

SPECIAL STUDIES ABOUT THE JEWS

be seen the aged and decrepit of both sexes with tattered garments and dishevelled hair who met to weep over the downfall of Jerusalem, and purchased permission of the soldiery to prolong their lamentations. So completely were all traces of the ancient city obliterated that its very name was in process of time forgotten. It was not till after Constantine built the *Martyrion* on the site of the crucifixion that its ancient appellation was revived.

SECTION VI

SPECIAL STUDIES

- A. The SAMARITANS.
- B. JEWS OF THE DISPERSION
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- F. SECTS OF THE JEWS
 - 1. Origin and names of the Jewish sects
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 - 5. The Scribes
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WATCH FOR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS:

1. Were the Samaritans originally Jewish in origin, or did they come from other nations?
2. Did the Jews cooperate with Samaritans after the Babylonian captivity?
3. What man built a temple on Mt. Gerezim? Date?
4. Why did Jews who were travelling not pass through Samaria?

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5. What section of the Bible was alone accepted by the Samaritans?
6. What was the attitude of the Jews toward Samaritans?
7. What is the modern city name *Nablus* derived from?
8. What are two ways in which the Samaritan Pentateuch differs from the Hebrew books of Moses?
9. What do we mean by the Jews of the *Dispersions*?
10. Where did the Jews of the Dispersion send money?
11. Were there few or many Jews in Asia Minor? Which apostle had much contact with Jews there?
12. What were the Jews who adopted Greek ideas and language called?
13. What city in Egypt had a large Jewish population?
14. What writings did the Jewish writers at Alexandria attempt to harmonize together?
15. What is the *allegorical* interpretation of scripture? Where was this first extensively practiced?
16. What city in north Africa had many Jewish inhabitants?
17. What Roman ruler first settled Jews into Rome?
18. What Roman emperor temporarily banished Jews from Rome?
19. How did the dispersion of the Jews relate to the preaching of the apostles (particularly Paul)?
20. What are proselytes?
21. How had many been made to be proselytes, other than by willing conversion?
22. What was a "proselyte of the gate"?
23. What were "proselytes of righteousness"?
24. Besides submitting to circumcision, what else were the proselytes of righteousness required to submit to?
25. What do we mean by the term *canon*?
26. When was the O.T. canon completed?
27. How many books did the Jews have in their canon (by their way of counting)?

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28. What were the names of the three divisions of the Hebrew canon?
29. What books do the Jews refer to as the "former prophets"?
30. When were the Jewish canonical books generally accepted as scripture?
31. Date of the council of Jamnia. What were some of its decisions?
32. When did Josephus say that the LAST of their scripture books had been written?
33. Did the Dead Sea colony at Qumran have any concept of the idea of canon? Were some books more sacred to them than others?
34. What is the name of the collection of books containing the TRADITIONS of the Jews?
35. What are the two parts of the Jewish Talmud? What is the relationship of these two parts to one another?
36. Besides the written law, what other law did the Pharisees believe that they possessed?
37. What does the word *Targum* refer to?
38. When did the Jewish Targums originate?
39. In what language are the Targums?
40. What name is given to the Greek Old Testament? What does this name mean?
41. Where was the Greek O.T. produced? Approximately when?
42. What is the name of the letter which (supposedly) tells of the production of the Greek O.T.?
43. Was the Septuagint version much used by the early Christian church?
44. Tell three differences between the Septuagint and the Hebrew Bible.
45. How many "books" constitute the Apocrypha?
46. What does the term *deutero-canonical* mean, and to what does it refer?

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47. What is the primary meaning of *Apocrypha*?
48. During what centuries were the books of the *Apocrypha* produced?
49. What does the First book of Maccabees tell of?
50. What does the name *Pseudepigrapha* mean?
51. Why are certain books called *pseudepigrapha*? What other name is frequently used for these books?
52. What does the word *synagogue* mean?
53. When, apparently, did synagogues first appear?
54. State two influences that the synagogues had upon the Jews.
55. Synagogues were built in such a way that the worshippers faced toward what?
56. What was kept within the "ark" in each synagogue?
57. What officers in Christian churches were similar to those in the Jewish synagogues?
58. Give three particulars in which the synagogue ritual was followed in Christian churches.
59. During what period did the various sects of the Jews originate?
60. What were the principal sects of the Jews?
61. What is the root meaning of the name *Pharisee*?
62. What was the fundamental doctrine of the Pharisees?
63. Were the traditions of the Pharisees few or many, burdensome or easy to bear?
64. Why did Christ's eating with publicans and sinners so greatly shock the Pharisees?
65. Why would the Pharisees have been shocked by Christ's teaching that a man was not defiled by what he ate, but by bad thoughts alone?
66. Did the Pharisees believe in a future life?
67. Did the Pharisees attempt to make converts (proselytes)?
68. From what man's name (apparently) is the name *Saducee* derived?

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69. Were the Sadducees a lower-class or upper-class group?
70. What was the fundamental doctrine of the Sadducees?
71. Did the Sadducees believe in a resurrection of the dead?
72. Did the Sadducees believe in man's free will?
73. Did the Sadducees reject all scripture except the Pentateuch?
74. When did the sect of the Sadducees disappear?
75. What were the Essenes?
76. How many Essenes did Josephus say there were?
77. Where was one particular colony of Essenes?
78. Why did the Essenes generally withdraw from society?
79. When, possibly, did the Qumran colony originate?
80. When was the Qumran colony destroyed? By whom?
81. How many books did the Qumran Essenes have?
82. Give two arguments against the idea that Christian doctrines were derived from the Essene colony at Qumran.
83. What was the original ancient work of scribes?
84. What did the scribes become in the course of time?
85. Did the office of scribe develop into a good or evil system?
86. How authoritative did the traditions and decision of the scribes become?
87. Who were the founders of two "schools" within the order of the scribes?
88. Which of these two teachers was the more broad-minded and congenial?
89. Which of the two schools of the scribes was Gamaliel (Acts 5:34) connected with?
90. When did a boy start his training to become a scribe?
91. How honored and prominent were the scribes in the time of Christ?
92. What does the word *Sanhedrin* mean? To what group of Jews did the title refer in the time of Christ?
93. To what was the origin of the Sanhedrin traced?

94. When did the Sanhedrin probably originate?
95. What classes of men composed the Sanhedrin?
96. How many members did the Sanhedrin have?
97. What New Testament personages were brought to trial before the Sanhedrin?
98. What authority had been taken away from the Sanhedrin in the time of Christ?

A. THE SAMARITANS.

1. Their heathen origin.
2. Hostility of Samaritans to Jews.
3. Hostility of Jews to Samaritans.
4. History of the Samaritans.
5. The Samaritan Pentateuch.

Though jealously rejected by the Jews from the first moment of their return, the half-heathen Samaritans demand a place in Jewish history for their position in the very center of Palestine and from their own high claims of rivalry with the Jews.

1. *Their heathen origin.*

The strangers, whom we have seen placed in "the cities of Samaria" by Esarhaddon, were of course idolaters, and worshiped a strange medley of divinities. Each of the five nations, says Josephus, who is confirmed by the words of Scripture, had its own God. No place was found for the worship of Him who had once called the land His own and whose it was still. God's displeasure was kindled, and they were infested by beasts of prey which had probably increased to a great extent before their entrance upon the land. "The Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them." On their explaining their miserable condition to the King of Assyria, he dispatched one of the captive priests to teach them "how they should fear the Lord." The priest came accordingly, and henceforth, in the language of the sacred historian, they "feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children and their

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children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day" (II K. 17:41). This statement exposes the pretensions of the Samaritans of Ezra's time to be pure worshipers of God—they were no more exclusively his servants than was the Roman Emperor, who desired to place a statue of Christ in the Pantheon, entitled to be called a Christian.

Such was the origin of the post-captivity or new Samaritans, men not of Jewish extraction, but from the further East.¹ Our Lord expressly terms them aliens (Luke 17:18). A gap occurs in their history until Judah has returned from captivity. They then desire to be allowed to participate in the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem. It is curious, and perhaps indicative of the treacherous character of their designs, to find them even then called by anticipation, "the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin,"² a title which they afterward fully justified. But, so far as professions go, they are not enemies; they are most anxious to be friends. Their religion, they assert, is the same as that of the two tribes, therefore they have a right to share in that great religious undertaking. But they do not call it a *national* undertaking. They advance no pretensions to Jewish blood. They confess their Assyrian descent, and even put it forward ostentatiously, perhaps to enhance the merit of their partial conversion to God. That it was but partial they give no hint. It may have become purer already, but we have no information that it had. Be this, however, as it may, the Jews do not listen favorably to their overtures. Ezra, no doubt, from whose pen we have a record of the transaction, saw them through and through. On this the Samaritans throw off the mask, and become open enemies, frustrate the operations of the Jews through the reigns of two Persian kings, and are only effectually silenced in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, 519 B.C.

1. II K. 17:24. Josephus calls them Cutheans, from the interior of Persia and Media.

2. Ezra 4:1.

2. *Hostility of Samaritans to Jews.*

The feud, thus unhappily begun, grew year by year more inveterate. It is probable, too, that the more the Samaritans detached themselves from idols, and became devoted exclusively to a sort of worship of Jehovah, the more they resented the contempt with which the Jews treated their offers of fraternization. Matters at length came to a climax. About 409 B.C., a certain Manasseh, a man of priestly lineage, on being expelled from Jerusalem by Nehemiah for an unlawful marriage, obtained permission from the Persian king of his day, Darius Nothus, to build a temple on Mount Gerizim for the Samaritans, with whom he had found refuge. The only thing wanting to crystallize the opposition between the two races, viz., a rallying point for schismatical worship, being now obtained, their animosity became more intense than ever. The Samaritans are said to have done every thing in their power to annoy the Jews. They would refuse hospitality to pilgrims on their road to Jerusalem, as in our Lord's case (Luke 9:52-53). They would even waylay them in their journey;³ and many were compelled through fear to take the longer route by the east of Jordan. Certain Samaritans were said to have once penetrated into the Temple of Jerusalem and to have defiled it by scattering dead men's bones on the sacred pavement.⁴

Their own temple on Gerizim they considered to be much superior to that at Jerusalem. There they sacrificed a passover. Toward that mountain, even after the temple on it had fallen, wherever they were, they directed their worship. To their copy of the Law they arrogated an antiquity and authority greater than attached to any copy in the possession of the Jews. The Law (*i.e.*, the five books of Moses) was their sole code; for they rejected every other

3. Josephus, *Ant.* xx, 6, 1.

4. *Jos.*, *Ant.* xviii, 2, 2.

book in the Jewish canon. And they professed to observe it better than did the Jews themselves, employing the expression not unfrequently, "The Jews indeed do so and so; but we, observing the letter of the Law, do otherwise."

3. *Hostility of Jews to Samaritans.*

The Jews, on the other hand, were not more conciliatory in their treatment of the Samaritans. The copy of the Law possessed by that people they declared to be the legacy of an apostate (Manasseh), and cast grave suspicions upon its genuineness. Certain other Jewish renegades had from time to time taken refuge with the Samaritans. Hence, by degrees, the Samaritans claimed to partake of Jewish blood, especially if doings so happened to suit their interest.⁵ A remarkable instance of this is exhibited in a request which they made to Alexander the Great, about 332 B.C. They desired to be excused payment of tribute in the Sabbatical year on the plea that as true Israelites, descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, sons of Joseph, they refrained from cultivating their land in that year. Alexander, on cross-questioning them, discovered the hollowness of their pretensions. They were greatly disconcerted at their failure and their dissatisfaction probably led to the conduct which induced Alexander to besiege and destroy the city of Samaria. Another instance of claim to Jewish descent appears in the words of the woman of Samaria to our Lord, "Art thou greater than *our father Jacob* which gave us this well?"⁶—a question which she puts without recollecting that she had just before strongly contrasted the Jews and the Samaritans. Very far were the Jews from admitting this claim to consanguinity on the part of these people. They were ever reminding them that they were after all mere Cuthæans, mere strangers from Assyria. They

5. *Ant.* xi. 8, 6; ix, 14, 3.

6. *John* 4:12.

accused them of worshiping the idol gods buried long ago under the oak of Shechem.⁷ They would have no dealings with them that they could possibly avoid. "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil," was the mode in which they expressed themselves when at a loss for a bitter reproach. Every thing that a Samaritan had touched was as swine's flesh to them. The Samaritan was publicly cursed in their synagogues—could not be adduced as a witness in the Jewish courts—could not be admitted to any sort of proselytism—and was thus, so far as the Jew could affect his position, excluded from hope of eternal life. The traditional hatred in which the Jew held him is expressed in Ecclus. 50:25, 26, "There be two manner of nations which my heart abhorreth, and the third is no nation: they that sit in the mountain of Samaria; and they that dwell among the Philistines; and that foolish people that dwell in Siche[m]." And so long was it before such a temper could be banished from the Jewish mind, that we find even the Apostles believing that an inhospitable slight shown by a Samaritan village to Christ would be not unduly avenged by calling down fire from heaven (Luke 9:54).

"Ye know not what spirit ye are of," said the large-hearted Son of Man, and we find him on no one occasion uttering any thing to the disparagement of the Samaritans. His words, however, and the records of his ministrations, confirm most thoroughly the views which has been taken above, that the Samaritans were not Jews. At the first sending forth of the Twelve, he charges them, "Go not into the way of Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁸ So again, in his final address to them on Mount Olivet, "Ye shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the ut-

7. Gen. 35:4.

8. Matt. 10:5-6.

termost part of the earth." So the nine unthankful lepers, Jews, were contrasted by him with the tenth leper, the thankful *stranger*, who was a Samaritan. So, in his well-known parable, a merciful Samaritan is contrasted with the unmerciful priest and Levite. And the very worship of the two races is described by him as different in character. "Ye worship ye know not what," he said of the Samaritans: "We know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews."⁹

Such were the Samaritans of our Lord's day: a people distinct from the Jews, though lying in the very midst of the Jews; a people preserving their identity, though seven centuries had rolled away since they had been brought from Assyria by Esarhaddon, and though they had abandoned their polytheism for a sort of ultra Mosaicism; a people, who still preserved nationality, still worshiped from Shechem and their other impoverished settlements toward their sacred hill; still retained their separation, and could not coalesce with the Jews.

4. *History of the Samaritans.*

The history of the Samaritans after their break from the Jews is not clearly known. In the light of the Samaritan papyri found in 1962 in the Jordan valley,¹⁰ it appears that the sequence of their kings was as follows:

- Sanballat I (ruling in 444 B.C. Neh. 2:10)
- Delaiah, son of Sanballat (c. 410 ff.)
- Sanballat II (c. 390 ff.)
- Hananiah, son of Sanballat II (ruling in 354)
- Sanballat III (c. 335 ff.)

Alexander the Great slaughtered many of the Samaritans. (See Section I of this book, under Alexander.) A Mace-

9. John 4:22.

10. *Biblical Archaeologist*, Dec. 1963, p. 120.

donian colony was formed at Samaria. The Samaritan's territory was gradually diminished. John Hyrcanus destroyed their temple on Mt. Gerezim in 109 B.C.

The Samaritans have continued to exist to this day. They have a tiny colony of about 400 in Nablus, which is a corruption of the name Neapolis, or "New Town," built by Vespasian a little west of the older town of Shechem, which was then ruined. They have a synagogue, and they observe the law and celebrate the Passover on a sacred spot on Mt. Gerezim with an exactness of minute ceremony which the Jews themselves have long since ceased to practice.

5. *The Samaritan Pentateuch.*

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH is a Recension of the commonly received Hebrew Text of the Mosaic Law, in use with the Samaritans, and written in the ancient Hebrew, or so-called Samaritan character. It differs in several important points from the Hebrew text. Among these may be mentioned: 1. Emendations of passages and words of the Hebrew text which contain something objectionable in the eyes of the Samaritans, on account either of historical improbability or apparent want of dignity in the terms applied to the Creator. Thus in the Samaritan Pentateuch no one in the antediluvian times begets his first son after he has lived 150 years: but one hundred years are, where necessary, subtracted before, and added after, the birth of the first son. 2. Alterations made in favor or on behalf of Samaritan theology, hermeneutics, and domestic worship. Thus the word *Elohim*, four times constructed with the plural verb in the Hebrew Pentateuch is in the Samaritan Pent. joined to the singular verb (Gen. xx. 13, xxxi. 53, xxxv. 7; Ex. xxii. 9); and further, anthropomorph-

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isms as well as anthropopathisms¹¹ are carefully expunged—a practice very common in later times. The last and perhaps most momentous of all intentional alterations is the constant change of all the phrases, “God will choose a spot,” into “He has chosen,” viz., Gerizim, and the well-known substitution of Gerizim for Ebal in Deut. xxvii. 4. In Exodus as well as in Deuteronomy the Samaritan Pentateuch has immediately after the Ten Commandments, the following insertions from Deut. xxvii. 2-7 and xi. 30: “And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan . . . ye shall set up these stones . . . on Mount *Gerizim* . . . and there shalt thou build an altar . . . ‘*That mountain*’ on the other side Jordan by the way where the sun goeth down . . . in the champaign over against Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh, ‘*over against Shechem.*’ ”

The origin of the Samaritan Pentateuch has given rise to much controversy, into which we can not enter in this place. The two most usual opinions are: 1. That it came into the hands of the Samaritans as an inheritance from the ten tribes whom they succeeded. 2. That it was introduced by Manasseh, at the time of the foundation of the Samaritan Sanctuary on Mount Gerizim.

(For questions on the Samaritans, see numbers 1-8 on page 885-886.)

B. THE JEWS OF THE DISPERSION.

1. Origin and influence of the Dispersion.
2. Three divisions of the Dispersion.
3. Dispersed Jews in Asia Minor.
4. Dispersed Jews in Alexandria Egypt.
5. Dispersed Jews of north Africa.
6. Dispersed Jews at Rome.
7. Influence of the Jewish Dispersion upon Christianity.

11. Anthropomorphisms are references to God as if He had human form — arms, ears, eyes, etc. Anthropopathisms are references to God as if He had human feelings — repentance, sorrow, etc.

1. *Origin and influence of the Dispersion.*

THE JEWS OF THE DISPERSION, or simply THE DISPERSION, (Gr., *diaspora*) was the general title applied to those Jews who remained settled in foreign countries after the return from the Babylonian exile and during the period of the second Temple. The Dispersion as a distinct element influencing the entire character of the Jews dates from the Babylonian exile.

Apart from the inevitable influence which Jewish communities must have exercised on the nations among whom they were scattered, the difficulties which set aside the literal observance of the Mosaic ritual led to a wider view of the scope of the law, and a stronger sense of its spiritual significance. Outwardly and inwardly, by its effects both on the Gentiles and on the people of Israel, the Dispersion appears to have been the clearest providential preparation for the spread of Christianity.

But while the fact of a recognized Dispersion must have weakened the local and ceremonial influences which were essential to the first training of the people of God, the Dispersion was still bound together in itself and to its mother country by religious ties. The Temple was the acknowledged centre of Judaism, and the faithful Jew everywhere contributed the half-shekel toward its maintenance.¹ Treasuries were established to receive the payments of different districts, and the collected sums were forwarded to Jerusalem.

2. *Three divisions of the Dispersion.*

At the beginning of the Christian era the Dispersion was divided into three great sections, the *Babylonian*, the *Syrian*, the *Egyptian*. Precedence was yielded to the first. The jealousy which had originally existed between the

1. Matt. 17:24.

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poor who returned to Palestine and their wealthier countrymen at Babylon had passed away, and Gamaliel wrote "to the sons of the Dispersion in Babylonia, and to our brethren in Media . . . and to all the Dispersion of Israel." From Babylon the Jews spread throughout Persia, Media, and Parthia; but the settlements in China belong to a modern date. The few details of their history which have been preserved bear witness to their prosperity and influence. No schools of learning are noticed, but Hillel the Elder and Nahum the Mede are mentioned as coming from Babylon to Jerusalem.

3. *Dispersed Jews in Asia Minor.*

The Greek conquests in Asia extended the limits of the Dispersion. Seleucus Nicator transplanted large bodies of Jewish colonists from Babylonia to the capitals of his western provinces. His policy was followed by his successor Antiochus the Great; and the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes only served to push forward the Jewish emigration to the remoter districts of his empire. In Armenia the Jews arrived at the greatest dignities, and Nisibis, became a new centre of colonization. The Jews of Cappadocia² are casually mentioned in the Mishna; and a prince and princess of Adiabene adopted the Jewish faith only thirty years before the destruction of the Temple. Large settlements of Jews were established in Cyprus, in the islands of the Aegæan, and on the western coast of Asia Minor. Paul the apostle had many contacts with Jews in Asia Minor. The Romans confirmed to them the privileges which they had obtained from the Syrian kings; and though they were exposed to sudden outbursts of popular violence, the Jews of the Syrian provinces gradually formed a closer connection with their new homes, and together with the

2. I Peter 1:1.

Greek language adopted in many respects Greek ideas, and so became "*Hellenists*."

4. *Dispersed Jews at Alexandria Egypt.*

This Hellenizing tendency, however, found its most free development at *Alexandria*. According to Josephus, Alexander himself assigned to the Jews a place in his new city; "and they obtained," he adds, "equal privileges with the Macedonians"³ in consideration "of their services against the Egyptians."⁴ Ptolemy I. imitated the policy of Alexander, and after the capture of Jerusalem he removed a considerable number of its citizens to Alexandria. The numbers and importance of the Egyptian Jews were rapidly increased under the Ptolemies by fresh immigrations and untiring industry. Philo estimates them in his time at little less than 1,000,000; and adds, that two of the five districts of Alexandria were called "Jewish districts;" and that many Jews lived scattered in the remaining three. For some time the Jewish Church in Alexandria was in close dependence on that of Jerusalem. Both were subject to the civil power of the first Ptolemies, and both acknowledged the high-priest as their religious head. The persecution of Ptolemy IV. Philopator (217 B.C.) occasioned the first political separation between the two bodies. From that time the Jews of Palestine attached themselves to the fortunes of Syria; and the same policy which alienated the Palestinian party gave unity and decision to the Jews of Alexandria. The Septuagint translation, which strengthened the barrier of language between Palestine and Egypt, and the temple of Leontopolis (161 B.C.) which subjected the Egyptian Jews to the charge of schism, widened the breach which was thus opened. But the division, though marked, was not complete. At the beginning of the Christian era the Egyptian

3. *Contra Apion*, II, 4.

4. Josephus, *Wars*, II, 18, 7.

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Jews still paid the contributions to the temple-service. Jerusalem, though its name was fashioned to a Greek shape, was still the Holy City—the metropolis, not of a country, but of a people—and the Alexandrians had a synagogue there.⁵ The internal administration of the Alexandrine Church was independent of the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem; but respect survived submission.

Besides the political separation, the Alexandrine Jews developed a great separation in their ways of thinking from the Palestine Jews. At Alexandria Greek, Egyptian, pagan, and Jewish ideas co-existed in friendly union. The Jews became acquainted with pagan writings, and the Egyptian Jews necessarily imbibed the spirit which prevailed around them. Jewish writers began to try to harmonize the teachings of their law with Greek ideas. The allegoric exposition of the Pentateuch by Aristobulus, which is the earliest Greek fragment of Jewish writing that has been preserved (about 160 B.C.), contains large Orphic quotations which had been already moulded into a Jewish form, and the attempt thus made to connect the most ancient Hellenic traditions with the Law was often repeated afterward. This Aristobulus who gave currency to the Judæo-Orphic verses endeavored to show that the Pentateuch was the real source of Greek philosophy. Henceforth it was the chief object of Jewish speculation to trace out the subtle analogies which were supposed to exist between the writings of Moses and the teaching of the schools. The study of the Platonic philosophy at Alexandria gave a further impulse to this attempt. The belief in the existence of a spiritual meaning underlying the letter of Scripture was the great principle on which the Jewish investigations rested. The facts were supposed to be essentially symbolic: the language the veil (or sometimes the mask) which partly disguised from common sight the truths which it enwrapped. This was the

5. Acts 6:9.

origin of what is called the *allegorical* interpretation of the scriptures.

5. *Dispersed Jews of north Africa.*

The Jewish settlements established at Alexandria by Alexander and Ptolemy I. became the source of the *African Dispersion*, which spread over the north coast of Africa, and perhaps inland to Abyssinia. At Cyrene (Acts 11:20) and Berenice (Tripoli) the Jewish inhabitants formed a considerable portion of the population. The African Dispersion, like all other Jews, preserved their veneration for the "Holy City," and recognized the universal claims of the Temple by the annual tribute. But the distinction in language led to wider differences, which were averted in Babylon by the currency of an Aramaic dialect. The Scriptures were no longer read on the Sabbath. Still the national spirit of the African Jews was not destroyed. After the destruction of the Temple, the Zealots found a reception in Cyrene, and toward the close of the reign of Trajan, A.D. 115, the Jewish population in Africa rose with terrible ferocity. The insurrection was put down by a war of extermination, and the remnant who escaped established themselves on the opposite coast of Europe, as the beginning of a new Dispersion.

6. *Dispersed Jews at Rome.*

The Jewish settlements in *Rome* were consequent upon the occupation of Jerusalem by Pompey, 63 B.C. The captives and emigrants whom he brought with him were located in the trans-Tiberine quarter, and by degrees rose in station and importance. They were favored by Augustus and Tiberius after the fall of Sejanus; and a Jewish school was founded at Rome. In the reign of Claudius, the Jews became objects of suspicion from their immense

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numbers; and the internal disputes, consequent perhaps upon the preaching of Christianity, led to their banishment from the city.⁶ This expulsion, if general, can only have been temporary, for in a few years the Jews at Rome were numerous,⁷ and continued to be sufficiently conspicuous to attract the attention of the satirists.

7. Influence of the Jewish Dispersion upon Christianity.

The influence of the Dispersion on the rapid promulgation of Christianity can scarcely be overrated. The course of the apostolic preaching followed in a regular progress the line of the Jewish settlements. The mixed assembly from which the first converts were gathered on the day of Pentecost represented each division of the Dispersion;⁸ (1) Parthians . . . Mesopotamia; (2) Judæa (i.e. Syria) . . . Pamphylia; (3) Egypt . . . Greece; (4) Romans . . . ; and these converts naturally prepared the way for the apostles in the interval which preceded the beginning of the separate apostolic missions. The names of the seven deacons are all Greek, and one is specially described as a proselyte.⁹ The church at Antioch, by which St. Paul was entrusted with his great work among the heathen,¹⁰ included Barnabas of Cyprus, Lucius of Cyrene, and Simon surnamed Niger; and among his "fellow-laborers" at a later time are found Aquila of Pontus,¹¹ Apollos of Alexandria, and Urbanus, and Clement, whose names, at least, are Roman. Antioch itself became a centre of the Christian Church, as it had been of the Jewish Dispersion; and throughout the apostolic journeys the Jews were the class

6. Acts 18:2.

7. Acts 28:17 ff.

8. Acts 2:9-11.

9. Acts 6:5.

10. Acts 13:1.

11. Acts 18:2.

to whom "it was necessary that the Word of God should be first spoken,"¹² and they in turn were united with the mass of the population by the intermediate body of "the devout," which had recognized in various degrees "the faith of the God of Israel."

(For questions about the Dispersion of the Jews, see numbers 9-19, page 886.)

C. THE PROSELYTES.

1. Willing converts to the Jewish faith.
2. Dark side of proselytism.
3. Proselytes of the gate.
4. Proselytes of Righteousness; their baptism.

1. *Willing converts to the Jewish faith.*

The *proselytes* were people of various nationalities who became converts to the Jewish faith, willingly, for the most part. With the conquests of Alexander, the wars between Egypt and Syria, the struggle under the Maccabees, the expansion of the Roman empire, the Jews became more widely known, and their power to proselytize increased. The influence was sometimes obtained well, and exercised for good. In most of the great cities of the empire there were men who had been rescued from idolatry and its attendant debasements, and brought under the power of a higher moral law. The converts who were thus attracted joined, with varying strictness, in the worship of the Jews. They were present in their synagogues;¹ they came up as pilgrims to the great feasts at Jerusalem.² In Palestine itself the influence was often stronger and better. Even Roman centurions learned to love the conquered nation, built synagogues for them,³ fasted and prayed, and gave alms, after the pattern of the strictest Jews,⁴ and became preachers of

12. Acts 13:46.

1. Acts 13:42-43, 50; 17:4; 18:7.

2. Acts 2:10.

3. Luke 7:5.

4. Acts 10:2, 30.

THE JEWS AND PROSELYTES

the new faith to the soldiers under them.⁵ Such men, drawn by what was best in Judaism, were naturally among the readiest receivers of the new truth which rose out of it, and became, in many cases, the nucleus of a Gentile church.

2. *Dark side of proselytism.*

Proselytism had, however, its darker side. The Jews of Palestine were eager to spread their faith by the same weapons as those with which they had defended it. Had not the power of the Empire stood in the way, the religion of Moses, stripped of its higher elements, might have been propagated far and wide by force, as was afterward the religion of Mahomet. As it was, the Idumæans had the alternative offered by John Hyrcanus of death, exile, or circumcision⁶ The Ituræans were converted in the same way by Aristobulus.⁷ Where force was not in their power, they obtained their ends by the most unscrupulous fraud. They appeared as soothsayers, diviners, exorcists; and addressed themselves especially to the fears and superstitions of women. Their influence over these became the subject of indignant satire.⁸ Those who were most active in proselytizing were precisely those from whose teaching all that was most true and living had departed. The vices of the Jew were engrafted on the vices of the heathen. A repulsive casuistry released the convert from obligations which he had before recognized,⁹ while in other things he was bound, hand and foot, to an unhealthy superstition. It was no wonder that he became "twofold more the child of hell"¹⁰ than the Pharisees themselves.

5. Acts 10:7.

6. Josephus, *Ant.*, xiii, 9, 3.

7. *Ant.* xiii, 11, 3.

8. Juvenal, *Satire*, vi, 543-547.

9. See law of Corban, Matt. 15:4-6.

10. Matt. 23:15.

The position of such proselytes was indeed every way pitiable. At Rome, and in other large cities, they became the butts of popular scurrility. Among the Jews themselves their case was not much better. For the most part the convert gained but little honor, even from those who gloried in having brought him over to their sect and party. (Comp. Gal. 4:17.)

3. *Proselytes of the Gate.*

We find in the Talmud a distinction between Proselytes of the Gate and Proselytes of Righteousness.

The term *Proselytes of the Gate* was derived from the frequently occurring description in the Law, "the stranger that is within thy gates."¹¹ Converts of this class were not bound by circumcision and the other special laws of the Mosaic code. It was enough for them to observe the seven precepts of Noah—*i.e.*, the six supposed to have been given to Adam, (1) against idolatry, (2) against blaspheming, (3) against bloodshed, (4) against uncleanness, (5) against theft, (6) of obedience, with (7) the prohibition of "with the blood thereof" given to Noah. The proselyte was not to claim the privileges of an Israelite, might not redeem his first-born, or pay the half-shekel. He was forbidden to study the Law under pain of death. The later Rabbis insisted that the profession of his faith should be made solemnly in the presence of three witnesses. The Jubilee was the proper season for his admission. All this seems so full and precise that it has led many writers to look on it as representing a reality; and most commentators accordingly have seen these Proselytes of the Gate in the "Religious proselytes," "the devout persons," "devout men," of the Acts.¹² It remains doubtful, however, whether it was ever more than a paper scheme of what ought to be,

11. Ex. 20:10; etc.

12. Acts 13:43; 17:4, 17; 2:5.

disguising itself as having actually been. All that can be said is, that in the time of the N. T. we have some evidence of the existence of converts of two degrees, and that the Talmudic division is the formal systematizing of an earlier fact.

4. *Proselytes of Righteousness; their baptism.*

The *Proselytes of Righteousness*, known also as *Proselytes of the Covenant*, were perfect Israelites. We learn from the Talmud that, in addition to circumcision, baptism was also required to complete their admission to the faith. The proselyte was placed in a tank or pool, up to his neck in water. His teachers, who now acted as his sponsors, repeated the great commandments of the Law. These he promised and vowed to keep, and then, with an accompanying benediction, he plunged under the water. To leave one hand-breadth of his body unsubmerged would have vitiated the whole rite. The Rabbis carried back the origin of the baptism to a remote antiquity, finding it in the command of Jacob¹³ and of Moses.¹⁴ The Targum of the Pseudo-Jonathan inserts the word "Thou shalt circumcise and baptize" in Ex. xii 44. Even in the Ethiopic version of Matt. xxiii. 15, we find "compass sea and land to baptize one proselyte." The baptism was followed, as long as the Temple stood, by the offering or Corban.

It is obvious that this account suggests many questions of grave interest. Was this ritual observed as early as the commencement of the first century? If so, was the baptism of John, or that of the Christian Church, in any way derived from, or connected with, the baptism of proselytes? If not, was the latter in any way borrowed from the former?

13. Gen. 35:2.

14. Ex. 19:10.

NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

The Dead Sea colony at Qumran (where the Dead Sea Scrolls were written) practiced a type of baptism. Their washing was not an initiatory rite (like Christian baptism), but was rather reserved for those already in their community.¹⁵ Their practice was an immersion of the entire person.

The N. T. teaching on baptism did not, therefore, deal with a subject unfamiliar to the Jews. It was already a meaningful act in their religion. The question of the priests and Levites to John the baptizer, "Why baptizest thou then?" (John 1:25) implies that they wondered, not at the act itself, but that it was done by one who disclaimed any authority, or any title such as Messiah or "Elijah," which might have justified his introduction of a new dispensation.

(For questions on the Proselytes, see numbers 20-24, page 886.)

D. JEWISH RELIGIOUS WRITINGS.

1. The Hebrew Canon.
 - a. Number of books.
 - b. Books in the Hebrew canon.
 - c. Acceptance of the books as canon.
 - d. Evidence of the close of the canon.
 - e. Critical ideas about the canon.
2. The Talmud: Mishna and Gemara.
3. The Targums.
4. The Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint.
5. The Apocrypha (or Deuterocanonical books); Brief accounts of the various books of the Apocrypha.
6. The Pseudepigrapha.

15. Wm. S. LaSor, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith* (Chicago: Moody, 1969), p. 79.

THE JEWISH SACRED BOOKS

1. *The Hebrew Canon*'.

The study of the O.T. canon rightly belongs to O.T. History, before 420 B.C., rather than to the period after the end of O.T. history. The reason for this is that the last O.T. books, Malachi and Chronicles, seem to have been completed very shortly after the last events of O.T. history were completed.

a. *Number of books.*

The Jews had many religious books, but only 22 of these were regarded as "defiling the hands," that is, they were so sacred that the hands of those who handled them became too holy to permit of handling lesser books at the same time. The N.T. speaks of such books as "inspired of God," that is, "breathed of God" (II Tim. 3:16). They are the collection which Jesus referred to as "the scriptures" (Matt. 22:29).

b. *Books of the Hebrew canon.*

The Hebrew arrangement and groupings of their sacred books differ somewhat from the English O.T., although the Hebrew authorities differ among themselves sufficiently about this to indicate that the arrangement of the books is not a matter of particular significance or divine revelation. Generally, but not always, the Hebrew scriptures are arranged in this order:

(1) The Torah, or law: 5 books, Gen. through Deut.

1. The word *canon* comes from the Hebrew *kaneh*, modified into Greek as *kanon*, and originally meant a measuring stick or measuring reed. (See Ezekiel 40:3). From this meaning its applications were extended to mean any type of law or principle which was a standard to be measured up to, in science, morals, etc. Then its meaning was further extended to become the title of the books or writings which thus functioned as the standard for measurement. In its present use the word *canon* simply means "those books regarded as divinely revealed scripture."

NEW TESTAMENT BACKGROUNDS

- (2) The Prophets, or *Nevi'im*
 - (a) The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, I & II Samuel; I & II Kings
 - (b) The Latter Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve (Hosea through Malachi, counted as one scroll)
- (3) The Writings, or *Kethubim* (called in Greek *Hagiographa*, or Holy Writings)
 - (a) Psalms, Proverbs, Job
 - (b) The Five Megilloth, or rolls: Song, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther (all in one scroll)
 - (c) Daniel
 - (d) Ezra-Nehemiah (regarded as one scroll)
 - (e) Chronicles (both in one scroll)

The arrangement and groupings of the O.T. books in our English Bibles differs from the Hebrew arrangement, in that it follows the order as given in the Greek Septuagint O.T., as altered slightly through the Latin Vulgate. As stated above, the order of the books does not appear to be a matter of divine revelation.

c. Acceptance of the books as canon.

It appears that these writings were generally accepted by the God-fearing people as soon as they were produced, as the authoritative utterances of divinely qualified prophets. The disobedient people neither accepted them at the time of their production, nor have they at any time since. Note that Moses' writings were at once accepted (Ex. 24:7). Also note that the God-fearing people at once accepted Jeremiah's writings, while the ungodly rejected them (Jer. 36:15-16, 23-24). There was no necessity for a long period for canonization to transpire; nor did any decision by any council or group either make a book to be "inspired"

THE JEWISH SACRED BOOKS

or prevent its being so accepted. Canonization was therefore for all practical purposes simultaneous with production. Books written by verified prophets were received upon the authority of their authors.

The final formal acceptance of the O.T. canon was not actually done until the Council at Jamnia in A.D. 90, when the Jewish Rabbis met together to give official endorsement and enforcement to the books in their canon. This council rejected the Septuagint version, the Apocrypha, and all Christian writings. It authorized production of a new Greek Bible (Aquila's version). This council was convened to combat the growing influence of Christian teaching among the Jews. The Christians had generally been using the Jews' own Septuagint Bible to prove Christian teachings. This led the Jews to condemn their own Greek Bible.

In giving legal endorsement to the books of the Hebrew canon, the rabbis at the Council of Jamnia did not cause the books to become canon; they only gave legal force to the recognition of the books that had already for centuries been accepted as the word of the Lord by multitudes of believing Israelites.

d. Evidence of the close of the canon

In spite of modern critical opinions to the contrary (see below), all the real evidence we have indicates that the books we call the O.T. canon were all completed and accepted by the time of Ezra, about 420 B.C.

Josephus, the Jewish historian of about A.D. 80 writes:

We have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing and contradicting one another (as the Greeks have,) but only twenty-two books. . . . It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes [I, king of Persia, 465-

424 B.C.], but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; and how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as we have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them. (*Against Apion*, I, 8)

The Jewish Talmud (*Baba Bathra* 14b-15a) declares that Moses wrote his own book and the portion of Balaam and Job. Joshua wrote the book which bears his name and the (the last) eight verses of the Pentateuch. Samuel wrote the book which bears his name and the Book of Judges and Ruth . . . The men of the Great Synagogue wrote Ezekiel, the Twelve Minor Prophets, Daniel, and the Scroll of Esther. Ezra wrote the book that bears his name, and the genealogies of the Book of Chronicles up to his own time.

The Jewish Apocryphal book *Ecclesiasticus* (written about 180 B.C. and translated into Greek about 130 B.C.) refers in its prologue to the "law, and the prophets, and the other books of our fathers." This seems to refer to the three-part division of the Hebrew scriptures (Torah, *Nevi'im*, *Kethubim*) that modern Hebrew Bibles follow. Although 130 B.C. is not as far back as the time of Ezra, it is still much earlier than many modern critical authors are willing to date the completion of the Hebrew canon.

e. *Critical ideas about the canon*

The prevailing-modern critical view is that the five books of Moses were first partly written down about 1000 B.C., and then not fully completed and canonized till after

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the Babylonian captivity, about 450 B.C., nearly 1000 years after Moses! The "prophets" were supposedly not completed nor accepted as canon until about 250 B.C., and the "writings" were not made canon until about 90 A.D.! Jonah is dated anywhere from 400 to 250 B.C. Ecclesiastes and Daniel are dated about 165 B.C. Esther is dated about 125 B.C. These opinions are without any substantial evidence for them, and were formulated as a result of an evolutionary concept of the development of religion, and a skeptical attitude toward the existence of all predictive prophecy. Since the O.T. contains many clear predictions of such events as the conquest of Alexander and the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes (168 B.C.), and since critics doubt the existence of predictive prophecy, they naturally have attempted to date books containing such prophecies after the events they tell of. We prefer to believe the testimony of the Lord Jesus, who accepted the reality of prophetic predictive scripture on many occasions (for example see Luke 24:27).

It has been alleged that the Dead Sea colony at Qumran was not acquainted with any concept of "canon" in their time (150 B.C.-A.D. 68), because they had in their libraries MANY other books besides those of our commonly accepted canon. This does not prove that they had no idea of canon, any more than the fact that in Christian libraries there are many books besides the basic Bible books proves that they have no idea of canon. Actually the Qumran people did show a special reverence for the law and the prophets far beyond that paid to other books. The fact that at least five scrolls or parts of scrolls of Isaiah were found at Qumran shows the stress given to this prophet.

The opening statement in their *Manual of Discipline* states that everyone who wishes to join the community must pledge . . . to do what is good and upright in His

sight, in accordance with what He has commanded through Moses, and through His servants the prophets (i. 1-2). This sounds as though Moses and the prophets (comp. Luke 16:29) were canon at Qumran, rather than their multitudinous other books. Admittedly the issue of canon was not as live an issue among the Qumran covenanters as it became among the Jews a century later; but they nonetheless seem to have had about the same views of scripture canon as other Jews.

2. *The Talmud: Mishna and Gemara.*

The *Talmud* is one of the two important branches of Jewish literature (the other being the *Targums*) which began to develop after the return from Babylonian captivity.

The *Mishna*, or the "second law," which forms the first portion of the Talmud, is a digest of the Jewish traditions, and a compendium of the whole ritual law, and represents the traditions which were current among the Jews at the time of Christ. The Talmud seems to have been put into final written form in the second through fifth centuries after Christ.

The Mishna was very concisely written, and requires notes. This circumstance led to the Commentaries called *Gemara*¹ (i.e., Supplement, Completion), which form the second part of the Talmud, and which are very commonly meant when the word "Talmud" is used by itself. The language of the Mishna is that of the later Hebrew, purely written on the whole, though with a few grammatical Aramaisms, and interspersed with Greek, Latin and Aramaic words which had become naturalized. The Mishna contains the *oral tradition*, which at length came to be esteemed far above the sacred text. It was the fundamental prin-

1. There are two gemaras; one of Jerusalem, in which there is said to be no passage which can be proved to be later than the first half of the 4th century; and the other of Babylon, completed about 500 A.D. The latter is the most important, and by far the longest.

ciple of the Pharisees that by the side of the written law there was an oral law to complete and to explain the written law. It was an article of faith that in the Pentateuch there was no precept, and no regulation, ceremonial, doctrinal, or legal, of which God had not given to Moses all explanations necessary for their application, with the order to transmit by word of mouth. The classical passage in the Mishna on this subject is the following:—"Moses received the (oral) law from Sinai, and delivered to it Joshua, and Joshua to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue."

3. *The Targums.*

The Jews, on the return from captivity, no longer spoke the Hebrew language; and as the common people had lost all knowledge of the tongue in which the sacred books were written, it naturally followed that recourse must be had to a translation into the idiom with which they were familiar—Aramaic, formerly miscalled Chaldee. Moreover, since a bare translation could not in all cases suffice, it was necessary to add to the translation an explanation, or paraphrase, particularly of the more difficult and obscure passages. Both translation and paraphrase were designated by the term *Targum* which means "interpretation." The Targums were originally oral, and the earliest Targum, which is that of Onkelos (or Aquila) on the Pentateuch, began to be committed to memory about the 2d century of the Christian era; though it did not assume its present shape till the end of the 3d, or the beginning of the 4th century. It is written in the Aramaic dialect, closely approaching in purity of idiom to that of Ezra and Daniel. It follows a sober and clear, though not a slavish exegesis, and keeps as closely and minutely to the text as is at all consistent with its purpose, viz., to be chiefly, and above all, a *version for the people*. Its ex-

planations of difficult and obscure passages bear ample witness to the competence of those who gave it its final shape. It avoids the legendary character with which all the later Targums entwine the Biblical word, as far as ever circumstance would allow.

A Targum on the prophets (Joshua to Kings, Isaiah to Malachi) was produced in Babylon in the fourth century A.D., and is called the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel. It is not as reliable as is the Targum of Onkelos.

4. *The Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint.*

THE SEPTUAGINT or Greek version of the Old Testament owed its origin to the same cause as the Targums. The Jews of Alexandria had probably still less knowledge of Hebrew than their brethren in Palestine; their familiar language was Alexandrian Greek. They had settled in Alexandria in large numbers soon after the time of Alexander, and under the early Ptolemies. They would naturally follow the same practice as the Jews in Palestine; and hence would arise in time an entire Greek version. But the numbers and names of the translators and the times at which different portions were translated are all uncertain. The common received story respecting its origin is contained in an extant letter ascribed to Aristeas who was an officer at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus. This letter, which is addressed by Aristeas to his brother, Philocrates, gives a splendid account of the origin of the Septuagint; of the embassy and presents sent by King Ptolemy to the high-priest at Jerusalem, by the advice of Demetrius Phalereus, his librarian, 50 talents of gold and 70 talents of silver, etc.; the Jewish slaves whom he set free, paying their ransom himself; the letter of the king; the answer of the high-priest; the choosing of six interpreters from each of the twelve tribes, and their names; the copy of the Law, in letters of gold; the feast prepared for the seventy-two, which continued

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for seven days; the questions proposed to each of the interpreters in turn, with the answers of each; their lodging by the sea-shore; and the accomplishment of their work in seventy-two days by conference and comparison. This is the story which probably gave to the Version the title of the Septuagint and which has been repeated in various forms by the Christian writers. But it is now generally admitted that the letter is spurious, and is probably the fabrication of an Alexandrian Jew shortly before the Christian era. Still there can be no doubt that there was a basis of fact for the fiction: on three points of the story there is no material difference of opinion, and they are confirmed by the study of the Version itself:—1. The Version was made at Alexandria. 2. It was begun in the time of the earlier Ptolemies, about 280 B.C. 3. The Law (*i.e.*, the Pentateuch) alone was translated at first.

The name *Septuagint* means "The Seventy," referring to the 70 supposed translators. It is commonly abbreviated as LXX.

The Septuagint version was highly esteemed by the Hellenistic Jews before the coming of Christ. The manner in which it is quoted by the writers of the New Testament proves that it had been long in general use. Wherever, by the conquests of Alexander, or by colonization, the Greek language prevailed; wherever Jews were settled, and the attention of the neighboring Gentiles was drawn to their wondrous history and law, there was found the Septuagint, which thus became, by Divine Providence, the means of spreading widely the knowledge of the One True God, and his promises of a Saviour to come, throughout the nations. To the wide dispersion of this version we may ascribe in great measure that general persuasion of the near approach of the Redeemer which prevailed over the whole East, and led the Magi to recognize the star which proclaimed the birth of the King of the Jews.

Not less wide was the influence of the Septuagint in the spread of the Gospel. Many of those Jews who were assembled at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, from Asia Minor, from Africa, from Crete and Rome, used the Greek language; the testimonies to Christ from the Law and the Prophets came to them in the words of the Septuagint; St. Stephen probably quoted from it in his address to the Jews; the Ethiopian eunuch was reading the Septuagint version of Isaiah in his chariot; they who were scattered abroad went forth into many lands, speaking of Christ in Greek, and pointing to the things written of him in the Greek version of Moses and the Prophets; from Antioch and Alexandria in the East, to Rome and Massilia in the West, the voice of the Gospel sounded forth in Greek; Clement of Rome, Ignatius at Antioch, Justin Martyr in Palestine, Irenæus at Lyons, and many more, taught and wrote in the words of the Greek Scriptures; and a still wider range was given to them by the Latin version (or versions) made from the LXX for the use of the Latin Churches in Italy and Africa; and in later times by the numerous other versions into the tongues of Egypt, Ethiopia, Armenia, Arabia, and Georgia. For a long period the Septuagint was the Old Testament of the far larger part of the Christian Church.

The LXX differs in the order of the books from the Hebrew Bible. (Its order is similar to that of our English Bible, which was derived from the LXX through the Latin Vulgate Bible, which is a translation of the LXX.) The LXX includes several of the apocryphal books. Throughout it has numerous small variant textual readings from the Hebrew Bible. In a few books (e.g., Exodus, Jeremiah, Samuel) the LXX has many chapters that differ greatly from the Hebrew.

Numerous manuscripts from the Dead Sea scrolls have shown that some of the textual variants of the LXX also

existed in some Hebrew manuscripts. This has caused a greater respect for the LXX, and some minor corrections of the O.T. text may be made in the light of these discoveries. However, these variations are not sufficient to make our standard Hebrew Bibles untrustworthy. In the vast majority of verses the readings of the Greek and Hebrew Bibles are practically identical, and in some places the LXX itself is obviously in error.

5. *The Apocrypha (or Deutero-canonical books)*

a. THE APOCRYPHA. The collection of Books to which this term is popularly applied includes the following. The order given is that in which they stand in the English version. I. 1 Esdras. II. 2 Esdras. III. Tobit. IV. Judith. V. The rest of the chapters of the Book of Esther, which are found neither in the Hebrew nor in the Aramaic. VI. The Wisdom of Solomon. VII. The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus. VIII. Baruch. IX. The Song of the Three Holy Children. X. The History of Susanna. XI. The History of the destruction of Bel and the Dragon. XII. The Prayer of Manasseh, king of Judah. XIII. 1 Maccabees. XIV. 2 Maccabees.

The primary meaning of *Apocrypha*, "hidden, secret," seems, toward the close of the 2d century, to have been associated with the signification "spurious," and ultimately to have settled down into the latter. The conjectural explanation given in the translation of the English Bible, "because they were wont to be read not openly and in common, but as it were in secret and apart," is, as regards some of the books now bearing the name, at variance with fact. The term *Deutero-canonical* is often applied to these books. This term means "belonging to the second (and presumably inferior) canon."

It was almost a matter of course that these secret books should be pseudonymous, ascribed to the great names in

Jewish or heathen history that had become associated with the reputation of a mysterious wisdom. So books in the existing Apocrypha bear the names of Solomon, Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezra. These books represent the period of transition and decay which followed on the return from Babylon when the prophets who were then the teachers of the people had passed away and the age of scribes succeeded. Uncertain as may be the dates of individual books, few, if any, can be thrown further back than the commencement of the 3d century B.C. The latest, the 2d Book of Esdras, is probably not later than 30 B.C., 2 Esdr. vii. 28 being a subsequent interpolation. The alterations of the Jewish character, the different phases which Judaism presented in Palestine and Alexandria, the good and the evil which were called forth by contact with idolatry in Egypt, and by the struggle against it in Syria, all these present themselves to the reader of the Apocrypha with greater or less distinctness.

The following is a brief account of the separate books:

(1) *The First and Second Books of Esdras* are called in the Vulgate, and in all the earlier editions of the English Bible, the *third* and *fourth* books. In the Vulgate 1st Esdras means the canonical book of Ezra, and 2d Esdras means Nehemiah. (*Esdras* is a Greek form of Ezra.)

(a) *First Book of Esdras*.—The first chapter is a transcript of the two last chapters of 2 Chr., for the most part *verbatim*. Chapters iii., iv., and v., to the end of v. 6, are the *original* portions of the book, and the rest is a transcript more or less exact of the book of Ezra, with the chapters transposed and quite otherwise arranged, and a portion of Nehemiah. Hence a twofold design in the compiler is discernible: one to introduce and give Scriptural sanction to the legend about Zerubbabel; the other to explain the obscurities of the book of Ezra, in which however he has signally failed. The *original* portion of the book seems to

indicate that the writer was thoroughly conversant with Hebrew even if he did not write the book in the language.

(b) *The Second Book of Esdras* was originally called "the Apocalypse of Ezra," which is a far more appropriate title. The Greek text in which it was originally written is lost. The common Latin text, which is followed in the English version, contains two important interpolations (Ch. i. ii.; xv. xvi.) which are not found in the Arabic and Aethiopic versions, and are separated from the genuine Apocalypse in the best Latin MSS. Both of these passages are evidently of Christian origin. The original Apocalypse (iii.-xiv.) consists of a series of angelic revelations and visions, in which Ezra is instructed in some of the great mysteries of the moral world, and assured of the final triumph of the righteous.

(2) *Tobit*.—The scene of this book is placed in Assyria, whither Tobit, a Jew, had been carried as a captive by Shalmaneser. But it must have been written considerably later than the Babylonian captivity, and can not be regarded as a true history. It is a didactic narrative; and its point lies in the moral lessons which it conveys, and not in the narrative. In modern times the moral excellence of the book has been rated highly, except in the heat of controversy. Luther pronounced it, if only a fiction, yet "a truly beautiful, wholesome, and profitable fiction, the work of a gifted poet. . . . A book useful for Christian reading." Nowhere else is there preserved so complete and beautiful a picture of the domestic life of the Jews after the Return.

(3) *Judith*.—This book, like that of Tobit, belongs to the earliest specimens of historical fiction. The narrative of the reign of "Nebuchadnezzar king of Nineveh" (i.1), of the campaign of Holofernes, and the deliverance of Bethulia, through the stratagem and courage of the Jewish heroine, contains too many and too serious difficulties, both historical and geographical, to allow of the

supposition that it is either literally true, or even carefully moulded on truth. But the value of the book is not lessened by its fictitious character. On the contrary it becomes even more valuable as exhibiting an ideal type of heroism, which was outwardly embodied in the wars of independence. The self-sacrificing faith and unscrupulous bravery of Judith were the qualities by which the champions of Jewish freedom were then enabled to overcome the power of Syria, which seemed at the time scarcely less formidable than the imaginary hosts of Holofernes. The peculiar character of the book, which is exhibited in these traits, affords the best indication of its date; for it can not be wrong to refer its origin to the Maccabæan period, which it reflects not only in its general spirit but even in smaller traits.

(4) *The Rest of Esther*—

These six "Additions," totalling 107 verses, consist of passages which were inserted throughout and after the canonical book of Esther in the LXX. They consist of visions, letters, prayers, etc. designed to show the hand of God in the narrative. While the book itself never mentions God's name, the "Additions" mention God many times. Bruce Metzger thinks that these additions were first inserted into Esther about 114 B.C.

(5) *The Wisdom of Solomon*.—This book may be divided into two parts, the first (ch. i.-ix.) containing the doctrine of Wisdom in its moral and intellectual aspects; the second, the doctrine of Wisdom as shown in history (ch. x.-xix.). The first part contains the praise of Wisdom as the source of immortality, in contrast with the teaching of sensualists; and next the praise of Wisdom as the guide of practical and intellectual life, the stay of princes, and the interpreter of the universe. The second part, again, follows the action of Wisdom summarily, as preserving God's servants, from Adam to Moses, and more

particularly in the punishment of the Egyptians and Canaanites (xi. 5-16; xi. 17-xii.). From internal evidence it seems most reasonable to believe that the book was composed at Alexandria some time before the time of Philo (about 120-80 B.C.).

(6) *The Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach*, or *Ecclesiasticus*.—The former is the title of this book in the Septuagint, the latter in the Vulgate, the name "Ecclesiasticus" indicating that the book was publicly used in the service of the Church. Of its author, Jesus (*i.e.*, Jeshua or Joshua), the son of Sirach, "of Jerusalem," we know absolutely nothing; but his Palestinian origin is substantiated by internal evidence. The language in which the book was originally composed was Hebrew, that is, probably, the vernacular Aramæan dialect. It was translated into Greek by the grandson of the author, in Egypt "in the reign of Euergetes," for the instruction of those "in a strange country who were previously prepared to live after the law." It is an important monument of the religious state of the Jews at the period of its composition. As an expression of Palestinian theology it stands alone; for there is no sufficient reason for assuming Alexandrine interpolations or direct Alexandrine influence. The conception of God as Creator, Preserver, and Governor, is strictly conformable to the old Mosaic type; but at the same time his mercy is extended to all mankind. Little stress is laid upon the spirit-world, either good or evil; and the doctrine of a resurrection fades away. In addition to the general hope of restoration, one trait only of a Messianic faith is preserved, in which the writer contemplates the future work of Elias. The ethical precepts are addressed to the middle class. The praise of agriculture and medicine and the constant exhortations to cheerfulness, seem to speak of a time when men's thoughts were turned inward with feelings of despondency and perhaps of fatalism. At least the book marks the growth of

that anxious legalism which was conspicuous in the sayings of the later doctors. Life is already imprisoned in rules; religion is degenerating into ritualism: knowledge has taken refuge in schools.

(7) *Baruch*.—This book is remarkable as the only one in the Apocrypha which is formed on the model of the Prophets; and though it is wanting in originality, it presents a vivid reflection of the ancient prophetic fire. The assumed author is undoubtedly the companion of Jeremiah, but the details of the book are inconsistent with the assumption. It exhibits not only historical inaccuracies, but also evident traces of a later date than the beginning of the captivity. The date of its composition is probably about the time of the war of liberation (B.C. 160), or somewhat earlier.

(8) *The Song of the Three Children, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon*, are brief additions to the canonical book of Daniel.

(9) *The Prayer of Manasses, king of Judah*.—The repentance and restoration of Manasseh¹ furnished the subject of many legendary stories. "His prayer unto his God" was still preserved "in the book of the kings of Israel" when the Chronicles were compiled, and, after this record was lost, the subject was likely to attract the notice of later writers. "The Prayer" in the Apocrypha is the work of one who has endeavored to express, not without true feeling, the thoughts of the repentant king. The writer was well acquainted with the LXX.; but beyond this there is nothing to determine the date at which he lived. The clear teaching on repentance points to a time certainly not long before the Christian era. There is no indication of the place at which the Prayer was written.

(10) *The First and Second Books of Maccabees*.—(a) *The First Book of Maccabees* contains a history of the

1. II Chron. 33:12 ff.

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patriotic struggle, from the first resistance of Mattathias, to the settled sovereignty and death of Simon, a period of thirty-three years (B.C. 168-135). The opening chapter gives a short summary of the conquests of Alexander the Great, and describes at greater length the oppression of Antiochus Epiphanes. The great subject of the book begins with the enumeration of the Maccabæan family (ii. 1-5), which is followed by an account of the part which the aged Mattathias took in rousing and guiding the spirit of his countrymen (ii. 6-70). The remainder of the narrative is occupied with the exploits of his five sons. Each of the three divisions, into which the main portion of the book thus naturally falls, is stamped with an individual character derived from its special hero. The great marks of trustworthiness are everywhere conspicuous. Victory and failure and despondency are, on the whole, chronicled with the same candor. There is no attempt to bring into open display the working of Providence. The testimony of antiquity leaves no doubt but that the book was first written in Hebrew. Its whole structure points to Palestine as the place of its composition. There is, however, considerable doubt as to its date. Perhaps we may place it between B.C. 120-100. The date and person of the Greek translator are wholly undetermined.

(b) *The Second Book of Maccabees*.—The history of the Second Book of the Maccabees begins some years earlier than that of the First Book, and closes with the victory of Judas Maccabæus over Nicanor. It thus embraces a period of twenty years, from B.C. 180(?) to B.C. 161. For the few events noticed during the earlier years it is our chief authority; during the remainder of the time the narrative goes over the same ground as 1 Macc., but with very considerable differences. The first two chapters are taken up by two letters supposed to be addressed by the Palestinian to the Alexandrine Jews, and by a sketch of the author's

plan, which proceeds without any perceptible break from the close of the second letter. The main narrative occupies the remainder of the book. This presents several natural divisions, which appear to coincide with the 'five books' of Jason on which it was based. The first (c. iii.) contains the history of Heliodorus (cir. B.C. 180). The second (iv.-vii.) gives varied details of the beginning and course of the great persecution (B.C. 175-167). The third (viii.-x. 9) follows the fortunes of Judas to the triumphant restoration of the Temple service (B.C. 166, 165). The fourth (x. 10-xiii.) includes the reign of Antiochus Eupator (B.C. 164-162). The fifth (xiv., xv.) records the treachery of Alcimus, the mission of Nicanor, and the crowning success of Judas (B.C. 162, 161). The writer himself distinctly indicates the source of his narrative—"the five books of Jason of Cyrene" (ii. 23), of which he designed to furnish a short and agreeable epitome for the benefit of those who would be deterred from studying the larger work. His own labor, which he describes in strong terms (ii. 26, 27; comp. xv. 38, 39), was entirely confined to condensation and selection; all investigation of detail he declares to be the peculiar duty of the original historian. Of Jason himself nothing more is known than may be gleaned from this mention of him. The district of Cyrene was most closely united with that of Alexandria. In both the predominance of Greek literature and the Greek language was absolute. The work of Jason must therefore have been composed in Greek; and the style of the epitome proves beyond doubt that the Greek text is the original. It is scarcely less certain that the book was compiled at Alexandria.

The Second Book of Maccabees is not nearly so trustworthy as the First. In the Second Book the groundwork of facts is true, but the dress in which the facts are presented is due in part at least to the narrator. It is not at all improbable that the error with regard to the first cam-

paign of Lysias arose from the mode in which it was introduced by Jason as a prelude to the more important measures of Lysias in the reign of Antiochus Eupator. In other places (as very obviously in xiii. 19 ff.) the compiler may have disregarded the historical dependence of events, while selecting those which were best suited for the support of his theme. The latter half of the book (cc. viii.-xv.) is to be regarded, not as a connected and complete history, but as a series of special incidents from the life of Judas, illustrating the providential interference of God in behalf of His people, true in substance, but embellished in form.

There are two other books of the Maccabees, entitled the *Third* and the *Fourth*, not included in the English Apocrypha. *The Third Book of the Maccabees* contains the history of events which preceded the great Maccabæan struggle. *The Fourth Book of Maccabees* contains a rhetorical narrative of the martyrdom of Eleazar and of the "Maccabæan family," following in the main the same outline as 2 Macc.

6. *The Pseudepigrapha.*

By *Pseudepigrapha* we refer to a group of Jewish books which have never been considered as of equal authority even with the Apocrypha. The title *Pseudepigrapha* literally means "false writings." They are, for the most part, ascribed to such ancient heroes as Enoch, Solomon, Baruch, Ezra, etc., even though by nearly unanimous consent they were written centuries after these men died, during the period approximately 150 B.C. to A.D. 200. Many refer to these books as the *Apocrypha*. In that case they refer to what we have called Apocrypha as the Deutero-canonical books.

Books included in the *Pseudepigrapha* are: (1) *The Book of Jubilees* (legendary additions to Genesis, c. 125 B.C.); (2) *Letter of Aristeas* (giving the legendary story of

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the production of the LXX); (3) *Books of Adam & Eve* (First to Fourth centuries A.D.); (4) *Martyrdom of Isaiah*; (5) *I Enoch* (First and Second centuries B.C.); (6) *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*; (7) *Sibylline Oracles*; (8) *Assumption of Moses*; (9) *II Enoch*; (10) *II Baruch*; (11) *III Baruch*; (12) *IV Esdras*; (13) *Psalms of Solomon*; (14) *Fourth Maccabees*; (15) *The Damascus Document*.

(For questions on the Jewish Religious writings, see numbers 25-51, page 886-887.)

E. THE SYNAGOGUES.

1. Importance of the synagogues.
2. History of the synagogues.
3. Influence of the synagogues.
4. Size and structure of synagogues.
5. Internal arrangement of synagogues.
6. Synagogue officers similar to those of Christian churches.
7. Synagogue ritual largely followed by Christian churches.
8. Judicial functions of synagogues and churches.

1. *Importance of the synagogues.*

The word *synagogue*, which means a "congregation," or "assembly," is used in the New Testament to signify a recognized place of worship. A knowledge of the history and worship of the synagogues is of importance to the student, since they are great characteristic institutions of the later phase of Judaism. More even than the Temple and its services, in the time of which the New Testament treats, they at once represented and determined the religious life of the people. We can not separate them from the most intimate connection with our Lord's life and ministry. In them he worshiped in his youth, and in his manhood. Whatever we can learn of the ritual which then prevailed

tells us of a worship which he recognized and sanctioned; which for that reason, if for no other, though, like the statelier services of the Temple, it was destined to pass away, is worthy of our respect and honor. They were the scenes, too, of no small portion of his work. In them were wrought some of his mightiest works of healing.¹ In them were spoken some of the most glorious of his recorded words;² many more, beyond all reckoning, which are not recorded.

2. *History of the synagogues.*

We know too little of the life of Israel, both before and under the monarchy, to be able to say with certainty whether there was any thing at all corresponding to the synagogues of later date. They appear to have arisen during the exile, in the abeyance of the Temple worship, and to have received their full development on the return of the Jews from captivity. The whole history of Ezra presupposes the habit of solemn, probably of periodic meetings.³ The "ancient days" of which St. James speaks⁴ may, at least, go back so far. After the Maccabæan struggle for independence, we find almost every town or village had its one or more synagogues. Where the Jews were not in sufficient numbers to be able to erect and fill a building, there was the *Proseucha*, or place of prayer, sometimes opened, sometimes covered in, commonly by a running stream or on the sea-shore, in which devout Jews and proselytes met to worship, and, perhaps, to read (Acts 16:13).

3. *Influence of the synagogues.*

It is hardly possible to overestimate the influence of the system thus developed. To it we may ascribe the

1. Mark 1:23; et al.

2. Luke 4:16; et al.

3. Ezra 8:15; Neh. 8:2; 9:1; Zech. 7:5.

4. Acts 15:21.

tenacity with which after the Maccabæan struggle the Jews adhered to the religion of their fathers and never again relapsed into idolatry. The people were now in no danger of forgetting the Law and the external ordinances that hedged it round. If pilgrimages were still made to Jerusalem at the great feasts, the habitual religion of the Jews in, and yet more out of Palestine, was connected much more intimately with the synagogue than with the Temple. Its simple edifying devotion into which mind and heart could alike enter attracted the heathen proselytes who might have been repelled by the sacrifices of the Temple, or would certainly have been driven from it unless they could make up their minds to submit to circumcision.⁵ Here too there was an influence tending to diminish and ultimately almost to destroy the authority of the hereditary priesthood. The services of the synagogue required no sons of Aaron; gave them nothing more than a complimentary precedence. The way was silently prepared for a new and higher order which should rise in "the fullness of time" out of the decay and abolition of both the priesthood and the Temple. In another way, too, the synagogues everywhere prepared the way for that order. Not "Moses" only but "the Prophets" were read in them every Sabbath day and thus the Messianic hopes of Israel, the expectation of a kingdom of Heaven, were universally diffused.

4. *Size and structure of synagogues.*

The size of a synagogue, like that of a church or chapel, varied with the population. We have no reason for believing that there were any fixed laws of proportion for its dimensions like those which are traced in the Tabernacle and the Temple. Its position was, however, determinate. It stood, if possible, on the highest ground, in or near the

5. Acts 21:28.

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city to which it belonged. Failing this, a tall pole rose from the roof to render it conspicuous. And its direction too was fixed. Jerusalem was the focus of Jewish devotion; and the synagogue was so constructed that the worshipers as they entered and as they prayed looked toward it. The building was commonly erected at the cost of the district, whether by a church-rate levied for the purpose or by free gifts must remain uncertain. Sometimes it was built by a rich Jew, or even, as in Luke vii. 5, by a friendly proselyte. When the building was finished it was set apart as the Temple had been by a special prayer of dedication. From that time it had a consecrated character. The common acts of life, eating, drinking, reckoning up accounts, were forbidden in it. No one was to pass through it as a short cut. Even if it ceased to be used, the building was not to be applied to any base purpose—might not be turned, *e.g.* into a bath, a laundry, or tannery.

5. Internal arrangement of synagogues.

In the internal arrangement of the synagogue we trace an obvious analogy to the type of the Tabernacle. At the upper or Jerusalem end stood the Ark, the chest which like the older and more sacred Ark contained the Book of the Law. This part of the synagogue was naturally the place of honor. Here were the "chief seats," after which Pharisees and Scribes strove so eagerly,⁶ to which the wealthy and honored worshiper was invited.⁷ Here, too, in front of the Ark, still reproducing the type of the Tabernacle, was the eight-branched lamp, lighted only on the greater festivals. Besides this, there was one lamp kept burning perpetually. Others, brought by devout worshipers, were lighted at the beginning of the Sabbath, *i.e.*, on Friday evening. A little farther toward the middle of the building

6. Matt. 23:6.

7. James 2:2-3.

was a raised platform on which several persons could stand at once, and in the middle of this rose a pulpit in which the Reader stood to read the lesson or sat down to teach. The congregation were divided, men on one side, women on the other, a low partition five or six feet high running between them. Within the Ark, as above stated, were the rolls of the sacred books. The rollers round which they were wound were often elaborately decorated, the cases for them embroidered or enameled, according to their material. Such cases were customary offerings from the rich when they brought their infant children, on the first anniversary of their birthday, to be blessed by the Rabbi of the synagogue.⁸ As part of the fittings we have also to note (1.) another chest for the *Haphtaroth*, or rolls of the prophets. (2.) Alms-boxes at or near the door, after the pattern of those at the Temple, one for the poor of Jerusalem, the other for local charities.⁹ (3) Notice-boards, on which were written the names of offenders who had been "put out of the synagogue." (4) A chest for trumpets and other musical instruments, used at the New Years, Sabbaths, and other festivals.

6. *Synagogue officers similar to those of Christian churches.*

In smaller towns there was often but one Rabbi. Where a fuller organization was possible, there was a college of Elders,¹⁰ presided over by one who was *the ruler of the synagogue*.¹¹ To these elders belonged a variety of syn-

8. The custom, it may be noticed, connects itself with the memorable history of those who "brought young children" to Jesus that he should touch them (Mark 10:13).

9. If this practice existed, as is probable, in the first century, it throws light upon the special stress laid by St. Paul on the collection for the "poor saints" in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16, etc.). The Christian Churches were not to be behind the Jewish Synagogues in their contributions to the poor of Judea.

10. Gr. "Presbyters." Luke 7:8.

11. Luke 8:41, 49; Acts 18:8.

onyms, each with a special significance. They were *shepherds*¹² watching over their flock, *presidents*, as ruling over it.¹³ With their head, they formed a kind of Chapter, managed the affairs of the synagogue, and possessed the power of excommunicating.

The most prominent functionary in a large synagogue was known as the *Sbeliach* (*—legatus*), the officiating minister who acted as the *delegate* of the congregation, and was therefore the chief reader of prayers, etc., in their name. The conditions laid down for this office remind us of St. Paul's rule for the choice of a bishop. He was to be active, of full age, the father of a family, not rich or engaged in business, possessing a "good voice" apt to teach.¹⁴ In him we find, as the name might lead us to expect, the prototype of the "angel of the Church" of Rev. i, 20, ii, 1, etc.

The *Chazzan*, or *servant* of the synagogue,¹⁵ had duties of a lower kind resembling those of the Christian deacon. He was to open the door, to get the building ready for service. For him, too, there were conditions like those for the *legatus*. Like the *legatus* and the *elders*, he was appointed by the imposition of hands. Practically he often acted during the week as school-master of the town or village, and in this way came to gain a prominence which placed him nearly on the same level as the *legatus*.

Besides these, there were ten men attached to every synagogue, whose functions have been the subject-matter of voluminous controversy. They were known as the *Batlanim*, and no synagogue was complete without them. They were to be men of leisure, not obliged to labor for their livelihood, able, therefore, to attend the week-day as well as the Sabbath services. They were, probably, simply a body of men permanently on duty, making up a con-

12. Eph. 4:11.

13. I Tim. 5:17; Heb. 12:7.

14. Cf. I Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9.

15. Luke 4:20.

gregation (ten being the minimum number), so that there might be no delay in beginning the service at the proper hours, and that no single worshiper might go away disappointed.

It will be seen at once how closely the organization of the synagogue was reproduced in that of the Christian *Ecclesia*. Here, also, there was the single presbyter-bishop in small towns, a council of presbyters under one head in large cities. The *legatus* of the synagogue appears in the "angel"¹⁶ of the Christian Church. To the elders as such is given the name of Shepherds.¹⁷ They are known also as "leaders," or "those who have the rule over you" (Heb. 13:7).

7. *Synagogue ritual largely followed by Christian churches.*

The ritual of the synagogue was to a large extent an adaptation of the staterly liturgy of the Temple. It will be enough, in this place, to notice in what way the ritual, no less than the organization, was connected with the facts of the New Testament history, and with the life and order of the Christian Church. Here, too, we meet with multiplied coincidences. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say, that the worship of the Church was identical with that of the synagogue, modified (1) by the new truths, (2) by the new institution of the Supper of the Lord, (3) by the spiritual gifts (*charismata*).

From the synagogue came the use of fixed forms of prayer. To that the first disciples had been accustomed from their youth. They had asked their Master to give them a distinctive one, and he had complied with their request,¹⁸ as the Baptist had done before for his disciples,

16. Rev. 1:20; 2:1.

17. Eph. 4:11; I Pet. 5:1.

18. Luke 11:1.

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as every Rabbi did for his. The forms might be, and were abused; but for the disciples this was, as yet, the true pattern of devotion, and their Master sanctioned it. To their minds there would seem nothing inconsistent with true heart worship in the recurrence of a fixed order,¹⁹ of the same prayers, hymns, doxologies, such as all liturgical study leads us to think of as existing in the Apostolic Age.

The large admixture of formal teaching in Christian worship, that by which it was distinguished from all Gentile forms of adoration, was derived from the synagogues. "Moses" was "read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day,"²⁰ the whole Law being read consecutively, so as to be completed, according to one cycle, in three years, or according to that which ultimately prevailed, and determined in the existing divisions of the Hebrew text, in the 52 weeks of a single year. The writings of the Prophets were read as second lessons in a corresponding order. They were followed by the *Derash*, "the word of exhortation,"²¹ the exposition, the sermon of the synagogue. The first Christian synagogues, we must believe, followed this order with but little deviation. It remained for them before long to add "the other Scriptures," which they had learned to recognize as more precious even than the Law itself, the "prophetic word" of the New Testament. The synagogue use of Psalms again, on the plan of selecting those which had a special fitness for special times, answered to that which appears to have prevailed in the Church of the first three centuries.

The conformity extends also to the times of prayer. In the hours of service this was obviously the case. The third, sixth, and ninth hours were, in the times of the New Testament,²² and had been probably for some time be-

19. I Cor. 14:40.

20. Acts 15:21.

21. Acts 13:15.

22. Acts 3:1; 10:3, 9.

fore,²³ the fixed times of devotion. The same hours, it is well known, were recognized in the Church of the second, probably in that of the first century also.

The sacred days belonging to the two systems seem, at first, to present a contrast rather than a resemblance; but here too there is a symmetry which points to an original connection. The solemn days of the synagogue were the second, the fifth, and the seventh, the last or Sabbath being the conclusion of the whole. In whatever way the change was brought about, the transfer of the sanctity of the Sabbath to the Lord's Day involved a corresponding change in the order of the week, and the first, the fourth, and the sixth became to the Christian society, what the other days had been to the Jewish.

8. *Judicial functions of synagogues and churches.*

The language of the New Testament shows that the officers of the synagogue exercised in certain cases a judicial power. The synagogue itself was the place of trial;²⁴ even, strange as it may seem, of the actual punishment of scourging.²⁵ They do not appear to have had the right of inflicting any severer penalty, unless, under this head, we may include that of excommunication, or "putting a man out of the synagogue,"²⁶ placing him under an anathema,²⁷ "delivering him to Satan."²⁸ In some cases they exercised the right, even outside the limits of Palestine, of seizing the persons of the accused, and sending them in chains to take their trial before the Supreme Council at Jerusalem.²⁹

Here, also, we trace the outline of a Christian institution. The Church, either by itself or by appointed dele-

23. Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10.

24. Luke 12:11; 21:12.

25. Matt. 10:17; Mark 13:9.

26. John 12:42; 16:2.

27. I Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8-9.

28. I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 1:20.

29. Acts 9:2; 22:5.

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gates, was to act as a Court of Arbitration in all disputes among its members. The elders of the Church were not, however, to descend to the trivial disputes of daily life. For these, any men of common sense and fairness, however destitute of official honor and position, would be enough.³⁰ For the elders, as for those of the synagogue, were reserved the graver offenses against religion and morals. In such cases they had power to excommunicate, to "put out of" the Church, which had taken the place of the synagogue, sometimes by their own authority, sometimes with the consent of the whole society.³¹

(For questions on the Synagogues, see numbers 52-58, page 888.)

F. SECTS OF THE JEWS.

1. *Origin and names of the Jewish sects.*

The division of the Jewish people into religious parties following teachers of different schools of theological opinion is a phenomenon peculiar to the age subsequent to the Captivity. In the ritualism of the Mosaic law there was scarcely any scope left for opinion, and, at all events, we find little if any trace of a tendency to discuss the foundations of the Law on the one hand, or to speculate on its developments. The actual division was a stern conflict between obedience to the law of God, and the open rebellion of idolatry; between prophets truly inspired by Jehovah, and those who spoke falsely in his name; between the fidelity of religious patriotism, and the parties that were ever for leaning to Egypt and Assyria.

The cessation of idolatry, and the more thoughtful and spiritual character which the Jewish religion assumed after the Captivity, gave freer scope to the speculative element.

30. I Cor. 6:1-8.

31. I Cor. 5:4.

The contact with foreign modes of thought must also have had no small influence; but still it is one of the obscurest parts of this difficult subject to trace back any specific tenets of the different parties that were formed during the Asmonæan period, to oriental ideas imbibed during the Captivity, on the one hand, or to Hellenistic philosophy on the other. Especially must we be careful to confound the "opposition party" in theology—the Sadducees—with the unpatriotic Hellenizers who were hateful alike to all who had any regard to the law of Moses and the worship of Jehovah.

In one point, at least, there was a resemblance between the religious parties of the Jews and the philosophic schools of the Greeks: the name used to refer to Greek philosophic schools (*heresy*) was applied to the Jewish religious parties. This Greek word, roughly transliterated *heresy* in English, is often translated as *sect*, a word derived from Latin, meaning a *beaten path*, or *way*. This term *way* is often applied to the Christians in the N.T. (Acts 9:2).

We read in the *Acts of the Apostles* (5:17) of "the *sect* (or *heresy*) of the Sadducees," and "the *sect* of the Pharisees" (15:5). When St. Paul was charged with being "a ringleader of the *sect* (*heresy*) of the Nazarenes," his reply proves that he knew the term to be used in an opprobrious sense:—"This I confess unto thee, after *the way which they call heresy*, so worship I the God of my fathers;" and the Apostle himself, as well as Peter, uses the term in that condemnatory sense in which it has passed into ecclesiastical language.

The chief sects among the Jews were the PHARISEES, the SADDUCEES, and the ESSENES; who may be described respectively as the *Formalists*, the *Free-thinkers*, and the *Puritans*; but it must be remembered that such brief general characteristics are of necessity extremely vague. Of

1. Acts 24:5, 14; 28:22.

the *Herodians* who can not properly be called a *sect* we have already had occasion to speak.

2. *The Pharisees.*

- a. Their name and origin.
- b. The Pharisees' fundamental doctrine: belief in an oral law.
- c. Pharisees' belief in a future life.
- d. The Pharisees' proselytizing spirit.

a. *Their Name and Origin.*

The PHARISEES are so called from *Perishim*, the Aramaic form of the Hebrew word *Perushim*, "separated." The name does not occur either in the Old Testament or in the Apocrypha; but it is usually considered that the Pharisees were essentially the same with the Assidæans (i.e. *chasidim*—godly men, saints) mentioned in the Books of Maccabees.

A knowledge of the opinions and practices of this party at the time of Christ is of great importance for entering deeply into the genius of the Christian religion. A cursory perusal of the Gospel is sufficient to show that Christ's teaching was in some respects thoroughly antagonistic to theirs. He denounced them in the bitterest language.² Indeed, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion, that his repeated denunciations of the Pharisees mainly exasperated them into taking measures for causing his death; so that in one sense he may be said to have shed his blood and to have laid down his life in protesting against their practice and spirit.³ Hence, to understand the Pharisees is by contrast an aid toward understanding the spirit of uncorrupted Christianity.

2. See Matt. 15:7, 8; 23:5, 13, 14, et al.

3. Luke 11:53-54.

b. *The Pharisees' fundamental doctrine:
belief in an Oral Law.*

The doctrines of the Pharisees are contained in the *Mishna*, of which an account has been already given. It has been there shown that the fundamental principle of the Pharisees is that by the side of the written law there was *an oral law to complete and to explain the written law*, given to Moses on Mount Sinai, and transmitted by him by word of mouth.

It is not to be supposed that all the traditions which bound the Pharisees were believed to be revelations to Moses on Mount Sinai. In addition to such revelations, which were not disputed, there were three other classes of traditions. 1st. Opinions on disputed points, which were the result of a majority of votes. 2dly. Decrees made by prophets and wise men in different ages, in conformity with a saying attributed to the men of the Great Synagogue, "Be deliberate in judgment; train up many disciples; and *make a fence for the law.*" These carried prohibitions farther than the written law or oral law of Moses in order to protect the Jewish people from temptations to sin or pollution. 3dly. Legal decisions of proper ecclesiastical authorities on disputed questions. However, although in these several ways *all* the traditions of the Pharisees were not deemed direct revelations from Jehovah, there is no doubt that all became invested, more or less, with a peculiar sanctity; so that, regarded collectively, the study of them and the observance of them became as imperative as the study and observance of the precepts in the Bible.

Viewed as a whole, they treated men like children, formalizing and defining the minutest particulars of ritual observances. The expressions of "bondage," of "weak and beggarly elements," and of "burdens too heavy for men to bear," faithfully represent the impression produced by their multiplicity. An elaborate argument might be ad-

vanced for many of them individually, but the sting of them consisted in their aggregate number which would have a tendency to quench the fervor and the freshness of a spiritual religion. Particularly were their laws about the keeping of the sabbath day detailed and hair-splitting and burdensome.

In order to observe regulations on points of this kind, the Pharisees formed a kind of society. A member was called a *chaber*, and those among the middle and lower classes who were not members were called "the people of the land," or the vulgar. Each member pledged, in the presence of three other members, that he would remain true to the laws of the association. The conditions were various. One of transcendent importance was that a member should refrain from every thing that was not tithed.⁴ The Mishna says, "He who undertakes to be *trustworthy* (a word with a technical Pharisaical meaning) tithes whatever he eats, and whatever he sells, and whatever he buys, and *does not eat and drink with the people of the land.*" This was a point of peculiar delicacy, for the portion of produce reserved as tithes for the priests and Levites was *holy*, and the enjoyment of what was holy was a deadly sin. Hence a Pharisee was bound, not only to ascertain as a buyer whether the articles which he purchased had been duly tithed, but to have the same certainty in regard to what he ate in his own house and when taking his meals with others. And thus Christ, in eating with publicans and sinners, ran counter to the first principles, and shocked the most deeply-rooted prejudices of Pharisaism; for, independently of other obvious considerations, he ate and drank with "the people of the land," and it would have been assumed as undoubted that he partook on such occasions of food which had not been duly tithed.

Perhaps some of the most characteristic laws of the

4. Cf. Matt. 23:23; Luke 18:12.

Pharisees related to what was clean and unclean. According to the Levitical law, every unclean person was cut off from all religious privileges and was regarded as defiling the sanctuary of Jehovah.⁵ On principles precisely similar to those of the Levitical laws,⁶ it was possible to incur these awful religious penalties either by *eating* or by *touching* what was unclean in the Pharisaical sense. One point alone raised an insuperable barrier between the free social contact of Jews and other nations. This point is, "that *any thing* slaughtered by a heathen should be deemed unfit to be eaten, like the carcass of an animal that had died of itself, and like such carcass should pollute the person who carried it." On the assumption that under such a concept all animals used for food would be killed by Jewish slaughterers, the most minute regulations are laid down for their guidance. In reference, likewise, to *touching* what is unclean, the Mishna abounds with prohibitions and distinctions no less minute; and by far the greatest portion of the 6th and last "Order" relates to impurities contracted in this manner. Referring to the "Order" for details, it may be observed that to any one fresh from the perusal of them, and of others already adverted to, the words, "Touch not, taste not, handle not," seem a correct but almost a pale summary of their drift and purpose;⁷ and the stern antagonism becomes vividly visible between them and Him who proclaimed boldly that a man was defiled not by any thing he ate, but by the bad thoughts of the heart alone;⁸ and who even when the guest of a Pharisee pointedly abstained from washing his hands before a meal in order to rebuke the superstition which attached a moral value to such a ceremonial act.⁹

5. Num. 19:20.

6. Lev. 20:25; 22:4-7.

7. Col. 2:21.

8. Matt. 15:11.

9. Luke 11:37-40.

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It is proper to add, that it would be a great mistake to suppose that the Pharisees were wealthy and luxurious, much more that they had degenerated into the vices which were imputed to some of the Roman popes and cardinals during the 200 years preceding the Reformation. Josephus compared the Pharisees to the sect of the Stoics. He says that they lived frugally, in no respect giving in to luxury, but that they followed the leadership of reason in what it had selected and transmitted as a good.¹⁰ With this agrees what he states in another passage that the Pharisees had so much weight with the multitude that if they said any thing against a king or a high-priest they were at once believed;¹¹ for this kind of influence is more likely to be obtained by a religious body over the people through austerity and self-denial than through wealth, luxury and self-indulgence. Although there would be hypocrites among them, it would be unreasonable to charge all the Pharisees as a body with hypocrisy in the sense wherein we at the present day use the word. But at any rate they must be regarded as having been some of the most intense *formalists* whom the world has ever seen; and looking at the average standard of excellence among mankind, it is nearly certain that men whose lives were spent in the ceremonial observances of the Mishna would cherish feelings of self-complacency and spiritual pride not justified by intrinsic moral excellence. The supercilious contempt toward the poor publican and toward the tender penitent love that bathed Christ's feet with tears would be the natural result of such a system of life.

It was alleged against them on the highest spiritual authority that they "made the word of God of no effect by their traditions." The evasions connected with Corban are well known, and others equally striking might be added from the Mishna.

10. *Ant.* xviii, 1, 3.

11. *Ant.* xiii, 10, 5.

c. *Pharisees' belief in a future life.*

One of the fundamental doctrines of the Pharisees was a *belief in a future state*. They appear to have believed in a resurrection of the dead, very much in the same sense as the early Christians. This is in accordance with St. Paul's statement to the chief priests and council¹² that he was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, and that he was called in question for the hope and resurrection of the dead; and it is likewise almost implied in Christ's teaching which does not insist on the doctrine of a future life as any thing new, but assumes it as already adopted by his hearers, except by the Sadducees, although he condemns some unspiritual conceptions of its nature as erroneous.¹³

d. *The Pharisees' proselytizing spirit.*

In reference to the *spirit of proselytism* among the Pharisees, there is indisputable authority for the statement that it prevailed to a very great extent at the time of Christ;¹⁴ and attention is now called to it on account of its probable importance in having paved the way for the early diffusion of Christianity. Through kidnapping,¹⁵ through leading into captivity by military incursions and victorious enemies,¹⁶ through flight,¹⁷ through commerce,¹⁸ and probably through ordinary emigration, Jews at the time of Christ had become scattered over the fairest portions of the civilized world. On the day of Pentecost, Jews are said to have been assembled with one accord in one place at Jerusalem "from every region under heaven." Moreover, the then existing regulations or customs of synagogues afforded facilities which do not exist now, either in

12. Acts 23:6.

13. Matt. 22:30; Mark 12:25; Luke 20:34-36.

14. Matt. 23:15.

15. Joel 3:6.

16. II K. 17:6.

17. Jer. 43:4-7.

18. Josephus, *Ant.* xx, 2, 3.

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synagogues or Christian Churches, for presenting new views to a congregation.¹⁹ Under such auspices the proselytizing spirit of the Pharisees inevitably stimulated a thirst for inquiry and accustomed the Jews to theological controversies. Thus there existed precedents and favoring circumstances for efforts to make proselytes, when the greatest of all missionaries, a Jew by race, a Pharisee by education, a Greek by language, and a Roman citizen by birth, preaching the resurrection of Jesus to those who are the most part already believed in the resurrection of the dead, confronted the elaborate ritual-system of the written and oral law by a pure spiritual religion; and thus obtained the co-operation of many Jews themselves in breaking down every barrier between Jew, Pharisee, Greek, and Roman, and in endeavoring to unite all mankind by the brotherhood of a common Christianity.

(For questions about the Pharisees, see numbers 61-67, page 887.)

3. *The Sadducees.*

- a. Their name and origin.
- b. The Sadducees fundamental doctrine: denial of an Oral Law.
- c. Sadducees deny a resurrection of the dead.
- d. Sadducees believe in free will.
- e. The Sadducees supposed rejection of all scripture except the Pentateuch.
- f. Rapid disappearance of the Sadducees.

a. *Their name and origin.*

Although frequently mentioned in the New Testament in conjunction with the Pharisees, they do not throw such vivid light on the real significance of Christianity as the Pharisees do. Except on one occasion, when they united with the Pharisees in insidiously asking for a sign from

19. Acts 17:2; Luke 4:16.

heaven,¹ Christ never assailed the Sadducees with the same bitter denunciations which he uttered against the Pharisees. They have not been so influential as the Pharisees in the world's history; but still they deserve attention as representing Jewish ideas before the Pharisees became triumphant and as illustrating one phase of Jewish thought at the time of the promulgation of Christianity.

The origin of their name is involved in great difficulties. The Hebrew word by which they are called in the Mishna is *Tsedikim*, the plural of *Tsadok*, which undoubtedly means "just," or "righteous," but which is never used in the Bible except as a proper name, and in the English Version is always translated "Zadok"² The most obvious translation of the word, therefore, is to call them Zadoks or Zadokites; and a question would then arise as to why they were so called. The ordinary Jewish statement is that they are named from a certain Zadok, a disciple of that Antigonus of Socho, who is mentioned in the Mishna as having received the oral law from Simon the Just, the last of the men of the Great Synagogue; but it is certain that this statement must be rejected. As recourse is had to conjecture, the first point to be considered is whether the word is likely to have arisen from the meaning of "righteousness," or from the name of an individual. This must be decided in favor of the latter alternative inasmuch as the word Zadok as we have already seen never occurs in the Bible except as a proper name; and then we are led to inquire as to who the Zadok of the Sadducees is likely to have been. Now, there was one Zadok of transcendent importance, and only one: viz., the priest who acted such a prominent part at the time of David and who declared in favor of Solomon when Abiathar took the part of Adonijah as successor of the throne.³ His line of priests

1. Matt. 16:1, 4, 6.

2. II K. 15:33.

3. I K. 1:32-45.

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appears to have had decided pre-eminence in subsequent history. Thus, in Ezekiel's prophetic vision of the future Temple, "the sons of Zadok," and "the priests the Levites of the seed of Zadok" are spoken of with peculiar honor as those who kept the charge of the sanctuary of Jehovah when the children of Israel went astray.⁴ From this it has been conjectured that the Sadducees or Zadokites were originally identical with the sons of Zadok, and constituted what may be termed a kind of sacerdotal aristocracy. To these were afterward attached all who for any reason reckoned themselves as belonging to the aristocracy; such, for example, as the families of the high-priests who had obtained consideration under the dynasty of Herod. These were for the most part judges, and individuals of the official and governing class.

The expression "the sons of Zadok" occurs frequently in the Dead Sea manuscripts from Qumran⁵ as a title for the faithful members of that colony as contrasted with the apostates. However, these writings give no real clues as to the origin of the name *Sadducee*, or as to which Zadok the name was derived from.

b. *The Sadducees' fundamental doctrine: Denial of an Oral Law.*

The leading tenet of the Sadducees was *the denial of the leading tenet of their opponents*. As the Pharisees asserted, so the Sadducees denied, that the Israelites were in possession of an Oral Law transmitted to them by Moses. In opposition to the Pharisees, they maintained that the written law alone was obligatory on the nation as of divine authority.

It must not be assumed that the Sadducees, because

4. Ezek. 40:46.

5. Wm. F. LaSor, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith* (Moody, 1962), p. 162ff.

they rejected a Mosaic Oral Law, rejected likewise all traditions and all decisions in explanation of passages in the Pentateuch. Although they protested against the assertion that such points had been divinely settled by Moses, they probably, in numerous instances, followed practically the same traditions as the Pharisees.

c. *Sadducees deny a resurrection of the dead.*

The second distinguishing doctrine of the Sadducees, the *denial of man's resurrection after death*, followed in their conceptions as a logical conclusion from their denial that Moses had revealed to the Israelites the Oral Law. For on a point so momentous as a second life beyond the grave, no religious party among the Jews would have deemed themselves bound to accept any doctrine as an article of faith, unless it had been proclaimed by Moses, their great legislator; and it is certain that in the written Law of the Pentateuch there is a total absence of any assertion by Moses of the resurrection of the dead. This fact is presented to Christians in a striking manner by the well-known words of the Pentateuch which are quoted by Christ in argument with the Sadducees on this subject.⁶ It can not be doubted that in such a case Christ would quote to his powerful adversaries the most cogent text in the Law; and yet the text actually quoted does not do more than suggest an *inference* on this great doctrine. It is true that in other parts of the Old Testament there are individual passages which express a belief in a resurrection, such as in Is. xxvi. 19, Dan. xii. 2, Job xix. 26, and in some of the Psalms; and it may at first sight be a subject of surprise that the Sadducees were not convinced by the authority of those passages. But although the Sadducees regarded the books which contained these passages as sacred, it is more

6. Ex. 3:6, 16; Mark 12:26-27.

than doubtful whether any of the Jews regarded them as sacred in precisely the same sense as the written Law.

In connection with the disbelief of a resurrection by the Sadducees, it is proper to notice the statement,⁷ that they likewise denied there was "angel or spirit." A perplexity arises as to the precise sense in which this denial is to be understood. Angels are so distinctly mentioned in the Pentateuch and other books of the Old Testament that it is hard to understand how those who acknowledged the Old Testament to have divine authority could deny the existence of angels. The two principal explanations which have been suggested are either that the Sadducees regarded the angels of the Old Testament as transitory, unsubstantial representations of Jehovah, or that they disbelieved, not the angels of the Old Testament, but merely the angelical system which had become developed in the popular belief of the Jews after their return from the Babylonian captivity. Either of these explanations may possibly be correct; and the first, although there are numerous texts to which it did not apply, would have received some countenance from passages wherein the same divine appearance, which at one time is called the "angel of Jehovah," is afterward called simply "Jehovah."⁸

d. *Sadducees believe in free will.*

Josephus states that the Sadducees believed in the *freedom of the will*, which the Pharisees denied. Possibly the great stress laid by the Sadducees on the freedom of the will may have had some connection with their forming such a large portion of that class from which criminal judges were selected. They would be more practical in judging human conduct than those who felt that much of man's

7. Acts 23:8.

8. Gen. 16:7, 13; 22:11, 12; 31:1, 16; Ex. 3:2, 4; Judges 6:14, 22; 13:18, 22.

conduct was controlled by powers outside of himself (Josephus, Ant. xx, 9, 1).

e. *The Sadducees' supposed rejection of all scripture except the Pentateuch.*

Some of the early Christian writers attribute to the Sadducees the rejection of all the Sacred Scriptures except the Pentateuch. Such rejection, if true, would undoubtedly constitute a most important additional difference between the Sadducees and Pharisees. The statement of these Christian writers is, however, now generally admitted to have been founded on a misconception of the truth, and it seems to have arisen from a confusion of the Sadducees with the Samaritans.

f. *Rapid disappearance of Sadducees.*

An important fact in the history of the Sadducees is their *rapid disappearance from history after the first century*, and the subsequent predominance among the Jews of the opinions of the Pharisees. Two circumstances, indirectly but powerfully, contributed to produce this result: 1st. The state of the Jews after the capture of Jerusalem by Titus; and 2dly. The growth of the Christian religion. As to the first point, it is difficult to overestimate the consternation and dismay which the destruction of Jerusalem occasioned in the minds of sincerely religious Jews. In this their hour of darkness and anguish, they naturally turned to the consolations and hopes of a future state; and the doctrine of the Sadducees that there was nothing beyond the present life would have appeared to them cold, heartless, and hateful. Again, while they were sunk in the lowest depths of depression, a new religion which they despised as a heresy and a superstition was gradually making its way among the subjects of their de-

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tested conquerors, the Romans. One of the causes of its success was undoubtedly the vivid belief in the resurrection of Jesus, and a consequent resurrection of all mankind, which was accepted by its heathen converts with a passionate earnestness, of which those who at the present day are familiar from infancy with the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead can form only a faint idea. To attempt to check the progress of this new religion among the Jews by an appeal to the temporary rewards and punishments of the Pentateuch would have been as idle as an endeavor to check an explosive power by ordinary mechanical restraints. Consciously, therefore, or unconsciously, many circumstances combined to induce the Jews who were not Pharisees but who resisted the new heresy to rally round the standard of the Oral Law, and to assert that their holy legislator, Moses, had transmitted to his faithful people by word of mouth, although not in writing, the revelation of a future state of rewards and punishments.

(For questions about the Sadducees, see numbers 68-74, page 888-889.)

4. *The Essenes.*

- a. Identification of the Essenes; The Qumran colony.
- b. Origin and history of the Essenes.
- c. Writings of the Essenes.
- d. The relation of Essenes to Christianity.
- e. Practices of the Essenes.

a. *Identification of the Essenes; The Qumran colony.*

The Essenes were a small, very strict, semi-monastic sect which formed colonies apart from the rest of the Jews, whom they generally regarded as hopelessly corrupted.

The number of the Essenes is roughly estimated by Philo at 4000, and Josephus says that there were "more than

4000" who observed their rule.¹ Their best known settlements were on the N.W. shore of the Dead Sea, but others lived in scattered communities throughout Palestine, and perhaps, also, in cities.

This sect is represented by Josephus as combining the ascetic virtues of the Pythagoreans and Stoics with a spiritual knowledge of the Divine Law. The origin of their name is quite uncertain, and the various derivations that have been proposed for it are all more or less open to objection.

The Dead Sea colony at Qumran, which produced the famous Dead Sea scrolls, was probably an Essene colony, although their writings indicate some differences from the Essene practices as described by Josephus.² The Essenes generally condemned marriage; the Qumran colony did not. The Essenes would not use oaths, but the Qumranians did. The Essenes repudiated slavery, but the Qumranians did not. These differences suggest that the Qumranians may have been a splinter group within the Essenes, or that Josephus may not have had all his facts right about the Essenes. Some even suggest that the Qumranians were a different sect from the Essenes; but this seems unlikely because there is hardly space enough in the area around the N.W. Dead Sea area for both the Qumran settlement and another Essene settlement to which Josephus refers.

b. *Origin and history of Essenes.*

The growth of Essenism was a natural result of the religious feeling which was called out by the circumstances of the Greek dominion; and it is easy to trace the process by which it was matured. From the Maccabæan age there was a continuous effort among the stricter Jews to attain an absolute standard of holiness. Each class of devotees

1. Josephus, *Ant.* xviii, 2, 5.

2. Wm. LaSor, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith* (Moody, 1962), p. 177ff.

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was looked upon as practically impure by their successors, who carried the laws of purity still further; and the Essenes stand at the extreme limit of the mystic ascetism which was thus gradually reduced to shape. The associations of the "Scribes and Pharisees," "*the companions, the wise,*" gave place to others bound by a more rigid rule; and the rule of the Essenes was made gradually stricter. Judas, the earliest Essene who is mentioned (c. 110 B.C.), appears living in ordinary society.³ But by a natural impulse, the Essenes withdrew from the dangers and distractions of business. From the cities they retired to the wilderness, to realize the conceptions of religion which they formed, but still they remained on the whole true to their ancient faith. To the Pharisees they stood nearly in the same relation as that in which the Pharisees themselves stood with regard to the mass of the people. The differences lay mainly in rigor of practice, and not in articles of belief.

The traces of the existence of Essenes in common society are not wanting, nor confined to individual cases. Not only was a gate at Jerusalem named from them,⁴ but a later tradition mentions the existence of a congregation there which devoted "one-third of the day to study, one-third to prayer, and one-third to labor." Those, again, whom Josephus speaks of as allowing marriage, may be supposed to have belonged to such bodies as had not yet withdrawn from intercourse with their fellow-men. But the practice of the extreme section was afterward regarded as characteristic of the whole class, and the isolated communities of Essenes furnished the type which is preserved in the popular descriptions.

Information is lacking as to the exact time when the Qumran colony withdrew to its monastery near the N.W.

3. Josephus, *Wars* i, 3, 5.

4. Josephus, *Wars* v, 4, 2.

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corner of Dead Sea. LaSor estimates that it was about 196 B.C. when the first group settled there.⁵

A possible occasion for further withdrawal of devout Jews to this colony is suggested in the *Habakkuk Commentary*, one of the documents found in the Dead Sea caves in 1946-47. This document mentions the "house of Absalom," who were silent at the reproof of the Teacher of Righteousness, and did not help him against the Man of the Lie.⁶ The identity of the Teacher of Righteousness and the Man of the Lie are both uncertain; but LaSor suggests that the Teacher of Righteousness may have been the good priest Onias III (198-171 B.C.). In the time of Onias, Simon, the treasurer of the temple, instigated an attempt to seize the treasures of the temple; perhaps he was the Man of the Lie. At any rate, it appears that one group of the priests, the formalists, or Sanhedrin, did not speak against the outrage. Thereupon the "true sons of Zadok" (the Qumran seceders) moved out of the formalist group in protest, and started their own colony.

Later withdrawals to Essene colonies could well have occurred during the time of Alexander Jannaeus. The record of his shocking wars with his own countrymen can be read earlier in this book. Probably in the time of Herod the Great others withdrew to the Dead Sea.

At Qumran the colony occupied itself with tanning leather for writing purposes, copying scrolls, hours of study of the Law, prayer, and anticipation of the end of the age, which they regarded as very near because of their nation's society had become intolerably wicked.

Josephus tells that in A.D. 68 Vespasian brought his Roman army across Palestine from Caesarea to Jericho. The people of Jericho resisted briefly, but then fled to the mountains westward. Qumran is very near (7 miles)

5. LaSor, *Op. cit.*, p. 225.

6. 1Q Hab. 5:9-10. LaSor, *op. cit.*, 223.

to Jericho. It would appear that when the inhabitants of Jericho fled that the Qumranians also fled, but only after they had placed their precious scrolls in earthen jars and hidden them in nearby caves to be retrieved when they returned. Vespasian left to return to Rome. But his son Titus came to Jericho, and marched the army up to Jerusalem to besiege it. The fact that a coin of the Roman Tenth Legion was found at Qumran suggests that Titus must have destroyed the Qumran buildings before marching on up to Jerusalem. With Roman troops stationed all around the area, the Qumran residents, if they survived at all, never returned to get their scrolls. They were found by accident in the winter of 1946-47 by an Arab shepherd boy.

c. *Writings of the Essenes*

Scrolls and fragments of writings have been found in eleven caves in the Qumran vicinity. The fragments number in tens of thousands, some no larger than a fingernail, and others much larger. The principal scrolls number seven, or eight, with the publication of a "Temple Scroll,"⁷ obtained by the Israelis after the Six Days' War. These seven scrolls include two manuscripts of Isaiah; a commentary on Habakkuk chapters one and two; the so-called Manual of Discipline, or Sectarian Document, which gives rules and procedures for the members of the colony; an allegorical work called *The War of the Sons of Light against the Children of Darkness* (or *Order of Warfare*); a collection of Thanksgiving Hymns; and the *Genesis Apocryphon*, a combination of Biblical and legendary information relating to Genesis 12-15.

Besides these materials, fragments of every O.T. book except Esther have been identified among the finds. Also fragments of nearly all of the apocryphal books; and frag-

7. *Biblical Archaeologist*, Dec. 1967, p. 135 ff.

ments of Mark, John, Acts, Matthew, Luke, and Colossians. These N.T. documents possibly found their way to Qumran by Christian settlers who stayed at Qumran briefly after the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. Also a great many other fragments of other books, some of the Pseudepigrapha, and some previously unknown writings were found. Not all the fragments have yet been identified, but it appears that the total number of manuscripts originally left at Qumran may number six to eight hundred. One of the rooms in the ruins at Qumran contained a writing table with inkwells containing dried up black ink and pens. Certainly the Qumranians were a literary people.

d. *The relation of the Essenes to Christianity.*

Certain popular books in recent years have alleged that the Dead Sea scrolls have provided us with knowledge about the "source" of many Christian beliefs, terms, and practices: the Essenes are declared to have given to John the Baptist or to Jesus himself such ideas as "the new covenant," "sons of light," "the community," "the suffering Messiah," "baptism," "communion," and many other concepts.

These allegations must be treated as speculation, to say the most for them. Many of the terms used both in Christian writings and in the Qumran writings were drawn from the Old Testament which is the predecessor of both Christianity and Qumran. Therefore, the fact that certain expressions are found both in the New Testament and in the Dead Sea manuscripts does not prove that they came from the Dead Sea colony.

Furthermore, there are many expressions in the Dead Sea documents that are antagonistic to Christian doctrine. The Qumranians were taught to love all the children of

light, but to HATE all the children of darkness.⁸ They declared they would show no compassion to any that turn from the way.⁹ They regarded themselves as having direct access to God, and needed no intermediary among them (such as Christ Jesus).¹⁰ They had burdensome detailed Sabbath rules, such as Jesus condemned in the Pharisees.¹¹ With such great differences as these between themselves and the N.T. doctrine, it is hard to see how the Qumranians could have been the source of N.T. faith and practices.

Nearly all of the principal scholars working on the Dead Sea manuscripts deny categorically that there is any indication that the Essene colony at Qumran contributed in any way to the beliefs of Christendom. For example, Theodor H. Gaster, a translator of the Dead Sea documents, after listing twelve parallels between the N.T. and the Qumran documents says that it must be stated emphatically that the community envisaged in the Dead Sea Scrolls and translated into reality at Qumran, is in no sense Christian, and holds none of the fundamental theological doctrines of the Christian faith.¹² Similarly Rabbi Samuel Sandmel says that the Dead Sea Scrolls have no bearing on the origin of the Christian gospel. For further confirmation of the fact that most scholars deny connection between the N.T. doctrines and the Qumran beliefs, see Wm. LaSor, *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Faith*, p. 207 ff.

e. *Practices of the Essenes*

These were regulated by strict rules, analogous to those of the monastic institutions of a later date. The candidate for admission first passed through a year's novitiate, in which he received, as symbolic gifts, an axe, an apron, and

8. Theodor H. Gaster, *The Dead Sea Scriptures in English Translation*, Doubleday, 1964, p. 46.

9. Gaster, *Op. cit.*, 129.

10. *Ibid*, 159.

11. *Ibid*, 88.

12. *Ibid*, 19.

a white robe, and gave proof of his temperance by observing the ascetic rules of the order. At the close of this probation, his character was submitted to a fresh trial of two years, and meanwhile he shared in the lustral rites of the initiated, but not in their meals. The full membership was imparted at the end of this second period, when the novice bound himself by "awful oaths"—though oaths were absolutely forbidden at all other times—to observe piety, justice, obedience, honesty, and secrecy, "preserving alike the books of their sect, and *the names of the angels.*"¹³

The order itself was regulated by an internal jurisdiction. Excommunication was equivalent to a slow death, since an Essene could not take food prepared by strangers for fear of pollution. All things were held in common, without distinction of property or house; and special provision was made for the relief of the poor. Self-denial, temperance, and labor—especially agriculture—were the marks of the outward life of the Essenes; purity and divine communion the objects of their aspiration. Slavery, war, and commerce were alike forbidden; and, according to Philo, their conduct generally was directed by three rules, "the love of God, the love of virtue, and the love of man."

(For questions about the Essenes, see numbers 75-82, page 889.)

5. *The Scribes.*

- a. Origin of the scribes' office.
- b. Importance of the scribe's work.
- c. Evil development with the scribal office.
- d. The schools of Hillel and Shammai. Training for and advancement within the scribe's office.

a. *Origin of the scribes' office*

THE SCRIBES, though not a sect of the Jews, may be

13. Josephus, *Wars*, ii, 817.

conveniently treated of in this place on account of their intimate connection with the Pharisees. The words "Scribes" and "Pharisees" are bound together in the Gospels by the closest possible alliance.¹ The Scribes, who were originally the secretaries of the king, became in course of times a learned class, students and interpreters of the law. The seventy years of the Captivity gave a fresh glory to the name. The exiles would be anxious above all things to preserve the sacred books, the laws, the hymns, the prophecies of the past. To know what was worth preserving, to transcribe the older Hebrew documents accurately, when the spoken language of the people was passing into Aramaic, to explain what was hard and obscure—this was what the necessities of the time demanded. The man who met them became emphatically "*Ezra the Scribe*," the priestly functions falling into the background, as the priestly order itself did before the Scribes as a class. The words of Ezr. vii. 10 describe the high ideal of the new office. The Scribe is "to seek the law of the Lord and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." Of the time that followed we have but scanty records. The Scribes' office apparently became more and more prominent. They appear as a distinct class, "the families of the Scribes," with a local habitation.²

b. *Importance of the scribe's work.*

It is characteristic of the Scribes of this period that, with the exception of Ezra and Zadok,³ we have no record of their names. A later age honored them collectively as the men of the Great Synagogue. Never, perhaps, was so important a work done so silently. They devoted themselves to the careful study of the text, and laid down rules for transcribing it with the most scrupulous precision. A

1. Matt. 23 passim.

2. I Ch. 2:55.

saying is ascribed to Simon the Just (300-290 B.C.), the last of the succession of the men of the Great Synagogue, which embodies the principle on which they acted, and enables us to trace the growth of their system. "Our fathers have taught us," he said, "three things: to be cautious in judging, to train many scholars, and to set a fence about the Law." They wished to make the Law of Moses the rule of life for the whole nation and for individual men.

c. Evil development within the scribal office.

It lies in the nature of every law system like the law of Moses that it raises questions which it does not solve. The Jewish teacher could recognize no principles beyond the precepts of the Law. The result showed that, in this as in other instances, the idolatry of the letter was destructive of the very reverence in which it had originated. Decisions on fresh questions were accumulated into a complex system of casuistry. The new precepts, still transmitted orally, came practically to take their place. The "Words of the Scribes," now used as a technical phrase for these decisions, were honored above the Law. It was a greater crime to offend against them than against the Law. They were as wine, while the precepts of the Law were as water. The first step was taken toward annulling the commandments of God for the sake of their own traditions. The casuistry became at once subtle and evil, evading the plainest duties, tampering with conscience.⁴ The right relation of moral and ceremonial laws was not only forgotten, but absolutely inverted. This was the result of the profound reverence for the letter which gave no heed to the "word abiding in them."⁵

The teaching of the Scribes about an Oral Law was naturally opposed to the opinions of the Sadducees. The

3. Neh. 17:13.

4. Matt. 15:1-6; 23:16-23.

5. John 5:38. Their teaching is contained in the Talmud.

leading tenet of the Sadducees tended, by maintaining the sufficiency of the letter of the Law, to destroy the very occupation of a Scribe; and the class, as such, belonged to the party of the Pharisees.

d. *The schools of Hillel and Shammai.*

There were within the party of the Pharisees, within the order of the Scribes, two schools with distinctly opposed tendencies, one vehemently, rigidly orthodox, the other orthodox also, but with an orthodoxy which, in the language of modern politics, might be classed as Liberal Conservative. The latter party was founded by Hillel (born about 112 B.C.), while the strictly orthodox party was represented by his contemporary, Shammai. The two were held in nearly equal honor. One, in Jewish language, was the Nasi, the other the Ab-beth-din of the Sanhedrin. They did not teach, however, as their predecessors had done, in entire harmony with each other. The points on which they differed were almost innumerable. In most of them, questions as to the causes and degrees of uncleanness, as to the law of contracts or of wills, we can find little or no interest. On the former class of subjects the school of Shammai represented the extremest development of the Pharisaic spirit. The teaching of Hillel showed some capacity for wider thoughts. He was the first to lay down principles for an equitable construction of the Law with a dialectic precision which seems almost to imply a Greek culture. The genial character of the man comes out in some of his sayings, which remind us of the tone of Jesus the son of Sirach, and present some faint approximations to a higher teaching. The contrast showed itself in the conduct of the followers not less than in the teachers. The disciples of Shammai were conspicuous for their fierceness, appealed to popular passions, and used the sword to decide their controversies. Out of that school grew the

party of the Zealots, fierce, fanatical, vindictive, the Orangen-men of Pharisaism. Those of Hillel were like their master, cautious, gentle, tolerant, unwilling to make enemies, content to let things take their course. One sought to impose upon the proselyte from heathenism the full burden of the Law, the other that he should be treated with some sympathy and indulgence. The teaching of our Lord must have appeared to men different in many ways from both. While the Scribes repeated the traditions of the elders, He "spake as one having authority," "not as the Scribes."⁶ While they confined their teaching to the class of scholars, He "had compassion on the multitudes."⁷ While they were to be found only in the council or in their schools, He journeyed through the cities and villages.⁸ While they spoke of the kingdom of God vaguely, as a thing far off, He proclaimed that it had already come nigh to men.⁹ But in most of the points at issue between the two parties, He must have appeared in direct antagonism to the school of Shammai, in sympathy with that of Hillel.

On the other hand, because the temper of the Hillel school was one of mere adaptation to the feeling of the people, cleaving to tradition, wanting in the intuition of a higher life, the teaching of Christ must have been felt as unsparingly condemning it. It adds to the interest of this inquiry to remember that Hillel himself lived, according to the tradition of the Rabbis, to the great age of 120, and may therefore have been present among the doctors of Luke ii. 46. Gamaliel, his grandson and successor,¹⁰ was at the head of this school during the whole of the ministry of Christ, as well as in the early portion of the history of the Acts. We are thus able to explain the fact, which so many

6. Matt. 7:29.

7. Matt. 9:36.

8. Matt. 4:23; 9:35; et al.

9. Matt. 4:17.

10. Rabbi Simeon, the father of Gamaliel, came between them, but apparently for a short time only.

passages in the Gospels lead us to infer,—the existence all along of a party among the Scribes themselves, more or less disposed to recognize Jesus of Nazareth as a teacher,¹¹ not far from the kingdom of God,¹² advocates of a policy of toleration;¹³ but, on the other hand, timid and time-serving, unable to confess even their half-belief,¹⁴ afraid to take their stand against the strange alliance of extremes which brought together the Sadducean section of the priesthood and the ultra-Pharisaic party. When the last great crisis came, they apparently contented themselves with a policy of absence.¹⁵

*e. Training for and advancement within
the Scribe's office.*

The special training for a Scribe's office began, probably, about the age of thirteen. The boy who was destined by his parents to the calling of a Scribe went to Jerusalem, and applied for admission to the school of some famous Rabbi. The master and his scholars met; the former sitting on a high chair, the elder pupils on a lower bench, the younger on the ground, both literally "at his feet." The education was chiefly catechetical, the pupil submitting cases and questions, the teacher examining the pupil.¹⁶ After a sufficient period of training, probably at the age of thirty, the probationer was solemnly admitted to his office.

There still remained for the disciple, after his admission, the choice of a variety of functions, the chances of failure and success. He might give himself to any one of the branches of study, or combine two or more of them. He might rise to high places, become a doctor of the law,

11. John 3:1; Mk. 10:17.

12. Mk. 12:34.

13. John 7:51.

14. John 12:42.

15. Luke 18:50-51.

16. Luke 2:46.

an arbitrator in family litigations,¹⁷ the head of a school, a member of the Sanhedrin. He might have to content himself with the humbler work of a transcriber, copying the Law and the Prophets for the use of synagogues, or a notary writing out contracts of sale, covenants of espousals, bills of repudiation. The position of the more fortunate was of course attractive enough. In our Lord's time the passion for distinction was insatiable. The ascending scale of Rab, Rabbi, Rabban, presented so many steps on the ladder of ambition. Other forms of worldliness were not far off. The salutations in the market-place,¹⁸ the reverential kiss offered by the scholars to their master, or by Rabbis to each other, the greeting of Abba, father,¹⁹ the long robes with the broad, blue fringe (Matt. xxiii. 5), all these go to make up the picture of a Scribe's life. Drawing to themselves, as they did, nearly all the energy and thought of Judaism, the close hereditary caste of the priesthood was powerless to compete with them. Unless the priest became a Scribe also, he remained in obscurity. The order, as such, became contemptible and base. For the Scribes there were the best places at feasts, the chief seats in synagogues.²⁰

(For questions about the Scribes, see numbers 83-91, page 889.)

G. THE SANHEDRIN.

The word *Sanhedrin* is formed from the Greek *Sunedrion* which means "a sitting together." The *Great Sanhedrin*, as it is called in the Talmud, was the supreme council of the Jewish people in the time of Christ and earlier. In the Mishna it is also styled *house of judgment*.

17. Luke 12:14.

18. Matt. 23:7.

19. Matt. 23:9.

20. Matt. 23:6; Luke 14:7.

JEWISH SANHEDRIN

The *origin* of this assembly is traced in the Mishna to the seventy elders whom Moses was directed to associate with him in the government of the Israelites (Num. xi. 16, 17). This body continued to exist, according to the Rabbinical accounts, down to the close of the Jewish commonwealth. But it is now generally admitted that the tribunal established by Moses was probably temporary, and did not continue to exist after the Israelites had entered Palestine.

The fact that Herod, when procurator of Galilee, was summoned before the Sanhedrin (B.C. 47), on the ground that in putting men to death he had usurped the authority of the body (Joseph. *Ant.* xiv. 9, 4), shows that it then possessed much power and was not of very recent origin. It probably originated shortly after the Babylonian captivity.

In the silence of Philo, Josephus, and the Mishna respecting the *constitution* of the Sanhedrin, we are obliged to depend upon the few incidental notices in the New Testament. From these we gather that it consisted of *chief priests*, or the heads of the twenty four classes into which the priests were divided (including, probably, those who had been high-priests); *elders*, men of age and experience; and *scribes*, lawyers, or those learned in the Jewish law (Matt. xx. 57, 59; Mark xv. 1; Luke xxii. 66; Acts v. 21).

The number of members is usually given as 71, though other authorities make them 70, and others 72. The president of this body was styled *Nasi*, and was chosen on account of his eminence in worth and wisdom. Often, if not generally, this pre-eminence was accorded to the high-priest. That the high-priest presided at the condemnation of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 62) is plain from the narrative.

As a judicial body the Sanhedrin constituted a supreme court, to which belonged in the first instance the trial of a tribe fallen into idolatry, false prophets, and the high-priest, as well as the other priests. As an admin-

istrative council, it determined other important matters. Jesus was arraigned before his body as a false prophet (John xi. 47), and Peter, John, Stephen, and Paul as teachers of error and deceivers of the people. From Acts ix. 2, it appears that the Sanhedrin exercised a degree of authority beyond the limits of Palestine. According to the Jerusalem Gemara, the power of inflicting capital punishment was taken away from this tribunal forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem. With this agrees the answer of the Jews to Pilate (John xix. 31), "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Beyond the arrest, trial, and condemnation of one convicted of violating the ecclesiastical law, the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin at the time could not be extended; the confirmation and execution of the sentence in capital cases belonged to the Roman procurator. The stoning of Stephen (Acts vii. 56 sqq.) is only an apparent exception, for it was either a tumultuous procedure, or, if done by order of the Sanhedrin, was an illegal assumption of power, as Josephus (*Ant.* xx. 9, 1) expressly declares the execution of the Apostle James during the absence of the procurator to have been.

(For questions about the Sanhedrin, see numbers 92-98, page 889-890.)