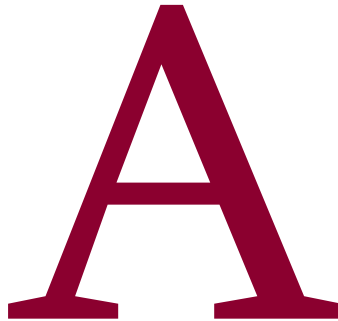


JUDAISM



religion of ethical MONOTHEISM in the class of CHRISTIANITY and ISLAM—Judaism encompasses all the related religious systems that exhibit these common traits: (1) belief that God is unique and made manifest in his revelation of himself to MOSES in the TORAH at Mount Sinai; (2) privileging the Torah, or PENTATEUCH (the Five Books of Moses), among the Israelite Scriptures; and (3) acceptance of the Jews in later times and in other places as the continuation of Scripture's "ISRAEL" in the Land of Israel. In the early 21st century there were nearly 15 million Jews worldwide.

THE TORAH

The Pentateuchal framework. The Pentateuch—consisting of the books of GENESIS, EXODUS, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—is written from the perspective of the loss and recovery of the Land of Israel between 586 and 450 BCE. These events of a long-ago past begin with the creation of the world, the making of man and woman, the fall of humanity through disobedience, and the flood that wiped out nearly all of humanity except for NOAH and his kin (making Noah the progenitor of all humanity). There then follows the decline of humanity from Noah to Abraham; the rise of humanity through ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB (who is also called Israel), and the 12 sons of Jacob; the exile in Egypt; and the deliverance to Sinai. There, the scriptural narrative continues, God revealed the Torah to Moses, and that revelation contained the terms of the COVENANT, or contract, that God then made with Israel—*i.e.*, the family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The book of Genesis therefore narrates the story of creation and then of the beginnings of the family that would always constitute Israel: the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The book of Exodus presents the story of the children of Israel's slavery in Egypt and how God redeemed them from Egyptian bondage and brought them to Sinai, there to make a covenant with them by which they would accept the Torah and carry out its rules. The book of Leviticus portrays the founding of the priests' service to God: that service being through the sacrifice of the produce of the Holy Land to which God had brought Israel. The book of Numbers provides an account of the wandering in the wilderness. The book of Deuteronomy then presents a reprise of the story, a long sermon by Moses looking back on

A Jewish boy carries the Torah at his Bar Mitzvah at the Western Wall in Jerusalem
Richard T. Nowitz/Corbis

CONTENTS

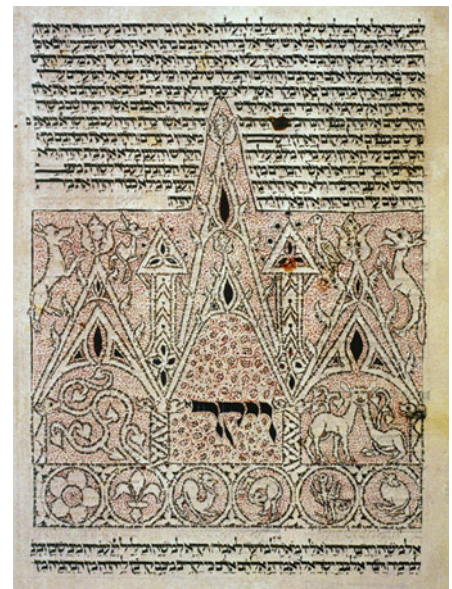
The Torah 585
 The Pentateuchal framework 585
 The Pentateuchal paradigm of all Judaisms 587
Second Temple Judaisms, 450 BCE to 70 CE 589
 The social world of Second Temple Judaisms 590
 Qumrān's Judaic system 590
 Pharisaic Judaism before 70 CE 591
Rabbinic Judaism 592
 The first phase of Rabbinic Judaism 592
 The second phase of Rabbinic Judaism 595
The challenge of Christianity 596
 Canon 597
 Symbol 598
 Teleology 599
 The Talmudic reply to political events 600
Rabbinic Judaism's success in Western civilization 600
 The theology of Rabbinic Judaism 601
 The hegemony of Rabbinic Judaism 603
Subsets of Rabbinic Judaism 604
 New modes of thought and the advent of philosophical thinking 604
 Maimonides (1135–1204) 605
 Judah ha-Levi (1080–1141) 606
 Media of piety—mysticism and Hasidism 608
Heretical systems 610
 Karaism and Shabbetaianism 610
Rabbinic Judaism meets competition 611
Continuator-Judaisms of the 19th century 612
 Reform Judaism 612
 Orthodox Judaism 613
Twentieth-century Judaisms beyond the Rabbinic framework 615
 Zionism 615
 American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption 618
Rabbinic and other Judaisms in modern times: Continuity and discontinuity 620

the history of Israel from the beginning of the wandering through the point of entry into the Promised Land, followed by a restatement of the rules of the covenant between Israel and God.

Thus, it follows that every Judaism, wherever and whenever created, believes that through the Scriptures of ancient Israel it can trace its beginnings to the creation of the world. Following the biblical record, each system maintains that God created the world and for ten dismal and declining generations, from Adam to Noah, despaired of creation. For ten generations, from Noah to Abraham, God waited for humanity to acknowledge the sovereignty of the one God, creator of heaven and earth. Finally came Abraham and SARAH; Abraham obeyed God's commandment to leave his home in the city of Ur in Chaldea (an area that would become known as Babylonia) and journey to the Promised Land. Thus, Israel begins with the experience of alienation: "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). Through their descendants Sarah and Abraham founded Israel, the people of the Lord, to whom, later at Sinai, God revealed the Torah, the complete record of God's will—initially for Israel (the Jewish people), but eventually for all humanity. The biblical record goes on to speak of DAVID, the king of Israel and founder of the ruling household, from which, at the end of time, the MESSIAH is destined to come forth. So Judaism tells the story of the world from the creation of ADAM AND EVE, through the revelation of the Torah at MOUNT SINAI, to the redemption of humanity through the Messiah at the end of time—a picture of the world, beginning, middle, and end. This account of the history of humanity and all creation derives from a people that traces its origins to the beginnings of history and yet thrives in the world today.

The Pentateuch includes a composite of materials by different authors, each of whom had his own viewpoint and intellectual traits. It must be remembered that it was only after the destruction of the First TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM in 586 BCE that the Torah—in this context, the Five Books of Moses—came into being, coming together as a pastiche of received stories, some old, some new, all revised to fulfill the purposes of the final authors and to explain the origins of Israel, the Jewish people. In light of Israel's ultimate destiny, which the authors took to be the loss and restoration of the Holy Land, the origins of the people in its land became meaningful. Israel began with its acquisition of the land, through Abraham; attained its identity as a people through the promise of the land, in the covenant of Sinai; and entered the land under JOSHUA. Israel's history then formed the story of how, because of its conduct on the land, Israel, in spite of the prophets' persistent warnings, lost its land, first in the north (Israel), then in the south (Judaea). Exiled in Babylonia, the authors of the Torah recast Israel's history into the story of the existence of the people, a conditional existence dependent on their carrying out a contract: do this, get that; do not do this, do not get that.

The Pentateuch as fully formulated comes from the small number of Israelite families who remembered the exile, survived in Babylonia, and then, toward the end of the 6th century BCE, began the return to ZION. To the priests who rebuilt the Temple and gave the Pentateuch its final form what mattered historically was the destruction of the First Temple (586 BCE), and, some three generations later, the resto-



ration of Zion and the rebuilding of the Temple. To them the cult was the key, the Temple the nexus between heaven and earth. The Pentateuch set forth the priest's conception of a shared consciousness, a collective myth of a people subject to condition and stipulation, forever threatened with desolation, always requiring renewal—nothing was a given. Beginning at this time the Pentateuch, declaimed in the SYNAGOGUE from week to week, taught this one lesson of the human condition of Israel. The priests' Torah, the Pentateuch in its final statement, constituted the first and enduring Judaic paradigm, to which all Judaisms to come would either conform or object.

The Pentateuchal paradigm of all Judaisms. A Judaic religion confronts an urgent question and supplies an answer that is self-evidently valid within the paradigm of Israel's exile and return as interpreted in the Pentateuch. Responding to the agenda framed by Scripture in the original encounter—death and resurrection, as interpreted in the destruction of the Temple and the later return to Zion—the question addressed by Judaic systems from the Pentateuch onward was, and would remain, "Who is Israel? And what rules define Israel as a social, and therefore political, entity?" In one way or another, Israel, the Jewish people wherever they lived, sought means of declaring itself distinct from its neighbors. However, this persistent stress on differentiation—the exclusion of the neighbors from the group, and vice versa—yields a preoccupation with self-definition that runs contrary to the situation of ancient Israel, with the unmarked cultural frontiers and constant trade among diverse groups that was characteristic of ancient times. At the formation of the Pentateuch, Israel was deeply affected by the shifts and changes in social, cultural, and political life. The problem of self-definition came to renewed expression when, more than a century after the formation of the Pentateuch under EZRA and NEHEMIAH, the Greeks under Alexander the Great conquered the entire Middle East (c. 330 BCE) and incorporated the Land of Israel into the international Hellenistic culture. And, when the war of independence fought by the Jews under the leadership of the MACCABEES (c. 160 BCE) produced an independent state for a brief period, that state found itself under the government of a Jewish court that accommodated itself to the international style of politics and culture.

So what made Israel separate in any sense from its neighbors? In fact, the principal propositions of the Pentateuchal Torah and the historical and prophetic writings of the century beyond 586 BCE—namely, Israel's heightened sense of its own social reality and its status as an elected people standing in a contractual or covenantal relationship with God—reveal the inner structure of the system. They express the paradigm's logic—which is not dictated by events, even in events selected and reworked—and apply its theological premises, not the hard data of Israel's common life in either Babylonia or the Land of Israel. The Pentateuchal system not only selected the events it would deem consequential, it dictated to whose experience those events would bear consequence. For from

(Opposite page)
Frontispiece to
Leviticus, 14th-century
German Torah; (below)
the rock-cut tombs of
the Maccabees,
Modi'im, Israel

(Opposite) The Granger Collection;
(below) Erich Lessing—Art
Resource



the perspective of a vast population of Israel—Jews who remained in the Land of Israel after 586, or in Babylonia after Cyrus' decree in 538 permitted return to Zion—the system spoke of events that simply never happened. For both groups, for different reasons, there was no alienation and consequently, no reconciliation—for these groups what was normative corresponded to the merely normal, they lived life like any other nation, wherever it happened to locate itself. As an example of a religious system creating a society, we can find few better instances than the power of the conception of Israel as expressed by the Pentateuch and associated writings after 586 BCE. It served to show people not only the meaning of what had happened but to also tell them what had happened: to create for Israelite society a picture of what it must be and therefore what it had been. That sense of heightened reality and intense focus on the identification of the nation as extraordinary represented only one possible meaning of events. However, we do not have access to any interpretation other than the system of the Torah and the prophetic and historical writings framed by the priests and given definitive statement under the auspices of Persia's Jewish viceroy in Jerusalem, Nehemiah, and his counsellor Ezra.

Since the Pentateuchal face of Judaism began as a paradigm, not as a set of actual events, the conclusions generated by the paradigm, derived not from reflection on things that happened but from the logic of the paradigm. Additionally, that same paradigm created expectations that could not be met, thereby renewing the resentment presented in the myth of exile within people who had never experienced the phenomena. At the same time the paradigm set the conditions for remission of resentment, and so resolving the crisis of exile with the promise of return. This self-generating, self-renewing paradigm formed the self-fulfilling prophecy that all Judaisms have offered as the generative tension and critical symbolic structure of their systems.

The Judaic system devised in the Pentateuch's basic structure by the priests not only addressed, but also created, a continuing, chronic social fact of Israel's life. So long as the people perceived the world in such a way as to make urgent the question that Scripture framed and answered, Scripture enjoyed a power of persuasion beyond all need for argument, imparting to it the self-evident status of God's revealed will to Israel. And that power lasted for a very long time. Scripture gained its own authority, however, independent of the circumstance of society, and the priests' paradigm of exile and return imposed itself even in situations where its fundamental premises hardly pertained. Accordingly, when the world imposed different questions upon them, Jews went in search of not only more answers—an additional Torah (hence the formation of the Judaism of the dual Torah)—but different answers (hence the formation, in modern times, of Judaic systems of a different character altogether). But even then, a great many Jews continued to envision the world through the original perspective of exile and return created in the aftermath of destruction and restoration—to see the world as a gift instead of a given, and themselves as chosen for a life of special suffering but also special reward.

The generative tension—precipitated by the interpretation of the Jews' life as exile and return—that had formed the critical center of the Torah of Moses remained. Therefore the urgent question "Who is Israel?" answered by the Torah retained its original character and definition, and the self-evidently valid answer—as read in the synagogue—retained its relevance. With the renewal, generation after generation, of that same resentment—the product of a memory of loss and restoration joined to the danger of a further loss in the here and now—the priests' authoritative answer did not lose its power to persist and to persuade. Scripture kept reminding people to ask the question, to see the world as described, in Scripture's mythic terms, through the experience of exile and return. To those troubled by the question of exile and return—that is, the chronic allegation that Israel's group-life did not constitute a given but formed a gift accorded on conditions and stipulations—the answer enjoyed the status of (mere) fact. For a small, uncertain people, who were captivated by a vision of distant horizons, behind and before such a powerful and immediate message was a map of meaning.

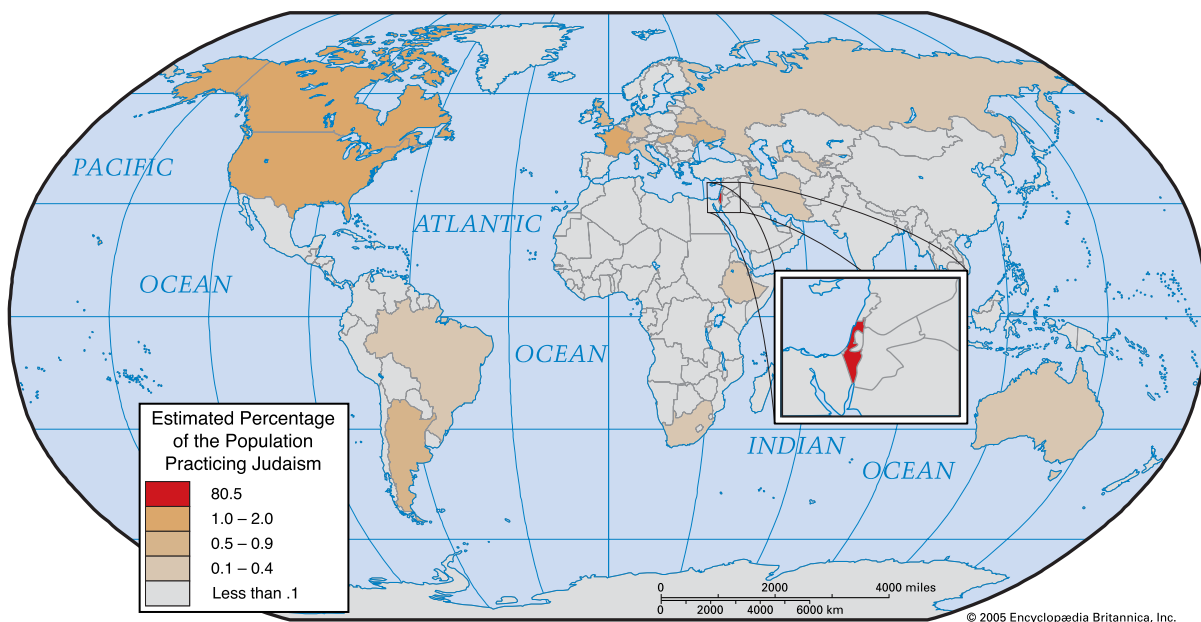
SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISMS, 450 BCE TO 70 CE

Ancient Israel's Scriptures yielded not only the priestly model but, in fact, three quite distinct points of emphasis, definitions of what, in the life of community, nation, and individual, mattered. The Judaisms that emerged from Scripture centered upon three types or points of emphasis: (1) the one that emerged from the priestly viewpoint, with its interest in sanctification, and so stressed doctrine, law, and a way of life; (2) the one that took a special interest in the wise conduct of everyday affairs, yielded by the wisdom-writings, with a stress on the here and now of ordinary life; and (3) the one that emphasized the meaning and end of history, produced by the prophetic angle of vision, with a focus on salvation. To describe the three basic sorts of Second Temple Judaisms, we turn first to the idealized type as it will have reached expression in generative symbol: (1) an altar for an offering, (2) a Torah-scroll, (3) a coin. The altar for the priestly ideal, the scroll of Scripture for the ideal of wisdom, and the coin marked "Israel's freedom: year one," for the messianic modality (drawing on a later messianic movement, the one led in 132–135 CE by BAR KOKHBA). The principal strands of ancient Israelite life come to realization in the distinct types of holy men we identify as priests, scribes, and messiahs, with their definitive activities in cult, school and government offices, and (ordinarily) the battlefield.

The priest described society as organized through lines of structure emanating from the Temple. His caste stood at the top of a social scale in which all things were properly organized, each with its correct name and proper place. The inherent sanctity of Israel, the people, came through genealogy to its richest embodiment in him, the priest. Food set aside for his rations at God's command possessed that same sanctity, as did the table at which he ate. To the priest the history produced by the sacred society of Israel was an account of what happened in, and (alas) on occasion to, the Temple.

To the sage, the life of society demanded wise regulation. Human relationships required guidance by the laws embodied in the Torah and best interpreted by the sage. Accordingly, the task of Israel was to construct a way of life in accordance with the revealed rules of the Torah, and so the sage, master of the rules, stood at the head of society. As for prophecy's insistence that the fate of the nation depended upon the faith and moral condition of society, history testified to the external context and inner condition of Israel, viewed as a whole. Both sage and

World distribution of Judaism



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priest saw Israel from the aspect of eternity. But the nation lived out its life in the history of this world, among other peoples who coveted the very same land, within the politics of empires. It was the messiah's kingship that would resolve the issues of Israel's subordinated relationship to other nations and empires, establishing once for all time the correct context for priest and sage alike.

The social world of Second Temple Judaism. Among a number of Judaic groups that distinguished themselves between 450 BCE and 70 CE, we have sufficient evidence to describe two sects in their broader social context, and not merely their statements of belief: first, the Judaic system, identified by some with the ESSENES, and put forth by the writings found at QUMRĀN; and second, the PHARISEES. Each in its way realized in sharp and extreme form the ideals of the normative system of the priests' Torah of Moses. The community-writings (assigned by some to the Essenes) of Qumrān and the writings of the Pharisees turned back to the PRIESTLY CODE and its generative symbols and myths. One encompassing example of that fact is the stress among both groups upon cultic cleanness and uncleanness. Each of these social groups defined itself around the eating of cultic meals in the state of cleanness prescribed in Leviticus for the Temple priest in the eating of his share of the Temple sacrifices.

Qumrān's Judaic system. The Judaism portrayed by the library discovered at Qumrān (*see* DEAD SEA SCROLLS) flourished in the last two centuries BCE to 68 CE. The main element of the library's worldview of Judaism was the conviction that the community formed the final remnant of Israel, and that God would shortly annihilate the wicked. These "converts" to the true faith would be saved and this "Israel" at Qumrān would endure because their founder, the Teacher of Righteousness, established a new contract or covenant between the community and God. The task of the community was to remain faithful to the covenant, endure the exile in the wilderness, and prepare for the restoration of the Temple in its correct form. So it recapitulated the history of Israel, seeing itself as the surviving remnant of some disaster that had destroyed the faith, and preparing for the restoration they anticipated would soon come—just as it had before. Therefore, we find in the Qumrān system a replication of the Judaic system of the PRIESTHOOD, with one important qualification. While the Judaic system represented by the Pentateuch laid great stress on the holy way of life, the Qumrān system added a powerful element of eschatological expectation and so combined the holy way of life with a doctrine of salvation at the end of time. The principal components of the scriptural composite—Torah-laws, prophetic historical interpretation, and sagacious rules on the conduct of everyday life—found counterparts in the library of the community as the Qumrān Judaism reworked the several strands into a distinctive and characteristic statement of its own.

The Qumrān library sets forth the Judaic system of a holy community in the here and now, awaiting an eschatological climax. The elements of the original paradigm are three: first, the notion of a saving remnant, a chosen few, which surely originated in the pattern of Israel that endured beyond 586 BCE; second, the conception of a community with a beginning, middle, and end, rather than a community that exists more or less permanently; third, the notion that the Israel at hand replicates the sanctification of the temple in its very being. These are large and encompassing principles, and within them we can make provision for the indicative traits of the Qumrān system. All commentators on the library of Qumrān have found the community's sense of itself striking: a people different, separate from the rest of Israel, the clean, saved few among the unclean many, the children of light. The fundamental notion that this small group constituted in microcosm the Israel that mattered rested on the premise that the "Israel" out there, the nation as a whole, live on condition and respond to stipulation. That "Israel" had failed; its people had become (in the mind of the followers at Qumrān) the children of darkness. Making such distinctions within the old Israel in favor of the new requires the conviction that the life of Israel is not a given, a fact of ordinary reality, but a status to be attained through appropriate regeneration, in context, sanctification. And that basic notion expresses the general pattern of the Pentateuchal structure: Israel is called and, out of nothing, in formed a very par-

ticular entity, subject to very special conditions: the children of light, as against the rest, the children of darkness. The prerequisite for such an acutely self-conscious understanding of one's people is the original and paradigmatic experience of national death and resurrection.

Pharisaic Judaism before 70 CE. The Pharisees, who also stressed the observance of cultic rules of sanctification, were especially diligent in keeping the laws concerning the correct preparation of food, including the proper separation of a portion of the crops for the support of the priesthood and other scheduled castes (tithing). Scripture had specified a variety of rules on tithing and other agricultural offerings, in general holding that God owned a share of the crops, and God's share was to go to the holy castes (priests, LEVITES, as well as to the poor). In addition to making sure everything that was supposed to yield its portion to the castes did, the Pharisees obeyed those rules concerning the preparation of food that linked meals to the altar and its service. Scripture—the book of Leviticus—had furthermore laid down rules governing the sources and affects of uncleanness (*see also* TOHORAH). Such sources of uncleanness, specified in Leviticus 11–15, derive from the bodily flux of human beings, including excretions from sexual organs, and contact with certain deceased creatures, for example. The primary result of contact with such sources of uncleanness was not hygienic but, mainly, cultic: one affected by uncleanness could not enter the Temple. Therefore, for the authors of the Priestly Code, the concern for the cleanness or uncleanness of utensils and persons was rooted in the desire to protect the cult and the Temple against the dangers lurking in the sources of uncleanness. But the rules laid out in the MISHNAH that affect uncleanness—many of them going back to the earliest stratum of the Mishnaic system, before 70 CE, and, hence, many assume, to Pharisaic origins—deal primarily with domestic matters. The Pharisees maintained that Israel was meant to observe ritual purity in the home as well as the Temple, and recent archaeological findings show that many Pharisees did. (These findings include immersion pools [*miqvaot*] in homes.) The fundamental assumption was that one should eat not only food deriving from the altar, but meals eaten at home in a state of cultic cleanness. The further and more important assumption was that ordinary people, and not only priests, keep those rules. Put together, the two premises describe a group of lay people emulating priests, much on the order of the Qumrān Judaism, and treating their homes as temples, their tables as altars.

The Pharisaic stress on the sanctification of the home and the paradigmatic power of the Temple for the home suggests the Pharisees had a more extreme position on the priestly paradigm of the Pentateuch than the priests themselves. What the priests wanted for the Temple, the Pharisees wanted for the community at large, and so carried to a still more radical extreme the fundamental systemic position of the priests' Torah of Moses. Admittedly, we have little access to positions taken in the 1st century by the Pharisaic system on other matters, besides



Caves at Qumrān in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in 1947

Joel Fishman—Photo Researchers

those represented in the GOSPELS and by the later RABBIS of the Mishnah. Still, one cannot imagine that the group took these positions only on the questions concerning cultic sanctification, as that was only a partial aspect of the complete system. The Qumrān Judaism presented a substantial account of the meaning and end of history; its doctrine of salvation spelled out in so many words the community's idea of Israel—or, rather of itself as the final remnant of Israel. What we know of the Pharisaic system allows us to characterize it also as a Judaism of sanctification—at least that—and permits us to identify that generative Pentateuchal paradigm of the 6th and early 5th centuries BCE. No wonder the Pharisees affirmed the eternity of the soul (as JOSEPHUS says) or the resurrection of the dead (as PAUL, himself a Pharisee before conversion to Christianity, is presented in Luke's ACTS). For the way of sanctification led past the uncleanness of the grave to the renewed purity of the living person, bringing purification out of the most unclean of all sources of uncleanness, the realm of death itself. Thus the pattern of everyday sanctification brought immediacy to the cosmic pattern of death and resurrection.

RABBINIC JUDAISM

Taking shape after 70 CE out of the union of the traditions of Pharisaism and of pre-70 scribes, RABBINIC JUDAISM—in the Mishnah, the Talmuds BAVLI and YERUSHALMI, and the MIDRASH—culminated in the doctrine of the dual Torah. That is, the Torah both oral and written, that God revealed to Moses at Mount Sinai. The Pharisees' belief system incorporated "Traditions of the Fathers," and to these later Rabbinic Judaism would assign the ORAL TRADITION from Sinai. This oral tradition, the doctrine held, was handed on from master to disciple in a chain extending from Moses down to the rabbis themselves. It was then preserved in the writing of the Mishnah, a philosophical law code; the Talmuds, which comment on the code; and the midrashic compilations, which interpret Scripture in accord with the rabbis' doctrines.

Rabbinic Judaism took shape in two stages: firstly, from 70 to the 4th century CE, as represented by the Mishnah (dating to *c.* 200 CE), commentaries on the Mishnah (which date from 200 to around 300 CE), and commentaries on the Scripture produced during that same period; and, secondly, by the two Talmuds—the Yerushalmi (dating to *c.* 400 CE) and the Bavli (dating to *c.* 600 CE), and the later midrashic compilations. The first stage set forth a Judaic religious system without reference to the challenge of Christianity; the second was a revision of the initial system, now responding to the challenge of Christianity's use of the canon and Scriptures of Judaism to prove and validate Christian beliefs. That second, fully articulated system of Judaism would then form the framework for all Judaisms until the 20th century (*see below*: Twentieth-century Judaisms beyond the Rabbinic framework). Some Judaisms took shape in response to the Rabbinic system and amplified it or added to its resources; others took shape as heresies defined by rejection of principal parts of that same system. But so long as Christianity, and later, Islam, set the critical issue confronting Israel, the holy people, Rabbinic Judaism defined the paramount, norm-setting Judaism.

The first phase of Rabbinic Judaism. As portrayed in the Mishnah, the first phase of Rabbinic Judaism—which was continuous with pre-70 Pharisaism—responded to the destruction of the Temple by maintaining that although the holiness of Israel, the people, had formerly centered on the Temple, it had endured and transcended the physical destruction of the building and the cessation of sacrifices. Thus, Israel the people was holy. The system created by Rabbinic Judaism instructed Israel to act as if there was a new Temple formed of Israel, with the Jewish people becoming the medium and instrument of God's sanctification. Joined with this new Pharisaic view of life was the substance of the scribal ideal, which stressed learning the Torah and carrying out its teachings. Like the scribes of old, the emerging system claimed it was possible to serve God not only through sacrifice but also through study of the Torah.

The way of life of Rabbinic Judaism, in its final definition, was the Pharisaic method, with its stress on the everyday sanctification of all Israel. The worldview

and substance of that Judaism was the scribal message, with its stress on the Torah. Pharisaism stressed the universal keeping of the law, obligating every Jew to do what only the elite—the priests—were normally expected to accomplish. But, it was this doctrine of who actually constituted Israel that would at first glance seem fresh and unpredictable. The people who constituted Israel was surviving Israel: after the rupture marked by the destruction of the Temple the crisis centered attention on what had endured, persisting beyond the end: the people itself. In the life of a nation that had ceased to be a nation on its own land and then once more had regained that land, the calamity of the Temple's destruction represented once more the paradigm of the death and resurrection. Consequently after 70 CE the truly fresh and definitive component of the new system actually restated in contemporary terms the fixed and established doctrine with which the first Judaism, the Judaism of the Torah of Moses after 450 BCE, had commenced.

The initial statement of Rabbinic Judaism—the Mishnah—stresses sanctification, which is understood as the correct arrangement of all things, each in its proper category, and each called by its rightful name, just as at the creation. Everything (except the beasts that would be named by Adam) had been given its proper name—or, in the language of Scripture, been classified in its correct category. God then called the natural world very good and God sanctified it. The system of philosophy expressed through concrete and detailed Mishnaic law is a worldview that speaks of transcendent things, presenting a way of life in response to the supernatural meaning of what is done, and thus, a heightened and deepened perception of the sanctification of Israel in deed and in deliberation. Therefore sanctification means two things: first, the distinguishing of Israel in all its dimensions from the rest of the world and its ways; and second, the establishment of the stability of Israel in the world of nature and supernature, particularly when threatened by instability or disorder. Each principal topic of the Mishnah takes up a critical and indispensable moment or context of social being and fully expresses what the halakhic system (*see* HALAKHAH AND HAGGADAH) as a whole wishes to declare on that subject.

The world that the Mishnah addressed was hardly congruent to the worldview presented within the Mishnah. In the aftermath of Bar Kokhba's war against Rome in 132–135 CE, Jews were barred from Jerusalem and the Temple. Thus, at this time, there was no cult, no Temple, no holy city to which the Mishnaic laws applied. The laws of the Mishnah were formulated before the loss of the Temple, but the codification of the laws began after the Temple was gone. Therefore, at the very outset, a sizable proportion of the Mishnah dealt with matters to which the sages had no material access or practical knowledge of at the time of their work. We have seen that the Mishnah contains a division on the conduct of the cult (the fifth division), as well as one on the preservation of the cultic purity of the sacrificial system along the lines laid out in the book of Leviticus (the sixth division). In fact, a fair part of the second division takes up the conduct of the cult on special days—*e.g.*, the sacrifices offered on the Day of Atonement (YOM KIPPUR), PASSOVER, and the like. Indeed, what the Mishnah wants to know about appointed seasons concerns the cult far more than it does the synagogue. The fourth division, on civil law, presents an elaborate account of a political structure and system of Israelite self-government that speaks of king, priest, Temple, and court. But in the time in which the 2nd-century authorities did their work it was not Jewish kings, priests, and judges who conducted the government of Israel in the Land of Israel but the Romans. So it would appear that well over half of the document speaks of the lost cult, Temple, government, and priesthood. Moreover, as we shall see, the Mishnah takes up a profoundly priestly and Levitical conception of sanctification. When we consider that the Temple lay in ruins, the city of Jerusalem was prohibited to all Israelites, and the Jewish government and administration that had been centered on the Temple and based its authority on the holy life there were dismantled, the fantastic character of the Mishnah's address to its own catastrophic day becomes clear. Much of the Mishnah speaks of matters not in being at the time of its creation, because the Mishnah wishes to make its statement on what really matters.

The Mishnah tells us something about how things were, but it tells us everything about how a small group of rabbinic sages wanted things to be. The document is orderly, repetitious, and careful in both language and message. It is small-minded, picayune, obvious, dull, and routine—everything its age was not. Standing in contrast with the world to which it speaks, the Mishnah's message is one of small achievements and modest hope intended to defy a world of large disorders and immodest demands. It offers this message to an Israelite world that could not shape affairs in any important ways and speaks to people who by no means willed the way things were. The Mishnah lays down a practical judgment on and in favor of a people who must go forth with the imagination and will to reshape their reality, regain a system, and reestablish an order upon which trustworthy existence is to be built.

The Mishnah's principal message is that humanity is at the center of creation, and as the head of all creatures upon earth, corresponds to God in heaven, in whose image humanity is made. The Mishnah makes this simple and fundamental statement by imputing the power to man to inaugurate and initiate those corresponding processes, sanctification and uncleanness, which play such a critical role in the Mishnah's account of reality. Human will, expressed through human deed, is the active power in the world. Will and deed constitute those actors of creation that work upon those neutral realms that are subject to either sanctification or uncleanness: the Temple and table, the field and family, the altar and hearth, as well as woman, time, space, and transactions in the material world and in the world above as well. An object, a substance, a transaction, even a phrase or a sentence is inert but may be made holy when its potential to be sanctified is aroused or generated by the interplay of man's will and deed. Each thing may either be treated as ordinary or (where relevant) made unclean by the neglect of the will and the inattentive acts of humankind. The entire system of uncleanness and

holiness awaits the intervention of humanity, which imparts the capacity to become unclean upon what was formerly inert, or which removes the capacity to impart cleanliness from what was formerly in its natural and powerful condition. Likewise, in the other ranges of reality humanity is at the center on earth, just as is God in heaven. People are God's counterpart and partner in creation, and, like God, they have power over the status and condition of creation, putting everything in its proper place, and calling everything by its rightful name.

Whereas the urgent question had previously been "Who is Israel?," when the answer was found by Judaism in the first Rabbinic



Roman soldiers carrying the menorah taken from the Temple of Jerusalem as war booty, 70 CE; detail of a relief on the Arch of Titus, Rome, 81 CE

Alinari—Art Resource

phase—that Israel is the surviving people faithful to the Covenant—the question then became “What can a man do?” Addressing itself to holy Israel, the Mishnah proceeded to answer that man, through will and deed, is master of this world, the measure of all things. When the Mishnah thinks of man it means Israel, the subject and actor of its system, and so the statement is clear: this man is Israel, who can do what he wills. In the aftermath of the two Roman wars (66–73 and 132–135 CE), the message of the Mishnah cannot have proved more pertinent—or poignant and tragic. The first stage of Rabbinic Judaism’s formation therefore answered a single encompassing question: in the aftermath of the destruction of the holy place and holy cult, what remained of the sanctity of the priestly caste, the holy land, and, above all, Israel and its holy way of life? The answer was that sanctity persists, indelibly, in Israel, the people—in its way of life, in its land, in its priesthood, in its food, in its mode of sustaining life, in its manner of procreating and so sustaining the nation—and that sanctity would endure. But in time to come that answer found itself absorbed within a successor-system, one with its own points of stress and emphasis.

The second phase of Rabbinic Judaism. Rabbinic Judaism, which emerged about 70 CE and reached its final statement in the Talmud Bavli, took shape in response to both internal and external stimuli. Its internal set of questions derived from the character of the Mishnah itself, while its external questions came from the catastrophic political change the Jews underwent following the conversion of the Roman emperor CONSTANTINE I to Christianity in 312 and the subsequent establishment of the Christian religion as the religion of the state.

As soon as the Mishnah made its appearance in about 200 CE the vast labor of explaining its meaning and justifying its authority got under way. The Mishnah presented one striking problem in particular: it rarely cited scriptural authority for its rules. By omitting scriptural proof-texts, the Mishnah bore the implicit claim to an authority independent of Scripture, and in that striking fact the Mishnah set a new course for itself, raising problems for those who would apply its laws. From the time of the formation of ancient Israelite Scripture into a holy book, the Torah—after the return to Zion in Ezra’s time (c. 450 BCE)—the established canon of revelation (whatever its contents) was with Scripture, in that proof-texts were cited alongside their own rules. Otherwise the new writings could find no ready hearing in Israelite culture.

Over the next 650 years after the formation of the Torah, four conventional ways to accommodate new writings, or new “tradition,” to the established canon of received Scripture had come to the fore. First and simplest, a writer would sign a famous name to his book, attributing his ideas to Adam, Enoch, Jacob’s sons, JEREMIAH, Baruch, or any number of others, down to Ezra. But the Mishnah bore no such attribution. Implicitly the Mishnah carried the further notion that sayings of people on the list of authorities from Moses to nearly their own day derived from God’s revelation at Sinai. But no one made that premise explicit before the time of the Talmud Yerushalmi. Second, an author might also imitate the style of biblical Hebrew and so try to creep into the canon under the cloak of Scripture. But the Mishnah’s authors ignore biblical syntax and style. Third, an author would surely claim his work was inspired by God, a new revelation for an open canon. The Mishnah, however, contains no claim that it forms part of the Torah of Sinai; that claim would be added only in the mid-3rd century by the compilers of the *Pirke Abot* (“The Sayings of Our Fathers”), which linked authorities of the Mishnah to Moses on Sinai. Fourth, at the very least, an author would link his opinions to biblical verses by including an EXEGESIS of the latter in line with the former so that Scripture would validate his views. The authorship of the Mishnah did so occasionally, but far more commonly stated on its own authority whatever rules it proposed to lay down.

The solution to the problem of the Mishnah’s authority—that is, its relationship to Scripture—was worked out after its compilation and set forth in the subsequent writings of the rabbis, particularly in the Talmuds, the commentaries to the Mishnah. There were several ways in which the work of legitimization went forward, as represented by diverse documents that succeeded and dealt with the

A page of the tractate Makkot of the fourth order, Neziqin, from the Vilna edition of the Bavli, or Babylonian Talmud, first printed 1880–86. It concerns the fate of a man who was convicted and escaped and how he is to be judged. The box surrounding the Mishnah and code numbers have been superimposed on the page. They indicate a variety of notes, commentaries, and references to Scripture and other Talmudic and Rabbinic sources that span hundreds of years of scholarship

By courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York; Frank J. Darmstadter



Mishnah. The three principal forms of legitimization were: (1) The tractate Abot (c. 250 CE), which represents the authority of the sages cited in Abot as autonomous of Scripture. Abot claims the Mishnah requires no systematic support through exegesis of Scripture in light of Mishnaic laws. The authorities in Abot do not cite verses of Scripture, but what they say does constitute a statement of the Torah. (2) The book TOSEFTA (c. 400 CE), whose authors took the middle position that the Mishnah by itself provided no reliable information and all its propositions demanded linkage to Scripture, to which the Mishnah must be subordinate and secondary. Tosefta very commonly cites a passage of the Mishnah and then adds an appropriate proof text. (3) The far extreme, which states that everything in the Mishnah makes sense only as a (re)statement of Scripture or upon Scripture's authority. This stance was tak-

en by the SIFRA, a post-Mishnaic compilation of exegeses on Leviticus, redacted at an indeterminate point, perhaps about 300 CE. The Sifra systematically demolishes the logic that sustains an autonomous Mishnah, for the Mishnah appeals to the intrinsic traits of things, and those traits allow for classification and hierarchization; it in no way depends on classification from external sources (not even Scripture). Sifra, however, demonstrates that the identification of the correct classification of things depends not upon the traits of things viewed in the abstract but upon the classification of things by Scripture. The framers of the Sifra thus recast the two parts of the Torah into a single coherent statement through unitary and cogent discourse. So the authorship of Sifra made its entire statement by choosing, for structure, a book of the Pentateuch—Leviticus—and, for form, an exegesis of a base-text of Scripture.

THE CHALLENGE OF CHRISTIANITY

Five fundamentally important events in the history of Judaism took place in the 4th and 5th centuries CE. All of them except for the last were well known in their day. These events were as follows: (1) the Christian conversion of the Roman emperor Constantine in 312; (2) the failure of the emperor Julian's (reigned 361–363) plan to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem, seen by Israel as a sign of its reconciliation with God; (3) the beginning of the depaganization of the Roman Empire, including a program of attacks on PAGAN temples and, along the way, synagogues; (4) the Christianization of the majority of the population of Palestine (the land Jews believed God had set apart for the people of Israel); and (5) the creation of the Talmud Yerushalmi and of the compositions of Scriptural exegeses, in particular GENESIS RABBAH and LEVITICUS RABBAH (both part of midrash Rabbah). This world-historical change could not be absorbed into Israel's system of theories on the outsiders (GENTILES), in general, and the meaning of the history of the great empires, in particular. (That theory—coming from, among other places, the books of the prophets—contained the belief that the God of Israel is revealed in the

events of nations and the history of the world, and not only through the rhythms of nature. For example, when God was pleased with Israel, Israel was given self-rule. But the Pentateuch at Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 32–34 stated explicitly that Israel's rule by pagans was God's punishment of Israel's disobedient intransigence toward his covenant.)

Additionally, the Roman Empire under Christianity was fundamentally different in two ways from the Empire under pagan rulers. First, it shared Israel's reverence for exactly the same Holy Scriptures on which Jewry based its existence. So it was no longer a wholly other, entirely alien empire that ruled over the horizon. It was now a monotheist biblical empire, formerly persecuted and not so different from Israel in its basic convictions about the all important matters of time and eternity. The Christian emperors read the same Scriptures as the rabbis, so the challenge to Judaism was acute in a way that the pagan challenge had never been. Second, established policies of more than a half a millennium—from the time of the Maccabees' alliance with Rome to the start of the 4th century—now gave way. Pagan tolerance of Judaism and an accommodation with the Jews in their Holy Land (disrupted only by the Jews' own violation of the terms of the agreement in 66–73 and 132–135) was no longer a governing principle. Instead, there was intolerance of Judaism and persecution of Jews through attacks on their persons and property.

Given the political changes of the age, with their implications for the meaning and end of history as Israel would experience it, the fresh emphasis on salvation, the introduction of the figure of the Messiah as a principal teleological force, the statement of an eschatological teleology for the system as a whole—these constitute answers to questions that were raised by Christian theologians. These theologians held that the Christian triumph confirmed the Godhood of Jesus and thus the rejection of Israel and the end of Israel's hope for salvation at the end of time. The answer offered by Judaic sages was the Torah in its dual media, the affirmation of Israel as children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the coming of the Messiah at the end of time. The questions and answers fit the challenge of the age.

Canon. The text-based answer to Christianity's ascent was revealed in the unfolding of the sages' canon as it pertained to the use of Scripture. The Mishnah and the exegetical literature that served it (*e.g.*, the Tosefta and the Talmuds) had followed a topical organizational pattern that arranged ideas by subject matter. However, in the 3rd and, especially, the later 4th centuries, writings entering the sages' canon took shape around the explanation of verses of Scripture, instead of around a set of topics.

From the 4th century the rabbis produced compositions of biblical exegeses that were collected into holy books. The making of such collections facilitated the next natural step in the process as precipitated by the appearance of the Mishnah. Christianity addressed the world (including the Jews) with a systematic exegetical apologetic—Matthew's and the other Gospels demonstrated a living exegesis showing how events in the life of Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the shared Scripture (the OLD TESTAMENT). The Judaic task of creating a counterpart exegesis of the Mishnah was a pressing issue in the confrontation with Christianity; it became necessary to show in a systematic and orderly way how Scripture was to be read by Israel. In the Mishnah the sages had found a systematic exegesis of Scripture unnecessary since there was no contrary reading to theirs to present a challenge. But confronting the powerful Christian challenge made further indifference impolitic and impossible, and sages replied with their compositions of the Talmud and the midrashic compilations, restating their reading of Scripture in the face of the Christians' interpretation of God's message.

By the 4th century the Christian church had reached a consensus on the bulk of the NEW TESTAMENT canon, having earlier accepted the Old Testament. Accordingly, the issue of what constituted Scripture had come to the fore for Judaism, as Christianity focused the sages' attention on that larger matter of systematic exegesis. This issue was raised, for example, when the Christian scholar JEROME (d. 419/420) referred to the Jews' having a "second" Torah (meaning the oral Torah) that was not authoritative, and when a series of important fathers of the Chris-

tian church produced profoundly Christological exegeses of Scripture. It would be heightened when the sages, speaking on their own and to their chosen audience, went through pretty much the same processes. They explained the standing of that "second Torah" and produced not merely counterpart exegeses to those of the Christians but counterpart compilations of such exegeses as well.

Symbol. As the generative symbol of the literary culture of the sages, the Torah stands for the system of Rabbinic Judaism as a whole. The Torah was symbolic of the doctrine that Moses received the Torah at Mount Sinai in two media, written and oral. The written Torah was transmitted and is now contained in the Pentateuch. The oral Torah was formulated for ease in memorization and then transmitted through sages and their disciples, from Moses and Joshua to the most current generation of rabbis today.

That doctrine of the dual Torah, that is, of the Torah in two media, came about in response to the problem of explaining the standing and authority of the Mishnah. But broadening the symbol of the Torah was actually accomplished around the figure of the sage. The symbol of the Torah accounted for the sages' authority—the sage being the one in possession of God's oral law. Only later on in the pages of the Talmud Yerushalmi did the doctrine of the dual Torah reach expression. So in the evolution of the documents of the canon of Judaism, the generative symbol of Torah reveals a striking change. Beginning as a rather generalized account of how sages' teachings relate to God's will, the symbol of Torah gained concrete form in its application to the dual Torah, written and oral, Pentateuch and Mishnah. What once stood for a few specific books came to stand for all the teachings and laws of Israel, as well as the system that taught and promulgated those laws.

Torah thus took on a multiplicity of meaning: standing for a kind of human being, connoting a social status and group, and referring to a type of social relationship. It further came to denote a legal status, differentiating things and persons, actions and status, as well as "revealed truth." In all, the main points of insistence of the whole of Israel's life and history come to full symbolic expression in that single word. If people wanted to explain how they would be saved, they would use the word Torah. Torah stood for salvation and accounted for Israel's this-worldly condition and the hope, for both individual and nation alike, of life in the world to come. For the kind of Judaism under discussion, therefore, the word Torah stood for everything, symbolizing at once the whole.

After the appearance of the Mishnah, the Torah moved, in two significant stages, from standing for a concrete, material object, a scroll, to symbolizing a broad range of relationships. The first stage is marked off by tractate Abot, the second by the Talmud Yerushalmi. As to the former, Abot regards the study of Torah as what a sage does, while the substance of Torah is what a sage says, and likewise what a sage says falls into the classification of Torah. At issue in Abot is not Torah but the authority of the sage. It is the sage's standing that transforms a saying into a Torah-saying, placing it into the classification of Torah. Abot then stands as the first document of incipient Rabbinic Judaism—the doctrine wherein the sage embodies the Torah and is a holy man in the likeness and image of God, like Moses "our rabbi." So the claim that a saying falls into the category of Torah if a sage says it as Torah leads to the view that the sage himself is Torah incarnate.

To the rabbis the principal salvific deed was to "study Torah," memorizing Torah-sayings by constant repetition, and, as the Yerushalmi itself amply testifies, for some sages this included profound analytic inquiry into the meanings of those sayings. The innovation alters the symbol such that the "study of Torah" is imparted with a material supernatural power. For example, by repeating words of Torah as incantations, the sage could ward off the angel of death, as well as accomplish other kinds of miracles. Mastery of Torah transformed the man engaged in Torah-learning into a supernatural figure, able to do things ordinary folk could not. The vast expansion of the category of "Torah" meant that through the transformation of the Torah from a concrete thing to a symbol, a Torah-scroll could be compared to a man of Torah, namely, a rabbi. It had been established that salvation would come from keeping God's will in general, as Israelite holy men had in-

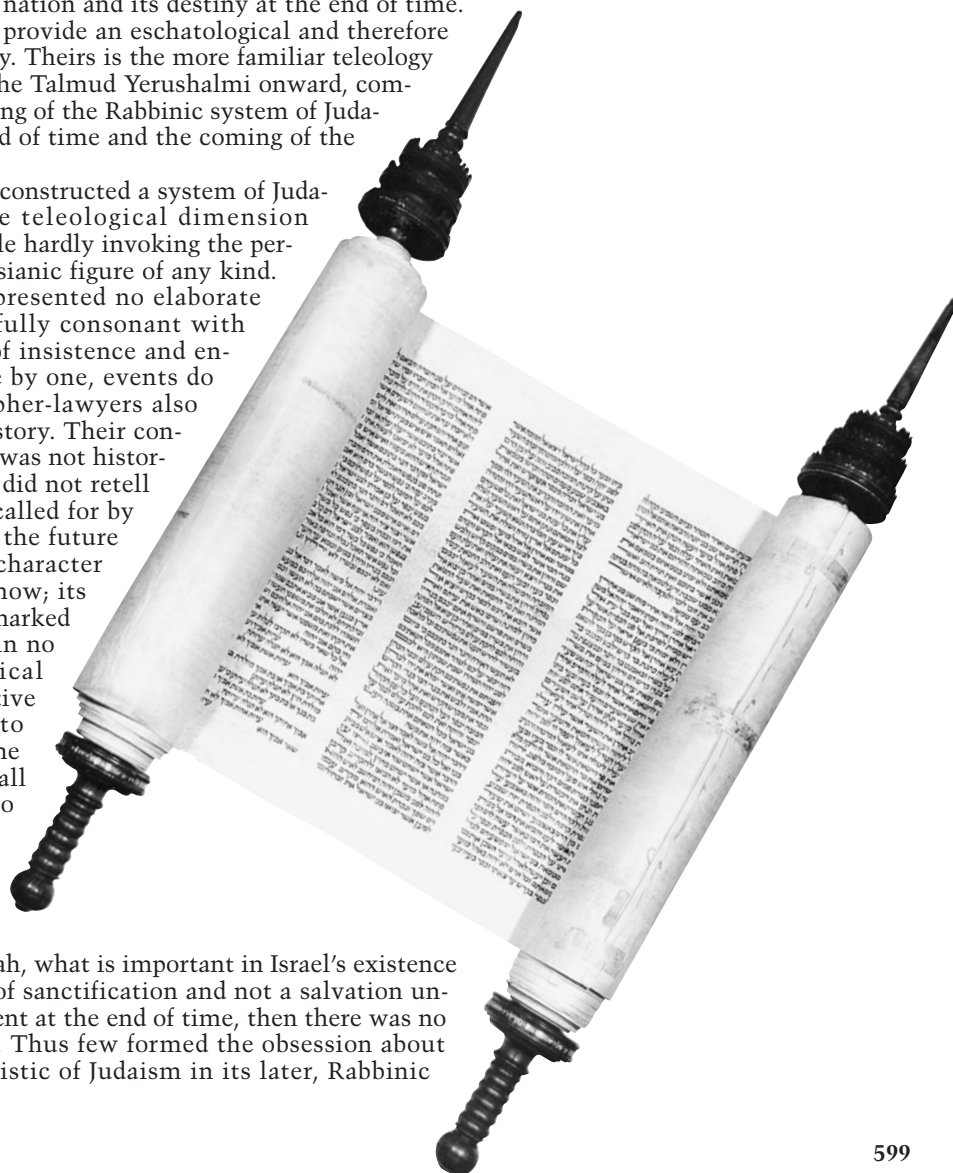
sisted for so many centuries. So it was a small step for rabbis to identify their particular corpus of learning, namely, the Mishnah and associated sayings, with God's will as expressed in Scripture, which was the universally acknowledged medium of revelation.

The symbolization of the Torah proceeded from its removal from the framework of material objects, or of its own contents, to its transformation into something quite different and abstract, distinct from the document and its teachings. Specifically, the Torah stands for something more when it comes to be identified with a living person, the sage, and endowed with those particular traits that the sage claimed for himself.

Teleology. The teleology of a system answers the question of a system's purpose and goal, presupposing that a system has a purpose or goal. Teleology explains why someone should do what the system requires, and what will happen if they do not. The Mishnah and its closely related successor documents, Abot and the Tosefta in particular, present a teleology without eschatological focus (that is, a teleology in which the messianic theme plays no considerable role). These books speak more commonly about preparing in this world for life in the world to come, and focus on the individual and his or her personal salvation, rather than the nation and its destiny at the end of time. By contrast, the Talmuds provide an eschatological and therefore messiah-centered teleology. There is the more familiar teleology of Judaism, which, from the Talmud Yerushalmi onward, commonly explains the meaning of the Rabbinic system of Judaism by referring to the end of time and the coming of the Messiah.

The Mishnah's authors constructed a system of Judaism in which the entire teleological dimension reached full exposure while hardly invoking the person or functions of a messianic figure of any kind. The Mishnah's framers presented no elaborate theory of events, a fact fully consonant with their systematic points of insistence and encompassing concern: one by one, events do not matter. The philosopher-lawyers also exhibited no theory of history. Their conception of Israel's destiny was not historical but existential. They did not retell stories, or teach lessons called for by events. They taught that the future would be shaped by the character of Israel in the here and now; its loyalty to the Torah that marked its covenant with God in no way called upon historical categories of either narrative or didactic explanation to describe and account for the future. Therefore, the small importance attributed to the figure of the Messiah as a historical-eschatological figure is in full accord with the larger traits of the system as a whole. If, as in the Mishnah, what is important in Israel's existence was the ongoing process of sanctification and not a salvation understood as a one-time event at the end of time, then there was no reason to narrate history. Thus few formed the obsession about the Messiah so characteristic of Judaism in its later, Rabbinic

Torah scroll
The Jewish Museum



mode, when a messianic focus formed, in large part, in response to the sudden ascent of Christianity.

The Talmudic reply to political events. With its political triumph, Christianity's explicit claims, now validated in the world-shaking events of the age, demanded a reply. The sages of the Talmud Yerushalmi provided it. Responding to the very specific points where the Christian challenge met old Israel's worldview head-on, the sages' doctrines reemphasized the biblical message that history teaches lessons. They restated the Pentateuchal-prophetic teaching that said Israel's covenant with God accounts for Israel's fate and they stressed the Pentateuchal theme that Israel was to make itself holy because the Lord God is holy and Israel was to be like God. The sages also taught that when Israel had made itself holy ("sanctified") God would respond by saving Israel from its lamentable situation among the nations and bring it back to the Land for judgment and entry into the world to come.

What did Israel's sages have to present as the Torah's answer to the cross, with its doctrine of the triumphant Christ, Messiah and king, ruler now of earth as of heaven? It was the Torah in three forms. The Torah was defined in the doctrine, first, as the status, as oral and memorized revelation, of the Mishnah, and, by implication, of other rabbinical writings. The Torah, moreover, was presented as the encompassing symbol of Israel's salvation. The Torah, finally, was embodied in the person of the Messiah who, of course, would be a rabbi. The outcome was a stunning success for that society for which the sages, and, in the sages' view, God, cared so deeply: eternal Israel "after the flesh" (*i.e.*, those who are Jewish by birth). In the rabbis' statement Judaism did endure in the Christian West, as the sages gave Israel a secure conviction of an Israel after the flesh, to which the Torah continued to speak. We know the sages' Judaism won because when, in turn, Islam gained its victory, Christianity throughout the Middle East and North Africa gave way, leaving only pockets of the faithful. But the sages' Judaism in those same vast territories retained the loyalty and conviction of the people of the Torah. The cross would rule only where the crescent did not, but the Torah of Sinai, sanctified Israel in time everywhere and always, and promised secure salvation for eternity.

RABBINIC JUDAISM'S SUCCESS IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION

The eventual success of Rabbinic Judaism in overcoming Christianity's challenge and holding the faith of its people cannot be attributed only to its power to recapitulate and systematize Scripture's system. Whatever the power of a well-crafted and cogent theology, in the end the political and social world also decided the fate of Rabbinic Judaism. Judaism endured in the Christian West, as well as in the Muslim East, for two reasons. First, Christianity and Islam permitted it, and second, Israel, the Jewish people, wanted it to endure.

The importance of the first of the two factors can be seen in the fate of paganism in the 4th century (and the fate in the 7th and 8th centuries under Islam of ZOROASTRIANISM and Sabianism, a religion that worshiped a moon deity at Harran in Assyria). It was not the intellectual power of sages alone that secured the long-term triumph of Judaism. It also was the Christian emperors' policy toward Judaism that afforded to Jews and their religion such toleration as they would enjoy then and thereafter. There may have been some incidents of ANTI-SEMITISM against Jews or their synagogues, but the religious worship of Judaism was never actually prohibited. Pagan sacrifice, by contrast, came under interdict in 341, and, while pagan festivals went on into the 5th century, the die had been cast.

But the Jews also remained faithful to Rabbinic Judaism because it contained the answers that allowed them to make sense of their world. The Judaism of the dual Torah constructed for Israel a world in which the loss of political sovereignty and the persistence of tolerated subordination within Islamic and Christian nations actually attested to Israel's importance and centrality in the human situation. So the long-term condition of the conquered people found more than mere explanation in that pattern which had defined God's will in the Torah for Israel beyond the first catastrophe and restoration. That generative experience of loss

and restoration, death and resurrection, set forth by the first Scripture allowed Israel to maintain a renewed sense of its own distinctive standing among the nations of the world.

But while Judaism taught the Jews that Israel's subordinated position gave probative evidence of its true standing, Judaism also promised an eventual ascendancy: the low would be raised up, the humble placed into authority, the proud reduced, the world made right. So the Judaism of the dual Torah did more than react: it reassured and encouraged. For a long time that Judaism defined the politics and policy of the community. It instructed Israel, the Jewish people, on the rules for the formation of the appropriate world and it designed those attitudes and actions that would yield an Israel on one side subordinate and tolerated, but on the other proud and hopeful. The Judaism of the dual Torah began with the encounter of a successful Christianity and persisted in the face of a still more successful Islam. But for Israel, the Jewish people, that Judaism persevered long after the conditions that originally precipitated the positions and policies deemed normative, because that same Judaism not only reacted to, but also shaped Israel's condition in the world. In making a virtue of a policy of subordination that was not always necessary or even wise, the Judaism of the dual Torah defined the Jews' condition and set the limits to its circumstance.

The theology of Rabbinic Judaism. The theological beliefs of Rabbinic Judaism—the Judaism that had become the normative system—are as follows: God is one and unique, loving and just. Monotheism by nature explains many things in a single way. One God rules. Life is meant to be fair, and just rules should describe what is ordinary, all in the name of that one and only God. Thus, in monotheism a simple logic governs, limiting the ways of making sense of things. But that logic contains its own dialectics. If one true all-powerful and omniscient God has done everything, then all things are credited to, and blamed on, him. In that case he can be either good or bad, just or unjust—but not both. Responding to the generative dialectics of monotheism, the sages' dual Torah systematically reveals the justice of the one and only God of all creation. God is not only God but he is also good. Appealing to the facts of Scripture—the written part of the Torah—the sages constructed in the documents of the Oral part of the Torah a coherent theology, creating a cogent structure and logical system to expose the justice of God. The theology of the dual Torah presents a world order based on God's justice and equity. The categorical structure of the dual Torah encompasses God and humans, the Torah, and Israel and the nations. The working system of the dual Torah finds its dynamic in the struggle between God's plan for creation—to create a perfect world of justice—and man's will. That dialectic took the events contained in the sequences of rebellion, sin, punishment, repentance, and atonement; exile and return; and embodied them in a single paradigm: the disruption of world order and its subsequent restoration.

The four principles of the dual Torah's theology are as follows:

1. God formed creation according to a plan, which the Torah reveals. The facts



Illuminated page of the Mishneh Torah, written by Moses Maimonides, c. 1351

Giraudon—Art Resource

Jews, longing for a return to the Holy Land, point to a visionary Jerusalem. They are shown with the pointed hats that they were required to wear to distinguish them from Christians, and they are depicted with birds' heads since they felt it was sacrilegious to depict the human form in sacred texts. Illustration from the Birds' Head Haggadah, southern Germany, c. 1300

By courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem



of nature and society set forth in that plan conform to a pattern of reason based upon justice, showing the world order. Those who possess the Torah (Israel) know God and those who do not (the Gentiles) reject him in favor of idols. What happens to each of these two sectors of humanity depends on their respective relationship with God. Israel in the present age is subordinate to the nations, because God has designated the Gentiles as the medium for penalizing Israel's rebellion, provoking Israel to repent through its subordination and exile. Private life and the public order conform to the principle that God rules justly in a perfected and static creation.

2. The perfection of creation, as realized in the rule of exact justice, is signified by the timelessness of the world of human affairs—this world conforms to a few enduring paradigms that transcend change (a theory known as the theology of history). Time is marked not by present, past, or future but only by the recapitulation of those patterns. Perfection is further embodied in the unchanging relationships of the social

commonwealth (an idea known as the theology of political economy), assuring that scarce resources, once allocated, remain in stasis. A further indication of perfection lies on one side in how the components of creation complement one another, and on the other, the correspondence between God and man, who was made in God's image (known as theological anthropology).

3. Israel's public and personal condition marks flaws in creation. Perfection is disrupted by the sole power capable of standing on its own against God's power: man's FREE WILL. What man controls and God cannot coerce is man's capacity to form intention and therefore choose to either arrogantly defy God or humbly love God. Because man defies God, the sin that results from man's rebellion flaws creation and disrupts world order (a view known as theodicy, which defends the goodness of God despite evil in the world). The paradigm of Adam's rebellion in Eden governs; thus the act of arrogance leading to exile from Eden accounts for the condition of humanity. But, as in the original transaction of alienation and consequent exile, God retains the power to encourage repentance through the punishment of man's arrogance. In mercy, moreover, God exercises the power to respond to repentance with forgiveness; a change of attitude can evoke a counterpart change. Since he commands his own will, man also has the power to initiate the process of reconciliation with God, through an act of humility and repentance, man may restore the perfection of that order that his arrogance has marred.

4. God ultimately will restore the perfection that embodied his plan for creation. In this restoration death by reason of sin will die, the dead will be raised and judged for their deeds, and most of them, having been justified, will go on to eternal life in the world to come. The paradigm of man's restoration to Eden is realized in Israel's, the people's, return to the Land of Israel at the resurrection of the dead and the LAST JUDGMENT. In the language of the Mishnah tractate Sanhedrin, "All Israel has a portion in the world to come," meaning that Israel, the people, will be brought back to the land, judged, and (in most cases) granted eternal life in Eden. (This eschatological theology should not be confused with contemporary political and secular events.) In that world or age to come the sector of hu-

manity that knows God through the Torah will encompass all of humanity. Idolators will perish, and the humanity that comprises Israel at the end will know the one, true God and spend eternity in his light.

Here we have nothing other than the Pentateuch's paradigm of exile and return, beginning with the fall of Adam and the loss of Eden, and paralleled in the fall of Israel and the loss of the Land of Israel, Jerusalem, and the Temple. But the sages underscored that, as prophecy insisted, through return to God, Israel would recover and keep its Eden. And, they added, even now on certain occasions and through certain rites and practices on the Sabbath Israel could regain Eden for a moment. In the dual Torah the rabbis reworked Scripture's story, trying to translate its lessons into the organizational norms of the community of Israel. The law represented the conclusions drawn by sages from Scripture's story about humanity from Genesis through Israel in 586. Furthermore, the liturgy of synagogue and home recapitulates the characteristic modes of thought of the dual Torah and reworks its distinctive constructions of exemplary figures, events, and conceptions. In defining the religion the world calls "Judaism" and that calls itself "the Torah," sages have always maintained that they possessed the Torah revealed by God to Moses at Mount Sinai ("Moses received Torah at Sinai and handed it on to Joshua, Joshua to elders, and elders to prophets, and prophets handed it on to the men of the great assembly" [Mishnah Abot 1:1]). As a matter of fact, by making the theology of the dual Torah the pivot between the written Torah and the liturgy and piety of the faith, the sages were right in registering that claim.

Set forth baldly, Rabbinic Judaism takes up the critical theological heritage of the Hebrew Scriptures and hands it on to the age to come as an ordered, coherent, integrated system. Sages take as their task the recapitulation of the structure and system that they identify with the written Torah and encompass within that theology their own, as we see, very limited amplifications. For sages implicitly insist that those very ideas—that logic, this story of theirs—do recapitulate the ones set forth by the written Torah. Their heirs, in early medieval times, saw in the dual Torah, written and oral, a single coherent revelation: "the one whole Torah given by God to Moses, our rabbi, at Sinai." That apologetics, integral to the theology of the oral Torah, takes a critical position in nearly every line of every document. It defines the form of many documents and the generative energy of them all.

The hegemony of Rabbinic Judaism. In the history of Judaism from the 7th to the 20th centuries two facts attested to the power of Rabbinic Judaism. First, the Judaic system was able to absorb massive innovations in modes of thought and media of piety. Second, the same system defined issues so that heresies took shape in explicit response to its doctrines, showing that the system predominated to the extent that it dictated the character of its critics and enemies.

The power of the Judaism of the dual Torah and the cogency of the system is attested to by its capacity to both precipitate and also accommodate diverse Judaisms. Over the centuries, from the 4th to the present time, derivative systems took shape, restating in distinctive ways the fundamental convictions of the Judaism of the dual Torah, or adding their particular perspective or doctrine to that system.

Others attained heretical status specifically by rejecting important components of the received system—*e.g.*, its doctrine of the dual Torah or of the Messiah as a sage and model of the Torah fully observed. So long as the self-evident truth of the established Judaism persisted for believers, each of these derivative systems—orthodox or heretical—had a relationship with that fundamentally paramount statement of matters. It was only when this received Judaism no longer enjoyed a virtually unique standing as the valid answer to urgent questions that Judaic systems took shape that were utterly out of phase with that system that had reached its initial version in the 4th century and its final one in the Talmud Bavli.

Within Rabbinic Judaism, however, most of the diverse systems found ample space for their beliefs without resorting to HERESY. Some of these systems concerned new doctrines which had to be brought into accord with the received ones. Among them, for example, was a massive rethinking of the very modes of thought of Judaism, which took shape over a long period of time, moving from

mythic to philosophical thinking. The philosophical movement presents striking testimony to the power of the received system, for it set out to validate and vindicate the faith of that system, inclusive of the law and doctrine of the oral Torah. Each continuator-Judaism laid its stress on a received component of the original system or explicitly reaffirmed the whole of that system, while adding to it in interesting ways. All of the continuator-Judaisms claimed to stand in a linear and incremental relationship to the original. For example, they made constant reference to the established and authoritative canon or affirmed the importance of meticulous obedience to the law. Each one in its own way proposed to strengthen, purify or otherwise confirm the dual Torah of Sinai.

SUBSETS OF RABBINIC JUDAISM

New modes of thought and the advent of philosophical thinking. Because of the character of Islamic culture, the rise of Islam brought important intellectual changes to Judaism. The system set forth by Rabbinic Judaism accommodated this new mode of thought. Specifically, Muslim theologians—who could read Greek (or who read Greek philosophy translated into Arabic)—developed a rigorous, abstract, and scientific mode of thought along philosophical lines, with special interest in a close reading of Aristotle, one of the founders of the philosophical tradition. Rabbinic Judaism, embodied in the great authorities of the Torah, naturalized philosophy within the framework of the dual Torah. While in ancient times a school of Judaic philosophy in the Greek-speaking Jewish world—represented by Philo of Alexandria (d. 45–50 CE)—read Scripture in a philosophical light, the sages of the Talmud did not follow that generalizing and speculative mode of thought. But as the Judaic intellectuals under Muslim rule faced the challenge of Muslim RATIONALISM and philosophical rigor, they read Scripture as well as the oral Torah in a new way, attempting to reconcile and accommodate

*Hasidic Jews,
New York City*
Photo Researchers



the one with the other. In medieval Islamdom and Christendom, no Judaic intellectuals could rest easy in an admission of conflict between Scripture and science in its philosophical form.

Thus, alongside study of Torah—the spending of one’s life in learning the Talmud Bavli and later codes, commentaries, and rabbinical court decisions—a different sort of intellectual-religious life flourished in classical Judaism. It was the study of the tradition through the instruments of reason and the discipline of philosophy. The philosophical enterprise attracted small numbers of elitists and mainly served their specialized spiritual and intellectual needs. But they set the standard, and those who followed it included the thoughtful and the perplexed—those who took the statements of the tradition most seriously and intended through questioning and reflection, to examine and then effect them. The philosophers, moreover, did not limit their activities to study and teaching; they frequently occupied high posts within the Jewish community and served in the high society of politics, culture, and science outside the community as well. Though not numerous, the philosophers exercised considerable influence.

Philosophy flourished in a world of deep religious conviction—a conviction common to the several disparate religious communities. The issues of philosophy were set not by lack of belief but by deep faith; few, if any, denied the ideas of providence, a personal God, and a holy book revealed by God through his chosen messenger. Nearly everyone believed in reward and punishment, in a last judgment, and in a settling of accounts. The Jewish philosopher had to cope with problems imposed not only by the classical faith but also by the anomalous situation of the Jews themselves. How was philosophy to account reasonably for the homelessness of God’s people, who were well aware that they lived as a minority among powerful, prosperous majorities of Christians or Muslims? If Torah were true, why did different revelations claiming to be based upon it—but to complete it—flourish while the people of the Torah suffered? Why, indeed, ought one remain a Jew when every day one was confronted by the success of the daughter religions? For a member of a despised minority conversion was always an inviting possibility, even under the best of circumstances. The search was complicated by the formidable appeal of Greek philosophy to medieval Christian and Islamic civilization. Philosophy’s rationalism, openness, and search for pure knowledge challenged all revelations, and called into question all assertions of truth that were verifiable not through reason but only through appeals to a source of truth not universally recognized. Thus it seemed reason stood against revelation. Mysterious divine plans came into conflict with allegations of the limitless capacity of human reason: free inquiry might lead anywhere, and not necessarily to the synagogue, church, or mosque. And not just traditional knowledge, but the specific propositions of faith and the assertions of a holy book had to be measured against the results of reason. Faith or reason—this seemed to be the choice.

For the Jews, moreover, a formidable obstacle was posed by the very substance of their faith in a personal, highly anthropomorphic God who exhibited character traits not always in conformity with humanity’s highest ideals and who in rabbinic hands looked much like the rabbi himself. Classical philosophical conundrums were further enriched by the obvious contradictions between belief in free will and belief in divine providence. Is God all-knowing? Then how can people be held responsible for what they do? Is God perfect? Then how can he change his mind or set aside his laws to forgive people? No theologian in such a cosmopolitan, rational age could permit the assertion of a double truth or a private, relative truth. There was little appeal in the notion that something could be true for one party and not for another, or that faith and reason were equally valid and yet contradictory. The holy book had to retain the upper hand. Two philosophers represent the best efforts of medieval Judaic civilization to confront these perplexities.

Maimonides (1135–1204). First is MOSES MAIMONIDES, who was a distinguished student of the Talmud and of Jewish law in the classical mode, a community authority, a great physician, and a leading thinker of his day. His achievement was to synthesize a Neoplatonic Aristotelianism with biblical revelation. His *The Guide of the Perplexed* (original Arabic title, *Dalālat al-ḥā’irīn*, later known un-

der its Hebrew title as the *More nevukhim*), compiled in 1190, was intended to reconcile the believer to the philosopher and the philosopher to faith. For him philosophy was not alien to religion but identical with it, for in the end truth was the sole issue. Faith is a form of knowledge; philosophy is the road to faith. His proof for the existence of God was Aristotelian. He argued from creation to Creator but accepted the eternity of the world. God becomes, therefore an "absolutely simple essence from which all positive definition is excluded" (Julius Guttman, *Philosophies of Judaism: The History of Jewish Philosophy from Biblical Times to Franz Rosenzweig*, trans. by David Silverman [1964], p. 158). One can say nothing about the attributes of God. He is purged of all sensuous elements. One can say only that God is God, and nothing more, for God can only be known as the highest cause of being.

What then of revelation? Did God not say anything about himself? And if he did, what need is there for reasonings such as these? For Maimonides, prophecy, like philosophy, depends upon the active intellect (human intellectual and imaginative capabilities). Prophecy is a gift bestowed by God upon man. The Torah and commandments are clearly important, but ultimately are not beyond question or reasonable inquiry. They, however, survive the inquiry unimpaired. The Torah fosters a sound mind and body. The greatest good, however, is not to study Torah in the sense described earlier, but rather to know God—that is, to worship and love him. Piety and knowledge of Torah serve merely to prepare people for this highest achievement. The study of Torah loses its character as an end in itself and becomes a means to a philosophical goal. This constituted the most striking transformation of the old values.

Maimonides provided a philosophical definition of Judaism—a list of articles of faith he thought obligatory for every faithful Jew. These required beliefs are as follows: (1) that God exists, (2) he has absolute unity, (3) he is incorporeal, (4) he is eternal, (5) he must be worshiped exclusively, (6) he speaks through prophecy, (7) that Moses was the greatest of the prophets, (8) that the Torah is divine in origin, (9) that the Torah is eternally valid, (10) that God has knowledge of man's deeds, (11) that God will reward and punish mankind, (12) that God has promised to send a messiah, and (13) that God has promised to resurrect the dead. The esoteric words of the philosopher were thus transformed into a message of faith complex enough to sustain critical inquiry according to the canons of the day and simple enough to bear the weight of the faith of ordinary folk and to be sung in the synagogue, as the hymn entitled "Yigdal." The "God without attributes" remains guide, refuge, and stronghold.

Judah ha-Levi (1080–1141). JUDAH HA-LEVI was a poet and mystic who represented those Jews who did not concur with Maimonides' position; who found the philosophers presumptuous, inadequate, and incapable of investigating the truths of faith. But the critics of "philosophy" were themselves philosophers. Judah ha-Levi produced *Sefer ha-Kuzari* ("Book of the Khazar"), a work that comprised a set of dialogues between a king in search of true religion and advocates of the religious and philosophical positions of the day, including Judaism. (The monarch was the king of the Khazar [now southeastern Russia], a kingdom which did, in fact, adopt Judaism about the 8th century.) Judah ha-Levi objected to philosophy's indifference to the comparative merits of the competing traditions, since in philosophy's approach, religion is recommended, but which religion does not matter much. Such an indifference may have been tolerable for the majority religions in the West—Islam and Christianity—but not for a minority destined any day to have to die for their faith.

Judah ha-Levi argues that martyrdom such as Jews faced will not be evoked by the unmoved mover, the God anyone may reach through either revelation or reason. Only for the God of Israel will a Jew give up his or her life. By its nature, philosophy is insufficient for the religious quest. It can hardly compete with—let alone challenge—the history of the Jewish people, which records extraordinary events centering on God's revelation. What does philosophy have to do with Sinai, the land, or prophecy? On the contrary, in expounding religion to the king of the Khazars, the Jew begins not like the philosopher with a disquisition on divine

attributes, nor like the Christian who starts with the works of creation and expounds the TRINITY, nor like the Muslim who acknowledges the unity and eternity of God. The Jew states: "I believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, who led the Israelites out of Egypt with signs and miracles; who fed them in the desert and gave them the Land, after having made traverse the sea and the Jordan in a miraculous way; who sent Moses with his Torah and subsequently thousands of prophets, who confirmed his law by promises to those who observed and threats to the disobedient. We believe in what is contained in the Torah—a very large domain" (Isaak Heinemann, "Judah Halevi, Kuzari," in *Three Jewish Philosophers*, ed. by Isaak Heinemann, Alexander Altmann, and Hans Lewy [1960], p. 33).

In *Sefer ha-Kuzari* the king then asks: Why did the Jew not say he believes in the creator of the world and in similar attributes common to all creeds? The Jew responds that the evidence for Israel's faith is Israel, the people, and its history and endurance, and not the kinds of reasonable truths offered by other traditions. The proof of revelation is the testimony of those who were there and wrote down what they heard, saw, and did. If so, the king wonders, what accounts for the despised condition of Israel today? The Jew compares Israel to the dry bones of EZEKIEL: "These bones, which have retained a trace of vital power and have once been the seat of a heart, head, spirit, soul, and intellect, are better than bones formed of marble and plaster, endowed with heads, eyes, ears, and all limbs, in which there never dwelt the spirit of life" (ibid., p. 72). God's people is Israel; he rules them and keeps them in their present status: "Israel amid the nations is like the heart amid the organs: it is the most sick and the most healthy of them all . . . The relationship of the Divine power to us is the same as that of the soul to the heart. For this reason it is said, 'You only have I known among all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities' (AMOS 3:2) . . . Now we are oppressed, while the whole world enjoys rest and prosperity. But the trials which meet us serve to purify our piety, cleanse us, and to remove all taint from us" (ibid., p. 75).

The pitiful condition of Israel is, therefore, turned into the primary testimony and vindication of Israel's faith. That Israel suffers is the best assurance of divine concern since the suffering constitutes the certainty of coming redemption. In the end, the Jew parts from the king in order to undertake a journey to the Land of Israel, where he will seek perfection with God. The king objects to this. He thought that the Jew loved freedom, but will find himself in bondage by imposing upon himself those duties obligatory for a Jew residing in the Land of Israel. The Jew replies that the freedom he seeks is from the service of men and the courting of their favor. He seeks the service of one whose favor is obtained with the smallest effort: "His service is freedom, and humility before him is true honor." He therefore turns to Jerusalem to seek the holy life. There is no effort to identify Judaism with rational truth, but rather there is the claim that the life of the pious Jew stands above truth—indeed constituting the best testimony to it.

Judah ha-Levi proposes that the source of truth is biblical revelation and that this revelation was public, complete, and fully in the light of history. History, not philosophy, testifies to the truth and in the end constitutes its sole criterion. Philosophy claims that reason can find the way to God. Judah ha-Levi says that only God can show the way to God, and he does so through revelation, and therefore through history. For the philosopher, God is the object of knowledge. For Judah ha-Levi, God is the subject of knowledge. And Israel has a specifically religious faculty that mediates the relationship to God; in references the role of Israel among the nations is similar to the role of the heart among the organs. Judah ha-Levi seeks to explain the supernatural status of Israel. The religious faculty is Israel's peculiar inheritance and makes it the core of humanity. But while the rest of humanity is subject to the laws of nature, Israel is subject to supernatural, divine providence, manifested in reward and punishment. The very condition of the Jews, in that God punishes them, verifies the particular place of Israel in the divine plan. The teaching of prophecy returns in Judah ha-Levi's philosophy.

Judah ha-Levi and Maimonides were part of a number of important thinkers who attempted to meet the challenge of philosophy and of reason by constructing

a comprehensive theological system. While they were much like the Muslim and Christian intellectuals in mentality, the Jewish philosophers had more in common with the Talmudic rabbis than with Gentile philosophers. The rabbis accepted the Bible and the Talmud and Mishnah as “the whole Torah,” and so did the Jewish philosophers. Both groups devoted themselves to the articulation of the role of Torah in the life of Israel, to the meaning of the fate of Israel, and to the effort to form piety and shape faith. And for both reason was the means of reaching into Torah—of recovering and achieving truth. Both agreed that words could contain and convey the sacred, and, therefore, reason was, through the examination of the meaning and referents of words, the golden measure. They differed only in the object of reason; one studied law, the other, philosophy. Yet Maimonides, the complete and whole Jew, studied both and made a lasting impact upon the formation of not only both sorts of Judaic tradition but also of the pious imagination of the ordinary Jew. This is because he translated his philosophical and theological principles and convictions into his presentation of the concrete, practical law.

Media of piety—mysticism and Hasidism. Not only did Rabbinic Judaism draw strength from new modes of thought, it also accommodated emphases in piety that placed a higher value on direct encounter with God and on spiritual gifts, even more than upon knowledge of the Torah. In mid-18th century Poland and Lithuania, HASIDISM, a mystical movement drawing upon the resources of the QABBALAH, began with emphases quite at variance with those of Rabbinic Judaism. Though Hasidism favors the holy man’s direct encounter with God over the sages’ meeting God in the Torah, it ultimately found a central place in its piety for Torah-study. Hasidism developed in mystic circles in Lithuania and Poland which carried on practices that marked them as different from other Jews—for example, special prayers, distinctive ways of observing certain religious duties, and the like. The first among the leaders of the movement of ecstasies and anti-ascetics, Israel ben Eliezer BA’AL SHEM ̇OV, “the Besht,” worked as a popular healer. From the 1730s onward he traveled and attracted circles of followers in Podolia (a region in present-day western Ukraine), Poland, Lithuania, and elsewhere. When he



The Exodus, carrying Holocaust refugees from Europe, lands at Haifa, Palestine, on July 18, 1947

Archive France/Tallandier—Archive Photos

died in 1760 he left behind a broad variety of disciples, followers, and admirers in southeastern Poland and Ukraine. Leadership of the movement passed to a succession of holy men, about whom stories were told and preserved. In the third generation, from the third quarter of the 18th century into the first of the 19th, the movement spread and took hold. Diverse leaders, holy men and charismatic figures called zaddikim, developed their own standing and doctrine.

Given the controversies that swirled about the movement, we would expect many of its basic ideas to have been new. But that was hardly the case. The movement drew heavily on available mystical books and doctrines, which from medieval times onward had won a place within the faith as part of the Torah. The Hasidic thinkers' emphasis on a given doctrine should not obscure the profound continuities between the modern movement and its medieval sources. To take one example of how the movement imparted its own imprint on an available idea, Menaḥem Mendel Schneerson of Lubavich notes that God's oneness—surely a given in all Judaisms—means more than that God is unique. It means that God is all that is: "There is no reality in created things. This is to say that in truth all creatures are not in the category of something or a thing as we see them with our eyes. For this is only from our point of view, since we cannot perceive the divine vitality. But from the point of view of the divine vitality which sustains us, we have no existence and we are in the category of complete nothingness like the rays of the sun in the sun itself. . . . From which it follows that there is no other existence whatsoever apart from his existence, blessed be he. This is true unification." (cited by Louis Jacobs, "Basic Ideas of Hasidism," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* [1972], vol. 7, col. 1404). Since all things are in God, the suffering and sorrow of the world cannot be said to exist. So to despair is to sin.

Hasidism laid great stress on joy and avoiding melancholy. It also maintained that religious deeds must be carried out in a spirit of devotion. The doctrine of Hasidism moreover held that, "In all things there are 'holy sparks' (*nizozot*) waiting to be redeemed and rescued for sanctity through man using his appetites to serve God. The very taste of food is a pale reflection of the spiritual force which brings the food into being" (*ibid.*, col. 1405). Before carrying out a religious deed, the Hasid would recite the formula, "For the sake of the unification of the Holy One, blessed be he, and his SHEKHINAH [presence in the world]." On that account they were criticized. But Hasidism was defined by the fundamental pattern of life and received worldview contained in the holy canon of Judaism. Hasidism therefore constituted a Judaism within Judaism—distinctive, yet related closely enough in its major traits to the Judaism of the dual Torah as to be indistinguishable except in trivial details. But one of these details mattered a great deal, and that is the doctrine of zaddikism: the ZADDIK, or holy man, had the power to raise the prayers of the followers and to work miracles. The zaddik was the means through which GRACE reached the world, as he was the one who controlled the universe through his prayers. The zaddik would bring humanity nearer to God and God closer to humanity. The Hasidim were well aware that this doctrine of the zaddik—the pure and elevated soul that could reach to that realm of heaven in which only mercy reigns—represented an innovation. As did the massive opposition to Hasidism organized by the great sages of the Torah of that time.

By the end of the 18th century this powerful opposition, led by the most influential figures of Eastern European Judaism, characterized Hasidism as heretical. Hasidism's stress on ECSTASY, visions, miracles of the leaders, and its enthusiastic way of life were seen as delusions, and the veneration of the zaddik was interpreted as worship of a human being. The stress on prayer to the denigration of study of the Torah likewise called into question the legitimacy of the movement. In this war Hasidism found itself anathematized, its books burned, and its leaders vilified: "They must leave our communities with their wives and children . . . and they should not be given a night's lodging; . . . it is forbidden to do business with them and to intermarry with them or to assist at their burial." Under these circumstances, no one could have anticipated Hasidism finding a place for itself in what would at some point be deemed Orthodoxy. But it did. By the 1830s Hasidism, which began as a persecuted sect, now defined the way of life of the Jews in

Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism
Archive Photos





A Jewish family from Yemen celebrates Passover
Popperfoto

the Ukraine, Galicia (now in modern day Poland and Ukraine), and central Poland, with offshoots in White Russia (present-day Belarus) and Lithuania on one side and Hungary on the other. Waves of emigration from the 1880s onward carried the movement to Western Europe, and, in the aftermath of World War II, to the United States as well as the state of Israel. Today the movement forms a powerful component of Orthodox Judaism, demonstrating Rabbinic Judaism's capacity to find strength by naturalizing once-alien modes of thought and media of piety.

HERETICAL SYSTEMS

Karaism and Shabbetaianism.

Whereas some religions—Roman Catholicism, for example—have central authorities that define what is orthodox belief, no such authority existed for the Judaism of the dual Torah. Yet still, as we

shall see, the dual Torah did come to define what was orthodox for Judaism—as judged by the fact that nearly all movements considered heretical by Jews were formed in direct opposition to the system of the dual Torah, which, in its ascendancy, defined the limits of heresy, imposing its values and stresses upon the contrary-minded statements of the age.

In the age of the dual Torah's dominance of Judaism it is difficult to find evidence that the dual Torah faced heresies essentially alien to its structure and system. From the 4th to the 19th century in Christendom, and to the mid-20th century in the Muslim world, Judaic heresies commonly took a position on exactly the program and agenda of the Judaism of the dual Torah. What characterized a heresy then was the rejection of one or another of the definitive doctrines of the norm. Two systemic heresies addressed a fundamental plank in the platform of the Judaism of the dual Torah. KARAIISM denied the myth of the dual Torah, and Shabbetaianism rejected the doctrine of the messiah as defined in the classical system and created a new doctrine within the received structure and system: a messiah outside of the law.

The indicative trait of the Judaism of the dual Torah was the doctrine that at Sinai God revealed the Torah to be transmitted thorough two media, written (the Pentateuch) and oral (which would eventually be written down in such canonical works as the Mishnah and Talmuds). Focusing upon that central belief, Karaism denied that God revealed to Moses at Sinai more than the written Torah, and explicitly condemned belief in an oral one. Karaism advocated the return to Scripture as against tradition, inclusive of rabbinic tradition. Although Karaism claimed to originate in biblical times and to derive its doctrine from the true priest, Zadok, the sect took shape in the 8th century in Babylonia in the period following the formation of the Talmud of Babylonia, on the one side, and the rise of Islam, on the other. The founder of the movement, ANAN BEN DAVID, claimed then to have recovered the original Torah of Moses. Ben David imposed rules concerning food that were stricter than the rabbis', and in other ways he legislated a version of the law of a more strict character than the Talmudic authorities admitted. The basic principle of Karaism was that Scriptures were to be studied freely, independently, and individually so that no uniformity of view could emerge. Given the stress placed by the Judaism of the dual Torah on the authority of the Tal-

mud and related canonical documents, we could not find a more precise statement of the opposite view.

The Shabbetaian movement was a 17th-century messianic movement organized around the figure of SHABBETAI TZEVI (1626–76) and is important in that it defined the messiah not as a sage who kept and embodied the law as did the Judaism of the dual Torah, but as the very opposite. Shabbetaianism posited the messiah as a holy man who violated the law in letter and in spirit, but by doing so in a complete reversal of the sage-messiah of the Judaism of the dual Torah, the Shabbetaian movement, like Karaism, also paid its respects to the received system.

RABBINIC JUDAISM MEETS COMPETITION

Between the 4th and the 19th centuries, Rabbinic Judaism in its classical paradigm found the strength to absorb innovation in intellectual life and in piety and even to define the character of heresies. When politics revised the urgent question facing Israel, Rabbinic Judaism began to face competition from other Judaisms, including both those that continued its system and those that rejected it altogether. Specifically, in modern times in the West (though not in Muslim countries) the long-established system of Judaism formed in ancient days—the worldview and way of life, that was addressed to a distinctive Israel and was framed in response to urgent and perennial questions—lost its near-monopoly among Judaisms. That received Judaic system—built on the experience of exile and return and modified in the oral Torah to encompass the sanctification of the life of the people as the condition of the salvation of the nation at the end of time—competed with, and even gave way to, a number of systems. Some Judaisms, such as Reform and Orthodoxy, stood in direct continuation with the received system, revering its canon and repeating its main points. Others utterly rejected the mythic structure and system of the Judaism of the dual Torah. These are represented by Zionism—originally a political, and not a religious, system—and the American Judaism of HOLOCAUST and Redemption, a system that completely ignores the Torah as generative symbol. But, as we shall see, these two systems also recapitulate the original system's pattern of exile and return, one of them explicitly, the other structurally.

A political change in the circumstance of the Jews in central and western Europe as well as in the United States demanded a rethinking of "Who is Israel?" and what it meant to be Israel, because Christianity could no longer be used to define the terms of debate. The original paradigm—that of exile and return—had emerged out of an essentially political problem confronting the authors of the Torah, namely, defining Israel within the political hegemony of Christianity. In subsequent settings the Rabbinic paradigm served to create a powerful and definitive myth of "Who is Israel?" The thought of Jews about perennial questions was affected by a stunning shift in the political circumstance of Judaism in the West brought about by the American Constitution of 1787 and the French Revolution of 1789. What happened from the end of the 18th century was the secularization of political life and institutions. Earlier modes of organization had recognized differing groups, guilds, and classes as political entities, and the Jews had found a place among them. In the hierarchical scheme, with church, monarchy, and aristocracy in their "proper" alignment, other political entities could likewise find their location. With church disestablished, monarchy rejected, and aristocracy no longer dominant in politics, the political unit became (theoretically at least) the undifferentiated individual making up the nation-state. That theory left no room for a collective such as Israel, the Jewish people, when viewed as a political unit, though (again, in theory) there might be room for the Jewish individual alongside other undifferentiated individuals. This produced a considerable crisis for the Judaism of the dual Torah.

In the aftermath of the changes in Western politics in the 19th century, Jews indeed asked themselves whether and how they could be something in addition to Jewish, and initially that something invariably found expression in the name of the locale in which they lived, whether it be France, Germany, Britain, or the United States. Could one be both Jewish and, for instance, German? That ques-

The blessing of the Sabbath candles, a weekly ritual performed by women that marks the beginning and end of the Sabbath

Hershkowitz—Monkmeyer



tion found its answer in two givens: the datum of the received Judaism of the dual Torah and the datum that being German or French imposed certain clearly defined responsibilities as well.

The Jews had formerly constituted a distinct group and in Eastern Europe and the Muslim countries they continued to. Now in the West, however, they, in theory, formed part of an undifferentiated mass of citizens, all of them equal before and subject to the same law. The Judaism of the dual Torah rested on the political premise that the Jews were governed by God's law and formed God's people. The two political premises of the nation-state and of the Torah

scarcely permitted reconciliation. The consequent Judaic systems in the 19th century, REFORM JUDAISM and ORTHODOX JUDAISM, each addressed issues regarded as acute and not merely chronic and alleged that they formed the natural next step in the unfolding of "the tradition," meaning the Judaic system of the dual Torah. The Judaic systems born in the 20th century did not make that claim, but they recapitulated that pattern, familiar from the very beginning of the Torah, that taught them what to expect and how to explain what happened.

The further political shift in the 20th century confronted Jews with a different and still more acute question: whether and how they could be human beings, if they were, or had been, Jewish. The 20th-century innovation of totalitarianism, whether Soviet-Communist or German-Nazi, made its imprint in full force upon the Judaic agenda. The question that then predominated became: where and how could the Jew endure? Its self-evident answer was: not among Gentiles, but only in the Jewish state, and this response produced one Judaism for the Jews of the state of Israel, and another, quite different one for the Jews of the Western democracies. Yet, at the threshold of the 21st century, it was only in those two environments that Jews found themselves free enough to ask such questions and receive such answers at all.

CONTINUATOR-JUDAISMS OF THE 19TH CENTURY

Reform Judaism. From the perspective of the political changes taking place following the American and French revolutions, the received system of the Juda-

ism of the dual Torah answered only irrelevant questions and did not respond to acute ones. Secular nationalism conceived of society not as the expression of God's will for the social order under the rule of Christ and his Church or his anointed king (or emperor or tsar), but as the expression of popular will for the social order under the government of the people and their elected representatives—a considerable shift. When society does not form the aggregate of distinct groups—each with its place and definition, language and religion, but rather undifferentiated citizens (though male, white, and wealthy, to be sure)—then the Jews in such a society will have to work out a different order of Judaism altogether. That Judaism will have to frame a theory of “who is Israel?” that is consonant with the social situation of Jews who are willing to be different, but not so different that they cannot also be citizens. Both Reform and Orthodoxy responded to this concern. Each rightly claimed to continue the received “tradition,” that is, the Judaism of the dual Torah.

The world at large no longer verified, as had the world of Christendom and Islamdom, the generative social category of Israel's life that saw Israel as supernatural entity. This raised the problem of defining what sort of entity Israel did constitute, what sort of way of life should characterize it, and what sort of worldview should explain it. This produced a new set of questions, and, in the nature of things, also self-evidently true answers. The American Reform rabbis, meeting in Pittsburgh in 1885 (*see also* PITTSBURGH PLATFORM), issued a clear and accessible statement of their Judaism:

We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only its moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization. . . . We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regular diet, priestly purity, and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. . . . Their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation. . . . We recognize, in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect, the approaching of the realization of Israel's great messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice, and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.

Here we find a Judaism in theoretical formulation, answering the key questions, “Who is Israel? What is its way of life? How does it account for its existence as a distinct, and distinctive, group?” Israel once was a nation (“during its national life”) but today is not. It once had a set of laws that regulated diet, clothing, and the like, which no longer apply, because Israel is not now what it was then. However, Israel forms an integral part of Western civilization. The reason to persist as a distinctive group was that the group has its work to do—namely, to realize the “messianic hope for the establishment of a kingdom of truth, justice, and peace.” For that purpose Israel no longer constituted a nation. It formed a religious community.

Orthodox Judaism. The term Orthodoxy in connection with Judaism first surfaced in 1795, and covers all Jews who believe that God revealed the dual Torah at Sinai and that Jews must carry out the requirements of Jewish law contained in the Torah as interpreted by the sages through time. Obviously, so long as that position was believed and practiced by the generality of Jewry, Orthodoxy as a distinct and organized Judaism did not have to exist. The point at which two events took place is interesting: first, the recognition of the received system, “the tradition,” as Orthodoxy, and second, the specifying of the received system as religion. The two of course go together. So long as the Judaism of the dual Torah enjoyed

recognition as a set of self-evident truths, those truths did not add to something so distinct as “religion,” but rather were a general statement of how things are: all of life explained and harmonized in one whole account.

Orthodox Judaism, founded in Germany in the mid-19th century in response to the success of Reform, mediates between the received Judaism of the dual Torah and the requirements of a life integrated in modern circumstances. Orthodoxy maintains the worldview of the received dual Torah, constantly citing its sayings and adhering, with only trivial variations, to the bulk of its norms for the everyday life. At the same time Orthodoxy holds that Jews adhering to the dual Torah may wear the same clothing as non-Jews wear instead of distinctively Jewish (even Judaic) clothing; they may live within a common economy and not practice distinctively Jewish professions (however these professions may be defined in a given setting); and they may, in diverse ways, take up a life not readily distinguished in important characteristics from that lived by people in general. So for Orthodoxy, a portion of Israel’s life may prove secular, in that the Torah does not dictate and so sanctify all details under all circumstances. The Judaism of the dual Torah presupposed not only the supernatural entity Israel, but also a way of life that distinguished, in important ways, that entity from the social world at large. Orthodoxy accommodated Jews who valued the received way of life and worldview but who also planned to live in an essentially integrated social world. Therefore the difference between Orthodoxy and the system of the dual Torah comes to expression in social policy: integration, however circumscribed, versus the total separation of the holy people.

Orthodoxy addressed the same questions as Reform but gave different answers. Reform maintained that the distinctive way of life had to go, since the Jews no longer constituted the holy people living a distinct existence but instead formed a religious group as part of a larger nation-state. Orthodoxy held that the Torah made provision for areas of life in which a Jew could be something other than a Jew. For example on the important point of education, the institutions of the Judaism of the dual Torah commonly held that one should study only Torah. Orthodoxy in the West included study of the secular sciences in its curriculum as well. The Judaism of the dual Torah ordinarily identified particular forms of dress as



Israeli men cover their heads with the tallit, or prayer shawl, as a sign of respect during morning prayers

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being Judaic. Orthodoxy required only the wearing of fringes (which could be concealed inside of a man's clothing) and a covering for the head. In these and in other ways Orthodoxy formed a fresh statement of the Judaism of the dual Torah, distinctive in its provision, for the Jew, of a life lived legitimately outside—though never in violation—of the Judaic norms. The distinction between adhering to the received system of the dual Torah and identifying with the mid-19th-century German Orthodox Judaism rested on such indicators as clothing, language, and above all, education.

Jews who kept the law of the Torah—for example, its strictures on food choices and the use of leisure time (to speak of the Sabbath and festivals in modern, secular terms)—crossed the boundary between the received Judaism and the new (if also traditional and received) Judaism of Orthodoxy when they sent their children to secular schools, in addition to or instead of solely Jewish ones, or when they included subjects outside of the sciences of the Torah in Jewish schools' curriculum. The notion that science, German, Latin, or philosophy deserved serious study was not alien to important exemplars of the received system of the dual Torah, but in the 19th century it felt wrong to those for whom the received system remained self-evidently right. Those Jews (including, as a rule such Jews as the Hasidim) did not send their children to Gentile schools, or include anything other than Torah-study in the curriculum of the Jewish schools. The Reformers held that Judaism could change, and that Judaism was a product of history. The Orthodox opponents denied that Judaism could change and insisted that Judaism derived from God's will at Mount Sinai and was eternal and supernatural, not historical and man-made. In these two convictions, of course, the Orthodox recapitulated the convictions of the received system. But in their appeal to the given traditional thought, they found some components of that system more persuasive than others, and in this picking and choosing, and the articulation of Judaism as a distinct religion autonomous of politics, society, and "the rest of life," the Orthodox entered the same world of self-conscious believing that the Reformers also explored.

TWENTIETH-CENTURY JUDAISMS BEYOND THE RABBINIC FRAMEWORK

Zionism. In the 20th century two Judaic systems dropped the theme of Torah altogether, while reworking the paradigm of exile and return that the Pentateuch set forth. Though neither of them are religious in any conventional sense, both have powerful influences among Jews who practice a Judaic religious system. The American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption and ZIONISM both responded to political crises: one to the advent of anti-Semitism that denied Jews the right to live in Europe at all, the other to the reconstruction and re-ethnicization of the American cultural order in the late 1960s. Both of these Jewish systems—they cannot strictly speaking be called Judaic, that is, religious—continue the generative paradigm of exile and return.

Zionism was the Jews' self-emancipation, in response to the nations' (Gentiles') failed promises of Jewish emancipation. It framed its worldview and way of life for its definition of Israel in response to the lack, by the end of the 19th century, of political improvement in the Jews' status and condition. Zionism called for Jews to face the fact that, in the main, Gentiles hated Jews and so they must emancipate themselves. Founding a Jewish state where Jews could build their own destiny free of anti-Semitism, the Zionist worldview declared the simple proposition that the Jews form a people, one people, and should transform themselves into a political entity and build a Jewish state. Zionism came into existence with the founding of the Zionist Organization at the First Zionist Congress in Basel (August 29–31, 1897) and reached its fulfillment, and dissolution in its original form, with the founding of the state of Israel in May 1948. Zionism began with its definition of Israel: a people, one people, in a secular sense. Then came a worldview combining the diverse histories of Jews into a singular history of the Jewish people (nation), leading from the Land of Israel, through exile, back to the Land of Israel. This component of Zionism constituted an exact recapitulation of the biblical narrative, though it derived from a nationalist, not a religious, per-

spective. The way of life of the Zionist required participating in meetings, organizing within the local community, and attending national and international conferences in a focus of life's energy on the movement. After settlement in the Land itself became possible in 1903, Zionism defined the most noble way of living life as migration to the Land, and, for the socialist wing of Zionism, building a collective community (kibbutz). So, Zionism presented a complete and fully articulated Judaism, which was prior to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948, one of the most powerful and effective of them all.

Three main streams of theory flowed together in the formative decades. Ahad Ha'am (1856–1927) laid stress on Zion as a spiritual center, uniting all of the Jewish

people wherever they lived, and emphasizing spiritual preparation, ideological and cultural activities, and the long-term intellectual persuasion of the Jews to Zionist premises. A political stream began in 1897 and maintained that the Jews should provide for the emigration of their nation's masses from Eastern Europe to the land of Israel, or anywhere, as Europe was entering a protracted state of political disintegration and already long suffering from economic dislocation. The founder of Zionism, THEODOR HERZL (1860–1904) placed more importance on the requirement for legal recognition of a Jewish state than upon the location of the state, and, in doing so, he defined



Israeli soldiers in the Old City of Jerusalem during the 1967 Six-Day War

Archive Photos

Zionism as the practical salvation of the Jews through political means. Herzl stressed that the Jewish state would come into existence in the forum of international politics. The instruments of state—a political forum, a bank, a mode of national allegiance, a press, and a central body and leader—came into being in the aftermath of the First Zionist Congress. Herzl spent the rest of his life—less than a decade—seeking an international charter and recognition of the Jews' state. A third stream expressed a Zionist vision of socialism (or a socialist vision of Zionism): the Jewish state was to be socialist, and for its first three decades it was. The early theoretical formulation of socialist Zionism (before its near-total bureaucratization) emphasized that a proletarian Zionism would define the arena for the

class struggle to be realized within the Jewish people. The socialist Zionists dominated the settlement of the Land of Israel and controlled its political institutions for three quarters of a century. They founded the labor unions, the large scale industries, the health institutions and organizations, the press, and the nascent army. They created the nation.

A Judaism entirely out of phase with the received system of the dual Torah, Zionism enunciated a powerful doctrine of Israel: The Jews form "a people, one people." Given the Jews' diversity, it was easier for people to concede the supernatural reading of Judaic existence than the national construction given to it. Scattered across the European countries and the Muslim world, Jews did not speak a single language, follow a single way of life, or adhere in common to a single code of belief and behavior. The Zionist worldview's central theme was the question of what made them a people, one people, and further validated their claim and right to a nation-state of their own. No facts of perceived society validated that view, since, except for a common fate, the Jews did not form a people, one people. True, in the Judaic system of the dual Torah and its continuators they commonly did. But these systems imputed to Israel, the Jewish people, a supernatural status, mission, and purpose, which Zionism did not. Zionist theory had the task of explaining how the Jews forming a unified people lead to the invention of "Jewish history," in which the past is read in a secular framework as a single and unitary story. Zionist theory showed how all the Jews came from one place, traveled together, and would return to that same place, and thus constituted one people as a matter of secular fact. Like Reform Judaism, Zionist theory derived strength from the study of history, and in time generated a great renaissance of Judaic studies, as the scholarly community of the nascent Jewish state took up the task at hand. The sort of history that emerged took the form of factual and descriptive narrative, but its selection of facts, its recognition of problems requiring explanation, and its choice of what did and did not matter all sprang from the larger program of nationalist ideology. So although the form was secular and descriptive, the substance was ideological in the extreme.

At the same time, Zionist theory explicitly rejected the precedent formed by that Torah, selecting not the history of the faith but the history of the nation, with Israel construed as a secular entity. Zionism defined episodes as linear Jewish history and appealed to those strung-together events, all of a given classification to be sure, as vindication for actions. This distinctive worldview explains a very particular way of life and defines for itself that Israel to which it wishes to speak. Like Reform Judaism, Zionism found the written component of the Torah more interesting than the oral. And in its search for a usable past, it turned to documents formerly neglected or treated as not authoritative—for instance, the books of Maccabees. Zionism went in search of heroes unlike those of the present—it sought warriors, political figures, and others who might provide a model for the movement's future, and for the projected state beyond. So instead of rabbis or sages, Zionism chose figures such as DAVID the warrior king, Judah Maccabee, who had led the revolt against the Syrian Hellenists, and SAMSON the powerful fighter—these provided the appropriate heroes for a Zionism that proposed to redefine Jewish consciousness and turn storekeepers into soldiers, lawyers into farmers, corner grocers into the builders and administrators of great institutions of state and government. The Judaism of the dual Torah treated David as a rabbi, but the Zionist system of Judaism saw him as a more worldly hero: a courageous nation-builder.

Yet the principal components of Zionism's worldview fit comfortably within the paradigm of the Torah, which stated, based on its own genealogical reasons, that the Jews form a people, one people, and should (when worthy) have the land back and build a state on it. It is not surprising that Zionism found ample precedent for its program in writings about the return to Zion as it linked today's politics to something very like God's will for Israel, the Jewish people, in ancient times. Thus, calling the newly formed Jewish city "Tel Aviv" invoked the memory of Ezekiel's reference to a Tel Aviv. Zionism would reconstitute the age of the return to Zion of Ezra and Nehemiah's era, and so carry out the prophetic promis-

es. Again the mode of thought is entirely reminiscent of Reform Judaism's, which, to be sure, selected a different, mythic perfect world; a golden age other than the one that glistened so brightly to Zionism. Yet the points of continuity should not be overstated. Alongside the search of Scripture, Zionism articulated very clearly what it wished to find there. And what Zionism did not find, it deposited on its own, its own systemic design marking it as heresy: the celebration of the nation as a secular, not supernatural, category, and the imposition of the nation and its heroism in place of the heroic works of the supernatural God. This classic shift can be seen in the recasting of the verse of Psalms, which originally read "Who will retell the great deeds of God" and ended up reading "Who will retell the great deeds of Israel"—and that only typifies Zionism's profound revisioning of Israel's history. For Israel in its dual Torah (though not only in that Judaism) formed a supernatural entity; a social unit unlike any other on the face of the earth and all humanity divided into two parts: Israel and the (undifferentiated) nations. Moreover, the Judaism given literary expression in Constantine's day maintained that the one thing Israel should not do is arrogant deeds. That meant Israel waited with patience, loyalty, humility, and obedience for God to save it. The earliest pronouncements of a Zionist movement were received in the Jewish heartland of Eastern Europe like the tocsin of the coming messiah, but for that same reason they seemed as BLASPHEMY to the sages of the dual Torah. God will do it—or it will not be done. Considerable time would elapse before most of the avatars of the dual Torah could make their peace with Zionism, and some never did.

American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption. In the context of this article "the Holocaust" refers to the Nazi's murder of nearly six million Jewish children, women, and men in Europe in 1933 through 1945. The "Redemption" is the creation of the state of Israel. This Judaic system—an ethnic ideology, not a religious formulation built out of the Torah—flourishes in the United States and, from 1967, has been the principal force in the public life of American Jews. This Judaism stresses the unique complementary experiences of mid-20th century Jewry: the mass murder of six million European Jews in death factories, and the providential and redemptive meaning of the creation of the state of Israel three years after the massacre's end. The way of life of Holocaust and Redemptive Judaism requires actively raising money and political support for the state of Israel. Whereas Zionism held that Jews should live in a Jewish state, this system gives Jews living in the United States a reason and explanation for being Jewish. As a whole it presents an encompassing myth, linking the Holocaust to the state of Israel as an instructive pattern, and it moves Jews to follow a particular set of actions. Diverse Judaic systems flourish in the United States: Reform, Orthodoxy, Conservatism, RECONSTRUCTIONISM, as well as others less choate. But the American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption exercises enormous power over the mind and imagination of Jewish Americans. It answers two separate and distinct urgent questions, the first addressed to the particular world of the Jews, the second to the world at large. The first question is, "Why should I be different, why should I be Jewish?" The second is, "How should I relate to the world at large?"

The Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption gives a powerful and critical answer to the question of why be Jewish: because you have no choice. It also explains that "Israel" should relate to the world at large through its own nation-state overseas, and in its distinctive and distinct communities at home. So American Judaism addresses the inner world as well as policy toward the outer world.

The two questions are connected—both emerge from the special circumstances of the Jewish American whose grandparents or great-grandparents immigrated to the United States or Canada. For that sort of American Jew, there is no common acknowledged core of RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE by which "being Jewish" may be explained and interpreted. Also, because anti-Semitism has become less common than it was from the 1920s through the early 1950s, there is no common core of social alienation to account for the distinctive character of the group and explain why it must continue to endure. Indeed, many American Jews, though they continue to affirm their Jewishness, have no clear notion of how they are Jewish, or what their Jewish heritage demands of them. Judaism is, for this critical part of

the American Jewish population, merely one reference point among many. For ideologists of the Jewish community, the most certain answer to the question "Why am I Jewish?," posed by the third generation, must be, "There is no real choice" since the Holocaust provides the answer: "Hitler considered you Jewish." The formative experiences of the Holocaust are now immediately accessible through emotions unmediated by sentiment or sensibility. These "Judaizing experiences" take the place of the Torah in nurturing an inner and distinctive consciousness of "being Jewish." So the Holocaust is made to answer the inner question of "Who are we, and why are we what we are and not something else?"

By the late 1960s third-generation American Jews—the grandchildren of the immigrants who were born between 1920 and 1940—had found the continuator-Judaisms of the synagogue conventional and irrelevant. These Judaisms did not address their questions and provide self-evidently valid answers. And how could those Judaisms serve, when they invoked experiences of learning and sensibility unavailable to American Jews beyond the immigrant generation and their children? Jews found that to make a model for viable life—an explanation of the world, and an account of how to live—out of those Judaisms, they had to give what they did not have. What was required was either memories few possessed or locating a road back to find memories, and very few found the will for this. The world of the everyday did not provide access to a worldview as subtle and alien as that of the Judaism of the dual Torah with its conception of humanity and Israel, let alone to the way of life formed within that worldview. How then to engage the emotions without the mediation of learning in the Torah that few possessed or wished to attain? And how to define a way of life that imparted distinction without great material difference? To put it bluntly, what distinctively Judaic way of life would allow devotees to eat whatever they wanted? The answer to the question of how to gain access to the life of feeling and experience that made one distinctive without leaving the person terribly different from everybody else emerged in the Judaic system of Holocaust and Redemption. This system presented an immediately accessible message that was cast in extreme emotions of terror and triumph, and its round of endless activity demanded only spare time. In all, the system of American Judaism realized in a poignant way the conflicting demands of Jewish Americans to be intensely Jewish (but only once in a while) but to not be too meaningfully different from others.

Three factors reinforced one another in turning the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption into a set of self-evident and descriptive facts, truths beyond all argument and gave it a position of paramount importance among the bulk of the organized American Jewish community: the Six-Day War of 1967, the re-ethnicization of American life, and the transformation of the mass murder of European Jews into an event of mythic and world-destroying proportions. Why date the birth of the Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption so precisely as the 1967 war? People take the importance of the state of Israel in American Jewish consciousness as routine. But in the 1940s and '50s, American Jewry had yet to translate its deep sympathy for the Jewish state into political activity, or the shaping element for local cultural activity and sentiment. Likewise, the destruction of European Jewry did not right away become "the Holocaust," in contemporary Jewish consciousness. (The term "holocaust"—which originally meant a sacrifice wholly consumed by fire, or a burnt offering—was not actually used to refer to the Nazi death camps until the 1950s. The term became more common through its use by such writers as Elie Wiesel [b. 1928] in his 1958 work *Night*.) Additionally, the re-ethnicization of the Jews could not have taken the form that it did—a powerful identification with the state of Israel as the answer to the question of the Holocaust—without a single, catalytic event.

That event was the 1967 war between the state of Israel and its Arab neighbors. On June 5, after a long period of threat, the dreaded war of "all against one" began, and American Jews feared the worst. Six days later they faced an unimagined outcome, with the state of Israel holding territory on the Jordan River, the Nile, and the outskirts of Damascus. The trauma of the weeks preceding the war, when the Arabs promised to drive the Jews into the sea and no other power intervened

or promised help, renewed for the third generation the nightmare of the second. Once more the streets and newspapers became the school for being Jewish. On that account the Judaism in formation took up a program of urgent questions—and answered them. In the 1930s and '40s, the age of Hitler's Germany and the murder of the European Jews in death factories, every day's newspaper brought lessons of Jewish history. Everybody knew that if he or she were in Europe, death would be the sentence for the "crime" of Jewish birth. And the world was indifferent. No avenues of escape were opened to the Jews who wanted to flee, and many roads to survival were deliberately blocked by anti-Semitic foreign service officials. Likewise, in 1967 the Arab states threatened to destroy the state of Israel and murder its citizens. The Israelis turned to the world, the world again ignored Jewish suffering, and a new Holocaust loomed. But this time the outcome was quite different. The entire history of the century at hand came under a new light as this moment of powerful and salvific weight placed everything that had happened from the beginning to the present into a fresh perspective.

The third generation now had found its memory and its hope, much as Zionism had invented a usable past. Its members could now confront the murder of the Jews of Europe, along with the exclusion and bigotry experienced by their parents and themselves. It was no longer necessary to avoid painful, intolerable memories. Now what had happened had to be remembered, because it bore within itself the entire message of the new day in Judaism. The binding of the murder of nearly six million Jews of Europe to the creation of the state of Israel transformed both events. One became "the Holocaust," the purest statement of evil in all of human history. The other became salvation in the form of "the first appearance of our redemption" (as the language of the Jewish prayer for the state of Israel has it). Accordingly, a moment of stark epiphany had captured the entire experience of the age and imparted to it that meaning and order that a religious system has the power to express as self-evident. For the third generation the self-evident system of American Judaism encompassed a salvific myth deeply and personally relevant to the devotees. At a single instant that myth made equal sense of both the world and the self, of what the newspapers had to say, and what the individual understood in personal life.

The distinctively American form of Judaism clearly connects to the Judaism of the dual Torah with its exact recapitulation of the pattern of the original Torah. The exile has its counterpart in the Holocaust, and the return to Zion is, in the Redemption, represented by the state of Israel. But American Judaism is not completely continuous; in fact it forms a heresy structurally out of phase with the Judaism of the dual Torah. In its stress upon the realization, in the here and now, of ultimate evil and salvation and in its mythicization of contemporary history, American Judaism offers a distinctively American, therefore a new and unprecedented, reading of the received tradition. This is by definition; when Jews have come to speak of fully realized salvation and an end of history, the result has commonly proved to be a new religion, connected to, but not continuous with, the received religion of Judaism.

RABBINIC AND OTHER JUDAISMS IN MODERN TIMES: CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY

The 19th-century Judaisms, represented by Reform and Orthodoxy, made constant reference to the received system of the dual Torah; its writings, its values, its requirements, its viewpoints, and its way of life. The 20th-century Judaisms, Zionism and the American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption, did not pretend to negotiate with Rabbinic Judaism or draw on its holy books. But there is a clear connection of all four Judaisms to the generative paradigm of the Torah—that experience of exile and return as announced in the time of Ezra. There are, of course, important differences between the continuator-Judaisms of the 19th century and the Judaic innovations of the 20th. Each Judaism born in the 19th century faced the task of validating the change affirmed by all of the borning Judaisms in one way or another. But all of those new Judaisms articulated a principle in which change guided relationships with the received system. And all the Juda-

isms recognized themselves as answerable, in diverse ways to be sure, to the received system, which continued to define the agenda of law and theology alike. We cannot point to a similar relationship between the new Judaisms of the 20th century and the received Judaism of the dual Torah. For none of them made much use of the intellectual resources of that system, found urgent, important issues within that system, or even regarded themselves as answerable to the Judaism of the dual Torah.

The 20th-century systems came to expression within the larger world—that of the nationalism of the smaller peoples of Europe and Zionism's rejection of the government of the international empires of Central and Eastern Europe—and, for American Judaism, the reframing, in American culture, of the policy governing social and ethnic difference. While these Judaic systems of believing and behaving did not draw extensively on the received Judaic system of the dual Torah, they did vastly overshadow in acceptance the Judaisms that did. From the 18th to the 20th century there was a radical attenuation of the bonds that joined the Jews to the Judaism of the dual Torah. The difference between the 20th-century Judaisms and the 19th-century ones was in the character of the ages in which they took shape. The Judaisms of the 19th century retained close and nurturing ties to the Judaism of the dual Torah, confronted its issues, drew heavily on its symbolic system, cited its texts as proof-texts, and eagerly referred to its sources in justification for the new formations. They looked backward and assumed responsibility toward that long past of the Judaism of the dual Torah, acknowledging its authority, accepting its program of thought, and acceding to its way of life—if only by way of explicit rejection. The Judaisms of the 20th century in common treated with entire disinterest the same received Judaism of the dual Torah. They looked forward and drew heavily upon contemporary systems of belief and behavior. But they turned to the received system of the dual Torah only adventitiously.

The difference between the 20th-century Judaisms and the 19th-century ones was much more than a century. It was the difference between the civilization of the West in its Christian form and that same civilization as it took new, secular forms altogether. With its interest in Scripture, messiah, and the long trends of history worked out in sanctification now for salvation at the end of days, what pertinence had the Judaism that was formed in response to Christianity? The new world imposed its own categories, including such organizing constructions as class struggle, the ideology of a homogeneously cultural and ethnic nation-state, and, in the United States and Canada, diverse and rootless people's search for ethnic identity. These issues characterized a world that had cast loose the moorings that had long held things firm and whole. What was left in the 20th century, for people with no relationship with the Judaism of the dual Torah, was a Judaic experience composed of politics on one side and raw emotions on the other. The ideologies of the 20th-century Judaisms came after the fact of experience and emotion. They explained the fact; they did not, as religions had done, transform feeling into sensibility and sentiment into an intellectual explanation of the world. The 20th-century systems represented by Zionism and the American Judaism of Holocaust and Redemption in common appeal to a self-evidence deriving from a visceral response to intolerable experience. Zionism formed into a single whole the experiences of remarkably diverse people living in widely separated places, showing that all those experiences formed a single fact—exclusion, victimization, and anti-Semitism—which Zionism could confront. American Judaism linked to an inchoate past the aspirations of a third and fourth generation of Jewish Americans who wanted desperately to be Jewish but in its own experience and intellectual resources could find slight access to something "Jewish." Emotion—of resentment in particular—formed the road within: for American Judaism, strong feelings about suffering and redemption; for Zionism, a powerful appeal to concrete deeds in the here and now by people who thought themselves helpless. Yet these Judaisms, so remote from the circumstance and substance of the generative system of the Torah, do not stand far from the starting point; for the contemporary Judaisms invoke exile and homecoming as the norm, just as stated in the Pentateuch: All have Eden in mind and eternal life in the mind's eye.