems to pose difficulties when taken out of context.[14]

Maimonides suggests that the meaning here is that a teacher must be careful in what he says, lest in controversy with heretics and unbelievers his words should be misconstrued and thus lead some to err. Furthermore, the term "exile" according to this interpretation, is to be taken figuratively; it describes the unhappy state of one who is unable to receive the true teaching because of his teachers.[15]

Apparently renunciation of fundamental tenets of Pharisaic/Rabbinic Judaism on the part of disciples because of incomplete teaching was not unheard of; indeed, it was understood to be a cause for the schism between the Sadducees and the Pharisees:

> Antigonus of Sokho had two disciples who used to study his words. They taught them to their disciples, and their disciples to their disciples. These proceeded to examine the words closely and demanded, "Why did our ancestors see fit to say this thing?[16] Is it possible that a laborer should work all day and not take his reward in the evening? If our ancestors, had known that there is another world and that there will be a resurrection of the dead, they would not have spoken in this manner!" So they arose and withdrew from the Torah and split into two sects, the Sadducees and the Boethusians . . .[17]

It is interesting to note that the fundamental Pharisaic tenet was rejected, according to this narrative, not as a result of intentional misinterpretation of the teaching, but rather as a result of an inadvertently and perhaps unavoidably incomplete representation of the tenet of reward and punishment. Apparently the author of this narrative felt that Antigonus could and should have exercised greater care and caution in conveying his

attitudes toward reward and punishment to his disciple so that there would be no room for misinterpretation and subsequent apostasy on the part of succeeding generations of disciples.

The possibility of an authentic tradition being lost was gravely exacerbated when a man intentionally led naive persons (disciples or lay people) astray and caused them to sin. Such a person was looked upon by the Tannaim as guilty of leading others to Gehinnom. Because of the depravity of the act as well as its catastrophic consequences, the perpetrator of such a deed forfeited any opportunity of repenting:

> Whosoever causes a community to do good, no sin will come through him, and whosoever causes the community to sin, no opportunity will be granted him to become repentant . . . lest he be in Gan Eden (Paradise) and his disciples be in Gehinnom (Hell), as it is said, A man that is laden with the blood of any person shall hasten his steps unto the pit; none will help him . . .[18]

Moreover the Sages made sure that accounts of such delinquent teachers were preserved in the literature, instead of removing them.[19] Perhaps this was for the benefit of later generations who would caution against circumstances allowing such a situation to arise.

Despite the disciples' dependence upon the teacher for spiritual and ethical enlightenment, we find numerous examples of disciples challenging a master on a particular point, either by word or deed. Although the phrase of courtesy, "Master, hast thou not taught us . . ." was utilized in introducing the disciple(s)'s objection, the

dynamics from which such contentions arose, differed from those discussed previously concerning classroom behavior. These latter disputes or disagreements were not part of the master's method of evaluating student competence. Instead, these were legitimate challenges to the master's conduct, which was perceived to be an improper or incorrect execution of a particular tradition or value-concept.[20] The nature of a particular challenge might have been a questioning of the master's performing a certain ritual (or failure to do so), which seemed to the disciple(s), as a contradiction to what the master himself had previously taught:

> Once when Rabban Gamliel married, he recited the Sh'ma on the first night (of the wedding feast). His disciples said to him, "Master, hast thou not taught us that a bridegroom is exempt from reciting the Sh'ma on the first night?" He said to them, "I will not listen to you, to cast off from myself the yoke of the kingdom of heaven even for a moment."[21]
>
> He washed himself on the first night of his wife's death. His disciples said to him, "Master, hast thou not taught us that a mourner is forbidden to wash himself?"
> He replied, "I am not like other men. I am delicate."[22]
>
> When his slave Tabi died he accepted condolence because of him. They said to him, "Master, hast thou not taught us that men may not accept condolence because of a slave?" He replied, "My slave Tabi was not like other men; he was a worthy man."[23]
>
> Once R. Judah after having had a seminal emission was walking along a river bank, and his disciples said to him, "Master, teach us a section from the laws of Derekh Erets." He went down and bathed and then taught them. They said to him, "Master, hast thou not taught us 'he (a person who has experienced a seminal emission) may repeat the laws of Derekh Erets (without bathing)'?" He replied, "Although I make concessions to others, I am strict with myself."[24]

> It is taught that R. Eliezer had a vineyard of the fourth year in Kefar Tabi to the east of Lydda, and he wanted to leave it for the poor.[25] His students said to him, "Master, your colleagues have overruled you and permitted it (you can redeem the fruit and bring only the money to Jerusalem.[26]

According to one account[27] R. Eliezer complied with what his disciples had related to him. The responses of Rabban Gamliel and R. Judah, however indicate that, at times, a teacher would knowingly act contrary to his own teachings if he felt he had valid personal reasons for doing so. Taking into consideration the emphasis and prominence that was given to the example set by the master for the disciples[28] we must ask whether or not personal reasons indeed constituted sufficient grounds for a master to depart from a practice he had advocated. Would not this departure, even if on a temporary basis, serve to confuse some students? How could a master teach one practice for others, yet personally practice an alternative, and would this not lead to the chaos which the masters were trying to safeguard against? Regretfully our sources do not convey any disciple reaction to such deviation. If there was indeed any at all, it can only be speculated or inferred. One inference derived from what has been observed might be that disciples also learned non-conformity, but such non-conformity to a set pattern of behavior was appropriate only in certain circumstances. Moreover, one had to be steeped sufficiently in knowledge to understand when deviation and departure from the norm was permissible, as

well as what their ramifications might be, especially in relation to disciples learning what the accepted halakhah really was.

A master's deviation from set halakhic practice, however, was not the only cause for challenging him. A student might be prepared to protest a particular course of action taken by the master if it was felt that such a course was outside the limits of rabbinic ethical propriety. Such a protest might be expressed as a direct rebuke to the master:

> Our Rabbis taught: After R. Meir's death, R. Judah announced to his disciples, "Let R. Meir's disciples not enter here, for they are disputatious and do not come to learn Torah, but to overwhelm me with halakhot."[29] Yet Symmachus[30] forced his way through and entered. He said, "Thus did R. Meir teach me: 'If one betrothes (a woman) with his portion (of a sacrifice) whether of the higher or lower sanctity, he has not betrothed (her)!.'"
> Thereupon R. Judah became angry with them and exclaimed, "Did I not say to you 'Let R. Meir's disciples not enter here, for they are disputatious and do not come to learn Torah, but to overwhelm me with halakhot . . .
> R. Jose said, "Shall it be said 'Meir is dead, Judah angry, and Jose silent? What is to become of the Torah?"[31]

R. Jose was willing to rebuke his teacher and risk falling into disfavor with him because he perceived R. Judah's remarks as improper and rude. Perhaps he sensed R. Judah's discomfort at the supposed threat to his ego. Nevertheless R. Jose decided that a temporary slight to his master's prestige would not be as distressing as a slight to Torah, however temporary it might be. The certainty of this decision seems to have given him the fortitude to challenge

his teacher and to call his behavior inappropriate.

The challenge did not always express itself in blunt, angry words. Occasionally it might be manifested in a much more subtle way. When the student was creatively subtle, the subtlety was not lost on the master; on the contrary, the message rang loudly and clearly:

> Rabbi once opened his storehouse in a year of famine, proclaiming, "Let those enter who have studied Scripture or Mishnah, or Gemara, or the Halakhah, or the Aggadah; there is no admission for the ignoramuses (amei ha-arets)." R. Jonathan b. Amram pushed his way in and said,
> "Master, give me food!"
> He said to him, "My son, have you learned, Scripture?"
> He replied, "No."
> "Have you learned Mishnah?"
> "No."
> "If not, how can I give you food?"
> He said to him, "Feed me as the dog and the raven are fed."
> So he gave him food. After he went away, Rabbi's conscience smote him and he said, "Woe is me, that I have given my bread to a man without learning!"
> R. Simeon b'Rabbi said to him, "Perhaps it is Jonathan b. Amram your student, who all his life has made it a principle not to derive material benefit from . . . the Torah." He enquired and it was discovered that it was so, whereupon Rabbi said, "All may now enter."[32]

We have seen that the master taught Torah not only in the legal discussions held in the classrooms or the courts, but also in setting an example for his disciples by living a pious and holy life. Every gesture was important: how he washed his hands, what blessing he recited before eating an apple or a potato. The disciple observed these closely in order to remember them and integrate them into his own lifestyle. He had to echo and imitate his teacher in order to fix them and do them on a

regular basis. We have seen that

> If the master was a living Torah, the disciple had to imitate each and every gesture of that incarnation to prepare himself for transmissions of upcoming generations.[33]

We have also observed how certain reminders directed to the master's sense of responsibility to function as role model of the ideal life served to reinforce it, and how the Sages understood the havoc which could be wrought by an individual who did not have this keen sense of responsibility. Such a person, according to the Sages could, either wittingly or unwittingly, cause the eradication of Torah. Furthermore we have observed the dynamics involved in a master's deviating from the letter or spirit of Torah (as he taught it)--how his disciples were quick to perceive it, and how their responses were determined by the nature of the change and the effect they hoped to make on the master. Learning from observation, however, was conditional on the other essential requirement which a student had to meet in order to become a Sage. This of course, was attending and serving the master. This was the <u>sine qua non</u> for attaining the status of a learned man: "Even if a man has studied Scripture and learned the Oral Law, but did not attend upon the Sages, he is still an ignoramus.[34] Modeling one's life after the master's depended on placing one's self in the service of the master. Without serving him, the disciple could not expect to observe his teacher in his everyday life:

> For studying Torah is through service of the master; through that service one learns to imitate his ways. How, after all, is the master himself supposed within the Torah-myth to have learned what he . . . teaches, if not through service to his master, and his to his, backward to Moses, "our Rabbi," who received the Torah and learned it from God Himself?[35]

Indeed the word for attendance upon the master, shimush, by extension came to be synonymous with the word for study, limud--not just theoretical study, but pragmatic study as well.[36] One learned the laws of daily living by actively serving scholars and watching them. Thus the level of knowledge attained by a student was directly proportional to the time and energy spent in ministering to his master(s). Indeed one Tanna is said to have praised the institution of shimush hakhamim to the degree that he attributed greater value and importance to it than to cognitive study:

> R. Jochanan said in the name of R. Simeon b. Yochai: The service of the Torah is greater than study, as it is said: Here is Elisha, the son of Shephat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah.[37] It is not said who learned, but who poured water. This teaches that the service of the Torah is greater than study itself.[38]

Perhaps this was merely rabbinic hyperbole, but it was certainly so to no greater degree than the comment attributed to R. Akiba which states that whoever does not make it a habit to attend upon the Sages has no share in the World to Come.[39] His student (and R. Simeon b. Yochai's contemporary) R. Meir is said to have expressed his teacher's sentiments in even more caustic terms:

> Whoever has a Sage in his vicinity and does not attend upon him, deserves death as it is said: For he despised the word of the Lord and broke his commandment; that soul shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be

upon him.[40]

Furthermore, according to an anonymous source, deficiency in this area generated the increase of legal disputes between the schools of Hillel and Shammai.[41] These four emphatic and perhaps extravagant statements regarding shimush hakhamim demonstrate clearly that it was taken to be a singularly important and vital aspect of a student's curriculum.

That the most minute detail, as well as an important legal axiom, could be learned through associating with scholars and serving them was not just a pious platitude preached by the Sages; it was attested to by personal experience:

> R. Judah said, "It was the Sabbath and I went to visit R. Tarfon at home. He said to me, 'Judah, my son, give me my sandal.' I gave it to him. He put out his hand toward the window and placed it on his staff. He said to me, 'My son, with this I made three lepers clean.' And I learned seven halakhot . . ."[42]

> R. Akiba said, "Thus was the beginning of my serving the Sages: Once I was walking on the road and I found an unburied corpse. I carried it four miles until I brought it to a cemetery and buried it.
> When I came and related the events to R. Eliezer and R. Joshua (his teachers), they said to me, 'For each and every step you took, it was as if you spilled that much more innocent blood.'
> I said to them, 'My masters, how so? If when I intended to do a worthy deed, I become culpable, how much the more so when I did not intend to do so?'[43]
> From that time I never ceased serving the Sages."[44]

Thus these two Sages relate personal experiences of learning something they had not previously known and might not have learned, had they not had these experiences which impressed upon them the value of attendance upon scholars.

Service was required of all students, particularly freshmen. As a student advanced in age and knowledge, his duties gradually decreased. Upon reaching the status of talmid ḥaver, he became a colleague of his teacher(s), albeit a junior one.[45] Though the student often engaged in menial tasks on his master's behalf, the standards and qualifications of a student worthy of service were not commeasurate with the simplicity of the tasks: they were much higher, for the opportunity to serve was a coveted one. In order to qualify the disciple had to have already reached a certain level, both in years and learning:

> (The) disciple of the Sages already knows the law. He is assumed not to be child, a beginner. He has mastered the rules sufficiently . . . He is a mature man, worthy of respect and honor. His "service" is not demeaning or degrading; he is not a slave . . . He is an honored man; he brings honor upon himself by his discipleship of the Sages. Not everyone is in his place. Only those who are worthy to imitate the master and learn the ways of Moses "our Rabbi" may take up the burdens of service.[46]

There were also practical reasons for this emphasis on service. The master-disciple relationship was perceived as being equivalent to that of the father-son relationship. We shall examine this more closely in the following chapter. Many students were transient, going from place to place, attracted by the prestige of various teachers. Although learning from more than one master posed the problem of confusing the student[47] he was later encouraged to learn oral traditions from one teacher and dialectics from several.[48] Once attached to a particular master, the

disciple was usually "taken under the master's wing" and supported with room and board. Since remuneration was not exacted for oral instruction, it would have only been fair to expect some sort of compensation from the student. In later times the Rabbis urged teachers to accept disciples' services graciously else they would deprive them of a kindness. Serving one's master would seem a logical corollary to the maxim "Let the honor of your teacher be like the fear of heaven":[49] it was the concrete expression of an abstract ideal.[50]

We have mentioned that many of the tasks performed by disciples were menial. Others were not. Whatever a student could do to serve his teacher was considered meritorious:

> Who is the one who honors his master? (The one who) feeds (him), gives (him) drink, dresses (him), puts his shoes on, helps him enter and leave (a premise), whether he is a Sage or a teacher . . .[51]

A disciple's helping his master to enter and leave a premise probably derived from the custom of accompanying the master. The only chore a student was not obliged to do was the removal of his master's sandal: this distinguished the disciple from a slave.[52] The disciple was also expected to assist in arranging the benches and/or mats in preparation for class.[53]

Two of the more important functions the disciple served were as chef and waiter during meals.[54] Interestingly enough, one school of thought marked a clear separation

between the two duties, as indicated by the practice of not serving one's master in the clothes one wore while preparing the meal:

> The school of R. Ishmael taught: One should not offer a cup of wine to one's teacher while wearing the garments in which one cooked a dish for him.[55]

Apparently this custom was derived from the biblical law (Lev. 6:4) which stated that the garments that the priests wore when officiating at the altar were not to be the garments for removing the ashes.[56] Wearing clean clothes while serving a meal was not only an expression of proper respect and etiquette but was also a further reminder of the conscious or unconscious association of serving the master with serving God. When the master became ill, disciples would care for him. Efforts at effecting a cure might take the form of preparing folk remedies[57] as well as praying on the master's behalf. The prayers of certain disciples were believed to have been efficacious in healing either the master or members of his family.[58] Similarly the sensitive and faithful master visited and cared for his disciples when they were ailing. Performing the various chores required to restore a student back to health was not beneath such a man; from such acts students (and other teachers) learned the meaning of lovingkindness:

> It once happened that one of R. Akiba's disciples fell sick, and the Sages did not visit him. So, R. Akiba came to the house to visit him, and because he swept and sprinkled the ground before him, he recovered. "My master, you have revived me?" he said. Then R. Akiba taught, "Whoever does not visit the sick is like a shedder of blood."[59]

Another service which a student often performed for his master involved attending him in the bathhouse and assisting him in preparing for his ablutions--helping him underss, carrying his clothes, heating the water, preparing the oil, etc. It also involved washing the bathhouse after the master had finished.[60] Such attendance provided the student with the opportunity to learn the rules of modesty within a framework of rabbinic custom. Paradoxically, the student learned these rules in what were admittedly intimate circumstances. Although a student might assist his master in preparing for bathing, he was not usually allowed to bathe with him. Only when his master required his attendance while in the bath was the disciple allowed to enter the bath itself.[61] Rashi explains that this prohibition arose out of consideration for the awe and respect which the student felt toward the master: should the student see the master exposed in the bath, this might result in embarassing the student, as well as diminishing the master's self-esteem.[62]

Despite the enormous emphasis placed on modesty and the desirable distance it placed between master and disciple, this rule of etiquette seems to have been violated occasionally, and in the name of Torah!

> It has been taught: R. Akiba said, "Once I went in after R. Joshua to a privy, and I learned from him three things . . ."
> Ben Azzai said to him, "Did you dare to take such liberties with your master?" He replied, "It was a matter of Torah, and I needed to learn."[63]

> It has been taught: Ben Azzai said, "Once I entered after R. Akiba to a privy, and I learned from him three things . . ."
> R. Judah said to him, "Did you dare to take such liberties with your master?" He replied, "It was a matter of Torah, and I needed to learn."[64]

In the name of learning Torah a disciple might resort to such actions in order to observe and learn from his teacher. Apparently such violations of even the most cherished moments of privacy were held to be legitimate.

In contrast to the common folk who paid respect to the Sages, the disciple had to go further. He naturally paid respect to his master and held him in awe. But his feelings had to be translated into the actions of service and ministering to the needs of his master. We have seen how this became, for the Sages, the sine qua non for acquiring true knowledge; one was not considered a true disciple of the Wise unless one engaged in it. What was learned was not only a certain humility and an appreciation of doing for other men, but the ways of righteous living were learned as well. Personal attendance led to imitation, and imitating the master was imitating, as it were, the Almighty. Torah was not only acquired cognitively; there had to be an affective component, creating emotions and attitudes within a student which could only be shaped and molded in observing the master live his life according to halakhah and imitating what he observed--the more significant acts as well as the minutiae. The master realized his responsibility to his students and tried to act accordingly.

We have been probing the dynamics of the master-disciple relationship of the Tannaitic period. By showing various attitudes and presenting passages which concretize them, we have tried to demonstrate how the sources portray this relationship to be one of trust, respect and mutual love. We now look at it in light of another relationship which is also characterized by trust, respect and mutual love--the father-son relationship.

NOTES

CHAPTER VI

1. Dov Peretz Elkins, Humanizing Jewish Life (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1976), p. 113.

2. Cantor, Process, p. 70.

3. M. Kadushin, The Rabbinic Mind (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1952; third ed., 1972), p. 7.

4. Cantor, Process, p. 40 (italics mine).

5. J. Neusner, Invitation to the Talmud (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 270.

6. H. Gollancz, Pedagogics of the Talmud and That of Modern Times (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 35.

7. Neusner, Invitation, p. 7.

8. Ibid., p. 70. A possible exception to a master's teaching by example would be R. Meir's learning from Elisha b. Abuyah. The text relates that the Amoraim had an argument as to how R. Meir could have learned from Elisha after his apostasy. The resolution was "R. Meir ate of the pomegranate, but threw the peel away." In other words, despite Elisha's sinful life, R. Meir still received valuable instruction from his former teacher. See Hag. 15b. Also note Meg. 27b-28a, where students ask various teachers how to merit long life, and were answered with lists of simple, mundane acts to be performed, or refrained from.

9. Tos. Ber. 1:4 (italics mine); see also Ber. 11a.

10. See the section on memory in ch. 2.

11. Avot. 4:13.

12. Herford, Ethics, p. 111.

13. Avot 1:11.

14. Herford, Ethics, pp. 30f.

15. See Maimonides on Avot 1:11. Also cf. Herford, ibid.

16. Antigonus of Sokho supposedly taught that reward or punishment was no reason to serve God. Cf. Avot 1:3.

17. These sects denied the afterlife and bodily resurrection. See ARN ch. 5 (ed. Goldin, p. 39).

18. Yoma 87a. The verse is from Prov. 28:17. See also Tos. Yoma 4:10-11.

19. Sotah 47a; San. 107b; Hag. 15b.

20. The challenge came from disciples who were eyewitnesses, and not from those who merely suspected a teacher.

21. Ber. 2:5. Cf. Ber. 16b.

22. Ber. 2:6.

23. Ber. 2:7.

24. Ber. 22a. This passage is found in the midst of a discussion on what can and cannot be taught by one suffering from a flux or a seminal emission and needing a ritual ablution. Apparently R. Judah had taught that the laws of Derekh Erets could be taught without ritual ablution.

25. In order that they would gather the fruit and bring it to Jerusalem, which was the custom.

26. This abrogated the former takkanah which disallowed the bringing of money to Jerusalem if the vineyard was within a day's walk of Jerusalem. See Bets. 5a-5b; Tos. Ma'aser Sheni 5:16.

27. Tos. M'aser Sheni, ibid. L. Finkelstein has shown that R. Akiba was known to be a challenger of his teachers' departure from custom. See Akiba, pp. 92-135 and notes.

28. Supra, note 9.

29. R. Meir's disciples, like their master, were shrewd in their ability to deduce laws through complex casuistry. Because of their skill, R. Judah saw them as a threat to him and his way of teaching.

30. A student of R. Meir.

31. Kid. 52b.

32. B.B. 8a.

33. J. Neusner, The Way of Torah (Encino: Dickenson Publishing Company, 1974), p. 49. This was the rationale

of Akiba who followed R. Joshua into the privvy to watch his procedure there. See Ber. 62a.

34. Ber. 47b; cf. Sotah 22a; Derekh Erets 2:8 (ed. Higger).

35. Neusner, Invitation, p. 70.

36. See Yer. Hag. 3:1; Yer. Shab. 10:5; Hul 54a. Also cf. L. Ginzberg, "The Significance of Halakah for Jewish History" Of Jewish Law and Lore, p. 247, note 13.

37. II Kings 3:11.

38. Ber. 7b.

39. ARN, ch. 36 (ed. Goldin, p. 152).

40. Derekh Erets 11:14 (ed. Higger).

41. Tos. Hag. 2:9. However, Ginzberg understands this statement as more of a compliment to the disciples than a derrogation:

> ". . . let no one fall into the error of imagining the tannaim were criticizing the disciples of Shammai and Hillel as lazy . . . this statement, understood correctly, does not blame but rather praises. Even though the tannaim couched their comment in negative terms, we can describe the situation affirmatively as follows: When the well-trained disciples of Shammai and Hillel increased, controversies increased in Israel . . . until the time of Hillel and Shammai, the form of study was not theoretical, but practical and pragmatic; that is, the accent was laid on correct action rather than pure study, and the disciples learned from the example of their masters how they were to act in order to assure themselves of life eternal. Since men are not temperamentally alike, it was inevitable that differences occurred among spiritual leaders, particularly between the conservatives and the progressives. As long as the number of disciples was not particularly large and most of the leaders belonged to the same class, controversies were neither numerous nor protracted and when something occurred which occasioned differences of opinion, a vote was taken to decide the enactment approximate to the immediate situation. However, beginning with the period of Shammai and Abtalion, who were 'great expounders' and increasingly in the days of the disciples of Hillel and Shammai, who broadened and deepened the logical categories by which the Torah was expounded, the method of study became more and more theoretical. Obviously, two people of diverse talents who investigate closely the implications of any enactment cannot but come to differing conclusions. This is what

is meant by the declaration that, when there was an increase in the number of disciples of Shammai and Hillel, who had not waited sufficiently on their masters, disagreements multiplied. The disciples of earlier generations were primarily interested in practical and pragmatic studies and there were therefore few disagreements among them; but the disciples of Shammai and Hillel emphasized theoretical investigation, and this caused greater disagreement." "Significance," pp. 94-95.

42. Tos. Negaim 8:2.

43. That is, "how could I be culpable when trying to do a good deed?"

44. Semahot ch. 4 (ed. Soncino, p. 346). Cf. Derek Erets 6:10. (ed. Higger).

45. Aberbach, "Institutions," p. 113.

46. Neusner, Invitation, p. 71.

47. Menahot 18a; Tos. Zevahim 2:17. See also Eruv. 53a, where R. Judah (an Amora) states that the knowledge of the Galileans, unlike that of the Judeans, could not endure because they (the Galileans) had learned from more than one teacher. Rashi explains that this was because the teachers spoke in different language which caused the students to forget what they had learned. Also cf. ARN ch. 8 (ed. Goldin, p. 49).

48. A.Z. 19a. Also see Landsberg, "Relationship," pp. 5-6.

49. Avot 4:15.

50. See Aberbach, "Relation," p. 3 and notes.

51. Derekh Erets 6:3 (ed. Higger). Cf. Kid. 31b-32a.

52. Ket. 96a.

53. Aberbach, "Relation," p. 5 and notes.

54. See Neusner, Invitation, where demonstrates throughout how table ritual was taught.

55. Yoma 23b; cf. Shab. 114a.

56. Ibid.; see also Rashi's comment.

57. Yer. Shab. 14:3; Yer. Ber. 1:2; Shab. 134a.

58. Ber. 34b.

59. Ned. 40a.

60. Shab. 40b.

61. Pes. 49a.

62. Ibid.

63. Ber. 62a.

64. Ibid. The Gemara also records an instance of a violation of the rules of modesty by a student of an Amora who hid under the bed of his teacher in order to learn the proper procedures of sexual intercourse. When discovered and reprimanded by his master, he gave the same reply--"it is Torah and I needed to learn."

Since this quote directly follows the previous one and is identical to it, one can speculate if there was a possible error in oral transmission regarding the names of these Sages.

CHAPTER VII

THE MASTER-DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP IN LIGHT OF THE FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIP

The relationship that evolved between a master and his disciple(s) was a "life-long discussion."[1] The medium of communication in this discussion, whose perennial topic of concern was the acquisition of Torah-learning, was not only oral discourse or recitation in the classroom in which the transference of ideas took place between teacher and pupil, but was also role-modeling, in which the concrete modes of behavior in routine daily life, paradigmatic of the concepts dealt with in the classroom, were demonstrated. Although the master was primarily the model for the disciple, occasionally the student might assume this role when necessary, i.e. when the student felt that his master's behavior was not sufficiently in line with the ideals of Torah, which were, of course, only learned from the master.

The master influenced the disciple significantly only when the relationship was able to grow over a long period of time. Such an observation was expressed later on by the Amora Rabbah, who said that a man does not come to know his master's mind (read learning or understanding) until after forty years.[2]

Because of the tremendous influence a teacher exerted on his students, as well as the significant amount of time necessary for the evolution of a solid relationship,

it is not incorrect to say that, besides a student's father, the teacher was the single most important personality in a disciple's life. Up to this point we have dealt with the relationship's various facets. We have tried to show how each succeeding level drew upon the level which preceded it. Parallels to the father-son relationship, although not pointed out specifically in the previous chapters, are certainly implicit in the areas that have been covered, e.g. role-modeling and personal attendance on the master. Teachers set examples out of a "parental" responsibility and students performed services out of filial love and respect.[3] This chapter will examine the master-disciple relationship specifically in the light of the father-son relationship, and will show when the Tannaitic teachers drew parallels and when they made distinctions between the two. As a father left his children an inheritance of his tangible property, so the master left his disciples a legacy of his knowledge and teachings. We will probe how this was passed on to the disciples--the disciples' responsibility to teach as his master, and the emphasis placed on perpetuating the master's memory by passing on traditions in his name. The last section of this final chapter will present various accounts of the deaths of several masters and will point out the various attitudes among students when confronted with their masters' deaths, as well as the importance of the final farewell which was part and parcel of the legacy left to them.

We mentioned above that due to the time master and disciple spent together and the influence the former exerted on the latter, the master was the single most important figure in the student's life. Later in this chapter it will be shown that the master was in reality considered by the Sages to be of greater importance to the student. We must reiterate however that it was not uncommon for a student to learn from several teachers. He would remain with one master until he had learned everything the master could teach him, at which time he was allowed to seek another master, especially when the first master knew himself to have a limited capacity.[4] To be sure, there seems to have been a disagreement as to the merits of learning under many teachers as opposed to learning under a single teacher. Those advocating the former were of the opinion that one might learn halakhot from one master, while learning dialectical skills from another. Other Sages do not seem to have been totally convinced of the efficiency of this method. On the contrary, they felt that learning under several teachers might result in confusing the student.[5]

Despite this hesitancy, the custom of learning from several masters seems to have been an accepted norm. A student judiciously selected those men who could offer what he desired to learn. Learning from many teachers, however, posed a problem for the student who wished to call one of them "my Teacher (par excellence)." Although the

problem might seem hypothetical, for the Rabbis it seems to have had very real ramifications, and therefore, had to be answered definitively:

> IF A MAN'S FATHER AND HIS TEACHER WERE EACH CARRYING A BURDEN, ETC. Our Rabbis taught: The teacher referred to is he who instructed him in Wisdom, not who taught him Bible and Mishnah:[6] this is R. Meir's view. R. Judah said: He from whom one has derived the greater part of his knowledge.[7] R. Jose said: Even if he enlightened his eyes in a single mishnah only, he is (considered) his teacher.[8]

As is evident, different Sages had different criteria as to which of a man's teachers might be called his Master par excellence. What is of significance here is not which criteria were legitimate, but rather that the Rabbis realized that the master-disciple relationship lent itself to comparison (and contrast) to the father-son relationship.[9] Indeed, for the Rabbis, they were fathers and their disciples were their children. They perceived the Deuteronomic command to "teach your children diligently" as singularly applying to them, fathers concerned with the apiritual well-being of their offspring:

> And thou shalt teach thy children:[10] these are your students, and thus you find it in every place that the students are called "children", as it is said: And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came out to Elisha.[11] And if they were "sons of the prophets" were they not students as well? Thus, this refers to students who are called "sons", and thus it says: And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came near to Elisha.[12] And if they were "sons of the prophets", were they not students as well? Thus, the students are called "sons", and thus you find it (similarly) with Hezekiah, king of Judah, who taught Israel the entire Torah and "called them "sons", as it is said" My sons, be not now negligent . . .[13] And just as the students are called "sons", so the master is called "father", as it is said: And Elisha saw it,

and he cried, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" And he saw him no more.[14] And it says: Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he was to die; and Joash king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over him and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!"[15]

It is not unthinkable that the master-disciple relationship, a synthetic association based on the mutual desire of giving and receiving knowledge, could not truly be the equal of the father-son relationship, with its bonds of consanguinity. It is not unthinkable especially when one remembers that teachers in contemporary society are not held in the same esteem in which the masters of Tannaitic Palestine were held. Today students do not (and are not expected to) perform the gestures of respect toward a pedagogue as was done in ancient times, nor do they spend the same amount of time with their instructors. Books, films, radio and television, usurping the teacher's role of "giver of knowledge," have not preserved the personal "give-and-take"element characteristic of all close human relationships.

Because the teacher was so vital to the development of the student, the Tannaim saw a natural parallel between teachers and students and fathers and sons. Besides the similarities in the respective duties and responsibilities found between the relationships, this parallel crystallized itself in various areas of Tannaitic legislation, where the roles and positions of fathers and sons and teachers and students were identical:

> The one who says the haftarah from the Prophets repeats also the blessings before the Sh'ma and passes before the Ark[16] and lifts up his hands (to give the priestly blessing if he is a kohen). If he is a minor his father or his teacher passes before the Ark in his place.[17]
>
> These, when they come of age may be believed when they testify of what they saw while they were yet minors: a man may be believed when he says, "This is my father's handwriting" or This is my teacher's handwriting . . ."[18]
>
> In cases of cleanness and uncleanness a father and his son, a master and his disciple count as two (witnesses), but in monetary cases, capital cases, cases involving flagellation, sanctifying the new month, and intercalating the year, a father and his son, a master and his disciple count only as one (witness).[19]
>
> . . . A father and a son and a master and a disciple may redeem second tithe for each other, and may feed each other with poor tithe.[20]
>
> Our Rabbis taught: Every scholar who feasts much in every place . . . desecrates the Name of Heaven and the name of his teacher and the name of his father . . .[21]

A word or two is in order concerning the passages from Tos. Sanhedrin 7:2, also found in T.B. Sanhedrin 36a and T.B. Kiddushin 32a. Rashi notes that in cases of cleanness and uncleanness, when the case is undecided and needs a ballot, the father and son, and the master and disciple count as two separate ballots. In capital cases, however, as well as in monetary cases, cases involving flagellation, sanctifying the new month (all of which require an odd-numbered court--twenty-three, three, three, and three respectively), and intercalation of the year (which needed a court of seven to decide)[22]--the father and son, as well as the master and disciple count as one vote. We must also note that in Tos. Sanhedrin 2:1 we find that for intercalation of the year the father and son count as two if they disagree,

and as one if they do not disagree. The passage does not mention master and disciple, causing us to ask: did the author of this passage overlook them, or was he of the opinion that a student would never disagree with his teacher, at least in regard to the intercalation of the year? Regarding the passage from T.B. Kiddushin 32a, the master and disciple were naturally close to one another, but in this instance were considered separate persons, and therefore when the master redeemed tithe for his disciple, he was not regarded as having redeemed his own.[23] Thus the master-disciple relationship was understood, in some circumstances, as paralleling that of the father and the son; when the father and the son were considered separate entities, so were the master and the disciple; when the former were considered as one entity, the latter were considered likewise.

Nevertheless it is clear from other sources, both halakhic and aggadic, that a student's ties to his master were ideally much stronger than his filial ones. For the Tannaim the central human relationship was in the school, not in the home. The master took the place of the father. Although the latter brought the student into this world, giving of his own flesh and blood to form the student's physical existence, the former would lead him into the World to Come by shaping his soul. Hence, the master deserved more veneration. If study was an act of piety, then the master was partly its object.[24] This idea was

concretized in a halakhic solution of the dilemma of master versus parent:

> If a man's own lost article and his father's lost article (need attention), his own takes precedence. His father's and his teacher's--his teacher's takes precedence because his father brought him into this world, whereas his teacher who instructed him in Wisdom, brings him into the World to Come. But if his father is a Sage,[25] his father's takes precedence. If his father and teacher were (each) carrying a burden, he must (first) assist his teacher to put it down and then assist his father. If his father and his teacher are in captivity, he must (first) redeem his teacher and then his father. But if his father is a Sage, he must first redeem his father and then his teacher.[26]

Another mishnah clarifies these decisions:

> . . . In the study of the Law, if the son gained much wisdom (while he sat) before his teacher, his teacher comes before his father in any case, since both he and his father are bound to honor the teacher.[27]

That this predilection for revering the teacher over the parent was so much a part of the rabbinic mind-set is further illustrated in a piece of legislation relating to hatarat nedarim--the annulment of vows.[28] R. Eliezer holds that the court should give the person who made the vow the opportunity to annul it out of regard to his parents' honor, believing that a person would tell the truth about his regret over making the vow in the first place. The majority of the Sages however, do not agree with R. Eliezer, suspecting that a person would indeed lie out of embarassment, and would say he felt regret (whether he genuinely did or not) out of regard to his parents' honor. They note that if such a person was genuinely regretful of making such a vow, there would be no need to

mention his parents at all.[29] Hence, the Rabbis presumed that a man would uphold his parents' honor and would not be so crass as to uphold his vow in spite of them; they suspected that a man would not be genuinely regretful of such a vow, but might lie out of shame and, therefore, they did not give him the opportunity to do so. However between R. Eliezer and the Sages there is no controversy in regard to the person's teacher--all agree that at the mention of his teacher by the court, the person would say that he would not have vowed, whether this be the case or not. The Rabbis believe he would definitely lie about his feeling of regret once the court mentioned the honor of his teacher. It is interesting to note that the reference to the teacher is made following a reference to God, which certainly would cause a man to express regret at having made a vow. Thus, all agree that should the court mention God or the teacher, the man would express regret, whether genuine or feigned. Should the court mention the man's parents, there is a controversy as to whether he would express feigned regret; he might dishonor his parents, but he would never dishonor his teacher (and a fortiori, God).[30]

In juxtaposing the master-disciple relationship to the father-son relationship we must realize that the former was of greater significance by virtue of the fact that the Rabbis perceived that talmud Torah (and Judaism) would be perpetuated through the former. It should be remembered that most of the Tannaitic period was an extremely difficult

time for rabbinic Judaism and the society in which it flourished. Roman emperors such as Hadrian were not as concerned with exterminating Jews, as they were with exterminating the religion of the Jews. Biological survival was not threatened; religious and spiritual survival was. Under Hadrian, assembling schools and ordaining disciples constituted capital offenses in which even the surrounding areas were made to suffer.[31] The Roman government understood that

> If the instruction of pupils by the teachers could be stopped, and the ordination of pupils as independent teachers could be prevented, then naturally a stoppage must occur in the life-current of Judaism.[32]

Knowing the type of crisis which the Jews faced at that time, it is not difficult for us to understand why the Rabbis would have put more emphasis on the master-disciple relationship. For them it was the only hope for Jewish survival; without dissemination of Torah, Jews would not be Jews, for Judaism, as the Rabbis understood it, would cease to exist. Because sages and students alike understood the ramifications of such a grave threat, superhuman efforts were made to insure that the learning process would continue. The literature has preserved accounts of these efforts. Not only do they reflect the ultimacy Torah-learning had (more than life itself) but they also depict the pathos and the passion evoked when life and limb were sacrificed for Torah and its teachers:

Five things did R. Akiba charge R. Simeon b. Yohai when

> he was imprisoned.[33] He (R. Simeon) said to him, "Master, teach me Torah." "I will not teach you," he (R. Akiba) replied (not wishing to endanger his disciple). "If thou wilt not teach me," he said, "I will tell my father Yohai and he will deliver thee to the authorities." "My son," answered Akiba, "more than the calf wishes to suck, does the cow desire to suckle." Said he to him, "Yet who is in danger: surely the calf is in danger."[34]

> Once the wicked government (of Hadrian) decreed that whoever performed an ordination should be put to death and whoever received ordination should be put to death, the city in which the ordination took place demolished and the (Sabbath) boundaries wherein it had been performed uprooted. What did R. Judah b. Baba do? He went and sat between two great mountains, between two large cities, between the Sabbath boundaries of Usha and Shefaram and there ordained five elders . . . As soon as their enemies discovered them he (R. Judah) urged them, "My children(!), flee!" They said to him, "What will become of thee, Master?" "I will lie before them like a stone which none (is concerned to) overturn," he replied. It was said that the enemy did not move from the spot until they had driven 300 iron spears into his body, making it like a sieve.[35]

The master wanted to teach his disciples as the cow wants to suckle her calf. Yet he also protected his charges as a lioness protects her cubs, often forfeiting her own life. In a time when the enemy desired to shut off the "life-current" of Judaism, both master and disciple risked all to insure that the current would continue to flow. The appreciation of their responsibility undoubtedly served to further cement the bonds between them.

If Torah was a patrimony, the master was the patriarch and the disciples were his heirs. The faithful transaction of their inheritance was pivotal to the inheritance not being totally forfeited. Just as an inheritance guarantees that the memory of the patriarch

will be preserved, so the disciples' preservation of the master's teachings served to insure the perpetuation of his memory in the Tradition. This was done through the practice of reporting traditions in the name of the master. That a dead teacher lived on through his teachings was expressed in a metaphor attributed to R. Simeon b. Yohai:

> The lips of a (deceased) scholar in whose name a tradition is reported in this world, move gently in the grave.[36]

Teaching what one had learned from one's master was understood by some Sages as the only legitimate way of continuing the Tradition. Such teachers followed this way often to the exclusion of any form of halakhic innovation. The paradigm of such an attitude was R. Eliezer b. Hyracanus, to whom the following is attributed:

> One who says something which he has not heard from his master causes the Divine Presence to depart from Israel.[37]

The same sentiment was also expressed in somewhat more positive terms:

> Anyone who reports something in the name of the one who said it brings salvation to Israel.[38]

R. Eliezer's conservatism was such that he would completely refrain from making new legal decisions on his own, and when asked to do so, would usually do his best to avoid it:

> Our Rabbis taught: It once happened that R. Eliezer spent the Sabbath in Upper Galilee in the sukkah of R. Johanan b. Ilai . . . and when the sun reached the sukkah he (R. Johanan) said to him, "May I spread a cloth over it?"[39] He (R. Eliezer) answered him, "There was not a tribe in Israel which did not produce a judge."[40] When the sun reached the middle of the sukkah, he said to him, "May I spread a cloth over it?" He answered him,

> "There was not a tribe in Israel from which there did not come prophets, and the tribe of Judah and Benjamin appointed their kings at the behest of the prophets." When the sun reached the feet of R. Eliezer, R. Johanan took a cloth and spread it over (the sukkah). R. Eliezer then tied his cloak, threw it over his back, and went out.[41] It was not in order to evade an answer (that he answered as he did) but because he never said anything which he had not heard from his master.[42]

When asked by colleagues about his apparent lack of creativity he replied:

> You wished to force me to say something which I have not heard from my teachers. During all my life no man was earlier than me in the college, nor did I ever sleep or doze at the college, nor did I ever leave a person in the college when I went out, nor did I ever utter profane speech, nor have I ever in my life said a thing which I did not hear from my teachers."[43]

From these two accounts it is clear that R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus took great pride in teaching only what had been taught to him by his own teachers. Perhaps he saw the teacher's function solely as the relayer of what had come before him to those who would carry on after him. To be sure, his attitude depicts an almost slavish preference for this particular pedagogical style. Had every teacher followed his example the development of Halakhah and its ability to adapt to changing social circumstances might have atrophied. Fortunately this was not the case. However, even when engaging in making new legislation one was advised to adhere to the master's basic ideas and methods of interpretation.[44]

Nevertheless, reporting in a teacher's name was considered meritorious. Of course reporting the author of

a tradition (whether a teacher or a colleague) proved helpful if only to enable a student to properly and logically compare statements.[45] But as we have suggested this custom had much more significance for the Tannaim: it insured that the individual master would be remembered in the chain of Tradition and that his particular contribution(s) would not be lost or given anonymously. This seems to be the basis for the familiar rabbinic formula "Rabbi A said in the name of Rabbi B."[46] From the many anonymous traditions found in the literature the ideal obviously was not always put into practice. Indeed the withholding of a master's name from his teachings was utilized as a punishment by R. Simeon b. Gamliel II to punish R. Meir and R. Nathan.[47]

When a disciple quoted his master he engaged in an act of piety and reference. It was a gesture of respect as a son would pay his father. When teaching in the name of one's teacher, one was obliged to begin, "Thus taught my teacher." If his father was his teacher he began, "Thus taught my father, my teacher." It should be noted that the teacher and father were never called by name. If a turgeman was employed, however, although he had to repeat verbatim what he heard, he was not to say "my teacher" or "my father, my teacher," but was to refer to Sage quoted by name. This was to insure against a tradition becoming corrupt. That is, if the turgeman repeated these phrases, the students might understand them as having originated

with his (the turgeman's) father.[48] Furthermore it is not inconceivable that a disciple might attribute a tradition to his teacher which he had not learned from him.[49] He might do so unwittingly or out of a misguided respect and reverence. Yet by orally "forging" his master's name he performed a serious disservice to the master. It was as serious as deleting his name from a tradition legitimately his; in either case, the tradition was corrupted.

Not only was a disciple expected to quote his master when stating a tradition, but he was also expected to quote it verbatim.[50] As we have already observed this was the reason for the emphasis on the development of the memory. Quoting verbatim was of such importance that obsolete words would still be employed as long as the master had used them:

> Hillel said: One hin of drawn water renders the immersion pool unfit. (We use hin and not log) only because a man must use the language of his teacher.[51]

The Rambam (Maimonides), commenting on this passage and emphasizing this particular responsibility of a disciple with some rabbinic hyperbole, suggests that Hillel followed the custom of repeating his teacher's words so meticulously as to mispronounce the word hin as his teachers did, even though he knew the correct pronunciation.[52] Thus, literal imitation of the master's words were expected of the disciple just as imitation of his behavior was. This was to insure that Torah would continue to be a working institution within a rabbinic framework.

At some point, disciples, by virtue of their demonstrating their competence, were ordained as rabbis. They were given the authority to adjudicate civil and ritual matters. Until Judah ha-Nasi (ca. 200 CE) consolidated the authority of ordination within the office of the Patriarchate, individual masters ordained their own disciples.[53] The sources, however, seem to reflect a certain ambivalence on the part of the Rabbis toward allowing a disciple to decide questions on his own. Undoubtedly disciples were exposed to the atmosphere of legal decision-making; their presence at sessions of the Sanhedrin and at the Court of Yavneh were taken as a matter of course. Disciples were allowed to participate in giving testimony during trials. We know that usually their testimony was only admitted if it supported the defendant's innocence.[54] When the court was ready to hand down a decision disciples were allowed, perhaps even encouraged, to state their opinions on the case.

The Sages showed care and insight in setting down guidelines for disciple input. They determined that in non-criminal cases, the g'dolim, the Sages with more erudition and experience, were to begin deliberation, whereas in capital cases, discussion was to begin with the disciples, the younger members of the court. This was done to prevent the disciples from being influenced by the more learned of the court, for it was understood that junior members might very well echo the words of their teachers

either out of a misguided respect or out of intimidation.[55] In anticipation of this possibility the Sages urged disciples to offer their own understanding of the matter at hand rather than rely on that of their teachers. To give this recommendation biblical support they cited Exodus 23:2: "Do not follow the multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou follow the multitude to pervert justice."[56]

Although a disciple might be acknowledged as having the capability to make a decision concerning a ritual matter for himself,[57] he was prohibited from making such decisions when they affected the lives of other individuals. He was, generally speaking, prohibited from adjudicating matters without his master's authorization, or in the presence of his master, or in the locale of his master's jurisdiction.[58] The gravity of transgressing this prohibition was articulated in the following passage, again attributed to the conservative R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus:[59]

> R. Eliezer stated, "The sons of Aaron died only because they gave a legal decision in the presence of their master Moses . . . R. Eliezer furthermore had a disciple who once gave a legal decision in his presence. "I wonder," remarked R. Eliezer to his wife Imma Shalom, "whether this man will live through the year." And he actually did not live through the year. "Are you a prophet?" she asked him. "I am neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but I have this tradition: whosoever gives a legal decision in the presence of his master incurs the penalty of death."[60]

R. Eliezer's words seem a bit exaggerated and it is unlikely that the disciple's death was due to his transgression of this prohibition. Indeed one scholar has suggested that R. Eliezer's attitude was probably not

accepted as the norm during his lifetime, but rather the prohibition of a disciple's making an independent decision stemmed from an incident which allegedly occurred during the time of Judah I:

> Once Rabbi went to a certain place and saw its inhabitants kneading dough without the necessary precautions against Levitical uncleanness.[61] Upon inquiry they told him that a certain scholar on a visit had taught them: Water of bitse'im (ponds) does not render food liable to becoming unclean. In reality he referred to betsim (eggs) but they thought he said bitse'im (ponds). They further erred in the application of the following mishnah: The waters of Keramyon and Pigah because they are ponds, are unfit for purification purposes . . .[62] Then and there it was decreed that a disciple must not give decisions unless granted permission by his teacher.[63]

Despite R. Eliezer's comments and the official decree of Judah I, this attitude of reluctance was thought to have been present in earlier days:

> Judah b. Tabbi said, "May I (never) see consolation (of Israel) if I did not execute a zomeim witness in order uproot (the false interpretation) from the minds of the Boethusians (Sadducees) who say: 'Zomeim (found guilty) were executed only after the (falsely) accused person had (actually) been put to death.'" Simeon b. Shetah said to him, "May I (never) see consolation (of Israel) if you have not shed innocent blood, for the Torah says: At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall he be killed.[64] Just as the witnesses must be two in number, so must the zomeim be two in number." Then and there Judah b. Tabbai resolved never to deliver a decision except by consent of Simeon b. Shetah.[65]

Moreover, the disciple, if he had the master's authorization to adjudicate matters, had to be a distance of three parasangs (one parasang=4000 yards) from his master's area of jurisdiction.[66] Another source claims the distance was to be twelve miles.[67]

Although the master might not authorize a disciple to decide legal matters unless the latter demonstrated a competence to do so, it is possible that the reluctance to allow him to do so while in the master's locale arose out of a desire to prevent infringement upon the master's authority, which would preclude preferment of the disciple at the expense of the master's own prestige. This problem seems to have rotated around a more fundamental question--whether honor should be shown to a disciple in the presence of the master. In Amoraic times, at the latest, this was a question which, evoked differences of opinion:

> And they (the daughters of Zelophahad) stood before Moses and before Eleazar the priest and before the princes and all the congregation.[68] Is it possible that they stood before Moses, etc. and they did not say anything to them (so that) they (had) to stand before the princes and all the congregation?--The verse is to be turned around and expounded;[69] these are the words of R. Josiah. Abba Hanan said in the name of R. Eliezer: They were sitting in the House of Study and these came and stood before all of them.--Wherein lies the dispute? One (R. Josiah) is of the opinion that honour may be shown to a disciple in the presence of the master,[70] and the other (Abba Ḥanan) is of the opinion that honour is not to be shown.[71] The law is (that honour is) to be shown. And the law is (that honour is) not to be shown.--Surely there is a contradiction between one law and the other?--To ere is no contradiction: one (refers to the case) where his master shows him (the disciple) respect; the other, where his master does not.[72]

Because this is a later source, we cannot be sure which of these two opinions was operative in the Tannaitic period, if either was operative at all! It would seem, however, that a master who respected a disciple and who had no qualms of showing him honour in public would not feel a great deal

of apprehension if the disciple adjudicated in his presence. On the other hand, the master who did not show respect for his disciple would certainly not allow him to adjudicate in his presence. It has been suggested that such a refusal was characteristic of a professional jealousy and a fear that the disciple might overshadow him. Thus the maxim "a man is not jealous of his disciple" while a nice thought, was probably not always representative of all relationships.[73] Although it would be unfair and unauthentic to subject such feelings to a psychoanalytic examination, we should remember that the Rabbis were human beings with human egos and human ego needs. Although the prime reason for putting qualifications on a disciple's activity in adjudication was certainly to insure that a disciple would not deliver incorrect decisions, it is not impossible that fear of encroachment into a master's sphere of influence also came into play here.

We have noted and demonstrated throughout this work that the master-disciple relationship was a life-long association. In this way it matched that of the father-son relationship. Once the interplay between master and disciple began, it endured until one or both died. Interestingly the relationship was later thought to transcend even death itself:

> Our Rabbis taught: When Rabbi was about to depart (from this life) he said, ". . . Joseph of Ḥaifa and Simeon of Efrat who attended me in my lifetime shall attend me when I am dead." (The Gemara explains that) . . . he was understood to mean "in this world." When it was seen however that their biers preceded his, (the

> two men died before Rabbi) (all) said that the conclusion must be that he was referring to the other world . . .[74]

During the Roman persecutions it was probably not uncommon for master and disciple to have met death together at the hands of executioners. However, sometimes the master was singled out for torture and subsequent execution, perhaps as an example (!) to his students of fate of one who defies the prohibition against teaching or practicing Judaism. Several scholars suffered martyrdom in this manner, but their fate does not seem to have significantly discouraged their disciples, nor disillusioned them with regard to their devotion. On the contrary, it was characteristic of them to be present during their teacher's tragic final moments; the master's final words were exemplary of the hope and faith which had characterized his life and which the disciples hoped would sustain them:

> When R. Akiba was taken out for execution it was the time of reciting the Sh'ma. While they were combing his flesh with iron combs he was accepting upon himself (the rule of) the Kingdom of Heaven. His disciples said to him, "Our Master, even to this point (are you willing to accept it)?" He said to them, "All my days I have been troubled with the phrase "With all thy soul--even when He takes thy soul." I said, 'When shall I have the opportunity of fulfilling this?' Now that I have the opportunity, shall I not fulfill it?"[75]

> When Hanina b. Teradion was executed the Romans wrapped him in a Torah scroll and set it afire . . . His disciples called out, "Master, what seest thou?" He answered, "The parchment is burnt, but the letters are soaring on high!"[76]

Of course the master need not have met death at the hands of the Romans for the disciples to come to pay their last

respects. Like dutiful children losing a parent they gathered to be with the master in his last moments and to say good-bye. It was a duty they performed even when they had been delinquent in their other duties to him:

> When R. Eliezer fell sick, R. Akiba and his companions went to visit him. He was seated on his canopied four-poster, while they sat in his salon. That day was Sabbath eve, and his son Hyrcanus went in to him to remove his tefillin. But his father rebuked him and he went out sadly. "It seems to me," he said to them, "that my father's mind is deranged.". . . The Sages (later), seeing his mind clear, entered his chamber and sat down at a distance of four cubits.[77] "Why have you come?" he said to them. "To study Torah," they replied. "And why did you not come before now?" he asked. They answered, "We had no time." He then said, "I will be surprised if these die a natural death." . . . His visitors then asked him, "What is the law of a ball, a shoemaker's last, an amulet, a leather bag containing pearls, and a small weight?"[78] He replied, "They are unclean, and if so, they can be restored to cleanness just as they are." Then they asked him, "What of a shoe that is on the last?" He replied, "It is clean." In pronouncing this word, his soul departed.[79]

As can be seen from this passage and the following one, it was important to the disciples to be with their master before he died, for this was the last and perhaps the most significant opportunity to learn from him; it was an opportunity and an honor which they cherished:

> At the hour of the death of R. Eleazar b. Azariah, his students entered and sat before him. They said to him, "Our Master, teach us one (last) thing." He said to them, "My sons, what shall I teach you? Go out, and let each man be solicitous for the honor of his colleague, and at the time when you stand to pray, know before whom you are standing to pray, for on account of this will all of you enter the World to Come.[80]

Because meriting the World to Come was the ultimate and logical reward for a life lived in piety, the disciples

naturally assumed that their master would receive his due portion in it. Thus their request for meaningful "last words" was sometimes centered on how to gain their own portion in the World to Come:

> Our Rabbis taught: When R. Eliezer fell ill his disciples went into visit him. They said to him, "Master, teach us the paths of life so that we may merit life in the World to Come." He said to them, "Be solicitous for the honor of your colleagues, keep your children from meditation,[81] and set them between the knees of scholars, and when you pray, know before whom you are standing and in this way you will merit the future world."[82]

One source declared that just to have been present at the death of Rabbi (Judah I) was sufficient to merit life in the World to Come:

> On the day that Rabbi died a <u>bat kol</u> (heavenly voice) went forth and announced: "Whosoever has been present at the death of Rabbi is destined to enjoy life in the World to Come."[83]

As children requested a blessing from a dying parent, so disciples asked a final blessing from the dying teacher:

> When Rabban Yohanan b. Zakkai fell ill, his disciples went in to visit him . . . They said to him, "Master, bless us." He said to them, "May it be (God's) will that the fear of Heaven shall be upon you like the fear of flesh and blood." His disciples said to him, "Is that all" He said to them, "If only (you can attain this)! . . ."[84]

> When he (R. Joshua b. Korba) was about to depart life, Rabbi said to him, "Bless me." He said to him, "May it be Heaven's will that you attain half of my days." "Not the whole length?!" he exclaimed, "Shall those who succeed you pasture cattle?"[85] (he replied).[86]

Lying on his death bed with his disciples gathered around him, a Sage must have felt a certain satisfaction that his life had been successful. Perhaps the satisfaction also stemmed from the knowledge that he would live on, as it

were, through his teachings which his disciples would hand down to students of their own. It was like a father knowing that his children would take care of the business he had spent his entire life building. Like children losing their beloved father, disciples reacted to losing their master with a great deal of remorse and disorientation. It was difficult to accept the fact that he, like other mortals would die. Sometimes they showed signs of denial, a psychological phenomenon characteristically found in those confronting the death of a loved one. Rabbi's associates forbade anyone to report his death:

> On the day that Rabbi died . . . they said: "Anyone who says that Rabbi has died, will be stabbed with a sword." . . . "Go and investigate (his condition)," the Rabbis said to Bar Kappara. He went, and finding that he had died, tore his cloak and turned the tear backwards. (He returned) and said, "The angels and the mortals have taken hold of the Holy Ark. The angels have overpowered the mortals and the Holy Ark has been captured." They asked him, "Has he gone to his eternal rest?" He replied, "You have said it; I have not said it."[87]

The disciples attachment for the master and their concern with their own sense of personal loss upon the death of the master, often caused them to be somewhat unaware of how much the master was suffering while alive. This was somewhat ironic in that their association with him had always been one of empathy--trying to feel as the master felt. When the master needed consolation during this critical period, it was stifled by the disciples' own anxiety. Like children feeling abandoned, their efforts to keep him in their midst caused him to linger:

> On the day Rabbi died, the Rabbis decreed a public fast and offered prayers for mercy . . . Rabbi's servant girl went up to the roof and said, "The angels desire Rabbi and the mortals desire Rabbi. May it be the will (of God) that the mortals may overpower the angels." When however, she saw how often he resorted to the privy, painfully taking off his tefillin and putting them back on again, she prayed, "May it be the will (of God) that the angels may overpower the mortals." As the Rabbis incessantly continued to pray for mercy, she took a jar and threw it down from the roof to the ground. They were silent (for a moment) and the soul of Rabbi departed in peace.[88]

Likewise, they overlooked the spiritual pangs their master might have felt when confronted with his own mortality before the end:

> When Rabban Yohanan b. Zakkai fell ill, his disciples went to visit him. When he saw them he began to weep. His disciples said to him, "Lamp of Israel, Pillar of the right hand, Mighty Hammer, why art thou weeping?" He replied, "If I were being taken before a human king who is here today and tomorrow is in the grave, whose anger if he is angry with me does not last forever, who if he imprisons me does not imprison me forever and who if he puts me to death, does not put me to everlasting death, and whom I can persuade with words and bribe with money, even so I would weep. Now that I am being taken before the supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, who lives and endures forever and ever, whose anger if he is angry with me is an everlasting anger, who if He imprisons me imprisons me forever, who if He puts me to death puts me to death forever, and whom I cannot persuade with words or bribe with money-nay, moreover, there are two ways for me, one leading to Paradise and the other to Gehinnom, and I do not know by which I shall be taken, shall I not weep?"[89]

When a Sage died his academy went into mourning. When R. Judah ha-Nasi died, classes ceased for thirty days. From then on, they mourned during the day and studied at night, or did the reverse, until a year of mourning had passed.[90] As one mourned for a parent, so he mourned for his teacher:

> Our Rabbis taught: These are the rents that are not (to be) sewed up: (The rent from) one who rends his clothes for his father, his mother, or his master who taught him Wisdom . . .[91]

The Amoraim later based this on the classical verse which parallels parent with teacher:

> Whence do we derive (these rulings)? From what is written: And Elisha saw it and he cried, "My father, my father the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.[92] My father, my father--that is, (to rend) on the loss of one's father or mother. The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof--that is, (for) a master who taught one Torah.[93]

Furthermore, in later times it was decreed that when a scholar died, everyone was to rend his/her clothes and bare the shoulder, for although he was not necessarily a close relative, he was like a close relative to all.[94]

It is interesting to note that even in mourning, the student's devotion to his deceased master might surpass the reverence due a deceased parent. To show this we offer the example of R. Akiba, who, according to one source, did not mourn for this father in the customary way:

> One does not bear (the shoulder) for the dead in general, but only for one's father, and mother; and if they are unworthy, he does not rend for his father and mother. It is related that when R. Akiba's father died, those present bared (the shoulder) but he did not.[95]

To be sure, a later legal code states that if the son is a distinguished scholar, it would be undignified for him to be seen with bare shoulders.[96] However when R. Akiba's teacher, R. Eliezer, died, his grief was almost uncontrollable:

> . . . he beat his flesh until the blood flowed down upon the earth. Then R. Akiba commenced the funeral address . . . and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof. I have many sins, but no moneychanger to accept them.[97]

Apparently for R. Akiba the loss of his flesh-and-blood relative was not nearly as painful to him, as was the loss of his teacher who could no longer answer his questions.

But such indications only support what we have already stated--the master was of more value to the student than his own parents because he held the key to the student's future afterlife. To parody a cliche, Torah (and its reward, the World to Come) was thicker than blood.

In concluding this chapter let us present an observation made by a modern scholar of rabbinic literature, which not only reiterates the preeminence of the master over the parent as conceptualized by the Rabbis, but also succinctly offers a type of gestalt for this phenomenon:

> . . . the effort to replace the father by the rabbi symbolizes a struggle equivalent to the effort to replace the concrete, this-worldly government of ordinary officials by the . . . supernatural authority of the rabbi qualified by learning of the Torah and capacity to reason through it. The Roman authority . . . ruled through force or the threat of force. The rabbinical figure compelled obedience through moral authority, through the capacity to persuade and to demonstrate through affective example (!), what the law required. Both political and familial life thus was to be rendered something other than what seemed natural or normal. Everyone could understand the authority of the gendarme, the priority of the father. But to superimpose the rabbi both in politics and the family represented a redefinition of the ordinary sense of politics and the plain, accepted meaning of the family. It made both into something abstract, subject to a higher level of interpretation than an ordinary person might readily perceive.[98]

NOTES

CHAPTER VII

1. Landsberg, "Relationship," p. 5.

2. A.Z. 5b.

3. See Kid. 31b-32a, for ways of honoring teacher and father.

4. Landsberg, "Relationship," p. 16.

5. See Ch. 5, note 47.

6. "Wisdom" was the ability to intelligently understand the Mishnah, the grounds for its statements, and the ability to reconcile opposing mishnahs (see Rashi to B.M. 33a).

7. Whether Bible, Mishnah, or dialectical skills.

8. B.M. 33a; Tos. B.M. 2:30. Cf. Tos. Horayot 2:5; Yer. Hor. 3:4.

9. The master-disciple relationship has also been likened to that of a bridegroom and a bride:

> "When R. Eleazar b. Arach began to expound on the works of the chariot, R. Yohanan b. Zakkai descended from his donkey. . . They went and sat under a tree. Fire descended from heaven and encircled them and there were ministering angels who danced before them as wedding guests rejoicing before the groom." (Yer. Hag. 2:1, p. 77 ed. Kotorchin).
>
> The simile indicates an implicit connection made by the author of this mishnah between the mutual love and devotion between a master and a disciple and that of a husband and a wife newly married.

10. Deut. 6:7.

11. II Kings 2:3.

12. Ibid., 2:5.

13. II Chron. 29:11.

14. II Kings 2:12.

15. Ibid., 13:14. See Sifre to Deuteronomy, "Va'ethanan," piska 34 (ed. Horowitz), p. 61.

16. To say the Amidah.

17. Meg. 4:5. Cf. Meg. 24a.

18. Ket. 2:10.

19. Tos. San. 7:2. Cf. San. 36a.

20. Kid. 32a.

21. Pes. 49a.

22. Tos. San. 2:1.

23. Kid. 32a, p. 155, note 8 (ed. Soncino).

24. Neusner, Way, p. 48.

25. The Munich Codex adds "Whose learning is equal to that of his teacher." Cf. Yer. Hor. 3:4.

26. B.M. 2:11; B.M. 33a. Bertinoro comments that "his teacher" refers to the one he learned the most knowledge from. See note 7. Also see Hor. 13a and Tos. Hor. 2:5 where it is stated that when a man, his father and his teacher are in captivity, and one is to be ransomed, the man precedes his teacher, who precedes his father but should his mother be in captivity with them, she is ransomed before them for her disgrace is greater (Rashi).

27. Keritot 6:9. Bertinoro, commenting on the phrase "in any case," notes that it refers to retrieving a lost article, helping with a burden, or ransoming from captivity. If the disciple's father was a Sage, he was to take precedence over the teacher, regardless of the fact that the student learned most of his knowledge from the teacher (not the father) and regardless of the quantity of the father's knowledge.

28. Yer. Ned. 9:1.

29. Ibid. See P'nei Moshe on this passage.

30. Ibid. Cf. Avot 4:15; Pes. 22b.

31. San. 14a.

32. Graetz, History, 2:426.

33. Akiba was imprisoned for defying Hadrian's edict against the study and practice of Judaism. He was later martyred.

34. R. Simon pleaded to be allowed to take the risk. See Pes. 112a.

35. San. 14a.

36. Yev. 97a.

37. Ber. 27b.

38. Avot. 6:6 Cf. Kallah, no. 24 (51b), Minor Tractates (ed. Soncino, p. 412).

39. To provide more shade, the point of the question was whether the spreading of the cloth is regarded as an extension of a temporary tent which is forbidden on the Sabbath. See Suk. 27b (ed. Soncino, p. 121, note 5).

40. R. Eliezer tried to change the subject.

41. So that he would not be responsible for R. Johanan's action.

42. Suk. 27b.

43. Suk. 28a.

44. Aberbach, "Relations," p. 19 and notes.

45. Drazin, Education, p. 113.

46. Herford, Ethics, p. 158.

47. Hor. 13b.

48. Kid. 31b.

49. Landsberg "Relationship," p. 25. Cf. Aljoris comment on Hag. 14b where he suggests that R. Eliezer b. Arach attributed his knowledge of the Works of the Chariot to R. Yohanan b. Zakkai out of humility, even though he might not have acquired this knowledge from him originally.

50. Avot 6:6.

51. Eduyot 1:3. Cf. Shab. 15a. I. Halevy in Dorot Rishonim, 1:95-9, explains that the word hin was a biblical word and not a mishnaic word. Nevertheless Hillel used it out of his desire to utilize his teacher's words.

52. Rambam on Eduyot 1:3.

53. Guttmann, Making, p. 246.

54. San. 5:4; Tos. San. 9:3.

55. Tos. San. 7:2; Cf. San. 32a and Rashi.

56. Tos. San. 3:8.

57. Hor. 1:1. Cf. Eruv. 63a.

58. Aberbach, "Relations," pp. 12f, cites Eruv. 62bff., suggesting that in later Amoraic times, a disciple who had reached the level of talmid haver and was the intellectual equal of his master, might be allowed to give legal decisions in his master's area of jurisdiction while the master was yet alive. However see Sifra, Metsorah, end of Negoim (ed. Weiss).

59. Some believe this R. Eliezer to be R. Eliezer b. Jacob. See Bayit Hadash to Eruv. 63a.

60. Eruv 63a; Yoma 53a. Rashi and the Tosofists suggest other reasons for their death. See Yoma 53a loc. cit.

61. Lev. 11:38.

62. Cf. Parah 8:10 and B.B., p. 298, note 10 (ed. Soncino). Also cf. Num. 19:17.

63. San. 5b. Cf. Aberbach, "Relations," p. 10. This decision might have been made before the authority to ordain was placed solely in the hands of the nasi. See Guttmann, Making, p. 247.

64. Deut. 17:6.

65. Tos. San. 6:6; Mak. 5b.

66. San. 5b, Cf. Eruv 63a.

67. Yer. Gittin 1:2 (43c). In Amoraic times it was decided that when no master was available for a decision, a disciple could give the decision. To prevent one from transgressing a commandment, a disciple could decide even in his master's presence. Cf. Eruv. 62b-63a and Aberbach, "Relations," p. 12.

68. Num. 27:2.

69. They came just to the congregation, then to the Princes, to Eleazar, and finally to Moses.

70. He maintains that they just went to the others (Moses' disciples) and then to the master himself (Moses).

71. That is, the case had to be submitted to Moses himself.

72. B.B. 119b; Y. Sotah 40b and 41b; Yoma 69a.

73. Landsberg, "Relationship," p. 23. Cf. San. 105b.

74. Ket. 103a.

75. Ber. 61b.

76. A.Z. 18a.

77. He had been excommunicated and others had to maintain a distance of four cubits from him.

78. The question deals with their subjection to uncleanness. Cf. San. 68a, p. 462, note 1 (ed. Soncino).

79. San. 68a.

80. Pirke Ben Azzai 1:4 in Minor Tractates (ed. Higger).

81. I.e. idle talk (Rashi).

82. Ber. 28b.

83. Ket. 103b.

84. Ber. 28b.

85. Succeeding scholars also needed positions of dignity.

86. Meg. 28a.

87. Ket. 103b.

88. Ibid.

89. Ber. 28b.

90. Ket. 103b; M.K. 22b.

91. M.K. 26a.

92. II Kings 2:12.

93. M.K. 26a.

94. M.K. 25a.

95. Semahot 9:3, p. 374 (ed. Soncino),

96. Ibid., note 9.

97. San. 68a.

98. Neusner, Invitation, pp. 234f.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION-
THE "VALUE" OF THE MASTER-DISCIPLE RELATIONSHIP

Throughout this thesis we have been concerned with how the master-disciple relationship in Tannaitic times served as the mechanism by which Jewish tradition was transmitted through the generations. We have seen that this period was marred with disintegration and instability, challenge and change, and that society (through the Sages) clung to the solidity and stability of Torah. In a sense, master handing down traditions to disciple, disciple handing down to his disciple, forged the bond linking segments of time together. Furthermore we have delineated the elements that formed the adhesiveness of that bond--etiquette in and out of the classroom; leisure time spent together; responsible wielding of authority and respectful submission to it; attendance upon the Sages and its counterpart, pedagogical role-modeling; a mutual love and closeness characteristic of a parental-filial relationship.

Thus far, we have presented these elements as one sets pieces into a picture puzzle. The pieces fit and the puzzle is complete. It is now that we must stand back and look at it in some over-all perspective. In doing so, the utilization of the methodology worked out by Max Kadushin will be helpful, namely that of working <u>value-concepts</u> as they appear in rabbinic literature. Although a summary of this system may not appear to have any <u>direct</u>

bearing on what has come before this, it is believed that such an explanatory summary (a somewhat lengthy one, to be sure) will put the master-disciple relationship into this desired perspective. We will show how the study of Torah, perceived by the rabbinic psyche as a primary value-concept within the fundamental value-concept of Torah, was concretized and intensified through the master-disciple relationship. In doing so we will also demonstrate how the relationship itself can be understood as an auxiliary concept to this primary value-concept of talmud Torah.

Because they are not two distinct entities, the individual and society are not set up against one another. To stabilize society and to allow for the expression of the self, certain ideas, or values, evolve and this is particularly true concerning the society in which rabbinic Judaism evolved.[1] Every individual expresses his personality by means of these value-concepts, each of which has a name or symbol in which it is "crystallized."[2] Since society was the basic reservoir of these value-concepts, every individual in the society expresses and develops his personality by the same means: "the individual is formative of the society, the society is formative of the individual."[3] Thus, value-concepts play a decisive role in both the development of the individual and the stabilization of society. It is important to understand that these value concepts are not subjective attitudes toward one's environment, nor are they "value judgments,"

revealing a bias of some kind.[4] Kadushin suggests that it is the factor of being "embedded" rather than named that has contributed to value concepts remaining virtually unnoticed. In reality the term "value-concept," unsatisfactory as it is, has the advantage of relating that such values can be communicated to the society as a whole (hence the label "concept"), and that what is communicated has a certain degree of subjectiveness and personal meaning (hence the adjective "value"). What it does not relate is that these particular ideas are not only communicable, but that they are common in the life-experience of the people.[5]

Although they are common, they are also dynamic, in that they are not set up in a static system of propositions. It is only when they are used in one's speech or actions that the coherence and interrelationship of these concepts are demonstrated.[6] The principle of coherence here refers to an <u>organismic</u> coherence. What this means is that it is not a "logical" coherence, but rather one which makes for a "unity" of thought over periods of time, still allowing room for differing opinions due to different circumstances.[7] The inherent organismic relationship between all rabbinic concepts

> . . . is of such a nature that every concept must possess its own distinctive features, no matter how closely related it may be to another concept.[8]

> Organic concepts are concepts in a whole complex of concepts none of which can be inferred from the others but all of which are so mutually interrelated that every

> individual concept, though possessing its own distinctive features, nevertheless depends on its character on the character of the complex as a whole which, in turn, depends on the character of the individual concepts.[9]

Thus the relationship of one concept to another consists of each concept being related to the whole integrated complex. Although there is no hierarchy, rabbinic concepts blend into one another, woven out of four fundamental concepts which will be presented later.

To express a rabbinic value authentically, one cannot "define it"; one cannot put it in propositional form or express it as a complete idea. An attempt at formulation changes the character of the value. Kadushin makes the point that to "define" something means to take abstract concepts and agree in a formal manner on the precise, technical meaning of each, as in philosophy or science. But because the common folk also used these values as the Rabbis did, the values were never allowed to be technically defined, but rather reflected human experiences with all of their variations and contradictions. A definition puts boundaries on a concept. Rabbinic concepts had to remain undefined in order to keep their vital flexibility to interweave with one another. Yet at the same time, a particular value-term does convey an abstract generalized idea common to all members of the group, thus giving it a certain, recognizable character.[10] Because they do not refer to "matters of sense" and they do not reflect logical mind processes, these terms, employed

in various contexts, can grow in meaning and expand in context, and therefore, the actual terms are only connotations.[11]

Although we are speaking of abstract terms the values we are describing were concretized in the everyday life of the Sages and the people. They affected social relationships, making them a "necessary" ingredient of social intercourse.[12] Their concretization made for a religious life, for it organized and interpreted their life experiences,[13] and yet it was an habitual and unpremeditated part of the human character. It was the relationship between general ideas and particular instances in life that amounted to a continuous, moment-to-moment concretization. Because these values were part of the human character the presence of mutually exclusive values, although logically paradoxical, were really coherent in view of their organismic nature and in complete consonance with the human organism and its differences in moods and temperaments.[14]

Kadushin reminds us that although value-concepts are dominant in rabbinic literature, they were dominant in the life of the people as well. This is because the Rabbis were the intellectual leaders of the community, concerned with the educational and spiritual enrichment of the people. "So far as the valuational life is concerned, the rabbinic mind was also the mind, at best, of the common man.[15] He further states:

> The maintenance of the special character of the group is thus, to an extent, a matter of the transmission of the valuational terms. The rabbinic valuational terms formed part of the vocabulary of the people as a whole, of every individual member of the people, high or low, scholarly or non-scholarly. And being part of the vocabulary, they were transmitted from generation to generation as an integral element of the language, by interaction from infancy. Yet despite dynamic interaction within the group and with members of other groups, and despite changes in times and circumstances, all of which had their effects on the rest of the language, the valuational terms, as we know, remained fixed and stable throughout the entire rabbinic period. Since the terms which spelled the special character of the people were fixed and stable, that character remained constant generation after generation.[16]

Character remained constant due to teachers imparting its nature to disciples. The vehicles for this expansion of rabbinic value-concepts were Halakhah and Aggadah. Although Kadushin believes that Halakhah was the more important in the respect that the laws and ordinances were the most important product of the steady drive towards concretization,[17] Aggadah reflected the functioning of the value-concepts in day-to-day living, in speech and in actions.[18] Values had a strict character when expressed halakhically and a more fluid character when expressed aggadically. But both functioned to concretize the values of the Rabbis, even with their abstract terms.

There are, according to Kadushin's understanding, four fundamental value-concepts. These are Divine Justice, Divine Mercy, Israel, and Torah. Each of these, in turn, has its own sub-concepts. To focus on one, the concept of Torah possesses sub-concepts, such as study of Torah (talmud Torah) mitsvot, good deeds, and derekh erets (which in turn

has its own sub-concepts).[19] These sub-concepts are not inferred or subordinate to the fundamental concepts, but rather are primary to them. They are treated in the literature in the same way the fundamental value-concepts are, and can be classified as such only after much scrutiny.[20] In reality the relationship between them is such that they tend to be used as a unit. Yet at the same time the coherence is integrative, so that the four fundamental concepts are free to combine and interweave with each other and other sub-concepts. Any particular concept takes on meaning in the very process whereby it combined with the other concepts of the complex. This is the organic process. There is no hierarchy, and thus, no major or minor importance.[21]

There are rabbinic ideas which have not been sufficiently crystallized into value-concepts. This is usually evident by their lack of conceptual terms. Such an idea is called an auxiliary idea. It usually serves, so to speak, a primary value-concept, "broadening the range of the latter's manifestations or else placing the concept in bold relief."[22]

From what we have observed of the dynamics of the master-disciple relationship during the Tannaitic period and how it served to transmit a love of Torah through generations and thus keep that aspect of the character of the people constant, it is our belief that this relationship can be viewed as an auxiliary concept, broadening the range

of the manifestations of the primary value-concept, talmud Torah, and placing it in bold relief to others subsumed under the fundamental value-concept, Torah.

The study of Torah, for the rabbis, was one of man's primary duties. As a gift from God it was all-pervasive, and thus was a character-forming agency:

> It offered greatest joy, demanded complete dedication to itself, shaped careers, and permeated manners.[23]

Study required joy and awe; it required the complete personality. A worthy man could acquire the World to Come (another value-concept) by engaging in it. It drew man closer to God than did the ritual of sacrifice; through study, man did not need a priestly intermediary to enter into a direct and personal confrontation with the Deity. As we have observed, study of Torah could not be engaged in effectively by solitary individuals. It required "co-operative learning" in which teachers and students were partners in learning. They formed a social grouping and through study, applied it to everyday life seeking guidance for their conduct.

The learning that study of Torah facilitated imposed an obligation to teach others--a rabbinic noblesse oblige.[24] If Torah was the character-forming agency, then the master did indeed serve as the mechanism through which it operated. For the student, growth was an ever-deepening awareness of the values held sacred by society and their kinetic interaction with each other in

daily life. As a person developed, the more aware he became of them, the more his personality was enriched, and the more significant his everyday experiences became. Because concretization of these values was a moment-to-moment, day-to-day experience and was personified by the master's life and his setting the example for his disciples, their relationship was the vehicle by which the novice moved toward the appreciation of talmud Torah, its efficacy, and its interweaving with the values of good deeds, mitsvot, and derekh erets.

Without the unique interaction between master and disciple characterized by the various forms of ritualized behavior with which this thesis has concerned itself, it is doubtful that the rabbinic value-concepts and their derivative images and metaphors could have maintained themselves through the challenges of the time in which they were espoused. The master facilitated the awareness of these values in his students; he was the gorame,[25] as it were, the "cause" by which his disciples achieved the holy life. As fertilizer to seed, he was the catalyst, fostering a knowledge and an appreciation of Torah. This is how the relationship, as an auxiliary concept, served to broaden the range of the manifestations of the primary value-concept, talmud Torah, putting it in bolder relief. Again (Kadushin notwithstanding), if the value-concept of Torah were to be conceptualized as a chain extending through time and space, the master-disciple relationship would be the bond linking

the segments of its development together. When a disciple memorized his master's traditions and imitated his behavior, and in turn taught his own disciples by quoting his master and emulating his behavior for them, then both master and disciple participated in this timeless process, reifying and sustaining the value-concepts inherent in the traditions they received and imparted. In this way they affected eternity.

NOTES

CHAPTER VIII

1. Kadushin, Mind, p. 8.
2. Ibid., p. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 8 quoting Whitehead.
4. Ibid. p. 3.
5. Ibid., p. 4.
6. Ibid., p. 5.
7. Idem., Organic Thinking, p. 3.
8. Ibid., p. 8.
9. Ibid., p. 184.
10. Idem., Mind, p. 2.
11. Ibid., p. ix.
12. Idem., Thinking, p. 179.
13. Ibid., p. 180.
14. Ibid., p. 179.
15. Idem., Mind, p. viii.
16. Ibid., pp. 78-79 (Italics mine).
17. Ibid., p. 96.
18. Ibid., p. 59.
19. Ibid., p. 15.
20. Ibid., p. 16.
21. Ibid., pp. 22f.
22. Ibid., p. 54.
23. Idem., Thinking, p. 43.

24. Ibid., p. 64.

25. J.L. Kessler, "The Gorame: A Theological Comment" Central Conference of American Rabbis Journal 21 (Winter, 1974).

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