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THE QUESTION OF THE LAW  
IN  
EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

A SKETCH OF THE JEWISH LAW FROM  
444 B. C. TO 135 A. C. WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS CONNECTION WITH  
THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY.

Leon M. Nelson

[1898]

70<sup>c</sup>  
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PREFACE.

CHANGE OF SUBJECT - CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THESIS  
WAS WRITTEN - CHARACTER OF THE THESIS - AID RECEIVED -  
AUTHORITIES CONSULTED.

Previous to the summer vacation of 1897, I had selected as a subject for graduation thesis, the consideration of the *הרחקת הגשמות* in pre-Maimonidean literature. On my return, I determined for various reasons to set aside whatsoever work I had done with a view to showing the de-anthropomorphizing tendencies in Jewish philosophical literature.

About the beginning of last November, at the suggestion of Dr. Deutsch, I finally decided to discuss "The Question of the Law in Early Christianity." But not even the short space of four months was granted me for the progressive unfoldment of the subject chosen. Circumstances over which I had no control combined to interrupt very seriously my work, especially in the preparatory stages.

Naturally in view of the foregoing, it is with some hesitation that I present this thesis to your honorable body. Under such conditions I have not attempted to secure originality at the possible cost of curious theories, and crude, startling hypotheses. Realizing the great temptation to which young students are said to be peculiarly liable, viz: the inordinate desire of excessive originality, the almost passionate longing for the discovery of ideas that have the virtue of being novel, howsoever absurd and ridiculous those ideas may chance to be; realizing I say this great danger, I have rather endeavored to

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follow humbly and reverently in the trail of the great masters to whom the world is indebted for much of the knowledge of this most interesting period in the religious development of Israel.

It will hardly be necessary, therefore, for me to state that I do not claim credit for even nine-tenths of the ideas treated of in the course of this thesis. Let no one expect, therefore, to find here any unheard of method of dealing with this all important subject. My aim has rather been to acquaint myself as far as possible with certain causes of the rise of the new religion, to obtain a somewhat definite idea of the stirring movements of thought and events, especially in relation to the Jewish Law in Early Christianity. Speaking paradoxically my object may be briefly characterized as being a purely subjective one.

In carrying out this object, I have as far as circumstances would permit, carefully studied the history of the period, have been at great pains to verify most of my references and have not failed to consult the sources both Jewish and Christian wherever necessary. I do claim, therefore, whatsoever credit belongs to one who has carefully considered all information possibly obtainable under the adverse circumstances spoken of above. I am responsible furthermore for arranging and classifying the material at hand, and urge that it be noted that I have endeavored

to adhere closely to my subject and avoid all extraneous matter. For more detailed information as to the general treatment of the Question of Law in Early Christianity, I may refer to the introduction.

In conclusion let me acknowledge with thanks the aid received directly or indirectly from the Hebrew Union College Faculty, among whom I may mention Drs. Mielziner, Philipson and Deutsch. To the last named in particular am I indebted for some valuable suggestions as to the reciprocal influence of Judaism and Christianity. As a further acknowledgment of assistance in this work, I hereby subjoin the list of books consulted in preparation of the thesis.

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## INTRODUCTION.

CHANGED OPINION AS TO THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY - TO  
WHAT IS THIS CHANGE DUE?      THESIS STATED - EARLY  
CHRISTIANITY ESSENTIALLY JEWISH - LAW NOT ABROGATED WITH  
COMING OF CHRIST. - REASONS FOR STARTING WITH TIME  
OF EZRA - WHAT IS MEANT BY "THE LAW" AS USED IN THIS THESIS  
- UNREASONABLENESS OF CERTAIN HISTORIANS IN TAKING PAUL  
AS THE ULTIMATE SOURCE FOR A CHARACTERIZATION OF THE  
JEWISH PEOPLE IN THE TIME OF CHRIST - RESULTS OF SUCH  
METHOD - GENERAL EFFECT OF EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES UPON  
INTERNAL CONDITION OF JUDAISM - BIBLE CRITICS AND THEIR  
ATTITUDE TO THE NEW TESTAMENT - THE RESULTS OF NEW  
TESTAMENT CRITICISM ACCEPTED IN THIS THESIS.

Christianity in popular opinion did not grow. It was made. It sprang Minerva-like from the head of Christ in its full maturity. The doctrines which Christianity holds are exclusively and originally Christian. From the very beginning it brought to a close the reign of law, vengeance, hatred, nationalism, particularism, formalism, ceremonialism, pharisaism and hypocrisy. With the crucifixion of Christ, there was ushered in a new era of love, mercy, universalism and spirituality. The letter was dead, the spirit lived.

In the light of a scientific analysis of the contents of the various books constituting the New Testament, this view has been considerably modified, if not altogether set aside. Higher criticism of the New Testament has shown almost conclusively that the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, etc. were written at different periods, under varying conditions, and by men of all possible shades of belief as to the teachings and personality of Jesus Christ.

This criticism supplemented by a study of the life and thought of the Jewish people in the time of the origin of Christianity is so far from supporting the hypothesis of the founding of an entirely new religion (Christianity) by Jesus, that it lends support to the statement of Edouard von Hartman (*Entwicklung des Religiösen Bewusstseins des Menscheit* 525). "If Paul had not

invented Heathen Christianity, the idea would never have occurred to later ages that Jewish Christianity was anything else than a religion of Law peculiar to the Jewish nation, containing intensified Messianic expectations and with a definite reference of those expectations to the person of a prophet who was not acknowledged while he lived and met with a violent death.\* (Quoted by Pfleiderer - The Apostle Paul).

A further study of the Jewish sources will reveal the fact that there is a remarkable similarity, approaching at times identity, between the ethical teachings of the Jewish Literature of the time, and those ascribed to Jesus Christ. Even the form in which these teachings are expressed is essentially Jewish. Nor is this similarity a merely superficial one. The whole religious life and thought of Early Christianity is but part and parcel of the larger life and thought of the Jewish religion of the same time. In the words of Dr. Joel (Blicke in die Religionsgeschichte I ab. 26) "Was Irenaus von den Ebioniten sagt, 'Sie lassen sich beschneiden und beharren bei den gesetzlichen Bräuchen und der Jüdischen Lebensweise, so dass sie auch Jerusalem verehren als die Wohnstätte Gottes' passt auf das ganze palästinische Christenthum bis in Trajanische Zeit hinein.

It is my purpose then to show that the Jewish law was not abrogated with the coming of Christ, and that moreover it is not even probable that any question as to its

entire validity ever occurred to him. His immediate disciples rather distinguished themselves for their zeal in maintaining every "jot and tittle" of the law. Aside from the questionable account given of Stephen in Acts VI and VII, Paul was the first convert to take the momentous step which eventually through favoring conditions led to the separation of Judaism from the mother faith. Yet we shall see that his opposition to the law brought down upon him the wrath of the Apostles and their followers, that after his death his influence waned, and his teaching would have probably disappeared were it not for the fortuitous concurrence of propitious circumstances, not the least effective of which was the result of the contest between Rome and Judaea.

The question as to the binding force of the Jewish law was the fundamental one between Heathen and Jewish Christianity. This discussion as to the validity of the Jewish law did not all of a sudden spring out of the air, but was the necessary result of the teachings of a school of Jewish philosophers, at the head of which stood Philo. A proper appreciation of the origin and significance of the whole question can be gained only by an understanding of the history of the law in the centuries preceding the inception of Christianity. I have recognized this necessity by starting this sketch with the introduction or re-introduction of the law 444 B. C.

Strictly speaking the law which Ezra laid before the Jewish people at that time, consisted in the main of what is now known as the Pentateuch. To this must be added most of the prophets, and some of the other books now included in the canon. But as commonly used, the words the law designates not only all canonical books and apocryphal writings, but also includes all the explanations, emendations, and additions of the scribes and Rabbis, whether these supplementary teachings were *שבעל פה* or *שכתב*. In short, it is a comprehensive term used to designate post-exilic Judaism. In treating of the laws with reference to the origin of Christianity, I have especially kept in view those portions of the law relating to cleanness and uncleanness, Sabbath and festivals, and circumcision. My reasons for so doing were (1) to keep this thesis within reasonable limits and (2) because these were the special points of the law around which afterwards the fierce struggle came to be waged.

As natural in such a bitter strife as was that between the Heathen and the Jewish Christians, both parties went to the extreme in their attempts to belittle the position of their opponents. Misrepresentation and abuse became common. Paul has been especially violent in his attacks upon the law, and naturally characterizes it and its effect



in unsparing terms. It would seem to any unbiased person that owing to this extreme attitude assumed by Paul, some allowance would be made for the bitter nature of his Epistles, and that his more extravagant utterances would be taken cum grano salis. (What is said of Paul's Epistles applies with equal force to those parts of the Gospels, which were written when the separation of Christianity from Judaism had already begun, and when a similarly bitter struggle was being waged between the apologetes of both sides). A reasonable man would as soon attempt to judge of the truth and sincerity of John Henry Newman by taking as his basis the attacks of Charles Kingsley, or would as soon accept for his guide as to the merits and faults of the Jewish people, the vile slanders of the notorious, anti-semite, Drumont. This comparison is enforced by the fact that Paul was not only a bitter opponent of the religion of Judaism, but to this opposition was united the added hatred natural to a convert from that religion.

And yet most of the great scholars who have patiently pursued the study of the history of this period have unqualifiedly accepted, in its entirety, the position of Paul with reference to the Jewish religion of his time, and from this pre-conceived theological basis, have proceeded to write the awful story of Jewish legalism, externalism and hypocrisy. So completely do some of them rely, in the last resort upon statements of Paul, and utterances delivered by opponents of Judaism a century and more after the death of

Christ, that Dr. Harnack, for example, has not hesitated to make the rather sweeping assertion, "No reliance can be placed on Jewish sources or on Jewish scholars as a rule. (History of Dogma, Vol. I 304 Note 1).

What has been the consequences of such a one-sided, unscientific method of writing history? Many years ago it was the custom to ring the changes on death and stagnation as characteristics of post-exilic Judaism. But when biblical criticism demonstrated that works like Job, Jonah, Ruth, Proverbs, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, etc. must be assigned to the period after the return from Babylon, a change of front took place. The pre-Maccabean epoch now became the subject for many an eloquent paragraph, only to draw the greater contrast between the stirring religious attitude of the Jews before the Maccabean revolution, and the decay and death of all inner feeling and heartfelt emotion of the same people after that event. The Jews in this later age, and especially in the time of Christ, were slaves who served their master only for the sake of reward. They cringed before the letter of the law, of whose spirit they knew naught. The burden of this law imposed upon the shoulders of the reluctant Jew was simply awful. What a life he must have led! How the heart of many a Jew must have beaten, as he thought of the countless trespasses from which he shrank, but which he could not escape! How often must he have been oppressed by the violation of God's commandments, which his conscience bound him to observe, but which he could scarcely hope even to

know much less to fulfil!" (Kuenen - National Religions and Universal Religions 233).

This mildly illustrates the characteristic method of dealing with the period in question. As thorough a scholar as Prof. Schurer says, "the Lord had only too much reason for rebuking his contemporaries for straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel, (Math 23<sup>24</sup>) and for hurling in their faces the heavy accusation of making clean the outside of the cup and platter, but being within full of extortion and excess. Like whited sepulchres which appeared beautiful without, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. They also appeared righteous before men, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity (Math. 23<sup>27, 28</sup> Luke 11<sup>44</sup>).". Then in a style befitting the violent partisan who apologizes for his extreme one-sidedness, rather than the scientific investigator striving to gain the truth whether that truth agrees with his likes or dislikes, Prof. Schurer continues: "Jus-tice requires us to say that many an excellent saying, etc." (The italics are mine). ----- "But when we look away from the single rays of light, and from the deeper shadows which form their contrast we cannot better characterize the entire tendency (the italics are again mine) of the Judaism of that period, than by the words of the Apostle. It was a fearful burden which a spurious legalism had laid upon the shoulders of the people. They bend heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders. (Math. 23<sup>4</sup>, Luke 11<sup>46</sup>). ----- Life was a continual tor-

ment to the earnest man who felt at every moment, that he was in danger of transgressing the law. -----Pride and conceit was almost inevitable for one who had attained to mastership, in the knowledge and treatment of the law.\*  
(History of Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ II Div. Vol IV 123 f.)

It is no refutation of these rather sweeping assertions to call to mind the numerous sentences in the Jewish literature of the time, sentences which are filled with the spirit of true piety, humility, sincerity and love.

given forth the Golden Rule Hillel

(Sab. 31<sup>a</sup> -] דעלך סני לחברך לא תעבד, ANTIGONUS MAY HAVE SAID  
אל תהיז כעבדים המשמשין את הרב על מנת לקבל פרס אל  
היו כעבדים המשמשין את הרב שלא על מנת לקבל פרס ויהי  
מורא השמים עליכם (ABOTH 1<sup>3</sup>)

Rabbi Elieser may have taught

(BERACHOTH 29) העשה תפלתו קבע אין תפלתו תחנונים

the rebuke of the hypocrite (Math 7<sup>5</sup>) may also be found

אם אמר טול קיסם מבין שניך אמר טול קורה

(ERACHIM 16<sup>b</sup> cf. TALMUD RUTH § 596) The origin of the

Prayer (Math 6<sup>9f</sup>) may be traced in Jewish literature (of  
Wunsche - Erläuterung der Evangelien 84 f) and hundreds of  
sayings similar in character may be assembled in a protest

against the easy generalizations of the type above illustrated, it would all be of no avail. For even (the) Kuenen who does not as a rule, go to the extreme in this respect, has said, "Whenever they (the scribes) extol the inward disposition as the highest, or even as the one thing needful, whenever they condemn mercenary piety, or seek an ally in the conscience of their hearers, they remind us of a captive bird pecking at the wires of its cage." (National Religions and Universal Religions 227). May I be permitted to add that Dr. Kuenen's style of reasoning reminds me of that innocent man who as a result of some conspiracy was placed in a lunatic asylum. When to people visiting the institution, he vehemently asserted his sanity, he was greeted with the remark "How perfectly sane he appears to be." Are there no sentences to be found in the Talmud and Midrash evidencing the fact that the Rabbis were not indifferent to the virtues of the heart, then of course the wholesale criticism of Prof. Schurer and others is justified. Do we, however, meet with ever so many examples of this type in the sayings of the Scribes, only the more do they justify hostile criticism, they are only more examples of impotent attempts to get out of the "cage." The spiritual and emotional elements in the teaching of the Scribes were little more than its helpless protest against its own essential character. (Dr. Kuenen *ibid* 228). Such arguments (as I stated above) cannot be refuted. They cut the ground from under one's feet, they admit of no reply, hence are illogical

as well as unfair.

In connection with the usual charge of the unspeakable burden of the law, I wish to refer to Mr. Schechter's admirable article, "The Law and Recent Criticism." (Studies in Judaism - 243). "On the one side," says he, "We hear the opinion of so many learned professors proclaiming excathedra, that the law was a most terrible burden, and the life under it the most unbearable slavery, deadening body and soul. On the other side we have the testimony of a literature extending over twenty-five centuries and including all sorts and conditions of men, scholars, poets, mystics, lawyers, casuists, schoolmen, tradesmen, workmen, women, simpletons, who all, from the author of the 119th Psalm to the last pre-Mendelssohnian writers with a small exception which does not even deserve the name of a vanishing minority, give unanimous evidence in favor of this law, and of the bliss and happiness of dying and living under it, and this the testimony of people who were actually living under the law, and not merely theorizing upon it, and who experienced it in all its difficulties and inconveniences. -----somebody must be right, either the learned professors, or the millions of the Jewish people must be under an illusion. Which it is, I leave to the reader to decide."

With this, we may leave the question for the present. I have dwelt upon it somewhat at length, because a pre-conceived opinion as to the necessary results of legalism will

materially color the whole account of the history of the Jewish people. The Jews have a right to protest, at least in the case of scientific investigators, against their whole history being distorted, in order to justify other religions. And right here there is a demand for Jewish scholars, well versed in both Jewish and Christian lore, to voice this protest.

The detailed characterization and discussion of the development of the Law, may be left to the main body of the thesis. Taking a sweeping view of the subject, one must perceive what a tremendous effect external circumstances have had upon the internal condition of Judaism. It seemed as everything conspired to render the Jew more and more attached to his sacred treasure. The dangerous Hellenistic movement and the subsequent bitter persecution of Antiochus were forces utterly different in character, yet both tended to make the pious Jew, withdraw, as it were, more and more within himself; and, when the ultimate results of the Jewish-Alexandrian school became apparent in the careers of men like Paul, when the Roman legions marched in triumph over the City of God, completed that triumph in the destruction of Bethar, the consequence of which was the formal separation of Christianity from Judaism, and when finally the cruel edicts of the Emperor Hadrian had been enforced, by this time, the reign of the law had become ab-

solite. Pharisaism (in all that that much abused word really implies) had won a signal victory. The scribes and the rabbis became once for all, the uncrowned kings of the spiritual realm of Judaism.

In carrying my thesis up to this point 135 A. C. (which year virtually decided the fate of Christianity) it has been necessary for me to frequently refer to the books of the New Testament. I have stated above that for a proper understanding of those books, an impartial investigation and criticism is absolutely necessary. In this respect a rather curious phenomenon presents itself. Scholars who are most skillful and ruthless in applying the scalpel of criticism deep into the books of the Old Testament, somehow or other find their hands palsied when dealing with critical problems of the New Testament. As Prof. Davidson in a recent article in the International Journal of Ethics (July 1897) says: "The critical results thus far obtained for the New Testament are less definite and final than those obtained for the Old, and indeed, there is evident, among some of the higher critics, a tendency to pat themselves on the back for their courage in dealing with the latter, and on that ground to hold themselves excused from laying hands on the former."

This is indeed a rather mild expression of the tendency characterizing the late works on New Testament criticism. Did such writers appear as apologues for their religion, there would be far less objection to their



mode of procedure. But when these men assume the "lion's hide" of modern scientific criticism of the Bible, and then hesitate to apply unsparingly the methods of such criticism, but use their disguise to defend the doctrines and teachings peculiar to their own faiths, then one begins to doubt at times the sincerity and honesty (scientifically speaking) of the whole school of biblical critics. However, let us be thankful for what they have accomplished.

The detailed accounts of the arguments for these accomplished results of a critical investigation of the documents before us, I have not thought necessary to give, though I have read with some care, some of the more important works dealing with such investigation. Here then may be given a mere sketch of the results in reference to the main parts of the New Testament. For the most part I have adopted the findings of the earlier Tubingen school, though a reference to the list of authorities consulted (of Preface) will show that I have not confined my readings to that school.

The earliest books of the New Testament appear to be those epistles of Paul, which have <sup>been</sup> accepted as genuine, viz: Romans, Galatians, I and II Corinthians (Weizäcker and Pflleiderer add I Thessalonians and Phillipians). With the addition of the Jewish Christian Apocalypse, these were all probably written not long before the end of the first century, and are evidences of the bitter strife between the

Pauline and Petrine parties.

The second period is one of conciliation. The Jewish Christians, though still maintaining most of their early customs, are now outside of the camp of Judaism. A member of this party tries to conciliate the Pauline party in the Gospel of Matthew. On the <sup>other</sup> hand, a Paulinist, in the Gospel of Luke, attempts to meet halfway the adherents of the opposing party. The Acts of the Apostles bears on the face of it an evident harmonistic attempt to smooth over the differences between Paul and Peter, to represent them as acting together, nay in some parts causes them to virtually exchange characters, all in flagrant contradiction to the supposedly genuine Epistles of Paul. To this period (the latter part of the second century) may also be assigned Epistles to Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews; Epistles of James and Peter.

Under the last group are especially the 4th Gospel and Johannine Epistles. These all betray a Gnostic tendency, and assume as settled the disputes concerning the law. Consequently they are very late.

In concluding this introduction (written mainly for the purpose of giving a general idea as to the proposed method of treatment of the subject chosen), I may refer again to Prof. Davidson's article, for the purpose of showing that I have not arbitrarily taken an extreme position in reference to New Testament criticism. Prof. Davidson asserts that it may be "stated with confidence" that, "the

New Testament is a compilation gradually formed, partly from older documents, during the second, third and fourth centuries; that its contents were different at different times; that its component treatises underwent frequent, numerous and important changes at the hands of harmonizers, and that it did not assume its present form until near A. D. 400, some additions such as the story of the adulteress (John 7<sup>53</sup> 8<sup>4</sup>) being made even after that."

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# CHAPTER I.

## PRE-MACCABEAN ERA.

REFORMS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH - OPPOSITION FROM THE START -  
 LAW INTRODUCED + MALACHI'S DENUNCIATION OF BACKSLIDING  
 PRIESTS - CHARACTER OF OPPOSITION TO EZRA AND NEHEMIAH -  
 OPPOSITION OVERCOME - PRIESTS + SCRIBES + GROWING IMPORTANCE  
 OF THE SCRIBES - HELLENISTS - CHASSIDIM.

בשנתכחה תורה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל עֲזָרָא מִכְּבֹל וִיסֵדָה  
(SUCCA 20<sup>a</sup>).

Thus naively does tradition bear witness to the tremendous importance of Ezra scribe, in the religious development of Israel. Supported by the strong arm of the energetic, zealous and enthusiastic Nehemiah, he initiated that grand movement which in the course of time was to make Israel indeed the servant of Yahweh, a people consecrated to the law of God.

That law upon which Ezra and Nehemiah laid so much stress was substantially the Pentateuch as we possess it today. In accordance with its spirit, they directed their first preliminary efforts to the purifying of the land which had become unclean "through the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands" (Ezra 9<sup>th</sup>), for "the people of Israel, and the priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the peoples of the land. ----- and have taken of their daughters for themselves and their sons ----- yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass. "  
(Ezra 9<sup>1-3</sup>). It was only after many years and in the face of bitter opposition that they even partially succeeded in their efforts to preserve the purity of their religion, and then it was at the cost of incalculable suffering and misery to many who had wittingly or unwittingly transgressed the law. They met with stern resistance at the hands of leaders, especially of those priests who had intermarried with many of the best families of the surrounding nations.

In consequence of the rigorous measures of Ezra, the relatives of these families harrassed the zealots in every conceivable manner, and only the fierce courage, I had almost said fanaticism of a Nehemiah could have at length broken down the fierce opposition.

At last, however, on the first day of Tishri 444 B. C., Ezra lived to witness the consummation of his long cherished plans. The author of the book of Nehemiah undoubtedly realized the great significance of this moment. "And all the people gathered themselves together as one man unto the broad place that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra, the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra, the priest, brought the law before the congregation both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding upon the first day of the seventh month. . . And he read therein before the broad place that was before the water-gate, from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women, and of those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law."

<sup>13</sup>  
(Neh. 8 ). Then the account continues and tells how the scribes and the priests assisted in the promulgation of this law, and how the Levites explained to the people who gathered again on the second day, and later celebrated with much zeal the feast of Tabernacles. The demonstration culminated on a special fast-day (Tishri 24) when "the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and con-

fessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers."

(Neh. 9<sup>2</sup>). At the conclusion of a long prayer (probably delivered by Ezra), the people formally accepted the law, and took a solemn oath that they would not intermarry with the surrounding nations, that they would strictly observe the Sabbath, and contribute to the support of the temple. (Of Neh. 10<sup>29 f</sup> ).

Yet hardly had Nehemiah disappeared from the scene when the priests fell back into their former habits. They married again their divorced wives and disregarded the service of the temple. "Ye offer polluted bread upon my altar, and ye say, wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say the table of the Lord is contemptible. And when ye offer the blind for sacrifice, it is no evil! and when ye offer the lame and the sick, it is no evil!" (Mal. 1<sup>7, 8</sup> ). "But cursed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a blemished thing."

(Mal. 1<sup>14</sup> ) On Nehemiah's return, he drove the guilty priests from their places, especially one of the family of Joiada, who had married a daughter of Sanballat, the Horonite

(Neh. 13<sup>28</sup> ). By means of the most severe measures, he succeeded in making the Sabbath, truly a day of rest, and as he thought of the difficulties he had encountered in his attempt to second the efforts of Ezra in establishing the law, he must have heaved a sigh of relief as he wrote,

"Remember me, O my God, for good." (Neh. 13<sup>31</sup> ).

But it must not be thought that all who opposed the re-

forms of Ezra and Nehemiah were priests actuated by low motives, men indifferent to the religion of their fathers.

On the contrary, there seems to have been an influential class who objected strenuously to this nationalizing of the Jewish religion, men who acted in the spirit of Isaiah.

<sup>6-8</sup>  
(56 ). "Also the strangers that join themselves to the Lord to minister unto him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast to my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples."

In protest against the exclusiveness of Ezra, may not the prophet Jonah have been sent to the heathen city of Nineveh? Is not the beautiful book of Ruth a witness to the fact that there were earnest men, actuated by the highest motives who strongly opposed the ruthless procedure of Ezra and Nehemiah in summarily setting aside all marriages contracted with women of surrounding nations. There were probably also those to whom the undue prominence given to the sacrificial cult was highly objectionable. Does not the author of that lofty fiftieth psalm speak for these in verses 8-14? "I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices; nor for thy burnt-offerings which are continually before me. I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beast of the forest is mine, and the



cattle upon a thousand hills. . . . I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I was hungry, I would not tell thee; . . . For the world is mine and the fulness thereof. . . . Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats? . . . Offer unto God, the sacrifice of thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High."

But the efforts of this party were unavailing. . . . Ezra was truly the man of the hour. . . . Only a strong central organization could have enabled Judaism to pass unscathed through the attacks of later years. . . . This central rallying point in the absence of all national independence, was the law. . . . Nor were the requirements of this law looked upon by the mass of people as burdensome. . . . The grand lofty attempt to order the whole life of the Jewish community in accordance with the law of God was eventually remarkably successful. . . . Many have been the panegyrics lavished upon the Temple. . . . Again and again have the singers in Israel testified to their boundless love for the law and its precepts. . . . "The law of God is perfect, restoring the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple. . . . The precepts of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart.----- More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: . . . Sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb." (Psalm 19, <sup>7, 8, 10</sup> ). . . . The long one hundred and nineteenth psalm is one continued outpouring of the heart in presence of the law of God. . . . "Oh, how I love thy law! It is my medi-

tation all the day." (Verse 97).

The supremacy of this law marked the reign of the priests. A large portion of the torah is devoted to precepts regulating the temple worship and sacrifices from which they derived benefit. It was but natural for Ezra, a descendant of a priestly family that was supposed to be able to trace its origin back to Aaron (Ez. 76), to introduce laws, tending to establish the priest not only as the head of worship, but also as executive of whatever civil power remained to the state (of Schürer Div. I, Vol. I 188). The priests alone took charge of all sacrifices. Their emoluments consisted not only of parts of the animals offered, but even taxes, in their favor, were levied independently of the sacrifices. (Of Schürer Div. II Vol. I 237). More important still, all persons, in any way connected with the priests could partake of their income (of Schürer ibid 249). These privileges lead to tremendous powers, enabling the priests to remain down to the destruction of the temple, the aristocracy of the land. During the pre-Maccabean age the high-priest was the highest authority, and as long as the Sanhedrin existed at Jerusalem, he was its president.

And yet Ezra was not alone a priest. He is especially mentioned as "the scribe of the law of the God of heaven" (Ez 7<sup>24</sup>).

Indeed he far more frequently referred to as a scribe than as a priest (of Ez. 7<sup>14</sup>, Neh. 8<sup>1</sup>, 8<sup>4</sup>, 8<sup>9</sup>, 8<sup>13</sup>, 12<sup>36</sup>). It was then perfectly natural that scribes

should take up the development of this law. If the people were to recognize it as their sole guide in every thought and act of life, they had evidently to be made acquainted with its contents, to be instructed in the understanding and practice of its numerous precepts. Thus there was called into existence a special body of men for this very purpose. These men came to be most familiarly known as Scribes.

The most important of their duties are stated in the first chapter of the *Ayoth*.

הם אמרו שלשה דברים היו מחובבן בדין והקמידו תלמידים

הריבה ועשו סוג לתורה

The scribes became the Jurists of the time (*νόμομαχοι* of the New Testament). They also were the teachers of the people, and spent a great part of their time in bringing up many disciples. In order to prevent their sacred treasure, the torah from being defiled by having its laws transgressed, they added precept upon precept to its command in order to hedge it in the more securely.

At first the scribes worked hand in hand with the priests. But, as in course of time, the latter became more and more occupied with worldly matters, became more and more neglectful of the precepts of the law, the scribes slowly began to take their place in the estimation of the people. They had devoted themselves to wisdom. Wisdom, in its highest sense, being obedience to the law, was exalted to the first rank. Even the synagogues which were now

scattered throughout the land, became primarily houses of learning where the law and the prophets (תורה ופירושה) were taught and expounded, and only in a secondary sense, were they house of prayer. As time went on the law of the scribes was exalted to such a place that it became a link connecting the human with the divine.

כשברא הקב"ה את העולם גזר ואמר השמים שמים  
 לוי והארץ נתן לבני אדם כשבקש ליתן התורה בטל  
 גזרה ראשונה ואמר התחתונים יעלו לעלונים והעלונים  
 ירדו לתחתונים (RABBA. EX. 12<sup>4</sup>).

The law became so sacred that it was almost blasphemous to deny its divinity. Among those ש"אין להם חלק לעולם הבא the Mishna ESPECIALLY MENTIONS (SAN 10<sup>1</sup>) האומר אין תורה מן השמים Way the Talmud went even still further

כי דבר "בזה" זה האומר אין תורה מן השמים ואפילו אמר  
 כל התורה כולה מן השמים חוץ מפסוק זה שלא אמרו הקב"ה  
 אלא משה מפי עצמו <sup>זה</sup> הוא כי דבר "בזה" ואפילו אמר  
 כל התורה כולה מן השמים חוץ מדין דין זה מקל וחמר  
 (SAN 99<sup>1</sup>).

and the men who helped to establish this law acquired such an influence, that a later authority could say חביבין דברי סופרים 'וסר מדברי תורה' (JER. SAN 30<sup>1</sup>)

Thus the law as expounded by the scribes came in later times to take the place of the temple and priests in the hearts of the people. As Dr. Jost says, (Geschichte des Judenthums I 291). "The foundations of the temple were undermined by the schools before it had been trampled upon by enemies from without, and desecrated by bloody feuds from within." (Quoted by Cheyne 349). This antagonism ultimately found its highest expression in the thought

(HORAYOTH 13A) אומר ונ"ח קודם לכוון גדול עם הארץ

and the great Hillel did not believe that an ignorant man could be truly pious. ולאדם הארץ חסיד (Avoth 24) <sup>24</sup> And yet, as Ben Sirach says (Ecclus 19) "Better is one that hath small understanding and feareth, than one that hath much prudence and transgresses the law."

Firmly established, however, as was this law, in the course of several centuries, its very foundations were threatened. The Greek culture introduced into Asia, by Alexander and the Diadochoi, spread rapidly over the continent, and found its way even into Palestine. To this country, it was brought mainly by those Jews who in large numbers had settled in Alexandria. Greek thought, Greek language, Greek customs, everything Greek was the watchword of the hour.

Especially did the movement find favor among the aristocratic priests at Jerusalem, men enriched by the treasures constantly pouring into the temple, a class which had

turned its attention more and more away from the exacting duties of the temple and longed for the fascinations of the Greeks, their literary pursuits, their games, their immoral enjoyments. — "In those days, came there forth out of Israel transgressors of the law, and persuaded many, saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the nations that are round about us; for since we were parted from them, many evils have befallen us. And the saying was good in their eyes. And certain of the people were forward herein, and went to the king, and he gave them licence to do after the ordinances of the nations. And they built a place of exercise in Jerusalem according to the laws of the nations; and they made themselves uncircumcised, and forsook the holy covenant, and joined themselves to the nations, and sold themselves to do evil." (I Mac. 11<sup>15</sup> ).

In order to further their ambitious, Grecizing schemes, they flung all scruples to the wind, stopped at no violence and finally invoked the aid of Antiochus Epiphanes to forcibly Hellenize the Jews. The people indeed had much to endure. Their temple was desecrated, their synagogues burnt, the scrolls of the law destroyed, circumcision, sabbath, festivals abrogated, and all were commanded on pain of death to eat unclean meat and sacrifice to idols set up throughout the land.

These violent measures reacted upon the party which proposed them. They had the effect only of concentrating the vigorous opposition into the party of Chassidim, men who

went to the other extreme. At first they sacrificed even life itself, rather than defend themselves by fighting on a sabbath. In many psalms, (especially 74 and 119) have they spoken bitterly of the Hellenists, in whom they could detect nothing worthy of praise.

After a long and bitter struggle, during which they were greatly encouraged by the author of the book of Daniel, they were finally successful, and the Hellenistic party (or rather the Judean branch of it) was crushed for the time. So powerful had it been however, and so near had it come to achieving its ends, that Schürer speaking of the Hellenizing projects, feels warranted in saying, "Had this process been allowed to go on in its natural and peaceful course, then the Judaism of Palestine would probably have in time assumed a form, in which it would be scarcely recognizable, a form even more syncretistic than that of Philo." (Div. I Vol I 198). May I add that in my humble opinion, judging solely by the later history of the Jews, Prof. Schürer's statement is not an extreme one.

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## CHAPTER II.

## POST - MACCABEAN ERA.

CHASSIDIM AND MACCABEES SEPARATE FROM ONE ANOTHER -  
 SADDUCKES AND PHARISEES - THE DISPERSION - CUSTOMS AND  
 LANGUAGE OF DISPERSION - SEPTUAGINT - PROSELYTISM -  
 SUCCESS IN FACE OF OPPOSITION - CAUSES - ALEXANDRIAN  
 MOVEMENT - PHILO AND THE LAW - CONSEQUENCES OF HIS TEACHING -  
 EARLY CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY , JEWISH - PAUL ON LAW -  
 JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH - JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS.



The Chassidim party had joined with the Maccabees against the Hellenizing priests and their Syrian allies. As long as the religion of Israel was at stake this alliance continued. When, however, the men of this party had accomplished their ends, they were already at the parting of the ways. To the Chassidim, Israel's whole attention should be devoted to the law as expounded by the scribes. For political independence for the forms and shows of royalty, they cared little, provided only, that without interference they could apply themselves solely to the study and practice of the law of God. To this idea they were faithful. They would concentrate all their attention to the carrying out of every precept of the law, even if in so doing they had to live completely in a Jewish environment, to separate themselves ( פרש ) from all unclean things and persons.

The Maccabees on the other hand were enthusiastic patriots. They wished to make Palestine independent politically as well as religiously. To carry out their aims, they became high priests. In order to keep up appearances as priests and princes, they did not hesitate <sup>to use</sup> the emoluments of priesthood as state taxes. Yet according to the law, they could not be priests and warriors at the same time, and later on the people openly resented the attempted violation of the law. As in the furtherance of their ambitious schemes, they could hope for little assistance from their old allies, they turned more and more to their former opponents, the

aristocratic priests, who managed to regain much of their former power. This naturally only widened the gap between the Chassidim and their leaders.

By the time of John Hyrkan, we see the result of the movement in the foundation of two new parties, the one party springing from the ranks of the priests, the other from those of the scribes. As to Geiger belongs the credit of having discovered the essentially differencing marks between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, I may characterize them in his words (Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel 149). "Die Sadducäer sind ursprünglich die vornehmen Priesterfamilien, Nachkommen der vorden Makkabäern herrschenden Zadokiten, denen sich überhaupt alles, was aus irgend einem Grunde sich zur Aristokratie wählte, anschloss, namentlich auch die hohenpriesterlichen Familien, welche durch die Herodäerzu Ansehen gelangten die Boëthusier; sie hatten Verwaltung und Gerichtsbarkeit inne. Die Pharisäer bestanden aus dem national and religiös gesinnten Bürgerthume, bildeten die Opposition gegenüber der Aristokratie, die sie allmählig überwältigten." (It is to be noted that Kuenen in his National Religions and Universal Religions 230 f denies that the Pharisees represented the "Jewish Bourgeoisie" and claims that they constitute only a sect). Essenism was in the main simply an exaggerated form of Pharisaism plus one or two foreign elements.

We have thus briefly noticed the rise of parties in Judea. But let us not imagine that Judaism was confined to Palestine. On the contrary it spread rapidly over the

world. Jews settled in the remotest parts of the Globe. Schürer (Div II Vol. II, 222 f) quotes the letter of Agrippa to Caligula to the effect that "Jerusalem is the capitol not only of Judea, but of most countries, by reason of the colonies which it has sent out on fitting occasions into the neighboring lands of Egypt, Phoenicia, Syria, Coelestria, and the still more remote Pamphylia and Cilicia, into most parts of Asia as far as Bithynia, and into the most distant corners of Pontus; also to Europe, Thessaly, Boeotia, Macedonia, Etolia, Attica, Argos, Corinth and the most and best parts of Peloponnesus. And not only is the continent full of Jewish settlements, but also the more important islands, Euboea, Cyprus, Crete, to say nothing of the lands beyond the "Euphrates." (Philo, Legat ad Cajum 36, Mang. II 587). Especially in Alexandria and Rome had the Jews settled by thousands.

Wherever they went they carried their law with them. They were granted exceptional privileges, and lived as independent communities, retaining their connection with Jerusalem by frequent pilgrimages, and with the temple by regular offerings. For worship they had synagogues in every part of the world, and held regular services on Sabbaths.

However, they could not fail to have been influenced by contact with the culture of the nations among which they lived. Especially did this influence manifest itself in the gradual substitution of the Greek language for their native Hebrew tongue. "The truth is," says Schürer

(Div. II Vol. 283), "Hebrew was so little current among the Jews of the dispersion that not a single instance has been met with of its use upon a tombstone."

It was owing to the Hebrew language thus gradually falling into disuse, that an urgent demand was felt for a translation of the Bible into Greek. In the course of many years this growing want was met by the so-called Septuagint. The translation was then hailed with joy by the Jews, and even in somewhat later times they could not find praise high enough for Ptolemy Philadelphus whom tradition wrongly supposed to have brought about the translation.

The influence of the Greek version of the Bible upon the later development of Judaism, is simply incalculable. Through it, the heathen world became acquainted with the contents of that wonderful literature, and the already large number of proselytes to Judaism was greatly increased. Josephus - Apion II 9 - says: "there is not a single town among Greeks or barbarians, or any where else, not a single nation to which the observance of the Sabbath as it exists among ourselves has not penetrated; while fasting and the burning of lights, and many of our laws with regard to meats are also observed." He also asserted that all the women of Damascus had been converted to Judaism. (Bell. Jud. II. 20.2). In Rome, the religion of Israel was accepted in the highest ranks. The whole royal family of the kingdom of Adiabene became sincere devotees of Judaism,

and often set example of extreme piety to the Jews themselves.

It is hardly probable that all these proselytes observed strictly every detail of the mosaic law. Probably most of them allied themselves to the Jews, especially in keeping a day of rest, attending synagogue on that day, and observing Jewish custom in regard to abstention from swine's meat. Yet that many went much further, we learn from Juvenal, Sat. XIV 96 - 100,

"Quidam sortiti metuentem sabbato patrena,

Nil praeter nubes et coeli numen adorant,

Nec distare putant humana carne suillam,

Qua pater abstinuit; mox et praeputia ponunt."

The question of circumcision of proselytes will be discussed later on. Suffice it to say that the class above mentioned would constitute *οἱ προσέκυτοι τὸν θεόν* met with in the gospels, the "שְׂרָפִים" (Psalm 118 - Have we here the three classes praising God, priests, Israelites, proselytes?) But undoubtedly, there was also a large number, who entered into full communion with Israel, observing all its laws, and submitting to all its rites and ceremonies. (In the last chapter the requirements for admission to Judaism will be considered). When once admitted, they were looked upon by the Rabbis as in duty bound to fulfil all the obligations incumbent upon Israelites, with whom, in most respects, they were on an equality. (Of Schurer Div. II Vol. II 326).

The widespread propaganda of the Jews brought upon them bitter attacks from both Greek (Egyptian) and Roman authors. The hatred of the former may be due in part, as Dr. Joel suggests, to the fact that through the Greek translation of the Bible, the Egyptians became acquainted with the disgraceful part assigned them in the books of Moses, and in consequence retaliated by accusing the Jews of being descended from the Hyksos, and asserting that the Israelites came from a leprous colony. (Of Blicke in die Religionsgeschichte Ab II 117). The hatred of the Romans is probably explained by the fact of their long and bitter struggle with the Jews.

But whatever be the cause, the fact is certain that at the close of the period which we are treating of, there was no slander too vile to be cast upon the Jews. They were targets for the shafts of wit and satire of the poets of the time from Juvenal to Horace, and even stately historians did not care to conceal their bitter animosity.

Yet the Jews continued in their proselytizing career and were eminently successful. This remarkable success may be due to several causes. The mysterious oriental religions were then all the rage with the Roman people, exercising upon their minds a peculiar fascination. Judaism was especially attractive with its rigid system of morals and its uncompromising monotheism as against the nerveless morality of effete and moribund paganism. Probably the main factor, however, in the making of these converts, whether for good or evil, lay in the peculiar way in which the

religion of Judaism was presented to the heathen world by the Jewish Hellenistic philosophers of Alexandria. This last movement in particular was fraught with so many important consequences, that we may pause a while to examine it somewhat more closely.

The Greek translation of the Pentateuch may be conveniently taken as the starting point of this new movement. In order not to offend the tastes of Greek readers, the translators scrupulously avoided gross anthropomorphisms. As the Hebrew settlers became more and more impregnated with the Greek philosophy, the conflict between it and the Jewish law became also more evident. They could not rid themselves of the new learning any more than they could think of giving up their old faith.

In this dilemma, a compromise was resorted to. They held to the traditions of their fathers, but explained the different commandments as being merely symbolical. Here an anomalous condition presents itself. The master of this school, Philo, did not carry his system to its logical conclusion. Thus he vehemently denounced those symbolists who disregarding, in consequence of their teaching, the observance of the precepts of the law, thought it sufficient to live up to the moral principles, which inspired these laws. Thus he says, "(De Migratione Abrahami, ed. Mang., I, 450), "Although circumcision properly symbolises the removal of all passions, sensuality and impious thoughts, yet we may not therefore set aside the practice enjoined; for in

that case we should be obliged to give up the public worship of God in the temple, and a thousand other necessary solemnities." (Of Ueberweg History of Philosophy I 229); and again we are told (Vita Moses Ed. Mang II. 136), "Nur Moses Gesetze bleiben fest, unerschütterlich und unzerstörbar, wie mit dem Siegel der Natur selbst bezeichnet, ununterbrochen von dem Tage ihrer Ertheilung bis auf den heutigen Tag; sie werden bestehen, so lange Sonne, Mond, Himmel und die ganze Welt bestehen." (Quoted by Hamburger - Real - Encyclopädie Ab II 907. .... of in this connection Math. 5<sup>18</sup> ). Just as Mendelssohn tried to assimilate with his religion the prevailing philosophy of the Eighteenth Century, landed in Deism yet remained an Orthodox Jew, just as Maimonides was so impregnated with the teaching of Aristotle that he virtually became an Agnostic, (Of Moreh Nebuchim Chapter 58) and still observed all the rites and ceremonies of Rabbinical Judaism, \_\_\_\_\_ so Philo could soar aloft into the empyrean heights of Platonism, could advance to speculations which infringed upon even the cardinal doctrine of Judaism, yet could consistently (as he thought) maintain every "jot and tittle" of the law.



But it is evident that when reason must be given for the support of a law, when the literal command is called into question, the validity of the law becomes weakened. Men naturally begin to throw aside the superfluous part (i.e. the literal part), and it becomes only a question of time and circumstances when to some minds the entire law must fall away. To the Jews in dispersion, many of whom looked upon the law as excessively inconvenient this allegorizing method of the Alexandrian philosophers was highly welcome. In later times, especially when to observe some of the more distinctive masks of Judaism was to single oneself out for obnoxious and exacting laws, the movement first to interpret the laws symbolically, and then gradually to do away with them altogether, met with growing favor in many circles. So much so is this the case that the opinion is held by some, and with considerable force that Christianity i. e. the strictly antinomial feature of Christianity, first arose in the Diaspora. At all events, it is very significant that even a Christian tradition mentions the first slight signs of approaching rupture with the law, as appearing among the Hellenistic Jews who had settled in Jerusalem (Acts 6<sup>1 f</sup>). It is

still more significant that Paul and Barnabas, who were regarded as the first to carry the gospel to the Gentiles, and in so doing gradually lead to the abrogation of the Law, I say, it is noteworthy in this connection that they both proceeded from Hellenistic settlements, the one from Tarsus, the other from Cyprus. In defending his mission Paul relied solely on the Greek translation of the Bible, and, if we may credit reports (Gal. 1<sup>17</sup> Acts 9<sup>1</sup>) carried his gospel first to the Greek city of Damascus, the entire female population of which, according to Josephus, had been converted to Judaism (Bell. Jud. II. 20.2).

In order to appreciate, however, the full significance of this all important step of Paul, it is necessary to take a glance at the original Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem. The only means we have for judging of the life, character and teachings of Jesus Christ are the actions of his apostles after his death. This cannot be too much insisted on. Now if there is one fact certain in the history of the rise of Christianity that fact is that the so-called community of the Apostles was in no essential sense to be distinguished from the other Jews residing in the capitol.

Only a stupendous ignorance of the history of the Jews at the time of Christ, a most wilful perversion of the teaching of that history or worse still, a most remarkable yielding to the sway of passion and prejudice could have induced a recent writer of our new "Christo-centric" school of theology to pen the following lines. "It is as if the heavens were swept bare of stars, and suddenly unexpected, unaccompanied, the light of lights appears alone in supreme isolation. Nor is there anything in his antecedents, in his surroundings, to explain his appearance and his radiance. There is nothing in the soil of the sordid and narrow Jewish race to produce such an embodiment of universal love." (The Gospel For An Age Of Doubt - Henry Van Dyke Yale Lectures on Preaching 1896).

Such a statement flies deliberately in the face of all authorities, Jewish and anti-Jewish, of that period of history. Says Baur (Church History of the First Three Centuries - I 117) in a chapter in which he appears as an apologete, "It (Christianity) strikes the deepest roots into the soil of the Old Testament religion," and again in the same chapter (I 43), "Had no new developments taken place, the only difference between the believing disciples and their unbelieving

countrymen, would have been, that to the former, the Messiah would have been one who had come already, and to the latter one who was still to come." (Of Schürer Div II Vol. II 136, where Holtzmann would lessen even this difference by denying that the Messianic idea had been transferred to popular consciousness in time of Christ). Weizsäcker, who belongs to the more conservative school of authoritative critics of the Bible says, (Apostolic Age of the Christian Church I 339), "The disciples of Jesus continued to live after his death in essentially the same relations as those in which they had lived along with him; they were still within the pale of Judaism, and under the law." And finally Schürer (Div. I Vol I. 1) as if speaking for the benefit of the whole school of pseudo-liberal-scientific-critical theologians of which the Yale lecturer of 1896 is a fair representative, states emphatically, "No incident in the Gospel story, no word in the preaching of Jesus Christ is intelligible apart from its setting in Jewish history, and without a clear understanding of that world of thought, distinction of the Jewish people."

That we have here a true statement of the facts of history, the New Testament records prove beyond all doubt. It is hardly possible that the Apostolic com-

munity could have existed and prospered in Jerusalem, had it not observed every "jot and tittle" of the law. Just about that time, the party of zealots was spreading rapidly, and in Jerusalem at least, the tendency was to a rigorous observance of the law. One thing is certain. If there is any historical character whatsoever appertaining to the Apostle Peter, it is that he was the Head of the primitive christian community in Jerusalem. Evidently he gave the tone to that community. The character of his teachings may be learned from the fact, that he was regarded by the Fathers, as the Apostle of Circumcision.

Again the bitterness and the violence so characteristic of the conjecturally genuine Epistles of Paul are absolutely inexplicable, aside from the fact that the Church of the Apostles in Jerusalem, supported with all of its power the provisions of the Jewish law. Wherever Paul went, he was followed by representatives of the Petrine party and in most cases they succeeded in undoing his work. They succeeded so well that after Paul's death, his name was for a time forgotten. He is not mentioned even by Justin who certainly approved of the doctrines and teachings of the Apostle.

Besides all this, we have certain sayings ascribed to Jesus, which prove beyond doubt the character of the beliefs of the early Church. Even in later times when the party hostile to the Jews came into prominence it left untouched many of these accounts and speeches. Certainly we could have no stronger emphasis placed upon the law than in Math. 5<sup>17-20</sup>. Especially important is 5<sup>18</sup> "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all things be accomplished (of Luke 16<sup>17</sup> - of also Exodus Rabba VI, f).

אמרו רבותינו באותה שעה עלתה יד שבירבה ובשתטחה לפני  
הקב"ה ואמרה רבש"ע לא כך אמרת אין אות בשלה מן התורה  
לעולם הרי שלמה עומד ומבטל אותי ושמוא היום יבטל אחת  
ולמחר אחרת עד שתבטל כל התורה כולה. א"ל הקב"ה  
שלמה ואלך כיוצא בו יהיו בטלין וקוצה ממך אני מבטל

of also Yalkut Tehillim 878, also *Berachith Rabba* 10, 1.

לכל יש סיקוסין שמים וארץ יש להם סיקוסין חוץ מדבר  
אחר שאין לו סיקוסין זו תורה

The authority of the scribes and Pharisees is recognized (Math. 23) even in a bitterly hostile chapter. The

ceremonies of the law are respected (Math. 8, 14, 17, 46, 1, 9, 14, 26, Acts 2, 3, 10, 10 --strictly in keeping with what we know of Peter from Epistles of Paul, Gal. 11 f 2 --At least the early Christians (the use of this term is an anachronism) in Jerusalem were "all zealots for the law" (Of Acts 21 20 f ).

With Paul, however, "Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth." (Romans 10 ). He was sent into the world that he might redeem them which were under the law." (Gal 4 19, 21 5 of II Cor. 5 ). The law had lost its curse, for Christ became a curse for us (Gal. 3 of Romans 8, 25 4 13 3 3, 7 ). The law had not been given as something eternal; it was simply educative leading gradually to salvation. And how did it lead to salvation? By producing guilt and thus giving need of redemption. "The law was our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Of Gal. 3 24 In this sense it was ordained 3 19 ) Of Romans 5 20 Indeed, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression." (Romans 15 4 ). But "through the law cometh the knowledge of sin." (Romans 3 20 ). Thus at least as here in Romans 7, the law is not sin, but leadeth to sin, in that it gives both desire for sin and opportunity to sin.

In the heat of controversy, however, Paul's views changed from time to time, being most violent in Galatians. Here he had just had his bitter quarrel with the Apostles, or as Paul would say, "those who were reputed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepted not man's person") Gal. 6

2 . It was at Antioch that Peter had refused to associate with the uncircumcised converts of Paul, and had won from the latter even his favorite disciple, Barnabas (Gal 2<sup>13</sup> ). Paul then publicly accused Peter of being a hypocrite (Gal 2<sup>13</sup> ), and stated his great doctrine, "Man is not justified by works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ." (Gal. 2<sup>16</sup> ).

"Through the law, he died unto the law." (Gal. 2<sup>19</sup> ) for "if righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought." (Gal. 2<sup>21</sup> ). He finally stigmatizes the precepts of the law as "weak and beggarly rudiments." (Gal. 4<sup>9</sup> ). Yet in Romans 7<sup>12</sup>

"the law is holy," and in 7<sup>14</sup> it is spiritual. More-over in 2<sup>14</sup> he says, "Not the hearers of a law are just before God, but the doers of a law shall be justified." In Romans 3<sup>28</sup> , he reiterates his familiar doctrine and declares "A man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law." (We have here a necessarily brief



resume of Paul's chief doctrines in regard to the law and justification. In Chapter VI, his opinions of circumcision will be presented. It was not our purpose to discuss the details of the quarrel of Paul and Peter, the bitter epithets passed on both sides, especially those concerning Paul's right to preach the Gospel. That as a rule Acts contradicts the account in Paul's epistles may be seen from a glance at the contents of each).

In connection with the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith alone, it is interesting to compare the later epistle of James. In 2<sup>14</sup> "What doth it profit, my brethern, if a man says he hath faith, but have not works? Can that faith save him?" .... "Faith, if it hath not works is dead in itself." (2<sup>17</sup> ). In 2<sup>23</sup> and 2<sup>24</sup> , we have the very example that Paul cited as a proof of his peculiar doctrine (Romans 4<sup>2</sup> and 8<sup>28</sup> ), viz: Abraham, given here as an eminent illustration of the theory of justification by works.

Moreover in the Apocalypse, one of the earliest books of the New Testament, we have strong hints that the Pauline doctrine of faith was totally rejected, of

5 14 23  
2, 2, especially 2. "I will give unto each  
of you according to your works." Of also 2<sup>26</sup>  
8 13 12 12  
3, 14, 20 and 22.

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## CHAPTER III.

FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE

TO

THE BAR COCHBA REBELLION.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE -  
 WITHDRAWAL OF PERMISSION TO REBUILD IT - <sup>NIN</sup>MISSION-  
 BRILLIANCY OF THE PERIOD - RABBIS CONDEMN GREEK TRANS-  
 LATIONS, APOCRYPHAL AND HERETICAL WORKS - TRACES  
 IN TALMUD OF OPPOSITION TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES, DURING  
 THIS PERIOD - AKIBA AND HIS METHOD - JEWISH CHRISTIANITY  
 STILL EXISTING - BAR COCHBA REBELLION - ITS CONSEQUENCES.

The destruction of the second temple was fraught with serious consequences for the further development of both Judaism and Christianity. Previous to the fearful struggle between Jerusalem and Rome, the Jewish Christians who held that a heathen must become a Jew in order to be a christian, joined with or at least sympathized with the Jewish zealots in their hatred of the seven-hill city. The earliest document of the Jewish Christian party, The Revelation of S. John the Divine, contains many instances of Jewish proclivities. "And I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns." (17).<sup>3</sup> "Upon her forehead, a name was written, a mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the earth. And I<sup>5, 6</sup> saw the woman drunk with the blood of saints." (17). "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth."<sup>9</sup> (17). "And the woman thou sawest<sup>18</sup> is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (17).<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the Gentile Christians had different feelings towards the city of the Caesars. "Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be

are ordained of God. " (Romans 13 <sup>1</sup> ).

"Render unto all their dues; tribute to whom  
tribute is due." (Romans 13 <sup>7</sup> ). Naturally then  
the capture of Jerusalem and the downfall of the temple  
would be a tremendous victory for Heathen Christianity,  
a terrible defeat for Jewish Christianity.

For with the burning of the temple, a very large  
portion of the law became inoperative. This was a  
powerful argument for the Gentile Christians to employ  
against their opponents. They looked upon the de-  
struction of the temple as a proof that it was God's  
will that the law should be abolished, or at least, only  
a minimum required of the heathen converts. (Is this  
required minimum stated in Acts 15 <sup>20</sup> and elsewhere,  
viz: that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and  
from fornication, and from what is strangled and from  
blood? Of San. 56

שבע מצות נצטוו בני נח דינין וברכת השם עכ"ל גילוי

עריית ושפכת דמים גזל ואכילת מאן החי

דינין גזל שפיכת דמים

were regulated by the civil law <sup>ברכת השם</sup> was  
of course included in the faith).

The overthrow of the capitol of the Jews weakened  
the Jewish Christian party further in that it took from

them the prestige of their high position as the church of the great city of Jerusalem. Gradually the legend grew among them that their Lord had foretold the destruction of the temple. They therefore ceased to hope for its rebuilding, and at length came into violent conflict with those Jewish zealots who were continually working towards that end. It was due in great measure to this last fact that a rupture finally took place between Jews and Jewish Christians.

The Jews did not give up hope of securing from an Emperor permission to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. The Heathen Christians naturally hindered their plans for the reason shown above. Dr. Joël (Blicks in die Religionsgeschichte 17 f) holds that Trajan gave this permission wherefore a festival { יום טהרה } was instituted in his honor (Of Megillah C. I Halacha Genesis Rabba 64, Rosh Hashanah 17). However, Trajan must have withdrawn his permission, because the day in his honor was set aside. A fearful struggle broke out, the Polemos shel Kitos <sup>Quintus</sup> (?) of the Talmud. (Graetz Vol. 4, 101 f - ascribes the violated promise to rebuild the temple to Hadrian. It is not necessary for our purpose to investigate this subject further. We wish simply to understand why all of a sudden, we begin to find in the Talmud laws against the Jewish Christians and their doctrines. "R. Joshanon ben Saccal, der wohl bis 80 n. Chr. an der Spitze der palästinischen Judenheit stand, hat häufige Disputation mit Sadduceern (Judaism VI, 6, Baba

Bathra 114), mit Boethusaern (Menachot 65), mit Heiden (Chulin 27, Beehoroth 8, Midrasch Rabbah Numeri O. 19), aber nicht mit Christen. Das ändert sich auf einmal in den Tagen der Junger R. Jochanans, des Josua ben Chananiah, des Elieser und des Gamaliel II. Man fängt an zwischen Christgläubigen und Christgläubigen zu unterscheiden, man verkehrt freundlich, mit den Einen, man nennt die Anderen Minim und Denuncianten, man trifft Einrichtungen gegen sie wie gegen innere Gefahr, man disputirt und verordnet.\* Of Blicke in die Religionsgeschichte A b I 30).

The period was certainly a dangerous one for Judaism. The Jews were persecuted by the Roman Emperors, and a heavy tax was imposed on every one found circumcised. (A law favoring Christianity, though not made for that purpose). A more insidious danger was the presence of Jewish Christians who gained proselytes even in high Jewish circles. Note I

הנהגה בן אחי ר' יהושע אזל לחדיה כסד נחום ועבדון ליה  
מינאי מלה ועלון נתה רכיב חמרא בשבתא אזל לבב  
יהושע חביביה ויהב עליו משח ואיתסי. אל כיון דהיתער  
בך חמרא דה הוא דשעא לית את יכיל שרי בארשא דישראל

of Koheleth Midrasch Rabbah 1<sup>6</sup>, also *ibid*, concerning R. Jonathan R. Jehuda ben N'kusa - of *ibid* 7<sup>26</sup>). The teaching of the school of Shammai, as we shall notice, inclined to Jewish Christianity more so than did that of the Hillelites. Rabbi Elieser ben Hyrkanos, the most prominent representative of the Shammmites, appears, both in teaching and action to have associated with the Minim, if he was not, as many suppose,

actually a member of them.

מעשה בר"א שנתפס לשום מינות נשלו אותו הגמון והעלו  
 על הבימה לדון אותו. אל ר' אדם גדול כמותך יעסוק  
 בדברים בשלים הללו. אל נאמן עליהדין והוא סבר  
 שבבילו אמר וחזא לא אמר אלא לשם שמים. אל מאחר  
 שהאמנותי עליך אף אני הייתי סבור ואומר אפשר שישיבות  
 הללו טועות הן בדברים בשליון הללו דימוס סטור אתה  
 אחר שנפטר ר' אליעזר מן הבימה היה מצטער על שנתפס  
 על דברי מינות נכנסו תלמידיו אצלו לנחמו ולא קבל  
 נכנס ר"ע אצלו אל ר' שמא אחד מן המינים אמר לפניך  
 דבר וערב לפניך אל הן השמים הזכרתי פעם אחת  
 הייתי עולה באיסטרטא של צפורי ובא אלי אדכ אחד  
 ויעקב איש כפר סכניא שמו ואמר לי דבר אחד נשום  
 פלוגי והנאני הדבר ואות הדבר היה כתוב בתורתכם  
 (דברים כג) לא תביא אתן זונה ומתד כלב. מן הן אמרתי  
 לו אסורין. אמר לי לקרבן אסורין לאכדן מותר ואמרתי לו  
 ואיך מה יעשה בהם אמר לי יעשה בחן בתן מרחצאות  
 ובתי כסאות. אמרתי לו יפה אמרתי ופוטמלמה  
 ממני הלכה לטעה כיון שראה שהורעתי לדבריו אמר  
 לי כך אמר פלוגי מצואה באר ולצואה יצאן. שנה (מיכה א)  
 מי מאתן זונה קבצה ועד אתן זונה ישובו יעשו  
 כורסון. לרבים והנאני ועל אותו הדבר נתפשתי  
 לשם מינות.

Torfaadullin  
 el. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.





one in the number of great men it contained. Among them may be mentioned R. Jochanan ben Zaccai, Rabban Gamaliel II, Eliezer ben Hyrkanos, Joshua ben Chanania, Elazar ben Azariah, Tarphon, Ishmael, Akiba, and Jose the Galilean. These men rendered Judaism independent of temple and sacrifice, and in their time finally achieved the undisputed sovereignty of the law. In the face of numerous obstacles, they succeeded in excluding alien elements, in purging their faith of dangerous doctrines, in rescuing it from Gnosticism and other "isms," of the time, and finally in preserving the Jewish religion.

In accomplishing all this, they were brought into bitter conflict with Christians, both Jewish and Gentile. Traces of these encounters are preserved in Jewish sources. Thus the Christians in their argument made much use of the Septuagint, misconstrued the translation, falsified the text by inserting passages favoring their religion, and asserting that the Jews had purposely omitted these verses. Thereupon, the attitude of the rabbis to the Greek translation changed entirely.

אָנעם בחמשה זקנים שכתבו לתלמי המלך את התורה יזכיר  
והיה אותו היום קשה לישראל כיום שעשו בו ישראל את  
העגל שלא היתה התורה יכולה להתרגם כל צרכה

(Sopherim <sup>8</sup> 1).

When further they interpreted the Bible after the allegorical manner of the Alexandrian School, and began to assign moral reasons for obeying the law, the rabbis scented danger and

denounced the practice.

האומר יברוך שבים הרי זו דרך המינות. על קן  
צפור יגיע רחמך ועל טוב יזכר שמך נאודים נאודים  
משתקין אותן.

<sup>9</sup> (Megillah 4 . Derenbourg 345, suggests that the word מרב in

this obscure passage may refer to Jesus, and cites Jerome's  
commentary on Isaiah 3<sup>20</sup> Op. 4<sup>82</sup> ). And for the same

reason, no doubt, Rabbi Elazar of Modin counts among those  
who have no חלק לעולם הבא

(Avoth 3") המגלה פנים בתורה שלא כהלכה

So clearly did the Rabbis perceive the dangerous tendency of  
any study connected even with Greek (On account of the results  
of Philo's teaching) that (in Menachoth 99<sup>5</sup>), Rabbi Ishmael  
taught that it was forbidden for any one to learn חכמה יוונית  
Their interdiction of Greek books and Greek language was not  
withdrawn until Aquila, the prize proselyte of Israel, made  
under the influence of Akiba, a strictly literal translation  
of the Bible (Megillah 9<sup>a and b</sup>), thus showing that the sole  
anxiety of the Rabbis was to preserve undefiled the Law of  
God and Israel.

For this very same reason they strongly interdicted all  
evangelical, apocryphal and heretical works. Thus to the  
enumeration of those שאין להם חלק לעולם הבא  
Rabbi Akiba adds (Jer San. X 28<sup>a</sup>) אף הקורא בספרים החיצונים  
Nay, the Rabbis went even further. Rabbi Tarphon (Tryphon  
Judaeus ?), a convert from the school of Shammai to that  
of Hillel, when asked whether he would scruple to burn the  
books of the Minim (הגליתין וספרי כוונים) when they contain-

ed the name of God, or passages from the Scripture, replied:

אָקפּה אַת בֵּן שָׂאִים יְבוֹאוּ לִידֵי שְׂאֵנִי אֲשֶׁרֶךְ אֶחָד וְאַתָּה  
הַאֲזִכֹּרֶת שְׁבָהָן

(Sabbath 116<sup>a</sup>)

The Rabbis had many discussions with the Minim on different points of the Law. Many of the questions put to them by the Minim were probably simply for the purpose of puzzling the teachers of Israel.

Thus Gamaliel II had a question propounded to him as to the propriety of his visiting baths which contained an image of Aphrodite (Of Avoda Zara 3<sup>4</sup>) of Midrasch to Psalms X.

Rabbi Joshua had frequent debates with the Christians in Palestine, and at his death the Rabbis asked

Chagiga 5<sup>a</sup> (מֵי נִין) מֵאִי קִירְסִין

The most fearful punishment was to be meted out to the

Minim after death. (Rosh Hashona 17) Rabbi Tarphon said,

אֶפִּילֹ אָדָם רוֹדֵף אַחֲרָיו לַהֲרֹג וְנִחְשֶׁה לַחֲכִישׁוֹ  
נִמְסֵ לְבֵית עֹבְדֵי אֱלִילִים וְאֵין בְּכֵנָם לְבֵיתָהּ שֶׁל  
אֱלֹ (מִינִים) שֶׁהִלְלוּ מִכִּיר וְכֹפְרִין וְאֵין מִכִּירִין וְכֹפְרִין

(Sabbath 116<sup>a</sup>)

The opposition to some of the teachings of the Christians may be traced in the diata of the Rabbis. The latter would go to any lengths in endeavoring to set aside the sayings of

their opponents. Rabbi Akiba, the uncompromising representative of the Hillelite school, and a champion of the anti-Christian forces, appears in many of these decisions. Then we are told in Math. 5<sup>32</sup>, that "every one that pulleth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress; and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery." The school of Shammai, resting upon that Deut 24<sup>1-4</sup>) virtually agreed to these words. The school of Hillel in their opposition to all teaching emanating from Christianity held that a man might divorce his wife for the most insignificant failure, e. g., spoiling a favorite dish. Akiba went even further. A man might divorce his wife, if he saw a prettier and more amiable woman. (Of Gittin 90<sup>a</sup>).

We have an account in Math. 17<sup>1-4</sup> of Elijah and Moses coming up on a mountain, and God talking to Jesus. In Succa 5<sup>a</sup>, Rabbi Jose says בעולם לא נרדה שכינה למשה ולא עליו חשה רגליהו למרות.

In Middah 61<sup>b</sup>, the Rabbis virtually declared that the law would cease with the coming of the Messiah. The Christians<sup>held</sup> that that time had come, and said John was Elijah the necessary forerunner of the Messianic era of Malachi III. In Mark 11 - 12<sup>9</sup> And they asked him, saying, how is that the scribes say that Elijah must first come? And he said unto them, Elijah indeed cometh first and restoreth all things. .... But I say unto you that Elijah is cometh." (Of Math.

11 - 12                      13 f  
 17                      Of also 11                      "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah which is come." Thereupon Rabbi Joshua, who represented the liberal tendency, and at times appears to be indifferent to what his contemporaries considered important elements of their <sup>faith</sup> religion, (Of Sanh. 96<sup>f</sup> and Niddah 70<sup>f</sup>), yet who was withal a thorough-going defender of his religion, proceeded to deny once for all the saying

נמות בשלום לעד לרא

He made this denial as strong as he possibly could, and asserted that he had received a tradition from Jochanan ben Zakkai, and he had received the tradition running back to Moses,

שאין אלהים בא לטמא ולטהר לרחק ולקרב אלא לרחק  
 המקורבין בזרוע ולקרב המרוחקים בזרוע (cf. Eduyoth 8<sup>7</sup>)

Not even Elijah had the power of abrogating any commandment.

Rabbi Akiba under the influence of the age developed his remarkable system of interpretation. He declared that in the Torah there was not even a superfluous letter or sign ( קיץ ) Everything had a meaning. He thus gave a Scriptural support to every possible law the Rabbis could introduce. This led to minute and detailed regulations, all probably in opposition to the encroachments of Christianity. While his system met with tremendous success, many of his contemporaries regarded it with disfavor. (Of Chagiga 10<sup>a</sup>, Sotah 27<sup>f</sup>, Menaechoth 29<sup>f</sup>). Rabbi Ismael adopted the view that the Torah spoke in human language.

It must not, however, be thought that because Jewish Christianity came into conflict with the Rabbis, that the former gave up the Law altogether. On the contrary, we have the testimony of Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History Bk IV Chap. V), who mentions the names of fifteen bishops after the destruction of Jerusalem and then declares, "These are all the bishops of Jerusalem, that filled up the time from the Apostles until the above-mentioned time, all of the circumcision." And again in the same chapter, he says, "So much have I learned from writers, that down to the invasion of the Jews under Adrian, there were fifteen successions of bishops in that Church, all which, they say were Hebrews from the first, and received the knowledge of Christ pure and unadulterated, so that in the estimation of those who were able to judge, they were well approved and worthy of the episcopal office. For at that time the whole church under them consisted of faithful Hebrews, who continued from the time of the Apostles until the siege that then took place." (Of also his characterization of the Ebionites *ibid.* Book III, Chapter 27). All the writings of this party that have come down to us, and accounts of them tend to show that it was essentially a Jewish sect, though in bitter opposition to the main body of Judaism represented by the Rabbis. This condition of affairs was not to continue much longer.

Hadrian would obliterate all distinctions of race and religion throughout the Roman world. This departure from the customary method of treating subjugated nations naturally

had the effect of driving the Jewish zealots well-nigh to desperation. Under the preceding Emperors, a premium had been placed upon uncircumcision. (Of Domitian tax). Now Hadrian filled their cup of misery to overflowing by decreeing that upon the site of the temple, around which were clustered the most sacred memories, that upon this site should rise a temple to Jupiter, Capitolinus, and a heathen name should be substituted for the historic Jerusalem. Joshua ben Chanania, who alone had been able to quiet the people (Of Midrasch Rabbah Genesis 64) was now dead. The energetic, enthusiastic and patriotic Akiba now swept everything before him; armed men sprung <sup>up</sup> as if by magic. The powerful leader of the people was greeted by Akiba as a star of Jacob. May he went further and proclaimed him the Messiah,

היינו מלכא בשמיהא ד' יוחנן בן חורזא  
אקבא יעבדו שבחים בלחיי וד' יוחנן בן חורזא

(Midrasch Rabbah Threni 2 of Jer. Taanith 4). However, the ardent support of the fiery Akiba would be sufficient to give him such a distinction in the eyes of his followers. If there is any truth in this legend it would serve as one reason to explain why the Jewish Christians did not in any way assist the Jews. The last thing that could be expected of them would be to acknowledge a Messiah other than Jesus. They therefore acted as spies and informers, at least so they were regarded by the Rabbis. (The very name "informer" came to be interchangeable with Min).

The overthrow of Bar Cochba and the succeeding Roman legislation completed the separation between Jew and Jewish



Christian. Hadrian's decree prohibited the observation of the Law, especially the rite of circumcision. When in following years this decree was modified, the change was decidedly in favor of Gentile Christianity, and virtually gave the death-blow to the further spread of Jewish Christianity. This important law allowed children born of Jewish parents to be circumcised, but, under the severest penalty, prohibited the act in case of those not born in the Jewish faith. The succession of bishops of the circumcision came to an end, and Christianity announced to the Roman world its formal separation from Judaism. (Of Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History IV. 3).

Though Jewish doctrines continued to influence the Christian Church, nevertheless with this formal separation, our sketch of the Jewish Law (considered as a whole) in Early Christianity may be brought to a close. There remain to be considered in the following chapters, certain details of this law, cleanness and uncleanness, Sabbath and Festivals, Circumcision.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### CLEANNESS AND UNCLEANNESS.

LAWS OF CLEANNESS AND UNCLEANNESS AS ESTABLISHED  
DURING AND AFTER TIME OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH - ATTEMPT  
OF HELLENISTS - CONSEQUENCES - PAUL'S VIEWS ON THE  
QUESTION - PARALLEL TEACHINGS OF THE GOSPELS AND THE  
RABBIS.

In our account of the introduction of the Law (Of Chapter 1), we noticed how Ezra, actuated by the spirit of the time (Of Haggai 2<sup>12, 13</sup>), had devoted his first attention to the purifying of the land which had been defiled by the action of the leaders in intermarrying with the daughters of the surrounding nations. In accordance with the Law he had brought with him from Babylon (Of especially Leviticus 11 - 15 Numeri 19), the people was to be holy and the land undefiled, free from all uncleanness of the nations. With the assistance of Nehemiah he virtually succeeded in his plans. (Of Ezra 9<sup>1f</sup>, 10<sup>17 f</sup>, Neh. 9<sup>28</sup>, 10<sup>28</sup>, 13 ).

The test of the cleanness or uncleanness of any person, as a rule, and in the last resort lay in the fact whether or not such a person was considered fit to enter the temple and offer sacrifices before the priest. He could not do so had he touched a corpse of man or of any beast which had died a natural death or had been torn by other beasts. Sexual impurities and leprosy also rendered him unfit for such sacrifices. The law which Ezra and Nehemiah establish-

ed provided numerous ways and means by which the individual could be rendered clean again. (In the course of this same chapter, I shall have occasion to speak of forbidden foods, which however, were not regulated as the above. My plan in thus introducing the latter subject is not wholly an arbitrary one. To the early Christians, the eating of forbidden foods seems to have been understood by the term unclean of 10, 14 and 15 Acts 10 ).

In later years Antiochus under the influence of the Hellenists proclaimed that the people should "pollute the sanctuary and them that were holy; ..... that they should sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean beasts ..... and that they should make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation." (I Mace. 1<sup>46 - 48</sup> ). We have previously shown (Of Chapter I) how the decrees of Antiochus had the effect of intensifying the opposition. The author of the book of Daniel, held up to the eyes of the people his hero as a model. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's meat." (Dan. 1<sup>8</sup> ) and the author shows how he grew in favor in the sight of God and man. In the second book of Maccabees (6<sup>19</sup> ) we are told how Eleazar

24

a man of ninety years (6 ) "welcomed death with renown rather than life with pollution" (i.e. eating swine's flesh (6 )<sup>18</sup>). The most earnest pleading could not move him. For, says the author, "he had formed a high resolve and one that became the dignity of his years, and the dignity of old age, and the gray hairs which he had reached with honor, and his excellent education from a child, or rather that became the holy laws of God."<sup>23</sup> (6 ).

In chapter seven we are told how a mother and seven sons suffered the most frightful torments rather than partake of swine's flesh. But says the author triumphantly speaking of the last and youngest son, "he also died pure from pollution, putting his whole trust in the Lord."<sup>40</sup> (7 ).

With such a spirit actuating the Chassidim party we can well imagine that its heirs in character if not in name, the Pharisees, proceeded to add precept upon precept to the already numberless laws on the subject of cleanness and uncleanness, until they were piled mountain high. The rules and regulations occupy twelve treatises of the Mishna. Nothing was too minute, and to our minds, (if we have a right to apply

the Standard of our age) puerile and insignificant to engage the earnest attention and discussion of the scribes. (The statement however, of Prof. Schürer, Div. II, Vol. 106, about the far-reaching influence of these ordinances on the daily life should be modified in accordance with the note of Mr. Montefiore, Religion of the Ancient Hebrews, 477, who shows that according to Rabbinical tradition, these innumerable regulations applied for the most part to the priests, of Maimonides,

Hilchoth <sup>אבות אבות</sup> Torath Kahanim  
(Sifra) 49 ; Rosh Hashanah 16 ). Indeed the scribes carried the laws of purification to such an extreme, that they were ridiculed by the Sadducees

<sup>אמרין בדוקים ראו פרושים מסבילין גבל חמה</sup>  
8 a  
(Jer. Hagiga 3 79 ).

In order to lead purer lives the Alexandrian Jews at first lived in different quarters from the foreigners. (Bell. Jud. II. 18 Josephus). This was in accord with the Rabbinical maxim.

<sup>תחלת סומא כנה לעז</sup>

(Of Real-Encyclopadie Ab I 874).

For the same reason (viz to widen the breach between Jew and Pagan for fear of idolatry).

<sup>יוסי בן יעזר איש צרידה ויוסי בן יוחנן איש ירושלים</sup>  
(Sabbath 14<sup>b</sup>) גזרו סומא על ארץ הפמים וכל כל דכוכית

Was it due to a similar reason that abstinence from certain meats was the first regulation to be imposed upon proselytes (Josephus Apion 2 <sup>39</sup>)? This abstinence was so frequent that the Satirist Juvenal ridicules it. (Sat XIV. 99 - 100).

Paul rejecting the whole law, was naturally indifferent to these requirements. In I Cor. 8, he says, "Meat will not commend us to God; neither if we eat not are we the worse; nor if we eat are we the better." However, he warns against eating meat sacrificed to idols (8 <sup>10</sup>) and then declares "if meat maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh for-  
<sup>13</sup> overmore." (8 <sup>13</sup>). (This is certainly a great concession).  
<sup>27 f</sup> In I Cor. 10, it is a mere question of expediency. There is nothing intrinsically wrong in partaking of any meat, but one should regulate his action in this respect by a view to the effect it will produce. It is on this account that the  
<sup>14</sup> <sup>20</sup> author of Revelations (2 <sup>14</sup> and 2 <sup>20</sup>) censures his party for eating flesh sacrificed to idols. (Weizsäcker Vol. I 205 notes that in the 2nd century, Ebionitic Homilies  
<sup>3</sup> forbid sacrificial flesh altogether 7. This is done also by Justin and by Irenaeus, and was a universal

principle of the church, of especially in this connection Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History V 1. 26). Chapter 10 of Acts in accordance with the tendency of the book makes Peter appear in the guise of Paul (Of Zeller, Acts of Apostles, Vol. 1, 272 f). Peter in a vision sees all "manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and fowls of heaven. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean. And a voice came unto him a second time, what God has cleansed, make not thou common." (10 12 f). And the story makes Peter act in accordance with this vision.

In Math 15<sup>1</sup> we have "Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man; but that which proceedeth out of the mouth, this defileth the man." (Of 5 Midrasch Koheleth 5, also Leviticus 16).<sup>2</sup> A similar passage is found in Mark 7 (Of Berachoth 2 52). That the Gospels however, did recognize the validity of the laws of cleanness and uncleanness is evident from Mark 1<sup>44</sup> and Luke 2<sup>22, 23</sup>.

But that the Rabbis were not blind to the ethical view of the question may be gathered from comparisons



given above. Joshua ben Chananiah appears to be indifferent.

אמר להן כית בשרא ואין חי כסמא כתיב לעתיד  
לבא צריכין העאה שלישי ושבועי או אין צריכין אמר  
להן לבשיחין בחרם להן

<sup>b</sup>

Niddah 70

Rabbi said that God purified Israel (Joma 85<sup>a</sup>) and R.

Jochanan ben Zaccai hold

לא הכית כסמא ולא המים כסהרין

<sup>a</sup>

and finally Sota 49 declares

משמץ ר"ג בסלה שריה

o o o o o o o o

## CHAPTER V.

## SABBATH AND FESTIVALS.

NEHEMIAH AND THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH -  
THE QUESTION OF FIGHTING ON SABBATH DURING THE WAR OF  
THE MACCABEES - THE DAY STRICTLY A DAY OF REST IN  
POST-MACCABEAN TIMES - ATTITUDE OF CHRISTIANITY  
TO SABBATH AND FESTIVALS.

Among the solemn promises which the "seed of Israel" made to Ezra and Nehemiah on the formal acceptance of the Law, we note the following: "And if the peoples of the land bring ware or any victuals on the Sabbath day to sell, that we would not buy of them<sup>31</sup> on the Sabbath or on a holy day." Neh. 10 ). So lax, however, had the people been or become in their observance of the seventh day, that shortly after the above promise had been made, (on Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem) Nehemiah could say, "In those days I saw in Judah, some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing sheaves, and lading asses therewith; as also wine, grapes and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. .... There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought in fish and all manner of ware, and sold on the Sabbath unto the children of Judah and in Jerusalem." (Neh. 15 - 16 13 ). He had a terrible time to break up this custom and compel the people to observe the day as he saw fit. (Neh 13<sup>21 f</sup> ).

How wonderfully effective was the work of Nehemiah, or rather of the scribes who came after him, may be gathered from the two books of the Maccabees. Antiochus had issued his terrible decree "that they (Jews) should

profane the sabbaths and feasts." (I Macc 1 II  
<sup>46</sup>  
 Macc 6 ). Under the inspiring leadership of Mattathias, they had raised the standard of revolt. But in vain. Many were attacked on the Sabbath Day. They would not profane the Sabbath by fighting on it. (Of I Macc. 2 <sup>33, 34</sup> II Macc 6"). It required great courage on the part of Mattathias to make the proclamation, "Whosoever shall come against us to battle on the Sabbath Day, let us fight against him and we shall in no wise all die, as our brethern died in the secret places." (I Macc. 2 <sup>41</sup> . Be it noted this proclamation did not apply to offensive warfare. II Macc. <sup>26</sup> 8 ).

The victory of the Chassidim had the same effect on the regulations concerning the Sabbath as it had on other branches of the law. The Talmud enumerates thirty-nine kinds of work prohibited on Sabbath (Sabbath <sup>32 or Mishna 7<sup>2</sup></sup> 72) and each class was expatiated upon at length. Besides this, climbing, riding, swimming, clapping and dancing were prohibited (Sabbath 1 ), and all deduced from the simple passages in the Pentateuch (Ex 16 <sup>23 - 30</sup> , 8 - 11 12 12 - 17 21 1 - 3 3 20 <sup>23</sup> 31 <sup>34</sup> , 35 , Lev. 23 . <sup>32 - 36</sup> 12 - 15 ). This was carried Nunn. 15 , Deut. 5 .

to such an extreme that the remark is made in the Talmud

<sup>a</sup>  
(Chagiga 10 )

The sanctity of the Sabbath continued to occupy the highest place in the estimation of the people.

המחלל את השבת כעובד עבודת כוכבים ומזלות

<sup>a</sup>  
(Sanh 7 ). To desecrate the Sabbath was equivalent to violating the whole law (Chulin 2) and Sabbath (118) declared that a proper observance of the Sabbath was sufficient to atone for even idolatry. They went to extremes also in observing the Holidays. An instance is mentioned where Shammai had part of the roof taken off of his house, and the open space covered with branches of trees in order that a new-born babe might<sup>8</sup> celebrate the feast of Tabernacles (Succa 2 ). From all parts of the world, the Hebrews would flock to Jerusalem to observe the festivals. The population of the city during one of these festivals is estimated by Josephus as about 2700000 (Bell. Jud. VI. 9. 3). In spite of the precedent of the Maccabees, in spite of Shammai's justification of fighting on the Sabbath<sup>20</sup> (Siphre Deut 20<sup>a</sup>, Sabbath 60 ), it is well-known that Pompey, Herod and possibly Titus won their greatest

battles against the Jews, on the Sabbath.

Paul in Gal 4 expresses his utter contempt for Sabbath and festivals, which he characterizes as "weak and beggarly rudiments." "Ye observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain." In the same spirit, no doubt, Rabban Gamaliel was approached with the question why he observed festivals, etc.

<sup>14</sup> when God had declared (Isaiah 1 ) that he hated their festivals. Gamaliel replied by calling attention to the fact that God had said חדשיכם ומועדיכם

the festivals as observed by the people in the time of Isaiah. The verse did not read חדשי ומועדי

God's festivals. (Midrasch Tanchuma Num 29 of Mid.

Rabbah Num. 1 Chapter, of also Yalkut Isaiah 388). 258

The Sabbath was also declared to be eternal (Mechilta

כי תשא ) .

היכלנו המודע אומר המהלל את הקדשים  
ומבזה את המועדות... אין לו חלק לשום  
הבא

(Avoth 3"

27

In Mark 2 , we are told "The Sabbath was made for  
man, and not man for the Sabbath." Of Joma 85 .

היא מסורה בידכם ולא אתם מסורים בידה

1 - 8                      1 - 2  
(Of also Math 12                      , Luke 6                      ).                      In Math 12<sup>w</sup>

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees, "What man shall there be of you that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the Sabbath Day, will he not lay hold on it and lift it out?"                      (Of Sabbath 128<sup>b</sup> also Baba Mezia 32<sup>b</sup> ).

Jesus also performs cures on the Sabbath Day, and the Pharisees are represented as objecting strenuously (Of 9 - 13                      1 - 5                      6 - 10  
Math 12                      Mark 3                      , Luke 6                      ).                      In this, however, he has the full support of the Talmud.

משה ואהרן וכל בני ישראל

6                      f  
(Joma 8 , of also Joma 85 ).

At all events the Rabbis could not find sufficient words to express their love for the Sabbath (Of Introduction).                      It was considered a token of God's love (Tosephta Berachoth 3<sup>7</sup> ), a treasure given to Israel (Sabbath 10<sup>f</sup> ), and was styled a "Queen" (Sabbath 119<sup>a</sup> ).                      One other thing is certain, the early Christians continued for many years to observe the Sabbath and some of the festivals (Of Math. 24<sup>20</sup> , 26<sup>17</sup> , Acts 13<sup>27</sup> , of also Eusebius Ecclesiastical History III. 27, and Early Church History, Edward Backhouse, Chap. XIII.)

## CHAPTER VI.

## CIRCUMCISION.

AS A RESULT OF MACCABEAN REVOLUTION, CIRCUMCISION  
BECOMES A NATIONAL DISTINCTION - PAUL IS FIRST  
INDIFFERENT AND THEN OPPOSED TO IT - APOSTLES UPHELD  
IT - ATTITUDE OF THE RABBIS - CIRCUMCISION OF PROSELYTES.



Among the many bitter complaints brought against  
 11 - 15  
 the Hellenists in Mace 1 , we read, "and they  
 made themselves uncircumcised." A glance  
 11 - 17  
 at II Mace 4 will readily show us the cause why  
 so many priests readily submitted to the painful opera-  
 tion of ἐπιστομῆς The king later de-  
 creed that "they should leave their sons uncircumcised"  
 48  
 (I Mace 1 ). Whomsoever the king's officers caught  
 circumcising their children were put to death in the most  
 60 10  
 barbarous manner. (I Mace 1 of II Mace 6 ). The  
 Chassidim under Mattathia employed force to secure the  
 46  
 rite of circumcision (I Mace 2 ). After the war  
 even more so than before it, this rite was looked upon  
 as a distinguishing mark of Jews. Hyrcan compelled  
 the Idumeans to accept the rite as a mark of submission  
 and amalgamation, i. e. a purely political act. (Jo-  
 sephus Ant. XIII. 9. 1.) For the same reason,  
 Aristobulus I forced circumcision upon many of the  
 Itureans. (Josephus Ant. XIII. 11. 13). In later  
 time the members of the Herodian family upheld this  
 rite. (Josephus Ant. XX. 7. 1 and 7. 3.)

Under the probable influence of Philo and  
 school (Of chapter II), who volatilized away all obser-  
 vances, Paul denied the binding force of circumcision.

It was to him a matter of indifference. "For neither  
 is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision." (Gal.  
<sup>15</sup>  
 6 ). Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is  
 nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God."  
<sup>19</sup>  
 (I Cor. 7 ). "Was any man called being cir-  
 cumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Hath  
 any been called in uncircumcised, let him not be cir-  
<sup>18</sup>  
 cumcised." (I Cor 7 ). Again he expresses the  
 opinion that it may help. "For circumcision indeed  
 profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law; but if thou  
 be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is be-  
<sup>25</sup>  
 come uncircumcision." (Romans 2 ). But after  
 all it is a minor matter. "If therefore the uncir-  
 cumcision keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his  
 uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?" (Romans  
<sup>26</sup>  
 2 ). "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly;  
 neither is that circumcision which is outward in the  
 flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circum-  
<sup>28 - 29 a</sup>  
 cision is that of the heart." Romans 2 ).

Under the influence of party opposition Paul did not  
 stop with this statement which savors strongly of the  
<sup>23</sup>  
 Alexandrian school. In Gal. 5 , he goes to the ex-  
 treme. "Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that, if ye  
 receive circumcision, Christ will profit you nothing. Yea

I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision that he is a debtor to the whole law." Indeed he is so excited that in 5<sup>10</sup> and 5<sup>12</sup> he takes a bitter fling at the chief of Apostles for preaching other wise.

For this constituted one of the vital points of difference between Paul and the Apostles. Even in the garbled account given in Acts, we can see how the Apostles rigidly held to the law of circumcision. In Acts II, where the attempt is made to give Peter a quasi-Pauline character, he is upbraided by the Apostle in Jerusalem. "Thou wentest in unto men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (11)<sup>3</sup> of also Acts 15<sup>1</sup>, 15<sup>5</sup>. In accordance with its tendency to grant concessions on either side, Acts 16<sup>3</sup> make Paul circumcise his disciple, Timothy. Of also Acts 21<sup>20</sup>. The best proof, however, that the Church in Jerusalem adhered constantly to the law of circumcision, may be gained from the second chapter of Galatians, of especially 2<sup>12</sup> where Peter would not mingle with the Gentile Christians, because they were not circumcised. That the Jewish Christians continued to hold to this position is further evidenced by Math. 10<sup>6</sup> and 15<sup>24</sup>, where the Apostles are sent to the Jews only, not to the Gentiles.

From the standpoint of the Jewish law, Paul's allegorizing in Romans 2<sup>28, 29</sup> was certainly dangerous. We find, therefore, Akiba, the consistent opponent of Christianity, definitely replying to Paul's statement (Of Midrash Rabba

Genesis 46 -

ר' עקיבא אומר ארבע ערלות הן נאמר ערלה  
באופן נאמר ערלה בפסח ונאמר ערלה בלב  
נאמר ערלה בגוף נאמר לו והתהלך לפני  
והיה תמים אם ימול מן האופן אינו תמים מן  
הלב אינו תמים מן המה אינו תמים ומהכן  
ימול ויהיה תמים הרי אומר זו ערלת הגוף

Hillel is also reported to have said

הפירש מן הערלה כמורט<sup>ט</sup> הקבר

(Of Pesachim 8, Eduyoth 5<sup>2</sup> Kerithoth 4<sup>4</sup>).

Rabbi Elazar of Modin, declared

המפיר בריתו של אברהם אבינו עליו השלום  
אין לו חלק לעולם הבא<sup>11</sup>

(Avoth 3<sup>11</sup>).

In the following anecdote Rabbi Eliezer gives a very decided answer to Agrippa, who seems to doubt the validity of the rite of circumcision (Of Tanchuma Ed Amsterdam 7<sup>a</sup>)

שאל אגריפס המלך את ר' אליעזר וכי מאחר שיהיה  
חבב את המילה למה לא כתבה בעשרת הדברות  
אמר לו קודם עשרת הדברות הזהיר עליה שנאמר  
ונתתה אם שמע תשמע בקולי ושמרתם את בריתי  
ואומר..... זו ברית מילה

The question of circumcision was a very important one for the admission of proselytes. Josephus (Ant. XX. 2. 4) has left us an account of a decided difference of opinion in this matter. On the admission of King Izates to Judaism, a

Jew Ananias asserted "the King could honor God without circumcision, if he had firmly resolved zealously to observe the Jewish ordinances." This was more important than circumcision." Another Jew, Elazar of Gallilee held that the king should be circumcised in order to show proper respect for the Jewish laws. In Sabbath 135<sup>a</sup>, we have a similar question discussed.

גל מה וחלקו על גר שנתגייר כשהוא מיהיל להסיף  
 שבש אומרים כריך להסיף ממנו דם ברית ובה  
 אומרים איך להסיף ממנו דם ברית

The classic passage, however, is found Jebamoth 46<sup>a</sup>

ת"ר גר שכל ולא סבל ר' אליעזר אמר הרי זה גר  
 ר' יהושע אמר סבל ולא סבל הרי זה גר

The question is finally settled as far as the Jews are concerned in Kerithoth 9<sup>a</sup>

רבי אומר ככם כאבותיכם מה אבותיכם לא נכנסו  
 לברית אלא במילה וטבילה והרפאת דמים אף הם  
 לא יכנסו לברית אלא במילה וטבילה והרפאת דמים

though by this time the decrees of Hadrian and Antoninus had settled for them. Besides, the Rabbis themselves came to look with disfavor upon all proselytes, as witness

<sup>b</sup>  
(Jebamoth 47 )

אמר מר גר שבא להתגייר גומרים לו מה ראית  
שבאת להתגייר ומודיעים אותו מקצאת מצות  
קלות ומקצאת מצות חמירות מאי שנא דא  
פרוש נפלוש דאמר רבי הלבו קשים גרים  
לישראל כספחת

As stated above in Chapter III , the Jew Christians continued circumcision down to the Bar Cochba rebellion. Baur (Church History of First Three Centuries, Vol. I, 108) thinks baptism gradually took its place.

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