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FOCUSING ON TRACTATE SANHEDRIN + HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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Report on the Rabbinic Dissertation Submitted by

Janise Poticha

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Ordination

Resurrection in Rabbinic Judaism

Janise Poticha's thesis, Resurrection in Rabbinic Judaism, is a study of discussions of resurrection in BT Sanhedrin, ch. 11., as her subtitle indicates. Ms. Poticha discusses the topic in 5 chapters: 1) A discussion of resurrection and after-life in the Bible, mostly focusing on Sheol; 2) the idea of the power of gods to resurrect or give life in pagan beliefs in Asia Minor and the Near East; 3) the Pharisaic-Sadducean debate regarding resurrection; 4) the proofs for resurrection in BT Sanhedrin, ch.11; and 5) a discussion of the theological import of resurrection.

While much of Ms. Poticha's thesis repeats previous studies, the thrust and direction of the thesis points in a fairly new direction. She has paid attention to Sheol and pagan considerations about the gods' power to give life or resurrect in order to provide a historical and theological context for the rabbinic idea of resurrection of the dead. Later Biblical books indicated some notion of it, but whether it was a metaphor or reality remains a major question. Paganism almost universally denied the possibility that the gods would raise the dead and frequently denied the gods' power to do so. This was especially true for the Greeks.

It may be that Jewish reaction to Hellenism joined with the beginnings of some idea of resurrection in the later Biblical books to announce a particularly Jewish theological view: God is more powerful than any of the pagan gods. He can raise the dead. The Sadducees, and aristocracy inclined to Hellenism, may have played this down; the nationalist Pharisees would have vaunted this claim.

Ms. Poticha then turns to the "proofs" for resurrection. She does a fine job of categorizing them into genre. Interestingly, rabbinic midrash appears least frequently as a form of proof for resurrection. Highly literal--perhaps, "hyperliteral"--readings of Biblical texts, especially Pentateuchal ones, appears as typical proofs used against "minim", "Sadducees", and "Samaritans". Logical arguments, especially a fortiori ones and ones drawn from life and nature function as responses to "Romans"/"Hellenistic figures". Some of these proofs are directed to no outside audience and have the formula "Whence do we derive resurrection from the Torah?" These seem to address the Mishnah which states, "...and these are they who have no share in the world-to-come: one who denies resurrection as a principle in the Torah...." (M. Sanhedrin 11:1). It then becomes an act

of mishnah-commentary to show that the principle can be found in the Torah. What is striking about the examples is that they address their various audiences in ways that are appropriate to each given the Rabbis' tans" get overliteralist Biblical proofs. "Romans" and "Hellenists" get logical proofs and proofs from nature and life because they make no claim to believe in the Torah's authority or truth.

In her final chapter, Mr. Poticha points out that the real concern of the Rabbis may have been God's power rather than resurrection itself. By referring to the fact that resurrection must be mentioned in the Amidah blessing that praises God's power. She also notes the continuation there of the Talmudic argument from nature in that resurrection and rain are joined together in that blessing. Subtly, the argument is made that proof of resurrection is visible in the natural cycle of what looks like death followed by rebirth.

Respectfully Submitted,

Professor Michael Chernick

April 1, 1992

RESURRECTION IN RABBINIC JUDAISM:
Focusing on Tractate Sanhedrin and Historical Background

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Ordination

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New York, New York

11-March-1992
6-Adar II-5752

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of the resurrection of the dead in Judaism took shape gradually. The Jewish idea of the afterlife has focused upon belief in either corporeal resurrection or the immortality of the soul. While one or the other of these concepts, and occasionally both together, has been present in every period in the history of Judaism, it can be said that these ideas underwent their most significant development during the rabbinic and medieval periods, the former being the focus of this study.

BIBLICAL PERIOD

The notion of the afterlife in the Bible is vague. After death, an individual is described as going to "Sheol", a kind of underworld. It is only through the power of God that one can ascend from this netherworld (Deut. 32:39, I Sam. 2:6-7). In the book of Psalms there is the general conviction that God is stronger than death and can rescue one from Sheol:

"You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears...I walk before the Lord in the land of the living."
(Ps. 116:8-9)

"I shall not die, but I shall live...he has not given me over to death." (Ps. 118:17-18)

It is not stated how this deliverance will take place, it is enough for the psalmist to know that God will not give one up to death or Sheol.

The language of resurrection is sometimes used figuratively, as in Ezekiel's vision of the heap of dry bones (Ez. 37:1-4) and in Isaiah (Is. 26: 17-19) to describe the national restoration of the people of Israel. Just as God can resurrect those who seem to be beyond hope, so too, God can resurrect a people to national life.

Two outstanding examples of resurrection are those performed by Elijah (I Kings 17:17-24) and Elisha (II Kings 4:17-37, 13:21). Both Elijah and Elisha resuscitate a widow's child. These two examples are quite different from the restoration of the people of Israel. Consequently, they are looked upon as exceptions to the natural order of things. They are not mentioned anywhere else in the text. Therefore, they are considered isolated miracles which demonstrate the great power of God and God's prophets.

An early description of an eschatological resurrection of the dead is in Daniel 12: 1-2:

"...and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to an everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

The book of Daniel is an apocalyptic text composed in the midst of the Antiochian persecutions (167-164 B.C.E.), which explains the verses not suggesting a universal resurrection, but rather resurrection for the righteous and the wicked of Israel.

II Maccabees, a contemporary writing with the book of Daniel, also discusses resurrection of the dead. It shows that the idea of resurrection is bound up with the belief in just retribution, especially in the case of martyrdom. The story of Hanna and her seven sons, related to us in chapter seven, is a clear indication of a belief in the resurrection of righteous Israelites.

"You wretched, you release us from this present life but the king of the world will raise us up, because we have died for his laws, to an everlasting renewal of life." (vs. 9)

HELLENISTIC AGE

The subject of life after death was a matter of intense interest from 200 B.C.E. onward. This interest was fueled by the individualistic outlook on life which had arisen by the intense problems of faith created by persecution and the continuing trials of living under unjust, foreign rulers. This intensity was also effected by the political and religious controversies within Jewish communities.

Joseph Klausner, in his book *The Messianic Idea in Israel* writes that in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (ca. 110 B.C.E.-70 C.E.), resurrection of all people will take place in the Days of the Messiah. However, only the righteous will enjoy the fruits thereof.

In his same book, Klausner discusses the Syriac Book of Baruch (compiled ca. 70 c.e.). According to Klausner, all the righteous of the world are to be resurrected. The earth will restore the dead without changing their form from which they had been buried (50:2). This particular passage attests to the resurrection of the body. The text continues that the wicked will also rise but only to behold the transformation of the righteous to angels. These wicked who rose, also in the same form as they had at death, shall, instead of being transformed, 'wither away' to be tormented eternally.

The idea of immortality and resurrection appears in the *Wisdom of Solomon*, and its development is continued in the writings of Philo Judaeus (d. 45-50 C.E.). Philo describes how the souls of the righteous return after death to their native home in heaven, or, in the case of rare individuals like the Patriarchs, to the intelligible world of ideas. Philo's views were immensely influential on early Christian philosophy and had great impact on rabbinic Jewish thought.

RABBINIC JUDAISM

Belief in the resurrection of the dead is the cornerstone of rabbinic eschatology. Josephus Flavius in his books *Jewish Antiquities* and *The Jewish War* attribute the general acceptance of the belief in resurrection in rabbinic Judaism to the victory of Pharisaism after the fall of Jerusalem. This led to the Mishnaic statement: "All Israel has a portion in the world to come... but the following have no portion therein: He who maintains that resurrection is not a biblical doctrine, the Torah was not divinely revealed and an epikoros." (T.B. Sanh. 90a).

The rabbinic doctrine concerning reward and punishment in the hereafter is based on belief in the reunion of the body and the soul before the day of judgment. Although rabbinic thought was influenced by Greco-Roman ideas about the existence of the soul as an independent entity, and although there exist some relatively late rabbinic opinions that attach greater culpability to the soul than to the body for a person's sins, there are no rabbinic sources that testify to belief in the immortality of the soul independent of the notion of corporeal resurrection.

Resurrection of the dead is also the ground on which the rabbis stood to prove God's overwhelming power over all other gods. The rabbis use Scripture, logical arguments and parables, to prove the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. The content of their arguments was such that it spoke directly to the various audiences who did not believe in the doctrine of resurrection, could not find the doctrine in the Torah, or expressed a special interest in it. The goal for the rabbis was to ensure the survival of God, Torah, and Israel.

As a testimony to God's faithfulness, the rabbis also made God's power to revive the dead the subject of the second benediction of the 'Amidah', the focal-point of Jewish liturgy, and included several references to the resurrection in other prayers in the liturgy.

The resurrection of the dead is a subject not often discussed today. Although it remains in Conservative and Orthodox liturgy, all suggestions of resurrection have been removed from Reform and Reconstructionist liturgy. The denial of resurrection made way for the seemingly more acceptable doctrine of immortality. The very uncertainty of knowledge concerning death and the afterlife allows the subject to be an ongoing focus of discussion.

The object of this thesis is to engage myself as well as the reader in that discussion. This discussion focuses on the historical background of the resurrection of the dead and how the rabbis, specifically in T. B. Sanhedrin 10, proved its existence.

CHAPTER 1

Sheol

In ancient Israel, the notion of what becomes of a person at death was similar to those notions found among neighboring civilizations. The belief was the dead were gathered together in a vast subterranean region. This world of the dead, termed 'שְׁאוֹל-Sheol', corresponds to Hades of the Greeks and Arallu of the Assyro-Babylonians.

Human beings are composed of flesh, breath of life, or soul, and spirit. Death meant that this life or soul of the person departed from the body, is manifested by the cessation of vital breath (Gen. 2:7).¹ Upon death, the human being was buried in a natural cave or in the ground. Since burial was a means by which atonement was wrought for sins, a hasty burial was mandatory.

The notion of the afterlife in the Bible is vague. One of the assumed whereabouts of the dead was an immense, deep, dark abode of shadows. Those who inhabit this underworld are the dead, a semblance of their former selves, without strength. They are shut in by gates and bars.² According to Job 7:9-10, it was a place of no return.

The etymology of the term 'Sheol' is uncertain. It has been argued that the word 'Sheol' is an Assyro-Babylonian loanword, 'shu'alu', having the assumed meaning 'the place whither the dead are cited or bidden' or 'the place where the dead are ingathered.' This notion had been refuted and was temporarily replaced. The new theory developed that the connection was between the Hebrew 'Sheol' and the Assyro-Babylonian 'Sillan' (Western land). This theory posited that 'Sillan' was the point where the sun goes down, that is, the gateway of the nether world.³ It is certain that most of the ideas included in the Hebrew term 'Sheol' are also expressed in the Assyro-Babylonian descriptions of the state of the dead found in the myths concerning Ishtar's descent into Hades, and those about Nergal and Ereshkigal and in the Gilgamesh epic.⁴

Although the exact meaning of 'Sheol' is obscure, what it represents is clear. It is synonymous with 'קֶבֶר-grave' (Ps. 88:12),

and 'בֹּר' -pit', originally a 'dungeon', which was used as a prison and as a grave.⁵

Similar to the Assyro-Babylonians, Sheol was located underneath the earth, the departed had to go down to it.⁶ Those "going down into the pit" seem to be a technical expression describing the dead.⁷

Heaven and Sheol are thought to be the two farthest extremes of the universe (Amos 9:2). The furthest point of the earth, according to Enoch 16:6, 'toward the setting of the sun' was designated תַּחְתִּיתִּית אֶרֶץ -the nethermost parts of the earth.⁸ It stands to reason that this place was the most distant place from where 'Yahweh' reigns.

Other descriptions of Sheol are given in Isa. 14:3-21, and Ezek. 32:17-32, where the descent of the king of Babylon and the Egyptian Pharaoh are described. In Ezekiel's description of the 'pit' (Sheol), he refers to a region, *'the uttermost parts of the pit'*, suggesting that other nations or people occupy their own quarters in this vast shadow. Here, the *'uncircumcised and those slain by the sword'* are found. Infants who died before circumcision who were not buried in the family tomb and victims of murder or those who died in battle and left unburied, were considered to be extremely unfortunate cases, although to this gloomy underworld all must one day go. Also, those who died a violent death, suicide, executed criminals, those murdered and various tyrants, because of their crimes deserved this pitiless punishment.⁹ It was the common belief in the Ancient Near East that such persons led an uneasy existence in this underworld. But Ezekiel states that the Pharaoh, buried with all the respect due to a man of his stature, will, for moral reasons share their miserable fate. Those who had experienced life miserably would look forward to their release from their earthly bitterness, where the wicked would cease and the weary would rest.¹⁰ These seem to be our first hints of beginning thoughts concerning the punishment of the wicked after death. Ps. 73:18-20 supports this notion of being cut off from the land of the living and being sent down to Sheol in God's anger before one's time this being the direst doom of the wicked.

Although everyone shares the same destination, Sheol is not in fact a place of punishment reserved for the wicked and it is not identical with Gehenna. All departed are in it, and the wicked do not suffer eternal punishment there.

In both II and IV Maccabees the same story is told of what exactly may be able to survive death, or may be restored beyond death, but they handle them very differently. IV Maccabees sees resurrection of the body as the reward for the righteous, particularly for martyrs and it constructs its ideas out of material in the tradition which was designated as Scripture. For example, it retains a Biblical view of Sheol to which the righteous and the wicked go at their death without distinction, but the implication that Sheol itself is in the control of God is developed. Thus Eleazar refuses to partake of the pig's flesh which is being forced upon him, with the words: 'Even if for the present I shall escape the punishment of man, yet I will never escape the hand of the Almighty, either living or dead' (6.26). Eleazar accepts death, not because he believes or expresses any hope that it will lead to a reward for him, but because he cannot betray his present experience of God: 'Just before he died under the blows, he groaned aloud and said: "The Lord whose knowledge is holy sees clearly that though I might have escaped death,, whatever agonies of body I now endure under this bludgeoning, in my soul I am glad to suffer, because of the awe which he inspires in me"' (6.29).

But when II Maccabees tells the story of the seven brothers who are killed in succession in front of their mother (who is then herself killed at the end) Sheol has become a kind of transit camp for the righteous, and obviously, in particular, for those faithful Jews who refuse to break the commands of Torah. So the fourth brother 'when he neared his end, cried, "Ours is the better choice, to meet death at men's hands, yet relying on God's promise that we shall be raised up by him; whereas for you there can be no resurrection or new life"' (7.13).

The same general hope is expressed by the second brother:

After stripping the skin from his head, hair and all, they asked him, 'Will you eat, before you body is tortured limb by limb?' But he retorted in the language of his ancestors, 'Never!' So he too was put to the torture in his turn. With his last breath he exclaimed, 'Inhuman fiend, you may discharge us from this present life, but the King of the world will raise us up, since it is for his laws that we die, to live again forever.' (7. 7-9)

II Maccabees is clear that this continuing renewal of life requires the resurrection of the body, as the third brother exclaims: 'It was heaven that gave me these limbs, for the sake of his laws I disdain them, from him I hope to receive them again' (6. 2).

According to the Ethiopic Apocalypse of Enoch 22:9-13, Sheol is not an abode of all the dead, where the souls merely exist as vague shadowlike figures, devoid of individual characteristics. It is a spacious realm with three subdivisions: one realm is allotted to the righteous who have been vindicated in life; one to sinners who were not submitted to divine judgment before death; and one realm to those whose deeds were judged during life.

In the Hellenistic world, Greek notions of the dual nature of a human being became more popular. One's true self is an imperishable soul (Platonic doctrine), which, during 'life' is the partner of the mortal body. At death, the soul leaves its abode, which eventually decomposes and perishes. The soul then flies away to the realm of spiritual existence, to which it belongs. It is the soul that is responsible for a person's character, their appetites, passions, character and conduct. The destiny of the disembodied soul is determined by the deeds done in the body. The good are happy and the bad are miserable. Good and bad were judged by the social and civil standards of the departed's peers, or by the ethical principles of philosophers. In the Greek religion there was no definition of righteous and wicked as the Jews had Law, nor did they share the idea of God's retribution with Judaism. For the Greeks, the separation of good and bad was embodied in natural fitness, not by divine decree. In the Wisdom of Solomon, which offers an excellent example of the union of

Greek and Hebrew ideas, chapter 3: 1-6 expresses the idea of the lot of souls at death:

'But the souls of the upright are in the hand of God, and no torment can reach them. In the eyes of foolish people they seemed to die, and their decease was thought an affliction, and their departure from us their ruin, but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they are punished, their hope is full on immortality, and after being disciplined a little, they will be shown great kindness. For God has tried them, and found them worthy of himself. He has tested them like gold in a furnace, and accepted them like the sacrifice of a whole burnt offering.

Sheol is often synonymous with shadows.¹¹ In the same way, the dust recalls the dark dwelling of the perished.¹² It is a place of profound silence (Ps. 115:17), and is a land of oblivion (Ps. 68:12). One could not call upon nor praise Yahweh in Sheol as expressed by Hezekiah in Is. 38:18:

*'Sheol cannot thank thee,
death cannot praise thee;
those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Thy truth.'*

It is not a remote region passively waiting for humanity to die, one by one. Rather, it is a power threatening the living, like an insatiable monster waiting to devour its prey.¹³

We may now begin to speculate about God's (Yahweh) role concerning Sheol and beyond. There existed the conviction that since God was the giver and sustainer of all life, God could indeed raise the dead. Consequently, we read of the revivification of the widow's son in I Kings 17:17-23, of the Shunnamite woman's son in II Kings 4:19-35, and of an anonymous dead man in II Kings 13:21. The living God is able to intervene in Sheol.¹⁴ In Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones (Ez. 37), the issue is not whether God can raise the dead, but whether God will raise the dead, and give them new life.

Some people did not die at all. Both Enoch and Elijah are said to have been 'taken' (translated bodily into the presence of God; Gen. 5:21-24, II Kings 2:1-12). These become important passages when speculating, Biblically, about life after death. Ps. 139: 7-12 asserts that even Sheol cannot separate the psalmist from God.

There is a strong suggestion in Ps. 73 that God will manifest grace upon the righteous by taking them to heaven, where they will exist eternally with God. The people of God will, therefore, be saved from Sheol to live with God forever. According to Ps. 49, however, the unrighteous will face a deprived existence in the chambers of the subterranean.

One of the most important differences between Judaism and other ancient religions is in the belief concerning what is beyond death. The ancient Israelites imagined the dead, shadows of their living selves, inhabiting the family tomb or gathered with the multitudes of the dead in a dismal subterranean cavern, the lot of all. Other peoples with whom the Israelites had contact separated the good dead from the bad dead. These categories were discriminatory, their religions and philosophies developing social and civil standards by which to judge the dead. The prevailing representation was that the soul is by nature imperishable, and at death flies to the place and lot in another area of existence, which the individual deserves based on their character and conduct in life. Such notions existed in the Hellenistic world and in the Wisdom of Solomon.

The Israelite knows that life is continually threatened, the obstacles are manifest in the power of death lying in wait. But the Israelite discovers that God is able to break the bonds which are constricting, to have power over death. The Israelite is in danger of falling into the hands of Sheol, but never ceases to set hopes in the redemptive intervention of God. It happens that one will be numbered among those who 'go down to the pit,' but also hopes for the experience of salvation; the pull on the person is from two directions: from death, always drawing, and from the Living God who rescues one from the bonds of death. The

Israelite is in constant awareness of the existence of death, proclaiming God's power to destroy it, as they are reminded in Psalm 30:

A psalm and song at the dedication of the house of David. I will extol thee, O Lord, for you have lifted me up, and has not made my foes to rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried to you, and you have healed me. O Lord, you have brought up my soul from the grave; you have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing to the Lord, O you saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. For his anger endures but a moment; in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by your favour you have made my mountain to stand strong; you did hide your face, and I was troubled. I cried to you, O Lord, and to the Lord I made supplication. What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise you? Shall it declare your truth? Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me Lord, be my helper. You have turned for me my mourning into dancing, you have put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; to the end that my glory may sing praise to you, and not be silent. O Lord, my God, I will give thanks to you forever.'

CHAPTER 1

¹ "וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפִּיו נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה"-and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

² Isaiah 38:10; Job 38:17; Psalm 9:14; 107:18.

³ R. Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life*, 1960, pp. 37.

⁴The Jewish Encyclopedia, E.G.H., vol. VI, Sheol, pp. 283; J. B. Prichard, *The Ancient Near East*, 1958, Descent of Ishtar to the Netherworld, 1-11, Epic of Gilgamesh 7, 3:33-39.

⁵Gen. 40:15; Ps. 28:1, 30:3; Isaiah 15:15, 38:18; Lam. 3:55.

⁶Gen. 37:35, 42:38; I Kings 2:6.

⁷Is. 14:19; Ps. 28:1, 30:3, 68:4, 68:6.

⁸Deut. 32:22; Ezek. 26:20, 32:24; Ps. 86:13, 88:7; Lam. 3:55.

⁹ D. Gowan, *Bridge Between the Testaments: A Reappraisal of Judaism from the Exile to the Birth of Christianity*; 1986, pg. 473.

¹⁰Job 3:11-20, 17:13-16.

¹¹Ps. 40:20; Job 10:21, 38:17.

¹²Ps. 22:30, 30:10; Is. 27:19; Dan 12:2.

¹³Is. 5:14; Prov. 1:12, 27:20, 30:15.

¹⁴Am. 9:2; Is. 7:11; Ps. 135:6, 139:8.

CHAPTER 2
THE ABILITY OF OTHER GODS VS.
THE OVERPOWERING MIGHT OF GOD

For centuries the Jews had been under foreign rule- Babylonian, Persian, Ptolemaic, Selucid and finally Roman. From the beginning of the sixth century B.C.E., due to deportation, colonization, and emigration, increasing numbers of Jews dispersed to other countries, East and West. They were caught up in the many changing currents that disturbed and formed the ancient world. Due to these currents as well as their own exploration, their piety and their doctrines were affected. Belief in resurrection in particular, was one concept whose foreign influence affected Israelite tradition. The Persians, for example, taught the Jews to believe not in the immortality of the soul but in the resurrection of the body, and to connect it with the universal justice at the end of time, the Last Judgement.

According to the German theologian, H. Schmidt, at the time when Ezekiel was writing Ch. 37 of his book, the "Chosen People" were on the verge of believing in resurrection, but for Judaism to attain real certainty, the intervention of Persian religiosity and influence was required.¹⁵

In the opinion of H. Birkeland, the idea of resurrection of the body derives from a special interest taken in the physical aspect of the final restoration. This devotion to the material aspect is evidence of Iranian origin.¹⁶

Although greatly influenced by Egypt, Iran, Persia and the Greeks, the religious development of Judaism was quite different. A common denominator which permeated all religions was the omnipresence and omnipotence of the gods. The notion of power as it relates to deities is deeply rooted in all religions. For the ancient Near East, as for the Bible, the gods alone are immortal and they alone have the power to make a life or kill.¹⁷ Life depends on the gods, but in the pagan religions the divinity is nothing more than a series of personifications of natural forces. The God of Israel forms

life, renews it, disposes of it, and is clearly distinguished from the other gods.

God's power and might has always played an important role in rabbinic thought. Emphasis on this power and might had practical significance in various periods of Jewish history. For the rabbis God was all-embracing power and might. The same view was not necessarily held in other previously influential religions.

According to Homer, the Greek gods are not omnipotent, and their dominion has specific boundries. They are not only limited by their own boundries, but are also limited by the power of other gods. The one dominion that no Greek god has control or power over is that of death. No god can revive the dead nor reverse the decree of *moira*, the decree of death. Fate, for the Greek gods, is intrinsically different. It is considered basically negative, but upon human beings it bestows good. From fate stems death and annihilation. But, if gods have no control over fate, death or annihilation, then what good is the help of the gods? The answer, according to Walter Otto in his *Die Gotter Griechenlands*, is 'none.' If the god is outside the realm of Nature and is unable to control Fate, that god is useless. But in the Greek religion, in which the gods are identified with bliss and grandeur of life, a separation exists between the gods and death. Their gods differ from human beings in that they know the nature of the *moira*. This *moira* is the law which transcends everything and determines the fate of each person.¹⁸ The gods cannot control death for they are a part of life.

One of several differences between the religion of Israel and the Greek religion is how the Jews believed in the better lot of the righteous after death. The Greeks believed in the anthropocentric notions of human beings. A person constituted an immortal soul in a mortal body. Their notions of immortality stemmed from a strong sense of worth of the personality. This personality could, so to speak, demand perpetuity, as if it was their right. Through Greek mythical tales came the popular belief in the separation of good and bad in the life beyond. The souls of the good went to the place of gods and heros. The mythological stories allowed the philosophers to believe in company that was purely intellectual,

while the more poetic could enjoy sensory delights. The mysteries of the after-life were left to the philosophers, but its concept always remained strictly individual.

Once the language of *nephesh* and *ruach* (life and breath) were being written in Greek (and an increasing number of Jews were beginning at least to write in Greek, the *lingua franca* of the Mediterranean world), the possibility of Greek philosophical reflection became obvious, because the Greek reader would see such familiar words as *psuche* and *pneuma*. That would not immediately suggest to him a single or simple concept of the soul and its immortality, because such issues were much debated in Greek philosophy. But it would at least allow the engagement of Jewish hopes with Greek speculation. In particular, it would encourage the speculation that the soul or spirit might be a self-sufficient reality which might be detached from the body and continue in its own right, even if it would require to be reconnected with this body, or a body, for its full expression; and that certainly sounds like a kind of Platonic dualism.

What Plato himself believed is much disputed, but certainly some form of dualism was attributed to him. Some Jews made deliberate attempts to meet the Greek quest for wisdom and for God, by showing how the Jewish faith and tradition sought the truth. IV Maccabees is part of this endeavour to show how Judaism meets the needs expressed in the Greek quest. The outset of the book states its basic theme: 'The question which we have to determine is whether 'reason' is the complete master of passions', a question which many Greek philosophers also addressed. The answer of IV Maccabees is that 'reason' alone is not enough, what is required is 'reason' controlled and inspired by piety. The book argues that piety is only attainable within the Jewish religion. It follows that the faithful Jew should never be frightened of death, because death leads to life; indeed it leads to life for others, because the death of the faithful (as martyrs) is sacrificial.

What IV Maccabees stresses, as the way in which the faithful can indeed continue to live in the company of God, is the immortality of the soul, not the reconstruction of the body. The

Patriarchs receive the souls of the faithful at death (5.37, 18.23), and those souls are then rewarded in the presence of God (9.8, 15.2, 17.5).

Regardless of whether Greek ideas of immortality of the soul were poetic or philosophical during the first century B.C.E., it became evident that Judaism began to develop its own thoughts on this subject. Its premises were very different. The Greek notion of dualism of soul and body contrasted with Judaism's unity of soul and body. The Greek final liberation of soul from the body, the prison of the soul, was the state of immortal worth in contrast to the Jewish belief in the reunion of soul and body to dwell again in the completeness of God's nature.

Another striking difference from the religion of Israel was Judaism's inclusion of death in the realm of God's power. This excluded any dualistic belief or concept of magic which would be necessary to challenge the forces of the Deity and would detract from God's omnipotence. God is all-powerful, 'Almighty', and is the 'Lord of Hosts'. The totality of God's might is expressed in God's control over nature. In Psalm 104:32 God is in full control of nature; '

He looked on the earth and it trembled, He touched the hills and they smoked'.

After crossing the Red Sea the Israelites, recognizing God's power exclaimed:

(Ex. 15:12): *'You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them'.*

In Psalm 106:2, the rhetorical question is asked:

'Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can proclaim all His praise?'

God delivered Israel from Egypt:

(Ex. 15:11): *'Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods" Who is like you, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?'*

And the Almighty is the God who:

'kills and makes alive, God brings down to the grave and brings up' (1 Sam. 2:6).

God is the God of all gods, great, mighty and awesome (Deut. 10:17). In Psalm 106:2-5, 7-12 we read how God's might is manifested with special emphasis on the individual as well as national history and control of nature:

2. *'Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?*

Who can proclaim all His praise?

Blessed are they that keep judgment, and does righteousness at all times.

Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that you bear unto your people: O visit me with your salvation;

That I may see the good of your chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory with your inheritance.

7. *Our fathers understood not your wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of your mercies, but provoked God at the sea, even at the Red Sea,*

Nevertheless He saved them for God's namesake, that God might make God's mighty power to be known.

He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up; so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

And He saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

And the waters covered their enemies; there was not one one of them left.

They believed His words, they sang His praises.'

God's might also assures redemption, as written in Isaiah 24:21:

'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord will punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon th earth.

Once the secret of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is revealed (Dan. 2:19) to Daniel, he acknowledges God as the source of wisdom and might, the source who removes kings and establishes them, who gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those with understanding (Dan. 2:19-21).

The parallel view that the Torah and its revelation are to be regarded as an expression of God's might and power is also found in *The Wisdom of Solomon*. The author of *The Wisdom of Solomon* depicts wisdom as:

'...more mobile than any motion, and she penetrates and permeates everything, because she is so pure; For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of God's mighty glory...' (7:24-25).

God's might is expressed in wisdom, and wisdom is the product of this might. This power is not visible, just as God, to whom it belongs cannot be perceived, but its work leaves a lasting impression and effect.

In *The Wisdom of Solomon* the powers became something spiritual and immaterial, in contrast to the prevailing attitude of the non-Jewish Hellenistic world who could only think of power in material terms. In *The Wisdom of Solomon* these powers are presented as ideas, spiritual entities ('...reward of holiness' 2:22). Considering this, we can begin to understand the rabbis. The Divine power finds expression in the Revelation of Torah. Consequently, the question of power and might is eliminated from those ideas prevalent in the non-Jewish world. We can understand that the rabbis were not operating in a vacuum and needed to create a complete system of thought. The non-manifestation of God's power was not an indication of the absence of that power but shows a relationship between the revelation of God's power and actions of human beings.

God's absolute dominion over nature and over history are emphasized by the rabbis. In conjunction with these aspects, the

rabbis use the term 'גבורה-might' to stress God's power and omnipotence. The Tannaim, as well as the Amoraim use the term 'גבורה' in particular connection with the giving of the Torah and Revelation. In a Baraita it is stated: 'The rabbis have taught: What was the procedure of instruction in the Oral Law? Moses learned from the mouth of the גבורה, then Aaron entered and Moses taught him his lesson...' (T.B. Eruvin 54b)¹⁹. When R. Ishmael b. R. Jose was asked whether he was worthy of learning Torah from Rabbi, he replied: 'Was Moses then worthy to learn Torah from the mouth of the גבורה? (T. B. Yevamot 105b)²⁰. It is reported from the Amora R. Johanan: 'What is the meaning of the Scripture, "The Lord gives the word: They that publish tidings are a great host"?- Each word that issued from the mouth of the גבורה was divided into seventy languages' (T.B. Shabbat 88b)²¹. The notion of גבורה-God's might, was used extensively by the end of the first century. Its significance is attested to by many midrashic examples, as well as New Testamental examples supporting the epithet of God's might.

Ephraim Urbach in his book *The Sages*, discusses how important the concept of 'dynamis' was in the religious formation of the ancient world, beginning in the third century B.C.E. Its origin is in the sciences. Aristotle, the Greek philosopher, distinguished between 'dynamis', potential power, and 'energia', actual power. By the first century B.C.E. the doctrine of sympathy, or the discovery of natural forces in objects, had developed in relationship to the natural forces in medicine and in magic. Astrologers adopted this theory in order to explain the influence of the heavenly bodies which became central to Stoic physics.²² This concept of power, depicted as a form of breathing, developed into the miraculous and the mysterious. About two hundred B.C.E. a pseudo-science in occult literature influenced Egyptian religious behavior. The notions, purely physical, were meant to explain the miraculous powers of objects in the organic and inorganic world, the nature of their hidden characteristics and their sympathies. This pseudo-science had great influence on the concept of 'power' in religious literature

and greatly affected religious life. By the end of the Hellenistic era, gods were no longer directly performing miraculous deeds and were no longer revealed in natural phenomena, but in their underlying power.²³

In the third century C.E., it was the philosopher Plotinus who claimed that deities did not actually dwell in idols, but their powers resided within. With the help of rituals, worshippers could call upon the deity to the idol. The widespread use of sorcery and magic arts, evidenced by magical amulets and inscriptions is proof of the power invested in the gods by human beings.

It is necessary to remember these facts when discussing 'power' and to keep in mind that religious ideas were bound up in the concept of power and might. The Talmudic and Midrashic Rabbis continually sought to prove God's גבורה.

In Mekhilta de-R. Ishmael, Massekhta de-Shira the might of God is compared to that of a human king.

'I will sing unto the Lord, for God is highly exalted'.
To what can this be compared? To a human king who entered a country, and all praised him, saying that he was mighty, whereas he was weak; that he was rich, whereas he was poor; that he was wise, whereas he was foolish; that he was compassionate, whereas he was ruthless; that he was just and faithful, whereas he had none of these virtues, only everyone flattered him, but God who spoke and the world came into being is not so. However great the praise given God, God transcends praises. 'I will sing unto the Lord' that God is mighty, as it is said *'The great, the mighty, and the awesome'* (Deut. 10:17); and it says *'The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle'* (Ps. 34:8); and it says *'The Lord will go forth as a mighty man, God will stir up His fury like a man of war; God will cry, yea, God will shout aloud, God will prove mighty against enemies'* (Is. 42:13); and it says *'There is none like you, O Lord; You are great, and Your name is great in might'* (Jer. 10:6); 'I will sing to the Lord' that God is rich, as it is said *'Behold to the Lord your God belongs the heaven'*... (Deut. 10:14); and it says *'The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof'*... (Ps. 14:1); and it says *'The sea is God's, for God made it'* (Ps. 95:5); and it says *'Mine is the silver, and*

Mine the gold'...(Hag. 2:8); and it says 'Behold, all souls are Mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is Mine; the soul that sinneth, it shall die' (Ez. 18:4)²⁴

This midrash concerning God's might is in direct contrast to that of a human being. While it recognizes the human king's power, it believes those who praise him flatter him, although his might is meager. But the might of God is not dependent upon the praise of people. God's power is absolute, and has dominion over the entire world. God's power controls life and death, and is symbolized by might in battle, great in name, who belongs in heaven, who created and subsequently has ownership of the earth, and whose wealth is bound up in human souls.

The second benediction of the Amidah (Eighteen Benedictions), which is called גבורות in the Mishnah Rosh Ha-Shana 4:5:

'סדר ברכות אומר אבות וגבורות וקדושת השם...'

epitomizes the rabbinic teaching of גבורות-God's mighty deeds. The epitomizing of God's might became central in the belief in the resurrection of the dead. The blessing which begins and ends with the 'resurrection of the dead' proves, for the rabbis, God's greatest might, the reviving of human life (to be discussed further in the final chapter).

Although greatly influenced by the surrounding cultures, Judaism developed along its own path. The common denominator was the notion of power as it related to the deities. Power and might also play a significant role in rabbinic thought. This dicta plays an important and permanent role in the developing Jewish religion, while it did not persist in other religions. The rabbis permeate rabbinic literature with 'proof' of God's absolute גבורה. It is this might and this power that controls all nature and history, dominates all gods, is the source of wisdom, reveals Torah; it is this גבורה that causes the rain to fall and resurrects the dead, as we will further discuss.

CHAPTER 2

¹⁵H. Schmidt, "Der Ewigkeitsbegriff im A. T., in *Alttest. Abh.*, 1940, (article in translation: "The Expression of Eternity in the Old Testament."

¹⁶H. Birkeland, "The Belief in the Resurrection of the Dead in the O. T.," in *St. th.*, III/I, 1950, pp. 60-78.

¹⁷II Kings; Deut. 32:39; I Sam. 2:6.

¹⁸E. R. Dobbs, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, University of California Press, 1964, pp. 6.

¹⁹See appendix #1.

²⁰See appendix #2.

²¹See appendix #3.

²²M.P. Nelsson, *Greek Piety*, Oxford, 1948, pp. 102-103.

²³*ibid.*

²⁴See appendix #4.

APPENDIX #4

Mekilta d'Rabbi Ishmael
Tractate Shirata

אשירה ליי כי נאה נאה מלך בשר ודם
 105 שנכנס למדינה והיו הכל מקלסין לפניו שהוא נבור
 ואינו אלא חלש שהוא עשיר ואינו אלא עני שהוא
 חכם ואינו אלא טפש שהוא רחמני ואינו אלא אכזרי
 שהוא דייין שהוא נאמן ואין בו אחת מכל המדות
 הללו אלא הכל מחניף לו אבל מי שאמר והיה
 110 העולם אינו כן אלא אשירה ליי שהוא נבור שנאמר
 האל הנדול הנבור והגורא וגו' ואומר יי עוז וגבור
 יי נבור מלחמה ואומר יי כנבור יצא וגו' ואומר
 מאין כמוך יי גדול אתה וגדול שמך בנבורה אשירה
 ליי שהוא עשיר שנאמר הן ליי אלהיך השמים וגו'
 115 ואומר ליי הארץ ומלואה וגו' ואומר אשר לו הים
 וגו' ואומר לי הכסף ולי הזהב וגו' ואומר הן כל
 הנפשות לי הנה וגו' אשירה ליי שהוא חכם שנאמר
 יי בחכמה יסד ארץ ואומר עמו חכמה ונבורה וגו'
 ואומר כי יי יתן חכמה וגו' ואומר יהיב חכמתא
 120 לחכימין וגו' מי לא ייראך מלך הגוים וגו' כי בכל
 חכמי הגוים ובכל מלכותם מאין כמוך אשירה ליי
 שהוא רחמן שנאמר יי אל רחום וחנון וגו' ואומר
 כי אל רחום יי וגו' ואומר זכור רחמיך יי וגו' ואומר
 טוב יי לכל ורחמי וגו' ואומר ליי אלהינו הרחמים
 125 והסליחות אשירה ליי שהוא דייין שנאמר כי המשפט
 לאלהים הוא ואומר אלהים נצב בעדת אל וגו'
 ואומר הצור תמים פעלו וגו' אשירה ליי שהוא נאמן
 שנאמר האל הנאמן וגו' ואומר אל אמונה וגו' הא
 ליי נאה הנבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד

CHAPTER 3

DISPUTE BETWEEN THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

Our modern separation of church and state and emphasis on the individual private faith commitment as it fits within a societal framework, as the foundation of religion, were unknown in antiquity. In traditional society, including the Roman empire and Jewish Palestinian society, religion was emeshed in the political and social fabric of the community. Religious beliefs and practice were part of the family, ethnic and territorial groups into which people were born. People did not choose their religion, nor did most social groups have members of different religions. Religion was integral to everything else and inseparable from it. People might worship new gods in addition to the old ones and engage in additional cultic practices, but they remained what they were culturally and socially. Radical conversion to another religion and rejection of one's inherited beliefs and behavior meant separation and alienation from family and one's hereditary social group. Thus, involvement with religion was in itself political and social. Consequently, the Pharisees and Sadducees were not to be looked upon as sects withdrawn from society with no political impact. Quite the contrary. Even the Qumran community, which lived by the Dead Sea, were part of Jewish society and quite likely had political impact. They were not completely cut off from Jewish society since the area was inhabited and they presumably paid taxes to the Hasmoneans and Romans.²⁵ To be a Jew was to be part of Jewish society, including culture, behavior, cult and identity with the people and land. Those who disagreed with the Temple authorities were still within the social boundaries of Judaism and an influence to be dealt with.

Although religion was embedded in society as a whole, in a way it is not today, those people with cultic or religious functions could form separate power centers within that society. In larger societies, complex religious organizations and specialized religious roles developed and were institutionalized by the leaders.²⁶

Consequently, the identity between the entire community and the religious sphere was partially absent, leaving room for competition among the groups within a religion.²⁷

Groups with a strong religious base could acquire independence and power within society by stressing universal values and ideology while subscribing open membership. Such groups, separate from the traditional territorial and status hierarchy, could be conservative and in support of the government. Thus, they could be politically valuable for the central authorities. Alternatively, they could promote a critical stand toward society, based on moral and symbolic appeals to the people.²⁸ Such an independent religion, having a firm political base, typically tried to dominate society totally by the creation and use of sacred texts, schools to interpret the texts, and groups to disseminate its religious knowledge and world view. When a complex society created such groups, such as Judaism did during the Greco-Roman period, the smaller traditions of local groups and families were gradually integrated into the great tradition of the larger society.²⁹

The conflicts among various groups which is reflected in the post-exilic biblical writings and in Josephus's writings indicate the struggle to direct and control Jewish society by numerous groups, of whom the Pharisees and Sadducees are just a few.

In this complex society one of the most interesting aspects of the social and political development of the Jewish nation during the period of the Hasmoneans was the rise of the חכמים-the sages, as an influential and prestigious group. They were scholars of the Torah and religious tradition who became of invaluable importance during the Second Temple period.

The study of Torah and the development of the הלכה, law which helped to determine the patterns of daily religious, ritual, civil, family and government-in Hasmonean Judea, attracted the nation's intellectual and spiritual elite, who devoted their lives to it. The sages influenced political life as well as having a decisive voice in the Sanhedrin. They were the moving spirit of the most prominent religious current among the Jews of the Second Temple

era-the Pharisees, "those who are set apart," i.e., by avoiding contact with others for reasons of ritual purity.

The Pharisees carried on a trend that had its origins in the Persian era and had encompassed the activities of the scribes and interpreters of the Torah in the days of Ezra and after. Their immediate predecessors were the Hasidim, the pious, the just, who knew that there was ultimate reward. Their adherence to the Law and belief in the ultimate reward was challenged at the beginning of the persecution under Antiochus Ephiphanes. A group of Hasidim refugees, fleeing to the wilderness, who endeavoured to keep the commands of God, refused to fight on the Sabbath. Rather than defending themselves, they proclaimed: "Let us all die guiltless. We call heaven and earth to witness that you destroy us unlawfully" (I Mac. 2:29-41).

Josephus' *Antiquity*, 10:5,9, is the first historical work to mention the Pharisees. This occurs in an excursus inserted in a paragraph not relating to the context, but in a discussion of Jonathan Hyrcanus' wars with Demetrius II and his negotiations with the Romans and the Spartans (139 B.C.E.). Josephus states that "about this time" there were three schools, or sects, of Jews who entertained different notions about fate and free will. They were the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes.

Josephus strongly approved of Johanan Hyrcanus and pictured him as a successful ruler who engaged in a number of conquests in the principalities surrounding Israel, renewed the treaty with Rome, destroyed the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim and established his sovereignty over Samaria. (*Ant.* 13.9.1-10.3). As a sign of his approval Josephus concludes with a story that Johanan Hyrcanus the high priest was alone in the temple burning incense when he heard a voice saying that his sons had been victorious in battle. Josephus attributed this revelation and prophecy to the approval and success of Johanan Hyrcanus. As proof, he was given a successful reign and the gift of prophecy as well as the God-given offices of high priest and ruler. (*Ant.* 13:10.7)

Josephus explained that Johanan Hyrcanus had problems because "the envy of the Jews was aroused against him by his own successes and those of his sons; particularly hostile to him were the Pharisees who are one of the Jewish schools, as we have related above" (*Ant.* 13:10.5). According to the story, the Pharisees originally had great influence over Johanan Hyrcanus who was a disciple of theirs and greatly loved by them. The story of their conflict began at a banquet given for them by Hyrcanus (*Ant.* 13:10.5). At this banquet Hyrcanus said that he wanted to be righteous and please God in every way. He asked the Pharisees to correct him if he was doing anything wrong. But the Pharisees said that he was virtuous, and he was delighted with their praise. Any power obtained by the Pharisees came from the influence and support of Hyrcanus. The loss of Hyrcanus' patronage meant the loss of Pharasaic influence.

This story tells us much about the Pharisees' place in society. Hyrcanus was the Pharisees' political ruler, the Pharisees were clients dependent on him, acting accordingly by not criticizing him. The story portrays the Pharisees as a group with considerable influence, especially concerning ancestral laws and customs. The story also tells us of the intellectual power they possessed.

Later, the Pharisees' unity with Hyrcanus was broken due to a false story about his mother, spread by Eleazar, a Pharisee. Due to this personal grievance and the leniency of the punishment prescribed by the Pharisees for Eleazar, Hyrcanus shifted favors from the Pharisees to the Sadducees.

Further separation between the Pharisees and Hasmoneans developed as outward hellenization of the royal house and administration grew. Pharisaic ideas of the Torah and holiness in everyday life could not coexist with this Hellenization. The fact that the Hasmoneans gradually came to rely on the support of a wide range of social elements throughout Palestine, some of which were foreign, contributed to the tension. Hyrcanus, increased the strength of his army by enlisting gentile mercenaries. This too,

was troublesome for the Pharisees, for religious and political reasons. The mercenary army strengthened the hold of the monarchy and enabled the king to disregard the will and institutions of the nation.

Hyrkanus' death brought Alexander Jannaeus (103-76), his son, to power (*Ant.* 13.12.1). This era was also replete with struggles, territorial gains and conflicts with the people. On his death bed, Jannaeus bequeathed the throne to his wife, Alexandra. The combination of the Pharisees desire to compromise and Alexandra's need to consolidate her power by making a coalition with the most influential group among the people, the Pharisees, began to create stability and reinstated Pharisaic halakhah. The Pharisaic laws once again, became the law of the land, as they had been before the dispute between Hyrcanus and the Pharisees.

After the death of Alexandra, in 46-47 B.C.E., amidst the political confusion, Herod was summoned to trial before the Sanhedrin on the charge that he acted illegally in several executions without the consent of the Sanhedrin. By supporting Herod at crucial points during his quest for power and in the chamber of the Sanhedrin, the Pharisees attained his favor.

The entire Second Temple period was dominated by the leadership of the Pharisees. There is no way of knowing how many Pharisees there were at the end of the era; all we do know is the number of Pharisees who refused to swear an oath of loyalty to Herod was more than 6,000 (*Ant.* 15.10.4). This number indicates the solid core of the group, its sympathizers may have been far more numerous. In the Sanhedrin itself the Pharisees were represented by a united group of authorities whose influence on Sanhedrin decisions was enormous. The Pharisaic group also included many priests, some of whom were from respected families, such as Josephus.

The philosophy of the Pharisees was faithfulness to the Torah and its infusion into all aspects of life. The Torah to which they referred differed considerably from the text of the Scriptures, for it also encompassed the entire living tradition of

the law as it had evolved over time. This was based on the assumption that the Torah must be able to provide any answer to any question that arose in actual life. This 'oral Torah', the Pharisaic tradition, arrived at by interpreting the 'written Torah', often times seemed contradictory to the plain reading of the text. Their law encompassed all aspects of religion, ritual, law and social order. Pertaining to legal matters the Pharisaic tendency was to humanize the law; in theology the Pharisees believed in a middle ground. For example, they differed from the beliefs held by the Essenes, and believed in the doctrine of free will. The Pharisees believed in the immortality of the soul and in individual reward and punishment after death, sharing the eschatological beliefs of the people. It seems their spiritual and social activity was what preserved the Jewish religion as a vital, active faith.

The Pharisaic influence extended far beyond the direct adherents of the sect. Their followers included the bulk of the nation. They regarded the Pharisees as their natural leaders with Pharisaic הלכה-law as the self-evident expression of Jewish religion. During the Hasmonean period, their main opponents were the Sadducees. Since the high-priestly family claimed descent from Zadok, the first priest of the Solomonic Temple, they called themselves *Zaddukim*, or Sadducees. Concerning religion, the Sadducees were essentially conservative. They held that only the written Torah was holy. They would not concede to the Pharisaic authority who proclaimed their self-inspired interpretations as oral Torah and as the source of laws equivalent to the written word. In many matters concerned with Temple service, with legal affairs and with daily life, they differed from the Pharisees. In matters connected with faith and philosophy, they believed in free will and rejected many of the popular beliefs of their time, including resurrection of the dead. Socially, they were the upper crust of the Jewish community, the aristocracy and the senior priestly families. They were the social and political leadership of the nation at the outbreak of the Hasmonean Revolt. As late as the time of Josephus, after the

Pharisees had been in full control of Jewish life for more than a century, it was still true that the richest families adhered to the Sadducees.³⁰ In his book *Jewish Antiquities* (13.298), Josephus wrote: "The Sadducees have their support only among the rich, and the people do not follow them, while the Pharisees have the people for their ally". The Pharisees had been able to win over to formal allegiance most of the upper middle class, but the highest aristocracy continued to resist. "The Sadducean influence radiated from the Temple, the Pharisaic from the market place."³¹

The Sadducees were not a proper religious party or sect, as the Pharisees were, but primarily a social class. They were the aristocracy of the priesthood, together with the wealthy and influential laity who attached themselves to the sacerdotal nobility. Their position on the sole authority of Scripture was that of the conservatism of the upper class, clergy and laity. They denied the authority of the unwritten law; they acknowledged no revelation except that which is found in Scriptures (*Ant.* 13. 10.6). They had ritual and juridical traditions of their own, but their authority rested on the legislative powers of rulers or of the Sanhedrin, not on supplementary instructions given to Moses at Sinai. The Sadducees were literalists, and often more rigorous than the Pharisees in regard to criminal law, of which the Pharisees were more accommodating (*Ant.* 13.10.6). In contemporary eyes, they were a religious party in Judaism characterized by their distinctive beliefs.

The Pharisees were noted for their practice of the law and their ability to interpret the law in their own way. This suggests that they had particular views about how to live Jewish life and probably followed communal customs within an organizational structure. The Pharisees' acceptance of life after death and resurrection as well as reward and punishment is contrasted with the Sadducees' rejection of these teachings. Also, their positions on fate (divine providence), free will and human responsibility are contrasted. The Pharisees saw God and humans in a close relationship both in this life and the next. They believed in the survival of the soul, the revival of the body, the great judgment,

and life in the world to come. The Sadducees saw humans as independent and distant from God both in life and after. They found nothing in Scriptures, as they read them in their plain sense, substantiating the resurrection of the dead or retribution after death (*Ant.* 18.1.4).

The Sadducees had only the Biblical tradition with which they could justify themselves. This is certainly true when looking at their opposition that there will be a life with God beyond death. Their opposition is well known in the Gospels of the New Testament but also as we have seen in the writings of Josephus, who said of the Sadducees: "As for the persistence of the soul after death, penalties in the underworld, and rewards, they will have none of them" (*War* 2.165), and "The Sadducees hold that the soul perishes along with the body" (*Ant.* 18.16).

What the Sadducees themselves believed is impossible to reconstruct, since virtually nothing from their own writing or opinion has survived. But what is certainly clear is that they would not advance beyond their Biblical evidence. They affirmed the goodness of the created order as it now is, including death. It would be a kind of blasphemy to reject the present life by supposing that there is a better one to come.

The Pharisees seem to have been a more cohesive group than the Sadducees and it is probable that they had a leadership structure, education for their member and clear criteria for membership.³² The beliefs which they espoused in the afterlife, divine activity in history and human freedom, were probably different enough from the traditional Jewish teachings and attitudes to require some positive commitment. By contrast, the Sadducees maintained the older, more traditional view of Judaism, that there was no afterlife, and probably followed post-exilic tradition in seeing God as more transcendent than immanent and less directly involved in the events of history.

The Sadducees and the Pharisees were like all other Jewish groups, each of which had its own traditions, social and religious goals and laws. That the Sadducees were more traditional and the Pharisees more innovative makes it appear that one interpreted

Scripture and the other did not, that one accepted a new body of law and the other did not. In fact, post-exilic Judaism had already engaged in massive adaptation of traditional Jewish life to new circumstances and the Sadducees as part of that Judaism had a distinctive interpretation of many parts of Jewish life.

The testimony of the sources that the Sadducees did not believe in resurrection, afterlife and judgment fits the other things we know about them. The Sadducees' belief is the traditional Biblical view; ideas of resurrection, immortality and afterlife entered Judaism in the second century B.C.E. and only gradually dominated Judaism over the next four or five centuries.³³ If Sadducees were predominantly from the governing class, which tended to be very conservative in a traditional society, it was probable that they did not accept the new innovation of resurrection. They wished to maintain the status quo and keep the focus on the nation of Israel in this world, not the next. Their rejection of life after death and judgment also explained Josephus' description of them in terms of stressing free will and denying fate. Though as Jews they certainly believed in God's covenant and care for Israel, they did not believe in God's apocalyptic intervention in world history as so could be presented as denying fate and stressing human control over life. In addition, the rejection of the new belief in afterlife and the new customs being developed by the Pharisees, was characteristic of the resistance of the dominant class.

To the outsider, the differences between the Pharisees and the Sadducees would have appeared minor, but within the community such differences typically produced fierce conflicts over control and influence. Even in the first generations after the fall of Jerusalem the real issues had fallen into oblivion. The destruction of the temple and the abolition of the Sanhedrin left the surviving Sadducees a mere sect, small in number, without influence among the people, standing for nothing in particular except their conflict with the Pharisees. Therefore the authority of the unwritten law and of the Pharisaic interpretation of the Scriptures was uncontested.

Up unit now, we have focused on the educated groups and the nobility without paying any attention to the uneducated artisan, worker, the people who compromised the nation. During the fourth century B.C.E., the artisan and trader of Jerusalem, under the oppression of exploiters, sought compensation beyond the grave; the place where all human inequalities were equal before the power of God. The more bitter their lot in this world, the more passionately they clung to the hopes of the next world. An abstract immortality might have satisfied the philosopher, but the hungry worker of Jerusalem could only be comforted by the Egyptian and Persian doctrine of physical resurrection.³⁴ The glorious Messianic Age, as the culmination of worldly struggles, bringing peace and tranquility, had been a prominent thought in Israel's thoughts, and offered substantial hope for resurrection.³⁵

It has been suggested that the idea of resurrection in Israel has its roots in Canaanite religion. There, the dying and rising of the god Baal plays a significant part in symbolizing the annual death and renewal of vegetation. But the conclusion as to how it relates to human beings is never drawn. What is significant is how Isaiah 26:19 combines the revival of the dead with the falling of the dew of light. It is that dew which plays an important part in Canaanite mythology. It is also probable that Hosea 6:2: "*He will revive us after two days, on the third day he will raise us up*", dates back to the Canaanite formula quoted by repenting people. The prophet, however, rejects the conversion of the people and does not accept their hope of revival.³⁶

Several passages in Isaiah (24-27) indicate that the author had been thinking about resurrection. Specifically in 26:19, the notion is clearly outlined:

The dead men of your people shall live, my dead body shall arise. Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust: for your dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.
 יחיו מתוך נבלתי יקמו, הקיצו ורננו שבני עפר.
 כי טל אורח מלך וארץ רפאים תפיל."

This doctrine had been long ignored among the Jews. No matter how appealing the doctrine of a future life might have seemed, the belief in it was directly related to ancestor worship and other primitive beliefs, which were not respected by the sages of the time. Certainly by the fifth century B.C.E. the fear of idolatry had almost disappeared in Jerusalem. During the first Commonwealth, the Jews struggled against influence from Egypt and had basically succeeded in keeping the Jewish faith free from resurrection and of the superstitions associated with it. Even after the author of Isaiah 26 spoke, Judaism still regarded the belief in resurrection with suspicion.

Although resurrection is not mentioned directly in the burial stories of Jacob and Joseph (Gen. 50:2,3,26), it is evident that the Egyptian practice of embalming was accepted. Their accepted process of preserving the body was a necessary preparation for its ultimate future. Had resurrection been consciously opposed, it certainly would not have been the subject of Jewish patriarchs.

The first notion of a revived world is written in the Book of Enoch. The author, said to have lived about 200 B.C.E., just before Antiochus Epiphanes, wrote:

"And no mortal is permitted to touch this tree of delicious fragrance till the great day of judgment, when He shall avenge and bring everything to its consummation forever; this tree, I say, will then be given to the righteous and humble. By its fruit, life will be given to the elect; it will be transplanted to the north, to the holy place, to the temple of the Lord, the Eternal King. Then will they rejoice with joy and be glad: they will enter Thy holy habitation: the fragrance thereof will be in their limbs, and they will live a long life on earth, such as their fathers have lives, and in their days no sorrow or pain or trouble or calamity will affect them"³⁷

In the opening chapters of the Book of Enoch (ch. 1-5), the judgment of God is depicted with biblical imagery, with no mention of resurrection. The unrighteous are destroyed, and

bestowed upon the righteous is wisdom so they never sin nor incur punishment. They live full, long days in gladness and peace. In the Psalm of Solomon 3:13-16, the sinner falls to rise no more and speaks of their destruction, of the day when the righteous find life (13:10, 14:6, 15:15). I Enoch 22:13 writes that the wicked do not rise but remain where they have been, in great pain (I Enoch 91:9-10; II Baruch 30).

Then, the hope of resurrection normally meant the expectation that at some future time the dead, after waiting in some sort of intermediate state, would rise to a new life. This new state presumably involved a body. It usually, but not always, presupposed that both the righteous and the wicked would be raised.

Although the *Wisdom of Solomon* reflects strong Greek influence, the author looks forward to a day of 'visitation':

But the souls of the upright are in the hand of God, and no torment can reach them. In the eyes of foolish people they seemed to die, and their decease was thought an affliction, and their departure from us their ruin, but they are at peace. For though in the sight of men they are punished, their hope is full of immortality (3:1-4).

The visions in the Book of Daniel recapitulate the line of history through the conquest of Alexander and the division of his empire. In chapter 7:24, chapter 8:11-14, 25; chapter 9:26 and chapter 11:36-39, the author details the desecration of the Temple and the attempt to suppress the Jewish religion, and foresees doom (Dan. 7:9-11, 26; 8:25; 11:45). At the height of his power he is suddenly cut off. His kingdom, the last of the great kingdoms, fails him, and in its place is established the world-wide kingdom of the holy people of the Most High, which is forever and ever, and to which all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be subject (Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 18, 22, 26). As the end is drawn near, the calculation of '70 weeks' are just about fulfilled, with one-half week remaining. Then, Michael, the champion of the Jews will arise in their defense (12:1). The conflict will be at a time of

distress, but in it the Jews will be delivered. *"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt"* (12:2). It has been suggested that the people chosen for 'everlasting life' were those who gave their lives for the sake of religion in persecution or had fallen in battle in defense of religion; while the latter are the Hellenizers and apostates.³⁸

The fate of the Hellenizers and apostates is called to our attention in Isaiah 66:24, where all humankind, who in the future will come to worship the Lord in Jerusalem, will go forth and see the corpses of those who rebelled against God: *'for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh'*.³⁹

It was not only the oppressed artisan and trader of Jerusalem who sought compensation beyond the grave, but also the martyr. The martyr, who under torture, about to die, would declare their faith that God will raise them up to an endless life with the limbs which had been torn from their bodies, restored. This is best illustrated in II Mac. 7:7-14:

When the first one had departed in this manner, they brought the second one to be mocked and they tore off the skin of his head with the hair, and asked him, "Will you eat, or have your body punished limb by limb?" But he replied in the language of his forefathers and answered; "No."

So he underwent the same series of tortures as the first suffered. But when he was at his last gasp, he said: "You wretch, you release us from this present life, but the king of the world will raise us up, because we have died for his laws, to an everlasting renewal of life."

After him, the third was mocked, and when he was told to put out his tongue, he did so quickly, and courageously stretched out his hands, and said nobly:

"I got these from heaven, and for the sake of its laws I disregard them, and from it I hope to receive them back again," so that the king himself and those who were with him were amazed at the young man's spirit..."

The writer of the II Maccabees and the Book of Daniel proudly asserted the doctrine of resurrection. They assured the dying martyrs that they would be called back to life eternal, while their oppressors also would be revived, but for everlasting derision and contempt.

The ultimate salvation of the individual is inseparably connected with the salvation of the people. In accordance with the prophetic teaching, this was made dependent on the righteousness or the repentance of the nation collectively, and not on the conduct and character of the individual concerned. The concern was for the whole Jewish people. Those, who by their teaching and actions made the majority righteous merited special honor, while those who were wicked, deferred the fulfilment of God's promise of salvation to the nation. The responsibility of the religious leaders, the Scribes and those that followed the Pharisees, were not only to teach everyone the obligations and rituals of Judaism, teach Torah, clarify the Halakha, the interpretation of the Scriptures and instruct the people in the principles of faith in Divine Providence, in reward and punishment, and in the resurrection of the dead, but also to promote among them the fulfilment of the obligations.

Judaism was the public as well as the personal religion of the Jewish people. A Jew did not embrace it to escape the perils of the soul beyond the grave, much less the retributive justice of God. Religion was not a means to an end, but to the divinely appointed end. Whole hearted love of God was its essence; its duties were to God and accomplished for the sake of God.

The Sadducees who rallied for the Hasmonean House vehemently denied the resurrection of the dead; while the Pharisees continued to affirm it. With each war and with the death of each martyr, the Pharisaic devotion to resurrection became more passionate, so much so that the Mishnah regards it as a cardinal teaching of Judaism and condemns those who do not believe to a loss of future life.

The Sadducees appear mostly as opponents of the Pharisees and always as adversaries of the authors of rabbinic literature. They are not legitimate participants in the numerous debates which go on among the sages, but an outside group to be refuted. The two Talmuds sometimes reach the point of not accepting them as legitimate Jews. In rabbinic literature, especially in the Tosefta, the Sadducees are identified with or closely associated with the Boethusaian, a group even less well known than the Sadducees.⁴⁰ It seems that the rabbinic authors had a clear sense of the Sadducees as opponents who differed on some essential points of practice and belief, but no precise and consistent knowledge of what those differences were.

In the earliest sources, the Mishnah and Tosefta, the Sadducees differ from the Pharisees and tannaitic authors especially concerning ritual purity and sabbath observance. The disagreements are typical mishnaic disputes and concern limited points of behavior and interpretation, some public and some private. No fundamental disagreements over hermeneutic principles for interpreting Scripture or the relationship of customary interpretation to the written canon appear, nor does a comprehensive picture of the Sadducean position emerge from these disputes.

The Mishnah and Tosefta refute the views of the Sadducees rather than present a plain picture of their positions. The Babylonian Talmud paints the Sadducees in lurid terms and suggests in places that they were not really Jews, but heretics (as we shall see). Such may not be historically true, but the result of a later defense of rabbinic authority and its way of life.

CHAPTER 3

²⁵A. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society*, Glazier Inc. 1988, pg. 5.

²⁶S. N. Eisenstadt, *The Political Systems of Empires: The Rise and Fall of Historical Societies*, Glencoe Free Press, 1963; pg. 50.

²⁷ibid; pg. 61.

²⁸ibid; pp. 62-65.

²⁹ibid; pg. 65.

³⁰Josephus, *Antiquities*, 13:10.6; 18:1.3.

³¹L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees*, J.P.S. 1962, Vol. I, pg. 81.

³²ibid; pg. 122.

³³George W.E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism*, Cambridge: HUP, 1972.

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1, from about 200 C.E. there existed the criticism against those who deny resurrection of the dead; later talmudic passages speak not of those who deny resurrection of the dead, but who deny that it can be proved from Scripture.

³⁴L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees*, referring to Edwin Albers, *Die Israelitisch-Juedische Auferstehungshoffnung in ihren Beziehungen zum Parsismus*; A. Bertholet, *Die Israelitischen Vorstellungen vom Zustande nach dem Tode*, for a further discussion of the Egyptian and Persian influence on the Jewish doctrine of Resurrection.

³⁵J. Greenstone, *The Messiah Idea in Jewish History*. R. H. Charles, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, In Judaism, and in Christianity*; London, 1899; pg.83.

³⁶Encyclopedia of Religion, vol. 4, pg. 346.

³⁷R. H. Charles translation: *Enoch* 25:5-7; and *The Books of Enoch, Aramaic Fragments of Qumran Cave #4*, Milik; Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1976.

³⁸G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the first Centuries*...vol II, pg. 297.

³⁹The connection for both texts is with the word "דְּרִאָּן", found only in these two locations.

⁴⁰A. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society*; pg.301.

CHAPTER 4

PROOF OF THE DOCTRINE OF RESURRECTION AS EVIDENCED BY THE
TALMUD: TRACTATE SANHEDRIN

There can be no doubt that various biblical passages use figures of speech that speak of the resurrection of the dead and God's power. In rabbinic literature the subject is discussed in the Tractate Sanhedrin(10:1):

"All Israel has a portion in the world to come...
And these are they that have no share in the world to come: one who says that there is no resurrection of the dead in the Torah and one who says that the Torah is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean"
כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא...
ואלו אין להם חלק לעולם הבא:
האומר: "אין תחיית המתים מן התורה"
ו"אין תורה מן השמים" ואפיקורוס.

The fact that Rabbi Akiva adds to this Mishnah:

"Also one who reads apocryphal books and one who whispers an incantation over a wound"
רבי עקיבא אומר: "אף הקורא בספרים החיצוניים
והלוחש על המכה..."

shows that the first part of the Mishnah preceded his time. - II -
Maccabees shows that the belief in the resurrection of the dead was already an accepted belief during the Hasmonean period. The author of the book claims that the martyrs, at the time of Antiochus' religious persecution said:

"It is better to die by men's hands and look for the hopes God gives of being raised again by him." (7:14)

The Mishnah commentators find it difficult to explain the threat that one who denies resurrection will have no share in the world to come. But it is clear that the Mishnah is directed against people who held certain views, such as the Minim and the

Sadducees. The Mishnah does deny those who do not believe in resurrection a share in the world to come.

The mention of the resurrection of the dead in Tractate Sanhedrin does not attest to the beginnings of this belief, but the struggle for its acceptance against its opponents.

When the phrase "resurrection of the dead" is used without contextual indication, it usually suggests resurrection for the masses. The dispute over the question whether there is any such thing as a resurrection of the body includes both. The controversy of resurrection between the Pharisees and the Sadducees began in the stage of what may be called immediate eschatology, represented in Daniel and parts of Enoch, long before the end of the first century C.E., and before the rabbis of the second century.

Verses in Daniel place resurrection before reward and punishment in the world to come:

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt, "But go thou thy way till the end be, for thou shall rest, and stand in your lot at the end of the days ."(12:2, 13)

Resurrection to everlasting life is the reward, and the author of II Maccabees has in mind the pious martyrs who offered up their lives for the sanctification of God's name.

Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1 feels so strongly concerning resurrection it states:

"The following are those who have no portion in the World to Come: whoever says that the resurrection of the dead is not found in the Torah; or the Torah is not from Heaven: אין להם חלק לעולם הבא ואלו האומר "אין תחיית המתים מן התורה" ואין תורה מן השמים"

The Babylonian Talmud comments that one who denies the resurrection of the dead shall have no part in the resurrection, for

God dispenses justice measure for measure. Against the non-Jewish world, of course other arguments would be employed such as the four parables in Tractate Sanhedrin (90b, 91a), but with those who acknowledge the authority of Scripture, like the Sadducees, other heretics (Minim), or the Samaritans proof of the doctrine must be derived from Scripture.⁴¹ Numerous proofs are employed from the Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Writings, supported by rabbinic statements.

The question of resurrection and its physical nature, as well as other questions, are answered by elaborate exegesis based on parables and biblical interpretation.

SCRIPTURAL PROOF

DIRECT BIBLICAL PROOF

For complete substantiation, the Talmud employs all three sections of the Bible: Torah, Prophets, and Writings. The Minim (or Sadducees) ask of Rabbi Gamliel (San. 90b):

"From where do we know that the Holy One Blessed Be will resurrect the dead?

מניין שהקדוש ברוך הוא מחייה מתים?"

Before we discuss the response, we must discuss the underlying problem, that is, who is asking the question and exactly to whom? There are two possibilities as to who is asking the question.⁴² In one source the question is asked by the Minim, in the other source it is asked by the Sadducees. If we accept the former reading then the minim asked the question. Considering the Sadducees were not of any importance after the destruction of the Temple, the question would then have been asked to Rabban Gamliel II (of Yavneh), who lived after the destruction of the Temple. Regardless, Gamliel responds using the Torah, Prophets and Writings. If the latter reading is accepted then the question was directed to Rabban Gamliel the Elder, one of the earliest Tannaim, president of the Sanhedrin, who lived in the first half of the first century before the destruction of the second

Temple. The point to be made is that proof in Scripture would indicate the audience assumed a Jewish secularism.

Gamliel's responses reject all of them:

From the Torah, as it is written:

"And the Lord said to Moses: Thou shall sleep with thy fathers and will rise " (Deut. 31:16)

They objected:

But it may mean rather, "...and this people will rise up and go whoring (after foreign gods)."

Gamliel continued:

In the Prophets for it is written: *"Thy dead shall live, my dead bodies shall rise; awake and sing, you that sleep in the dust, for like a dew of herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead" (Is. 26:19).*

His opponents responded:

This may refer to the dead whom Ezekiel resurrected.

This too is challenged since this verse might refer only to the dead resurrected by Ezekiel and not to a general resurrection.

Gamliel then quoted from Writings, namely, Song of Songs 7:10:

"And the roof of my mouth is like the best wine that goes down sweetly for my beloved, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak".

This is supported by Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yahotzadak, that only the lips of the dead move, but they are not necessarily resurrected:

If a halakhah is said in any person's name in this world, his lips speak in the grave, as it is written: 'causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak'.

R. Gamliel did finally provide what the Talmud reports as uncontested proof, which we shall consider in the section on literal readings of the Bible.

The Talmud cites a baraita which quotes Deut. 32:39, a verse from the final Song of Moses, to prove that resurrection can be found in the Torah (San. 91b).

"I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal"

The baraita proposes hypothetical opponents who suggest that this verse merely states that when God kills one person, another is given life. The baraita retorts that the verse must be understood in its entirety. Just as wounding and healing must refer to the same person, so too killing and bringing to life refers to the same person.

The expression 'to kill and to make alive' perhaps does not primarily refer to the truly extraordinary possibility of restoring life to the dead, but may more simply connote the whole of God's power. That the God of Israel kills and makes alive, that God wounds and heals, that God thus accomplishes antithetical and complementary works, is a way of stating that God is able to do all things and that God's power is unlimited. God's divinity is manifest in the capability of withdrawing and granting life. Moreover, the terms 'dying', 'living', 'wounding', and 'healing' are appropriate to describe the miserable or the happy condition into which the Jewish People comes.

The significance of this verse is emphasized by its context which stresses God's absolute power and unlimited activity, which contrasts directly with the inability of idols.

This verse is directly related to the resurrection of the Israelites, the People of Israel as a whole. This 'Song of Moses' tells us of the destiny of a nation and not about the future of the individual. Here, God is revealing supreme and unique divine power.

LITERALIST/GRAMMATICAL PROOF

Rabban Gamliel quoted Deut. 11:21 as his final response to opponents of the doctrine of resurrection.

"(The land which) the Lord swears to your ancestors to give to them, as the days of heaven upon the earth"...
 not 'to you' but 'to them' is said.,
 'לכם' לא נאמר אלא להם' (San. 90B)

The text supports the idea that God will give the land directly to the Patriarchs.

The minim finally agree with the plain reading of Rabban Gamliel's text. Others say that Rabban Gamliel could have used Deut. 4:4 as his proof-text:

"But you that did cleave to the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day". (היום)

Since Moses would not say something so clearly obvious, merely to those standing in front of him, Rabban Gamliel's comment suggests that the word היום, with the definite article (ה) means that Moses' audience lives not just today but also in the world to come.

'as simply as you are alive today, and even in the day that everyone is dead, you will live, even in the world to come you shall live'

The almost over-literal reading implies a Gamliel who addressed a Sadducean audience or what the rabbis believed a Sadducean audience would be like.

The use of a literalist grammatical reading of a Torah text is employed to prove the resurrection of the dead, in a baraita which cites Rabbi Meir (Sanh. 91b):

Where do we know resurrection from the Torah? It is written (Ex. 15:1): *"Then shall Moses (אז ישיר משה) and*

the children of Israel sing this song to the Lord"
(אשירה ליהוה)

It is from the use of the imperfect tense in conjunction with **וא**, that the future tense is assumed. We would normally translate the beginning of the verse: "And Moses sang..."; but R. Meir, assuming the imperfect future tense would read it "Then shall Moses and the children of Israel sing..."

The text continues in much the same manner (Josh. 8:30):

"Then shall Joshua build (או יבנה יהושע) an altar to the Lord God of Israel..."

Since Joshua will build an altar in the future, it too substantiates that the doctrine of resurrection is in the Torah.

Rabbi Simai held that the doctrine of resurrection can be found in Exodus 6:4:

*"And I also have established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan -
וגם הקמתי את בריתי אתם לתת להם את ארץ כנען"*
(San.90b)

It is Simai's contention that since the text states that Canaan will be given to the Patriarchs (**אתם**) who were already dead, the land will be given 'to them-**להם**'. The text does not state that the land will be given 'to you-**לכם**', to the Israelites present in Egypt. God can fulfill this promise by resurrecting the Patriarchs. Thus, a literalist-reading yeilds a "proof" for resurrection in the Torah.

Rabbi Joshua ben Levi, a third century Amora, continued the tradition of proving that the Bible upheld the existence of resurrection. Again, a literalist reading of Ps. 84:5 is the source for his view. Citing the verse:

"Blessed are they that dwell in your house, they will yet praise (יהללוך) you. Selah"

He states:

The verse does not say: 'they praised' but 'they will yet praise'."

Resurrection of the dead and its substantiation in the Torah are assumed. Nevertheless, Rabbi Yochanan asks:

"How is the doctrine of resurrection derived from the Torah"? (San. 90b)

מניין לתחיית המתים מן התורה?

He claims the response is implied in Numbers 18:28:

"...and you shall give thereof the Lord's heave offering to Aaron the priest".

R. Yochanan leads us to his answer by raising two questions regarding the verse and the basic laws of heave-offerings: 'Can it be that Aaron will live forever?' and 'Is it not true that he did not even enter the land of Israel, that they might give this portion (of *terumah*) to him?' Since Aaron did not live to enter Israel, R. Yochanan wonders how Aaron could receive *terumah*. After all, *terumah* is a mitzvah only applicable in the land of Israel. Therefore, concludes R. Yochanan, Aaron will be resurrected at some time in the future, and he will receive *terumah* in Eretz Israel. Thus resurrection can be found in the Torah.

The School of Rabbi Ishmael contested this statement. Their position states that 'לאהרן'-to Aaron' really means 'כאהרן'-like Aaron'. Aaron becomes a metaphor for anyone in the priestly class capable of receiving the *terumah*. But, Rabbi Yochanan, believing that the doctrine of resurrection can be found in the Torah offers Lev. 22:9 for its support:

"...and die therefore if they profane it,"

in order to receive *terumah* Aaron must be resurrected.

Finally, Rabbi Chiyya bar Aba, a third generation Palestinian amora (c. 290), cited yet another literalist interpretation of Rabbi Yochanan. Here, R. Yochanan proves that resurrection can be derived from the Torah from Is. 52:8 (Sanh. 91b):

"The voice of your watchmen is heard: they lift up their voice; together shall they sing (יִרְנְנוּ), for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall return to Zion"

The text does not say: 'they sang', but says 'sing'. Once again Scripture employs the imperfect tense to clarify future action, thus substantiating resurrection of the dead in Scripture.

RABBINIC MIDRASHIC PROOF

Rabbi Eliezer ben R. Jose, a fourth generation Tanna living in the late second century, accuses the Samaritans/Cutheans of falsifying the Scriptures (San. 90b), without any gain, for resurrection is proved by Num. 15:31:

"(Because he has despised the word of God, and has broken God's commandment) that soul shall utterly be cut off (הַכֶּרֶת תִּכְרֹת); his sin shall be upon him".

The text continues:

Since it says: "הַכֶּרֶת תִּכְרֹת-(that soul) shall be utterly cut off" meaning (according to you) in this world, when shall his sin be upon him? Surely in the world to come!

Regarding Eliezer ben Jose's response, R. Papa asked Abaye:

"Why didn't he say that both issues could be derived from the phrase: 'הַכֶּרֶת תִּכְרֹת' alone?"

Abaye responded that the Samaritans assume the text to be in the language of human beings. Opposition also occurred in the rabbinic circle of R. Ishmael. Indeed, R. Ishmael and his circle held this view and used alternative midrash to that of R. Akiva to

prove that a blasphemer forfeited this world and the world to come by their act.

PARABLES / LOGICAL ARGUMENTS AND
ARGUMENTS FROM 'ANCIENT' SCIENCE/OBSERVATION

PARABLES /LOGICAL ARGUMENTS

In addressing either the non-Jewish world or its thinkers' views, the rabbis used parables rather than Scriptures to prove the resurrection of the dead. In Sanhedrin 90b and 91a we find seven parables used to substantiate resurrection.

LOGICAL ARGUMENT

Gebiha ben Pesisa who, according to the Talmud, defended Jewish claims before Alexander the Macedonian, debated the doctrine of resurrection, according to logic, with a 'min'.⁴³ The 'min' is quoted as saying (Sanh. 91a):

"Woe to you, wicked, who say 'the dead will revive.' If the living die, the dead will not live!" Gebiha ben Pesisa said to him: "Woe to the wicked who said: 'the dead will not revive'-if what was not now lives, surely what has lived will live again."

In the next parable, an emperor says to Rabbi Gamliel:

"You say that the dead will come to life. But they become dust, how can dust come to life?"

The emperor's daughter responds, using Greek logic:

'In our town there are two potters: one fashions (his products) from water, and the other from clay: who is the more praiseworthy?' He said to her: 'The one who fashions them from water'. She said to him: 'If (God) can fashion (them) from water, surely (God) can fashion (them) from clay!'

The logic employed here is that if God can fashion human beings from water, i.e. semen, then surely God can create human beings from clay or, rather, dust. Dust, here, has two connotations; 1) God can fashion human beings from the dust into which the dead are turned and 2), in Gen. 2:7, God forms man from the dust of the ground.

PARABLE

In Tractate Sanhedrin (90b) we find a curious discussion. Here a Gentile noble woman declares her belief in resurrection, but she is looking for a concrete explanation on the issue.

"Queen Cleopatra" is said to have questioned Rabbi Meir: I know that the dead will live again, for it is written: (Ps. 72:16)

'There shall be abundance of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountain, the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth'

But when they arise, shall they arise nude or in their garments?' He said to her: 'A fortiori, from a grain of wheat: if a grain of wheat which is buried naked sprouted forth in many robes, how much more so the righteous, who are buried in their garments.'

The question of the dead rising clothed or not may be a question asking whether resurrection is a spiritual or physical event. It is not the only difficult question to be answered. Who is Queen Cleopatra? There is no clear-cut answer to this question; what we do have are several suggestions. Footnoted in the Soncino translation, Bacher, in his *Agada der Tanaiten* 1:68, no. 2 regards קליאופטרה מלכתא (Cleopatra, the Queen) as a corruption of פטרוקי דכותאי the Patriarch of the Samaritans. This is supported by the parallel text of Kohelet Rabbah 5:12, where the disputant of the belief of the resurrection of the dead with R. Meir is a Samaritan. That would also answer the question as to why 'Cleopatra' is able to quote and understand the use of

biblical text. This 'Cleopatra' may also be an aristocratic Roman, knowledgeable in Eastern mystery religions or Christianity, who is interested in Judaism. One last possibility may be that she is a fictitious character created by the rabbis to promote the doctrine of resurrection. The important issue is not who she is but the question which is asked. Implicit in his response as to the physicalness of resurrection, R. Meir also suggests the on-going divine process of resurrection. The resurrected body is paralleled to the seed of wheat, which looks dead before it has been properly germinated, i.e. nurtured by God.

Tosefot Ketubot 111b offers two possible interpretation as to the garments. The garments at the time of resurrection will be either the shrouds from the time of burial, or their (prestigious) garments from their active lifetime. Either way, we find the talmudic teaching to be that the dead will rise with clothing, suggesting the fully physical nature of resurrection.

LOGICAL ARGUMENT

The fourth parable, the Jewish response, is from the school of Rabbi Ishmael, who taught that resurrection may be deduced from glassware:

"...if glassware, which, though made by the breath of flesh and blood, has been broken, can be repaired, then all the more so human beings (created) by the breath of the Holy One." (San. 91a)

Glassware, which has been made by human breath, i.e. blowing glass, can be mended by melting the glass down and fixing it, all the more so, human beings can be resurrected by the breath of God. It is interesting to note, that no audience is mentioned accompanying this parable.

In the fifth parable we are not sure if the person speaking with Rabbi Ammi is a 'min' or a Sadducee.⁴⁴ In R. Ammi's time,

Sadducees no longer existed, and the Gnostics did not deny it. Herford suggests that R. Ammi's opponent was a heathen. Regardless, the min asked of R. Ammi:

"You say that the dead will revive, but they turn to dust, can dust come to life?" He said to him: "I will tell you a parable. This may be compared to the human king who said to his servant: 'Go and build for me a great castle in the place where there is no water and no dust. They went and built it. In some time it collapsed. He said to them: 'Go and rebuild it in a place where there is dust and water.' They said to him: 'We can not.' He became angry with them and said to them: '(Surely if you could build) in a place where there was no water and dust, all the more so you can build where there is water and dust."

The implication is that God wanted to create something out of nothing, namely, human beings out of dust, as the king wanted his palace created out of nothing. God like the servants succeeded. The palace's collapse is comparable to human death, which can be rebuilt, in a place of water and dust. So too, in a place where something had lived, God can remake it.

These parables are focused around the natural properties of clay, glass and water. Society at this time generally believed that all substances were compounds of the four basic elements: Earth, Air, Fire and Water. Clay and glass were originally earth and dust. They were combined with water, subjected to high degrees of heat, and with the help of the craftsperson, assumed a new form. Man, too, was composed in the same way. It then seems logical to draw the conclusion that if broken objects of clay and glass could return to their natural form of dust, then refashioned by the craftsperson, all the more so, human beings, could be returned to their original form despite death.

ARGUMENT FROM 'ANCIENT' SCIENCE/OBSERVATION

The text continues as R. Ammi gives two examples from life to prove resurrection:

"If you do not believe, go out to the field and see a mouse, which today is but half flesh and half earth, and tomorrow has developed and become all flesh."

The mouse, at birth, is not fully formed but by the next day, it has fully developed. The text continues:

"And you will say: 'That takes a long time. Therefore go up to the mountain and see that there is nothing but one snail. Tomorrow the rain will descend and it will be covered with snails.'"

The complete development of the mouse takes a considerable length of time, whereas resurrection must happen in a moment. Thus the example of spontaneous generation is used to prove that God can create life with great speed.

CONTROVERSY OF BODY AND SOUL

The controversy of body and soul is the subject of our seventh parable offered by Rabbi to Antoninus⁴⁵ (San. 91a). Antoninus asked Rabbi:

"The body and the soul can free themselves from judgement; How? The body claims: the soul sinned, (the proof being) that from the day it left me, it is laid upon me like a silent stone in the grave (powerless). And the soul claims: the body sins, (the proof being) that from the day that I departed from it, I fly in the air like a bird (and commit no sin).

Antoninus maintained that body and soul can separate themselves in judgement. The body says it was the soul that sinned, for from the day it was separated from me here I lie in the grave, mute and powerless. The soul says it is the body that

sinned, for from the day I was separated from it, here am I flying in the air like a bird. Rabbi responds with a parable:

("I will tell you a parable to what the matter may be compared...) To a human king who owned a beautiful orchard which contained beautiful figs. He appointed two watchmen, one lame and the other blind. The lame man said to the blind man: 'I see beautiful figs in the orchard, come and carry me (on your shoulders) and we will eat them. The lame man rode on the back of the blind man and they went and ate them.' Some time later, the owner of the orchard came. He said to them: 'Where are those beautiful figs?' The lame man replied: 'Have I feet to walk with?' The blind man replied: 'Have I eyes to see with?' What did he do? He placed the lame upon the blind and judged them as one. So too, the Holy One Blessed Be brings the soul, places it in the body, and judges them as one. As it is written: (Ps. 50:4) *"God shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that God may judge the people"*. *"God shall call to the heavens from above"*-this refers to the soul; *"...and to the earth, that God may judge the people"*-this refers to the body.

God is capable of bringing the soul and installing the body into it. Consequently, they are judged together.

The debate concerning resurrection being a doctrine implied in Scriptures became so heated that it led to the opening ruling in Tractate Sanhedrin (10:1):

"All Israel has a portion in the world to come, for it is written: (Is. 60:21) *'Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever; they shall be the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified'*. And these are they that have no share in the world to come: one who says that there is no resurrection of the dead found in the Torah and one who says that the Torah is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean".

GENTILES AND RESURRECTION

Who were the opponents who denied resurrection as a doctrine in Torah? While all believing Israelites merited resurrection, what did the rabbis believe was the Gentile's fate? R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus (end of the first century C.E. through beginning of the second century) and R. Joshua ben Hananiah (same time period), the disciples of Johanan ben Zakkai, maintained contradictory positions as to the ultimate fate of the Gentiles. R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus did not think well of them,⁴⁶ and believed:

"No Gentiles have a portion in the world to come, as it is said: 'The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the Gentiles who forget God (Ps. 9:18). In the first clause, *'The wicked return to Sheol*, are considered to be the wicked of Israel; while in the second clause, *'who forgot God*', includes the Gentiles."

Rabbi Joshua replies that he formerly held the same view as to the fate of all Gentiles. However, he states that he changed his mind and held that *'all Gentiles who forgot God'* implies that there are righteous people in the nations of the world who have a portion in the world-to-come.⁴⁷

Tosefta San. 13:1 also reports a difference between Rabban Gamliel and R. Joshua ben Hananiah on whether the children of the heathen will have a portion in the world-to-come. Gamliel excluded them, quoting from Mal. 3:19; while Joshua, quoting Ps. 116:6 and Dan. 4:20, state that they would enter the world-to-come. Tosefta San. 13:2 also cites Mal 3:19 is quoted:

"...and the day that comes shall burn them up, with the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root no branch."

An unattributed midrash interprets this as follows: 'Root' is the soul; 'branch' is the body, and the children of the wicked Gentiles will neither be brought to life in the resurrection nor be punished.⁴⁸

REWARD AND PUNISHMENT WITH RESPECT TO RESURRECTION

The predominant religious and moral concerns of the rabbis was not the fate of the heathen, but the individual retribution which awaits all Israelites.

In the first century the Schools of Shammai and Hillel agreed on the two classes in Dan. 12:2, as to the righteous, who are destined for eternal life; and the wicked, who are destined for eternal abhorrence. They differed over what became of those who were neither totally righteous nor totally wicked. The School of Shammai held that those in whom good and evil were equal will go down to hell and come up, and arise:

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name and I will hear them; I will say, 'It is my people', and they shall say, 'The Lord is my God.'" (Zech. 13:9).

The wicked of Israel in their bodies, and the wicked of the nations of the world in their bodies go down to hell and are punished for twelve months. After that time, their souls become extinct, their bodies burned, hell casts them out, they are turned to ash, the wind scatters them and strews them beneath the soles of the feet of the righteous,⁴⁹ for:

"they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, says the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 3:21).

The School of Hillel maintained that God in abounding mercy would incline the balance to the side of mercy, and not send them down to Gehenna:

"...and proclaimed the Lord, 'The Lord, mighty, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth.'" (Ex. 34:6)

But the heretics, the apostates, the epicureans and those who deny the divine nature of Torah, will be punished for all generations, as it is written in Isa. 66:24:

"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorranceto all flesh."

OTHER OPPONENTS OF RESURRECTION

Of the other opponents of resurrection as a doctrine of the Torah, we found in Sanhedrin those people to be named: 'Minim.' As we have seen, variant readings suggest the opponents to be the Sadducees. As noted earlier, Josephus⁵⁰ attested to their opposition. The New Testament also supports their opposition to resurrection (Mark 12:18):

"Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection and they asked him (Jesus) saying..."

It is ironic to note that the very people who deny resurrection ask of Jesus a question concerning a woman, who due to the consecutive death of seven brothers, all of whom fulfilled their leverite marriage requirements ask:

"In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife." (Mark 12:23)

It is Josephus who claims that the Sadducees do not believe in any reward or punishment after death.⁵¹ It is generally accepted that the Sadducees denied the doctrine of resurrection.⁵²

But, who were the 'Minim'? They were Jews with a literature of their own, with much opposition in the second century C.E. Bacher explains the term as coming from the root meaning 'kind' or 'source' and could be translated into English using sectary, partisan or heretic. Travers Herford understands Moritz Freeland's the 'Minim' to be Jewish Gnostics.⁵³ Herford disagrees, stating that 'most Jewish scholars' believe the 'Minim' to be Jewish Christians. Early imprints use the word 'min' as a result of censors who changed the original terminology such as: עובדי כוכבים ומזלות (other nations) and עובדי כוכבים (worshippers of stars and planets).⁵⁴ Depending on the context of the text and its time period, the 'Minim' could be either Samaritans, Sadducees, Gnostics, Christians or any other group opposing the Pharisees.

It is apparent from this discussion how vitally important it was for the rabbis to defend the doctrine of resurrection. Their defense ranged from evidence in the Scriptures aimed at Jewish non-believers to parables to refute the non-Jewish non-believers. For us, the rabbis proofs are weak at best, but we must consider their validity in their respective time period. For example, we do not consider a newly born mouse to be half mouse and half earth, as was believed during the rabbinic period. We understand that a newly born, undeveloped animal requires some time to grow hair, open their eyes and learn how to function. Our contemporary understanding was not known at this time. Aristotle's notion of spontaneous generation was a crucial development for science, but today we would not apply it to snails who appear in great number after a rain shower. Let us look once again at Queen Cleopatra's question concerning the nature of resurrection. She asked if people come back clothed or naked, i.e. if resurrection is physical or spiritual. As believed when the person dies, the body and soul part company. At death the soul flies off while the body is reverently purified and prepared for interment in the soil, where it is planted, as it were, like a seed. After all, the seed of wheat, after the harvest, appears as if it were dead, yet after planting it in the ground, and watering it, new life sprouts forth.

As the resurrection of the dead nears, the seed germinates. A dramatic transformation takes place, as the seed of wheat sprouts anew, so too, a new body is sculpted.

The clarity and directness of the Mishnah reflects the determined agenda of the rabbis:

"All Israel has a portion of the world to come for it is written: *'The people are all righteous, they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.'* But the following have no portion therein: one who maintains that resurrection is not a biblical doctrine, the Torah was not divinely revealed and an epikoros."

The pernicious influence of other religions impaired the pure monotheism of Judaism. The accent of rabbinic proof was on God as the power, origin and cause of everything rather than on resurrection. God as identified in Scripture was the very foundation of Judaism. The rabbis understood how and when to use Scripture as their source of proof. For the opposition, who were Torah-literalists, the rabbis expounded literally upon verses in the Torah as evidence. For those people who understood Torah, but could not understand the doctrine of resurrection in it, the rabbis employed midrashim. For the opposition, who required logic, the rabbis offered logical parables as proof. The rabbis used more Scriptural examples than midrashic examples to prove the resurrection of the dead. The reasons may include: greater numbers of Torah-literate opponents to be convinced; midrash was not considered to be as authoritative as Scripture or the agenda of the rabbis was to support their Scriptural and Talmudic system proofs. The rabbis base the certainty of the resurrection of the dead on the creative power of the God of Israel. God is the God of the living not the God of the dead. Thus, God is the God of resurrection. It is only on the firm reality of God that the reality of resurrection can be established. The goal of the rabbis was to ensure the survival of God, Torah and Judaism.

CHAPTER 4

- ⁴¹In the Babylonian Talmud these names are used interchangeably.
- ⁴²Tractate Sanhedrin, Horeb edition 1925 and Shulsinger edition 1948.
- ⁴³His exact identity is unknown. It is suggested that he is a legendary figure.
- ⁴⁴T. Herford, *The Problem of Minim Further considered, Jewish Studies in Memory of George Kohut*, N.Y. 1935, pg. 281.
- ⁴⁵Antoninus has been identified as several different men: Marcus Aurelius (Rapport); Severus (Graetz, who, assumes that it was the second R. Judah the Prince who was the friend of Antoninus); Caracalla (Jastrow).
- ⁴⁶Gittin 45b; Baba Batra 10b.
- ⁴⁷Tos. Sanhedrin 13:2; San. 105a.
- ⁴⁸Tos. San. 13:2; San. 110b.
- ⁴⁹Tos. San. 13:4.
- ⁵⁰*Antiquities*, 18:11-22, 13:171-173; *Wars* 2:119-166.
- ⁵¹*Antiquities* 18:11-12, 13:171-173; *Wars* 2:119-166.
- ⁵²*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, 1971, Vol. 14: Sadducees; Matt. 22:23; Mark 22:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 23:8.
- ⁵³T. Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash: The Problem of Minim Further Considered, Jewish Studies in Memory of George Kohut*, N.Y. 1935, pp. 359-369.
- ⁵⁴Based on a discussion with Dr. Michael Chernick, March 1992.

הדרן עלך אלו הן הנחנקין

כל ישראל ^ללדם חלק לעולם הבא שנאמר ^ווענך כולם צדיקים לעולם יירשו ארץ נצח כמעט
 מעשה ידי להחפאר ^וואלו יראין לדם חלק לעולם הבא ^והאומר אין תחיית המתים מן
 התורה ואין תורה מן השמים ואפיקורוס ר'ע אומר אף הקורא בספרים הריצונים ^ווהלוחש על המכה
 ואומר ^וכל המלה אשר שמתי במצרים לא אשים עליך כי אני ה' רופאך אבא שאל אומר אף
^והדונה את השם באותיותיו ^ושלישה מלכים וארבעה הדיוטות אין להן חלק לעולם הבא שלישה מלכים ירבעם
 אדאב ומנשה ר' יהודה אומר מנשה יש לו חלק לעולם הבא שנאמר ^וויתפלל אליו ^ווישמע תחנונו
 וישיבנו ירושלים למלכותו אמרו לו למלכותו השיבו ולא לדוי העולם הבא השיבו ארבעה הדיוטות
 בלעם ודואג ואחזתופל וגחזי: ג' וכל כך למה חנא הוא כפר בתחיית המתים לפיכך לא יהיה לו חלק
 בתחיית המתים שכל מדותיו של הקב"ה מדה כנגד מדה ראמר ר' שמואל בר נחמני אמר ר' יוחנן
 מניין שכל מדותיו של הקב"ה מדה כנגד מדה שנאמר ^וויאמר אלישע שמעו דבר ה' ^ווג' כעת מוד סאה
 סלת בשקל וסאתים ישעורים בשקל בשער שומרון וכתיב ^וויען השליש אשר ^והמלך נשען על ידו את איש
 האלהים ויאמר הנה זה עושה ארובות בשמים היהיה הדבר הזה ויאמר ^והנך רואה בעיניך ומשם לא תאכל
 וכתיב

ויהי לו כן וירמסו אותו ודבר כי שם ט נון סל
בדלי הכליס לקט: (וי 6 פסוק קיים נפולס) כל
כל קי שחקן ו תחומה וכלה לא נכנס לארץ
והוא ויהם ממש תחומה ה' לארץ (הקל):

San. 90b

הלך פרק אחד עשר מתדרין

סנה
דע

זו וואו קדם ליחזקאל שנתבט בית חקוק וזה מתבט
על שיה פחד יחזקאל לנחות חסיד חלל לשלם הכ
ב: פרומתיים נלביז כלומר נשח ומוחזקות שסר ישי
לל שיו: מרפסן שפויסיו כפולס: שפויסיו נשח
תורה אור משט כחך הקבר חלל חן חן

ובחוב יויד לו כן וירמסו אותו העם בשער
וימח ויילמא קללת אלישע נרמא ליה
ראמר רב יהודה אמר רב קללת חכם
אפי על תגם היא באה אם כן לכתוב
קרא וירמסו וימח מאי בשער על עסק
שער (אמר ר' יוחנן) מצין לתחית המתים
מן התורה שנאמר ויחיתם מעט (את) תחיתם
ה' לארץ הבתן ובי ארץ לעולם קים
והלא לא נכנס לארץ ישראל שעתה לא
תחיה אלא מלכר שעתיד לעולם וישאל
עומה לו תחיה מכאן לתחית המתים כן
העדות רבי רבי ישעיהל חג לארץ
כאור מה ארץ חבר אף בניו חברים
אד שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יוחנן
מצין שאין עומה תחיה לכהן עם הארץ
שנאמר ויאמר לעם ליושבי יהודה לתחית
מח (לכתיב ולוים) למען יחזק בתורה
ה' כל רבשוק בתורה ה' יש לו מח
ושאני מחזיק בתורה ה' אין לו מח אמר
רב ארמא בר ארמא אמר רב יהודה כל
העומ תחיה לכהן עם הארץ כאילו עומה
לפי אר *מה אר ספק דורס ואוכל ספק
אני דורס ואוכל אף כהן עם הארץ ספק
אוכל בתורה ספק אוכל בתורה ר
יוחנן אמר אף טורם לו מיה שנאמר
יסורו בו כי יחלוהו רבי ר'א בן יעקב תנא
אף משרא עין אשמה שנאמר והשרא
אורם עין אשמה באכלם את קרשיהם תניא
ר סימא אמר מצין לתחית המתים כן
התורה שנאמר ויגם הקשוני את ברת

אתם לתת להם את ארץ בענין להם לא נאמר אלא להם מכאן לתחית המתים כן התורה: (א) (צדק
גם נשים סוכן): שאלו מצין את רבן נמלא מצין שדקדוש כחך הוא סודה מתם אמר
להם מן התורה וכן הנביאים ולא קבלו מצין מן התורה רמתי: ויאמר ה' אל
משה הנך שוכב עם אבותיך וקם אמר לו ויילמא וקם העם הזה ונהג מן הנביאים דכתיב
יהו סדך נבלת יסר הקדש ורע שוכי עפי כי מל אדות מלך וארץ ופאים הפיל ויילמא מיה שיהיה
יוקאל מן התוכנים דכתיב יורכך כין הסב הלך ליהודי למישרים דובב שפתי ישנים ויילמא רדוש
מרושן שפוחיה בעלמא: ר' יוחנן ויחנן משם ריש בן יוחנן כל כי שנאמר הלה בשם
בעולם הזה שפוחיה דוכבת בקבר שנאמר דובב שפתי ישנים עד: שנאמר להם סקרא זה אשך נשבע ה'
לאבותיהם לתת להם להם לא נאמר אלא להם מכאן לתחית המתים כן התורה ר'א מן הסקרא הוא אמר להם
ואתם הדיקסם בה אליהם חים כלכם חום (פשימא דידים כלכם חום אלא אפילו כיום שכל העולם
כלם מתים אדם חום) לה חום כלכם קים אף לעוהב כלכם קים שאלו חמים את רבי יוחנן כן ונהג
מצין שהקבד סודה מתים וידע מה שעתיד להיות אמר להו תחיתו מן הסקרא הוא שנאמר ויאמר ה'
אל משה הנך שוכב עם אבותיך וקם העם הזה ונהג ויילמא וקם העם הזה ונהג אמר להו נקם
סדא פלגא בדידי ריע מה שעתיד להיות אחר נבי אד יוחנן משם רבי שמעון בן יוחנן מצין
ועוד סדא ברת דרבי מה שעתיד להיות שנאמר הנך שוכב עם אבותיך וקם
תניא אד אליעזר בר יוס ברבר זה ויפתי ספר מינים שהיו אומרים את תחית המתים כן התורה
אמריו לון ויפחם תורבם ולא העליהם בידם כלום שארם אומרים את תחית המתים כן התורה
דרי הוא אומר הדברת חברת תפיש תניא מה הדברת חברת בעולם הזה ענה בה לאימא לאו
לעולם הבא אל רב פפא לאבי ולימא להו תחיתו סדברת חברת אנהו וכו אמר ליה דברת חברת
כללן בני ארם] תנא דברת חברת בעולם הזה חסרת לעולם הבא דבר רע אמר לו ר' ישמעאל
והלא כבר נאמר יאת ה' הוא מגוף ותפיה ובי שלשה עולמים יש אלא ונברתה בעולם הזה הדברת לעולם
הבא וברת חברת דברתה וזה כללן בני ארם בין ר' ישמעאל ובין רע ענה בה מאי עובדי ביה
לכתנאי *כיל אפלו עשה תשובה חל ענה בה לא אמרז אלא בוסן שעונה בה: שאלה קראיפא
מלמחא את רם אמר דענא דדי שכיב דכתיב יצא מניח מעד כעש הארץ אלא כשהן עומין עומין עומין
כלבשה עומין אמר לה *ק' מוחה ישה חמה ששקטה שומה יתא ככסה לבישה ארסם שומים
כלבשה על אהר ככה וכמה אל קסר לכן נמלא ארסיהו דשכיב די הוא עשרא ושאר כן קא די

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CHAPTER 5 GOD'S POWER AS MANIFEST IN THE AMIDAH

As testimony to God's faithfulness, the rabbis made God's power to revive the dead the subject of the second benediction in the 'Amidah', the centerpiece of Jewish liturgy, considered to be the prayer par excellence. They also included several references to resurrection in other prayers in the liturgy.

The Amidah begins with the blessing of Jewish Ancestors (אבות) who initiated Israel's mission of Divine service. The second blessing (גבורות) takes the worshipper to the end of history and the culmination of Divine service: the day of final judgment. At that time, the resurrection of the dead will occur, demonstrating the enormity of God's might.

גבורות

אתה גבור לעולם אדני מחיה מתים
אתה רב להושיע (משיב הרוח מוריד הגשם)
מכלכל חיים בחסד מחיה מתים ברחמים רבים
סומך נופלים ורופא חולים ומתיר אסורים
ומקים אמונתו לישני עפר
מי כמוך בעל גבורות ומי דומה לך?
מלך ממית ומחיה ומצמיח ישועה
ונאמן אתה להחיות מתים
ברוך אתה יהוה מחיה המתים

You are eternally mighty, my Lord, the Resuscitator of the dead, abundantly able to save (Who makes the wind blow and makes the rain descend). Who sustains the living with kindness, resuscitates the dead with abundant mercy, supports the fallen, heals the sick, releases the confined, and maintains faith to those asleep in the dust.

Who is like you, O Master of mighty deeds, and who is comparable to You, King who causes death and restores life and makes salvation sprout. And You are faithful to resuscitate the dead. Blessed are you, O God, Who resuscitates the dead.

It is rabbinic tradition that the first three of the "18 Benedictions", or the Amidah, (1) אבות, (2) גבורות, (3) יהוה [קדושת] were written by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Abraham is the progenitor of Israel. The second blessing is dedicated to his son Isaac who provided a glimpse of resurrection at the *Akedah*. Although he was never sacrificed, tradition teaches that Isaac's soul left his body for a brief instant and ascended to celestial heights, then God returned it to revive his momentarily lifeless flesh.

"The Lord said: 'Do not lay a hand on the boy.'⁵⁵ His soul returned to his body and he stood up on his feet. Then Isaac knew that resurrection was to be proved from the Torah, that all the dead will in the future be resurrected. At that moment he said: 'Praised are You, O Lord, who resurrects the dead.'⁵⁶

The blessing which begins and ends with "the resurrection of the dead" shows how death is also one of the mighty deeds of God and how death, powerful as it is, does not limit that might. God rules over death, with the power to revive the dead. According to Israel Abrahams⁵⁷ the benediction of גבורות-Powers, is aptly termed. It recounts God's sustenance of the living and resurrection of the dead. In its primitive form, this benediction probably referred to the Omnipotence of God in more general terms, but when the Sadducees disputed the notion of resurrection, the Pharisees, perhaps during the reign of John Hyrcanus 135-104 B.C.E., introduced into the Amidah this emphatic statement of belief in the dogma.

The Amidah itself is a fixed body of liturgy. There are occasions when we are required to insert additions to the fixed prayers. One of these inserts occurs in the גבורות:

משיב הרוח מוריד הגשם

(see above for its location within the blessing)

This addition is traditionally inserted in the blessing during the festival of Sukkot in the fall, and continuing until the first day of Passover, in the spring.

It is written in Mishnah Berakhot 5:2:

"we mention the mighty (powerful) deeds of the rain in the (benediction of) The Resurrection of the Dead:
מזכירין גבורות גשמים בתחיית המתים"

The Talmud asked: Why is rain mentioned in this benediction?

R. Joseph responded:

מאי טעמא? אמר רב יוסף:
מתוך ששקולה בתחית המתים,
לפיכך קבעוה בתחית המתים.

What is the reason? R. Joseph said: 'since the rain is rated equal with the resurrection of the dead, they placed it in (the blessing of) 'The Resurrection of The Dead.'

What is the link between resurrection and rain for the Rabbis? Resurrection is the major and recurring theme of this benediction, obscuring its first name גבורות. Had the Mishnah used the name גבורות, the Gemara might not have shown any curiosity, as 'the mighty deed of rain' is surely a גבורה (might). Rav Joseph answers that the placement is warranted, as rain is no less significant than resurrection and is its equal, for rain revives and resurrects Nature (Meiri).

Among the 'powers' of God are included natural laws, in particular the ordering of the wind and the rain. According to Mishnah Ta'anit 1a, God is eulogised for "causing the wind to blow and the rain to fall."⁵⁸ In Ta'anit 2a we are told that rain is considered as great a manifestation of the divine power as the resurrection of the dead.⁵⁹ Further into the text, it is written:

"The day of rainfall is greater than the day of the Resurrection of the Dead, because the future revival is only for the righteous, whereas rainfall comes for both the

righteous and wicked alike. Since rainfall is compared to revival, the Sages included it in the blessing for the Resurrection of the Dead." (Ta'anit 7a)

Rain causes a buried seed to germinate and produce a new plant. This parallels the resurrection when the 'planted' body will re-emerge. Both are evidence of God's גבורה-might.

Rain and resurrection are equal for the rabbis. The basis for this hypothesis is that both rain and resurrection are the best examples of God's life-giving power. It seems the rabbis extended this hypothesis to dew as well. Water, from God, has the power of life.

R. Joshua b. Levi also said: "At every word which went forth from the mouth of the Holy One, Blessed be, the souls of Israel departed, for it is said: *My soul went forth when He spake*. But since their souls departed at the first word, how could they receive the second word? He brought down the dew with which He will resurrect the dead and revived them, as it is said: *Thou, O God, did send a plentiful rain, Thou did confirm Thine inheritance when it was weary*."

(T. Shabbat 88b)

Resurrection of the dead is such an essential dogma that Maimonides lists it as his Thirteenth Principle of Jewish Faith. According to Maimonides, the doctrine of resurrection is identical with that of the immortality of the soul, naming the life of the soul after separation from the body 'resurrection'.

Pertaining to Maimonides' Thirteenth Principle of Faith, it was Zwi Werblowsky who wrote:

"Since Pharisaic times the resurrection of the body was official doctrine. Rabbinic literature insists on it as an essential dogma. Its problematic relation to ideas of immortality and a hereafter has been discussed earlier... Here it must suffice to indicate that modernism has found this dogma to be one of the most unpalatable. Whereas orthodoxy still holds to it, the Reform Prayerbook has deleted all references to the resurrection of the body and substituted the apparently less

objectionable and more "refined" expression "life eternal". Other theologians do not believe it necessary to have any hard-and-fast ideas on the subject and deem it sufficient to recognize the symbol as a confession of the value and significance of the total human personality (body and soul) in the divine scheme."

Types of contemporary Judaism have moved beyond the ideology of the rabbis. We have read the rabbis confirmation of clothed bodies at the time of resurrection. We are told in T.B. Kethobot 111b that the righteous will be resurrected wearing their own clothes. They also give instructions before their death on the kind of garments in which they are to be buried for the same reason (Sabbath 114a). They also say that the righteous whom God will resurrect will not return to their dust (Sanh. 72a). If they had any blemishes while alive in this world they would be healed of them in the time of resurrection (Sanh. 91a). For the rabbis, resurrection was certain and corporeal. It was such a basic doctrine for the rabbis that they inserted it into the Amidah, to remind the worshipper of God's power and life-giving qualities.

CHAPTER 5

55Gensis 22:12.

56Pirke d'Rabbi Eliezer, chapter 34.

57I. Abrahams, *A Companion to the Authorized Daily Prayerbook*, Hermon Press, 1966, pg 59.

58ibid.

59P. Birnbaum, *Daily Prayerbook*, Hebrew Publishing Co., 1977, pg. 83-84.

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